

Leaving the pyrokinetic android alone might not have been the best idea, but she was legless, couldn't fly, and was sealed in stone up to her eyes. If she managed to make her way out of that, then she had been sandbagging our fight pretty hard.

At an unspoken agreement, I rushed off to help M'gann and Tora, while Wally streaked away to Kaldur and Kyle in a blur.

M'gann, who could feel that I was coming, set me up for an attack by flying away from me and chucking anything she could lift with her mind at the hydrokinetic robot, while Tora did her best to keep his blasts of water from hitting both of them by freezing the torrents of water before he could really pour any energy into them.

As M'gann and Tora moved I pulled up a block of stone from beneath me, launching myself up into the air. With a twist of my arm, I once again reformed the stone spike around my hand, wrist, and forearm. I was inches from smashing it into his head when a blast of electricity caught me in the side, blasting me off course. I hit the ground hard, tumbling a short distance before coming to a stop in a smoking heap. I could hear M'gann shout, even as I started struggling to get back to my feet.

As I stood, still dazed by the electricity and impact, I vacantly noted that the electrokinetic had blasted me, his arm reaching out and still sparking with electricity. He had somehow found a chance to help his compatriot despite the fact that he was fighting against Aqualad, Kid Flash, and Superboy.

I would have been annoyed if my teammates didn't immediately punish him for being distracted. Superboy grabbed his arm and held it out straight while Aqualad jumped and slashed his weapon downwards, his water bearers shifting into a sword to slice the robot's arm off, clean through the extra armor. I had just enough time to see Kid Flash take advantage of the android's flinching to knock its leg out from under it.

I shook my head and focused, just in time to jump up and over a blast of water that the hydrokinetic sent my way. I ran around him, keeping my distance to keep from getting blasted again. After a moment I sent M'gann an impression of an idea, which she immediately mentally confirmed. I suddenly turned, now heading toward the robot, forcing him to shift his focus. When he blasted me with a stream of water he was pulling from the ground, I lifted a massive chunk of stone in front of myself before jumping up on top of it. From there I lept over him, my shield held downwards to protect most of my body.

Sensing an easy hit, the red and gold armored android aimed a blast of water up at me, slamming into my shield and lifting me up into the air. He kept up the pressure, raising his other hand to add another blast of water... only for M'gann to slam the large chunk of stone I had just pulled up into him. She was straining to lift it, but she still slammed it into him twice more before throwing it into the side, the whole area shaking from the impact.

Free of the crude weapon she caught me in her TK as I fell back down, letting me down safely.

The android, who was now dented and beaten, his limbs bent at bad angles, struggled to move for a moment before going slowly limp, its joints sparking for a moment before it stopped moving completely.

For a long moment, the area was silent, the dust we kicked up settling, and the water the hydrokinetic pulled up from the ground soaking back into the earth. The fires that the pyrokinetic had caused while she was fighting Kid Flash and I still burned in the background, throwing up smoke and light. In the distance, I could see that the train had been stopped. Robin was sitting on the last train, his legs dangling off of the side.

Standing behind him, holding Professor Ivo with his arms behind his back was Batman with Superman and Wonder Woman on either side of him. As he was too far away to be heard without shouting, Batman raised his hand to his ear.

“Professor Ivo has been secured, are all android threats neutralized?” He asked through the communications devices.

“Yes, all threats neutralized,” Kaldur answered, breathing heavily.

“Good. Put out the fires and regroup,” He ordered, Kaldur nodding in agreement. “Support teams are incoming.”

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Within several minutes a wave of police and more showed up to secure the area, cordoning off the battleground. After our statements were taken and the scene was photographed I was asked politely to unseal the pyrokinetic from her partial stone tomb. I did so, but only after everyone had cleared the area and Superboy was nearby, ready to support me if she was playing possum. The androids, who had all turned themselves off at some point after being defeated, as well as all their parts, were secured and shipped off to the closest Star Labs. Not long after that we climbed back into Bioship and headed back to the cave, where we would wait for a debriefing from Batman.

About an hour after we arrived home, the intimidating hero stepped through the Zeta-Tube. We had started a quick, impromptu dinner, but we quickly made our way to the main area, meeting Batman there. The briefing started off by confirming the red and gold androids had arrived safely at a secure star labs facility before continuing to go over more information.

“Your strategy for this mission was well done, both your plan for the handoff of the fake containers, and your initial plan for entering the freight car,” He said with a nod, after closing out the basic information he had been going over on the holoprojector. “There was no way for you to predict how much backup Professor Ivo would have, especially not from who appears to be T.O. Morrow, or at least his creations. They haven't amicably worked together in quite some time. The only way to avoid that ambush would have been to not infiltrate at all, which wasn't an option.”

As he drew his analysis of our performance to a close, Kaldur tensed, and I internally prepared myself for what came next.

“That said, the spur-of-the-moment plan to separate the team could have been better thought out,” He commented. “Inside the train car Professor Ivo was in just as much danger as you, staying inside could have defused the situation without much of a fight. Further, Kid Flash, Skarn, both of you were almost seriously hurt when you stopped to chat during the fight.”

I could have responded to his assertion, and explained what we were talking about, but he was right enough that the details didn't matter. I could *feel* Wally behind me, barely holding back from making some sort of comment.

“Kaldur, sending Robin to stop the train almost gave Professor Ivo the chance to escape. I had to intervene to keep that from happening,” He said, looking at our leader. “Your options were limited, but what could you have done differently?”

“Destroyed the monkey robots so he didn't have a way to escape the ice,” Kaldur responded quickly, clearly having spent some time thinking about this.

“A solid alternative, though whether that would have made difference is conjecture,” He said with a nod. “I want all of you to review the footage captured from Bioship and brainstorm what you could have improved on, or done differently. Whether you do this together or separately is up to you, but I want a written report of what you come up with either way.”

Batman looked at each of us, and together we nodded. It was a good idea, and we would probably end up doing it together. When we had all confirmed his direction he nodded and continued.

“Still, even with the issues I have mentioned, as well as a few other smaller moments, this mission was a success. Professor Ivo was captured, three violent androids were apprehended, none of you were hurt and property damage was kept to a minimum. Good work.”

The seasoned hero went over a few more points, mostly discussing the implications of Professor Ivo and T.O. Morrow working together. Red Tornado was extremely concerned upon learning that T.O. Morrow was producing more androids, though Batman had no news on their level of sentience.

When he finally left we went back to our dinner, which was just a few plates of sandwiches that M'gann and I put together. We ate silently for a while before Kaldur finally spoke up.

"I would like to ap-"

"Don't even start that shit Kaldur." Robin said, cutting him off. "Tonight was a win, even if it had its rough parts. Our inexperience showed but considering how badly it could have gone, we did well. You've got nothing to apologize for."

"He's right Kaldur. No one is perfect." Kyle added, among others nodding in agreement.

"While acknowledging what we did wrong is important to improve, we need to remember what we did well too," I pointed out. "Our initial plan to convincingly give up the decoy containers worked well. Kaldur, your plan to breach the train car was well done as well."

"We should have stopped the train first." Kaldur said, shaking his head. "Perhaps even before breaching."

"Hindsight is twenty/twenty, and we will have plenty of time to poke holes in our actions later," I pointed out. "Speaking of which, we should keep our workout light tomorrow and skip our sparring to go over the footage together. We can work together to make a combined report."

The group agreed and dinner continued, eventually ending when Wally needed to return home. Before he left he handed the meteoric iron back to me.

"We need to design you some sort of fist protector," I said, focusing for a moment to shift the metal into a single clump. "If you didn't have to worry about shattering your fist you could do some serious damage."

For a second he winced before nodding in agreement, flexing his hand, which was a bit scuffed and red.

"It has upper limits, something to do with how the energy I use interacts with physics," he explained. "Flash doesn't have to worry about that, the energy protects him from the impacts. He can't punch through concrete by taking advantage of the fact that force equals mass multiplied by an object's acceleration, but he would have been able to do some significant damage to the androids without your brass knuckles."

I nodded, understanding that it took a lot for him to casually talk about his power's shortcomings.

"I'll talk to Batman about getting you some lightweight, reinforced gauntlets," I said. "He might already have something or we might need to get something built from scratch."

We talked a bit more about our options and what he wanted before he headed off to the Zeta-Tube and I returned to the living room. Most of the team had gone to bed or to their private rooms, leaving me and M'gann alone in the living room area.

*"Everything alright?"* She asked as I plopped down next to her, easily picking up on my sour mood.

With a mental sigh, I explained Wally's situation to her, and my own frustration at being unable to help.

*"He is a hero, and while he can be a pain in the butt, he doesn't deserve to be tortured by his powers like that,"* I said when I was finished. *"I keep on thinking that there must be something I can do, that any of us could do, but according to him everything has already been done."*

*"That is sad, he doesn't deserve that,"* She agreed, sliding in her seat to lay her head on my shoulder and lean against me. *"But it sounds like there isn't much we can do but keep our eyes open and support him as best we can. Who knows, maybe something..."*

She trailed off for a moment, her mind working furiously. I could feel it spinning faster as she thought something through.

*"Warren, was the Flash one of the heroes who fought against the power-replicating android?"*

I stopped to think, my enhanced memory replaying the short clip of the fight that Batman had shown us. I nodded in confirmation.

*"Yes, he was in the footage that Batman showed us. Why?"*

*"Because, if the android was really replicating powers, meaning he encountered them and then copied them, and Flash was fighting him..."*

*"Then he would have copied the Flash's power, which could give a lot of insight into how the energy Wally says they use works. Damn M'gann, that's a good idea."*

I stood from the couch and pulled out my phone. It was getting to be on the late side, but this was important enough that it didn't matter. I clicked on Batman's contact number and held the phone to my ear. It rang twice before he picked up.

"Skarn, what is it?"

“Batman, a question about the android the League fought. Was it actually copying your abilities or was it using its own tech to mimic them?”

“... It appeared to be duplicating rather than mimicking, but we won't know for sure until Star Labs begins its analysis. Why?”

“Well if it managed to copy Flash's ability completely, including the unknown energy that both he and Kid Flash uses, it could provide a lot of insight into how it works-”

“Which we could then use to better understand Kid Flash's issues, maybe even develop a way to treat them,” He finished. “Solid reasoning. I will inform Star Labs to add that to their primary objectives in their analysis. Good work.”

“M'gann is the one who came up with it, I'm just the messenger,” I corrected, smiling as she blushed, still sitting on the couch “If possible I would like to see the lab reports from all of the androids, both T.O. Morrow's and Professor Ivo's, even if it's a dead end for Kid Flash.”

“I'll make sure they get to you. Batman out.”

I hung up the phone and put it back in my pocket before reaching out with my hand, M'gann reaching out and taking it. I pulled her up into my arms with a smile, giving her a hug as she rested her head on my shoulders. I held back a chuckle, realizing that she was shifting her shape to give me a better hug.

*“That was a great idea M'gann,” I said with a smile. “Batman said he would keep us in the loop, but we won't know until Star Labs is done with their examination.”*

We stood together for a minute or so, enjoying each others presence, both mental and physical. Eventually, though, it was time to call it a day. We shared a brief kiss, both of us blushing before we headed off to bed.