

If Harley ever decides to leave Mistah J., she might consider hanging in with Mistah S. Santa isn't nearly as svelte as the Joker, but he probably has a better health plan, and almost certainly dental, too, considering all the candy and cookies you have to consume in the course of business. He also has pets, and those are dear to Harley's heart, as we are reminded in the first of three stories contained in Harley Quinn Holiday Special #1. True, reindeer are a bit large for Harley's taste. She prefers small dogs and cats, and hasn't the heart to get them spade and neutered, resulting in lots of little gifts running around during the holiday season. With the help of her friend Tony, she proceeds to get the little darlings good homes by pawning them off on unsuspecting but kindly shoppers at Dini's Department Store, a name very familiar to fans of Batman: The Animated Series, where Harley was born. In the process, she becomes involved with a family terrorized by an anxious little girl who first falls in love with Harley's colorful, uhm, presentation, then becomes a model patient as Dr. Harleen Quinzel proceeds to conduct some surprisingly conventional and believable therapy. This selection features art by Mauricet in what is becoming the default Harley Quinn style: elongated forms, thick lines ever-so-slightly feathered, and crowded but carefully-composed and balanced layouts. Dave McCaig's blue-shifted palate gives the impression of a cold, slightly wet winter, exactly the right look for a story trying to remind the reader of Christmas without invoking snowfall and sleighs. The second story, with layouts by Amanda Conner, art by Brandt Peters, and colors by Paul Mounts, is presented in the form of a children's book or a slightly artistic greeting card. It tells the tale of a humbug, a creature who each year takes up residence in the inner ear of some poor unfortunate and proceeds to hum Christmas carols for forty-eight solid hours. Needless to say, the humbug this year fastens on Harley, who proceeds to almost chew the scenery in her response to the cheerful but incredibly annoying vermin. Luckily, salvation arrives in the form of Santa, or a department store version at any rate, who knows the humbug's great weakness, a love of candy canes. When one of the treats is inserted in Harley's ear, the bug is unable to resist chomping down, thus becoming very easy for Saint Nick, or Pseudo Nick, to capture. The final story is drawn by Darwyn Cooke and colored by Dave Stewart in the tradition of a 1970s cartoon. Harley, finding a gray hair, sets out to confront Father Time. Her quest leads her to an old man named Harold Tyme currently ensconced in a local nursing home. After appropriate, or perhaps appropriately inappropriate, hilarity, the resulting confusion gets straightened out and Harley's pets discover their innate talents as therapy animals. The post Harley Quinn Holiday Special #1 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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