



xxv. Running

They were hiding out in an abandoned storage building. Auralie wasn't sure how Steve had found it. For all, she knew it could have been GPS. She was standing there with Sam and Steve. Bucky, whose arm was held in place just in case he was still in Winter Soldier mode, was finally waking up.

"What," he mumbled, confused, "where am I?"

"I don't have a clue," Auralie replied, realizing it was not the Winter Soldier. But was it Bucky?

"Do you know me?" Steve asked, panic in his eyes.

Bucky looked up, and smiled a bit, "Your mom's name is Sara. You used to wear newspapers in your shoes." ↵

Steve smiled, "can't find that in a museum."

Sam looked around, an incredulous look on his face, "what, so just like that we're cool?"

Bucky looked down again, "what happened?"

Steve began to explain. Sam sighed, already wondering how the hell he got into this mess. Auralie decided to make good use of her time and check her phone, which had been dingling for a while. She wasn't sure whether she wanted it to be Wanda or not.

It turned out to be Clint, sending her random pictures of a new coffee flavor he discovered. Auralie sighed. How did this team ever become earth's mightiest heroes? ↵

Auralie was almost at ease, standing there with the boys, trying to distract herself from her constant worry about Wanda. But then she realized something.

"We stole Bucky! We stole a prisoner of the CIA!" Auralie screeched. ↵

"Did you just notice?" Sam rolled his eyes.

"You don't understand," Auralie explained, "King T'Challa will want to come after him. Tony will try and stop us. He'll bring Nat and Rhodey. We'll have to fight other defenders of the world. Our friends....."

Her voice cracked like her team was cracking. They were her family, especially since she no longer had Maria at her side all the time. Natasha and Steve were the closest things to parents she had had in a long time. Clint and Tony were like the craziest, best uncles ever. Sam was like a cool older brother. The thought that she would be split from them, that she would have to fight them, well, it was one of her worst nightmares and yet it was inching closer and closer to reality.

"Auralie," Sam said softly, putting a hand on her shoulder.

"Sorry," she snapped back to the present, "what was that?"

"I was just going to ask if you were ok," he said.

"Oh," Auralie said softly, "I'm not actually, but there are things more important than me. We have to find that bad guy."

"Alright," Sam agreed, "but after this, you need a vacation. We all do."

"Agreed," she smiled, "so, what's the plan." ↵

Steve put on his captain face, "I'll get in touch with Sharon Carter and get our gear back. We're going to call in Clint and ask him to bring Wanda and someone known as... Ant-Man..... and then we're going after the psychologist, no matter what. Everyone alright with that?"

"Yeah," Auralie nodded.

Sam shrugged, "we don't have a better plan."

"Do we even have a car to follow him in?" Bucky asked as Auralie and Steve went to get his arm unstuck.

Steve beamed, "of course we do. Come on everyone." Sam let out a long-suffering sigh and followed him. Auralie and Bucky went behind him.

"Bucky, just a word of warning the car is....." Auralie trailed off, waving her hands vaguely.

.....

"Tiny," Bucky said, sitting next to Auralie, "it's so tiny. Steve, why did you choose the clown car?"

"I can't believe that I'm agreeing with him, but this was a bad idea," Sam added.

Auralie snorted, "They aren't wrong."

Steve sighed, "I can't go anywhere with you three, can I?"

"Hey, just be glad Clint isn't here yet," Auralie giggled, "or Natasha....."

Her good mood once again faded, realizing Natasha was not going to come and join their team. She had signed the accords. Clint may or may not have been coming, depending on if he was able to get Wanda out without Vision noticing. And Wanda.....

Auralie missed Wanda. She always missed Wanda when they were separated, because very few people had that sort of connection with her. Auralie had never had a very serious sort of relationship with someone, it had always been casual, never anything close to love. And Auralie feared for the witch. If they tried to convince her she was a monster.....

Auralie's hands clenched into fists. She was mad. She wanted to fight the government, consequences be damned.

She felt a cool metal hand on her own and she turned to see Bucky looking at her with concern. She gave him a slight nod and relaxed. Protecting the world was the most important thing here. But if they kept treating Wanda and the others like bombs instead of people, Auralie knew she would snap, and she feared what would happen then. She didn't want to doom her friends, but she couldn't stand what was happening. She was utterly at sea, drowning in confusion and indecision. She could feel herself going under. ↵

Auralie needed to know Wanda was alright. Wanda was like a breath of fresh air, a whole world of dreams and possibility and magic, everything that Auralie found amazing. If Wanda was alright, then Auralie could focus. If Auralie could focus, then maybe they could make it out of this mess. But if Wanda was hurt or broken..... ↵

Auralie did not know how she, someone so closed off and afraid to love, was falling so hard. But in the year that she had known Wanda, it had somehow happened, and Auralie could not go back. Nor, she thought, would she want to. ↵

"So....." Bucky said, looking a little uncomfortable.

Auralie smiled at him reassuringly, trying to encourage him, "what is it Bucky?"

Bucky asked, "what's the deal with the cat man?"

Auralie opened her mouth to explain everything about T'Challa, but Sam cut her off by yelling, "THANK YOU! I WAS WONDERING THE SAME THING!" His hands flew up as he talked, hitting the roof of the car and leading to a stream of cursing.

"Shit, that hurt," Sam rubbed his arms. ↵

Auralie said mildly, "Sorry Steve chose such a tiny car?" Bucky cracked a tiny smile.

Sam laughed, "yeah, bad call on his part."

And Steve Rogers, ever the frustrated father of the Avengers, cried, "DAMMIT! I WILL TURN THIS CAR AROUND." ↵

Auralie met Sam's eyes in the mirror, "so, would this be a bad time to ask if we were there yet?" ↵

Steve let out a cry of exasperation. ↵

A/N: Bucky is acting more like Bucky! Anyways, this chapter had a lot of humor about the tiny car, to balance out the big fights later. But as you can see, Auralie is getting more and more stressed, the poor thing. ↵

Next Chapter we get to finally check in with Wanda! (Also Clint and Scott)

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