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Natasha sighed as the remaining Avengers across the universe slowly
started to drop out of the video call. Earthquakes, garbage dumps
and killing sprees weren't exactly the hopeful things that she had
been praying for.
"How's the kid?" Carol Danver's asked, her and Rhodey being the
only ones remaining on the call. Natasha almost jumped, unaware
that the blonde had not hung up yet.
Carol had taken quite a liking to Scottie a er meeting the girl. Even
Steve had made the comparison that the two of them had slightly
similar powers, but Carol was like a more extreme and powerful
version of what Scottie had once been. It wasn't unusual for Carol to
ask the same question at the end of every monthly meeting, and it
also wasn't unusual for Natasha to give her the same reply.
"She's still praying for her powers to reappear. She seems to think still
that if they come back she'll somehow be able to change it and bring
everyone back," Natasha informed Carol and Rhodey, both who
sighed and dropped their heads slightly at the delusion.
Natasha was right, though. Behind closed doors Scottie was obsessed
with getting her powers back and despite her attempts to hide it from
Natasha, Steve, Tony and Pepper, they all could see how it was
destroying the girl from the inside. Steve had tried to get her to come
along to his support group in the city in the hopes that it would help
her, but she only lasted two sessions before chucking that in. Natasha
had given her various tasks with keeping an eye on the planet but
none of them ever seemed important enough for the girl to stop
thinking about everything and everyone that they had lost.
There was even a brief period of 6 months where they had gotten a
dog for the compound, mainly in the hops that Scottie would form
some sort of companionship with the animal. Sadly, it just seemed
like nothing worked and a few months later the dog would find its
forever home with the now teenage daughter of Scott Lang, Cassie.
The girl had visited the compound once or twice over the past five
years despite her dad not really having known them all that well.
Scottie had spoke to her briefly but it was apparent pretty quickly
that they were handling their grief much di erently.
There was a moment of pause in the room before Carol turned her
head to look at Rhodey, wishing his holographic figure luck before
vanishing from the room too. Natasha let out a deep sigh, watching
as Scottie entered the small that joined on to the study from the
corner of her eye.
Looking up, she noticed that Rhodey was still on the line, patiently
waiting for her to continue their conversation. Scottie slowly moved
into the room, clutching le overs from a chinese that Steve had taken
her out for the night before. She perched on the edge of the armchair
a few metres away from Nat, nodding quietly at Rhodey.
 "Where are you?" Natasha asked the man, not knowing if she was
about to like what he would say.
"Mexico. The Federales found a room full of bodies. Looks like a
bunch of cartel guys. Never even had the chance to get their guns o ."
"It's probably a rival gang," Scottie interrupted, knowing that she was
just humouring herself. The three of them all knew exactly who this
was that was committing all of these slaughterings.
"Except it isn't. It's definitely Barton. What he's done here, what he's
been doing for the last few years... I mean, the scene that he le ..."
Rhodey said, trailing o before noticing that Natasha had tears
forming in her eyes from the state her best friend had reached. "I
gotta tell you, there's a part of me that doesn't even want to find
him."
 'Will you find out where he's going next?" Natasha interrupted, taking
a bite of the sandwich that she had quickly made before their
meeting had started earlier. Scottie looked between Natasha and
Rhodey as she dug into her le overs, aware that this was only going
to end with Natasha confronting the man.
"Nat..."
"Please."
Rhodey nodded, a so sigh falling from his lips as he too ended the
call. Natasha let a few tears fall from her eyes, knowing that Scottie
wasn't going to hold it against her. They had grown incredibly close
over the past five years, with Scottie even telling Natasha about the
dreams she had been having in the past year.
Scottie lost her romantic soulmate in Wanda, but she gained a
platonic soulmate in the form of Natasha - and while that wouldn't
heal the hurt and the pain that she felt every day, it was certainly
numbing it.
"You know I'd o er to cook you dinner but you seem pretty miserable
already."
Scottie jumped slightly as Steve appeared in the room, surprised that
she hadn't heard the man entered since her nano tech hearing aids
had now actually been giving her better hearing than the average
human since Tony had finished their latest upgrade. Sure, she was
now fluent in sign language from the help of Natasha but it was
comforting to know her dad was always going to be looking out for
her even if he had retired from the inventing superhero lifestyle five
years before.
"You here to do your laundry?" Natasha teased, referring to the fact
that the man had moved out of the compound a year prior and into a
humble apartment in Brooklyn.
"And to see some friends," Steve noted, looking pointedly between
the two partial blonde women in the room. Scottie smiled so ly as
she stood up and pulled the man into a tight hug. The world might
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"Clearly, your friends are fine," Natasha joked, wiping a tear away from her eyes with a humourless chuckle. The three of them all shared a sad laugh for a moment before Steve moved to sit down on the armchair across the room from the duo. "You know I saw a pod of whales when I was coming up the bridge." "In the Hudson?" Natasha teased him, knowing that he was telling the women this for an ulterior purpose than just letting them know how his whale watching hobby was developing. Scottie didn't seem too impressed but then again she never truly had been impressed by anything since Wanda had destroyed the stone. "There's fewer ships, cleaner water." "You know, if you're about to tell me to look on the bright side. Um... I'm about you to hit you in the head with a peanut butter sandwich," Natasha joked back, raising her half eaten sandwich with an almost as sad half-smile. Steve moved his jacket to the side of the chair before settling down again. "Sorry. Force of habit. You know, I keep telling everybody they should move on and... grow. Some do. But not us." Scottie remained quiet, afraid that if she spoke up about why she couldn't grow that she was going to get another one of their 'Wanda wouldn't want you to mope forever' speeches that she had became pretty accustomed to over the past five years. They had became more frequent in the past few months especially as everyone had really

"If I move on, who does this?" Natasha asked him, the deep

underlying despair present in her voice. This was all she had le.

"Maybe it doesn't need to be done," Steve so ly told her, seeing that

the woman had been having this exact crisis in her mind for a while

compound open other than Scottie and Natasha's unwillingness to

"I used to have nothing. And then I got this. This job... this family. And

"Maybe Steve is right." Both of them spun around to look at the girl in

I was... I was better because of it. And even though... they're gone...

stop trying to find some way to reverse everything and bring it all

now. They all knew that there was little reason le to keep the

have moved on, but the three of them knew that they were never

going to be content with this life.

started to almost move on.

I'm still trying to be better."

There was a so pause before Scottie spoke.

as the trio all started at it in amazement.

"It's the front gate."

others could be too.

"Holy shit."

shock. She was the last person they expected to say that moving on was maybe something they should start doing. "I think we all might need to get a life." "You first," Natasha joked, trying to make sense of what Scottie was telling her. Just before she could go to say anything on the situation, the screen at the table flashed up in front of them, an image of a man frantically waving at yelling at the camera appearing. "Oh! Hi. Hi! Is anyone home? This is Scott Lang. We met a few years ago, at the airport? In Germany? I got really big, and I had my mask on. You wouldn't recognize me!" Scottie squinted at the screen, confusion spread out across her face

"Is this an old message?" Steve asked, the hairs on the back of his

when the snap had happened, he had been claimed as one of the

Scottie felt something stir from inside her, that small ounce of hope

Scottie blinked for a second, realising that maybe if he was back then

casualties as poor Cassie Lang had been le without her dad.

that she had forgot she had was sparking up again as Natasha

pointed out the time stamp on the video to the rest of them.

neck suddenly standing on edge. Scott Lang was dead. Five years ago

'Have you ever studied Quantum Physics?" Scottie leaned against the table, her hand running over her face as she tried to figure out what the hell was happening. Scott seemed completely unaware that they were very confused and continued to yapper on in their ears. "Only to make conversation," Natasha said, very flyaway. Scottie and Steve shared amused looks at the woman's comment knowing that it was perfectly in line with Natasha's personality to have done so. "That's hot," Scottie joked, causing Natasha to send her a playful

wink before turning their attention back to Scott. Scottie wasn't sure

if it was because their names were similar - and she hated it when

people had similar names as hers - but she had never really been

"Alright. So... five years ago, right before Thanos, I was in a place

microscopic universe. To get in there, you have to be incredibly small.

Hope, she's my... She was my... She was supposed to pull me out. And

Scottie felt her shoulders slump. Sure, she was glad that Scott had

finally gotten out of what she assumed was a rough few years but it

had just demolished her hope that the man had somehow been

reversed from the e ects of the snap. It hit her with the sad truth:

"I'm sorry. That must've been a very long five years," Natasha

someone who hadn't been taken in the snap wouldn't be the one to

sympathised with the man, amazed that he had survived that and not

gone insane. They might have only met the man for a few minutes

They had heard the stories about how hard adhering to his house

There was a long pause of silence as the trio all shared bewildered

looks before turning back around to look at Scott in surprise. Five

hours? Scottie wished that it had only been five hours for her, but

every minute had felt like it lasted for longer than five hours to her.

"See, the rules of the Quantum Realm aren't like they are up here.

"Yeah, but that's just it. It wasn't. For me, it was five hours."

but she had already known that he found it hard to sit still as it was.

called the Quantum Realm. The Quantum Realm is like its own

then Thanos happened, and I got stuck in there."

reverse it.

arrest had been.

just getting to the point was making her ridiculously agitated.

particularly keen on the man before the snap and the fact he wasn't

Everything is unpredictable. Is that anybody's sandwich? I'm starving." He picked up Natasha's half eaten sandwich before ramming it into his mouth and turning back around. His eyes landed on the plate of Scottie's le overs, which the girl quickly snatched to her chest. She wasn't about to let him eat her food, even if he had been stuck in a wormhole for five years... or hours? 'Scott, what are you talking about?" Steve almost snapped, answering Scottie's prayers of getting the Lang to finally get to the point of his story. He had been in the room for almost ten minutes and had successfully explained nothing to them.

"What I'm saying is, time works dierently in the Quantum Realm.

what if we did? I can't stop thinking about it. What if, we could

then exit at another point in time? Like... Like before Thanos."

The only problem is right now, we don't have a way to navigate it. But

somehow control the chaos, and we could navigate it? What if there

was a way to enter the Quantum Realm at a certain point in time but

Scottie looked at him for a moment before her eyes narrowed as she

stared at the man in front of them, waiting on him to say he was just

"Wait, are you talking about a time machine?" Steve interrupted her,

them. Natasha straightened out as she looked towards Scottie to see

that the girl was thinking exactly what she was thinking. If they could

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his eyes wide at the concept that Scott was trying to pit across to

pull that o then... well, maybe they wouldn't be standing here in

"No. No, of course not. No, not a time machine. It's more like a...

"Scott, I get e-mails from a raccoon, so nothing sounds crazy

Yeah, a time machine. I know it's crazy. But I can't stop thinking about

it. There's gotta be some way... There's gotta be...some w... it's crazy."

kidding or that he was being dramatic. When it didn't come, she

couldn't help but let out an amazed chuckle.

pain.

anymore."

Morgan Stark.

her lover, she couldn't hate him.

way it was for Tony.

travel movies in the past.

**"**No."

"So who do we talk to about this?"

"You can't be suggesting what I think you are..."

"Are you seriously telling me that your plan to save the universe is based on Back To The Future" Scottie was leaning against the outside wall of the log cabin that she had helped Tony and Pepper to build years prior. She had been unnaturally quiet in this conversation, her mind still running at 500 miles per hour as she tried to fully understand the argument that the men in front of her were having. When Scott had suggested the idea of a time machine, she had originally thought that Tony would jump straight into the concept and get to work immediately like he had always done for any of her problems that she had encountered. It was on the car ride over that she realised the crucial di erence in pre-snap Tony and post-snap

Tony that was going to make this idea not happen; her little sister

Scottie wanted to be annoyed at Tony as soon as he started their

current argument with Scott, but she knew exactly why the man

changing the timeline they lived in. As much as she thought that she

would hate him for not doing everything in his power to bring back

Scottie knew fine well that if she was in his position and time-travel

meant losing Wanda, then it was a no-brainer for her either, just the

"Good. You had me worried there. 'Cause that'd be horse shit. That's

not how quantum physics works," Tony told the man, knowing fine

well that his plan was based around the stu that he had seen in time

wasn't exactly willing to run straight into just going back and

"Tony... We have to take a stand." Natasha finally interrupted, trying to get the man to think about things from their point of few. He might have moved on, but they all certainly hadn't. "We did stand," Tony pointed out, a hint of bitterness still in his voice as he thought about how Thor had killed Thanos yet still couldn't bring everyone back. "And yet, here we are." "I know you got a lot on the line. You got a wife, a daughter. But I lost someone very important to me. A lot of people did. And now, now we have a chance to bring her back. To bring everyone back. And you're telling me that won't even..." "That's right, Scott, I won't even," Tony interrupted, his voice calm

but loud over Scott's frantic yells of anger at the man. "I got a kid."

'Scottie's your kid too," Scott continued, trying to make the man

sway to their point of view. Scottie raised her eyebrows as everyone

turned to look at her for her input, even though nothing she said was

"I would do almost anything to bring Wanda back, but the one thing I

knowing until that moment that the small human running towards

"Mommy told me to come and save you," Morgan told Tony as the

can't do is risk losing my sister," Scottie so ly told them all, not

her was the reason that she might finally be moving on.

going to change anyone's minds on the matter.

man scooped her into his arms, propping her up on his hip before passing her over to Scottie so that she could say hi. "Good job. I'm saved. I wish you'd come here to ask me something else. Anything else. Honestly, I... I missed you guys, it was... Oh, and table's set for six," Tony trailed o at the end, giving them a chance to rekindle the friendship that they all once had. But he knew that they wouldn't be able to look at him the same way a er this. "Tony, I get it. And I'm happy for you, I really am. But this is a second

chance," Steve told Tony, still not really getting it despite his claims.

"I got my second chance right here, Cap. I can't roll the dice again. If

you don't talk shop, you can stay for lunch."

Scottie's sleeve with a small childish grin on her face - fully oblivious to the context of the argument that had just happened in front of her. "Mommy says you don't get a choice about staying for lunch, Otter!" 🔌 "I wouldn't miss it for the world," Scottie told her, but there was a hesitation in her voice that Tony also noticed. Scottie hated that he wouldn't try to help, but she hated that she almost was glad he didn't even more.

Maybe Cap had been right, maybe it was time they moved on.

As the three superheroes began to turn away, Morgan tugged on

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