

Chapter 19

I don't know what to do. I've always been bad at consoling people. So I just sit there, holding Wanda's hands while she silently cries. I don't say anything, because what is there to say? Keep calm and keep going? There are people around you who love you? There is nothing to say. And sometimes, you don't need to say anything at all. All you need to do is be there. And so, I try to just be there for her. And as we sit there like that for a while, the tears falling from Wanda's eyes seem to slowly fall less frequently, until they eventually completely stop, leaving Wanda just sitting there in front of me, pu y-eyed. I again don't say anything, but give her hands a little squeeze just to show her I do care, and feel a small squeeze back.

Suddenly the door to the room flies open with a crash, making us both jump and let go of each other. In marches García and Agent Smith, followed by three guards.

"Thank you, agent." Agent Smith says as two of the guards approach Wanda, who seems to recoil.

"I'm not done." I say determinedly, but my voice sounds small.

"Yes you are." Agent Smith says and the third guard walks up to me and shows me to stand up.

I get up from my chair as the other guards are dressing Wanda in the straightjacket and collar again, treating her like a lifeless puppet.

"I told you she doesn't need those-" I try, but I'm already being led out of the room, following Agent Smith and García.

I let them walk me along the hallway outside for a few meters, before I stop, forcing the rest of the group to stop as well and look at me.

"What's happening? I was getting her to talk, wasn't I?" I ask García and Agent Smith.

"We've had an analyst analyze your interview, and we suspect you somehow communicated with Maximo telepathically." García says, frowning at me.

"What?" I splutter, shocked. "That's ridiculous, I can't"

"No, you can't, but she can." Agent Smith cuts me off dryly. "You told us the extra safety measures we put in place were unnecessary. Clearly, without them, Maximo can freely use her telepathic skills. And if she can access those, who knows what other-"

I open my mouth to cut him off but am distracted by the sound of a door opening and shutting behind me. I turn around just in time to meet Wanda's wide eyes as she's dragged away by the two burly guards.

"Where are you taking her?" I ask the guards loudly, but they don't stop, so I turn back toward García and Agent Smith. "Where are they taking her?"

"We need to run some tests-"

"What tests?"

"And now that we suspect she might take her life-"

"Take her life? What on earth are you talking about? I want to continue my interrogation!" I demand, feeling frazzled.

"You are not continuing anything for the moment, agent." Agent García sternly tells me. "Let's go."

And so, we continue to walk down the hallway, and I am very aware of the guard walking just a few paces behind me. Silently we return to the room in which everyone else is waiting. They pretend to be busy as we walk in, but I notice the quick glances they shoot at me. There is a new person in the room whom I haven't seen before, and so I assume they are the analyst Agent Smith mentioned earlier. Indeed, they are hunched over a screen replaying footage from Wanda's interrogation.

"Please, have a seat." Agent Smith motions towards a chair and I sulkily sit down, preparing to be berated in front of everyone.

Agent Smith and García sit down near me and study me closely. I decide I've had enough of these men, and that I class them as belonging to the same kinds of assholes as Hayward. I keep my head up high and wait for either of them to speak.

"What did she say to you?" García finally breaks our silence.

"You have a camera, you heard it all."

"We know she communicated with you." García says, frustrated, and I raise my eyebrows at him.

"Yes, she did, and you have it all on tape."

"Why do you think Maximo would allow herself to be apprehended in order for you to be saved?" Agent Smith asks me slowly.

"I don't know." I shrug nonchalantly. "Maybe she isn't this terrible monster you are all making her out to be. Crazy theory, I know."

"Agent, I surely must not remind you that you don't accidentally murder and torture people and expect there not to be any ramifications."

"Who has she murdered?" I exasperatedly sigh. "And don't say Lagos."

"One example-"

"She saved everyone in that market!"

"We are not here to debate with you whether or not Maximo is dangerous!" Agent Smith raises his voice and the room goes quiet all around. Still, I refuse to back down.

Agent Smith leans forward, keeping his icy eyes on mine, and when he speaks next, his voice is barely audible.

"The Bureau sent you here without any discussion with me whatsoever, they seemed to think you have handled yourself well on previous cases. I am not seeing any indication of that whatsoever in you. Now I have been accommodating and I have let you have your go at it, but sadly, you've been very underwhelming. Too bad Maximo didn't seem to recognize you at all, or have anything to say to you."

"Agent Davies!" Agent Smith raises his voice but doesn't look away from me.

"Yes, sir?" Agent Davies appears next to us.

"Thank you both for your involvement on this case, but I have no further need for you and you may return back to the mainland." Agent Smith stands up and finally looks at Agent Davies, who, if surprised, does not show it.

"Thank you, sir." That is all she says and looks at me expectantly.

I hush and stand up, wanting to throw something at Agent Smith, but can sadly not find anything heavy enough near me. I follow Agent Davies out of the room, and two guards promptly join us.

"Back to the helipad, please." Agent Davies tells the guards who nod, and start escorting us back through the heavily secured Ra.

My head is reeling. I know I have to do something, or there will be a coverup and Wanda might not see the light of day again. Before, I might have not questioned the FBI, but after what happened to my niece, and now this... I'm starting to question quite a lot. And my talk with Wanda has just solidified everything. As we walk in silence, I start to desperately formulate a plan in my head. I try to memorize the few paths I've taken through the Ra; which doors led to which rooms and how the doors were opened.

Eventually, we are back in the huge hangar and I see our helicopter in the far end. I know my time is running short, and soon, I'll be back in that hellish machine on my way back to my old life, to a life in which I won't ever have anything to do with Wanda ever again, instead apprehending easy targets in a sleepy town somewhere.

"I need the bathroom." I suddenly blurt out and we stop halfway through the hangar.

"What?" One of the guards asks.

"Bathroom. That time of the... you know." I sheepishly grin and everyone is uncomfortable.

"Can't you wait till...?" Agent Davies asks me.

"No, definitely not." I smile, making sure to bounce from one foot to the other. "Why don't you go get the helicopter ready and whatnot and I just-"

"You're not going anywhere alone." One of the guards informs me quickly.

"Well, why don't you and I go to the bathroom hand in hand and-"

"Ok, ok, Jesus!" The guard rolls his eyes. "I'll go with her."

"We'll be quick!" I tell the others cheerfully and the guard and I start walking back.

We make it to the hallway that connects to the hangar and keep walking in silence. I'm hyperaware of everything around me now. The guard takes a left and stops in front of a door.

"I'll wait here." He says and I walk past him into the bathroom.

Well inside I make sure that all the stalls are unoccupied before I yell out:

"Hey, dude, I can't come and look at this!"

As I hoped for, the guard hesitantly opens the door and peers in.

"What?" He asks, annoyed.

"This!" I say and point in towards one of the stalls. "Are you kidding me?"

He shoots me a look but enters and walks towards the stall I've pointed at. As he pushes the door open and looks into the perfectly clean and normal stall, I make my move. I rapidly swipe the gun from his belt and undo the safety, all with my one functional hand, before he's turned around to face me in shock.

I point the gun at him and back away from him.

"You stay real silent for me now." I purr softly, adrenaline racing through my veins. "Why don't we take a little walk?"

A/N: it's all going down next chapter..!

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