

## XLIV. Giving Rides

"We have to get out of here," Auralie cried. Steve and Sam had done it. The helicarriers were firing on themselves and crashing down. They would destroy the Shield base. Most everyone had already evacuated, trying to get away from Hydra. So Auralie, Natasha, Fury, and Maria, who had raced up to join them, were dashing to the helicopter, hoping that they could get away in time.

Natasha slid into the pilot's seat, Fury in the co-pilot's seat, Maria and Auralie in the back. Maria was pulling up footage of Sam Wilson, missing his wings, beaten up, and as badass as ever. He had run into Rumlow.

Rumlow said, "there is no mercy in Hydra. Just order. And order only comes through pain."

"Man shut the hell up," Sam replied. He and Rumlow fought, and then the building came crashing down. Sam got out of the way, running to the other side of the floor, but Rumlow was crushed, hopefully never to be seen again, but Auralie knew that in the world of superheroes, they rarely ever got what they wanted.

Sam tapped into the com system and cried, "I need a pickup. Meet me at the 41st floor."

"On our way, stay where you are," Natasha replied, taking them down.

Sam yelled, "not an option."

Auralie fell into Maria as they flew around the debris, on their side, and maneuvered through the collapsing building. The sisters held onto each other and the helicopter, knowing if they fell out, they were in serious trouble.

They spotted Sam, leaping out of the building and into the helicopter. He slid through the side doors, Auralie and Maria grasping his arms and pulling him into a seat as Nat and Fury got them out of there. Sam sputtered, "41st floor."

"Well, it's not like they put the numbers on the outside of the buildings," Fury replied.

.....

They landed a little ways away, ambulances arriving to help take Fury and Sam and Nat to the hospital. Maria and Auralie would go to, but Maria had taken the task of dealing with the press, and Auralie had her own job to do. She had to find Steve. According to Sam and Maria, Steve hadn't gotten o of the helicarrier. Auralie was desperately hoping that wasn't true, but if it was, she wasn't going to let his body be lost.

She trudged through the greenery to the riverbank where he would have come down and she saw something surprising. Steve, his chest rising and falling reliably, was laying there, covered in blood and mud and very much alive. And Bucky Barnes, the Winter Soldier, was standing over him, looking at him with an expression of confusion.

Auralie stepped out of the greenery. She could have turned invisible and waited until Bucky le , but she wanted to talk to him, if only for a minute. The fact that Steve was alive meant that there was hope for the metal-armed assassin and Auralie would make sure he was alright. She owed it to Steve to make sure Bucky was ok.

"Bucky," she said, approaching cautiously.

"Is that me?" he asked. He seemed confused and broken, and Auralie felt her own broken little heart overwhelmed with emotion for this man who did not deserve the lot he had gotten in life.

"Yes," Auralie replied, "your name is Bucky. The man you saved is Steve. Steve told me about you. He said you were great."

Bucky seemed even more confused, but he didn't run or move to attack her, instead, he said, "I don't think I knew you. But he could be wrong."

"No," Auralie said soothingly, keeping her voice so , "you never met me before Bucky. But I heard what they did to you. I want to help. What do you need me to do?"

"I don't know," Bucky said brokenly, "just get him to safety." He gestured to Steve.

"I will, he'll be alright," Auralie promised.

Bucky looked at Steve's face, a bit of recognition in his eyes, "I knew him. I know him."

"Yes," Auralie replied, "you know him. You were best friends."

"The end of the line," Bucky whispered. He knew those words, Steve had said them, but he didn't understand their meaning anymore. Part of him wanted to run, but the other part wanted to know what the words meant to him, why they struck a chord so deep in the heart he had thought he didn't have.

Auralie whispered, "that's how long you two would be a team."

Bucky met the girl's blue eyes. He was surprised by her youth, but more surprised by her lack of fear, and the way she looked at him with something he was only just starting to recall. Kindness.

"If you want to remember," she continued, "you should go by the Smithsonian. They have a whole exhibit there on Captain America, on Steve. It can help you discover who you are."

"You really think it will help?" Bucky asked, sounding lost.

Auralie nodded, "yes. Unless you want to see the uniform, which we stole." She cracked a small smile and Bucky became a little less afraid, a little less wary, at least of her. It had been forever since he last heard a joke. The last person to say something funny to him was Steve when he had cracked the joke about payback for the rollercoaster.

"Who are you?" Bucky questioned, "I think they called you Eclipse."

"I am the Eclipse," Auralie nodded, "but my real name is Auralie Shadow."

Bucky nodded and walked away calling, "I'll go to the Smithsonian." Auralie did not stop him, knowing he needed to figure things out on his own.

She did, however, call a er him, "Bucky."

He turned back, "yeah?"

Auralie said, "if you ever need anything at all, Steve is there for you, always, and so am I."

He nodded, looked at Steve once more, layers of pain and comfort on his face. Then he turned back and walked away. When he was only a small dot in the distance, Auralie found herself crying. She cried for the world that had been so cruel to so many people who didn't deserve it, and she wished that she could save them all. But she couldn't. There would be so many more that bled out for a better future that may never come. She might be among them.

Sometimes Auralie wondered why she did this.

But she knew she wasn't going to stop. It could be worse if she stopped. And she had to do something, she couldn't just do nothing. It was against her nature. So, Auralie would fight this doomed battle for every day of her life in the hopes that she could make just a single small piece of the world better.

Once Bucky was fully out of sight, Auralie sent out a signal. She heard the rumble of the trucks as they came to collect her and get Steve to a hospital. She dried her eyes and prepared to meet them.

**A/N: This was a rather emotional scene I think. Poor Bucky has been through so much, and I really just wanted to put in the moment between him and Auralie because when the CW part comes around, Bucky will be important to Auralie and Wanda's story, and Bucky and Auralie's friendship needed a place to start. I just want Bucky and all the other Marvel characters to be happy. Except for Thanos.**

[Continue reading next part](#) □