3.6 "All right, Cap, Scottie. I got our scepter in the elevator just passing the 80th floor," Tony's voice crackled through the comms as Steve motioned for Scottie to follow him. This was their time to strike and get the sceptre before it le the building and headed to Sokovia where it would be used to give Wanda and her brother powers. a "On it. Head to the lobby," Steve instructed Tony, Scottie hot on his heels as they paused outside the elevator doors. Pressing the button, Steve turned to Scottie with a mischievous glint in his eyes. She tilted her head in confusion as he looked at her with a small smirk of excitement on his face. "Okay so... here's the plan." Agent Sitwell, Rumlow and the rest of the double agents all took a deep breath as the elevator doors in front of them slid open to reveal the one and only Captain America and their newest threat, Scottie Casey. "Captain. I thought you were coordinating search and rescue?" Sitwell asked, visibly more tense as the two superheroes moved into the elevator. "Change of plans," Steve firmly replied, any trace of the smirk he had minutes prior now long gone. Scottie moved from one foot to the other awkward as Rumlow eyed her suspiciously. "Casey. Have you done something with your hair since we saw you five minutes ago? You look older," he mused, causing Scottie to almost swear under her breath as she realised they had overlooked the fact she was clearly no longer a teenager. "Hey, Cap." They both let the tension leave their bodies as Rumlow moved on without anymore questions on her change in appearance, simply eyeing them both up with his hand moving to his gun at his side. "Rumlow," Steve greeted back. "I just got a call from the Secretary. We're gonna be running point on the scepter." "Sir? I don't understand," Sitwell interrupted instantly, shooting a panicked look with some of the men that surrounded the two Avengers. Scottie knew that if she had her powers, they all would have felt the temperature rise from her nerves. a "We got word there may be an attempt to steal it," Scottie replied smoothly, a much better liar now than she had been back in 2012. It was no secret that Scottie Casey was the world's worst liar when she was new to the team. "Sorry, Cap. I can't give you the scepter, Rumlow informed them both, his hand ready to pull out his taser any second. He knew they could take Steve but he wasn't sure how they would all handle the superpowered girl. a "I'm gonna have to call the Director." "That's okay. Trust me," Steve murmured. "Hail Hydra." a "Hail Hydra," Scottie mimicked as she smiled at Rumlow. The man's jaw dropped in amazement that SHIELD's golden boy and girl were actually on their side. Scottie would have screamed in delight at it actually working, had her excitement not been cut short the second they exited the li and came face to face with 2012 themselves. Maybe it was being shot with her own beam of energy that triggered her realisation, but Scottie slowly stood up from the ground with a lot more on her mind than the fact she had just been blasted five floors down by teenage her. Vormir. å The word had been ringing through her mind ever since she had heard it, almost as if something was calling out to her and warning her. The second her body had absorbed the energy blast that younger her had shot towards her, it was almost as if she could feel the mind stone talking to her like it had when she had absorbed it before fighting Thanos. It felt like it had yelled out Vormir in such a way that she almost felt as if she had began to grieve something. When she stood up, she had realised what the stone was trying to make her grieve. a Thanos had gone to Vormir without a stone but with a daughter. When he le Vormir, he returned with a stone but no daughter. He had told Wanda as she tried to hold him back that he had sacrificed more than she would ever know and that he felt her pain when Scottie had almost died. Scottie knew what was going to happen next. Clint and Natasha would go to Vormir without a stone but with each other. Clint or Natasha would come back from Vormir with a stone but without the other. a⁵ Vormir wasn't making her nervous because she was going to die there, Vormir had been making her nervous because whatever small connection she had le with the mind stone was warning her that the soul stone was going to demand more than just some expertly planned time travel, but rather a literal soul. Taking o towards where she had seen Steve leave the tower a er successfully finishing his fight with himself - she assumed he had knocked her past self out pretty quickly a er she had blasted Scottie o the side of the bridge - she knew that she had to somehow get to Vormir before it was too late. As she ran towards where she could see Tony and Scott and Steve all arguing, she slowed down with a furrowed brow at why they seemed to only be in possession of one stone and not the Tesseract. Realising pretty quickly that they had failed to get the Tesseract, her mind ran at a greyhound pace as she thought about her realisation and what this meant now that they didn't have the Tesseract. She needed to go to Vormir and she needed to be able to get back from Vormir too. She needed more Pym Particles, and she needed to go to Vormir herself. Listening to what her dad and Steve were trying necessary particles she would need to carry out her rescue plan and to have a spare incase it didn't work out. "Scottie, Scott, get this back to the compound," Tony said, shoving the sceptre towards Scott. "I'm going with you Dad," Scottie told him, her eyes not wavering from his as she stood his ground. Her hand rested on his arm, and for the slightest moment Tony could have sworn he felt her hand warm up slightly. He stared back, before his eyes so ened and he nodded once at her. "Suit up," he said to Scottie and Cap, everyone surprised that he hadn't taken more convincing to let Scottie join them. "What's in New Jersey?" Scott asked, confused about what they all were talking about. Scottie knew fine well who they would find in New Jersey, having listened to Tony tell her about his father and his work many a time in the past fi een years. Tony took hold of Scottie's wrist as he muttered digits to Steve, inputting them into his own device and Scottie's too. He didn't want to risk her accidentally hitting the wrong number. "Cap. Captain. Steve, sorry, America. Rogers. Look, if you do this, and this doesn't work, you're not coming back," Scott interrupted them all as they began to get ready to travel through the quantum realm once more. Scottie tightened her ponytail as she prepared for the strange feeling in her stomach that she had gotten last time. "Thanks for the pep talk, pissant," Tony brushed him o before turning to look at the other two. "Do you trust me?" "I do," Steve admitted, something that Scottie would never have imagined a er that day at the airport in Germany. She nodded in agreement and Tony placed a so hand on her shoulder before looking back at Steve. "Your call." "Here we go." Scottie looked around amazed at the army base as Steve and Tony began to walk slowly away from where they had appeared. She had taken the disguise from Tony quickly, and was quite amazed to discover that the bomber jacket she was wearing over her black combat trousers and black tee made her actually look like she belonged there. Sure, a skirt and tights might have helped her not stick out as much but it wasn't like they just had them lying around on the base. "Clearly, you weren't actually born here, right?" Tony muttered to Steve, noting how hectic everything seemed to be. They had been to the base before, but not during the height of it in the 1970s. "The idea of me was," Steve admitted, his eyes already trailing to the barracks he knew would have the secret lab inside of the it. "Right. Well, imagine you're SHIELD, running a quasi-fascistic intelligence organization. Where do you hide it?" "In plain sight," Steve told him, motioning to the base with his head. Scottie turned to look at it in surprise, lowering her sunglasses to properly take it all in. Steve looked at Scottie and noticed how out of place she looked, rolling his eyes and reaching into his pocket and pulling out a small piece of metal. Put this on," he commanded, shoving the rags into her hand. Scottie's eyes widened as she noticed the dog tags with Steve's name on them. "Do you just carry these about with you? How do you even have The two men ignored her, simply leaving her behind as they headed towards the building. She hu ed before tugging the metal tags in over her head to make it look more like she was supposed to be there. Following her dad and Steve closely, they entered the first in the li , moving forward to hide his face from her as she seemed to stare at Steve for a moment longer than necessary. It was no secret that Captain America was a legend in the US army, but Scottie didn't think they would have so many photos of the man and his friends hanging up around the base. "Good luck on your mission, Captain," Tony told him as he moved to exit the li . He briefly looked at Scottie before stepping out. "It was nice meeting you, Agent." "Good luck on your project, doctor." There was a moment of silence as the duo now waited in the elevator with the woman who kept staring at them in confusion. She hadn't seen either of them around before and she pretty much knew everyone here by heart. "You're new here?" "Not exactly," Steve said, not being able to help himself. Scottie almost rolled her eyes before moving forward to step out of the elevator. "I'll see you in a moment, Captain." Steve opened his mouth in confusion at Scottie moving out of the li, knowing that she was meant to be sticking with him on this one. She winked at him, knowing that she couldn't let him know what she needed to do next. She wouldn't put his life at risk. in them - and even less so about SHIELD. She had been so sure that there would have been an extra stock of Pym Particles in the Director's o ice like there usually was with these sort of things in the Her whole plan was that she'd come here, find the spare ones and of the extra particles and wouldn't be making the same return trip as them. And that had pretty much found itself on fire instantly, since all she found in the room seemed to be maps and planners and a photograph of a man who looked incredibly like Bucky Barnes. Scottie paused as she picked up the photo, her finger running across the picture as she took in what Bucky looked like with short hair and didn't know the man well at all but she understood better now that he hadn't always been the brainwashed killer turned victim that she had always known him to be. "Can I help you?" face to face with a very stern looking woman holding a gun towards her. Scottie's eye's widened as she realised exactly who was standing in front of her and she cursed at herself for not remembering who was Director in the 1970s. Peggy Carter was one of the most beautiful and elegant women she had ever seen. Scottie had heard so much about her from Steve throughout the years and while she had never met the woman, she wasn't disappointed. She could tell from here that Peggy was truly one of the kindest and bravest women that she would ever be blessed to meet. "Why are you holding that photo of my friend and why are you in my o ice?" Peggy asked more sternly this time, her eyes scanning the girl over once more. Scottie didn't realise that Peggy was already starting to form a suspicion about the girl, especially considering the way she was dressed and how she had been looking at the photo of Bucky. She tried to think of what to say before finally deciding that maybe some variation of the truth would help her out here. "I need Pym Particles to save a friend." Peggy slowly lowered her gun, her eyebrows narrowing as she took in what the blonde had said. No-one knew about those particles minus a very very small group of people and this girl who clearly had no relation to any of those people shouldn't have know a single thing about them. The light caught on the tags around her neck and Peggy noticed the familiar numbers and name that she would never be able to forget. Slowly moving around the girl, Peggy moved to the other side of her desk where a framed photo of Steve Rogers sat facing away from the girl. She pulled out the drawer on the desk from under the photo's position and her suspicion was confirmed instantly. Hank Pym had told her that one day his Pym particles would be the secret to what he deemed "time travel" but she had naturally had belong to her, she was suddenly convinced. with a sigh. "But did he live a good life?" Scottie did a double take, not having expected the woman to ask that. She knew instantly that she had been figured out and had it been anyone else she might have been surprised - but Peggy Carter has always been made out to be one of the smartest people around. "He does, he carries on your legacy. You're a hero. I've heard so much amazed at the same time. Peggy smiles so ly, before she reached into her drawer and grasped her hand around something. "You said you needed Pym Particles? What happens so bad in the future that you have to come back to 1970 to get particles?" "I swear, I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the sake of the world," Scottie admitted, running a hand through her hair as she tried to ignore Steve and Tony hissing in her earpiece about meeting them back where they appeared in the next five minutes. Peggy nodded, taking her hand out from the desk and passing her two of the red vials she had been a er. Scottie looked at her in amazement, surprised that she had been so willing to trust a girl she had never met. "Thank you Miss Carter, I'll never forget this." Turning to exit the room, Peggy's voice stopped her once more in her tracks. "You look just like your father, Miss Casey and you seen to be just as caring as your mother. I look forward to meeting you again." Scottie paused, her hand on the handle as she looked back over her but she knew her parents had worked for SHIELD since they were recruited from school. They'd worked for HYDRA for that entire time too. Maybe it was the small slip of her smile at hearing the praise her parents received, but as soon as Scottie le the room without another word, from that moment on, Peggy never trusted Agent Casey or his soon-to-be wife again. "Where have you been?" Tony hissed as Scottie jogged over to where Steve and him had been waiting for the girl and growing impatient. "It doesn't matter," she muttered before turning to look at Steve who was clutching something in his hands. "Did you get them?" Steve moved his hand to pass her one of the vials - unaware that she didn't need it but she accepted it anyway to keep a spare one for herself. Turning to look at her dad, she noticed the case in his hands. He nodded before she could ask if that was the Tesseract, a huge grin appearing on her face as she looked at the other two. "Holy shit, I can't believe this worked!" They both laughed too, all three of them having a moment to be glad something had finally gone smoothly for them. Tony nodded at them both as he motioned to their wrist watches. "Right, lets go." As they all pressed the buttons to suit up, Tony and Steve both furrowed their brows as the built in visor screen reported that only two out of the three of them had set their landing point for 2023. Tony turned to look at Steve in confusion. "Do you have the right co-ordinates? Why are you set for the middle of nowhere in 2014?" He asked in confusion before realising that Steve was about to ask him the same thing. They both turned to face Scottie who wasn't laughing anymore. She had tears pouring from her eyes as her hand hovered over the confirm button on her hand strap. "I love you," she told them both, slamming her hand on down on the activation button. It almost felt like slow motion as they both rushed towards her, trying to make her stop and think about what she was about to do. "Whatever it takes." But their hands grasped at empty air. Scottie Casey had taken o into the quantum realm with no explanation to her family. The machine booted back up as all of the remaining members of the Avengers gathered at their departure spot. All of them looked around in amazement as they realised that they had actually somehow managed to pull it o. "Did we get them all?" Bruce asked, a grin spread across his face as he noticed the six stones spread across the large group that had formed in the circle. "You telling me this will actually work?" Rhodey whooped with a smile on his face as he had the sudden realisation that they were going to get everyone back. He grinned at Rocket as the two of them exchanged a fist bump, laughing loudly as they were filled with hope. Everyone cheered and got excited between them as they smirked at as he realised that Tony wasn't laughing. His eyes looked to the two in pain as he crumpled to his knees on the ground. The thump was deafening. Everyone spun around to look at the man, their smiles instantly when they le. "Clint, where's Nat?" Bruce asked, his voice breaking slightly as he noticed the first missing member of their team. Clint said nothing, his head simply staring at his hands where the stone was resting in his palm. He couldn't say it. It should have been "Tony," Rhodey mumbled so ly, turning to face the man as he picked up on the other empty spot in the room. "Where's the kid?" Tony's eyes were narrowed, a look of disbelief across his face as he continued to stare at the spot where his daughter had been standing only hours prior. He couldn't stop thinking about how she had knowingly betrayed them, sending herself o to god knows where to most likely never return. He had promised her he wouldn't die on this mission and now it was dawning on him that she hadn't promised him the same. "Cap, where's Scottie?" Rhodey repeated to Steve when he didn't wasn't just one casualty. Steve turned to look once more at the space, his eyes watering as Tony took o from the platform, dropping the suitcase in his hands as he moved away without a word. There was nothing he could say. the skin on her uncovered hands red raw from the unforgiving sharpness of the cold rocks. Standing as the so wind and gentle snow brushed her hair lightly past her face, she knew instantly that her friends were no longer here. She didn't want to find out who had le and who hadn't been so lucky, but she knew that any minute she was going to have to su er it. She was well out of her depths here, and potentially had just wasted her only chance at getting home. Looking at the leather band that was strapped on to her wrist as her time travel suit condensed back into the band Tony had made for them all, she found a lump form in her throat as she remembered just why they would have

a to debate, Scottie knew instantly how she was going to get herself the á a a elevator they saw that they assumed would lead them towards where they needed to be. Tony stood inbetween Steve and the other woman ď Scottie had very little knowledge about army bases and what went on a pocket it without Steve or Tony finding out that she was in possession without the weight of the Winter Solider mantle on his shoulders. She Scottie squealed as she turned around on the heel of her foot, coming ₫³ a a many doubts about that. But the second this girl appeared in clothing that really wasn't from around here and wearing dog tags that did not "I figure you can't say much," Peggy started as she leaned on the desk a about you," Scottie admitted, trying not to say too much but being so a đ٩ shoulder at Peggy's words. She wouldn't be born for another 25 years a a a a ď a each other, amazed that they'd managed it all. Rhodey looked over to his best friend, excited to see him grin back but he found himself stop empty spots between Steve and Clint, the latter man's face contorted a dropping from their faces as they noticed the empty space beside him that a familiar red head and her partner in crime had been standing in a a⁶ å a receive an answer from Tony, a lump in his throat as he realised there ď Scottie straightened up as she pulled herself over the final rock ledge, made this sacrifice. She had already lost one soulmate - she wouldn't lose her deepest friendship too. "Scottie, daughter of Cli ord," a voice called out, the rasp causing her to spin around with her hands raised and faintly glowing in front of From the shadows in front of her, a masked figure floated forward. The hood fell back to reveal a skeleton face, scorned with red as the figure stared straight through her with a wisdom that she was instantly overwhelmed by. She knew exactly who this man was - or at least had once been - but something told her that he wasn't here to try and continue Nazi Germany. "I am a guide. To you, and all those who seek the Soul Stone. However, I regret to inform you that you are too late." Scottie bowed her head slightly, already having suspected that the trade o had happened. She was angry, at not just herself but also Nebula who knew exactly of the sacrifice her friends would have had to endure. If she had known, she would have made sure it was her and not either Clint or Natasha. If she had just listened to what the small connection le between her and the mind stone had been trying to tell her. Nodding as she swallowed thickly, she allowed the figure to lead her towards the edge of a large cli . She knew that when she looked over the cli she was going to see one of her friends sprawled our lifeless on the ground below her. The hooded man glided backwards, almost as if he was trying to give her the decency to compose herself before looking. Taking one more step forward so that her feet just touched the edge, Scottie sucked in a breath before opening her eyes as her head looked down. Not even a second later, the girl was stumbling backwards and throwing up everything that was resting in her worried stomach. She would never be able to get the image of her best friend, her closest to a sibling she would ever have, lying on the ground with those lifeless eyes staring directly up at her soul. đ Natasha Romano was dead, lying in a pool of her own blood with lifeless eyes staring upwards. ď Red Skull said nothing, simply staying where he was hovering as he waited to see what the girl did next. He was very aware that she was going to try and bargain for everything in her power, but there was nothing that any human would have been able to do to turn this this around. "Whatever it takes," she mumbled under her breath, a sick feeling still overwhelming her as she really began to realise the sacrifices everyone was having to make to bring their friends home. "They said that too." A chill travelled up her spine as she thought about Clint and Natasha standing on this cli trying to decide who was going to take the plunge. She knew it would most likely have gone out as a combat scu le - with neither wanting the other to die. Clint's bow on the ground at her feet only served as a reminder that Natasha was always the better fighter of them all, but never had she expected that it would kill the woman. "Take me instead," Scottie said. The firmness in her voice had Red Skull turning to look at her, almost with a slight sympathy as he heard the crack at the end. "Give her back." "A soul for a soul. No take backs," he simply replied. Floating just out of her reach as Scottie trembled with anger slightly on the ground She could almost feel the soul stone's presence, something that she supposed her connection to the mind stone must have granted her once upon a time. "There is nothing any human can do." a Flinching slightly as her fist came into contact with the ground, Scottie suddenly furrowed her eyebrows as she had a sudden memory flash through her head at his words. Five years prior when she had been underestimated as just a human by Thanos' self proclaimed children. a "We don't trade lives," Scottie muttered under her breath, thinking back to that fateful day in Avengers HQ five years prior. Steve had told them all that as they fought to prevent from having to kill Vision - not that that mattered now. They all knew even if they reversed the snap that the Android most likely would remain dead. A life had been traded here - but they didn't trade lives. Scottie wouldn't trade her life for Natasha's, not when she had something much better to o er. "A life has been traded, the deal has been done..." Red Skull began, but was cut o as Scottie jumped to her feet. Something that made no sense but yet made the most sense had just floated into her mind. at "What if I gave you something much more powerful than a life? Huh?" She said, the venom in her voice obvious as she took a step towards the guardian. "How about that?" a There was a pause in the air as the snow almost seemed to stop around them. A flash of lightning in the distance seemed to illuminate the look of determination on her face as the red man let out a small smile. "The fate of the world is in your hands, yet you bargain for one human. Dare I ask, what a girl like you can o er to the mighty Volmir to reverse what has been done?" Scottie shut her eyes as she moved slightly closer to the cli edge. Her feet rested half on the cli and the tips of her toes rested in the air in front of it. She knew exactly what she needed to do now, the words chanting in her head from the mind stone telling her why she should do the complete opposite. "I'm not just any human." And with that, Scottie Casey jumped. å Continue reading next part \Box