

[David Lance POV]

I looked at Darkseid, who was just a few meters away from me, unmoving, with his arms crossed behind his back. This was bad, very bad, if a fight broke out, I would lose.

I knew the limits of my strength better than anyone, and right now I was well out of my range. Without the rings, fighting Darkseid would ultimately result in my demise.

I had to be careful.

Sure, he had said he wanted to talk, but even then, even when I knew he wasn't lying, but even then.... Any misstep in this... conversation he wanted could lead to an outcome I couldn't afford to pay as things were.

"Don't waste my time," Darkseid said, his eyes glowing red.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, my voice shattering the terrain within the force field with massive destructive power. Yet Darkseid remained unfazed as if my whispers were nothing more than a summer breeze.

"I don't like to repeat myself," Darkseid growled. "You've taken out two enemies of mine, I owe you one. Blood for blood. Darkseid always pays his debts."

Maybe I could take advantage of this.

"And what are you willing to pay, King of Apokolips," I asked.

Darkseid smiled slightly at this. "We are enemies. I know what you wish, you seek to save this pathetic excuse of a planet, from me. A deal like that can be made if you are willing to listen, that is."

Nothing is ever easy, is it?

"I don't suppose you'd leave this part of the galaxy alone, just because I killed two of your enemies, would you?" I asked, knowing very well the answer to that question.

Darkseid smiled again. "No. But I am open to negotiate. If you want to save this planet, and your galaxy, so badly."

I don't know what he's planning with this conversation, but seeing as I have no other choice at the moment, I'll continue this to see where we get to.

"I'm all ears," I replied.

"I know you know more than you should, which is why I know you know that this is not my true body, but one of many avatars under my control," Darkseid replied, his eyes fixed on mine. "That being clear, I'll get to the point. I will spare this planet, and nearby galaxies, if you join the game."

If I join the game? What the fuck?

"The game?" I asked.

"In your home universe, the human known as Vandal Savage, and I have an agreement. A promise so to speak, to have a war like no other, and I want you to be a part of that war," Darkseid replied.

Savage... and... Of course, I remember that...

Before I could ponder on that bit of information any further, pain like no other invaded my head, as memories I didn't have before invaded my head one by one like a tidal wave.

I remembered it all.

Everything.

Every episode I had ever seen, was now clear as if I had just seen them.

“You want me to join your little game with Savage?” I chuckled, the pain I had just suffered slowly fading away.

Darkseid remained silent for a moment before smiling once again. Three smiles in a day, from Darkseid himself. What a... terrifying sight.

“Exactly, if you agree to this. I will spare this pathetic world and the surrounding worlds,” Darkseid replied. “All you have to do is make my conquest of your homeworld harder.”

So, I was basically trading my fight with him here, for a fight with him in my universe.

“My avatar there won’t know a thing about your visit to this universe, so you will have time to make things interesting in your own way,” Darkseid continued, his words making me pause.

“You will withhold information from your avatar in my universe?” I asked, confused as to why he would do such a thing.

Darkseid laughed at this¹, a booming, dark, terrifying laugh. “I have existed for billions of years. Each universe has a different origin from the one known as Darkseid, but in the end, all remains the same. I am entropy, I am death, I am Darkseid. If I wanted to conquer the multiverse without a challenge, I would’ve done so eons ago. My goal goes beyond conquering

everything, so in each universe, I limit myself to the laws of the Presence, and add a few handicaps myself to make things more interesting for each one of my avatars.”

As he spoke, I could feel the malice leaking out of his body, the power, the true power of the one behind the avatars. It was like staring at the sea, wondering how deep it was, knowing very well that any guess would be wrong.

“So that’s what you want?” I chuckled. “You want to add another handicap for your avatar in my universe. And I happen to be a good option for that, right?”

Darkseid chuckled back. “Yes. So, do we have a deal?”

Even though he worded that as a question, I knew I didn’t have much of a choice. I could tell by the way he had allowed me to feel part of his true power, to see what lay behind the curtains of his avatar.

He was telling me that I either accepted the deal or faced the consequences.

Not that I needed a threat to accept. This deal was saving me the fight now, for doing something I would’ve done anyway in my world.

“We do,” I nodded, extending my hand. “You will leave this part of the galaxy alone, forever, and will not seek to harm it

in any way. And I will join your little game with Vandal, right?”

Darkseid took my hand and shook it. “We have a deal. Good luck.”

Having said that, Darkseid snapped his fingers, and the kinetic field that surrounded us started to dissipate as a boom tube opened in its place.

“I expect a lot from you, don’t disappoint,” Darkseid added, before stepping into the boom tube, and leaving Earth.