



Chapter Twenty-Nine

They had been in Wakanda for two weeks now and every day that past, Wanda found her grip on the small shred of hope she had slipping away. Shuri had been optimistic that she could recreate the machine, but so far there had been several mishaps that had resulted in the test machines failing.

Standing on one of the large balconies of the palace, Wanda looked out at the city that sprawled out below. It was an amazing place and usually she loved visiting here, but the circumstances of this visit loomed over her like a dark cloud. She wished that Y/N was here, that she could have shared the awe of Wakanda with her.

"Shuri is nearly ready for us to come back to the lab, she thinks that she's cracked the problem. I was listening but it became very technical and I won't even try to repeat her explanation" Nat walked out onto the balcony, coming to stand beside Wanda, a reassuring hand resting on her friend's shoulder.

"Do you really think this can work?" Wanda looked to Nat, "Or are you just wasting time chasing false hopes?"

Nat had watched the way Wanda had been slowly falling apart since Y/N had vanished and she hated that there was nothing she could do to ease her best friend's pain. There were times Nat felt like it was her fault, if she hadn't pushed so hard on Y/N then maybe it wouldn't have set into motion the series of events that had led to Y/N making the choice she had.

When she had expressed that to Wanda, Wanda had shut it down immediately and told Nat to not think like that. Wanda had told her that whether it had happened then or months later, Y/N's brother would have gotten to her somehow. Nat had worried Wanda wouldn't have been able to forgive her, but as always her best friend continued to surprise her with how much she would do for her family.

"I don't think it is false hope, things might take awhile but we will figure this out. If we can crack time travel, then we will crack universe travel" Nat assured her gently, "Plus you were the one who found a way to save me and Tony when it went wrong, you're strong and powerful Wanda. If you can keep the balance of your magic in place then I believe you can do anything."

Wanda managed a small smile in response to Nat's words. She had thought her friends would abandon her after what she had done at the Hydra facility, but they had all been through times where they had made questionable decisions, the part that mattered was how they dealt with it after. Nobody held it over one another, they would just do what they could to support each other through it.

"Let's go and see Shuri" Wanda said after a moment.

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"Ah welcome back, Maximo and Romano" Shuri said with a grin as she saw the two of them pass through the entrance of her lab.

"You look happier than you did earlier when I saw you" Nat responded, earlier Shuri had been cursing very colourfully at the screens surrounding her.

Shuri laughed lightly, gesturing for the pair of them to come over to where she was standing. In the centre of the lab on a slightly raised platform was the tech that Shuri had constructed, it looked like a archway, but when it was switched on it would harness Wanda's magic and in theory create a portal. A portal that should allow them to travel through into another universe.

"That's because I think with a little assistance from Mr Stark, that we have figured it out" Shuri explained, "Though don't tell him how helpful he was, he'll gloat about it forever."

"Secrets safe with me" Nat laughed as she took a seat on one of the stools.

Wanda approached the machine, tilting her head slightly as she looked at it. This was what she was relying on to find Y/N. A combination of tech and magic, it was what had taken Y/N which made Wanda apprehensive, but all their other research had been unable to locate another way to travel the multiverse. Nobody existed here with a natural ability for it.

The doors to the lab opened again and Bucky walked in with Steve and T'Challa accompanying him. He gave Wanda a warm smile as they walked over to join the three women.

"So you have solved the mystery then sister?" T'Challa asked as he studied her latest creation, it was the fourth version of it, the others had either malfunctioned or blown up.

"Yes brother, all we need to do now is a test run and then we will see" Shuri nodded as she tapped on various screens prepping the gateway.

"How will we know if it opens a gateway into the right universe?" Steve asked with a slight frown, he was hesitant about all of this, time travel had been one thing but this seemed far more dangerous.

Shuri glanced up and saw the concern in Steve's face.

"Really that part comes down to Wanda and her magic, she is the one that will be in control of where it opens. My working theory is because of how connected her and Y/N are, if her power reaches out to Y/N's then that will be the link to the right universe" Shuri said as she finalised the last few checks, "But this is not exactly without it's risks, all of which I have been very clear about."

Many evenings since the arrival of part of the Avengers, Shuri had spent them explaining the various risks and problems that could occur. She had wanted them to understand that there was no guarantee that the tech could hold up and should it look like at any point things were too dangerous she would shut it down. None of them wanted to go through a Thanos level threat again and there was no saying who else might be watching for an open door into another universe.

"Nobody is taking the risk apart from me and I fully understand what could go wrong. But I would rather take it then accept Y/N is lost forever" Wanda spoke, looking to Steve.

Steve gave a small bow of his head, accepting that to try and convince Wanda to abandon this now would be foolish.

"Let's begin then" Shuri said gesturing for Wanda to step up onto the platform, "Everything is ready, just needs you to add your magic now Maximo."

Stepping up onto the platform, Wanda took a deep breath, focusing her mind. She looked down at the faded letters on the sweatshirt she was wearing, Y/N's sweatshirt. Summoning her magic, Wanda opened her eyes, red glowing in them as she let her magic flow into the gateway.

Shuri monitored the screens closely as they started to flash with information as the tech powered up with Wanda's magic. The readings were the best ones she'd seen out of all the trials they'd run so far, but her concern was raised at a spike in one of the graphs on the screen. The stability was fluctuating from green to red.

"Wanda, we may need to stop" Shuri warned with a hint of panic as the readings began to run faster than she could keep up with.

The others had moved to a safe distance, not wanting to be too close if things went wrong. But when they heard the tone of Shuri's voice the three of them went to approach the gateway. Seeing this, Shuri waved for them to stop moving.

Wanda's focus was fixed on thinking about Y/N, remembering what her power had felt like, willing her own to seek it out. She ignored Shuri's calls for her to stop, her magic had caught a scent and refused to be drawn back.

The gateway was filled with a glowing energy that swirled and flickered, there was a blur of images within it, momentary glimpses of other universes were coming through. It had worked, this was the first time any sort of connection had been made but Shuri was shouting now that the tech was not going to be able to hold. They might be able to open the door but they wouldn't be able to keep it open.

Bucky and Nat went to move, to grab hold of Wanda but subconsciously Wanda sent out a wave of magic behind her, creating a barrier between herself and the others.

"Wanda you need to stop!" Nat called out, her hands pushing against the magical barrier trying to get through it.

Wanda looked over her shoulder at them.

"I can't, I have to find her" Wanda told them.

"We can't keep it open Wanda, it's too volatile. If you go through you might not be able to come back" Shuri warned her.

"I will find a way" Wanda replied as she turned back to look at the gateway.

There.

Y/N was there. Wanda saw her in the gateway, her magic had tracked through the universes and found her.

"Y/N..." Wanda said her name like it was a promise before stepping into portal.

As Wanda went through it, she pulled her magic back in and as she did the tech Shuri had created began to fail no longer able to power itself without Wanda's magic being there.

They all stood there in silence as it broke down and where Wanda had been moments ago, was now an empty space.

"What have we done..." Nat said as she looked to the others.

Had they just lost Wanda too?