

[David Lance POV]

Today, I was exhausted.

The past few months, when I wasn't focusing on my research or, in preparing for the inevitable, I had been training as much as I could to the point of exhaustion.

I had my reasons to do this, even though I was already plenty strong, one of them being that I knew very well I had yet to really tap into my powers.

My main ability lay in my power to harness the electrons around me in order to create devastating results.

After some very intrusive tests, I have been able to discover and confirm a few interesting things about my body.

For one, I had discovered that the speech center of my brain contained a unique organic mechanism that was able to generate an unknown particle that interacted with the electrons I absorbed to create the phenomena behind my voice.

This meant that control, at least to a point was possible, but not without some sort of external aid.

The original Black Bolt had a metallic, fork-shaped antenna on his head that allowed him to focus and channel his powers in more directed and less destructive ways.

Based on that alone, I had theorized the antenna of his head was the one responsible for monitoring the speech center of his brain, allowing him to create a more controlled version of the phenomena behind his powers.

I had also theorized that if such a thing was possible to accomplish, other things such as enhancing my own physical strength beyond normal limits, and other attributes could be easily accomplished using the same method of control and redistribution of power.

I had been working on these theories for some time now, and while I had yet to reap any gains from it, I was making steady progress.

My first prototype, S-0.1, short for Solution 0.1. Had demonstrated the ability to funnel my power into a more channeled result, though it was far from usable.

Solution 0.1 required rest between uses, usually between six to eight hours, making the prototype useless for anything other than research.

I wasn't worried though, I was making progress, not as fast as I would want, but I was in the right direction.

Besides trying to acquire a semblance of control of my powers, I was training because I knew I still lacked some powers the original Black Bolt had.

Once whatever had clouded my memory had vanished, I had been able to remember multiple things about Black Bolt.

I had never been a very big fan of Black Bolt as a comic character, but even then I had come across multiple bits of knowledge about him in my past life.

Some were questionable, but others had left a mark on my mind.

Such as the following.

On multiple occasions throughout the comics, Black Bolt had shown the ability to manipulate matter and energy to an unknown degree. Some of the feats he had demonstrated while doing this, were things such as the ability to transmute water into ice, and creating multiple toys out of thin air.

I could only theorize he had done such things by rearranging the molecular structure of already existing matter in order to obtain such results.

Now, how exactly he had done that? Well, that was still something I was trying to figure out.

Beyond that, Black Bolt had also shown the ability to fly, which I'll admit had taken me a bit to figure out how exactly.

Thanks to my research with Solution 0.1, and a few theories I was pretty sure weren't theories anymore, I had concluded how such a thing was possible. Black Bolt was able to fly because he had harnessed the unknown particles his brain generated.

From there it was easy to deduce that he was using said particles to create anti-gravitons which would easily

enable him to defy gravity itself, ergo giving him the ability to fly.

That, of course, only worked flawlessly on paper, I wasn't sure how to implement any of that into use, yet.

I was certain the solution to these conundrums was within the completion of Project Solution. Every theory I had, was based on that, the little thing that had given Black Bolt the ability to better control his powers.

I estimated I would complete this project by the end of the year, give it or take.

After all, I was occupied with other projects as well, which were all just equally important as this project was for me.

Having control of my powers was certainly something I craved very much, but it wasn't something that would push me out of my current goals.

I was plenty strong as I was right now, there was no rush to make that particular project my priority.

As I was right now, there weren't many individuals that posed a threat to my entire operation.

And for the ones that did, having more raw power wouldn't make much of a difference anyways.

Klarion, for example, was on top of that list.

The point being, I had no rush with any of my particular objectives as of now, personal or not.

"You called?" Slade said, snapping me out of my long reverie.

I turned to face the mercenary and smiled. "I have. I have a mission for you if you are ready."

Slade rolled his head around slowly, his neck popping with a loud crack. His dark eyes glinted with an air of confidence as he raised an eyebrow in silent challenge. His lips curled into a smirk as he spoke in a deep, powerful voice. "When haven't I before? What's the objective?"

"I need you to steal Ray Palmer's research about Molecular Alteration," I replied.

Slade raised an eyebrow and crossed his arms, a sly smile curling up the corner of his lips. "You study in the same place he works at," he said.

"I do, which is why it's best if I keep my distance from such missions, wouldn't you agree?" I replied.

Rule #1 of illegal activities, never hit a place you have a strong connection with if you can avoid it.

"Very well," Slade nodded. "I will have what you want by the end of the month."

Having nothing more to add, I threw a thumb-sized USB drive with a flick of my wrist toward the Mercenary and Slade plucked it from the air before it could reach him.

"Load the program within the USB," I said, pointing at the drive. "It'll keep your digital footprints invisible. For as long as nobody really looks."

Slade carefully grabbed the thumb drive, squeezing it tight in his palm. He glanced around the room one last time, then spun on his heel and exited, not stopping until he was out of sight.

Slade was many things, but inefficient wasn't one of them.