

## 2.6

Scottie leaned against Steve as she watched Shuri scan the stone on Vision's head, her eyes staring intently at the hologram that then projected over his palm. Scottie couldn't explain to any of them the sudden sickness that she felt in her stomach, her hands warming slightly as if the stone was telling her to stop this from happening.

Steve cast her a concerned look as he felt the warmth in her wrists as she stood against him, his mind instantly realising that his original thoughts about Scottie and the stone might be right. The girl looked at him, so sharply that he understood that it was too late to stop this from happening. Scottie had known that the stone being destroyed might change everything for her, but she knew that this mission could not fail.

"Whoa. The structure is polymorphic," Shuri explained, her eyes lapping up every inch of the hologram in front of her. She furrowed her eyebrows as she studied it, almost thinking of how stupid it had been to attach it all individually.

"Right, we had to attach each neuron non-sequentially," Bruce nodded, almost sounding impressed with himself at the effort that they had put into creating the android in front of them. Scottie rolled her eyes as she remembered how Ultron had almost been born the exact same way, but quickly moved back to the conversation they were having.

"Why didn't you just reprogram the synapses to work collectively?"

Everyone turned to look at Bruce, awaiting his response even if they didn't understand the comment. Vision even turned to look at the man quizzically, causing Bruce to shudder slightly uncomfortably on his feet as he faced scrutiny for something they did years ago.

"Because... we didn't think of it?" He almost asked back, disappointment in his tone as he realised that the girl was right. It would have not only saved them lots of time in the beginning but this process would have been sorted much quicker too.

"I'm sure you did your best."

Scottie and Natasha had to hide their grins at the level of sass that came out of the young Princess. She was the first person they had ever met minus Tony that had been able to outsmart the scientist in front of them and it was something they were pleasantly enjoying.

"Can you do it?" Wanda interrupted, not wanting this process to fail. She wasn't looking forward to destroying the stone but she knew if Vision was separated from it then everything should be okay.

"Yes, but there are more than two trillion neurons here. One misalignment could cause a cascade of circuit failures," Shuri explained, knowing how important it was to them all to keep Vision alive for the process. She turned to look at T'Challa, a determined look in her eyes. "It will take time, brother."

"How long?" Steve asked, turning away from where he had been trying to make Scottie look at him. The man was disappointed that she was still hiding things from them as everything they had all been through together.

"As long as you can give me."

Scottie took a deep breath as soon as she heard the alarm from the hand of the bald woman on the opposite side of the room. The girl turned to look at the globe that was hovering above the general's hand, noticing the location marker that seemed to pulse frantically.

"Something's entered the atmosphere."

Almost as if it had been planned, the communications unit in their ears all crackled to life as Sam's voice filled the line. It was a little crackly from the Wakandan tech outdating their own, but it was still clear enough for them all to know what he was trying to say.

"Hey, Cap, we got a situation here."

"Yeah, don't start celebrating yet, guys. We got more incoming outside the dome."

Scottie jumped slightly as large ships in the distance caused trees outside the boundary of the protection dome to crush and boil up due to the shock waves. Tensing slightly, she noticed that Steve and T'Challa were sending each other concerned looks at the scope of the fight that was about to occur.

What looked like hundreds of meteors were crashing on the ground around them, bouncing off the protective dome and hitting the areas of forest outside of it. Scottie could see the armies gathering below them as they prepared for the fight that was coming, making the girl rub at the bandage on her arm as she prepared to take it off for the battle. If she used her powers, the bandage was only going to end up being set on fire anyway.

"It's too late," Vision told them all, struggling against Shuri and Bruce to sit up on the table. "We need to destroy the stone now."

Scottie turned to watch Natasha advance towards the android, pushing him slightly back on to the table. She was a scary woman at the most of times but in that moment Scottie was sure that even Vision was scared of what she would do if he didn't listen to her.

"Vision, get your ass back on the table," Natasha ordered, the android obeying her as Scottie hovered next to Steve. Her eyes were focused on the main ship that had landed almost directly across from the window of the lab across the field and she knew that this was it.

"We will hold them off," T'Challa promised his sister, his hand resting on the tooth necklace that was around his neck. Scottie had so many questions about how that was able to carry his suit but she knew it was something else on her list that she would need to ask about another time.

"Wanda, as soon as the stone's out of his head... you blow it to hell," Steve told Wanda, knowing that the girl was completely unaware of what might happen to his girlfriend as a result of this mission. He too was sure that Scottie was going to be fine, or he was sure that the girl would have told them otherwise.

"Evacuate the city. Engage all defense procedures!" T'Challa yelled. He paused for a moment, looking back at Steve before shooting the man an almost knowing smile. "And get this man a shield."

Scottie felt a surge of power in her then, her eyes travelling over to where the stone was slowly becoming detached from Vision. It was almost like with every inch of power that she was given, she was growing slightly stronger as the stone's energy seemed to find her. Whether that was going to be a good thing or not, Scottie wasn't particularly sure.

"Scottie," Natasha called as they all prepared to leave the lab minus Wanda, Vision and Shuri. "Let's go."

Scottie nodded, jogging back over to Wanda as she placed a soft kiss to the girl's lips. They hadn't had a moment to kiss other than their original reunion, but Scottie was very afraid this would be the last chance they'd ever get. Wanda smiled into the kiss, before pulling back and lightly pushing the girl towards the rest of the team.

"I'll see you before you know it," Wanda murmured as Scottie followed them out of the room. The red head rolled her eyes at the cheeky look Vision and Shuri were giving her before they all focused again on saving the android and removing the stone.

On the battlefield, Scottie was nervously unwrapping the bandage from her arm as they all rode in carriers that seemed to effortlessly hover over the ground they were speeding across. Natasha was helping the girl to unwrap the bandage as she noticed how much Scottie's fingers were shaking, while Steve and Bucky stood next to the two women.

Scottie could hear the heavy thumps of Bruce in the Hulkbuster armour running after them, and she was also faintly aware of Rhodey and Sam flying above their heads. Natasha dropped the bandage from Scottie's arm on to the floor beneath them as she reached up to touch the communication unit in her ear.

"How we looking, Bruce?"

Scottie turned her head to see Bruce was utterly impressed with the suit, running and jumping over rocks as if it was what he was born to do.

"Yeah, I think I'm getting the hang of it. Wow! It's like being the Hulk without actually..." Bruce stopped talking with a yelp as the heavy metal foot of the suit hit a rock and caused the man to fall flat on his face while the carriers rode by him. Scottie noticed the fierce Okoye giving him the most disgusted look she had ever seen, causing a small smile to fall on her face at the sight.

Her brief moment of peace was interrupted by Rhodey's voice on the comms reminding her that this was a battle now - not just a small fight that she was used to.

"I got two heat signatures breaking through the tree line."

While Scottie wasn't quite able to make out who the two figures were that she could see, she knew that it was two of Thanos' goons for sure. Natasha squeezed the girl's hand gently in solidarity before their carriers slowly swerved to a tilt as everyone jumped off them.

Scottie was not quite as smooth, stumbling slightly until Bucky grabbed her with his metal arm and steadied the girl from falling over like Bruce had done only minutes prior in the Hulkbuster armour. She thanked the man as she held on to his arm for just a second, allowing herself to regain her senses.

"Scottie, stay on me." Steve muttered, knowing that she was easily the least experienced person for battle out of everyone in Wakanda.

While Bruce also had little war knowledge, he had at least got a significantly large protective shell currently wrapped around him.

The blonde nodded, falling into place just behind Steve's left flank. She knew him well enough to know that he would only be able to help her stay alive if she listened to what he told her to do. Natasha fell into place beside her, almost as if her and Steve were protecting her from the aliens that they were approaching.

It took Scottie less than a few seconds to notice that it was only the trio and T'Challa in his Blank Pather suit that was approaching the barrier to meet with the aliens. She supposed that this was how all war fights began - a failed negotiation.

"Where's your other friend?" Natasha teased, hoping to find out if the other alien they had met in the train station was dead like expected.

The female alien hissed at them through the barrier, her sword slashing against it as she tested the strength of it. "You will pay for his life with yours. Thanos will have that stone and its power."

Scottie felt a chill run down her spine at the second meaning in the sentence that the alien had uttered. If what she previously thought was happening, and the stone was what was giving Scottie her powers, then it meant that Thanos was going to need to go through her to get the full potential of the stone.

"That's not gonna happen." Steve told the alien, his hand firmly squeezing Scottie's before letting T'Challa take over.

"You are in Wakanda now. Thanos will have nothing but dust and blood."

"We... have blood to spare."

Scottie yelped in disgust as strange, mutated alien dogs started to pool from the ships behind the alien. Steve nodded to T'Challa as they knew this was time for them to head back to their army and prepare for the bloodshed that was about to happen.

"Did they surrender?" Bucky almost joked as the four returned back to the front line, Scottie almost being herded by Steve and Natasha to stay with them. They knew the girl was capable of holding her own in previous battles, but this was different.

"Not exactly."

Scottie shot Natasha and Steve one more look before jumping as T'Challa began the war chant that she had been told about but never witnessed herself. Shouts of 'YIBAMBE' were heard across the grounds as they all prepared themselves for the attack of the strange dog creatures.

"What the hell?" Bucky questioned as he studied the creatures, nothing but pure disgust on his face. Scottie had to remind herself that while the rest of them had seen aliens before, Bucky was the only one who actually probably had not.

"Looks like we pissed her off," Natasha quirked, trying to keep Scottie from freaking out at the sight of the demon like creatures in front of them. Everyone looked on horrified as the Outrider creatures threw themselves at the forcefield, their bodies and heads being chipped off as they tried their hardest to break the barrier.

"They're killing themselves," Okoye muttered, disgust in her voice as she studied the scene that was playing out.

Scottie looked at her mentors for a brief moment before she turned to face Natasha and Steve, turning her comm off for a brief second so that Wanda would not hear the information she was about to place on them before the battle.

"On the topic of killing themselves..." Scottie said abruptly, making Bucky, T'Challa, Steve and Natasha all turn to look at her in confusion. "...Wanda destroying the stone might actually kill me because me and Vision found out that I might only be in existence aka alive because of my connection to the stone but it also might not and I might but fine but just to let you know that if I drop dead at some point that might be why."

There was a pause in all of their emotions as they stared back at the girl who had essentially just vomited her own possible death on them seconds before they were about to enter the toughest battle of their lives. Natasha was holding herself together from strangling the girl in front of her, very very furious at how Scottie was so close to sacrificing herself for them again without telling them all.

Just before anyone could reply, the Border Tribe soldiers all fell to their knees as they raised their shields, a few stray outriders having made it through the barrier intact and ready to attack the awaiting army. Scottie took this distraction to flex her wrists and turn her comm device back on, ready to help take down more aliens.

Scottie fired a few of the sunlight beams from her hands as the demons ran towards them. Unlike the guns that her fellow friends were using, and even the high tech laser spears that the army was using, her beams did not take a couple of shots to kill the creatures.

In fact, the second her beams came into contact with them, they seemingly exploded into a pile of flesh. Natasha and Steve sent her an impressed look as Scottie yelped in amazement, encouraging her to keep shooting towards the creatures.

"Cap, if these things circle the perimeter and get in behind us... there's nothing between them and Vision," Bruce told them all, motioning to where the creatures were starting to spread out along the bordering protection line. Scottie paused at his words, knowing that if the creatures managed to get to Vision then the mission would fail.

"Them we better keep 'em in front of us."

"How do we do that?"

T'Challa caused for a moment before bringing his comm bracelet up to his mouth. "We open the barrier. On my signal, open North-West Section Seventeen."

"Requesting confirmation, my King. You said open the barrier?"

"On my signal."

Scottie shook in her shoes slightly as she realised they were about to enter headfirst into the bloodbath officially now. Natasha squeezed her shoulder once to reassure the girl that they could do this, that they would win this war.

"This will be the end of Wakanda," M'Baku muttered from a few spaces down from Scottie, and the girl didn't know how she was supposed to disagree with that. This was truly make or break for them all. There was no hesitation in Okoye's voice when she spoke. The strength and power in her tone reminded Scottie of why the woman was a general in the country.

"Then it will be the noblest ending in history."