

[David Lance POV]

It had been two weeks since the encounter with Amazo, and my broken bones and injured body had finally healed.

Leaving nothing but the memory of the battle and how the combined efforts of Rachel and I had been the key to victory.

I smiled at the memory.

Sure, it had been one hell of a fight, where I had taken more damage than ever before, with the stakes being higher than I would've liked.

But.

It had also been our first in the big leagues, at least together, and yet, we had worked together flawlessly, using our skills and knowledge in synchrony to take down the enemy.

In the end, it was our teamwork that made that victory possible.

Without Rachel, I wouldn't have been able to defeat Amazo.

“Your sister wants to see you,” Rachel said, opening the door of my room as she held a book in her hands.

~On my way,~ I replied, trying to peek out the title of the book. Something that Rachel quickly noted and, in turn, cheekily hid the book under her purple sweater.

I smiled, deciding to find out what book she was reading later; I might just ask her; I mean, more often than not, she caves with a few answers when it comes to literature.

Taking a deep breath, I finished what I was doing, and I grabbed my phone before making my way out of my room toward Dinah and Oliver’s room, with Rachel on my side.

I didn’t like seeing her bedridden. It was a picture that, no matter how good things were in terms of her recovery, didn’t settle all too well for me. It pained me, seeing her like that, looking so fragile.

I guess at times; I just forget how fragile we humans are.

Not that I belong to that group anymore, which simply made her look all the more fragile in my mind. These thoughts infuriated me because I knew that my sister was by no means fragile.

But no matter how much I told myself that, that she was strong, skilled, and more. A small part of my mind would put her on a pedestal of fragility that made her no honor, a pedestal that brought with itself a semblance of guilt.

A part of me wanted to believe this was my fault.

The thing was, I knew this was a stupid thought. This, by no means, had been my fault; I mean, in this universe, shit just happens, and Amazo happens to enter that category.

I knew my self-deprecating thoughts had no base, that they made no sense.

But when does the mind ever make sense?

I honestly believe in the saying that says we are our own worst enemy.

“Do I need to hit you with the [I’m being stupid stick]?” Rachel asked, getting a read of my emotions.

~No, and the hell do you mean by the [I’m being stupid stick]?~
I replied, giving her an odd look, wondering if I should be concerned about that... stick.

“It’s something I came up with,” Rachel replied, nodding proudly, almost as if puffing up like a bird at her own idea.

~I see...~ Did... did Rachel ever hit her teammates when they were being stupid? Is... is that canon? I feel it's not, but... it kind of fits with her personality, yet at the same time... it doesn't.

"This house is too big," Rachel said, changing the subject.

I blinked, nodding. ~Rich people, more in Oliver's case, love big houses. I see the attractive, but honestly, sometimes is just a chore to get stuff around like; there was one time I had to walk for ten minutes to get a water bottle because my fridge had ran out of them.~

"With your speed, you could've gotten the water in a matter of seconds," Rachel replied, quirking an eyebrow.

I huffed, crossing my arms in indignation. ~Yes, I could've, but I had just woken up, and I didn't feel like sprinting to the kitchen on the third level...~

"Fair enough," Rachel nodded.

~Not everyone can open a portal with a sway of their hand,~ I added, arms still crossed.

"Well, it's not that simple, but yeah, I can do that," Rachel smiled at me cockily.

I smiled, rolling my eyes at her. ~So, how has been fighting crime all alone in Star City?~

“Pretty uneventful,” Rachel replied as we neared the turn that led to the hallway that led to Dinah’s room. “The only villain that has tried to do anything was someone called Catman; he wasn’t happy I made a comment of him copying Catwoman.”

Catman? Well shit, that’s new.

~Was he hard to deal with?~ I asked.

“No, we didn’t even fight. I just... kind of levitated him off the ground and threw him in prison,” Rachel replied. “He wasn’t happy about that either.”

I imagine, of all possible defeats, having someone take you out without a fight is quite humiliating in the villain world. ~He will probably hold a grudge against you. With that humiliating defeat, you might have gotten yourself a nemesis...~

Rachel froze, her eyes snapping. “I would prefer if the villain that will make their whole life purpose destroying me, not to be a man with an unhealthy fixation on cats...”

~You can choose your friends, but like family, you can't choose your nemesis,~ I shrugged with a smile.

“But I can choose to cripple him,” Rachel muttered darkly.

~Where’s that stick you spoke of? The [I’m being stupid stick]?~ I asked, getting a soft chuckle from her.

“Fair enough,” Rachel sighed, a small groan escaping her lips. “I really hope that guy doesn’t make it his life purpose to defeat me...”

I smiled, patting her on the back. ~Cheer up; chances are that once he tries again and sees he can’t even fight you, he will give up that silly dream/grudge of his. The title of Nemesis requires both parties to stand on a similar ground, and obviously, he lacks the juice for that kind of title.~

Rachel chuckled. “He does lack the juice, and the taste, like why cats of all animals?”

~Hey, cats can be scary. Besides, the cat theme usually fits better on a female, like catwoman,~ I replied with two short nods.

“Are you saying that because you find Catwoman attractive?” Rachel asked, with an eat-shitting grin or the closest equivalent she could produce.

Me? Find her attractive! I would nev... okay I do. But I will never admit it!

~I do not,~ I replied without looking at her.

“Sure, you don’t,” Rachel snorted at my answer but didn’t press on.

~I don’t,~ I nodded.

“Yeah,” Rachel replied.

~I truly don’t,~ I nodded again.

“I believe you,” Rachel replied.

I narrowed my eyes.

She smiled.

~Fine, you win, you emotion-reading cheater,~ I sighed. ~But honestly, doesn’t the cat theme fit females better?~

“I suppose from an aesthetic point of view, it does,” Rachel nodded.

I nodded.

“Before we reach your sister, please don’t look at her like you feel like it’s your fault,” Rachel said, changing the subject.

Easier said than done; that woman can see through my acts, even if I act like everything is fine. Kind of hard to hide shit from someone that saw you grow.

“If she sees you feeling guilty, she will feel guilty, and that spiral just grows endlessly,” Rachel sighed.

~I know,~ I nodded.

It was honestly hard to control one subconscious when it came to natural reactions. It was like trying to kiss someone you found disgusting on every level without showing any disgust, it was nearly impossible, and the deeper the connection of that reaction was, the harder it was to hide it.

I could hide many things; I could even fool someone to think I found them attractive if the opportunity ever required it. I had trained for it, part of Batman’s training; unfortunately, I hadn’t trained for pretending I didn’t feel like shit for seeing my loved ones hurt.

The thing was, I knew that Dinah was still in pain, both physically and emotionally, for not having been able to help me during the fight.

“Dinah, we are here,” Rachel said as she knocked at the door.

“Come in!” Dinah replied, and moments after, Rachel was opening the door.

~What bus hit ya? Did you get the number?~ I said, needless to say, the first thing that came to my mind. Fucking panic humor, I swear.

Dinah snorted before breaking into a short-lived fit of laughter that came to an end because it hurt her to laugh. “Damn it, don’t make me laugh.”

“That was a good one, kiddo,” Oliver said with a proud grin, coming out of the bathroom, limping toward his bed. They were using separate beds because Dinah’s condition at the moment required her to have her own sleeping area.

~Hey, how’s the leg doing?~ I asked Oliver as I walked toward my sister.

“Well, it’s seen better days, like... what was the day before Amazo?” Oliver asked, pressing his lips together in pondering.

I smiled.

“Good to see you back to full,” Dinah smiled, reaching for my hand with loving warmth, before suddenly pulling a stick out of nowhere, bonking me in the head.

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The... I’m being stupid stick.

I should’ve seen it coming.

“Hahaha! Yes!” Oliver cheered with a grin. “It pleased my mustache seeing that!” At this, Dinah threw the stick at Oliver, seeing as he was out of reach. “Damn it; I’ve been betrayed!”