

Summary: Another late night visitor and more talk

Categories: [Batman](#) Characters: Bruce Wayne (Batman)/Dick Grayson (Nightwing), Other Female

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Challenges: None

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Story Notes:

Many lovely thanks to Bertina, {{kisses sweetly, you are my greatest fan friend. you kick my ass when i need it and blow me sweet butterfly kisses for encouragement.}} Thanks to 'rith for making sure i didn't completely destroy these lovely characters, and dee dee for giving their unabashed opinion.

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Chapter 1 by PurpleWaterlili

"Dena, honey, its time to wake up."

"Mmmmmm ... I'm sleepy."

"Dena, you're going to be late...again. I won't have you getting another demerit for tardiness this term Dena, now get out of bed."

"Daddddddy."

"Dena."

"I'm sleepy," she whined again, as he pulled back the curtains in his room flooding the room with light.

"Dena, I said its time to get out of bed. You need to take a quick shower and get ready for school."

"But, Daddy, I don't wanna go today."

He leaned in, pulling the cover down from her face and kissed her forehead as she groaned.
"Come on bedbug, its time to get up, and no arguments."

"Okay," she said, giving up the fight and relinquishing the covers her dad was pulling away from around her.

"It snowed some last night- do you want to walk to school today?"

"Yeah, will Uncle Garth take me?" she asked enthusiastically, finally crawling from beneath the covers, arms wide to giver her dad a hug.

"Wait a minute, how did you..." Dena squirmed out of his hug, scampering off to the bathroom.
"Hold it young lady." She paused. "I asked you a question, how did you know that your Uncle Garth was here?"

"I ... I guessed he was here."

"You guessed. Not going to work young lady. Dena, were you eavesdropping last night?"

"Sorry, Daddy, I didn't mean to."

"Dena, how many times do we have to go over this? You do know what you did is quite rude, don't you, young lady?" Tears started to swell in Dena's eyes. "Is this going to be a constant problem for us Dena? You know I don't like you eavesdropping, and furthermore, it's not in the least ladylike."

"I'm sorry." Her tears spilled down her cheeks and Richard's heart melted in his chest. "Really, daddy, I really am sorry. I was looking for you, you weren't in your bed and I thought you were in the office, but you and Uncle Garth were talking about me and I...and I ... I... I'm sorry Daddy."

"Oh BabyGirl," he said picking her up off the floor, "It's ok. I'm not that upset but you know I don't like when you do that. It's not nice, Dena."

"I know, Daddy. Please don't be mad at me anymore."

"I'm not mad with you, honey-pie." He moved to sit on his bed with her curled up on his lap. "So I guess you heard a lot of what we said last night right?" She nodded.

"Is Uncle Garth going to live with us again?"

"No, he's only visiting."

"Doesn't he love us anymore, Daddy?"

"Ohh honey. I never want you to doubt Garth's feelings for you. You'll always be his..."

"Pretty mermaid princess," they said in unison.

"Yes, he loves you, Dena. Never forget that."

"I love him too, Daddy. I missed him when he was gone."

"Me to, he missed you a lot, too, that's why he came to visit a little while." Richard held his daughter close, his nose buried in her hair, repeatedly kissing the crown of her tender head.

"Daddy,"

"Hum."

"Are you going to be so sad again when Uncle Garth leaves again?"

"No, I'll miss him and I'll be sad a little bit, but I promise I won't cry ok," he said, tickling her.

Giggling, she squirmed about in his lap, laughing loudly.

"Please Daddy, stop, stop I'm gonna pee my pants. Dadddddyy."

"Ok, Ok, I'll stop." He smiled down at her flushed face with its familiar scolding smile looking back at him. So seemed so much like him sometimes Richard thought, bring to mind the situation with Bruce.

"That isn't all you heard last night, was it?"

She moved to sit next to him, her feet pulled up into locust position looking directly in his eyes.

So serious sometimes, aren't you, little one? Richard thought.

"No," she admitted and shook her head.

"So what did you hear?"

"I didn't hear all of it, just some."

"Yes."

"Uncle Garth doesn't like my other Daddy does he?"

"No." He cleared his throat. "No he doesn't," Then said "Do you know why?" feeling a bit uncomfortable.

"No."

"Your Uncle Garth is only trying to protect us, he thinks your other Father would be mean to us."

"You don't think so?"

"No. No I don't. I know him better than you Uncle."

"Do you still love him?"

Richard was shocked by the question. "I...I..."

"I heard Uncle Garth ask you but I didn't hear what you said."

She's 5 years old, how the hell did she end up interrogating me? He sighed internally, searching for his answer.

"I know you love me and Grand Pa Alfie and Uncle Garth, do you love him, too, Daddy?" Dena continued to press for an answer.

"Well...Uh...Dena, I spent many years living with your other father; he and Grand Pa Alfie and I were a family. You know you always love your family right?"

"So you did love him."

Richard nodded.

"Is he family now?"

Crafty little half witch, you're worse than he is.

"If you want to know if I still love him Dena," he said pinching her nose playfully, and she giggled. "Yes, I do, and yes, he never stopped being family, even if we haven't seen each other in a very long time."

"But you saw him last night." She giggled.

"Did I?" I wonder if she knows Richard though. He didn't have to ponder that thought for more than three seconds before she provided him with an answer.

"He's Batman, isn't he, Daddy?"

Still a bit stunned she had discovered what few ever would he stumbled over his reply. "Uhh... yes he is. Uhh, Dena, how did you...how did you know?"

She looked down at her hands she was twisting in her lap shyly. That was enough of an answer.

"I'm going to have to remember what a nosey little detective I'm raising," he said jovially, not wanting to make her feel any sadder about her bad behaviour last night. "I'm going to have to sound proof my office and hold all my personal conversations in here. It's either that or I'll to just cut these little ears off," he teased, playfully tugging at her cute rounded lobes. She giggled loudly, as he continued to then tickle her on the bed.

"No Daddy, No you can't." She said falling back on the bed wriggling with a hand clammed over each ear. Laughing heartily she finally was able manage. "Hehe, Daddy I gotta go. I gotta go."

Lifting her up he took her into the bathroom and placed her on the floor before the commode.

"Buttons, Daddy," She said looking up at him, her little feet doing a dance on the matted floor with urgency.

"Ok hon." Kneeling he made quick work of getting her out of her winter jammies, helping her pull her arms out so it feel to the floor as she got on the potty.

"Thank you daddy."

"You're welcome Babygirl," he said, picking up her clothes and tossing them into the hamper. He set the water in the shower and turned back to her. "Now why don't you have your shower while I go start breakfast. I'll be back wash your back." Snagging the pink shower cap off its hook near the glass door of the shower stall, he continued, "We're running late so I can't wash your hair this morning and get it dried in time, so keep your hair under this, this time, ok?"

She nodded as he wrapped her hair into a chignon, before placing it under the cap with its little white flowers. "K daddy." As she was walked over to the shower and he headed out the door she spun on her toes. "Daddy?"

"Yes," he said stopping just beyond the door in his bedroom.

Over the rush of the water she yelled. "Can I meet him soon?"

"What did you say?"

"My other father, I didn't mean to...I'm sorry, Daddy."

"No honey, I'm fine, you don't have to worry about me so. You didn't do or say anything wrong. You really would like to meet him don't you?" She nodded. "He wants to meet you too. I invited him to dinner."

"Dinner when, Daddy? When?" She asked, bounding over to him and pouncing into his arms.

Laughing, he kissed her on the nose before setting her back on the floor and spanking her on the butt. "In the shower with you."

"Daddy...When Daddy, When?" she nagged as she was urged under the water.

"How does Friday night sound."

"Friday, really?" She turned to jump back into his arms again, but he was backing away, waving a finger.

"No you don't, you're all wet."

"Friday night, Daddy, that's just 2 days away."

"Yes, Dena. Now get washed up, you'll be late if you don't."

Giggling, she turned her attentions back to her shower. "Okay, Daddy."

##

Richard smiled as he watched Mrs. Seagram and Garth chatting away as they normally did. Mrs. Seagram always did have a sweet spot for his Atlantian friend.

"Visit!"

"Yes Mrs. Seagram."

"You haven't planned to return for good."

"No Mrs. Seagram, just a visit."

"I see."

"No you don't, but everything will be ok. I'll be sure to spend much quality time with Dena. That's what's really important."

"I'm glad to hear it. Little Lady has missed you sorely."

"Humm, I do believe you're right. I've missed her a lot too."

"Good morning, Mrs. Seagram, Garth." He flashed a smile to them both then walked over to the counter to get his coffee.

"Good morning, Mr. Greyson."

"Robbie."

"Mrs. Seagram...I want to apologise for last night's little interruption."

"It was fine, Mr. Greyson, once you and the Little Lady are quite fine."

"Yes, we're fine Mrs. Seagram. I see breakfast is done. Thanks, Mrs. Seagram."

"Well, actually, that wasn't me, sir. I was pleasantly surprised to wake this morning to this rascal knocking around in the kitchen with an armful of bananas in one hand and scouring your cupboards for brown sugar or some such thing."

Richard laughed. "Really now."

Garth almost blushed a bit as Mrs. Seagram continued.

"Imagine my surprise." Richard laughed when he saw the colour in Garth's face.

"I...I wanted to make breakfast for Dena."

"Tellytubby Toast- she'll love them," Richard said, placing a half a buttered English muffin on his plate and looked in the cupboard for his coffee mug and Dena's favourite juice glass. He poured himself some coffee and started making a plate for Dena. Filling it with two pancakes with banana eyes and mouth and pouring on lots of syrup and a smidgen of strawberry jam on each as a nose. Then filled her glass with some orange juice. Taking a sip of his coffee, he looked at the clock.

"So how has she been at her new school?"

"It was tough at first but I think she's settling in. She is strong willed, she'll find her way. She's made a few friends. They are nice kids."

"I'm glad. Will it be fine with you if I drop her off and pick her up from school today?"

"Uhhh, sure Garth, you know she'd love that." Glancing at the clock once more he rose, excusing himself. "Pardon me, I'll be back in a few minutes okay."

He rushed upstairs, and into the bathroom.

"Here you go, Daddy," she said, giving him the washcloth. "Hey, you were eating breakfast, that's not fair." She pouted as he lathered up the washcloth and rubbed at her back for her. "Uncle Garth made your favourite."

"He did, you ate my Tellytubby toast."

"No. No I didn't. I had a muffin and some coffee, honest," he teased. "Now rinse."

"Do they have a banana smile, I mean a real smile not like your surprised 'O' mouths?"

"Nope, not like mine, I do believe they are have their toothy banana grins in place. He asked if he could take you to school and pick you up again. I told him you'd like that."

"Yeah, am I done now, daddy?"

"Did you wash under your neck?"

"Yes Daddy."

"And behind your ears?"

"Yes Daddy." She giggled.

"Let me see, under here, hey, it's so clean it sparkles, and behind those ears. My...my 'spick and span.'" The last words they said together as he wrapped his lil girl in a towel and lifted her out of the shower.

He took his wiggly bundle into her room and deposited her on the floor as he went into the closet to find her uniform, while she dried herself and dragged the cap off her head.

"Well, Little Miss get your undies on, you're going to be late you'll probably have to driven instead of walking through the fresh snow."

"K, daddy," she said, flipping her hair over her shoulder as started to get dressed.

After pulling on her panties and undershirt he helped her into her tights and ankle socks. "Arms out." She complied, idly and he helped her into her baby blue blouse with the peter-pan collar, which he ensured sat neatly down on the fabric. He was kneeling before her buttoning it all the way down when she finally spoke.

"Daddy."

"Humm."

"You think Daddy Bruce will like me."

"I don't see why not. You are a very likeable girl. You're pretty, and smart and sweet and..."

"But kids at school don't think so." She sulked.

"Well they just don't know you the way I do."

"He doesn't either."

"Ohh Baby girl." He sighed. "You really shouldn't worry so. Bruce will love you no matter what you're like. He loves you already."

"But Why?"

"Because you're his daughter, his little girl. You're family. I'll bet you a quarter he loves you already."

She nodded. "Okay."

"As for the girls at school, they are just plain silly, if they don't see what a good friend you'd be. When they get to know you better, like Tylar and Maxine do, they'll like you too, ok BabyGirl. Just give it a bit more time."

"Alright Daddy. I love you," she said smiling.

"I love you too, BabyGirl." Kissing her forehead. "Now arms up," He said holding her jumper over her head guiding it down her body. He pulled the hidden zipper on the left side up. Patting her to let her know he was all done. "Just your shoes to go now" Richard said looking around the room.

"Dena, where are your shoes?"

"I don't know."

"Well if you don't know then how shall I."

"I don't know," she said cheekily. "Can I go have breakfast now?"

"Well I guess so, since you've decided to hide your shoes...again."

"I didn't hide them, Daddy."

"Oh well, you go have breakfast, I'll take another look around."

"K, Daddy."

"Don't forget to thank your Uncle Garth now."

"I won't," she yelled back as she dashed down the stairs. As she went Richard found himself saying a silent prayer she didn't slip on the tiles in the foyer, or worse, if she...

Dena ran out of room skidding as she reached the corridor, spying her Uncle walking down the hall from the kitchen, she vaulted onto the banister, squealing on her way down. The soles of her tights aiding her as she slid past Mrs. Seagram arms out stretched, balancing her as she surfed down the narrow polished mahogany.

"Uncle Garth! Uncle Garth!" she yelled.

Mrs. Seagram clasped her hand over her mouth eyes wide as the fearless 5 year sailed past her. "Queen Mother." She gasped.

"Hi. Morning Ma'am," Dena yelled.

"Dena, stop scaring Mrs. S and get off the banister."

"K Daddy," she yelled back, making eye contact with her Uncle. She sprang off, her arms stretched wide, sailing off the banister having only run down 13 steps in a flight of 24.

"Dena Princess."

"Catch me, Uncle Garth. Catch me."

Richard had finally reached the doorway of his room watching his daughter's shenanigans.

Rising quickly to the air, Garth caught Dena before she could begin her descent. Her out stretched arms immediately wound around his neck, hugging him tightly as he gently touched down with the precious devil.

"Young Lady, anymore teasing like that and you'll stay home every evening this week and next."

Looking up at her Dad Dena pouted. "I was only playing with Uncle Garth, Daddy."

"In your uniform no less, and you scared poor Mrs. S half to death."

"No truer words, Mr. Greyson, took 3 whole years clear off the end m' days, that one did."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. S."

"Apology accepted. Now I think I'll have m'self a lil lie down before m' duties in the afternoon."

When she reached the landing, Richard expressed his apologies, but Mrs. Seagram simply smiled.

"She's a good girl, a bit too high spirited, but a good girl. You should worry a little less about that one. She may be wild but she has a good head on her shoulders."

"She wasn't too much trouble last night."

"Heaven's no, sir."

"Her homework's done, all too quickly for my liking, doesn't give a person a moment of peace. She's a smart one. They are the ones that seem to need to be constantly engaged, that or they'd drive you quickly insane." She laughed light heartedly. "I'm going to have a bit of a nap, sir. If

you'd excuse me."

"Thanks, Mrs. Seagram."

She waved it off and made her way down the hall to her room. He smiled to himself, thinking of the gentle older lady as she retreated.

Richard had needed Mrs. Seagram more than ever once he finally donned his Nightwing suit. She came highly recommended by Alfred; having been the first his friends when he came to the country and she just a young au pair. It was she whom he had arranged to stay with Richard when he needed a nurse. She stayed on in the capacity until after Dena was born. As the needs of Richard and Dena changed, so did she. She flexed and yielded to their needs, having become quite fond of her charges. Mrs. Seagram was a young widow, losing her husband in a tragic train wreck at age 24. She hadn't any children, though she yearned to have them, and she found her love for her lost one was just as torrent had he survived to be with her. Remarrying was simply out of the question, but caring for children could be arranged. She took a job as an au pair and moved to the states seven months after Darien's death. That had been some 38 years ago. Mrs. Seagram had no regrets, now the perpetually fifty-nine year old Lady, was a member of the Greyson household she found herself happy, happier than most who reached her years. She had a good life, one of service, which agreed with her gentle good nature.

Her role in the household now would be difficult to define of late. Richard had made it quite clear he wished her to be a member of the family, he trusted her with Dena, and Dena had grown quite fond of Mrs. Seagram's Grandmotherly figure. In Dena's second year, Mrs. S realised she had stumbled her way into a quite bizarre position. A point she made issue with her old friend, Alfred. His late comings and goings, the bruises that appeared in their wake, and not to mention the "queer bunch of friends with which he associated" he remembered laughing heartily the first time he heard her refer to the Titans in that manner. Alfred had been worried that sooner or later she would figure something out, but he felt assured Meredith would understand and could be trusted. He was right of course, but only after she gave them both a good piece of her mind. How dare they assume she would not need to know such pertinent information? Her wrath had been legendary, and having seen it that afternoon, neither he nor Alfred would dare cross that threshold again.

Life with Mrs. S was good. Her duties of late mainly consisted of sitting with Dena, while he was away with business at night. Her days were her own; the few tasks she did around the apartment were far from a requirement of her duties, but rather the kindness of her heart. Richard absolutely enjoyed having a hands-on approach to raising his daughter, a point on which Mrs. S commended him. Each challenge he had to face raising Dena, he was certain Mrs. S would be there, happy to help him. Dena could be quite a handful at times, independent and headstrong to the point of being absolutely wilful at times. Richard sighed. There was no denying she was Bruce's child. There had been a phase where he'd tried to. She was his and his alone, a pathetic attempt to ease his own burden of guilt brought on by his own deliberate actions. It wasn't a terribly long phase; Bruce's presence in the child was simply undeniable, in neither face nor character. As she grew older it was her temper that worried him the most, he knew Mrs. S knew that, though he wasn't sure if she knew why.

Richard could never bring himself to bare his heart to her, and she never pried. He hardly spoke of his past to her, which wasn't to say she knew nothing of his past. The few shards of information he'd let slip, and what she knew of Alfred's life in Gotham, allowed her to paint an almost accurate picture of what his life had been like. She may have been climbing in years, but her wit was just as sharp as it had ever been. She knew his heart had been broken, and was happy when she saw romance budding between him and Garth. He was sure she must have been a bit hurt after her conversation with Garth this morning.

Richard returned to his task at hand- the hunt for Dena's shoes.

Dena's kept her room neat, well - basically. She never seemed able to put her shoes in the same place twice. Richard looked under the bed, nothing. He looked in the corners, nothing, under some a pile of teddies, nothing. He looked by the window, under the curtain, nothing. He looked behind the door, nothing He looked under her drawing table, and in her toy chest and finally in the oven of her kitchenette play centre. That child never ceased to amaze him. "We have a winner," he said collecting the shoes from their hiding place.

###

"Here you go, young lady."

"What took you so long, Daddy?" she said, snickering and laughing.

Raising an eyebrow at her as she giggled, he took his seat opposite her and Garth. "If I can't find them tomorrow, you'll wear your stockings to school."

"No I won't," she giggled and Garth laughed with her at Richard's expense.

Turning to her uncle after finishing a mouthful of pancakes. "Uncle Garth, I missed your Tellytubby Toast so much."

"Didn't you miss me, too?"

"Of course I did, silly, but yours taste way better than Mrs.S or Daddy's- his are always wet and swishy in the middle. Ewwwww."

"Duly noted," Richard said, snagging a piece of pancake off her plate, as he pored over some documents from a manila folder.

"Hey."

"What? I'm hungry and you made them sound so good, I needed to get a taste." He teased. Then silence reigned for a little while. Dena ate, becoming a bit wrapped up in her thoughts. Garth jumped up from his seat, a bit anxious.

"Well aren't you all sprightly so early this morning? A few months without Java, maybe you should have started out with some decaf or maybe you should just rinse the beans with cold water." Richard laughed.

"You maybe right about that." He played along, returning to his seat. His eyes darkened, lavender giving way to purple as they darted between Dena and Richard, both oblivious to his agitation. Garth, quickly became wrapped up in his reading again.

"Turkey with mustard and mayo."

Dena continued to devour her pancakes, only nodding acknowledgement to her Dad as he rose to prepare her lunch.

"Well, hurry up now, you wouldn't want to be late now."

"K, daddy."

Dena was humming to herself, then looking over his shoulder at Richard in his robe looking down as he diligently cut the ends off two turkey breast sandwiches. His hair draped down the sides of his face. His tongue caught between his teeth in concentration.

"I've missed this."

"What?" Richard asked without looking up.

"Uhh, nothing. It's really not important."

"Uhh ok." He took each sandwich and gently placed them in Dena's lunch pan, swishing around to grab a box of juice from the refrigerator and placed it in the lunch kit.

"Dick..."

"Garth, before you came last night, Bruce came by."

"I know."

"I thought my mind was off limits."

"That was when we were together, a fact you have made painfully clear is no longer true."

"I see."

"So, you've finally told him?"

"About Dena, yes, but you already knew that. You know I hate that. I think its so fucking rude." Dragging his hand through his hair, pulling it back from hiding his eyes, he continued. "I asked him to come over for dinner on Friday." Richard placed a few more large marshmallows in a Ziploc snack bag then looked up, making eye contact with Garth.

"If you want me out of the way Robbie..."

"I never said that Garth."

"I don't like this Richard."

"I'm afraid how you feel about it isn't an issue. It hasn't been something I have been looking forward to, but that's not the point. Its just an event which time has come."

##

So you'll pick her up at 2:30. She doesn't have any extra activities today, but I promised I'd take her down to the gym tonight. You still wanna do that tonight, right honey?" Richard asked as he knelt down on the shoveled pavement in front of Dena. She nodded and smiled. He hugged her and kissed her cheek as she wiggled in his arms.

"You're tickling me, Daddy."

"Really I didn't realise. I'm sorry, Little Miss Greyson."

He stood up and put his backpack on. "You be a good girl at school today and don't give you Uncle Garth a hard time."

"I won't."

"Well Uhh, Garth. Thanks for taking Dena to school for me. Thanks a lot. It means a lot to her. Well I'm off," he said, as the taxi the doorman hauled stopped next to him. He kissed the top of

Dena's head and hugged Garth and then slid into the car.

##

"So you like this new school of yours?" Garth asked as they held hands walking down the street.

"Yeah, it's ok, the teachers make us do more work than my old school but I like the uniform and we do gymnastics and swimming and there is dance class and music, I'm learning piano." She beamed

"I'm glad you like it."

"Uncle Garth, did you cry a lot when you went home to the sea?"

"Uhh, I missed you guys a lot but...I don't think I cried a lot. Why did you ask, did you think I was all-lonely down there? I was with some old friends, met a few new ones."

"Oh."

"Oh?"

"Did you know Daddy cried a lot, when you were gone? He was really sad. He doesn't know I know he was sad when you were gone. Are you going to stay now, Uncle Garth?"

"Uhh, I'm sorry your daddy was sad. I didn't mean to make him sad."

"I think he knows that. He's not sad anymore, though, now we live here, he's happy now. I guess he felt better at home. Like you did. He grew up here, you know, he lived in Gotham for a long time before I was born."

"I know. I knew him then."

"Ohh. Wooo. So you knew my other Dad too."

"Well, not really."

"Why, don't you like him?"

"It's not that I don't like him. I, uhh, I like him its just that... uhhh."

"Daddy said you don't like him because you don't really know him."

"Well I don't think that's necessarily true. It's just ...well its just that."

"Hey, Dena."

"Hi, Tylar."

"Huh ... We're here, Uncle Garth."

"Oh. Okay. Well have a good day at school ok."

"I will, okay bye, Uncle Garth." She ran through the gates towards the high staircase to the front entrance of the Carol Shepherd Academy for Girls. She stopped for a second, turned and waved to him just as another little girl came up to her, grabbing her hand, all three running inside chattering happily."

End for now
the infamous "Dinner" will come soon. Promise i'm already writing it.

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