

"Meet Steve"

STATIC - COLOR BARS & TONE

Title Card:

Arkham Asylum

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program

Patient #4479

Property of Doctor H. Quinzel

STATIC

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The lens-cap is removed and Joker smiles into the camera he is holding, waving.

JOKER
(whispers)
Hi. We have to be quiet.

Behind him through the partially closed door, a flashlight beam passes by the outside darkened hallway. Joker leans in closer to the camera.

JOKER (CONT'D)
'Cause I'm in your office!

He swings the camera around laughing to show the desk in front of him in the crowded office.

JOKER (CONT'D)
See, there's your desk. And your paperwork.

He slides everything off the desk with a shove. Then spots the framed pictures nearby, and zooms in, stepping closer.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Oh, and there's the family! Can't wait to meet them. There's the grandparents... The family...

He knocks over the pictures haphazardly as he focuses on each one. Then settles on a framed picture of a woman.

JOKER (CONT'D)
And a lovely portrait of you wife... Ahggg....

His voice trails off as he stares down at it. Dropping it he rummages through the fallen paperwork and picks up a name plaque that reads DR. JERIMIAH ARKHAM. He swings the camera down and moves to reattach the lens-cap.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I'm in the wrong office.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. QUINZEL'S OFFICE - LATER

The camera starts up again as the office door is swung open revealing Dr. Quinzel's office, the windows overlooking the city skyline outside.

JOKER
Here we are!

He sets the camera down on the desk, aiming it at the nearby chair. He clicks on the lamp and then flops down into the chair, making himself comfortable. He gives a shrug.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I couldn't sleep. My mind was racing with everything we talked about last time. I got myself all worked up and just had to tell somebody! Now, I know you're probably at home asleep. Without a care in the world. Kinda like Steve.

The Joker pauses, frowning in sudden confusion.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Who?!
(smiling)
I'll show ya.

Getting up, he moves off camera. With a BANG, the face of a dead body, STEVE, is dropped to the desk, wide eyed into the camera. Joker leans in next to it.

JOKER (CONT'D)
This is Steve. Say hi Steve.

There is a long moment of Joker staring, waiting on the lifeless body. He glances up at the camera.

JOKER (CONT'D)

He's shy. Not big on small talk. See, Steve was... kind enough to let me out of my cell for the night.

(shaking his head)

He won't be making that mistake again. It took some convincing. I think he was worried he was going to lose his job. I told him there was no need to be worried about that.

He gives the body a shove, rolling it over and almost out of frame. Sitting down, he puts his feet up on the body.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Life is short. Even shorter for some. You'd be surprised how shocked some people get when they find out they aren't going to live forever.

(gestures)

They're content to waste everyday not realizing the best years of their lives are slipping away.

Joker stares for a moment at the camera.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Until one day they wake up and see the old face looking back at them in the mirror. Or that they're dying of some terminal disease. Or that they're *stuck*... working at a mental asylum day after day after day.

His smile returns.

JOKER (CONT'D)

That's why I brought Steve along for the ride. You said you wanted to know where I was coming from. Because as Steve can show you, a real dead body is a lot different then just seeing one in a picture or on television.

He takes a moment to consider what he's just said, realizing the obvious.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Of course, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about when you find him on your desk tomorrow morning before you ever watch this.

(leans in)

It's my... gift to you. My little thank you basket for the therapy sessions.

Leaning back in the chair.

JOKER (CONT'D)

I would have gift wrapped him if I had the chance. I just couldn't find a big enough box. Anyway, when you see Steve, I don't want you to think of me.

(glancing off
thoughtfully)

Think about... Mortality. Focus on what you like to do, instead of what they tell you to do. Take advantage of every opportunity and live each day like it's your last.

Leaning in very close.

JOKER (CONT'D)

'Cause it just might be. Right Steve?

Looking over, he leans down towards Steve with a smile. Getting up, he whistles to himself and walks out of the office, the camera still running.

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