

[David Lance POV]

[Training begins.]

Soon after I had asked Wioska to train me, and she had accepted, she proceeded to once again seal my powers because, in her words, her training required me to be at my weakest to be effective.

Soon after that, the training started, and within moments I found myself standing in front of Wioska, my clothes torn, and my body covered in sweat and blood after a simple spar where I had failed to land a single hit on the old warrior.

"Your fighting skills leave much to be desired," Wioska said, shaking her head as she looked at me with disappointment. "You're too stiff, too slow, too green. But credit where is due. Without Trigon's influence, you can actually be called a warrior, a bad one, but a warrior nonetheless."

I grit my teeth in frustration. Perhaps I would do better if she allowed me to use the ring.

Who am I kidding?

With or without the ring, I would've lost.

My frustration was nothing but the result of the anger inside of me growing with each passing second. Fueled by each hit she landed and the fact that no matter how much I tried or how hard I tried, I couldn't land a single blow on her.

"You equate your lack of power to your circumstances," Wioska said, taking a step towards me as she looked at me with a piercing gaze. "Let me show how stupid that is."

Before I could give her words much thought, a few figures appeared in front of me, figures of people I knew, though only three of them froze me in shock.

Dinah.

Raven.

Oliver.

"One of my gifts is that I can see a warrior's physical and psychological weakness," Wioska said, her voice cold and emotionless. "You want to be strong because of them. However, you fear becoming strong because of them; how ironic, isn't it? Deep within, you believe that if you access your

full potential, you'll become something they won't accept, something they might come to despise."

Without even realizing it, I tried to look away from the apparitions in front of me, but no matter where I looked.

They would be there.

"Instead of ending your fights immediately by utilizing your power, you lower yourself to your enemy's level, and for what? for a false sense of humility, to make those you want to protect comfortable?" Wioska asked her words like daggers that pierced through my head. "You're not being humble; you're being a coward."

I had to hold back.

If I didn't, I would end up killing someone that I didn't want to kill.

I have to restrain myself, my every move. Or at least that's how it used to do that; it's been a while since I thought of the consequences behind my actions.

"Reaching your full potential and becoming a monster are two entirely different things," Wioska said, almost as if reading my mind. "I could've killed you at any moment had I wanted. But I didn't because I have control over my power, absolute control.

I hurt you as much as I want to hurt you; I make you bleed as much as I want you to bleed."

Without a warning, Wioska moved, and with a single motion of her hand that blurred out of my sight, she slashed my chest horizontally, causing me to fall to my knees in pain. Then, without another word, she repeated the same movement, but this time aiming at the mountain behind her, cutting it in half with a single slash.

"That's control," Wioska said, looking at me. "That's what separates the monsters from warriors."

I looked at the mountain falling behind her and then back at Wioska, who was now standing in front of me, the tips of her claws still dripping with my blood.

I smiled. Even though her every display of superiority over me infuriated me beyond measure, I was glad I had asked her to train me. I had no doubts that I would learn something valuable from her.

"Now get up," Wioska said as she turned her back on me. "We have much to do and little time to do it. I gave you a week of my time, and I intend to make you a warrior within that time frame. I won't have you sully my reputation by being a weakling."

Taking a deep breath, I pushed myself off the ground and followed Wioska as she walked, determined to get stronger or as strong as I could get within a week.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you something. Unlike last time, I won't release the seal on your power," Wioska said, not even bothering to look at me as she spoke. "You will have to regain your power and more during this week or die trying. And in case that wasn't clear enough, allow me to clarify, you'll either get stronger, or I will kill you."

Well, that is quite a way to motivate someone.

Very effective, though, that much, I could admit. Because I adamantly refused to die, not while Superman is still alive, I have come too far to fail now.

"Are we clear?" Wioska asked as she continued to walk.

"Crystal," I replied without hesitation.

"Good, you might be disgustingly weak, both of body and mind, but at least you have some resolve in you," Wioska said, giving me a backhanded compliment.

I wonder where the wise-looking Wioska went? When I was possessed by Trigon, or rather under his influence, she behaved differently.

Much differently.

Now, it was almost as if she had done a one-eighty turn. It was almost as if she was trying to get a rise out of me.

Which she hadn't achieved, only because even though my anger was prominent, thanks to the red lantern ring, I was no idiot.

I knew very well she would beat the ever-living crap out of me, with or without the ring.

If for a moment, even a single moment, I felt I could beat her, I was sure without a doubt that I would fully give in to my anger and try to kill her.

However, the gap in our strength was so massive. That even through my ever-growing rage, I could see it was best to avoid confrontation with her.

Though, I had to admit.

Behind all my anger, I was excited to see what I could learn from her.

If I could make just a fraction of her power mine, Superman would stand no chance.