

(Warning: This story contains female muscle, muscle worship, and graphic sexual content.)

Ever since she was shot, Barbara's Gotham City was reduced to a map on the screen. Streams of data and information flow charted, categorized, analyzed, and decrypted several times over every night.

Her Gotham was no longer the dark and gloomy rooftops, the alleys fraught with danger, where two people's relationship could be summed up as 'assailant' and 'victim'. No, that Gotham was feeling more and more like a memory.

Barbara was proud of her work. As Oracle, she kept an eye on the sky and an ear to the ground in the first place. She utilized all her talents and smarts to become one of the world's greatest hackers, and her abilities were invaluable to the Bat Family's war on crime.

Didn't mean she didn't miss going out.

Being Batgirl wasn't for fun; it wasn't for the thrills. She went out to strike out against crime and reclaim the night, inspired by her father's devotion to justice, and Bruce's mission to save their beloved city, so it could one day be the gem they all knew existed under all the tar and grime.

But with Batgirl came a sense of fulfillment, purpose, and strength. She took strength in the cowl; they all did. Bruce, more than anybody, understood what that mask and cape meant to someone. A shield, a symbol, incorruptible, unbreakable.

Outside of it, she was as human as anyone. Flesh and blood that could be bruised and cut.

No Kevlar to stop a bullet through the spine.

The old wound still ached some days.

She struggled so much, she fought and trained daily to recover, with the miracles of modern science and Bruce's nigh-endless resources and money to afford the best medical care possible. It was a testament to Wayne-Tec's sponsored medical procedures that she could even walk at all.

Her left leg sometimes didn't cooperate. Some days were better than others. She was still recovering; it'd be a while before she'd regain full mobility. Until then, she used a cane to get around instead of her wheelchair. Though sometimes when she forgot to take her pain medication, after an all-nighter as Oracle, her leg hurt too much and she required the chair again.

She hated the feeling of being bound, trapped in her own body and mind. For she knew the pain was partly trauma.

Of that *Clown*, his gun, his finger unbuttoning...

Barbara closed her eyes, taking a deep breath as she counted to ten, emptying her mind of all thoughts and letting the frustration wash away from her.

It helped, somewhat.

Seems like all she needed these days was help when she wanted to be the one giving it.

Not just in here, behind the Batcomputer. Even if her support was critical.

But out there, as one of the Bats.

To feel unbreakable again, to strike against crime directly.

To be this figure the underworld would fear, once more, the Batgirl, take on the cowl, and fight. Fierce, unrelenting.

Like Cassandra.

Barbara shuddered, "Fuck..." The moment they had, the sex, the passion, the way they could open up to each other about their vulnerabilities in between the bouts of frenzied lovemaking.

Cassandra had always been a friend; she never expected their relationship to turn that way. She didn't even know she liked girls...

No, that was a lie. Barbara had stared at heroines like Wonder Woman and Supergirl a touch too long sometimes to know her interests didn't lie solely with men.

Regardless, it's not like she wanted to be romantically involved. Oh no, Cassandra was down bad for Stephanie, and she wished them the best... Things had turned weird around here. Ever since Cassandra got infected with that venom variant.

God, it was nothing like Bane. The villain's muscles could get very monstrous and sickly looking with his venom. But Cassandra? She had looked like the pinnacle of perfection, beyond human limits and into the realm of the amazons. Muscles carved out of marble, honed with absolute mastery...

Barbara envied her; that body had turned her into a much superior crimefighter. A walking fortress, a bastion, unbreakable.

Everything she wanted to be... the things she needed to feel like Barbara again.

To be Batgirl.

She pushed the chair away from the Batcomputer; there was no relevant data right now anyway. Robin and Huntress were going radio silent, Cassandra was on route to rescue Spoiler. And the computer was still compiling all the information they got from the gangs currently employing this new Venom, along with its chemical composition.

The air in the Belfry felt stifling. She needed to step back, to think.

She grabbed her cane and slowly made her way to the one place that could clear her head. The gym.

She kept replaying the events of Cassandra's transformation in her mind. So magnificent, so erotic, so powerful. She had to fight the arousal even now, hours after it was done.

Her leg ached at the sight of the treadmill; it was the one machine she used most of all. The one that could help her recovery. Barbara merely put on a grey t-shirt and shorts, setting her cane aside and turning on the treadmill. She grabbed both handles and began walking.

One step at a time. One day at a time.

It was the only way she could heal.

...Barbara was so tired of waiting.

Grunting, she dialed up the speed another level, forcing her pace to hasten.

Her muscles burned from lack of use; this type of training regime was nothing compared to her heyday as Batgirl, where she bench-pressed fifty pounds and could run for miles, forging her body into a slim yet muscular crimefighting figure. All her hard-earned muscles had melted away after so much time in recovery post-injury and post-surgery.

Barbara wanted it all back. Her confidence, her life, her *strength*.

She dialed up the speed again and started sprinting.

Her muscles in her bad leg protested..., but they did not relent. They tensed not with pain, but with determination and strength.

Barbara fought against the growing pain; it was a reminder that she was still alive, that she was still struggling to overcome all the obstacles and tragedies sent her way. She pushed herself harder, running faster, no matter how much her leg protested.

At some point, the pain was welcomed, as it became a sign that she was getting better. Her leg kept running without stumbling, without faltering or doubling over. She felt her muscles continue to burn, begging her to continue, to keep going so they could rebuild themselves stronger. Greater, more powerful.

And that's what they were doing. Her leg muscles rippled with the intense movements, rising from their atrophied state to gain larger mass, swelling moment by moment as faint lines of definition slowly etched themselves over their surface.

She turned up the speed, and her legs kept up, no longer with struggle or wobbling, not even her bad leg. She kept running faster and faster, panting heavily as she pushed her limits. Yet said limits were being overcome, slowly going back to who she used to be.

And more.

Under her pants, her leg muscles began to brim with size. Slowly filling out the fabric as their mass expanded to levels only a professional athlete could have. Yet they were not the only ones, though theirs were the most worked-over muscles right now; the rest of her body seemed intent on catching up. Her flat stomach hardened, growing more defined as the abdominals carved themselves into existence with faint lines. Her thorax developed stronger muscles, her shoulders slowly swelled under the sleeves until they grew tight. Her arms expanded with mass as they swung back and forth at high speed.

She kept demanding more of the machine, of herself, and her muscles answered in kind. Barbara ran like she was chasing all that ever hurt her; her goal was to reach that destination and defeat it, not to run away from her pain.

She panted, the sounds coming from her mouth turning to growls before a furious yell.

The treadmill ground to a halt with a screech, and Barbara jumped out.

She hunched over, palms resting on her legs as she panted heavily. What... What was that? That surge of adrenaline, of strength...

And her muscles.

She could feel her quads under her palms, solid, toned, larger than they had been moments ago. She slowly trailed a hand over them, brushing over the fabric and feeling the ample muscle underneath.

It felt amazing.

She looked at her arm, slowly clenching her hand to see the forearm muscles pop out and the toned bicep jump. Barbara's face slowly morphed into a joyous grin as she understood what was happening. The Venom. Somehow, by coming into contact with Cassandra, she had taken some of it into herself.

Whereas she had originally been frightened by what it might do to her friend, she had grown fascinated and enraptured by the strength and size of those beautiful muscles. So raw and imposing...

And now that her body had not only regained the musculature from her time as Batgirl, but they were *somewhat* bigger than before... Barbara felt free. Complete, unbound.

Unbreakable.

She did not wait to test herself. She needed more.

Grabbing a pair of heavy dumbbells, Barbara was amazed that she didn't need to struggle to lift them, and quickly proceeded to curl them one at a time. Steady breaths made her strong abs clench, her chest rising rhythmically in tandem with her arms. Biceps burned with the effort as the reps continued, her muscles rippled and flexed with faint veins rising to the surface.

The sleeves tightened around her arms as deltoids swelled, her biceps and triceps solidified with even more tone. Her back seemed to stretch and broaden as her chest muscles grew in definition. Her body quickly becoming that of a frequent gym goer.

"That's it..." She muttered. "More,"

After what felt like the hundredth rep, her arms were trembling, but she kept going. Making the biceps *bloom*.

"Hnnng!" She grunted audibly as she slowly lifted her arm for this final curl, burning through this font of energy that filled up inside her.

Ri-riii-rip!

Her right bicep tore through the sleeve, her shoulder tore the seams, and unveiled the dense musculature. Barbara dropped the dumbbells and watched the muscle with fascination. All this size and musculature, her arms looked like those of the younger members of the Batfamily. Like Tim, with his slim and muscular build.

She flexed her arm a few times, smiling as it rose and throbbed, veins crawling over it more prevalently with one in particular running from forearm to shoulder. She caressed the muscle with erotic feeling, sighing pleasantly at the sensation. Looking at her other arm, Barbara flexed it a few times for the desired effect and ripped through the other sleeve again.

“Fuck...” She was getting a little aroused by it all.

She looked at herself in one of the wall mirrors, almost unable to recognize herself as her body had built up a lot of muscle in no time. The way her pants stuck to her legs like a second skin, how tightly her shirt wrapped around her, starting to highlight her abs and chest muscles. Even her breasts looked larger...

It was her legs that fascinated her the most; she had been bereft of their use for what felt like an eternity. Recovering function had been a miracle that brought her to tears. But the slow recovery had been hell in itself. To wheel around, to stumble, to wobble...

Whereas once she could...

Barbara didn't even think about it; she jumped, throwing herself into a backflip. It continued with a series of twirls and pirouettes with a stunning display of dexterity. She *laughed*, feeling free after being caged for so long. Laughed as the world became a blur from her sheer speed.

When she landed, she became a bit dizzy. Barbara giggled as she held her head. “Guess I'm a bit out of practice...”

“That can be easily remedied.”

Barbara tensed at the sudden voice. Instincts born from years of training snapped into action as she took on a defensive stance, turning to face the intruder. She softly gasped when she saw how it was.

Clad in tactical black leather around a tantalizing, curvy yet athletic figure, the woman was a sight to behold. Lightly brown skin, while her face displayed a lovely blend of Middle Eastern and Asian features, long dark hair as black as the night sky, draped over her shoulders as one large bang almost covered one eye, leaving the other more visible, its green glint twinkling with amusement and fascination at the Gordon.

Barbara blurted out in surprise, "Talía?!"

The daughter of Ra's al Ghul, his right hand, Damian's mother. Someone who had a *very* complicated relationship with Bruce and the Batfamily as a whole. Sometimes an ally, sometimes a foe, her loyalty to her father had flipped many times in the past.

With such a wildcard, Barbara was not willing to let her guard down.

"Mmm, interesting." She mused with a hand to her chin as she paced, giving Barbara a look over. "So, you had your share of the new serum."

Barbara's blue eyes narrowed with suspicion. "You're aware of what's going on then."

"Aware?" She chuckled. "Darling, *I'm* the cause"

Her eyes widened in shock. "What?"

"The new Venom in the streets? The gangs fighting over it? All my doing, a plot designed by me with research taken from another source, and modified by my own people" She wasn't even boasting, she was explaining things matter-of-factly.

"Why?" Barbara questioned. "What could you possibly gain from this?"

"On the larger scheme, this Venom variant is merely going through its trial phase. The gangs fighting is just a means to an ends, whittle out their meddlesome intervention while testing the serum's effectiveness." She said, "The larger goal however, is greater stability for Gotham"

"Figures," Barbara almost rolled her eyes. "Another of the League's plots"

Surprisingly, her words seemed to infuriate her given how her brow furrowed. "The League... is not involved." She said, a touch acidly. "I've cut ties with my father."

Okay, *now* she was lost.

“You abandoned Ra’s?” Barbara said dumbfounded. “Hard to believe, you always seem to go back to him.”

In a rare display of vulnerability, Talia sighed as she rested a hand over a nearby weight bar. “Have you ever wondered... why nothing changes?” The Oracle tilted her head at the assassin. “Crime, victims, chaos, the world. We strive to make the world a better place in our own ways, but we’re all locked in this... damn status quo.”

She swiped a hand through the air. “The Justice League, the League of Shadows, superheroes, supervillains. It. Never. Ends. The world remains the same as it has for the last few decades, the turn of the millennium was the last time any of us saw any meaningful change. We have contact with alien races, we barely manage to master our own technology. Metas and magic saturate the world, and we’ve yet to eliminate most of our problems. It’s not even egomaniacs like my father trying to rule the world, it’s the world’s *damn* insistence on remaining the same”

Barbara wanted to argue with her, but... she’s thought about it sometimes. How some things just never seemed to work. How progress always remained one step behind, even with so many things available to them.

“You have the Atlanteans with their miraculous technology. Covens of mages and warriors who invoke the old gods like the amazons. But the world, the common people? Still stuck on the same pointless struggle” Her green eyes shifted to the former Batgirl. “Doesn’t that make you furious, Barbara?”

“You can’t force change.” She spoke. “It takes time. To force things to change so fast brings more chaos.”

Talia was silent for a moment, “Is that what Bruce told you when you lost use of your legs?”

Barbara’s temper suddenly flared like raging storm, she growled, stomping forward to grab the assassin and-

“Did he even offer you help from the Atlanteans? Perhaps one of his magician friends to heal your legs?”

She stopped right before her hand could grab her neck.

“Or did he say... nothing?” Talia slowly smiled knowingly. “He didn’t even give you the choice, did he? He just never brought it up”

That...

“I mean, why couldn’t they have helped?” She continued. “You are a colleagues with the king of Atlantis, whose technology is centuries more advanced than the rest of the world. Your mentor is friends with Doctor Destiny, one of the greatest, if not *the* mages in the world. Couldn’t he have easily healed you?”

Barbara struggled to find a reason. “There’s... There’s always a price, for the easy route”

“Those are his words, Barbara.” Her tone softened, becoming gentle. “He had it ingrained into you because he doesn’t like what he can’t control. He doesn’t trust that which he can’t oversee personally. You know very well how he gets, as this city continuously tries to sink into the sea.”

...Why hadn’t Bruce asked the League? Why couldn’t they just make the miracles she *knew* they were capable of performing to the greater public? The super advanced science, the powers of magic, things they could have made available to the world for so long.

How many people could have recovered from grievous injuries, how many deadly diseases could have been eradicated already? The League’s cause was righteous, but... were they losing sight? Were they too focused on fighting the symptoms that they couldn’t pay attention to the cause and aftermath?

She could have recovered so much faster with their help...

“I am making a new league of my own, Barbara.” Talia slowly put her hand on her arm. “The new Venom is to make a force of fighters to bring order to the chaos. And to eventually, make sure the miracles of science and mysticism will be in the hands of everyday people.”

Barbara looked at her. “How is this ‘order’ going to work? You’re just going to kill anyone who stands up to you?”

“Please, why would we even bother?” Talia rolled her eyes. “When has death *ever* stopped monsters like the Joker? They always come back someday.”

Barbara hated how right she was. Why was it that people like the Joker always managed to return? Why did they never see the last of their enemies.

“The League of Shadows once had a purpose to protect the world through the hard choices. But under Ra’s they lost their way, now they worship him and his ego. And with destiny *demanding* the world always be in peril, killing our foes is not a permanent solution. No, we’ll build something much stronger than the revolving doors of Arkham. We’ll create facilities that’ll contain monster like him *permanently*.” She paused. “But for that we need a new league, a new order... and I need *your* help”

Once more, she looked stunned. “You... want me?”

“You’re prodigious young woman, a terrific fighter, someone whose moral compass will hold us accountable. And most of all, you’re familiar with the world’s injustice. You know what it is to need help and be ignored... you can see things in a way Bruce can’t.”

Barbara licked her lips, her gaze shifting as certainty seemed to leave her. Talia’s words made sense to her, far too much sense. Was... Was she even thinking straight? Was the Venom affecting her mind? Was Talia taking advantage of her state, of her trauma? She had been using all the right words. Disowning Ra’s, promising not to engage in killing, how she talked about uplifting the common people.

“I won’t betray him for you”

“I’m not asking you to,” Talia said. “I’m asking you to step out of *their* shadow, and help me help others. Help me create a new league that will finally change things”

“I’m... I don’t know, Talia. I...”

“Please,” She said oh so softly as her hand left her arm to cup her cheek. “So, we can prevent the Clown, and those like him, from claiming more victims”

...Damn her. Damn it all.

I'm sorry, Bruce. She mused internally. It's... It's just not working anymore. I know you try, you try to make Gotham better, you give money, you raise charities and foundations, you research technology to improve the world... But it never bears fruits, you're too focused on your mission that you let those things slides sometimes.

"...Alright." She said. "I'll help you"

And prayed she was doing the right thing.

Talia's smile stretched from side to side. "You won't regret this, Barbara. I promise you"

"I have rules." She said pointedly. "We'll have rules. Understood?"

"I'm not out to become the next Lex Luthor, darling." She drawled.

"We'll dismantle the gangs, none of this 'let them wipe each other out'"

"Not the easy route for you, I respect that." She looked over at Barbara's muscular frame. "You'd like to participate in the clean-up, I imagine"

"I want to get back out there," She confessed. "I'll protect Gotham like I used to. No, better than before..." She looked at her arm and slowly clenched her fist, making the bicep rise. "I need the strength to do it."

"And you'll have it, my dear" The older woman said, cupping Barbara's bicep and feeling its hardness. "We'll make a goddess out of you yet."