

## [David Lance POV]

I walked outside Lucifer's bar to breathe some fresh air, leaning against the door as it closed.

Defeating Brainiac had felt underwhelming. Perhaps it was the fact that Brainiac had no fighting experience, he had the knowledge of a million fights, but no real experience to call his own.

Now, all that was left was the lord of Apokolips, Darkseid.

Darkseid would surely prove to be an entirely different manner.

He had everything Brainiac lacked, making him an impossibly larger threat as a whole.

If I had anything on my side was the fact I didn't intend to fight him alone, not for a moment. I was confident in my skills, but with Darkseid, it was best not to risk it.

"You seemed troubled?" Wioska asked, her voice coming from above.

I looked up, finding Wioska sitting on a widow right above me.

~A little bit.~ I admitted with a nod. ~What are you doing up there? Enjoying the view?~

Wioska chuckled softly. “Hardly, as colorful as Earth is, it’s not my kind of planet. I preferred the ones with a... rougher exterior.”

In hindsight that makes sense, considering how Apokolips looks.

~Fair enough,~ I shrugged, as Wioska jumped down the window landing beside me without a sound.

“So, what’s troubling you?” Wioska inquired calmly.

I paused for a brief moment, considering the answers to that question. As stupid as it sounded, her question had many answers, though most leaned to the same cause, Darkseid.

~You know why,~ I replied, giving her a side look.

Wioska smiled for a moment before turning to look at me. “I still don’t understand why you remain here. For all intents and purposes, you already paid your debt to this universe.”

~I don’t know, call it my last heroic deed,~ I smiled, winking at her.

Wioska chuckled. “You are much more pleasant to deal with without those pesky rings. No sudden burst of emotions, no killing intent, no overwhelming hate.”

Hmm, I guess I do feel calmer and more collected without the rings. No rage, no fear, no hope, no will, at least not in massive amounts.

Right now, I just felt tired... exhausted. Like I want to sleep for a year, and let the world burn while I do so.

~I don't wear them because I like them, well, maybe I like the blue one, it helps a lot when it comes to healing, but as for the rest, I despise them with all my heart,~ I said, taking a deep breath. ~The only reason I still use them is because I need them to fill the gap in power between me and some of my enemies. Once that need is no longer there, I will destroy them, or throw them away.~

Wioska chuckled once again. “Throwing them away you say? I find that rather amusing, especially considering they are some of the most powerful weapons in creation. Allegedly.”

I shrugged. ~What can I say, I hate them. Their existence reminds me of every bad moment I have endured here, it's a constant reminder of my suffering, so why would I keep them? Unlike most people seem to think, I don't enjoy pain.~

I hated the rings and everything they represented. Though I was honestly considering keeping the blue one, its healing capabilities were remarkably good, outstanding in every aspect.

But for the rest, I hated them all.

Especially the red one.

“Don’t mistake my previous comment for a lack of approval,” Wioska replied, putting her hand on my shoulder. “To be entirely honest, I approve of your choice wholeheartedly. After all, a warrior that needs trinkets to fight is no warrior at all. If you keep them, you will grow dependent on them, and eventually, that will only hinder your growth, stagnating you as a mediocre failure.”

I honestly didn’t care if they hindered my growth or not, I just didn’t want them. Benefits or cons be damned.

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## **[Granny Goodness POV]**

War had been called off.

As to why the war had been called off, we didn't know yet. Only that it had to do with little Red defeating Brainiac.

It was very unlike our lord to cancel a call for war, but who were we to question his wisdom, his power? A good servant does as he or she is told, without hesitation.

And I was a good servant, no... Granny was the best there was.

"Granny Goodness," Darkseid said, his voice echoing through the lovingly haunting halls of his castle. "To the war room, immediately."

Hearing his orders, I moved to the war room to find my God waiting for me.

"My life is yours to command," I kneeled.

"Prepare a boom tube to earth, I wish to speak with Red," Darkseid ordered.

A most curious order, one worded in a most curious way. He wishes to speak with red, not kill him... how... odd. "As you wish."

"Next time you hesitate, it will be your last breath," Darkseid added, clearly seeing through my concerns.

I nodded, as pain like never before invaded my body. I deserved this, our god was right, who was I to question his motives, I was only here to see his will be made a reality.

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## **[David Lance POV]**

I continued talking with Wioska until she decided to go out and explore, leaving me to roam the streets of the city alone. Well, almost alone.

Someone was tailing me.

~Batman, don't you have something better to do?~ I asked, knowing very well that from wherever he was hiding he could see me sign.

“You defeated Brainiac,” Batman replied, coming out of the shadows.

~I did, though my question still stands. What are you doing here? Darkseid is still a threat, one bigger than me by a larger margin, so piss off, you have a Justice League to rebuild,~ I replied.

Batman at this narrowed his eyes. “You are no better than Superman ever was. You claim you’re a hero, but all you do is for your own gain, you kill, you sacrifice, and you don’t care about anything after you’re done.”

I smiled at him. ~You think I claim to be a hero? That’s adorable, I was a hero. At one point in my life, not anymore, I’m just a guy, tired of this game you heroes and villains play.~

Batman frowned.

~There was a time, I was content with playing the game like everyone else. Not anymore, so zip it with your self-righteous shit, I’m not interested in what you think, so save it for the next Robin,~ I replied, turning around only to see a few more figures appear.

Flash.

Harley.

Aquaman.

Catwoman.

And... Black Canary.

I turned around. ~Oh I see. You plan to capture me! That's just sweet. Let me guess, you saw me without the rings, and said, this is the time.~

Batman tensed, as did everyone else.

~I won't lie, this might be your best shot at capturing me. Though be warned that although this might be your best shot, you still have no chance whatsoever,~ I continued, readying myself for a fight. ~But don't let my words discourage you. Try your best.~