

## Chapter 7 - Introductions

“This cave was the original secret sanctuary of the Justice League.” Batman said, pacing on the solid concrete floor before turning to face the four younger heroes.

While he talked, I stood alongside M’gann, my back leant against the metal frame of the Justice League’s super secret teleport device, a Zeta-Tube. The machine was a fairly impressive piece of technology, reproducible super science that was actually around fifty years old. The machine teleported any individual to any other platform using Zeta-Beam energy, something that sounded so retro science fiction I was surprised there wasn’t a cheesy echo every time someone said it. When I jokingly asked what happened to my soul when we teleported, Batman had very seriously explained that the process had been vetted by several mystical experts, and that my soul would not be affected by the teleportation. I suppose I shouldn’t have been so surprised considering what had been happening the last few months.

As I listened to Batman talk to the younger heroes, explaining where they were and what their new team would be doing, I looked over at M’gann, who was nervously fidgeting. With a smile I took a deep breath, sending over calming vibes through the presence I could feel. She had pulled away slightly since last night, it no longer felt like a mental hug. Instead I could feel her not far away, present but distant. The Martian girl looked over at me and smiled, before focusing back on Batman.

I was a little shocked at how quickly I had adapted to having M’gann in mental contact. It was reassuring, like a hand on your shoulder, without being intrusive. We had separated when she dropped me off at my apartment, and I was shocked at how much I missed the connection. At first I was worried she had somehow affected me, maybe got me addicted to it, but by the time I actually went to sleep I was sure that it was just me missing the companionship. I was even more confident when I didn’t feel lacking or any cravings for the connection when I woke up.

“Yes, but covert.”

I frowned, listening to the older heroes describe what kind of missions my new teammates and I would be going on. Covert missions were, in theory, safer, since the main objective was to not engage in open conflict. But things rarely stayed simple and plans never survived contact with the enemy. That alone wasn’t a big deal. My teammates were, while a bit young, all relatively well known and experienced heroes. With some training, some team building and plenty of strategy we would be well equipped to handle any reasonable amount of escalation. The problem was that when covert missions went wrong, they usually went wrong in big, complicated, messy ways, because there was a reason you were sneaking around in the first place.

“The six of you will be that team.”

I pushed off of the metal frame and stepped closer to M’gann and J’onn, who had told me his Martian name when they picked me up and brought me to the nearest Zeta-Tube teleporter this morning. He had also confirmed what M’gann had mentioned the night before. I was particularly sensitive to telepathy and mental intrusions. It would never lead to any psychic powers or anything, but I would definitely feel any intrusions or influence. He attributed me being able to feel the changes in my mind to this sensitivity.

“Wait, six?”

I couldn't help but smirk, walking forward as Batman looked behind Robin at us. It wasn't a small feat to have stayed hidden from three heroes, even if they were younger than me, especially Robin, the student of the apparent king of stealth. Superboy had noticed us immediately, the benefit of super hearing.

The three younger heroes who hadn't known we were there turned and looked at us, surprised but quickly recovering.

“This is Miss Martian, Martian Manhunter's niece, as well as Warren Reeves, a yet unnamed metahuman hero.”

“About that, I think I picked a name.” I said, getting a surprised look from M’gann. “I was thinking Skarn.”

“Very well.” Batman agreed without missing a beat. “Skarn is a dimensional refugee who has been here for several months.”

“I remember you.” Kid Flash said, stepping forward. “You're the one who saved that woman and kid on the fourth. What, did you get ice powers or something from it?”

“No, not quite.” I replied with a chuckle, “I’m a geokinetic and enhanced human.”

“Yeeeeeahh... I’m sure you're great.” Kid Flash said before turning to face M’gann. “It is very nice to meet you, Miss Martian. I’m Kid Flash, this is Robin and that is Kaldur. Don't worry about remembering their names.”

I shook my head at Kid Flash’s antics before catching Superboy's eye. I give him a nod which he returns as the other remembers of the team come closer, introducing themselves.

“Superboy, come say hello.” Robin said, waving the stoic clone closer.

“We’ve already met.” He said, though he did come closer.

"It's nice to see you again though." Miss Martian said, smiling at him.

"It is, though we still need to finish our spar." I said, smirking slightly, sticking out my hand to him. "I was in the lead."

The teenager looked down at my hand before reaching out and shaking it once. It was a little rough, but I saw the smallest of smiles on his face.

"Today is the day." Aqualad said from beside me, getting my attention.

"... Huh? Is that some sort of reference I'm missing or...?"

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After we were done introducing ourselves, Batman led the group through an abridged tour, showing the most salient parts of the cave, which I learned was called Mount Justice. After showing us a few things Batman and the other chaperones left to assumedly do more important things than taking us on a tour, leaving us to explore on our own. Shortly after that, the three ex sidekicks had to leave, leaving M'gann, Superboy and myself alone, save the people rushing around to update and repair the cave turned secret bunker.

I couldn't help but frown as the three younger heroes almost scrambled to leave with their respective hero mentors to go on patrol or solve their own problems.

"What's wrong?" M'gann asked, noticing my frown.

"... I expected them to stay longer." I admitted. "They obviously have important roles elsewhere but from what I understood this team was supposed to be the next big step past those roles."

"I guess, I didn't think of that." She admitted, before giving me a smile. "I'm sure it's fine, they just learned about this place today, we will probably see them tomorrow."

We continued exploring, finding out way to the living quarters, a large series of hallways lined with dozens of rooms.

"Damn, this place is huge." I said, turning a corner to find another hallway of modest bedrooms. "It has three wings of rooms."

*"It feels so... empty."* M'gann said, floating down the hallway. *"Not quite creepy but... close."*

*"I know what you mean."* I agreed. *"Hopefully with the team around it won't be so bad. And with any luck more people will join."*

*"That would be great!"*

"I guess we should pick rooms?" I said out loud, getting a squeeing excited noise from M'gann and a stoic nod from Superboy.

M'gann flew ahead again, inspecting all the rooms despite having peaked into most of them before just a few minutes ago, as well as them all being almost exactly the same. I ended up just picking one at random, while M'gann picked one across from me. Superboy... picked the furthest one from us, in a completely different hallway.

"You don't want to stay next to us?" M'gann asked, sounding a little bit hurt.

"No." He explained simply with a shake of his head. "Too loud."

"O-oh. Sorry..." M'gann said, even more hurt.

"I assume that has something to do with super hearing?" I asked before she could start apologizing.

"Yeah." He agreed. "Not so bad when we are active but it makes it hard to sleep."

"Oh!" M'gann said, suddenly all sunshine and smiles, getting a chuckle from me. "I understand, I had something similar when I first came here. Well technically the opposite problem. It was too quiet here."

I could feel her lean on me mentally for a moment, sending feelings of gratefulness before pulling back.

"Maybe you should both try noise machines. Or ambient noise tracks. Or just plain old music." I suggested. "They might help both of you to be honest."

"Noise machine?" Superboy asked as we left our now claimed rooms and walked back towards one of the four way splits that lead to different parts of the cave.

"Yeah, they make a machine that generates random white static, or you could find them online." I explained. "Some people use them to help sleep or kind of zen out. At least they did in my universe. God, that still sounds crazy to say."

I couldn't help but smile as M'gann gave me a mental hug, feelings of support and sympathy coming through her presence. I pushed back some gratitude and gave her a nod and a shrug.

"I... guess I could try one out." He said, a bit unsure.

The next room we stumbled into was a library, a rather large room with rows of books. M'gann floated up and onto the second floor, leaving Superboy on the ground with me as we looked around. I walked to the nearest shelf, scanning through.

"Looks like a lot of reference material... I wonder if they have any other stuff." I said flipping through a medical journal before putting the book back.

"There are some up here!" M'gann called down. "This section is science fiction."

I looked over my shoulder at Superboy, who somehow managed to look both stoic, bored and annoyed. He had some serious resting pissed face. M'gann flew down from the top floor, landing next to me.

"Do you read a lot?" She asked, her normal happy smile on her face.

"I didn't used to." I admitted. "But with the upgrade I got it's a lot faster, and I remember more. Much more fun to read when it doesn't take you a month to get through a book."

"What about you Superboy?" She asked, peering over my shoulder to look at him. "Do you like reading?"

I couldn't help but wince. From the sounds of it he really wouldn't have had the chance to do much reading.

"I haven't really been able to." He said, looking around the room. "What's the point anyway? Cadmus uploaded everything I needed to know already."

"They might have uploaded some stuff, but what about things you do for enjoyment?" I asked out, pointedly not looking at him. "Everyone needs a hobby, some way to blow off steam and work through their shit."

"I... I used to watch sitcoms when I was back on mars. Earth sitcoms." She said, looking nervous for some reason.

"I used to play video games." I suggested with a shrug. "That was a bit expensive when I got dumped here, so I started reading instead."

Superboy looked like he wasn't sure what to say, clearly a bit overwhelmed. I frowned and realized this must be a lot for someone who less than a week ago was basically a brainwashed drone.

“Take a look around if you want Superboy, or look some stuff up on the computer. Me and M’gann are going to check out the kitchen again.”

He nodded absentmindedly before turning to look at the library, as me and M’gann left. She looked like she was about to ask me why we were leaving but I pushed against her presence next to my mind, silently asking her to hold off.

*“Why are we leaving him alone?”* She asked as we walked towards the kitchen. *“He seemed... lost.”*

*“He needed some space.”* I answered, walking into the kitchen and opening the fridge, happy to find it full stocked. *“He is struggling to adapt. I’m not an expert but he reminds me of someone going through culture shock, trying to fit into a situation he has no basis for.”*

*“So shouldn't we help him through it?”* She asked, watching me. *“I feel bad for leaving him alone.”*

*“That's 'cause you're a good person. Martian? Is 'person' specific to humans?”* I asked as I pulled out the ingredients to make a sandwich. *“I feel like it's not.”*

*“I think it applies to everyone.”* She agreed, watching me stack some deli meats on some bread. *“Are we supposed to be eating the food?”*

*“I don't see why not.”* I answered with a shrug. *“You want some?”*

I could feel her saying no mentally so I shrugged, continuing the process, making two roast beef sandwiches and spreading some potato chips on the side of the plate. When M’gann sent me a questioning vibe through the connection I shrugged.

*“I said we should give him some alone time, not that we would abandon him.”* I thought before looking down the hall and speaking in a normal voice. “Superboy, there is a sandwich on the counter for you, you can get it and go back to the library if you want.”

*“Oh, that was nice of you.”*

I shrugged and took my sandwich to the table, M’gann floating over with me, sitting down on the nearby couch. I was about to respond when Superboy came up from the hallway and looked at the sandwich. He picked it up and after a moment looked up at me.

“Thank you.” He said before turning and walking out.

We both watched him leave and I couldn't help but frown. He seemed like an empty shell, like he was waiting for inputs to react to, though admittedly that could just be because he didn't know us very well yet.

*"We can give him some space and try to connect to him when we are training and doing team exercises."* I suggested, before looking over at M'gann, who nodded in agreement. *"Has anyone mentioned any of that stuff to you by the way?"*

*"No, not really."* She said, frowning slightly as she was thinking. *"I mean Batman said that Black Canary would be in charge of that."*

*"Yeah, I remember. I wonder if she is still here."*

For a moment M'gann's eyes glowed green as she focused, before the glow faded and she shook her head.

*"No, she must have left already. Sorry."*

*"Wait, your range is the whole base?"* I asked incredulously. *"That's intense."*

*"Kind of? When I focus at least."* She said before continuing. *"It kind of depends. I could pick you out farther, and Uncle J'onnn even farther. It's easier with familiar minds. I don't know Black Canary that well but I'm pretty sure she isn't here, unless she is hiding in one of the outer corners."*

I smirk before focusing on an image of Canary tucked up behind some boxes, peeking out over them and giggling. Holding the image in my head I gently push it against M'gann's mental presence. She gasped and looked over at me, before giggling softly.

*"That was really good Warren."* She thought, giving me a big smile. *"I got the image pretty clearly. Here..."*

Nothing happened for a moment before I felt M'gann's presence shift slightly and suddenly I mentally had an idea of Black Canary looking down at the main room of the cave, giggling as she hid in the rafters. I laughed at the image, smirking as I thought up another one.

We spent the next five minutes laughing and coming up with new and more ridiculous places that Black Canary could be hiding from M'gann. When I was done eating and M'gann had finally come up with the best one, hiding among posters of herself, frozen in the same pose, I got up and made my way to the Zeta-Tube.

*"I gotta get home so I can start packing. I'm pretty sure I'll be back tomorrow, I don't exactly have a lot of stuff."*

*"Alright! I'll see you then."*

“Recognized. Skarn. B-06” The robotic voice of the Zeta-Tube said, and I couldn't help but smile as I walked through into the flash of light.