3.9

"How did you know it was time to settle down? Especially with your - our - line of work?"

Clint turned the swivel chair around slowly, a small smile on his face as he looked at the nervous Scottie who was sitting on the other side of the lab, eating his leftover Pad Thai as he continued to work on upgrading his gear. He studied her for a moment, knowing that the girl was genuinely interested in hearing his response.

"It was just a feeling. A gradual one I guess," Clint told her, leaning over and taking a sip of the soda she had brought for him. "It wasn't like one day I was like 'Okay let's get married, have children and buy a farm by the end of the week', you know? It was that realisation that I wanted to marry Laura, then the other stuff came afterwards."

Scottie nodded, placing the Pad Thai down as she leaned back against the couch. She fiddled with the bracelet on her wrist slightly as Clint continued to smile warmly at her. It didn't take a highly skilled spy to realise what was on her mind and why she'd asked him the question.

"You thinking about marrying her?"

Scottie looked up surprised for a second before she realised what he was asking her. She blushed red, barely trying to hide her smile as she looked back across the room with a small nod in response to his question.

"Do you believe in soulmates?"

"Hell yeah," Clint told her, a smirk forming on his face as he crossed one leg over the over and leaned forward so his elbows were resting on them. "Both platonic and romantic, and I fully believe I've got both already in my life."

"Nat and Laura?" Scottie asked, knowing that those were maybe the only two people Clint would ever trust 150% with his life. She knew he probably trusted herself 95% of the time, but they didn't have that connection the way the other two women did.

"Yeah," Clint mused before looking back to her. "And you think Wanda is yours?"

Scottie shook her head.

"Nah I don't think she is. I know she is."

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"Cap, what do you want me to do with this damn thing?"

Scottie's eyes frantically searched the battlefield as she blasted away another alien from Thanos' army, the Outrider dogs squealing as soon as her sunlight energy scorched their skin. She would have recognised Clint's voice anywhere and she had told herself that if Clint or Natasha needed anything during this battle that she would drop anything to get to them. They were certainly the least equipped to fight an alien army out of them all - even with their guns.

"Get those stones as far away as possible!" Steve yelled back, and Scottie noticed in the distance his shield colliding with Mjölnir again, the noise echoing in her ears as she continued scanning the field for Clint.

"No! We need to get them back where they came from!" Bruce yelled through the comms link, Scottie scowling at how complicated their situation was getting. Even she knew that there wasn't any way for them to get them back to time when their time travelling machine was scattered in thousands of parts around them.

"No way to get them back. Thanos destroyed the quantum tunnel," Tony informed them all, still slightly in shock from his reunion with Peter Parker.

"Hold on!" Scottie yelped in surprise as Scott suddenly shrank back to a normal size, a huge grin on his smile as he fumbled for something. "That wasn't our only time machine."

Just as her eyes finally latched on to where Clint was running through the battlefield, the familiar song that Scottie identified as La Cucaracha started to play. She really wished she knew it from learning about other cultures but the only reason she even recognised the song was from having heard it in the Bratz live action film - something that she had forced Wanda to watch maybe more than once.

Scottie took off towards Clint, blasting Outriders and other aliens out of her way as she rushed to the man's side, taking in all the information that the team were all passing between each other.

Tony watched her run from across the battlefield, noticing that Doctor Strange was standing just to his side and fighting off another hoard of foes. His eyes narrowed at the magician before casting one last glance back to Scottie.

"lHey. You said one out of 14 million, we win, yeah? Tell me this is it," Tony pleaded to the man, knowing that he couldn't bear to watch anything happen to Scottie or Peter ever again.

"If I tell you what happens, it won't happen."

"You better be right."

———

"BACK OFF!"

Clint jumped in surprise as he spun around, watching Scottie fire blasts towards the Outrider aliens that had him surrounded. His jaw dropped slightly at the slight golden glow that seemed to surround her whole body - and noted that while it appeared bright, it almost felt natural to see on her.

"Hey kid," Clint breathed, catching his breath for a second before realising they were both getting a little overwhelmed with the amount of Outriders that had started to circle now that the gauntlet had been spotted in Clint's arms.

"Clint! Give it to Scottie!" T'Challa yelled, slamming the aliens out of his way as he rushed over to the two. "Go, we'll hold them back!"

Scottie nodded as she snatched the Gauntlet from Clint and taking off in the direction that T'Challa had came from, powering towards the ugly brown van that she assumed had to be Scott's solution to their problem.

She was so close to it, almost 300 metres away now. As her hope grew, she knew that it had been too easy for her to just get to the van, especially as she had to throw herself to the ground to avoid the double edged sword that was heading straight towards her.

Rolling over, Scottie braced herself as she noticed the large purple Titan hurling towards her. Closing her eyes and curling her body in on the Guantlet, she tended as she waited for the inevitable pain that would come from his blow.

But it didn't.

"You took everything from me."

Scottie's heart stopped. She didn't need to look up or open her eyes to know exactly who had said that, to know exactly who was protecting her like they'd always promised they would.

A black clad hand reached into her vision, Scottie looking up to see T'Challa motioning for her to give him the Gauntlet while she helped her saviour fight Thanos. She smiled as she took his hand, passing him the metal and watching as he took off towards the brown van.

"I don't even know who you are," 2014 Thanos admitted, his armour glinting in the light as he spun his sword in his hand. He glared down her protector, narrowing his eyes in nothing but hatred as he started to move towards the woman.

"You will."

Wanda Maximoff's eyes burned a scarlet red, her hair waving in the non-existent wind around her as she hit the man with the biggest display of her powers that Scottie was pretty sure she had ever seen.

The witch was furious - and Scottie wasn't even sure that she had noticed that it was her that Thanos had been about to kill. It seemed, that Wanda hadn't spotted Scottie on the battlefield at all and had thought she died from Thanos' attack on the blonde back in Wakanda.

Slowly pushing herself back up to her feet, Scottie moved to stand closer to Wanda before turning her attention to where Wanda had began to crush Thanos with his own armour. Raising her arms, Scottie let out a slight yell as she pushed everything she had into firing it at the man, hearing his grunts of pain increase as the power that the Soul Stone had granted her singed at his flesh.

Just as Wanda went to look to her left to confirm the sudden hope that crossed her mind, Scottie lunged for the girl suddenly. Wanda furrowed her eyebrows in confusion before instantly realising why she had done it as the first space missile hit exactly where the red head had just been standing.

Forming a small dome around them with her powers, Wanda looked up at Scottie who was still hovering over her as she tried to use her body to shelter Wanda's. The red head's might parted in surprise slightly as she looked at Scottie. Doctor Strange had told them that some time had passed since the last battle, but Scottie didn't really look as young as she once had. She was now in her mid-twenties, and her once dirty blonde hair seemed to be a lot brighter under the blood and dirt that had gathered in it during the battle.

Wanda was exactly how Scottie remembered her. Exactly how she looked when she dreamt of her. She hadn't aged a single day. Her red hair was now a little dirty from where Scottie had knocked her to the ground, but the star struck look in her eyes as she looked at Scottie had been something that the blonde had honestly believed she would never see again.

"Hey," Wanda breathed, moving one hand to touch her cheek to make sure she was here - that she was real.

"Hey."

The duo were almost obvious to Carol Danvers demolishing the spaceships from the sky, their eyes still locked on each other as they helped the other to their feet. Scottie was sure that they were going to be swarmed with aliens again in any second, but she couldn't waste anymore time.

She grabbed Wanda's face once they were back to standing up, slamming their lips together in a kiss that she had waited five years for. Their tears made it taste salty and Wanda couldn't help but let out a slight laugh of amazement as they pulled back, wiping at her own face as she smiled at Scottie.

"I thought he killed you," Wanda told her, her voice breaking slightly as she thought back to what had only been an hour ago in her mind.

"I thought he killed you too."

"HEY, LOVEBIRDS!" They both jumped at the call, turning around to see an out of breath Natasha standing metres away from them as she stood surrounded in the debris of the battle that was still playing out around them. "Sorry to break up your reunion but Parker needs our help."

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"Hi. I'm– Peter Parker."

"Hey, Peter Parker. You got something for me?"

Peter barely managed to make it to his feet as he clutched on to the Gauntlet, looking at Carol Danvers with wide eyes as he passed her the metal glove. Exhaustion was spread across his face and his brain was trying to keep up with the devastation that was going on around him.

"I don't know how you're gonna get it through all that," he told her, his voice light and soft as he looked at the huge army that were zoning in on their location.

"Don't worry," Wanda told him, causing the boy to jump in fright as she landed next to him, Scottie and Natasha having ran across the battlefield below her to reach them. Scottie almost gasped at the woman on the Peagus that landed beside her, but she knew she would be able to ask questions later.

"She's got help."

Scottie let out a large laugh as she looked at the strong women that surrounded the boy. Okoye was twirling her spear, while Pepper landed beside her in the Rescue suit and Mantis stood slightly behind them. Scottie matched the grin on Shuri's face before noticing Scott's friend, Nebula and who she assumed to be Nebula's sister that she believed Thanos had murdered.

"Girl gang for life," Scottie said, causing them all to send her various different expressions.

Natasha rolled her eyes as they all rushed into battle, the red head looking at her friend who ran beside her as they rushed into fight the army.

"You always have the worst phrases Scottie."

———

Scottie wasn't sure how she ended up in the climatic tail of the battle. But here she was, lying on the ground beside Tony as she watched Thanos head butt Carol Danvers to no effect.

She would have let out a cheer, had the man not activated the power stone and thrown the woman across the battlefield straight away. The blonde looked at Tony who was struggling to get to her feet and she knew she had to stop the man from snapping.

Lounging forward, Scottie latched her hands around the Gauntlet as she stared Thanos down, knowing that the man would simply pummel her within seconds. But she just needed to distract him, because she knew Tony had the perfect plan for what would happen next.

In the corner of her eyes she noticed Doctor Strange hold a finger up to Tony - and it didn't take a genius to figure out what he meant. He was telling her dad that this was the one outcome that they would win with - even if he had to make the biggest sacrifice.

Thanos slapped Scottie away easily, the girl groaning as she hit the ground and rolled slightly. Looking up from where she was wheezing on the ground, Scottie couldn't help but wonder if this was her worst nightmare coming true.

Tony rushed at Thanos, his metal Iron Man hands grasping at the Gauntlet and trying to rip it off. Scottie gasped in anger as he was simply swayed away too, landing on the ground right beside her as he groaned in pain.

"I am– inevitable."

If Scottie had been watching Thanos, she would have noticed that his fingers had snapped. It didn't matter that she didn't see it - because nothing happened. The earth stayed the same, no one died - no one vanished.

Her eyes were focusing on nothing but Tony. The man was now kneeling in the dirt, clenching his hand from the radiation that was coasting through his body as he sent Scottie one last look before turning back to Thanos.

Scottie noticed Doctor Strange watching them carefully from the distance, and suddenly Scottie understood why the Soul Stone had let her have its power. She understood why she had been born, she understood what her purpose in this life was.

"And I– am– Iron Man."

Tony snapped, a flash of white blinding the battleground for the briefest of seconds as everyone covered their eyes.

If Scottie had looked around, she would have seen their victory play out before her eyes. Rocket fired at a Leviathan and before it devoured him, it crumbled into ash. The Black Order crumbled to ash. T'Challa and Quill looked around in surprise; Steve looked on in exhaustion, with the knowledge that they won.

Thanos, in horror, looked around and saw his entire army disintegrate. He looked back at Steve, who just stared right back at him. Thanos sat down and mourned, before slowly being erased from existence himself.

Scottie didn't see any of it, because her eyes were focused on one thing: her hand that had wrapped around the gauntlet milliseconds just before Tony had snapped. Her eyes slowly took in the burns that laced her body, the pain so unimaginable that it almost felt peaceful as her and Tony slumped back against the debris behind them.

"Thanks kid," Tony breathed out, his eyes unable to even move to look at where she was struggling to keep her eyes open too. Their bodies were covered in the burns, flesh scorned across Tony's left side and Scottie's right. She had absorbed the power of the stones too so that it was kore bearable for Tony - but it didn't look like it had done either of them any favours.

Scottie could make out Peter Parker running up to Tony from her blurred eyes, the girl unable to understand what he was saying due to the nano tech in her ears almost being fully destroyed now. Everything felt like she was hearing it underwater now.

"Casey, hey, hey," a new voice mused, a warm hand resting gently on her shoulder as they came into her blurry line of sight. "You just had to be the hero huh?"

Scottie's mouth twitched slightly as she tried to smile at the joke, Natasha's eyes pooling with tears as she waited on Wanda to arrive. The assassin leaned in, pressing a soft kiss to the undamaged flesh on Scottie's head before giving her shoulder one last squeeze and moving back into Clint's embrace so that Wanda could fall to her knees beside Scottie.

"Scottie, please," Wanda begged, her hand placed gently against Scottie's face. "I can't lose you."

Scottie's eyes shut for a second before she slowly managed to open them, taking a look at Wanda once more.

"You'll... never lose... me," Scott murmured, her words slowing down and slurring as her brain began to stop processing. "I'll always... be with you."

To their right, Pepper had just covered her mouth with her hand before accepting what was happening. She had been here so many times before - but she knew it was real this time. She had spent over 15 years with Tony Stark and she wouldn't have changed them for a single second.

"We're gonna be okay. You can rest now."

Tony's arc reactor flicked off soon after that, as if Pepper's approval was all he had been waiting on.

Wanda looked back to Scottie, seeing the girl was barely holding her head up now.

"Come back to me," Wanda asked of her, knowing that it wasn't something Scottie could promise her.

"Always," Scottie breathed, the light in her eyes fading as her head dropped ever so slightly.

They both had always been good at breaking their promises.

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