

“So what's our first step?” Robin asked, repeating the question he asked a few days ago. “We know what we want, how do we make it happen?”

“The first part is putting together a brief.” I said, getting a nod from Kaldur. “We need to inform the League, including your mentors about what our plans are. We still function at their discretion so we need to prove our idea has merit.”

“And how would we do that?” Wally asked. “If this is all so new, how do we prove its a good idea.”

His point got a few nods, Robin and Kaldur looking to me for a response.

“We start by pointing out how much more effective the League is as a team. We compare fights and conflicts they have had to come together to resolve, before pointing out that deeper levels of teamwork makes people even more effective.”

“Kinda hard for them to deny that when that's why the League was put together in the first place.” Robin pointed out with a smirk.”

“Exactly. We can point to the League and at you three as prime examples. Your mentors are better than you, no offense, but by teaming up both of you are even more effective.” I explained, noting that while Kaldur and Robin easily accepted that their mentors were better, Wally seemed offended by it. “We can then point out that special forces teams are known to take on targets that should outnumber and outscale them, but they succeed anyway due to superior training, tactics and teamwork. What would happen if a team of heroes were to adopt that level of training, learn those tactics and bond into a team.”

“We would have to back that up with evidence.” Kaldur pointed out, getting a nod from Robin.

“I have access to the computer at the Batcave, it has a lot of information on it.” Robin volunteered. “Give me a day and I could put down a whole list of statistics about how a tightly knit team increases effectiveness. Batman would know but that's honestly not a bad thing. I don't think he has a problem with us being better heroes as long as we don't cross any lines.”

“We should present it in the main room of the cave.” Kaldur said. “It can display all of that information. Including footage of previous fights.”

“So we pitch this as teamwork plus?” Wally asked.

“Pretty much.” I answered with a shrug. “I think it's a pretty big plus though.”

“It could be, if we all work hard.” Robin said. “It’s hard to deny the evidence. We are more effective with our mentors, and like Warren said, even with them being much stronger than us, they still benefit from the teamwork. Imagine that spread and multiplied over an entire team.”

“Okay, we pitch the idea, and they agree, what’s next?” M’gann asked, smiling as we all collaborated together.

“Then we start looking for people to train us in a more serious capacity.” I said. “I like Black Canary, but I don’t think she understands that we need more training than just some martial arts, and even if she did, I think someone who understands what we are trying to do would fit much better.”

“Why would I need to learn martial arts?” Superboy asked, looking confused.

“It’s an edge, if you meet someone stronger than you or you lose your powers somehow.” I explained. “But martial arts with enhanced strength are different from martial arts without, both as the attacker and the defender. Like Robin trying to arm bar me would be pointless because I could just stand up with him on my arm. And he knows that so he would never do it to me.”

“Grappling in general is a bad idea with someone with enhanced strength. All they need to do is grab and squeeze to break something.” Robin pointed out. “There are some holds that use their own body to lock them up, but most of those are anchored by your own body.”

“Right. So we might need a few trainers for hand to hand combat in particular, on top of the other positions.”

“And the League will foot the bill?” Wally asked skeptically.

“For now, I believe that they will.” I said with a nod. “If they refuse to, or in a few years we think it’s time to step away and become a stand alone group I think I have a solution, but it would definitely need another group vote.”

“What is it?” Kaldur asked.

“While the League being established has led to a slightly more clear organization of the superhero world, it is still a bit of a wild west situation out there.” I explained, gesturing vaguely to Earth, floating below us. “Almost every country in the world offers bounties for its super powered criminals. America is honestly one of the few that doesn’t”

“You want us to be bounty hunters?!” Wally asked, standing up straight, looking angry. Robin and Kaldur both frowned, but remained seated.

"In a sense, yes." I said, holding out my hands. "It's not as bad as it seems. I'm not suggesting we work for shady governments capturing dissidents and handing them over for reeducation. We would travel to other countries, capture real dangerous criminals who are hurting good people and hand them over to the proper authorities. We then take the payment and invest one hundred percent of it back into our group so that we can get better equipment and capture more dangerous criminals."

"...That still seems like a line we shouldn't cross." Robin said. "Getting paid to be a hero feels wrong."

"It would just be our business side." I explained. "We would also patrol and stop other threats for free. Look, I wasn't raised on this hero stuff like you guys where. I came up with a solution, if it's too far out there for you guys I accept that, we will just have to look for a new one."

"I think we should put this thought on hold. It is not without merit but should be given more thought." Kaldur said politically. "A more immediate problem is our scheduling. I discussed the possibility with my parents and they agreed that living here for the rest of the summer is agreeable, as long as I return to visit often."

"I would have to ask, but I don't think there will be a problem with me staying here for the summer at least." Robin agreed. "It might get a little messy with school but I think we can figure something out."

"I haven't talked to my parents either." Wally admitted. "I think they will understand, but like Robin said, school might be an issue."

"We can deal with school." I assured everyone. "Even if we have to slow down the process. This is a long term concept, two, three, even four years of school is still small scale."

All three of the former sidekicks leaned back in their chairs when I made that statement. I could feel M'gann's confusion at that reaction. Kaldur seemed to pick up on our confusion as well.

"Sorry, but I believe the scale of what we are trying to achieve just hit us."

"Guy's... maybe we should vote again." I said, shaking my head. "I see this as a very long term project. I imagine this team becoming multiple teams, all functioning on the same principles, on us becoming mentors for the new groups. That can only happen after we prove ourselves, which can only happen after we become worthy of doing that."

For a moment wally looked like he was going to say something but I raised a hand to cut him off.

“You guys are impressive heroes, especially for your age. You have extensive experience, knowledge and the skills to back it up. But you have no experience working as a well trained unit. We need to know each other like you each know your mentors, maybe even better. That takes time spent training, practicing and getting to know each other. This is not a casual Monday after school and every other Saturday project. And it’s for sure not something that will happen in a few months.”

The group was quiet for a moment, trading some looks before Robin nodded.

“Your right, It just hadn’t hit us that this was something for the long haul.” He explained, Kaldur and Wally nodding along. “I don’t think we need to vote again.”

“Yes, we are excited about the idea.” Kaldur added. “The major reason we wanted this team was because we wanted to be taken seriously. Your attitude to becoming more than just the talent pool for the Justice League reached all three of us. We are in, one hundred percent.”

“Good. I think everyone moving to the cave will help, but that will take a few more days it seems. I say we start off by coming together and sparring, every other day, for at least a few hours. Maybe starting tomorrow?”

“What time?” Wally asked. “I usually patrol with Flash in the morning and sometimes in the afternoon.”

“I think that part of the agreement is to put the team before those patrols.” Kaldur said, giving Wally a look and a shrug. “Hopefully we will be doing our own patrols eventually, but for now we must prioritize the team.”

Wally frowned, thinking for a moment before nodding.

“Yeah, alright. I guess I’m free whenever then. At least for the next month.”

“I think afternoon would work.” I volunteered. “We could meet tomorrow at noon?”

The rest of the group agreed that tomorrow at noon would work well. We talked a bit more about scheduling, what kind of trainers we needed and a few other things. Eventually Robin cut in.

“So when are we presenting this idea to the League anyway? And what do I tell Batman?”

“That’s... A good question.” I answered, thinking for a moment. “You should just be honest with Batman, but ask him to hold off on sharing it with the League until we can. As for when that would be, when you put together the statistics we can work out some footage and put

together a presentation. Once we all see it then we can call a meeting. A couple of days probably?”

“He... Would probably go for that, yeah.” Robin said with a nod. “He might come to you with more questions.”

“I’ll answer what I can, but a lot of those answers are going to be ‘That’s up to the team’ or some variation.”

“He would understand that... probably.” He answered with a shrug. “But I have to admit you pitched it pretty well, it might be best to have you leading the actual presentation when we get to it.”

“I... Yeah, okay, if that’s what everyone wants.”

“Probably for the best.” Kid Flash admitted. “I tend to put my foot in my mouth sometimes.”

“Admitting the problem is the first step to working through it.” Robin said, the smirk on his face revealing he was teasing his friend.

The rest of the group also agreed, leaving me a bit nervous but determined to prove myself. I had gotten this far, I could take it even further. We continued talking for a while long before the meeting started winding down. Before we could end it properly, Wally brought up a good point.

“We need a name.” He said. “We can’t keep going by ‘the team’ if we want to be taken seriously.”

“He isn’t wrong.” Robin agreed after a pause.

“Anyone have any ideas?” I ask, looking around.

“Kid Flash and the-” Wally started, cutting off when Robin threw a plastic knife at him, hitting him in the forehead. “Hey!”

“I believe referencing any of us is a poor choice.” Kaldur responded, though I could see his lips quirk slightly.

“Why don’t we think about it?” M’gann suggested. “It’s kinda hard to just come up with something like that off the top of your head.”

“Alright... tomorrow when we meet?” I suggested. “That gives us the rest of the day and morning.”

A short series of agreements later and we had moved on, finally closing the meeting. Wally took most of the pizza's home, though this time I kept a box for the next day. Everyone also went home with some of the cookies we made, promising a beaming M'gann that they would try them and report back tomorrow.

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We went about our slowly becoming normal routine the next morning, working out together before sitting down and sharing breakfast. This time I made breakfast burritos for everyone, which Superboy really enjoyed.

"I think I want the couple from Central City to be my guardians." He said, everyone having finished their food. "They were really nice and... well the others seemed to react badly to me."

"Badly?" I asked while M'gann carried the dirty dishes to the sink. "How so?"

"I don't know what it was but the more we talked the less interested they seemed." He tried to explain. "They didn't openly say anything... But I could feel it. I didn't get that at all from Sarah and Lily, they only seemed... patient and supportive."

"Well I'm glad you settled on them Superboy." I said with a smile. "Have you told them or..."

"No, not yet." He answered. "But I was going to after breakfast. Lily gave me her number so I could contact them if I wanted."

I could feel M'gann's rising happiness as she listened, scrubbing dishes with the biggest smile.

"That's great, Superboy." M'gann said, washing her hands and floating the dry plates back into place.

Super boy didn't seem to know how to react to that, simply nodding. To save him some awkwardness I stood and smiled.

"Alright, I need to get to my training down in the grotto." I said. "Let me know how that phone call goes, Superboy."

M'gann and I spent a few hours training, before preparing for the rest of the team to arrive for sparring. Superboy seemed in a good mood, which was encouraging. It wasn't long after me and M'gann finished that Robin, Kaldur and Wally arrived, staggered by ten minutes and in that order. They were all in full costume.

“Alright, so how should we set this up?” Robin asked when everyone was there and ready.

“I was thinking we start with some one on one sparring.” I suggested.

“How about tournament style?” Wally suggested. “That way we can see who’s the best fighter.”

“Maybe we save the tournament for another time.” I suggested, getting a nod of agreement from Kaldur. “Maybe after one on one we do two on two?”

The group agreed and we quickly set up the main room, activating a tracking system that incorporated the projection computers and sensors in the floor.

“Can this record out matches?” I asked Robin, who was the one setting it up.

“Yeah, from multiple angles.” He said, nodding when he realized what I was going for. “Should I turn it on?”

“No, not yet. Today is about getting a feel for each other. We should save the breakdown of everyone's mistakes and successes another time.”

With the set up done we used the computer to generate random matches, the first popping up on the screen. It was me versus Wally.

“Perfect, time to show off a little bit.” He said, cockily stepping into the arena giving M’gann an interesting look. “Wish me luck M’gann.”

“Good luck!” She called out, before adding in my head, pulsing confidence. *“He is going to need it.”*

I couldn't help but chuckle at her response, getting a weird look from Wally as I joined him.

“Something funny?” He asked as he pulled down his goggles.

“No no, just thought of something funny.” I responded, before sending back. *“I’ll go easy on him, I promise.”*

Now M’gann giggles, earning a look from Robin, whose brow rose in surprise before looking at me and back to M’gann. Luckily Wally didn’t pick up on any of that.

“Alright!” Wally called Robin. “Start the timer!”

I sunk down into a defensive pose, nothing fancy, just a kickboxing stance that I actually knew from before all of this happened. I tensed, ready for the speedster at the timer clicked down to zero. Kid Flash blurred and the fight began.