



1.1

6 MONTHS LATER. LAGOS, NIGERIA

"Any more sugar and you'll get a headache," Scottie Casey teased her girlfriend as she smirked over the table at her. The red-headed girl across from her didn't need to be able to see the blonde's eyes to know that she would have the familiar mysterious glint in them.

Scottie knew this, so she simply adjusted how her sunglasses were sitting on her face to keep the sun out of her eyes. Fiddling with the small leather band on her wrist, she noticed that Wanda was looking at her with a proud smile.

"What?" Scottie asked, her voice soft and light as she saw her girlfriend's reaction to the sight. She knew it wasn't the presence of the band she was smiling at, but rather the lack of presence of her metal training bands.

"I'm just proud of you," Wanda shrugged, a hint of a smile on her lips as she adjusted the hat on her head and raised the cup of coffee to her lips. Scottie smiled gently, feeling content with the words that had left Wanda's lips as she turned her head to study their surroundings a little bit better. "I know it's a big thing for you to not be wearing them, and I'm just so proud."

Scottie returned the smile across the table, knowing that Wanda was right. It was a big step for her, and the past six months of training had certainly beaten her up - but also into shape. She had come a long way since her accidental burning of Sam and while she would never forgive herself for hurting the man, he had long since forgiven her.

She knew her days of missions like these were becoming limited. Her face was more and more recognisable from the fact she spent her days with Tony and Pepper, and now it had become impossible for her and Steve to show their face without some form of disguise. It was only a matter of time before her presence was going to start compromising missions, she was sure of it.

A crackle in her ear reminded her that they weren't here for sightseeing, but rather a mission to stop the infamous Brock Rumlow. She had met the man briefly before the fall of SHIELD when she had gone to visit Fury at the triskelion. But that was a long time ago, and a lot had changed since then.

"All right, what do you see?" Steve's voice crackled through their communication units, Scottie noticing Wanda's finger twitch ever so slightly as she had missed the crackle to signal he was about to start speaking.

The Sokovian girl looked around slowly, her eyes trying to pick up every small detail in order to keep her place on the team. She knew that she was still the rookie here, even if Scottie had spent less time training with them.

"Standard beat cops. Small station. Quiet street. It's a good target," she noted, seeing Scottie nod ever so slightly from across from her.

"There's an ATM in the south corner, which means..."

"Cameras."

"Both cross streets are one way..."

"So, compromised escape routes," Wanda finished, knowing that she was pretty sure she had scouted the environment correctly. Scottie nodded, her eyes finally latching on to a red car up the street. One look told her it was bulletproof, meaning there was going to most likely be some bullets shot today.

"Means our guy doesn't care about being seen, he isn't afraid to make a mess on the way out. You see that Range Rover halfway up the block?"

Wanda nodded, following Scottie's line of sight. "Yeah, the red one? It's cute."

"It's also bulletproof, which means private security, which means more guns, which means more headaches for somebody. Probably us," Natasha's voice joined in with the conversation, reminding Scottie that this was a team mission - not just a recon mission.

"You guys know I can move things with my mind, right?" Wanda asked, fiddling with the rings on her fingers as she sent a cheeky smile to Scottie. The girl smiled back, stretching slightly as she felt some of the sunlight around them warm her shoulders slightly.

"Looking over your shoulder needs to become second nature for the former Red Room assassin almost scolded Wanda, reminding them all of the purpose of their missions.

"Anybody ever tell you you're a little paranoid?" Sam joked, his voice crackling through the comms from where he was perched down the road. Scottie smirked, knowing that Natasha was about to snark right back at him.

"Not to my face. Why? Did you hear something?"

"Eyes on target, folks. This is the best lead we've had on Rumlow in six months. I don't want to lose him!" Steve warned them down the line. He loved the banter as much as the next person but he knew what was at stake here. This was about more than just Rumlow, Scottie thought, it was personal.

Steve had been on a man-hunt for the Winter Soldier for a while now. While Scottie had never really been involved in the hunt for him, she just knew that he was a dangerous man even if he had once been Steve's friend.

"If he sees us coming that won't be a problem. He kind of hates us."

Scottie turned her head as she noticed a truck driving down the street towards them. Her eyes narrowed as she noticed it was a garbage truck, despite the fact that no-one seemed to have any garbage actually lying around.

"Sam, see that garbage truck? Tag it," she muttered, Steve humming in agreement as he also caught on to the truck that was heading down the small street.

They paused for a moment as they waited on Sam's robot to determine if it genuinely was a garbage truck or not. Scottie was ready, tying her blonde hair back as she was prepared to move. Wanda was still sipping on her coffee as she tried to remain blended in with their environment.

"That truck's loaded for max weight and the driver's armed," Sam's voice urgently informed them as he finished the scan on the truck. Scottie jumped to her feet, her mind running a million miles an hour as she motioned for Wanda to get up.

"It's a battering ram!" Natasha informed them all, catching on to the intention first. Steve shouted down the comms for them all to kick into action as Scottie turned to face Wanda.

"You go after the truck, I'm gonna circle round and catch Nat," she told the red head, not waiting for an answer as she took off in the opposite direction.

Scottie didn't have to run for long before she heard the rev of a motorcycle coming towards her. Reaching out, she grabbed on to Natasha's hand as the woman barely slowed for her to jump on behind her. The blonde tugged up the sleeves of her jacket as Natasha steered the motorcycle, knowing that if her arms began to get hot the last thing she needed was her jacket catching on fire.

"Rumlow has a biological weapon," Steve grunted down the comms, Scottie having tuned out of the sound of the others engaging in combat. Natasha nodded, raising her hand to her ear as she replied down the line to the Captain.

"We're on it."

The two of them quickly spun the motorcycle around the next corner, smacking straight into another one of the soldiers that were fighting with Rumlow. Scottie ducked under a fist as she punched one of the mercenary's in the jaw, knocking him to the ground.

Turning around as she swiped another one of the men to the floor, she noticed Natasha tried to zap Rumlow in the back of the neck with one of her Widow's Bite discs. The man simply smiled back, a sick grin on his lips as he laughed humourlessly at her.

"I don't work like that no more," he told her, picking her up by the collar and throwing her through the roof hatch of one of the armoured vehicles around them. The man smirked as he dropped a grenade down the hatch, slamming it behind him. "Fire in the hole."

Scottie wasted no time in sprinting after the man as he jumped into another AFV. She knew that she wouldn't be able to keep up with the van, but as long as she kept it in her sights she was sure that the traffic in Lagos would soon stop them.

"I'm going after him!" Scottie yelled down the comms, ignoring the shout of protest from Steve at the girl going herself.

She pushed herself further, noticing that the AFV crashed in front of them. Listening to Sam as he informed them all that the mercenaries were splitting up, Scottie kept her eyes trained on Steve as the man joined her on her left.

"They ditched their gear. It's a shell game now. One of them has the payload!" Steve informed the rest over the comms, nodding slightly at Scottie to show that he was acknowledging her presence. Just before she could reply to his words, she noticed a projectile coming straight for them as they ran over the car tops.

Steve sheltered them both with his shield, hitting the bomb directly back into the air as it detonated safely away from themselves but also from the citizens that were running and screaming through the streets beside them.

Just as Scottie went to thank him, a solid foot slammed into her back and sent her tumbling down the road from the force. Coughing as she jumped back up to her feet, she noticed that Steve and Rumlow had begun to fight each other in hand-to-hand combat.

"There you are, you son of a bitch. I've been waiting for this!" Rumlow growled at Steve, while Scottie was metres away fighting off the remaining mercenaries. She could feel her skin really begin to heat up and knew that she was going to have to start using her powers or she would be risking another outburst.

Just as she knocked the man beside her to the ground, she turned to notice that Rumlow had gained the upper hand against Steve and had him pinned against the side of a building with a blade extending from his arms.

Reaching her hand out, Scottie let out a slight yell as she let the built up energy leave her body. The stream of sunlight struck into the man, causing him to roar out from the heat as he crumpled a few feet away from Steve.

Scottie hissed slightly as she felt her skin burn, but she shoved it to the back of her mind as she sprinted towards Steve and she defeated Rumlow. Steve had taken the mask off the man's face, showing the deep scarring from when they had last fought each other at the fall of SHIELD.

"I think I look pretty good, all things considered," Rumlow tried to joke, knowing that he wasn't about to give anything up to the agents.

"Who's your buyer?"

Rumlow laughed sourly, knowing exactly what he could say to pass the time and draw Steve in. "You know, he knew you. You pal, your buddy, your Bucky."

Scottie felt her blood run cold as she realised that Steve's perspective was changing. The man had froze in his spot, suddenly flashing back to the thoughts of his friend as Rumlow said his name.

"What did you say?" Steve's voice dropped, his hand grabbing on to Rumlow's collar as all logical thoughts seemed to go out the window. Scottie's eyes widened as she noticed the man's hand moving down to the bottom of the vest he was wearing.

"He remembered you. I was there. He got all weepy about it. Till they put his brain back in a blender. He wanted you to know something. He said to me, 'Please tell Rogers. When you gotta go, you gotta go.' And you're coming with me," Rumlow growled, his finger tightening around a button at the bottom of the vest.

Scottie lunged just in time, pushing Steve out of the way just as Rumlow's bomb vest ignited. She yelled out in pain as the blast caught her right arm, dropping to the ground as she cradled it against her chest.

She felt Steve's hands hold her still as she tried to roll to the ground, the burning pain worse than the burning she was used to. Through her pain, Scottie was able to see that the blast was being kept contained - Wanda standing with deep concentration as she raised in into the air.

Scottie grimaced as she saw the control slip for just a second from Wanda, but that was all it took. The explosion blossomed, taking out almost three entire floors of the building that they had been fighting against.

As Scottie continued to groan and move against Steve's cold hands, she could almost feel the heartbreak from Wanda as she realised just what she had done. Steve raised one of his arms away from where he was trying to soothe Scottie, pressing into his comm as he processed what had just happened.

"Sam... We need... Fire and Rescue... on the south side of the building. We gotta get up there."