

The low thrum of the air filtration system, as well as the hum of the energy systems, was the only background noise permeating the hermetically sealed meeting room of the Justice League. The whine of servo motors moving was just barely audible over the ambient noise as Red Tornado stood from his chair. He scanned the room, letting the silence hang for a few seconds to ensure everyone was ready to hear his report. Additionally, his data on human interactions showed that humans frequently preferred pauses between actions to transition between them.

“The in-depth analysis of the pyrokinetic android has been complete,” He announced, his robotic and monotone voice easily reaching everyone. “Between the external and internal similarities between this android and myself, the likelihood that it was constructed by Professor T.O. Morrow is a near certainty.”

“And its partner?” Green Lantern Stewart asked.

“The analysis on the hydrokinetic is ongoing, but it would not be unreasonable to draw the same conclusion,” Red Tornado responded.

“I was under the impression that Morrow and Ivo did not get along,” Wonder Woman asked. “Did Ivo steal them?”

“Correct, they were rivals at best,” Red Tornado confirmed. “However, there was no evidence of a control mechanism or non-standard modifications. They were there under orders from Morrow to protect and assist Doctor Ivo.”

“We all thought Morrow was dead. Why did he give up that advantage?” Green Arrow asked. “And to help someone he wasn't very fond of?”

“He wanted me,” Red Tornado answered bluntly. “In exchange for offering him assistance and protection, Ivo would assist in capturing me after Amazo was rebuilt and later improved.”

“How did you figure that out?” The Flash asked.

“While analyzing the pyrokinetic, we discovered that it shared a sentience matrix similar to my own, though it was disabled.” He announced, sounds of shock and surprise coming from various members. “It also had a surprising amount of memory storage in that matrix, far more than a simple combat android would need. Unfortunately, we required a way to read those memory files.”

“That's why the analysis took so long. You focused on the pyrokinetic,” Batman stated, leaning forward. “Were you successful?”

"We were. Together with Star Lab scientists, a translation program was created. The footage revealed a young Professor T.O. Morrow discussing the plan to defend Ivo and the promise of him aiding in my capture. He was quite adamant I was required for something important."

"Like... He needed you for parts?" Green Arrow asked, Black Canary slapping his shoulder after his question.

"Unlikely. I cannot speculate as to why I am required," The red android admitted. "Just that I am essential to his latest plan."

"That is worrying," Wonder Woman said. "Perhaps you should remain on the Watchtower while we investigate."

"No," He responded simply, pausing for a long moment before continuing. "I do not know why, but I find the idea of remaining inactive while others pursue my creator... distasteful."

"We can discuss this later, Red Tornado," Batman said. "But I suggest activating your League beacon if you leave the tower or Mount Justice."

"Very well," The expressionless automaton said. "Regardless, that is not all we found in the memory banks of the pyrokinetic. I believe the League should see the first before the latest actions of T.O. Morrow."

A large holoscreen popped up behind and above Red Tornado, blank for a moment before snapping to a still image. After a moment, the projection started, showing a video of some sort of park, with people milling around. White metal pillars surrounded the space, supporting some kind of track, with green trees dotting the landscape underneath. The video feed turned, watching a retro-futuristic train zip around on the rail. As the train passed, the view settled on a large globe before moving down to look at a familiar superhero.

"Is that... Jay?" The Flash asked. "Holy hell, he looks young!"

"He is. This is the 1939 world fair. I recognize the decorations," Wonder Woman responded, her voice thick with nostalgia. "He must be twenty, twenty-one. Red Tornado, what does this mean?"

The android said nothing, the video feed continuing. As the view spun around, it became more and more evident that this wasn't a camera feed but the view of the androids' memory from their eyes. The video continued, showing the android juggling fire, showing off to the civilians around them.

"Oh, Hera..." Wonder Woman said as the video spun again, focusing on a hood-covered man.

The cape-clad villain pointed an energy weapon of some sort, not at the android, but at Jay Garrick, the original Flash. He pulled the trigger, and the weapon glowed for a split second before firing a blast of blue crackling energy. The video seemed to slow as the view shifted, the android moving until it was between the blast of energy and the Jay Garrick. The blast of energy struck the android in the side, and the perspective spun sickeningly, everything a blur before the screen went dark.

“That... Red Tornado, explain what we just witnessed,” Wonder Woman all but demanded, clearly recognizing something.

“It appears as though I was not Professor T.O. Morrow's first attempt at infiltrating the Justice Society of America,” He explained. “The pyrokinetic android contains all memories of Danette Reilly, otherwise known as Firebrand.”

“Are you sure?” Batman asked, getting an immediate nod of confirmation.

“Nearly certain. The memory files show many moments only she could know and includes mundane things that would serve little real purpose to replicate,” The red and yellow android explained. “It is difficult to know for sure why she shut down, as the blast would not have been lethal to her, and she has since been repaired, but there is very little doubt that the pyrokinetic android is Danette Reilly.”

Silence filled the room out of shock and respect for Wonder Woman, who was coming to terms with the fact that one of her good friends, once thought dead, was, in fact, an android infiltrator. After a long pause, Red Tornado once again spoke.

“I would like to petition the League for permission to repair my... sister.” He said. “The damage to her frame was severe, but her sentience matrix and more important features are intact. If we re-enable the connection and disable her pyrokinesis to be safe, I believe she could be saved. I rose above my programming and would like to offer my sister the same opportunity.”

Again the room was silent as they digested what Red tornado had just said, but eventually, Batman spoke up.

“As long as the frame is de-powered, and they are no longer compelled by their orders, I see no issue with attempting to rehabilitate them,” He said, looking around the room. “Does anyone disagree?”

After a long moment, no one said anything prompting Red Tornado to nod slowly

“Thank you. That is the end of my report.”

The android turned and walked around the table, sitting back in his chair, Dr. Renault looked at her neighbor as he did. After an extended silence, everyone still working through what Red Tornado had just dropped into their laps, Batman eventually coughed and stood, getting everyone's attention.

"Before we move on to the Star Labs report on Amazo, which is finally complete, I want to discuss the New Titan's latest mission and consequential investigation," He said.

"How did they do?" The Flash asked.

"They did a commendable job," The stoic hero admitted. "They implemented a combination of patrols and a rapid deployment method that led to three dozen arrests, assisted in several accidents, and saved a large group of people from a severe fire. They also halted a gang shootout that could have easily spiraled out of control."

"What kind of combination?" Green Arrow asked.

"Kid Flash and Superboy, along with a pair riding a motorcycle, patrolled the city, keeping their eyes open for anything that was going unreported, while the remaining team members waited in Miss Martian's martian spacecraft," He explained. "When a police call went through, they could be on-site in minutes, frequently less. It was considerably more effective than normal patrolling."

"Such a strategy requires a mobile base, as well as a large team," Martian Manhunter pointed out.

"Which is exactly what they have been saying from the beginning," Black Canary said. "A team-focused hero group could be more effective than lone wolves."

"How did their investigation go?" Hawkwoman asked, her transparent projection clicking with just a hint of static.

Both she and her husband were still patrolling the borders of Quroc and Bailya, keeping the peace as the once antagonistic countries settled after Queen Bee's arrest. They planned to leave within the next two weeks.

"As well as one could hope, especially given their relative inexperience," Batman explained. "With a little help from my resources, they managed to track down the arms dealer who was selling the exotic weapons almost immediately. Miss Martial pulled his source's location from his mind, and they quickly moved to take it down. It was quick, clean with little collateral damage or unnecessary casualties."

"What was the source, anyway?"

“A recently fired LexCorp engineer,” Batman explained. “He was let go an hour before Lex Luthor was arrested and took advantage of the confusion and chaos that ensued to steal the plans for two dozen pieces of high-tech equipment. He then used cheap off-the-shelf components to construct that equipment. ”

“He made high-tech, exotic weapons from off-the-shelf parts?” Aquaman asked with a concerned wince.

“Made incredibly unstable, low-powered versions of that equipment,” Batman corrected. “By all reports, Doctor Mikron O’Jeneus was a brilliant engineer with a promising career, but was caught stealing parts from Lex Corp workshops to make personal creations and was let go.”

As Batman talked, an image of the aforementioned doctor appeared on a holo-projected screen behind him, as well as pictures of several pieces of the equipment he had been producing.

“The assault on the abandoned machine plant that Dr. O’Jeneus was using as a base was clean, well thought out, and well executed,” The bat-themed hero continued. “Despite the gang members that Dr. O’Jeneus was hiring and equipping with exotic tech.”

He proceeded to explain a generalized overview of the assault on the basement facility, including several clips from body cameras that the New Titan’s wore during missions. When the conversation about the patrols and subsequent investigation ended, Batman passed the discussion to the Flash, shifting to the Amazo report.

“The breakdown of Amazo and its abilities took much longer than anticipated because, apparently, Star Labs had to put together a new division, Magictech,” The Scarlet Speedster explained.

Images of the non-sentient android appeared on the holoprojector, showing him in stages of disassembly, eventually reaching a point where a rune-encrusted skeleton was revealed, all connected to the central core located in the android's chest.

“Apparently, the android was using a combination of live analysis and ‘sympathetic magic’ to reproduce our abilities,” He explained, squinting down at the report he was reading from.

“Ivo must have gotten help with this,” Wonder Woman said, crossing her arms. “He has no experience with basic magic, never mind whatever powerful magic that could create such powerful effects.”

“Most likely, especially because multiple sets of fingerprints, including Ivo's, were found in the internal skeleton,” The Flash agreed. “It's a bit out of my wheelhouse, but essentially it would use whatever opening attack we used to create a link between itself and the attacker. It would then burn a frankly obscene amount of energy using the connection to mimic that power.”

“Even mine?” Black Canary asked. “I specifically remember him opening his jaw to scream.”

“That’s where the magitech comes in,” The speedster explained. “They are still analyzing exactly how it works, but they are confident this is the general idea. The magic was working with the technology to duplicate our powers. Thankfully there are limitations. The ‘sympathetic magic’ has a time limit, meaning that Amazo would have eventually lost his connection to all our powers. The system also takes an incredible amount of power. Star Labs is being cautious with the frame because whatever is in that core must be capable of releasing a staggering amount of energy.”

“Could the Light have been responsible for whoever was helping Ivo?” Captain Marvel asked.

“It’s possible, but we don’t know what other magic experts they have,” Hawkman responded. “Klarion is powerful, but I think such detailed and orderly work is beyond him.”

“We will keep a lookout for more information,” Batman said. “Now that we know this, we can ask Ivo some pointed questions about any other associates.”

“What about his super speed,” Superman asked, leaning forward. “I know you were hoping that you could learn something about the origin of your powers so that you could help Kid Flash.”

“Unfortunately, sympathetic magic doesn’t quite work that way,” The Flash responded with a smile. “It’s not generating its own copy of our powers and abilities, but observing them and fueling a replica. Same effects but from a different fuel source. When he copied Superman’s abilities, he wasn’t obviously wasn’t becoming Kryptonian, but he was showing Kryptonian levels of strength from servos and synthetic muscles that were definitely not capable of producing that level of strength.”

“The fact that you’re smiling makes me think there is a silver lining,” Captain Atom said. “Let’s hear it.”

“While working on forming a magitech division, one of the candidates pointed out that while this specific instance of magic might not have the solution to Kid Flash’s issue, that doesn’t mean that magic couldn’t help at all,” He explained. “He apparently looked up the lab’s records on the tests we did on Wally, and he pointed out that we never did any tests related to magic.”

“Why not?” Captain Marvel asked. “I’ve always thought that you and Kid Flash’s method of gaining powers sounded like some sort of modern take on ancient alchemy.”

“When Wally first got his powers, this was all still new,” Flash explained, gesturing to the group as a whole. “None of us were used to having so many different resources available. I had

never experienced magic, at least not that I was aware of. None of my rogues used it, and I had yet to be called in to help with someone who did.”

“You’re hoping that magic might have the answer where science did not,” Superman asked, the speedster nodding in confirmation.

“That’s right. I’m hoping to find a reasonably powerful magic user to take a look at him. I was thinking Kent Nelson or Zatara.”

“Both of them would happily help, and it would also give us an excuse to finally talk to Zatara about joining the League,” Wonder Woman pointed out.

“Great, but getting them to help is the easy part.”

“And what’s the hard part?” Hawkwoman asked.

“Convincing Kid Flash to accept magic long enough for them to help him.”