



XLI. Maria Hill to the Rescue

"Who was the guy on the bridge?" Sam asked. Both he and Natasha were wondering. Natasha had her suspicions, of course, having read the reports and known Steve for two years. But Sam had just met the man, and couldn't be expected to know everything.

Steve explained, and Auralie zoned out. She was trying to put together the picture of what happened to Bucky. She knew he had survived the fall but probably lost an arm. Steve explained to them that Bucky had been experimented on by Zola, so that was how he had survived. And the red star and rifle inclined that he had been found by the Soviets, who had then made him their assassin. But how had he stayed young? How had they wiped his memory? Was Steve's friend still in there?

Auralie did not know.

"I'm so sorry Steve, I know how much he meant to you," Auralie murmured.

Steve looked down, "even when I had nothing I had Bucky."

The van rattled on. Sam was keeping calm. Steve was shell-shocked, Natasha was injured, she had been shot in the chaos. Auralie felt bad for Steve, guilty for freezing, and overwhelmed with everything that was happening. In another life, she would be stressing about college and girls, not saving the world and brainwashed assassins. If it hadn't been for Elory she would have had that life, have had her parents and twins and no powers. She wasn't sure if she wished she had that life or not. Auralie liked her powers and being able to help people, but the constant fear wasn't exactly the ideal living situation. But this life did bring her Maria Hill.....

Auralie realized then that she was probably going to die. She was only eighteen. But that wasn't the worst thing, all the things she never got to do. The worst part was that the world would probably end, her friends would probably die, and worst of all, she would never get to see her sister again.

Maria

Her eyes filled with sudden tears.

Natasha fell back on the seat, clutching her shoulder. Her wound needed to be treated, and fast. Auralie looked at her friend with concern. Natasha's jaw was clenched, her eyes were narrowed, she was bruised and battered, but she was holding on.

Sam looked at the three silent guards, who were covered from head to toe in black clothing, and who hadn't said anything to them. Sam glared at them and yelled, "hey, she needs a doctor, otherwise she'll bleed out back here."

One of the guards took out an electric prod, the kind that could knock another person out in three seconds. They turned it on and pointed it at Sam, who didn't flinch, he just narrowed his eyes. Auralie wasn't ashamed to say she wasn't that cool, and she shrunk back a bit.

Then the guard slammed it into another guard's stomach. They held it there until the other guard passed out, then launched into an amazing kick that hit the third guard in the face and knocked them out. Auralie found herself smiling and weeping tears of joy as she recognized the fighting style.

Maria Hill took off the helmet and brushed her hair out of her face, "wow, that thing was squeezing my brain."

She then met Sam's eyes and asked, "who's this guy?"

She didn't get an answer because Auralie was launching across the truck and hugging her sister tight. Maria held her, having been just as worried for Auralie as Auralie was for her. Auralie whispered into her sister's ear, "I thought I was going to die without ever seeing you again."

Maria whispered back, "I'm just glad I was able to get here in time to save you."

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"She's lost a pint, maybe two," Maria cried about Natasha's injury.

A doctor replied, "let me take her."

Maria yelled back, "she'll want to see him first."

They were in a rudimentary Shield base, filled with officers, most that Auralie recognized. She spotted Amanda and some of the nurse's co-workers, several agents she was familiar with, and so many more. Auralie had realized that all of these people were one hundred percent on the side of doing good. On the side of Shield as it should be, not Hydra. They were relatively trustworthy.

Maria led the four battered and hurt people to a cavern, pulled back a curtain and revealed the one thing that could make them feel a spark of hope in the middle of all the dark smoke that was Hydra and their own emotions. A perfectly alive and conscious Nick Fury.

Auralie felt a smile creeping onto her face upon seeing Nick had survived through the impossible odds. It gave her hope for the rest of them.

She hoped Natasha could confront the demons of the past and learn that she was more than an assassin. She hoped that Sam could help them all discover who they were and find himself along the way. She hoped that Steve could adjust to this life and thrive. She hoped that Maria would be safe and strong and all the wonderful things she deserved. Auralie hoped that Bucky could be saved.

She even dared to hope something she hadn't really hoped before. She hoped that maybe her own shattered and broken heart, which still managed to like, feel compassion for, and draw her towards people, could find a way to cope with the brokenness. There was a hole in her heart that could never be fixed, that was just the way it was, the place where her twin resided was an empty cavity. And the odds of her ever being able to find someone that she could give that broken heart to, trusting them to love her back were slim. But if she could just accept it, that would be enough.

She realized she had zoned out again, and Auralie snapped back into focus. Steve was making a speech. He said, "Shield, Hydra, it all goes."

Fury didn't like that, and Auralie understood why. Shield had meant so much to so many people. But it was time to let it go. Maria spoke up, "he's right Nick."

Natasha nodded in agreement and Fury looked to Sam and Auralie. Sam smirked and gestured to Steve, "don't look at me, I do what he does, just slower."

Steve smiled gratefully at Sam. Auralie smiled at him too. They were lucky to have found him and even luckier that he was willing to put up with their craziness. The light-powered girl then realized that Fury was still looking for her answer so she said, "Fury, Shield took a chance on me, and I'm eternally grateful. But it's time for it to go. Let it die with some measure of dignity."

"Alright," Nick agreed, not putting up much of a fight and turning to Steve, "looks like you're giving the orders now Captain."

"Well, Steve's a good leader. I'd follow him for sure," Auralie said, smiling at the soldier. He smiled back, and Auralie knew it was time for action.

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A few hours before the operation began, Auralie and Sam went to find Steve. They found him standing on a bridge, looking out at the city.

"He's gonna be there you know," Sam called, getting right to the point.

Steve nodded, "I know."

"Look," Sam said, "whoever he was before, who he is now..... I don't think he's the kind you save. He's the kind you stop."

"I'm not sure I can do that," Steve said.

"It's alright," Auralie soothingly spoke, "it's a good thing. Love, mercy, memory, they are human traits. It's good that you're still human."

"And you aren't?" Steve asked, "I mean I know about the whole interdimensional DNA altering but....."

Auralie shrugged, "you mean do I have a heart like you? I'm not sure. I'm still figuring it out. But the funny thing is, a little bit ago I would have said no. I think working with you and Natasha and Sam and Maria has helped to give me a bit of hope. I'm going to hold on to that hope, you should to when it comes to Bucky."

"Thanks," Steve smiled, and he began to stride away.

Sam called, "where are you going?"

Steve turned to look at the man, "you wanna fight a war you gotta wear a uniform."

Auralie ran after the supersoldier, "I don't know what he's about to do, but I have to see it."

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The old security guard walked into the Smithsonian room dedicated to Captain America, only to find an unexpected sight. The Captain America costume was missing.

"Oh, man" he cried, "I am so fired."

The security guard then noticed a paper on the floor. It was a picture of two people, a man, and a young woman. The man was a familiar blonde wearing the stolen Cap uniform. Steve Rogers. The girl was an unfamiliar blonde in a Shield uniform.

Signed on the back in neat writing was a small note. The guard read it;

I sincerely apologize for the the . Captain Rogers is a drama queen, plus it's his uniform after all. Sorry again about the break-in, I hope no one gets into too much trouble for it.

- The Eclipse and Captain America (Natasha dared me to write that for the drama. It's actually Steve Rogers and Auralie Shadow)

The guard knew all about Steve Rogers and Captain America, and Natasha was the avenger/spy Natasha Romano, but who the hell was Eclipse/Auralie Shadow.

Stan Lee frowned. He didn't remember coming up with her.

A/N: Next chapter starts Pierce getting his ass kicked, yay! Steve really is such a drama queen when you think about it. Anyways, hope you enjoyed the ending, where I tweaked one of my favorite cameos and broke the fourth wall, just for a moment.

Continue reading next part