

[David Lance POV]

It had been two months since Brainiac captured me, and things hadn't been exactly the best for me. Every day, he would torture me, experiment on me, trying to unveil the secrets of my existence, as he himself described them.

My almost every hour within his grasp was painful beyond belief. And sadly for me, his knowledge and creativity in the arts of torture and experimentation knew no bounds.

Nevertheless, I remained composed and dignified as if it were simply a minor inconvenience through it all.

Despite the physical and mental anguish he would impose on me, I would never fail to carry myself with an air of supreme confidence. It was as though I was genuinely untouchable.

He would say that he could see through my tough act.

But I knew that despite that statement, my defiance was starting to annoy him. And that was all the fuel I needed to continue playing his game.

This wasn't to say I wasn't trying to escape; I was. Every moment of rest he gave me, be it because he had other things to do or something, I would try to break out of my cage.

I had yet to make any progress. Nevertheless, I was determined to succeed. Call it pride or arrogance, but I would not let an overly glorified toaster be the one to end my story, no matter how powerful he was.

"No matter how many times you fail, you still try," Brainiac said in a cold, calculative tone. "Why?"

"Do you even care?" I retorted.

"Why else would I inquire?" Brainiac replied. "Inquiry in the ultimate path of evolution, to understand everything there is to understand. By understanding why you still try, despite the futility of it all, I might find a way to cure your ailment."

"I try because I still have things to do, like tearing your synthetic ass apart, piece by piece," I replied, leaning against one of the walls of my prison.

Brainiac merely looked at me for a moment before saying. "You think you can escape me? Do you even know what I am capable of?"

"Yes, and I don't care," I replied.

"It seems you are suffering from Thought Disorder," Brainiac replied, staring at me unblinkingly. "Otherwise, there is no explaining why you make such statements without any data backing them up. Your entire self seems to act through pure illogical impulses."

"Don't you have better things to do?" I replied, taking a deep breath. "Like, I don't know... dividing by zero? or something?"

"You seem to forget you're under my control, and I can do whatever I want," Brainiac said with a hint of annoyance in his voice.

"Then, in that case, go ahead and torture me. I insist, honestly, the less time I spend hearing your voice, the better," I replied, crossing my arms.

Brainiac stared at me for a second without moving an inch or even replying until, eventually, after a moment or two, he turned away and made his way toward the door.

Finally, alone, I returned to what I was doing, trying to break out of my cage. I had tried everything, brute force, energy

attacks, focused attacks in a singular spot, random attacks to random spots, and so far, nothing.

I had even peed the walls to see if that worked. Not my best effort, I admit, but I was running out of options.

"A prison made specifically for me," I muttered, touching the walls with a sigh. I had tried everything and more; what else was there to do? Unless...

Brainiac said this prison was made to contain me perfectly, a cage without escape based on the data he had collected of me through my stay in this universe, meaning everything I had so far, everything I had learned, acquired, and more, was something this accursed room was equipped to deal with.

Meaning that the obvious solution to my current dilemma was to do something out of Brainiac's data, therefore breaking his preparation. Easier said than done, of course. All of my powers, abilities, and skills were something Brainiac had prepared for, and sadly, it wasn't like I could just spontaneously create a new power.

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However, not everything was lost. I still had the Blue Lantern's ring in my possession. Although a long shot, seeing Brainiac

had already prepared for a power ring, meaning there was a big chance he had prepared for them all, I still had the ring in my possession.

Making this the only possible variable out of Brainiac's preparation. Well, that or the unlikely event I develop a new power but seeing I hadn't so far, I might well give the blue ring a try, even though I wasn't all that... excited to do so.

There was a reason I had purposely ignored this... option so far. Well, a few reasons. One, I had no idea how to use the ring; I mean, sure, I had mastered the Red Lantern ring, but chances were my skills with one ring didn't translate to the other.

Two, the painful metamorphosis. As I was right now, I had no organs within me, for the most part, at least, because the Red Lantern ring had melted them away, making me puke most of them, replacing their space with plasma.

So, if I put on the Blue Lantern ring, those organs would come back, and well... That plasma would come out. Making the entire process rather painful.

I was okay with the pain. I didn't like it, sure, but I knew I could take it. The problem was the time during the pain.

Brainiac had the entire place under heavy surveillance, and that was putting it lightly. The room I was in had hundreds of cameras, robots, and other things that were always looking at me from outside my cage.

Meaning the moment I started to show even the slightest semblance of change, Brainiac would intervene, which brings me to my third point as to why I hadn't used the blue ring.

The absurdly short window of action all of this gave me. To summarize, I had to put the ring on and start blasting right away, not a second later, not half a second later, but immediately after, which made this a very hard thing to pull off.

I was confident in my skills, in my ability to adapt and learn from my mistakes, but even I knew having less than a second to act made my possible escape... impossible.

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Now that I think about it, there's maybe a way to make this escape attempt more feasible... What takes the most time of all I had thought so far was the metamorphic stage of it all; I mean, even with the power of the rings, regrowing organs wasn't exactly an easy feat, but... what if I could skip that step by using both rings?

I wasn't sure if using two power rings at the same time was even possible, but if it was, which I honestly hoped it was, I should be able to stop the blue ring from regenerating my organs by exerting control of that stage through my red ring.

It was a long shot, but it was worth a try.

"Well, fuck it," I muttered, pulling the ring out of my clothes and on my finger. As things were now, I had nothing to lose, so fuck it all, and let's try dumb shit.