

Wally immediately bolted towards me, zipping left then right, trying to throw me off before shoulder checking me from the side. I had seen how fast he could go during the fight with Captain Cold, but it was still incredibly difficult to judge his movements. He easily blew through my defensive posture and shoulder checked me, forcing me back a handful of steps. He stopped after he collided with me, seemingly shocked I was still on my feet. I resisted the urge to reach into my well of energy and earthbend, instead sinking back into a defensive posture. He shrugged and repeated his move, this time zipping right then left.

I was ready this time, and met his shoulder check with a grapple, snagging his costume and redirecting his energy and adding my own, tossing him clear out of the ring. He flew a good dozen feet before hitting the ground and tumbling. To his credit he was up on his feet almost immediately, but the computer keeping track of us dinged the first point. He stood and ran back to his original position, marked by a blue square floating a few inches off the ground. He looked much more serious than he had a few seconds ago.

I walked back to my position, which was marked in the same way. The computer started another timer, counting down again. When the timer hit zero the speedster made a beeline for me. He was moving noticeably faster, catching me off guard. I felt a fist on my jaw without any time to prepare, turning my head to the side. Instincts took over and I turned with the punch, rotating my body as best I could to absorb some of the impact. As I turned I threw a low punch, adding my new energy and my strength into it. I curtailed some of my force but added enough that it still hit him hard. I could hear him let out a quick sharp groan, his speed distorting the sound.

My pulled punch didn't seem like enough as he zipped away and came back, this time hitting me from my side. He hit me again, and again, each time zipping away and back at me. Finally I reached out and managed to time it just right, catching his arm as he reached out to hit me. I wrapped my hand around his wrist and held on tightly as he attempted to pull himself away. Even as he struggled I reached out with my other hand and grabbed his costume, lifting him off of his feet, easily carrying him out of the ring and putting him down. The computer called it and ended the fight.

"Beginners luck!" Wally called out as he jerked away, clearly annoyed as he stepped back and pulled up his goggles. "I was winning until you managed to grab my hand."

"Wally... you really weren't." Robin said, wincing slightly. "You weren't really hurting him. That first punch would have rattled me a bit but it didn't affect him at all. And that's not the biggest point. Do you remember how Batman introduced him? What he said his powers were?"

"Uh... kinda? He's enhanced somehow right?" He responded before smiling at M'gann. "I was distracted by a much more interesting teammate."

I could feel a curling bit of annoyance grow inside me as he looked at M'gann. M'gann felt it and pressed her mind closer to me, sending a wave of disinterest focused on Wally. I couldn't help but smile, sending my own wave of appreciation back at her.

"No Wally. He is enhanced and geokinetic." He responded with an eye roll. "He controls earth. Which you're currently standing on."

Wally looked down at his feet and then back up at me.

"Then why didn't he use it?"

"Because the floor here is filled with wires, pipes and sensors." I explained with a shrug, "I couldn't even cause a minor shake without breaking something and probably setting off every warning alarm the League has installed here."

"How fine is your control?" Kaldur asked, stepping closer.

"Right now I would be nervous about using my earthbending near civilians. Everything is full force and brutal because I'm still a beginner. Eventually I'll be able to do some pretty small scale bending and have some pretty fine control. Oh and I'll be able to bend metal as well."

"That is impressive, I would like to see your abilities at some point." Kaldure said. "I am curious if it is similar to the method I use to control water."

"Do you use chi or...?"

"It is a magical based ability." He said. "I trained at the Conservatory of Sorcery in Poseidonis."

"Hmmm... What's that like?" I asked, genuinely curious, ignoring Wally's eye roll.

"It was an interesting experience. While my future does not lay in academics I learned many useful things, and received my Eel tattoos."

I read through the Kaldurs files in my head, nodding along. Behind Kaldur the computer spit out another pairing, Superboy and Robin.

"They are what let you control electricity... right?" I asked. "What's the process involved with getting those?"

"There is a graduation from one level of study to the next." He explained, turning and stepping back so he could watch the fight. "When you reach that level the school provides a focus. I chose these tattoo's. They limit my magic flexibility but allow me greater control of

electricity and water than I would be capable of if I chose something more standard. Since I knew my path lay elsewhere it was the prudent choice.”

“That’s interesting.” I said as Superboy and Robin squared off.

The two teenage heroes waited for the timer to run down before jumping into action. Superboy leaped forward, while Robin jumped up, clearing the clone, planting his feet on his shoulders. Robin pushed off and jumped from his back, adding to his momentum and forcing him to stumble forward. The computer dinged, surprising everyone.

“His foot.” M’gann pointed out, drawing everyone’s attention. Sure enough Superboy had stumbled just a foot too far.

The two quickly reset and waited for the computer. Superboy looked visibly angry, his fists clenched.

“Superboy!” I called out, getting his attention. “Do you want to win, or do you want to be angry?”

Superboy looked at me for a moment before closing his eyes. He sank down into a copy of my kickboxing stance, a little awkwardly but passable. When the bell rang he still lunged forward, but purposely landing in front of Robin, just out of reach. Robin dove to the side but Superboy’s arm blurred and with a grimace grabbed Robin’s leg. With a firm grip he spun and threw Robin out of the ring.

This time M’gann was paying more attention and caught Robin with her telekinesis before he could hit the ground. She lowered him down gently.

“Thanks M’gann.” He said before doing a kip-up back to his feet. “That was a nice catch, Superboy. I didn’t expect the burst... of...speed... Hey, are you alright?”

Superboy was still grimacing, rubbing his arm. He shook it out and nodded.

“Yeah. It just hurts to speed up like that.”

“Why?” Wally asked bluntly, getting a look from Kaldur.

“I don’t know.” He answered. “Star Labs did an examination and we are waiting for the results.”

“...Superboy, could you try half that speed?” I asked after thinking silently for a minute. “Or actually, start shadow boxing slowly and speed up until it starts hurts.”

Superboy looked at me before shrugging. He started throwing out punches, getting faster and faster. After a few seconds his hands were moving much faster than anything a normal person could, quickly outclassing me next. His hands blurred with speed for a few seconds before he finally stopped, wincing slightly.

“That was impressive.” Kaldur said after a moment, Robin and I nodding in agreement. “You’re not as fast as Kid Flash but that was faster than anything I could manage. What made you think of that Skarn?”

It took a few seconds to realize he was talking to me.

“Oh, sorry, I’m not used to the codename yet.” I admitted sheepishly. “I’ve seen him run before, so I know he can do that without being in pain. If full superspeed hurts him, but normal running doesn’t, either it’s a special mechanism that allows him to do that or…”

“There is a threshold I can’t cross.” Superboy finished, looking down at his hand. “But why not?”

The group remained silent for a minute before Kaldur spoke up.

“Perhaps we should move on?” He suggested. “Superboy should sit out the next few matches so that his arm can recover. We can investigate his powers after we finish.”

The group agreed and Superboy reluctantly stood back to watch the matches. We went through a few more spars, including one between Kaldur and M’gann. She managed to hold her own and pin him once by sliding out of a hold using her shapeshifting, but Kaldur’s experience and abilities won out eventually. I fought Robin and lost, the boy wonder managing to string up my legs with a bolo after distracting me with a smoke pellet for the first pin, before knocking me out of the ring with a fancy tripping move I didn’t see coming. It was humbling but Robin promised to teach me how to beat the second move sometime. Again I barely managed to keep myself from reacting with my earthbending.

Eventually Wally brought up the two on two spars and the group agreed to switch over. Robin set up the computer and it spit out the first match up, me and M’gann versus Wally and Kaldur.

“Psh, we have this in the bag.” Wally said confidently, making his way onto the lit up ring. “Sorry M’gann, but maybe I can show you some moves after me and Kaldur win?”

*“What’s our strategy?” M’gann asked as we stepped into our places, ignoring the speedster. “I could pin one of them in place with my telekinesis, preferably Kaldur because it’s hard to grasp fast moving objects and people.”*

*"Your TK is a bit cheap to use like that in a friendly spar to be honest."* I said with a mental shrug. *"Maybe we just keep it simple, stay close and fight together?"*

*"Alright!"* She agreed, her mental smile shining through. I couldn't help but smile as well.

The countdown ended and Wally burst from his position and ran in a half circle to attack M'gann. I could feel her apprehension and instinctively sent her an image, showing her my idea. She quickly bent over at the waist and I rolled over her back just in time to catch Wally off guard and jab him in the side. Rather than stay in the danger zone he dashed off, zipping around behind Kaldur.

*"Wow! that was so cool!"* She said happily. *"I knew exactly what you wanted to do!"*

*"...Should we try that again?"* I asked, getting the feeling of emphatic agreement in return. *"Alright, on one we charge at Kaldur, ready? One!"*

Together we both charged across the gap at Kaldur, who looked at us in surprise before recovering. I sent her another image and she reached out, taking my hand and spinning, using her Martian strength to throw me at Kaldur. I caught the Atlantean in the chest with a shove that lifted him off of his feet and threw him out of the ring. I skidded and rolled before jumping up and turning. Wally was harassing M'gann with the same quick strikes he had tried on me, sprinting away and zipping back at her. It was her turn to send me an image, and I couldn't help but smirk.

Suddenly M'gann moved smoothly back, just out of the path of Wally's punch. He stumbled and dropped out of his super speed out of surprise. Before he could recover M'gann used her TK to lift his feet up into the air, flipping him up just enough for me to grab his feet. I spun around and threw him like a frisbee out of the arena. The referee called the round over, and M'gann let out a wave of happiness through our connection.

*"That was intense!"* She said with a smile.

Kaldur and Wally rejoined the arena looking wary, giving each other a look before getting back into position. Both of them looked serious now, though there wasn't much of a change for Kaldur. The countdown began and the second it ended both Kaldur and Wally charged, trying to put us on our back feet.

*"I'm gonna try something!"* M'gann said while mentally nudging me to step forward in front of her.

Wally, who was holding back, ran around the ring while Kaldur closed in with me. I could feel M'gann's presence almost meld against mine. She didn't dive any deeper thankfully, but it felt almost more intimate regardless. Her presence was clearer like this.

Kaldur threw out a feint and I fell for it, noticing just a moment too late. Before his fist could hit me however M'gann reached with a slightly stretched arm and blocked it, catching Kaldur off guard. Before he could recover I punched under her arm, driving him back a few feet.

Before I could even question it I could feel M'gann's emotions spike. I stepped to the right, away from Kaldur, just in time to intercept Wally. He was charging M'gann from the side and I shoulder checked him, causing him to skid and stumble, coming to rest on his knee a dozen feet away. M'gann's thoughts spiked again and we both leaned back, our hands reaching out and grabbing each other, supporting our sudden, out of balance movement. A hefty kick from Kaldur whiffed over both of us.

Seeing an opportunity I gave M'gann a nudge and she pulled on my arm, lifting me upright and launching me into Kaldur, with the help of her TK. I impacted the younger hero while he was still off-balancing from his missed kick, my shoulder impacting into his back. He went down relatively hard, the computer counting him down. Without even thinking I jumped back and felt Wally rush through where I had just been, charging me from where I couldn't see. M'gann caught me and lowered me back down, just in time to catch a hit from Wally on her side. I quickly sent her an image of us back to back.

We spun and planted our feet so our backs were together, watching as Wally whipped around the ring. Kaldur, who had made his way out after the ring declared him down, was watching us closely, listening to Robin whisper animatedly.

*"Want to end this quickly or show off?"*

*"Let's save showing off for another time."* She said with a mental giggle.

Wally zipped at us from our left side, trying to find an opening. M'gann turned and faked a wild punch, and when Wally moved to take advantage I reached out and grabbed his arm, throwing him to the ground easily. He groaned and rolled over, looking up at us while the computer counted it as a fall, calling out our victory. M'gann cheered both mentally and verbally, jumping up into my arms and giving me a hug.

*"That was amazing!"* She said happily, landing after our hug, looking up at me with a smile. *"Thank you so much for trusting me like that."*

*"Of course M'gann."* I responded with a smile, sending her a wave of happiness. Before I could say anything else Wally interrupted.

"How the hell were you doing that!" He called out in sore frustration, slowly getting back up to his feet. "It was like you had eyes on the back of your head."

“They were communicating telepathically.” Robin answered, all three of our other teammates entering the ring. “It’s how they were covering each other so well and reacting to things they couldn’t see.”

“Really?” Wally asked, vague distaste in his voice as he looked at us, eyes locking on to how close we were.

“Yeah. We have been since tryouts.” I said with a shrug, both of us moving, still standing close but just side by side.

“Martians are naturally telepathic, it’s a huge part of us. It’s not healthy for an untrained Martian to not have connections for a long time. We can get... a little quirky.” She explained, looking a bit nervous. I sent her a wave of support and she stood a bit straighter and continued. “I was surviving by connecting to Bioship and Uncle J’onn, but... Well Warren compared it to being really touch and conversation starved. Warren offered to let me connect to him and it’s been really helpful.”

“And really nice actually. It was different at first but... I think I would really miss it at this point.” I added, feeling a tight mental hug from the Martian. “Though I had no idea it could do that.”

“I knew it was possible.” She admitted. “Martian soldiers at least connect so they can telepathically talk and share some thoughts and emotions, only our elite units connect like that. I’m also not the best at it, it was just a jury rigged attempt.”

“Well it was pretty impressive.” Kaldur said. “Having instantaneous communication with no risk of being intercepted or jammed is a valuable resource.”

“I’m not ready for a mind meld.” Wally said emphatically, now standing up fully. “No offense M’gann.”

“It’s okay.” She said, feeling a little sad but understanding. “It’s an abstract concept for humans, I don’t blame you. I’m just glad that Warren volunteered. I was already... feeling a bit off by that time. I hate to imagine what I would be like if he hadn’t. I very much underestimated how much it would affect me.”

“And it’s different from just telepathic communication?” Robin asked, getting a nod from M’gann.

“Yeah, talking is no more invasive than just being around you. I can pick up outward surface moods but that’s it. Being in contact with Warren is a different thing, a deeper connection. Kind of like if you’re dehydrated eating a watery fruit might help but what you really need is water.”

“Well... we are definitely separating you two for the team versus from now on.” Robin said with a smirk. “Which means it’s me and Skarn versus Kaldur and Superboy. If he feels up for it.”

We continued sparring and talking for another few hours. Wally was surprisingly quiet for a bit before getting back into the groove. After a while we called it a day, the ex sidekicks leaving through the Zeta-Tube. Kaldur explained he would be moving in in the next few days, while Robin would be by the end of the week. Wally admitted that he hadn’t brought it up with his parents but would that night at dinner.