

What to Get for the Bat Who Has Everything

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/5528252) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/5528252>.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Green Lantern - All Media Types , Batman - All Media Types , DCU , DCU (Comics) , Young Justice - All Media Types
Relationship:	Hal Jordan/Bruce Wayne
Character:	Hal Jordan , Bruce Wayne , Clark Kent , mentions of Justice Leaguers , mentions of Young Justice - Character
Additional Tags:	Sleep Deprivation , Possibly OOC , Pre-Slash , First Kiss , Christmas , Fluff , uncle hal and the batkids , Batfamily
Collections:	The Legends of the Justice League , Hal Jordan
Stats:	Published: 2015-12-25 Words: 3330

What to Get for the Bat Who Has Everything

by [foxyk](#)

Summary

Hal gets Bruce for the Justice League Secret Santa.

Billionaires are so hard to shop for.

Notes

Promptfic, prompt at the end.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Bruce had dodged and ducked every invitation to join in Clark's poorly orchestrated scheme. Yet, come the 24th of December he found himself hanging a cheap gift bag by a branch on the oversized conifer that had been uprooted by Superman himself to bring to Mount Justice and decorate. He jostled the branch a bit and when the bag didn't fall, attempted to slink away before anyone noticed he had been there.

"You didn't check the names on the other gifts." A voice called as he neared the door.

"No, I didn't." Bruce agreed, turning back to see Hal Jordan out of uniform and eyeing the bag.

"What'd you get Hawkgirl?" Hal asked, curiously. He moved like he was going to zip up his flight jacket, then dropped his hands instead. Nervous?

“Buffy the Vampire Slayer box set.” Bruce shrugged.

Hal laughed, “Heroes and vigilantes are the hardest to shop for.” Hal completed a circuit of the tree and paused again, “Hey uh...” He shook his head, thinking better about whatever he had been going to say, “Nevermind. Merry Christmas Spooky.”

“Merry Christmas, Hal.” Bruce nodded and the Green Lantern costume snapped into existence before the almost adorably nervous hero fled the room. Bruce wondered briefly who Hal had gotten, but a chirp on his comm banished the thought; Batman didn’t have time for festivities.

Christmas was the most popular time of year for jailbreaks in Gotham, so it wasn’t until weeks later, when Red Robin was back at Titans Tower and Nightwing had left for Blüdhaven, that Bruce’s paperwork was interrupted by an unceremonious plop of a precisely wrapped gift in glossy gold and red wrap.

“Merry Christmas, three weeks late,” Superman huffed, claiming the extra chair that Bruce hadn’t yet bothered to put back when the boys had left.

“You shouldn’t have,” Bruce droned, admiring that somehow the stripes matched up perfectly on the seam and made designs on the folded sides. Even Alfred’s wrapping wasn’t so fastidiously neat.

“I didn’t, it’s your Secret Santa gift.” Clark admitted, “I had Shazam, got Ma to knit him a sweater.” He shrugged. That explained the red and yellow monstrosity of yarn that Bruce had found both Billy *and* Damian wearing as they napped through Dick’s annual viewing of A Christmas Story.

“Who got me?” Bruce asked, setting the gift aside to finish the report he was working on.

“I don’t actually know, I had Diana keep the master list to prevent cheating.”

Bruce knew that if Diana had the list, she had it on a piece of paper that she kept in her boot so he and Cyborg couldn’t access it. He’d honestly been too busy to care enough to track the spending habits of the leaguers to see who had been paired with whom; the algorithm was still written from last year-- he just needed to adjust the variables-- but before the previous night it had been two weeks since he’d slept more than three hours at a stretch.

“Hm. I’ll open it when I’m done with this, but if you’re interested I think Alfred has some hot cocoa upstairs.” Bruce offered.

“Oh I’m interested, but I have a deadline to beat, so I’ll have to take a rain check. Don’t forget to open the damn thing, okay?”

“Yeah, yeah” Bruce waved him off, noting his exit in a flurry of superspeed motion sensor bleeps.

As Bruce worked, the perfect gift box caught his eye every minute or so, causing his still-exhausted brain to break focus. The fourth time he found himself admiring the way the gold perfectly complemented the red was the last straw, he grabbed the box with a huff and used a nearby batarang to slice through the tape. He lifted the white cardboard jewelry box neatly out of the thick paper and pulled off the lid, revealing... another batarang. He stared closely at the completely normal black metal tracking batarang, confused.

He lifted the batarang out and stared at it. It was an old design, he noted, judging by the shape of the wings and the weight of it, based on the composite it was probably nearly as old as his tenure as Batman. He turned it over once he had finished the inspection of the first side and stopped cold.

Scratched into the veneer in his own small caps was the line, “You’re not gods. I can always find you.”

Bruce remembered scratching that message, remembered having planted the batarang in Hal’s flight jacket, and the tracker had gone dark well after Hal had been home in his apartment the next night. Hal never mentioned the device, but Bruce had gotten early on a pretty clear view of where the Green Lantern spent his time and he sent a clear ‘keep your nose clean,’ all at the cost of one batarang.

For a brief, blinding moment he thought maybe someone had kidnapped the Green Lantern, but then logic prevailed: why would Hal have even kept the thing? He had figured Hal had destroyed it when the tracker went dark but here it was, confounding him in the small hours of the morning after a long few weeks.

He dithered for a moment, inspecting every bit of the wrapping and weapon for any hint of what it meant before he pulled the cowl back over his head and started the warm-up sequence on the batjet. He would be in Coast City and getting answers within the hour.

Hal didn’t answer his door and, after a cursory search of the League computer, Bruce found he was still on-planet. He huffed and went around to the fire escape, sneaking silently up the rusty ladder. He cased the dark room for occupants and jimmied the window open upon ascertaining the coast was clear. He was closing the window behind him when he winced at the whisper of sheets and a few groggy footfalls.

“You know, **most people** don’t answer the door at 4am.” Hal said, voice thick with sleep as he leaned heavily against the doorway, scratching at his scalp.

“I didn’t think you were home.” Bruce said after a long silence. Hal was wearing boxers and a single tube sock scrunched low on his ankle. There was an impressive bedsheets wrinkle down his chest that drew attention to the dusting of dark hair that started at his navel and stood out against the paler skin of his abs. Bruce tore his gaze away, staring instead at the wall opposite Hal.

“Well I didn’t figure you broke into my house expecting to *find* me,” Hal sighed, walking to the kitchenette and setting up the coffee maker in the dark.

“I was... wondering... confused? I guess?” Bruce pulled back the cowl for something to do with his hands; he hadn’t actually thought this part of the discussion out. The exchange he was expecting was at the front door, or avoided entirely by answers found during his break-in. As the smell of coffee reached him, Bruce became very aware of the weight of his limbs and the considerably reduced speed of his thought processes.

“How long have you been awake?” Hal asked, suddenly much closer than he was before. Bruce felt torn between asking Hal to remove his single sock or find its mate.

“Today?” Bruce demurred, avoiding looking directly into Hal’s judging stare.

“Sure, let’s start there,” Hal chuckled, walking back into the kitchen when the coffee maker gurgled and spat at the end of the brew cycle.

“It’s been busy in Gotham.” Bruce huffed.

“The last time I saw you this tired was after Jason died.” Bruce didn’t have a reply for that and Hal scrubbed a hand over his face, “Where’d you leave the jet?”

“Kord lets me use a hangar when I’m in town, look, this was a really weird mistake I’ll just--” Bruce started, but Hal held up a hand.

“If I let you fly, Clark, Barry, every Robin ever, and especially Alfred will *murder* me.” Hal rolled his eyes, pouring the coffee down the drain. “Don’t make that face you’re worse than Ollie, I have a freebie shirt that’s too big and I don’t have an alarm set for another 16 hours,” Hal disappeared into his room and came back into the dim, streetlight lit main room holding a small stack of fabric, “So do you want the bed or the couch?”

“Wait, why did you keep that batarang?” Bruce asked, accepting the bundle as it was shoved into his gauntleted hands.

“Tomorrow. I already texted Alfred so tonight you sleep at the Jordan Inn, now: couch or bed?” Bruce found himself stymied, and he set the fabric down to remove his body armor in defeat.

“Couch?”

“An excellent choice as I picked my couch for passing out comfort.” Hal nodded approval and helped Bruce arrange the armor in a pile behind the couch, poorly hidden but lacking an eyeline from the door.

“I doubt *all* of the Robins would murder you,” Bruce argued, standing in just the insulation layer of his armor and picking through the pile, finding a white shirt with a mattress advertisement, a soft clean towel, and a pair of novelty Superman boxers that would probably fit big even on Bruce. He held them up with a questioning eyebrow.

“They were a white elephant gift, and name me one Robin who wouldn’t go completely over the top at anyone other than you allowing you to self destruct like that.”

“Stephanie Brown.” Bruce challenged as Hal pointed him toward the bathroom with a shake of the clean towel.

“*Blondie*? She’d be directly at the head of the charge organizing the attack. For a kid who isn’t even yours on paper she is weirdly protective of the Daddy Bats.” Hal laughed.

“Stephanie and Jason would use the flames from the wreck to pop popcorn.” Bruce snorted, wincing at the light in the bathroom and re-thinking his decision to not shower in the dark.

“Bullshit, unless they were popping it to feed the rescue team currently resuscitating you.” Hal snorted, taking over control of the water temperature when it became clear that Bruce had resigned himself to shower at whatever temperature the impossible dials decided for him, “For a guy who is widely regarded as not being a team player you have some rabidly loyal kids. The only Robin who wouldn’t come crashing through a wall to rescue you is one who is currently kidnapped or otherwise incapacitated.”

“Not funny,” Bruce more sighed than growled. He was getting too old for this.

“I’m gonna go set up the couch, but don’t worry, I’ll tell you up if the Boy Hostage disappears while you shower,” Hal chuckled, closing the door behind him with a click. Bruce showered quickly and dried off, grimacing at the stubble he’d let himself grow over the last few days. He figured it was outside the politeness of... whatever this was to ask for a razor, so he dried his hair as best he could, tamed it a bit with his fingers, and dressed in the ridiculous outfit provided. He padded barefoot back down the hall, half expecting Hal to laugh at him.

“I put your pillow on the side so you can see the door, but knowing your kids I wouldn’t blame you

if you moved it to a window view,” Hal offered, arranging a khaki and blue quilt over the back of the couch for him.

“It should be fine, thank you,” Bruce replied, barely relying on his ingrained Alfred manners as he stared longingly at the white sheet and pillow that called to him.

“The curtains are blackout so the sun shouldn’t wake you.” Hal assured him. “Go to sleep B, you look like hell.”

“I feel like hell,” He agreed, curling onto the surprisingly comfortable couch with an appreciative groan.

“Yep, that right there? That’s why I chose that one.”

“I’m gonna buy the company.” Bruce agreed sleepily.

“That’s right Mr. Big Bucks, always gotta one-up us,” Hal laughed, mussing Bruce’s hair before walking away. Bruce was out cold before the bedroom door closed.

Bruce roused slowly, he noticed the sun wasn’t on his face, so Alfred wasn’t trying to wake him yet and he went back to sleep. The next time he noticed he was in a smaller bed than normal, but the sheets didn’t smell like a hospital, so the darkness pulled him under again. He thought he heard Alfred, but it must have been in the hall because it stopped, so he drowsed again. Finally he came close enough to the surface of consciousness to remember the night before when, after thirty two consecutive hours awake he thought it would be a good idea to fly to Coast City to ask Hal about a *Batarang*.

He must have made some noise because as he was squinting into the faint lamplight to get his bearings, Hal shoved a lidded travel mug into his hands.

“Coffee, then thinky.” Hal told him with the grave delivery of one giving sage advice. Bruce decided not to question it and drink the coffee. Maybe he was still a little high on sleep deprivation.

“Hey big guy, what’s going on in there?” Hal asked, apparently not the first attempt he’d made to start conversation, judging by the almost worried expression.

“Jason says that, when Alfred or Dick convince him to stay the night he says that thinky thing every morning.” Bruce remembered why the phrase sounded so familiar.

“He got it from Roy. Well, Arsenal Roy I guess... Roy Prime? Either way, he stayed with me for a few weeks while Jay was getting a safe house set up for him and he says it all the time, not just the morning.” Hal chuckled, “The kid can do just about anything except sit still, and after the third thing he built almost destroyed a load bearing wall, Tim showed up miraculously with quilting supplies. The one on the couch was the first quilt Arsenal made, he blocked the whole thing out on the floor and Tim and Steph helped stitch parts of it but he did well over half.” Bruce looked more closely at the material, imagining how much time it would make to stitch tiny even stitches like sutures into an entire blanket. He was impressed.

“Where did Tim learn how to quilt? His parents didn’t, the only quilter I know is--”

“Alfred.” Hal agreed, “It was while you were lost in time, the kid was in a tailspin and Alfred thought it would ground him.” Hal took a drink of coffee, “It didn’t, Tim hates to sew, but he remembered the advice and passed it on to Arsenal who needed a less explosive hobby and now

quilts have been showing up in all kinds of weird highly secure places.”

Hal’s grin was lopsided and relaxed, it made him look younger, like Parallax had never happened and he’d just been here, babysitting Bruce and Ollie’s wayward children the whole time.

“You have clothes in the bathroom, I’m gonna heat up some food. I’d say you can leave whenever except that Alfred took your Batsuit and the plane home so you have to either call him for a ride or I can fly you home.” Hal told Bruce as he walked back to the kitchen. He was wearing very flattering jeans and a tee shirt that showed off his arms, but Bruce found himself wishing he’d spent more attention on the exposed chest and legs of the night before.

Before those thoughts got out of hand, Bruce found a shaving kit and a garment bag hanging from the back of the bathroom door. When he came out fifteen minutes later shaved and combed and dressed, Hal gave him a low whistle of appreciation.

“What?” Bruce asked, checking himself for any embarrassing faux pas.

“I don’t think I’ve seen you in baby blue in about a decade,” Hal admitted, setting a plate of what appeared to be bacon and toast on the bar next to another cup of coffee.

“It’s just an Oxford and jeans,” Bruce huffed, “It’s not like I’m planning on powder painting the Batmobile or anything.

“Okay but that? That I would pay to see.” Hal laughed, munching some bacon of his own.

“Can you imagine it now, a powder blue Batsuit with a pink Bat symbol?” Bruce laughed, “It would certainly strike fear into the hearts of criminals but what *kind* of fear?”

“Hey it’d give you a chance to paint all of your scratched up batarangs,” Hal pointed out, taking another bite.

“Speaking of...” Bruce prompted, hunger and levity gone.

“Do you know that billionaires are exceedingly hard to shop for? Aside from like, bribing Booster to kidnap you to go to a live filming of Gray Ghost, I had no ideas. So my obvious reaction was to poll the family.”

“And their responses?” Bruce prompted when Hal seemed like he was finished.

“Almost unanimously they agreed that a mystery would be best.” Hal nodded.

“Almost?”

“Dick wasn’t sure you’d get it, he thought I should make it clearer.” Hal finished his coffee.

“Make... *what* clearer?” Bruce asked, eyes narrowing as Hal moved closer to his space resting one hand against the corner. He pointed up. Bruce glanced and saw, stapled nearly flat to the ceiling, a sprig of mistletoe.

“He seemed to think you wouldn’t understand, so he boobytrapped the place.” Hal laughed.

“Boobytrapped?” Bruce glared at the offending leaves, trying to figure out why Dick thought they had anything to do with batarangs and warnings.

“Mostly it was Steph’s idea but Dick is taller.” Hal shrugged, “I gave you the Batarang because you gave it to me shortly after we met, shortly after I met Dick. It wasn’t a warning for the safety of

the galaxy or the earth, it was about the safety of Robin and later Kid Flash, Aqualad, the Roys, Superboy. I don't need the reminder to be a good boy for them anymore, they're all grown up to raise a new generation of heroes... but we're still here.” Hal shrugged.

“What does that have to do with mistletoe?” Bruce asked, pointing up.

“May I? It's tradition after all.” Hal smiled, holding one hand just under Bruce's chin.

“Okay...” Bruce agreed, uncertain but unafraid.

Hal leaned in, pressing warm against Bruce's mouth in a chaste kiss that nearly punched the air out of Bruce's chest. When he pulled back, Hal was grinning that lopsided little grin.

“They had me send you the batarang to say that I passed the test when you gave me a chance to be in their lives, and hopefully... to ask for the chance to be in yours?” Hal's face flushed and his ring glowed a little in alarm based off his newly excited state, “I mean, I'm not on planet all the time and you have a company to run and a city to watch and we're constantly being attacked by like, demigods and you've got a horde of kids who could literally kill me for hurting your feelings but I think maybe if--”

“Hal,” Bruce interrupted him. Hal stared at him for a second, brown eyes a bit wild and the blush still strong on his cheeks. Bruce smiled and leaned back into Hal's space, kissing him back. After a second he leaned back enough to speak, “You always know where to find me.”

If Bruce had thought he liked the lopsided grin from across the room, he liked even better how it tasted as Hal tangled his hand in the short hair on Bruce's neck.

Unknown to them, Tim and Jason were paying out the wager to Steph and Dick while Cass cooed and Damian pretended not to care. Babs was saving the surveillance footage for blackmail or next year's Christmas card. She figured she had time to figure out which; they were unlikely to lose each other now that they were found.

End Notes

So the prompt for this was “i got you for secret santa so i got you this really expensive but sentimental gift that you've always wanted, hoping you'll never find out it's from me - and that i've been in love with you 1234567 years” and I kind of missed the mark, but I feel like I got the spirit of it (and if not, I've tricked you into reading BatLantern Christmas fluff so... HA).

Thank-you to withasideofangst for the title ^_^

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good ship.

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