

# **The Dark Knight Hospital Scene: Take 2**

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**Introduction:**

In the original scene from *The Dark Knight*, the Joker convinces Gotham's mayor, Harvey Dent, that plans and schemes--or any attempts to control the world--are all futile. Chaos is better than order, because order can never be achieved. Unable to defend his position, Harvey eventually backs down and turns into the villain known as Two Face, who leaves his evil deeds up to mere chance, i.e. coin flips.

In our version of the scene, the Joker will turn Harvey into a villain by convincing him that he isn't morally responsible for his actions. This draws upon the contrast between The Naive Theory and Strawson's Basic Argument.

Scene opens with The Joker, dressed as a nurse, in a hospital room. Harvey Dent is recovering in the bed.

The Joker takes off his surgical mask and reveals himself.

Harvey Dent: (*shakes with fiery rage, but remains tied to his bed, unable to move*)  
ARRGGGHHHHHHHHH!!!!

The Joker: (*smirks; in a patronising tone*) Hello, Harvey.



The Joker: (*as he ruffles his hair*) You know, I don't want there to be any hard feelings between us. When you and, uh...

Harvey Dent : ...RACHEL!!

The Joker: (*innocently*) Rachel, were being abducted, I was sitting in jail.

Harvey: (*with burning hatred*) Your men, your plan.

The Joker: Look, Harvey. I organized the plan, and I chose to carry it out. That's all true. But look a little deeper. Am I really responsible for *why* I chose the way I did?

Harvey: (*growls*) Am I a fool? Of course you are responsible!

The Joker: How can I be responsible for who I am? I'm just a freak concoction of genetics and environment, both of which are beyond my control. And so are you, poor guy. We're both victims, slaves to forces much bigger than ourselves.

Harvey: Don't make excuses! You could have chosen otherwise! You could have let Rachel...

*The Joker: (interrupts) Harvey are you listening?*

Harvey: (*extremely agitated, gasping for breath*) You.. you...Rachel did not have to die! You chose to be a murderer, to be evil.

The Joker: (*cackles*) Harvey, Harvey, Harvey. Even to me, it *feels* like I'm the mastermind of my plan, but I'm not responsible for why I chose to carry it out. I'm not responsible for my *character*.

Harvey: (*hisses with disapproval*) Add up all of a man's choices, and you arrive at his character. I make choices every day — I lock up scum like you to keep the streets clean and the people safe. That's why I'm mayor. That's why you're a criminal. I chose to be good, and you chose to be evil.

The Joker: Did you really *choose* to live a moral life, or did your life lead you to be moral?

Harvey: I chose it!

The Joker: How, Harvey? How did you choose to be good?

*Harvey pauses.*

Joker: Think back to the *first* time you took the moral high road. Why did you do it? You did it because you already had the desire to act that way.

Harvey Dent: Sure. And that was *my* desire.

The Joker: But you didn't choose it! Unless, of course, you chose your desires before you were born. Are you responsible for *that*? How could you possibly be responsible for choosing your own character before you even existed?!

Harvey: What are you talking about?? This isn't about hypothetical choices I would've made before I was born. This is about about choices I *have* made.

*The Joker: Listen to yourself. You're missing the point. Something must have led you to choose your character! And something must have led to *that* something in order for you to have chosen your character. And something must have led to that something that must have...(sneers, as Harvey's face drops)...we could go on all day, Harvey!*

*Silence. Harvey glares intensely into the Joker's eyes as his breathing grows heavy.*



*The Joker licks his lips.*

*The Joker: They all (points to the window) love to talk about about how "bad" I am. They're scared of the truth, scared of what it would mean for their silly little lives if I weren't responsible for what I've done.*

*The Joker slowly loosens Harvey's cuffs.*

*The Joker: So listen, (The Joker pulls a gun out of his pocket) I'll give you a "choice".*

*The Joker places the gun in Harvey's hand, points it at his own head, and moves Harvey's finger to the trigger.*



The Joker: You see, when no one is responsible for anything, anything goes.

Harvey: *(Reaches for the coin on his bedside table and holds it up, with the silver side facing the Joker)* You live.



*Flips the coin around so the burnt side faces The Joker.*

Harvey: You die.

The Joker: (smiles) Now we're talking.

*The coin lands on the silver side. The Joker laughs.*

*Cut to the Joker walking out of the hospital.*