level. Bullets usually go through, they leave a scorching trail and pack a nasty punch but at least I don't feel my skin trying to weld back together and ripping all over again because a blade was still embedded in my body.

So to further back up my point, I was not only sleep deprived, hungry and overwhelmed, I was also incredibly annoyed at an obnoxiously talkative british man repeatedly trying to stab me in my own hotel room because apparently, that's a normal thing in my life. He was closly matching up to my frame, had about the same height but he did have maybe a few pounds of muscle on me under those messily tattooed arms.

"Who- the fuck- are you!" I hu in between dodging his jabs, his blade slicing my shoulder by a hair as he chuckled amidst staggered breaths.

"Wouldn't you like to know?" He tries again, wincing as I deliver a punch to his side and a quick kick to his sternum, sending him stumbling back and regaining a bit of distance in that already trashed room.

"That's why I asked!" I seethe, eyeing him as he keeps that same arrogant smirk plastered on his already bloody lip.

"You aregood. They told me you'd be." He breathes, taking a moment to catch his breath as he wipes the thin coat of sweat forming upon his forehead.

"Who is they? You work for HYDRA?" I question sternly, watching as he grimaces at my words. "HYDRA? Oh god no, they're wretched little leeches with a superiority

complex." He dismisses, talking as though we were catching up over co ee and not, quite literally, fighting to the death.

"Then why the fuck are you here? What are you— some sort of thief? You want money or something?" I prod as he begins to approach again, shaking his head amidst a small, breathy laugh.

"You think that low of me, darling?" He asks, going in with another jab that I dodge, but he gets a solid punch in with his free hand that lands right on my jaw.

He takes the opportunity to throw in more punches, sending me staggering back until i'm pressed against the door when he buries his dagger right into my shoulder. He was a lot better than I had expected, professional even. In only a few minutes of fighting, he was able to expect and predict my choices and direction, which is not something a measly theif is trained to do.

I cry out in pain, leaving the blade in as a surge of anger soares through my veins. I catch his head between the palms of my hands, clashing mine against it as the impact dizzies him severely. At this, I pull the knife out, instantly feeling my wound heal as— in a fit of rage, I grab the handle and take a jab at his face. I watch as the crimson traces from his upper eyebrow, above the bridge of his nose and down to his lower cheek, narrowly missing his le eye.

He gasps at the sudden action and I drop the dagger to deliver blow a er blow to his head, kicking him down to the ground and climbing on top of him. Flashes of what happened merely days prior plague my mind like a ghost, haunting me from the depths of my memories as I land punch a er punch to his skull, feeling his bones crack under my knuckles at the impact. This time, when his hands stop trying to claw at my face and drop to the carpeted floor, I find it in me to let up. I move o of him, falling to sit upon the ground with my back pressed to the television stand as I try to catch my breath. He was bloodied, his nose gushing uncontrollably as he struggled to prop himself up. He looks at me through hooded eyes, one of them already swollen shut as I stare back at him.

"Whoever sent you here wanted to kill you." I say through staggered breaths, my fists covered in splatters of his blood. "You're just like her, aren't you?" He says, spitting a wad of blood

onto the ground as he tries to wipe the one dripping from his broken nose. "Like who?"

"Lara." He says and the world stops.

He was stalling.

My ears ring as I look back at him in disbelief, my mind slowly connecting the dots as he leans back against the bed. His messy brown hair dishevelled, face and neck stained with red as horror sweeps my features. He doesn't work for HYDRA, he knew Lara and he knew where I was. He was sent here— but not to kill me.

In one swi motion, I get up and grab him by the neck, li ing him with ease as I bring him to the window that spanned from the ceiling to the floor. With a single kick, the glass shatters and the harsh wisps of the air outside enters as I step forward, holding him out over the edge as his eyes bulge and he squirms under my grasp. His feet frantically try to find solid ground, but his body was entirely held up by my grasp as I tighten my fingers around his neck. "Who do you work for?" I say through gritted teeth as he tries to grab

onto my wrists for support. "I'm getting really tired here, so you better answer quick." I add,

lowering him by an inch as panic floods his features.

"I- don't know. I don't know. I was only s-sent to fight you." He stammers as my fingers dig into his skin.

"Who fucking sent you?" I scream, inching him farther from the ledge as the tip of my shoes hang over the edge. "T—the corrector." He croaks out.

With a disgruntled hu, I toss him back inside as he lands onto the floor with a heavy thud. His desperate gasps fill the room as his hands fly to his neck, pawing at the bruised area as I approach him. I kneel over his back, my knee pressed to the base of his spine as I grab a fistful of hair to li his head.

"Who the fuck is the corrector?" I roughly whisper, feeling his slight trembles under my fingertips.

"I don't know her, I've only met her once." He shakily breathes as I ram his head down against the carpeted floors, his mu led screams of pain tainting the air as I li his head back up once again. "Fuck! You're fucking insane!" He exclaims as new, fresh streaks of

"Why are you here?" I try again, gripping his hair harsher as he winces in pain.

"Look— you fucking psychopath I only do what I'm told and I get paid. No questions asked. All I know is I had specific instructions to kill you or—" His voice slides into a hushed tone of realization as I cut him o with urgency.

"Or what?"

blood run from his mangled nose.

"Or to keep you here." He finishes and finally, like a bulb flickering on in a pitch black room the one glaring fact stares me in the face. The auction.

I drop his head, immediately diving to grab my phone and keys as I stormed out of the room, ignoring the man's desperate calls. As I bolt down the corridor, my bloodied, shaky hands struggle to navigate the screen. I wipe the crimson liquid onto my jeans, trying once hagain to get to the contacts. I finally get to press on Natasha's name, bringing the device to my ears as I sought to take the stairwell instead of the elevator.

The line rings, every passing second sparking my anxiety as I nearly jump down the flights of stairs. Natasha doesn't pick up. I quickly move onto Wanda, a string of hushed curses already flowing from my tongue as I burst through the doors and into the lobby, the sudden sound of the door nearly flying o its hinges instantly garnering horrified stares as I make my way to the stairwell across the room that led to the garage.

My clothes were still bloodied, all along with my hands as gasps and murmurs trace along my path. The line eventually leads to voicemail and I move onto the last person on my contact list, Maria. I'm halfway down to the garage when the line clicks and I'm able to finally take a breath as I run through the dimly lit space.

"Maria?" I breathe hurriedly, going as fast as my feet could take me. "What is it? What's wrong?" She replies instantly as I spot the

motorcycle. "You need to stop them. Call everyone o right now!" I exclaim,

hopping onto the bike and shakily pressing the key into the ignition. "I can't do that. They're already there. What's this about?" The urgency in her tone increases as the engine roars alive, my hands moving to grip the handles as I keep the phone to my ear by pressing my shoulder against it.

"It's a trap! There's no auction!" I scream before backing out, wasting no time in speeding out of the garage and busting through the guard rail that took way too long to li .

"What?" Maria's voice begins to dissipate into a mess of static, eventually cutting o as I let the phone fall in frustration.

I'm going through the city as fast as I could, speeding through tra ic and lights as I calculate the route in my head. If I don't stop, If I keep this speed I could be there in ten minutes, tops. So with my heart in my throat and a spew of sirens and honks accumulating behind me, I keep the accelerator tilted back as far as it could go as I glide through cars and pedestrians.

"Move! Move!" I scream as I roll onto the sidewalk, watching a sea of panicked civilians divide to make way for me as I eventually find my way back onto the road.

The sirens fade into the distance, signalling that i've lost whatever measly city cop trying to go a er my tail. Within a few more nerve wracking minutes, I spot the entrance to the pier. The gate was perched wide open and what greeted me was an array of trucks I recognized all too well. SHIELD. It was eerily silent as I pull up to the warehouse, surrounded by the smell of murky sea water and cargo crates stacked up as high as buildings. I click the engine o, leaving the key in as I carefully step o of the motorcycle.

No agents, no team, it was a ghost town.

My breath was hitched the entire time, frozen in the deepest part of my gut as my heart thrashed in place. Something was wrong, something was very, very wrong and I knew it. I could sense it, that place was like a glowing red flag. My hand lingers upon the knob that led inside, taking the deepest breath I could muster to try and prepare myself for what was to come. Visions of horror flash through my mind all in a split second, breaking my heart as my staggered, shaky breath traces the air.

I was actually there, seconds away from what could be the worst tragedy of my life. All the choices i've made, the paths I took led me to this dead end. This dark, twisted road that bore its roots into every and any one who dared see me for more than all I was meant to be. Without any choices le, I turn the knob and swing the door open. What comes into view is something that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

There was no auction, no men in suits bidding for the destruction of the world in the name of power but there was a stage. A stage and what faced the stage, on the ground were rows of seats. It looked like some sort of twisted theater, because every seat held an agent. There must have been at least fi y in that warehouse, each agent slumped into their seat with their head hung back and blood pooling on the ground.

They were all dead.

The smell of pungent gasoline hits my nose as my eyes trace over to the stage, five chairs, five seats, five people that nearly make me fall to my knees. The team- Steve, James, Maria, Nat and Wanda. Oh god, Wanda. Each of them slumped over, chained to the chairs with some sort of mask restraining their mouths. My bones felt like they've turned to jelly as I will myself to approach, tears already brimming my eyes as I hop up onto the stage. Each of them were bruised, bloodied as they sat there motionless.

I rush to Wanda instantly, slipping my hand underneath her chin and li ing her head. I brush her autumn hair away from her face, her eyes wired shut as streaks of dried blood tainted her skin, coming down from a gash at the top of her forehead right where her hairline begins. A layer of sweat glistened her skin as I cup her face in my grasp, tears streaming down my cheeks as I slip my fingers into the straps of the restraints that covered her mouth, ripping it o in one go as I tried to steady her head.

"Please— please breathe." I shakily trace my finger over her lips, feeling the lightest bit of an exhale fall from her mouth. Relief barely washes over me, but it's there. I don't know what I would have done if she was dead, if any of them were.

"I'm here— i'm real. Please." I beg, trying to keep her heavy head level with mine but all my e orts were to no avail. She wasn't waking up.

In that moment, I realize one glaring fact. My curse was never my

abilities- the curse was always me. I ruin every single person who dared touch me, who dared care for me, seeping into their blood like venom that drains their lives. Anger couldn't begin to cover all I felt looking at each and every one of them, sitting there broken and helpless.

I could barely keep my eyes on them— my stomach turned and my gut thrashed and I felt sick to my core. I wanted to double over and throw up, to expel the contents of me. To reach in and claw out whatever rotten thing covered my entirety. If I could fall to my knees and pull the heavens down to reign a miracle, I would. I would rip my heart through my chest over and over to take their place. "Oh god." It falls from my lips with the pain of my guilt, burning through my throat and scorching my tongue as I lower Wanda's head

and step away. Then, out of the corner of my eyes, Natasha moves. I must have been going crazy, but she moved. Her head, her fiery red strands bobbed ever so slightly- like she was trying to raise her head

but failing. I immediately jump to her aid, doing what I did to Wanda's restraints and ripping hers from her mouth. Almost immediately, Natasha's eyes shoot open as she takes a big gasp of air like she hadn't breathed in ages. I keep my hands on her cheeks, steadying her in place as her frantic eyes search my face.

"It's okay. It's me- Nat, Nat look at me." I plead as she shakes under my grasp, squirming in a panic that breaks my heart.

"L—Lexa? No. No. You have to go. You have to go." Natasha begins instantly, falling from her lips like a broken toy stuck on replay. Her eyes flash genuine horror, looking back at me as trails of dried blood pepper her upper lip and eyebrows.

"I'm going to get you all out of here. I'm going to get everyone out." I say, moving to grab the chains wrapping around her wrists from behind the chair.

It led to a small hole that continued beneath the stage, but I didn't mind where it ended. I only cared about setting them free. The moment I touch the metal, a surge of burning electricity courses through my veins as Natasha and I yelp in pain.

"Fuck." I wince, watching as the burnt skin on my fingertips begin to heal.

But Natasha's doesn't.

Her wrist was throbbing red from where the chains met her skin as Natasha's staggered breaths fill the space. Her face, contorted in pain as I step away in confusion. My eyes dart around the room, trying to find a way to break the links without frying the skin o of her bones when each of them start to gain consciousness. I only know one thing for sure, that I can take the restraints o from their mouths so I do. I go over each one, ripping the cover as they all gasp to take a breath.

"Lara? What are you doing here?" Steve's rough voice fills my ears as I snap to look at him, his le eye bruised to the point that it was swollen shut as his busted lip collected bits of dried blood. a

"I'm going to get you out." I reason as he frantically looks down, seeing the restraints on his feet. He tugs at his arms, outstretched over the back of the chair and immediately screams in pain as another jolt of electricity travels through his body.

"Don't pull! Don't— nobody move!" I scream in a panic, stepping farther to get a better look at all of them.

My eyes find Wanda, looking back at me with the most defeated and painful look I could have ever seen plastered on her face as I mouth ' i'm sorry. She shakes her head, almost as if to tell me not to apologize as her face changes into one of horror. Each of them do, eyes bulging and widened to look beyond me. To look at something that was behind me as my ears pick up on footsteps echoing from a

distance. I instantly turn around, my heart dropping as my eyes land on Lara, who was approaching with an emotionless look sweeped over her face. She wore the same thing she did when we last met, pitch black gear that matched her short, dark locks. She looked back at me with stone cold indi erence, her steady pace coming to a stop only steps away from the first row of chairs and dead agents as she goes over

every one that sat behind me on the stage. "What have you done?" I was first to break the silence, the agony dripping from every word that fell from my lips as I move to step

down from the stage.

"What I need to." Lara replies lowly, eyes settling on me with the fire of resentment i've seen before.

"This is too much. It's between you and me, i'm the one you want! Let

them go!" I scream, my angered words thundering through the air as a glimmer of a smile traces her lips.

"This isn't only about what you've done. This is about making you pay." She seethes, moving to look past me and up at the stage once

again.

"This— this is your new family, isn't it?" She chuckles bitterly, eyeing every one of them before returning to settle her gaze on me. đ "What are you talking about?"

"You think I don't know where you've been? What you've been doing? I've been watching you for years." She says through gritted teeth,

taking a menacing step forward. "I know how much you care for these... heroes." The word rolls o her tongue with disgust, an airy, mocking laugh falling from her lips.

"Heroes. What a funny thing. The most powerful people in the world and yet— look at them. Chained like dogs. Pathetic." She breathes with twisted amusement, making a move to step around me when I grab her shoulder harshly.

Without missing a beat, she shoves me o all while flipping us over and twisting my arm behind my back, inching us forward hastily until my hips meet the edge of the stage where she grabs a fistful of my hair and pushes me down. My face collides with the wood of the stage, the crack of my nose breaking echoing through my skull as blood begins to gush. She pulls me back, forcing me to li my head to look at them.

You're not going to get away with this." Steve growls from his burning a glare through Lara as Wanda screams in pain. Sparks of electricity surge from her chains as she slumps back down onto her seat in agonizing defeat.

"Wanda!" I scream, but my words are choked back by another harsh tug from Lara.

"Go on, try to use your powers again." Lara challenges. "You can still walk away from this." Natasha tries to reason, the panic in her eyes still swimming prominently despite her attempt at

feigning collection. "Do you hear yourself?" Lara questions almost sarcastically, ramming my head down once more and rebreaking my nose before pushing me aside. I grab onto the edge of the stage for support, the mind throbbing pain nearly knocking me o my feet as Lara hops onto the

platform. "Are you all that far up your own asses to see that you're losing? You're chained, tied up, you're at mymercy. Stop talking to me like i'm the one who needs to bargain for anything." She spits at Natasha, stepping between the seats to move behind them.

"Take these chains o and we'll see how far you get." James chimes in hatefully, garnering another mocking laugh from Lara as I watch helplessly.

"Haven't you been trying to find me for months?" Lara questions, the sound of her boots echoing o the ground was like claws on a

chalkboard as she comes to a stop right behind James. In one swi motion she grabs his chin, tilting his head back and

slipping a knife out from her pocket. She presses the blade right at his throat as horrified looks swarm each of our faces. Lara keeps her eyes on me, those eyes I can't seem to recognize the longer time passes.

"You only find me when I want you to find me." She hums, pressing the blade farther into his skin that it begins to draw little specks of blood.

"Lara! Don't!" I exclaim, hopping up onto the stage with whatever strength I had le.

"Choose." Lara says simply, letting up and removing the knife from his throat. She steps away, fiddling with the blade as she spins the tip against the pad of her finger.

"What?" "Choose. Me or them." She reiterates, freezing me in place as my breath stills. She's looking me right in the eyes, unfaltering and unmoving as she smirks.

"You choose me, I kill them and go— wherever you want me to. I'll give you another shot to prove yourself to me." She adds, li ing the blade from her finger and looking down to see the blood accumulating from where it broke skin.

"You choose them— and you kill me." She finishes, bringing her finger up to her lips and sucking the blood clean o. "You can't die." I counter, thinking that i've caught her blu when she digs into her pocket once more and pulls out a syringe. She tosses the item at me, I shakily catch it in my hands to see it filled to the brim

with thick blue liquid. "What if I told you I can? What if I told you wecan?" She hums.

It felt like my whole world crumbled with those words, ringing in my ears like a shadow that has finally stepped into the light. She was o ering me all i've ever wanted, all i've ever worked for. A chance to be a family— a chance to be with her again. All of those years of sacrifice, of loneliness and loss, had a shot of meaning once again. It was all i've ever dreamed of, to be able to show her the truth of what I le for.

I would have chosen her.

I would have chosen her in a heartbeat— months ago. I would have let the world burn and said her name without another thought. I wouldn't have cared for the lives lost, for the pain caused if it meant I got to have Lara back. But as I look at her, the blood on her hands and the blade in her grasp, looking back at me with eyes my memories can't relive anymore— I can't bring myself to choose.

I look at James and Maria and I see people who have given everything to make things right, to save the world countless times regardless of what it would cost them. I look at Steve and I see the man who shows up at my door in the middle of the night with the gentlest smile- even amidst his ruthless demons he kept a good heart. I look at Natasha and I see the girl who took me in, who risked everything to believe in me even when I didn't deserve it.

And Wanda.

I look at Wanda and I see the universe in her eyes, my whirlwind of emotions that brought me to life. I see New York City under the stars, I see roo ops and dimly lit parks, I see hesitant, tender touches and the warmest arms wrapping around me. I look at her and I feel my heart— in my chest, beating, alive, real. I look at Wanda and I see the girl who taught me what it was to be entirely and completely enamored—to love. a "Please." Wanda mutters shakily, earning my attention as I realize she

was in my head the entire time. Her eyes are filling with tears, lips quivering as I look to her with apology swimming in my eyes-because she knew what I was about to do. I look at all of them one last time and I'm not sure anymore because as much as I couldn't live a life without Lara, I couldn't imagine one without any of them either and maybe that's where betrayal comes in.

The biggest one of my life, came from me.

"I choose me." I say, pressing the syringe into my neck and feeling the liquid seep into my veins.

"No!" Wanda screams, thrashing in her seat as the electricity continue to surge. I can hear their voices, screaming for me as I close my eyes and take a deep breath.

It all fades to white noise, their screams, the smell, the sounds. Maybe I finally feel peace, letting the darkness consume me was the highest form of serenity I could have ever imagined. I had thought of that moment for ages, the liberation that death brings felt like a dream and a half away. What most people feared, was one I craved and now I could have it. I could finally have it.

Until I couldn't. Until I feel a sudden force hitting my sternum, sending me flying back and thudding to the ground a substantial distance from the stage. My head slams back against the concrete, sending a jolting pain through my temple as I peel my eyes open to find Martina heading my way. With confusion, I scramble to my feet as she swings her knife at me that I dodge within the last second.

"What just happened?" I stammer through tired breaths, dodging most of her jabs as I finally land a shove that puts distance between us.

"You made the wrong choice." Lara growls, never missing a beat at swinging at me.

"I'm going to kill them and make you watch." She seethes, landing a punch to my gut and going for a kick that I eventually catch. With all the strength the adrenaline provided, I toss her back towards the stage. She hits the front of the platform with a resounding thud as I rush to her side. Before I could kneel to her aid, she connects the sole of her shoe to my jaw and I stumble back as she scrambles to her feet with anger flowing through her glare. She lunges at me again, and I make a move to step aside as I continue to dodge her hits.

"How could you become such a coward!" She screams in frustration, hu ing between punches and kicks that miss me by a hair.

"I'm not a coward! I just don't want to choose!" I exclaim, never tearing my eyes away from her as her hits get sloppier with emotion. "And you think dying is the way out? You're weak! You're fucking weak- you're just like Adam!" She hu s, taking me by surprise by

referring to our dad. "Dad?" I grab her wrist, blocking a punch as she lands a kick to my

side that knocks the air out of my gut.

"Yourdad." She seethes as I stumble back a few steps.

She uses my confusion to her advantage, landing punch a er punch to my body until I hit the edge of the stage. She grabs me by the neck, li ing me o the ground with harrowing strength and tosses me right onto the platform. I land with a thud right by Natasha's feet, my head hitting the ground as I look up to meet her eyes.

"My pocket." She whispers in a panic and almost immediately, I reach up slip my hand into her le pocket to pull out another syringe.

Why does everyone have syringes?

Without question, I hide it behind my wrist as Lara comes up to grab my ankle, dragging me away from Natasha and onto the edge before connecting her fist with my face. She's knelt by my head, grabbing a fistful of hair once again as she brings our faces closer together in a rage.

"You're pathetic." She spits, looking back at me with disgust dripping from her eyes.

"No- but I am sorry." I croak out as blood drips from my nose, she looks at me in confusion as I bring up the hand that held the needle

and sink it into her neck. A horrified look of realization washes over her face as I let go, leaving

the needle in as she attempts to rise to her feet. In a failure of strength, she falls to her knees as her shaky hands rip the syringe from her neck and tosses it to the side. Her eyes never leave mine for a second, even when she's falling to her knees and shakily pulling out a lighter from her pocket. She flicks it open, the flame immediately

appearing as she tosses it down to the ground below the stage. For a moment, just a fleeting moment, I see a flash of the scared little girl in the corner of my room nearly a decade ago. For just a hair of a second, she looked like the Lara I knew. Then she falls to the ground, eventually slipping into unconsciousness as the fire spreads through the gasoline covered floor, engulfing the bodies in the crowd in a hot, scorching roar. I scramble to my feet as the fire continues to grow,

slowly engulfing the wooden planks that the platform was made of. "How long is this going to keep her out?" I turn to Natasha, panic streaking beneath my skin as she stammers to reply.

"I—If she has the same tolerance as you, at least a day or two." She says.

They were still chained and I needed to find a way to set them free without completely melting their hands o all while trying to beat the fire that was inching closer. My eyes dart around, noticing that the chains led below the platform I ram a fist through the wood, tearing

away until I create a hole big enough for me to fit. "What do you see?" Steve calls out as I jump into the opening, my

eyes eventually falling to a small generator that connected all the

chains. Before I could take another step, explosions pepper the surroundings from the corners of the warehouse, severely damaging the

sca olding that held the whole place up as fragments of the wall and ceiling begin to cave. I rush to the device, tearing the metal to reveal an array of wires that made absolutely no sense.

"Lexa!" Maria calls out in more of a warning, like she was trying to plead for me to go faster.

any kind of button that resembled an o switch but I come up empty

"There's— there's a generator." I scream, desperately trying to find

handed because obviously, It wasn't that easy. I make a rash choice to just yank one of the wires, only for Steve's screams to pepper the air the moment it sparks. Horror fills my bones

at the realization of what i've caused, so in a frantic, adrenaline fuelled rage I rush to climb out of the opening to find Steve covered in

sweat, panting with pain in his eyes.

"I'm going to yank it o . It'll sting—but only for a second. Maria— the moment I set you free you need to take Lara and run. Call for reinforcements." I instruct as I rush to settle behind Maria's chair, she

eventually takes a deep breath and nods for me to go.

I immediately grab the chains, feeling the electricity surge as I yank it o with all of my power. Maria winces at the split second shock, the fragments of the links falling to the ground as I move to free her

wrists. I could feel the adrenaline rushing through me as I move to Maria's ankles, breaking the restraints o without another breath as

she does exactly what was told and runs over to Lara. I move onto Steve, who was already wounded from my mistake as I

step around his chair and ready myself. Steve eventually nods and I do the same, this time not needing to remove the restraints on his

ankles because he yanks them o himself. "I can do it, I can help." Steve says, positioning himself behind James

as I nod and head right over to Natasha. "Okay, go." Nat breathes and I yank the link, trying to move as quickly as I can despite my skin not having enough time to heal but in times

like those— you barely feel pain. Steve was able to set James free while I finish up with Natasha, right

as one of the beams above comes crashing down to shatter a big chunk of the platform. The flaming beam forms some sort of division from hell as I instinctively hunch over Wanda's head, trying to protect

her from any more falling debris. When the coast was somewhat clear, I let her go and move behind her b

"Lexa! Wanda!" Natasha screams, trying to see through the flames as I wave her o.

"Go- we're right behind you!" I yell back before turning my attention to Wanda once again.

"I'm so sorry. This is going to hurt." I breathe, my heart sinking to my

gut as Wanda replies;

"It's okay. I can take it."

"I wish you didn't have to." Is the last thing I say before yanking the chain, eventually setting her free before moving to her ankles when a loud crash sounds from above.

I look up to see the piece of the roof right above us was caving into fall, breaking apart and eventually crashing down. I close my eyes instinctively, trying to brace myself for an impact that never comes

when I open my eyes to see Wanda with her arms up and a pained look smeared upon her face.

She was holding the roof up with her magic.

Without another thought, I yank her ankle restraints free and slip my arms beneath her knees and around her back, sweeping her o of her seat and hopping down as she melts into me in defeat. The roof caves in from behind as I run out the door that Steve held open, beckoning for us to hurry.

We finally step out, only making it a few feet away before the entire warehouse explodes into a mess of flames and metal, leaving all of us stunned as we stood there watching the fire engulf the debris. I set Wanda down to her feet as carefully as I could, making sure she was

strong enough to stand on her own. "Are you okay? You can stand?" I ask worriedly, keeping a firm arm around her back as she looks up at me, almost like she couldn't

believe I was real. "I—" She stammers.

"What? Are you hurt? Did she do anything?" I ask in a panic, eyeing her entirety trying to look for a wound of some sort when she brings her hands up to my chest and harshly shoves me, sending me

stumbling back. "What the hell?" I exclaim in surprise, looking at her in stunned

confusion as she glares back at me.

"You were going to kill yourself?!"

Continue reading next part