

[David Lance POV]

After taking a few minutes to collect myself, I walked back to the first level of the safe house to talk with Batman about what he had found about Waller and if that was related to whatever was troubling him.

The moment I entered the room, I saw Batman hunched over a computer, a frown clear on his face. "I've been through every possible file and database, and there's no mention of her anywhere, not anymore. The clearance to do that is worryingly high." He said as I walked toward him.

~So, what does that mean?~ I asked, taking a seat close to him.

Batman turned to me, his eyes clear and steady. "It means we have a problem. My information of Waller is scarce, having nothing but copies of old files about her, files that now seem to have been deleted from every database save for mine."

I frowned, thinking about what he said before replying. ~It makes sense. After all, the higher you are in the chain, the more power you have to do these things, and considering what Waller is doing, she needs all the privacy she can get.~

He nodded, his face clear of emotion. "I am aware."

I sighed, leaning back in my chair. ~We have her goal and motivation clear, so how do we move from here?~

Batman looked at me; his eyes narrowed in thought. "We need to make sure she's aware that we know about her plan or the general outline of it."

~To get a reaction out of her, in turn, altering her moves from now on,~ I replied, quickly catching on with Batman's plan.

Batman nodded, his face set in a grim line. "More or less."

~What about Harley and Ivy?~ I asked.

"They will remain here for the time being," Batman replied without missing a beat, his tone even and controlled. "The safehouse is packed with food, water, and other resources that only need to be refilled once every six months. The collars on their necks will ensure they remain within the second level or below, as well as giving us their location should we need it and the means to stop them should they try to attack us."

~Do you require my help in anything?~ I asked.

Batman nodded. "When needed, you will act as their warden, checking on their state, but beyond that, nothing. As for me, I

will focus on tracking Waller in order to get access to her computer."

I frowned but nodded. I had a feeling that this was going to be a long and difficult battle of the minds between us and Waller, but with little information we had, we had no other choice but to engage in such a battle.

After talking with Batman and setting clear the lines about what to expect from now on, Raven and I left, leaving the Dark Knight to continue his research about Waller at the safe house while we returned to Star City.

"Are you worried about Waller?" Raven asked calmly.

~Kind of,~ I nodded.

"You knew about her, just like you knew about Trigon," Raven said in an even tone.

I nodded.

"Very well, I won't ask," Raven nodded, satisfied with my answer.

~Thanks,~ I replied, relieved that she wasn't one to pry too much, always respecting my boundaries. I really couldn't have asked for a better friend.

"It's okay; like I told you before... I know there are things that one can't simply explain. I just wanted to confirm if my suspicions were right about how you knew about her"
Raven replied with an understanding smile.

I nodded, remembering what Raven had said about Aladdin during my encounter with him. ~What did you mean about Aladdin's body being enveloped in magic?~

Raven paused for a moment before answering. "His... body emanated ancient magic, but the feeling this particular magic gave me, as well as lack of any magical capabilities in him, made it evident he wasn't the caster of said magic."

I frowned, wrapping my head around what she had said. ~How ancient are we talking about?~

"A few centuries at the very least based on feeling alone. For a more accurate answer, I would need to get up close," Raven replied.

~Any idea who could be the caster?~ I asked.

Raven paused once again, musing over my question. “Nothing even remotely humanoid in essence, that’s for sure. If I had to take a guess, whoever put those spells on him is most likely still alive. As for who or what put the spells, well, I have a few guesses, but nothing that convinces me completely...”

Aladdin...

I wonder if he has any relation to the classic Arabian Nights story of Aladdin and the magic lamp. He certainly fit the ethnic profile.

~Is... a genie one of your guesses?~ I asked, testing the waters.

Raven stopped, giving me a look before calmly nodding. “It is, though, the correct term Djinn... How did you come to that conclusion or guess anyway?”

I sighed, giving her a small smile. ~Well, there is an Arabian story called Aladdin and the magic lamp that well, talks about a man finding a lamp that contained a genie. As for the story, I have no idea how old this tale is, besides the fact it was first introduced to Europe in a French translation by Antoine Galland in 1704. And, well, as you can see by my brief summary, the name of the story and what happens in it kind of fits with the guy we are talking about...~

Raven nodded slowly. "It would make sense; more often than not, tales of magic are lost in time, becoming over time nothing but fables of fiction for others, yet no matter how much these stories change over the decades, they usually hold some truth to them, if you know where to look."

~On that matter, if our guess happens to be true, and well, Aladdin has a genie, how bad can things get for us?~ I asked. The idea of an all-powerful genie being at the beck and call of someone bothering me to the very core.

"Djinn," Raven corrected again. "As for how worried we should be... well, it depends. As most tales depict them to be, Djinns are indeed unquestionably powerful creatures that are capable of great magical feats. The methods to capture one vary, but once captured, they are then bound to their captor until their captor dies, being forced to fulfill wishes until they are free once more."

So far, I'm pretty worried. ~So far, your explanation is not soothing my worries...~

"Magically speaking, a djinn is a powerful spirit of nature, or as some say, a condensation of natural mana/magical energy endowed with consciousness and character," Raven continued with her explanation. "Most djinns are very aggressive, their character being nothing but a byproduct of the environment on a global scale. As for their powers, well, according to legends, djinns can grant even the most far-fetched wishes; however, this is not entirely true."

~They have limits, right?~ I asked, connecting the dots.

Raven nodded. “While the limits vary between djinns, the laws they have to abide by are the same, with them being bound by the laws of the universe and the chain of command in the magical scale. If they were all-powerful as most tales depict them to be, capturing them would be impossible, but it isn’t, in fact, in Azarath’s library, there were tales about powerful mages capturing and taming these beings in the old ages. Though the tales were pretty clear that only a handful ever managed to accomplish such a feat because to imprison a djinn or tame one, the mage in question had to be able to bend the will of nature to his own.”

~But Aladdin isn’t a mage, so how did he manage to tame one or get one to work with him?~ I asked so far, such a feat seemed impossible for the guy. ~And what did you mean by the chain of command in the magic scale?~

“While it’s true that most djinns are aggressive, like wild animals, some of them have been known to be cooperative to a degree, as long as it benefits them,” Raven replied. “As for the chain of command, well, basically, they can’t mess with realms that other magical creatures or individuals hold if said beings are stronger than them or more connected to the realm in question. For example, they can’t resurrect the dead because the God of Death would not only stop them from trying but would erase them on the spot for trying to break the natural order of things.”

Well, that's reassuring to some degree. ~Well, that makes me feel better...~ I sighed.

“It is, but be that as it may, fighting a djinn is extraordinarily difficult, even with their limits. Based on the books I read about them, they can instantly cast spells that would take the most accomplished mages hours or days to, and if that wasn't enough, they are pretty much resistant to all schools of magic, as well as most physical phenomena.” Raven replied with an even tone. “Some of the schools of magic that they are vulnerable against are some of the fundamental ones, like Chaos and Order, as well Dark and Light magic... so, don't worry.”

I blinked, narrowing my eyes at her. ~Couldn't you have started from there?~

Raven smiled, saying nothing in return.