

## 2.8

There was nothing but an eerie silence as Wanda lay on the ground, panting from the energy she had just used to destroy the stone. She could see Scottie lying on the ground across from her, the girl's chest barely breathing as she lay motionless. Wanda was sure that the girl would be dead in seconds once the rest of the stone's energy left her body.

"I understand, my child. Better than anyone," Thanos said, standing above Wanda. He looked down slowly, moving his hand so that it reached down towards her head.

"You could never," Wanda snarled, her tears both a mixture of grief and anger as she looked back up at the man. The two closest people she had left to her were gone, and it was all his fault. She couldn't help but wonder if this was all in vain - since he just seemed unstoppable minutes ago with only five of the six stones.

Wanda squirmed slightly as Thanos' hand touched her head, lighting rubbing her hair in what one could only assume was meant to be comforting. He related to the grief she was feeling, but he was on a war path that he would stop at nothing to achieve.

"Today, I lost more than you can know. But now is no time to mourn. Now... is no time at all."

Wanda sat up slowly as Thanos moved his hand away from her head, making a strange motion with the gauntlet as a mysterious emerald shape began to encircling the wrist accessory. The green time stone shone brighter than the rest, and from over Wanda's shoulder she watched as the bad of yellow that had just exploded from Vision slowly began reversing its actions.

"NO!" Wanda screamed out, lunging towards where Vision was being brought back to life, knowing that she had to stop this from happening. Thanos was going to get the stone and this all would have been for nothing.

Thanos simply looked at her in pity, his hand coming down to swat away the crying Avenger. Wanda skidded along the dirt floor, her body rolling until it came to rest a few feet away from where Scottie was lying, her chest moving so slowly that Wanda was surprised she was even alive at all.

As their previous actions rewinded, Wanda could do nothing but watch as Thanos picked Vision up by the throat, pausing and then digging the tips of his purple fingers into Vision's synthetic forehead. The red tint that covered Vision's body turned a sickly grey instantly as Thanos ripped the Mind Stone from the android's head, before throwing the lifeless body to the side as if it was a broken toy.

Wanda held on to a gasping Scottie as the stone regained life, the girl having shot up with the sudden energy that had reactivated in her body. The whole team couldn't do anything other than watch as Thanos lifted the gauntlet up, the metal shimmering and taunting them as he hovered the last infinity stone over the last slot on the device.

The energy that surged around him seemed to crackle with all the colours of the rainbow, a thick electrical smell almost in the air as Thanos tilted his head back and let out a loud roar of power at the sudden feeling that was flowing through his body.

Scottie stopped gasping in Wanda's arms at the same time the stone made the connection with the gauntlet. She paused for a moment, suddenly peaceful while everyone watched on with fearful eyes. Wanda didn't even notice the girl suddenly looking down at her hands, staring at them intently for a moment in utter disbelief before looking back at where the stone had stopped glowing on the gauntlet.

Just as Thanos lifted his hand to inevitably complete his master plan, a familiar bolt of lightning struck him directly in the chest and sent him moving back hundreds of yards. The titan yelled out in anger, his eyes looking up to see his attacker speeding towards him.

Thor's eyes were glinting with power, the sky crackling as he moved his arm and flung the Stormbreaker axe directly at the titan. Thanos tried to use the gauntlet to stop Thor from hitting him, but the axe was true to its target.

Thanos stumbled down to one knee, groaning as the axe buried itself deep into the Titan's chest. He growled lowly at Thor as the cocky god landed directly in front of the man, reaching out the grab the Titan.

"I told you. You'd die for that!"

He took a hold of the back of the man's head, and looked him deeply into the eyes with a burning hatred as he continued to wedge the large axe deeper into Thanos' chest. The titan yelled out in pain as the God continued to smirk, aware of his friends watching in awe and hopefulness as Thor stopped the man from ending everything.

"You should have... you..." Thanos tried to speak, Thor's smile only growing larger as he prepared himself to hear the villain's final words. Just as Thor was about to interrupt and say something witty, a thick smirk emerged on Thanos' face as he continued his sentence. "...you should have gone for the head!"

As Thanos raised his hand to show his fingers about to snap with the gauntlet, Scottie squeezed her eyes shut almost as if that would stop the inevitable from occurring. She wasn't sure what would happen now, but she could only hope that somehow she would go quickly. She didn't want to suffer anymore than she already had today, and she just hoped that if there was an afterlife that she and Wanda would find the rest of their friends there together.

"NO!"

When Scottie opened her eyes, nothing had changed. Thanos was still looking down at the glove, but this time his face was one of anger and dismay rather than amusement and satisfaction. He paused for a brief second, before bringing his hand up and showing Thor down to the ground, wrapping him in unbreakable vines similar to how he had done for Natasha.

Scottie looked back at Wanda, the red head still clutching on to Scottie in disbelief. That should have worked. All the laws of their universe meant that whatever Thanos had tried to do with the gauntlet should have happened - but by the look on the mad titan's face, something had gone significantly wrong somewhere.

The rest of the team watched on in shock as Thanos continued to stare at the glove for a prolonged moment, unsure on why it had not worked. He had collected all the stones, he had made the sacrifice of his daughter, the stones had all worked and all of them were currently glowing brightly - minus the Mind Stone.

"How can this be?" Thanos whispered, more so to himself than any of the Avengers lying on the ground in shock around him. "I killed the Android, the stone bearer..."

As he turned back around to face where Vision's lifeless body lay, the sight before him made him suddenly realise where he had gone wrong.

Wanda was still sitting at the tree she had been thrown into, but her arms were no longer wrapped around a confused and dazed Scottie. Her focus was on Thanos looking, and where the rest of the team all were looking in disbelief. Out of all the outcomes everyone expected from the mind stone being destroyed, this was certainly never one of them.

Her eyes were burning a bright yellow, the exact shade of yellow that the mind stone had released when its energy had been dispersed as the stone cracked. The exact kinetic energy that had latched on to the nearest best thing to an infinity stone. When Scottie Casey was given her powers under the use of the Mind Stone, a unique bond had been formed with it. She had grown up aware of the bond, but never did she expect the stone would have also been aware of the bond.

Scottie Casey was almost glowing with energy as she stood just in front of Vision's dead body, her hands and wrists and arms all a bright vibrant glow from the pure sunlight energy that was crossing through her veins. Her smug smile caused Thanos to yell out in anger as she stumbled slightly on the spot.

She began to move towards him slowly, aware of her friends gaping looks at what she had just done. Scottie Casey had unknowingly absorbed the energy of the mind stone when Thanos had first destroyed it, meaning that on its reformation it was barely the infinity stone it once was. She had literally become a human carrier for the stone and everything it stood for, and in return the stone had granted her unlimited power.

Thanos also lunged forward, swinging his fist towards her head. She ducked slightly, stemming her hand towards him and allowing a beam of her newly improved energy to smack the mad titan backwards. He stumbled, falling over as she continued to slowly advance towards him. He pushed himself back up to his feet, lunging himself once more at her with more aggressive determination this time.

Her energy beam once again met his chest and sent him flying backwards. Scottie could hear the slight cheers of her teammates as they watched the small girl suddenly have the power to pummel the man who had taken them all out effortlessly into a small crisp.

Just as she approached him for what she planned to be the final time, she paused as she held her loaded hands directly above him. The Titan looked up at her in disgust, cradling the gauntlet in his hand so that she couldn't see the stones that were on it. That didn't bother her however, for she didn't need to see them to kill him there and then.

"Before you do this," Thanos said, his voice a fake fearful as he started to finalise his last game plan. "I want to tell you something."

Scottie paused, the curiosity getting the best of her as she allowed the titan to speak.

"I don't need all six stones to kill you, just like how I killed Tony Stark."

It was as if something had suddenly changed around them. Scottie's eyes dimmed of the sudden yellow glow she had picked up as she slowly took a step back from where the purple man was swinging himself to his feet, the five remaining stones on the gauntlet glowing brightly as he let out a battle cry.

Her mind was still reeling from him saying Tony was dead. She didn't want to believe him, but how would he know the man's name if he hadn't met him. If he had got the stone from Dr Strange who was with Tony, she was sure that he had gotten it. He just let the titan take it without a fight.

Her only real father was dead.

Scottie was so caught up in the information that she didn't hear the shouts of her friends telling her to watch out. Thanos' fist collided full force with the side of her face, causing her to hit the ground with a crack as she felt the bones in her left hand snap on impact with the ground. Literally snapping her back to reality, Scottie tried to scoot away on the ground from the man but he used the power of the remaining five stones to hold her in place, leaning down to grasp her head between his hands.

Wanda couldn't look as Scottie let out excruciating screams of pain as the mind stone on the gauntlet started to pulse brightly from the contact with the girl's skin. Steve once again rose to his feet, running towards the duo but being thrown back by the infinity stones power before he even managed to lay a hand on Thanos.

"Give me the power," Thanos yelled at the girl, pushing the gauntlet harder into the side of her head. Scottie started to feel woozy, but she continued to try and keep a hold of the energy that she could feel stirring within her. "You have more strength than I anticipated, little one," Thanos said, his hand gripping Scottie's face as the girl glared up at him from where she was kneeling on the ground.

"Go to hell," Scottie spat, recoiling instantly as Thanos' hand slapped down to the side of her face and sent her tumbling over to the hard ground once more. The girl wheezed, rolling over slightly as she tried to push herself away from the advancing purple Titan.

"Now now child," Thanos hushed her, simply reaching down and picking her up from the ground by the back of her neck. "If you just give me the stone's power I can spare your life."

She flinched as his large hand grasped at her head again, tugging it backwards and allowing him to press the stone into her flesh this time and not just the gauntlet. She was barely aware of the yells of her friends, the pain in her wrist causing her to yell out as she felt the man crush at her bones.

As her wrists began to heat up in self defence, Thanos grinned widely at her body's reaction to the pain and chuckled loudly as she fell to the ground at his feet in agony. The girl was hurt - but he didn't care. His plan was working out.

"Go to hell," The girl spat once more, her voice quavering slightly as she tried to mask the overwhelming fear of the man before her.

"Look around, to you this is hell. Your friends are useless, and poor Stark is currently bleeding out as we speak."

Scottie wanted to call it a bluff, she really did. But she just knew it wasn't a bluff; this was the man who had sent Loki. He had caused all of the pain and anguish in their lives from one stupid event and now here he was, trying to force her into helping him end the world as they knew it.

"They'll kill you for this," Scottie told him as she gritted her teeth, knowing that there wasn't much else she was going to be able to do to help her friends. "They'll avenge everyone you've cut down for this ludicrous goal."

"They will try, little one, and they will fail - and you? You're just lucky you won't be around to witness it."

Scottie gasped tightly as his grip on her tightened, her body finally giving in to the pain that was radiating throughout her body. His hands against her head resulted in a cracking noise, and pain like she had never felt before suddenly exploded in her eardrums. She screamed out in pain again, as her skin slowly began to turn a sickly shade of grey to match that of the deceased Vision's body as the yellow stone on Thanos' gauntlet began to shine brighter. It didn't take a genius to see that he was sucking her energy out to power the stone - and it was killing her.

Just before she felt her eyes start to droop, Thanos released her from his grasp. He stared down at the girl in almost pity, his mouth moving but with no words coming out. He looked like he was congratulating himself, but there was nothing she could do but watch with hooded eyes. With one final look at the girl he snapped his fingers.

And then everything seemed to stop.

Scottie watched in silence as he stepped backwards through a portal, a white light blinding them all for a split second. She groaned in pain as she lay on the ground, barely breathing. Warm hands pressed against her side, stroking and holding on to her carefully as if she would break any second. Her eyes opened as she slowly regained some energy, barely being able to do anything else than look upwards. Wanda and Natasha were hovering over her, their mouths moving frantically as Wanda placed her hands against Scottie's face, trying to get the girl to respond.

Natasha was moving her mouth too, and Scottie didn't understand why they weren't saying anything. Everyone knew she was a bad lip reader and if Thanos had already completed his snap then why would they be hiding things from the man.

And it all came crashing down on her at once.

Scottie couldn't hear a word. She couldn't hear the wind, she couldn't hear the cries of her friends or Thor's shouts as he demanded to know what Thanos had done. She couldn't hear Natasha begging her to show some sign of life other than blinking. She couldn't hear her friends shouting out for the rest of their team as they all tried to recover from what he had done.

She didn't hear Steve call out for Bucky as the man faded into nothing. She didn't hear Okoye calling out for T'Challa as the man evaporated before her. She didn't hear Rocket's pleas for Groot to come back. She didn't hear Rhodey's shouts as he tried to find a non-existent Sam.

But all she could see was the last look on Wanda's face before the redheaded, love of her life faded into nothing but dust.