

[David Lance POV]

As I walked into the Batcave, I saw Batman, in his usual place, sitting in front of his computer, reviewing some files. As I approached him, I noticed that the cave had undergone numerous renovations since I had last come, minor ones, but enough to be noticeable.

"Thank you for coming," Batman said, turning his chair around to face me.

I looked at Batman for a moment before nodding. ~We have much to discuss.~

Batman nodded as a single word escaped his mouth. "Yes."

Before he had even summoned me here, I had informed him about the situation, meaning that he knew how damned we were if Deathstroke's words were to be trusted.

~And? What will be our move?~ I prompted.

Batman paused for a moment as if carefully considering his words before replying. "While trusting Deathstroke is a folly, his words still carry some weight. If the Light knows who we are, who everyone is, a lot of things change from our perspective."

I assumed that much. If the Light knew who we were and still hadn't made a move against us so far while our guards were down to eliminate us, then part of their whole motive, or what we suspected their motive to be, shifted a bit out of place.

After all, killing Bruce Wayne would certainly be easier than killing Batman, and that same tone applied to everyone else in the League.

~Perhaps we are an essential part of their plans,~ I replied, frowning at the thought.

"It's possible," Batman replied, taking a deep breath. "Without truly knowing their goal, knowing what role we play in this scheme of theirs is nearly impossible to deduce with what we have."

I paused for a moment, thinking over what he had said. He was right, of course. After all, we knew nothing about the Light, nothing at all, yet they knew everything about us.

~So, about Deathstroke's invitation,~ I said, giving Batman a look. ~Will we take it?~

Batman was silent for a moment before simply nodding. "It is imperative we take any chances we get when it comes to the Light. However, this could very well be a trap. If the Light knows so much about us as Deathstroke hinted, then they could have easily concluded we are the only one's privy to their existence so far."

~Raven also knows about them, and yet Deathstroke is not inviting her to meet,~ I pointed out, taking a deep breath as I did.

"True," Batman replied, "But Raven has a history with the League and how we initially reacted to her, possibly making her the weakest link in this chain of knowledge, at least in their eyes."

I frowned at that. ~I see your point.~

This was really messed up. I didn't like this, fighting an enemy in the dark, knowing nothing about them, their plans, nothing. All of this made this entire mission exasperating.

~So, what do we do with Deathstroke's invitation?~ I asked once again.

"As things are, we don't have much of a choice, do we?" Batman replied, rising from his chair. "Be that as it may, we will approach this as if it were a trap."

[Unknown POV]

In an undisclosed location, Deathstroke sat on a metal beam high above the ground, leaning back against another one, as he gazed into a window conveniently located in front of him, his right-hand resting on his thigh, just above one of his holsters, as the other one held his phone as if waiting for something.

As if on cue, his phone starts ringing. Slowly, he moves the phone up and grins as he sees the caller ID. "Hello, Luthor, to what do I owe this pleasure?" He answers the phone in a low, raspy voice.

"There are a few targets we want you to take out of the picture in Star City, permanently," Luthor replied from the other end of the phone.

"Just send me the list of names and the information about them, and it will be done," Deathstroke replied, his voice bordering a low growl.

"Already done," Luthor replied with a soft chuckle. "If only Sportsmaster was as effective as you. Sadly, he chooses to be a walking advertisement for Olympic sports."

"If that was all, I have things to do," Deathstroke replied, still smiling as he continued to talk with Luthor.

"Of course, Slade," Luthor replied before hanging up.

Deathstroke chuckled softly as he pocketed his phone before looking back at the window in front of him. "I will enjoy killing each and every single one of them. And I won't be doing it alone."

Deep down, Deathstroke wasn't sure if the Bat would take his invitation to talk, and honestly, he didn't care if he didn't. All he cared about was that he had sowed the seeds of fear in the heart of his future apprentice.

Fear of losing everything you love. A man without nothing to lose is a man with an indomitable path. However, the moment that man gains something, something he holds dear, something he loves, he loses his true freedom and becomes a slave to his feelings.

Deathstroke knew that very well. After all, even he was subjected to this curse.

True freedom exists but is never within our grasp, at least not for most, for even before humans take their first breath into this world, they are chained by the love of someone, and as we live, those chains just keep increasing in numbers.

[Dinah Lance POV]

I walked into my room, making my way to the closet to get some clothes before going into the shower, my mind being clouded by the fact I wanted to see David.

It had been quite some time since I had seen my little brother, or rather, since I had spent quality time with him, and I couldn't help but miss him. I knew that he was busy with the Team and his own life, but I couldn't help it.

A part of me wanted to call him and check in or maybe just kidnap him from the base, but I wasn't sure if he would appreciate it or not. The last time I saw him, he seemed distant and preoccupied.

I, of course, worried but kept my tongue in place, as I didn't want to intrude on his privacy. After all, if something was wrong, he would tell me, right?

Oh god, I was being a fool. What in the hell is wrong with me? What teenager tells anything to those responsible for them?!

"Call down, Dinah," I muttered, taking a deep breath. I was just overreacting, or maybe was suffering from what some call the empty nest syndrome.

Maybe I could just ask him directly. Anything was better than inaction.

For a few moments, I continued thinking about how to approach my baby brother as I stood in front of my closet, staring at my clothes without really seeing them.

I just didn't want him to think I was seeing something wrong in him if there wasn't I didn't want to make things worse if they were getting better.

However, it was my duty and privilege to worry, to care, to overthink shit, and I would continue to do so for the rest of my life.

With a newfound resolve, I decided that the best course of action would be just to come out and ask him what was going

on with him. No beating around the bush or any of that crap, just a simple and direct question.

I nodded to myself, feeling better about my decision as I started picking out clothes for my shower. I would just take a quick one so I could get to the base sooner than later and maybe catch David before he went to bed... or started training.

Yeah, right, like that was going to happen. The boy never seemed to sleep; he was always training, always working on something. Maybe I should recommend him that he take up painting again.