

[Raven POV]

With David training in France, I decided to focus on my training with Black Canary in order to improve my hand-to-hand combat skills. Long story short, I sucked at it, but I had to start somewhere, and Black Canary was the best teacher I could have asked for.

It was a real struggle to become proficient in another form of combat when all my life I had used my powers to fight. But, as hard as it was, I understood the benefits of learning what Black Canary was trying to teach me.

I didn't like it.

But I understood the value behind the teachings.

I knew that this training would be beneficial for me in the long run, even if it didn't feel like it at the moment. And so, I was pushing myself out of my comfort zone because of it, I had yet to see any improvements, but I still kept my hopes high.

"Don't drop your guard," Black Canary said, landing a hit on my stomach.

Soon after, I collapsed to the ground, clutching my stomach in pain as I tried to catch my breath. Her punch had hurt more than I cared to admit. "What... guard?" I scoffed; when it came to hand-to-hand combat, I had the defenses of an unvaccinated child.

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David is corrupting me with his jokes.

"I'm sorry it hurt, but that's how you learn; after all, nobody enjoys the pain... almost nobody," Dinah chuckled.

I nodded, still trying to catch my breath. "I know."

"Good, now get up. We're not done yet."

I groaned but did as she said, getting back on my feet and into position. This time, however, I was determined to not let her hit me again, but alas, my determination would soon prove to be meaningless in the face of my total lack of skill, with Black Canary sweeping me off my feet, in the most literal meaning of the sense.

"Ouch," I muttered softly, my face flat on the floor. yet again.

"Let's continue again," Black Canary said.

I groaned in response, not trusting myself to say anything else. I was quite literally starting to get a headache from all the falling into the floor, that and I was pretty sure I had a concussion or two; I might be exaggerating, though.

"Let's stop for today," Black Canary chuckled, helping me get up.

I nodded with a faint smile, grateful for the reprieve. "Thank you."

"Don't worry. You'll get better with time and practice," Black Canary said encouragingly.

I nodded, though I wasn't so sure. This was already proving to be harder than I thought, but be that as it may, I was determined not to give up, no matter how much it hurt or how unbelievably bad I was it.

"Take the day off tomorrow," Black Canary reminded me, and I was about to protest, but she cut me off. "You've been working too hard, and you need rest."

I wanted to argue, but I knew she was right, so I simply nodded and bid her farewell before opening a portal back to my place. While not particularly happy with my progress, I had to admit that, in a way, I was looking forward to the day off, if only to rest my aching body.

Maybe I should call David and see how he's doing.

I chuckled to myself for the briefest of moments, imagining his reaction about the events of my training today. It was sure to be a hilariously one-sided conversation.

"Tomorrow," I muttered with a sigh, deciding against calling him, not wanting to trouble him while he was training. Instead, settling for a hot shower and an early night's sleep in the hopes that tomorrow my body wouldn't ache.

I knew I was probably asking too much.

But I was allowed to dream.

Using my magic to take my clothes off, throwing them into the washer, as I stepped into the shower, letting hot water soothe my aching muscles as I stood there motionless, letting it wash over me, eyes closed, trying to clear my mind.

Hot showers really had magical properties.

Letting the water relax me, I stayed in, washing my body thoroughly until the water started to cool, where I then reluctantly got out, wrapping myself in a towel as I went to my room, where I summoned the pajamas David had bought for me.

Pajama ready, I got into bed, burying myself in the blankets as I tried to will myself to sleep.

Alas, my mind wouldn't shut off.

Maybe a book would do.

Getting up, I went over to my small collection of two hundred books for the night and picked one out before crawling back into bed, getting comfortable as I opened the book, letting myself get lost in the story.

It was a riveting story about two souls fighting for control.

[Batman POV]

David was making fast progress with the training I had set for him. His skills sharpening at an alarming rate; in less than two months, he had finished two of the challenges I had originally allocated six months for him to complete.

I had to admit, I was impressed.

But I was also concerned.

The rate at which he was improving was far beyond what I had anticipated. Part of the reason I had him train outside the country was not only so that he could learn from others, but to have him experience the world outside the cage he made for himself.

His impressively fast progress was messing with that part of my plan.

I needed to find a way to slow him down or at least give him a challenge that would take him longer to complete.

But what could I do?

I needed something that would push him to his limits, something that would force him to think outside the box.

Unfortunately, I had nothing right now.

However.

Master Kirigi was bound to buy me some time to think on something.