

M'gann, Kaldur, Robin, Wally, and I waited silently by the Zeta-Tube. None of us were in costume, but Robin wore his usual face-obscuring sunglasses. I idly scratched at my cast, which M'gann immediately noticed and mentally nudged me to stop.

It was two days since we had completed our first real mission, and I was already fed up with the chunk of plaster wrapped around my arm. I was just thankful that the super soldier serum came with a pretty hefty healing factor, which meant that my time wearing the cast was measured in days, not weeks.

As we waited by the Zeta-Tube, I scanned over the group, looking over each of them. After returning from Santa Prisca Island, all of us were riding high on our success. Batman had complimented us on our procedure and Green Lantern Stewart had complimented us on our tactics, both of them agreeing that they were looking forward to what we were capable of once we got some proper training under our belt. Even Wonder Woman admitted that we had done exceptionally well. The fact that we voluntarily called for support when the additional Kobra Venom augmented cultists showed up spoke of our maturity.

Batman debriefed us that night after we had all been checked out by a League-approved doctor. They took an x-ray of my arm, wrapped it up in a cast, and bandaged a couple of scrapes that everyone had accumulated before sending us all home. With Batman's guidance, we went over the mission, what we had done wrong and what we had done right. Thankfully, the latter vastly outweighed the former.

When he was done he informed all of us that he had found our first trainer, and that they would be responsible for hiring our other trainers and teachers from here on out. After that, Wally went home and we all crashed into our beds.

Since then, I was on light duty, while everyone else continued the daily routines of working out and sparring. I was seriously getting antsy but refrained from doing anything beyond light earthbending practice. I was getting pretty good at pulling the stone and sand armor completely around my legs.

Before I could finish musing to myself, the Zeta-Tube lit up, the inner workings starting to spin and glow as the machine turned on. With a flash of light suddenly Torak, her father, and a woman I could only assume was her mother was standing in the cave. They slowly stepped further in as the Zeta-Tube slowly spun down behind them. Tora and her mother were carrying a single box each, while her father was struggling with three.

"Hello, welcome to the cave, New Titans headquarters," I said, stepping forward.

"Thank you! Wow, this is incredible!" Tora said, looking around with wide eyes.

Batman had sent Kaldur and me a message the day before, explaining that Tora had accepted our invitation to join the New Titans and that she was eager to join the team. It didn't take long after that to organize her moving in.

"We are lucky to have it," I said with a smile. "We can give you and your parents a quick tour after we drop off your stuff?"

Olaf and Tora's mom, who was introduced as Sofie, both nodded eagerly. After a quick reshuffling of boxes so that Olaf didn't drop the three he was carrying, I led the entire group through the base to the living quarters. Tora picked out a room, ending up with the one next to M'gann.

With all of the boxes dropped off, I started the tour, starting in the kitchen.

"I'm sure you can figure out what this place is," I said with a smile, getting a polite chuckle or two. "We usually try to have dinner together, and usually end up having breakfast together simply because we are all up at the same time to work out. M'gann and I enjoy cooking so we have been doing a lot of it, but we are technically on a rotating schedule with Aqualad and Robin."

I continued the tour, keeping to the interesting places for the most part, before leading the group down into the grotto last.

"And this is the grotto. I do a lot of my earthbending training down here, but Superboy spends a bunch of time down here reading," I explained. "Aqualad likes to swim down here as well."

"It's beautiful," Tora said, her eyes somehow even wider than they had been in the caves main entrance. "It is so peaceful..."

"I'm getting a bit jealous of you, my daughter," Sofie said, giving her daughter a large hug. "You are getting to stay somewhere so interesting."

"Well it won't be all fun and games, unfortunately," I said. "Our first trainer, our expert in squad tactics is scheduled to arrive tomorrow, and we have a team workout every morning and sparring and power workshop every weekday after that. It's going to be a lot of hard work."

"... Maybe I'm not so jealous," Sofie said.

"I'm eager to learn and be a part of the team," Tora responded, completely undeterred. "And eager to learn how to be a better hero."

"I am proud of you my daughter," Olaf said, with a smile, Tora turning and giving him a hug as well.

After that I led them back up to the main hall, the rest of the team waiting there for us to return. Tora gave her parents a final goodbye, sharing more than a few hugs and promising to visit via the Zeta-Tube, before the two adults stepped back in the said teleporter, vanishing in a flash of light. Suddenly Tora looked a bit more nervous than before, realizing she didn't have her parents around as support.

"Alright! Looks like it's time for the real introduction!" Robin said, smirking as he checked the time on his phone. "Pizza should be ready by now."

"Real introduction?" Tora asked nervously.

"Don't worry, it's nothing bad," M'gann assured her with a smile. "Just a New Titans tradition."

The group headed to the Hangar, introducing the newest member of the team to Bioship. Tora was fascinated by the unique ship and gasped when it shifted to create the seventh seat. From there we took our usual flight to grab our food from Happy Harbor before Bioship angled up and pulled out into space. Watching Tora get more and more excited the higher we got was certainly worth watching.

"We came out here like this when we first talked about starting the New Titans. Well when we first started talking about our current concept," I explained after Tora had finally recovered from the shock of the view. "We decided then that this would be something we would do as often as possible."

"Its... Beautiful," She said, looking back out the front viewing window, a slice of pizza in her hand. "I didn't... I never imagined..."

I nodded in agreement, reaching down and taking M'gann's hand, giving it a gentle squeeze. We finished eating before putting away the leftover food, leaving it for Wally to take home as usual. I mentally bumped talking to him about his caloric intake up my list. I knew it was somehow related to his powers, but the Flash didn't seem to be as nearly a voracious eater as him. When the seats were back in a casual position we started talking about the team and the last mission, as well as answering any questions that Tora might have had.

She listened to our description of the Santa Prisca raid with rapt attention, nodding eagerly. She also answered several questions about her own powers, confirming our suspicions about her powerset.

"Yeah, I can force ice back into water, why?" She asked, looking confused at our specific question.

“As far as I know, that's not something any ice-themed villains can do,” Robin explained. “The cryokinetics or the tech-based ones. Being able to melt any ice they throw at us will be incredibly useful.”

“Gå ta banen. Uh... Seriously?” She asked, looking at Kaldur who simply nodded in agreement. “Well... It's harder than creating ice, but it's not overly difficult.”

“Just something to keep in mind, you might want to dedicate some training to that, maybe see if you can make it easier,” I pointed out.

“Not actually a lot of ice villains out right now,” Robin said, smiling smugly because he got the scoop. “Most of them were at Belle Reve. Apparently, the Light had some sort of plan set up to stage a massive breakout that involved using Ice to weaken the walls. Now they've been scattered all over the place.”

“Damn... They really had their fingers in everything,” Wally said, shaking his head. “How many of them did the League manage to capture?”

“Luthor, Queen Bee, and Ocean Master,” Robin answered. “The League wanted to raid Infinity Island and grab Ra's al Ghul while we were running our strike at Santa Prisca but the UN dragged their feet and the island was empty by the time they finally gave the go-ahead.”

“Infinity Island?” Tora asked before anyone else could. “What's that?”

“It's where the League of Shadows was based,” Robin explained morosely. “We knew it existed for a while now, but Sportsmaster was the first person we've ever gotten our hands on that knew where it was and didn't immediately crack a cyanide tooth or bite through their tongue to keep it a secret.”

“Fuck... What a missed opportunity,” I said, shaking my head.

“Why did the League need permission to go there in the first place?” M'gann asked. “It seems counterproductive.”

“It is a trade-off,” Kaldur explained. “The League functions under a UN charter, which means that their arrests, investigations, and observations hold legitimate legal weight in the countries that are members. They are officers of the law where the UN maintains its influence. The cost for that legitimacy is that the UN requires that they follow a strict set of rules. It forbids things like excessive force...”

All of us listened to Kaldur as he explained the League's connection to the UN. Tora nodded along, seemingly happy to learn everything she could about the world she had just stepped into, while Wally and Robin politely listened, clearly already knowing what he was saying. I could feel M'gann's curiosity, both at the explanation and my own emotions.

*"What's wrong?"* She asked, looking in my direction.

*"It reminds me of something Steve Rogers had to deal with,"* I explained. *"In multiple versions of his story. It was... not nearly as clear cut and globally accepted as this. It led to a lot of fighting and suffering."*

"... other rules they would already follow normally. One that does cause issues is that they are not allowed to intervene in countries that are non-members and have specific requests for non-interference without a full vote from the UN. There are exemptions of course, but having knowledge of a location isn't enough to skip the vote."

"I knew there was some sort of connection going on but I didn't know the specifics," I admitted. "We should put together some packets of information about what we should all know. Something to give out to new members."

"Gonna give them a test too?" Wally asked jokingly.

"Maybe, eventually," I responded with a shrug. "Depending on how this goes, we might need to start weeding out those who aren't serious about the group, and not caring enough to study would be a good way to set at least one bar."

"Having a place for people to learn the basics of how the League and the Titans both work is a fair idea," Kaldur agreed before Wally could respond. "But it might be rather preemptive to consider that far into the future."

We continued the League and the Titans worked and would work, Tora obviously eager to learn more about how being an official hero worked. Eventually, as the conversation started to shift to more casual topics, I could feel M'gann reach out to Bioship while radiating a bit of mischief. That was the only warning I got before our seats started to shift, connecting together so she could lean on me. I happily put my arm around her, sharing the feeling of happiness with her.

"Oh, are you guys together then?" Tora asked, getting both of our attention.

"Umm... kinda?" M'gann responded questioningly, looking up at me with a blush.

"We hadn't quite gotten to the label part yet, but we are dating," I explained. "We are trying to take it slow because of all this."

I gestured generally to us, the team, and basically everything.

"Not usually a good idea to date in such a small group," Robin pointed out, raising both his hands defensively. "Just saying."

"Despite that and our age I think we are both mature enough to make it work," I said with a shrug. "Besides, seems to be working just fine for Black Canary and Green Arrow."

"Wait, Green Arrow and Black Canary are a thing?" Wally asked, eyes wide.

"... Seriously?" Robin asked, looking at him with a raised eyebrow. "Have you never seen them in the same room? They radiate so much couple energy they give off a glare."

"I... guess I just never noticed?" He guessed, looking confused.

"Well, either way, it won't be a problem," I said with a shrug, giving M'gann a mental hug while squeezing her hand gently. "We are taking it slow and... well she is worth the risk."

I could feel M'gann's happiness as my statement, flowing over me in waves. I sent my own back.

*"I think your worth it too,"* She said back to me, resting her head on my shoulder.

The conversation picked back up, slowly at first but more naturally after a while. Wally eventually cracked another box of pizza open, munching the lukewarm food as we talked. The topics changed until eventually, Tora asked about what tomorrow's schedule would be like.

"Normally we get up, do our morning workout, and then spar, as I mentioned earlier," I explained. "But our first trainer should be getting here tomorrow. Their focus will be on squad tactics, but I'm hoping they will have some input on what our training schedule should really look like. Depending on what they say I may end up shifting everything around to something more suitable or effective."

"Basically we are playing it by ear," Robin explained. "We are still figuring out how this will all work."

"Is Kyle going to be back by the time the trainer gets here?" Wally asked. "Seems like the kinda thing we should all show up for."

"He was gone before Batman told us about it, so he has no idea," I explained. "And considering what he is dealing with, I'm inclined to let him come back in his own time."

"What's going on? Who is Kyle?" Tora asked.

"Kyle is Superboy," M'gann explained. "And... to be honest I'm not sure it's our story to tell."

“He is out on a family emergency,” I explained vaguely. “I don’t think he would really care about you knowing, but...”

“I understand, I won't pry,” Tora said, nodding in acceptance.

Kyle had left not long after we returned from the Island, Superman picking him up the day after. Apparently, Superman's equipment was almost finished scanning Match, the full Kryptonian clone we found in Cadmus. Not only did Superman think that Kyle should be there after the scan was complete, but he was next to be scanned, something that would at least take the better part of the day. That didn’t include any sort of treatment or recovery if the scans found anything.

“I am sure Superboy will be happy to share when he returns,” Kaldur assured the young woman. “Hopefully that will be in the next few days.”

Eventually, we decided that we had been up in space for long enough, and M’gann directed Bioship back down to the cave. It wasn’t particularly late, but we had realized that we were very much out of cell phone range, meaning that no one could get a hold of us. Bioship had an emergency line that could technically receive calls, but it was still a bad idea to be out of touch for too long.

The rest of the day was spent getting to know Tora and helping her unpack. I also talked to her briefly about her costume, suggesting that she look into getting a reinforced option that was based on her original. She agreed, admitting that she had made her current version as form over function.

I finished the day by doing some more earthbending training, while M’gann gave Tora the full tour of the base, including the areas that weren’t very interesting but were still important, like the storage room and the utility room. Eventually, they took over the living room and started watching tv, splitting a bowl of popcorn.