The Super-Soldier

by TheSovereigntyofReality

Summary

When Steve Rogers catches X-23, Tony protests turning her over to S.H.I.E.L.D. Unfortunately, Steve doesn't listen.

Fortunately, the tendency of the Avengers and S.H.I.E.L.D. to ignore everything he says means they have no idea of his contacts.

His mutant contacts.

(Merges several continuities)

Notes

Disclaimer: If you recognise it from somewhere else, it isn't mine
The Child

Tony Stark could barely believe his ears. ‘You’ve gotta be kidding! She’s just a kid! She barely comes up to my waist!’

Steve Rogers scowled and shook his head. ‘Be that as it may, Tony, she’s killed hundreds of people. She can’t be allowed to just walk free.’

Beside him, Bruce Banner shook his head. ‘She’s a child, Steve! She’s not even a teenager yet. Don’t you think you’re being a bit harsh?’

‘Not at all,’ Steve said. ‘This girl kills without warning and without reason. She’s best to be kept in a secure environment.’

*By secure environment, you mean in a cell.*

‘And she will be,’ Fury said firmly. He nodded his head and two agents grabbed the girl by the arms. She squealed as she was dragged back. Tony looked at the girl. Her brown eyes wide with fear, looking directly at him in a wordless plea. Her wrists were bound to her neck in a set of specialised shackles.

‘I know she’s just a child, Tony.’ Steve’s voice took on that compassionate tone that sounded so fake to him. ‘But she’s too dangerous.’

No, she wasn’t. She was a mutant child with early power manifestation. That was what this was really about. If she hadn’t been a mutant, they wouldn’t have been so harsh. No, there would be attempts to teach her control of her powers. Instead, she would be locked in a cell to be used when S.H.I.E.L.D. decided they needed her. And Steve, idiot Captain America, would just let this happen.

But Tony hadn’t lost.

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**Westchester, New York**

Professor Charles Xavier frowned as he looked at the documents Tony Stark had faxed over. The child in question was perhaps ten or eleven. Stark had pulled out all his resources, as per usual, to give them the information they needed. Lennie Alice, the seer, was looking through some of the documents. She was actually currently looking at a photograph of the child in question.

‘So why was this kid killing?’ Scott Summers asked.

‘Mrs. Richards did go in and speak to her,’ the Professor said. ‘It seems she suffers from the effect of a trigger scent.’

‘A trigger scent?’ Storm asked.

‘It’s a pretty common trick,’ Lennie remarked. ‘A trigger scent means that her brain has been trained to go into killing mode when she smells a particular scent.’ Her expression darkened. ‘Usually by means of torture. All you’d have to do is spray the scent onto whoever you wanted dead. As far as we’ve got, the girl remembers nothing of her actual kills.’

Jean frowned. ‘Wouldn’t you smell an odd scent on yourself?’
'Not necessarily.' Lennie shook her head. ‘If it’s outside of the human olfactory spectrum, you could have it on you and you’d never know. The only explanation I can think for her being able to smell it when no one else can is if she’s mutated enhanced senses and her nose is a bit more sensitive.’

‘And they’ve just locked her up,’ Rouge remarked, disgust evident in her tone.

‘Yes,’ the Professor said. ‘Fury seems to know about the trigger scent, and he seems to be looking for it. He’s already had hundreds of scents tested for a reaction.’

‘What for?’ Hank asked.

Scott curled his lip. ‘So he can use it.’

‘And that’s exactly what Stark’s worried about.’ Lennie looked between the photo and the other sheet of paper she had. ‘Mind you, these powers are looking pretty damn familiar.’

Jean picked up another document. ‘Well, it does say she was cloned from another mutant. Maybe you’ve met him?’

‘Possible.’ Lennie flicked out her cell phone.

‘What are you doing?’ Peter Rasputin asked.

‘Getting Stark to fax us a picture of the “donor”.’ Lennie scoffed. ‘I doubt he was a voluntary participant though. If he is who I think he is, I wouldn’t want to be S.H.I.E.L.D. when he gets to them.’

‘He won’t kill them?’ Storm checked.

‘Not if he doesn’t feel the need to,’ Lennie said. ‘But he will confine them to a hospital bed for quite a while.’

Scott frowned. ‘What is “the need to”?’

Lennie chuckled. ‘If he’s in the middle of a war, if they’re trying to kill him, if they leave him literally no other option for getting out, or if it’s the only way to stop them.’ She paused. ‘To be honest, I’ve only ever seen him go to that last one a grand total of once.’

‘What happened?’ Kitty asked.

‘Well, there was this one guy,’ Lennie said. ‘Not sure who he was, but he kept attacking Logan – that’s this mutant’s name. Eventually, Logan turns around and beats the crap outta him. Logan has a thing where he’ll move in like he’s about to kill you, just enough for you to shit your pants, and then he’ll pull back and tell you to piss off. He did that, and then the guy came back. He tried again. Logan killed him because he felt that this was the only way he would stop. And it wasn’t just Logan he was attacking either.’

The Professor may not have liked the idea of killing, but he could understand why Lennie’s friend might feel the need to kill in those circumstances. It wasn’t pleasant, true. The important thing, though, was that he’d given this man a warning, and that warning had been ignored.

The fax machine beeped and began to print something off. Lennie stood up and walked over. She pulled the paper from the feed tray and twisted her lips. ‘Hm.’

‘So it is him?’ Jean asked, walking over to have a look. ‘Oh. I thought he’d be taller than that.’
‘Nope.’ Lennie chuckled. ‘He was forced to live on the streets in the Victorian era. He didn’t grow very tall. By the way, I need a portfolio so I can show him this.’ As the Professor began putting the adequate documents together, she explained. ‘He’s a stocky short guy with a habit of taking down enemies much larger than himself.’ She paused. ‘Which is also what his native namesake is famous for.’

‘Native namesake?’ Scott asked. ‘What’s that?’

‘Wolverine.’

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New York City

Tony was honestly surprised when the Mansion called back and requested a few more documents. After a quick phone call to Xavier, that was cleared right up. Turned out Lennie knew the guy whose DNA had been taken to create the kid. She was going up to tell him about it, but she needed the evidence.

No complaints from him!

So, he had FRIDAY send her everything they could find on the Weapon X Program. Then he looked this guy up. There were records of him spanning right back to the mid-to-late-1800s. He’d fought in every war from the Civil to the Vietnam, and his list of powers made one thing perfectly clear.

The “Great and Righteous” Captain America was not the first, nor the only, super-soldier on the block.

‘I hope this guy knocks him right off his big red, white, and blue pedestal.’
Bearing Bad News

Chapter Summary

The seer takes a little trip to Canada.

She knows exactly where to find Logan.

Canada

Lennie climbed out of the cab. It drove off as soon as the door closed behind her. She wasn’t surprised. This was a seedy part of town. She’d come into areas like this before, generally looking for wayward mutant kids – or Logan. The kids were always harder to find. Logan was easy. Go to the bar.

Sure enough, there he was. He sat at the bar, smoking a cigar and nursing a beer. If she wanted to, Lennie could easily be light-footed. She could approach without a sound. However, surprising Logan Howlett, if you could manage it, was never a good idea.

Logan turned his head as she approached the bar. ‘Lennie.’

‘Hey, Logan,’ she said.

‘What are you doin’ ‘round here?’

‘Something came up.’ Lennie sat down on the stool next to him. ‘You crossed lines with any military types in the last ten plus years?’

‘Couldn’t tell yer,’ Logan said, ‘but probably.’ He tapped his skull. ‘I got a lot of blanks in my memory. Can’t even remember if “Logan” is my real name.’

Lennie frowned. It wasn’t, but he used it like it was. ‘Then how did you remember me?’

‘Bits and pieces have been coming back over time,’ Logan said.

And Lennie had been popping and out of his life, as required, for about seventy years. So it stood to reason a few memories of her had come back. She sighed and opened her shoulder bag. ‘Well,’ she pulled out the Weapon X file and dropped it in front of him, ‘maybe this’ll shed some light.’

Logan raised an eyebrow and picked up the file. He flicked it open. Logan, who’d been reading for over a hundred and fifty years, scanned through the documents they’d gathered. He pulled the cigar out of his mouth. ‘Well, that certainly explains a few things.’

‘Yeah, really. There is one other thing.’ Lennie took the X-23 file out of her bag. ‘While they had you, they took some of your DNA.’ She handed the folder over. ‘This is what they did with it.’

Logan picked this file up and opened it with less trepidation than the first. The cigar was immediately crushed in his hand. ‘What the hell?’ He looked at Lennie.

‘Don’t shoot the messenger.’ She lifted her hands in surrender. ‘Cause I got more bad news.’
‘Naturally.’ Logan took another puff. ‘What is it?’

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The pick-up truck splashed through the mud as Logan drove out of Canada, heading for New York City. Lennie sat in the passenger seat, making some arrangements on a telepathic wavelength. Of course, she had told Logan this was what she was doing before she started.

Lennie leaned back and huffed.

‘Finished with your phone call?’ Logan asked.

‘Yes,’ Lennie said. ‘I expect you have questions.’

‘How did you find out about her?’ Logan asked.

‘Tony Stark told us,’ Lennie answered. ‘From what we can tell, there’s a trigger scent. These dicks just spray the scent onto the target and she smells it. She blacks out and mindlessly kills them.’

‘No recollection?’

‘None whatsoever.’ Lennie leaned her elbow on the windowsill. ‘So, one day, Captain America catches her in the act, beats her up, and decides she needs to be punished. He turns her over to S.H.I.E.L.D. custody, despite protests on her age from both Stark and Bruce Banner.’

Logan curled a lip. ‘Doesn’t ask questions?’

‘Doesn’t care, from what I heard. I actually spoke to the little self-righteous dickweed. He was all, “she killed hundreds of people and she has to be punished for it, and let’s completely ignore the fact that she’s ten”,’

Logan’s head snapped to the right, looking at her with barely-concealed rage. ‘Ten?’

‘Somewhere around there,’ Lennie said. ‘Of course, S.H.I.E.L.D. is testing various types of scents on her.’

Logan growled. ‘They’re looking for her trigger scent so they can use her.’

Lennie nodded. ‘That guy has got way too much faith in the system.’ She shook her head in befuddlement. ‘Luckily, Stark doesn’t. I got another mutant friend who runs a school and sanctuary for mutants. Stark contacted us with this, which brings us to now.’

‘Isn’t Stark that billionaire in the Iron Man suit?’ Logan asked.

‘Yup.’

‘So what’s his interest?’

‘Well, he’s the one who discovered the real reason for the mutant hate. Turns out it’s not what you’d think.’

Logan cocked an eyebrow at her.

‘So, Afghanistan,’ Lennie said. ‘Gets hit in the chest, kidnapped by insurgents, nearly dies, becomes Iron Man, yada, yada, yada. On one of his self-imposed missions, he actually encountered an entity that called itself the Sublime.’ She paused for his chuckle at the name.
Logan did not disappoint.

‘The Sublime turns out to be a hive mind parasite, that infested the human race back when it was still evolving from primordial sludge. Mutants, it appears, evolved as a defence against the infestation. It can’t infest you. Something in your bodies kills it. The moment the mutant gene activates, the parasite inside dies.’

‘So if the mutant gene were to spread, the parasite would be destroyed. So it makes humans hate us to destroy us before we destroy it.’

‘Precisely. It turns out when Tony Stark nearly died in Afghanistan, his body could not support the parasite and it died so he became what we call “clean”. Most of the other Avengers, and S.H.I.E.L.D. refused to believe him, and refused to even look into it.’

Logan scoffed. ‘Of course they did. That would be admitting there was something wrong with them, rather than us.’

‘I know. Fortunately, Dr. Banner had also been cleansed, if you will, and he and Stark actually put together work to try and prove its existence. Stark’s girlfriend and his best friend believed them because they knew it wasn’t something Tony would just make up. Through this, I came in contact with them and I took them to the school so they could share the information with actual mutants.’

‘And that’s how the two groups were in contact for this.’

‘Right. Now, eventually, they did find someone who believed them. You’ve probably heard of the Fantastic 4.’

Logan nodded. ‘Bunch of scientists who got powers, right?’

‘Yeah. As you said, they’re scientists. They’re professionals, so they actually looked at the actual data, and they found the parasite. However, seeing as the general public are not going to accept that there might be something wrong with them, rather than you, getting rid of it is going to be a trick and a half.’

‘Then what’s the plan?’

‘The plan is to manufacture something to purge the parasite and put it into flu shots. Currently, Reed, Sue, and a select few others are working on this.’

‘I’m not sure you’ll be able to sneak that into a flu shot.’

‘Me neither. If all else fails, we can just fabricate a disease and post the formula as the vaccine.’

‘That sounds more likely.’ He glanced at the “You Are Leaving Vancouver! Please Come Again” sign. ‘Where is this place?’

Lennie sighed. ‘Long Island. You’ve been there before?’

Logan nodded.

‘Good. There may be one concern, and I should probably tell you my solution to it.’

‘What concern?’

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Westchester, New York

The Professor rolled toward Cerebro. Scott, Jean, Hank, and Storm followed. It was almost time for the approach on S.H.I.E.L.D., and soon he would send his own team out. They would be going on at this time, after Logan had removed his daughter from S.H.I.E.L.D.’s grip.

‘Professor,’ Scott said, ‘why are we going to be out there? From the sounds of things, Lennie thinks this Logan guy is fully capable of fighting them by himself.’

The Professor smiled. ‘While it is true Lennie has great confidence in him, she does feel that when Captain America appears he will be backed up by all but Tony and Bruce. She feels that for a successful rescue, these must be a series of one-on-one fights. The Avengers must be divided.’

‘I see,’ Hank said. ‘If the Wolverine were to fight Captain America, he could beat him but if the others were to interfere, he would be outmatched.’

‘Yes.’ The Professor led them into Cerebro. ‘Lennie has complete confidence that mutant powers are vastly superior to those given by external forces. She wants us to take our opponents based on powers.’

‘So who’s taking on whom?’ Storm asked.

The Professor placed the helmet on his head.

The profiles of the Avengers appeared before them.
Attack on S.H.I.E.L.D.

Chapter Summary

Logan begins his offensive.

Tony invites a group of buddies over to watch the show.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Triskelon

Five S.H.I.E.L.D. vehicles crashed, blocking the road entirely from the small artificial island on which the Triskelon now sat. The agents who had been driving were either unconscious or dazed. Logan walked away from the wreck, sliding his claws back into his arms.

That should keep them distracted long enough for him to get in.

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Stark Tower

There were all manner of snack foods and both fizzy and alcoholic drinks set out on the table of the penthouse apartment that overlooked the Triskelon. He’d started out small, causing a road block that stopped access to the building where that little girl was being held.

The tower had an excellent view of the Triskelon.

Anything they couldn’t see, FRIDAY would show them by hacking into the security network.

Nine people sat around on the couches. There wasn’t much to watch yet, but it would build up. Johnny sat back, chowing down on bowl of popcorn he had. Reed and Sue sat together. Ben was perched by himself on one of the other couches. Tony and Pepper sat together on another couch, with Rhodey and Bruce sitting either side of them. Vision sat politely next to Bruce, waiting for the fight to begin.

‘Lennie said they already divvied up their opponents,’ Johnny remarked.

‘No guesses for who’s takin’ home the gold,’ Ben remarked. ‘I seen them mutants, and I seen them Avengers. Xavier’s bunch have them beat.’

‘The only question will be whether nature or science create the better super-soldier,’ Reed remarked. ‘Statistically, it’s never actually been measured.’

‘Well, we’ll get to see it first-hand now.’ Rhodey smirked. ‘Hey, Tones.’

‘Yeah?’

‘I’m thinking Cap’s gonna be hard to beat.’
Tony grinned. ‘I’m thinking Wolverine’s gonna be harder.’

‘Wanna put money on that?’

‘Sure.’

Johnny chuckled.

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At first, Fury was so occupied with the crash – apparently they hit something – that he didn’t even notice the intruder. It wasn’t until Coulson found three slitted puncture marks in the hood, all in a row, that there was any suspicion. Then he measured the dent in front of the punctures. Wouldn’t you damn-well know it? He called Fury over, standing on the hood. He stood in the dents to demonstrate one crucial factor.

‘Those are boot dents,’ Fury noted. ‘How strong would you have to be to make them?’

‘Much stronger than the average human, that’s for sure.’ Coulson hopped down.

‘Open it,’ Fury said.

It took three agents to prise the ruined hood open. Three particular parts of the engine had been broken – one of which was the timing belt. That was why the truck stopped so fast, and that was what caused the pile-up. Someone had intentionally stopped the traffic into and out of the Triskelon.

‘Get me the security tapes!’ Fury barked.

The security tapes had to be slowed right down and, as a result, were kinda blurry. But they did show what he was looking for. A male figure, didn’t look particularly big, had landed on the hood, seemed to punch it, and then jumped off. The truck had stopped. The crash had happened.

‘Where’s that guy now?’ Fury asked.

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Logan followed his nose. It wasn’t particularly hard. Before you hit adolescence, the hormones of adulthood were absent. There was only one scent here that lacked those particular hormones. Logan just followed the scent. The worst he had to do was slash open a few doors.

Then the alarm went off.

*Bit piss poor.* Generally, he’d be noticed sooner. Logan’s claws were tucked away, and for now he’d keep them that way. The PA system started barking, ‘Intruder in the brig! Intruder in the brig!’

Dickhead at the helm. Dickhead at the helm.

Logan smirked as the soldiers spun around the corner and charged at him. They opened fire. The bullets only stung very slightly as they hit his skin and ricocheted off his adamantium skeleton. Logan flicked his claws out and, with a snarl, he slashed the agents that were in sight. He was very careful not to kill them though. It was more the dickheads at the helm, and these guys were really just following orders. He’d done some pretty stupid things when he’d been doing that.

He’d incapacitate, not kill.

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Laura sat in the back corner of her cell, hugging her knees to her chest. She was scared of the next time the door opened. They were looking for the trigger scent. She was terrified they’d find it one day. She just hoped those two guys that had stood up for her would find a way to get her out.

She was terrified that they wouldn’t though.

Laura was torn out of her thoughts as she heard screaming outside her cell. She lifted her head and listened. There was a sound, like when she slashed someone. It was repetitive and it caused the screams. But the screams morphed into moans and howls, which she’d never heard before.

Laura cocked her head, listening.

There was suddenly a sound of metal on metal and sparks shot out of the lock on her door. The door was torn open. Sparks shot out and she jumped. Her claws immediately flicked out. The man that stepped in was new, though, and he didn’t wear the same clothes the others did. He had claws, just like she did. They retracted into his hands.

Laura knew who he was.

Her claws retracted too and she shot forward. The Wolverine crouched down and caught her by the shoulders. She looked up at him. He didn’t look dirty or haggard at all like he did in the holograms they made her train against. His hair and his sideburns were both cut short and he looked at her with blue eyes.

‘You all right, kid?’ he asked.

Laura nodded.

‘ Didn’t find the trigger scent?’ he checked.

She shook her head.

‘Good.’ He frowned. ‘You got a proper name besides “X-23”?’

‘Laura Kinney.’

The Wolverine cracked a smile. ‘Okay, Laura. This’ll go easier if I carry you.’

Laura nodded and allowed him to pick her up. She wrapped her arms around his neck and he lifted her up. Then he was running. Laura knew how fast she could run, but she wasn’t sure if this guy was running even faster. Maybe he was. He had even longer legs than she did and he moved them just as quickly as she did. They were going up, faster than Laura was sure she could run.

‘Where are we going?’ Laura asked.

‘To the roof. I got a friend waiting.’

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The X-Jet came to a landing on top of the Triskelon.

The ramp lowered. The door at the landing opened and Lennie Alice strode down, followed by several X-Men in uniform. She pointed out locations as they walked down. ‘Rogue, your targets going to come from that direction. Don’t let her see you.’ She pointed and one of the girls headed off. ‘Phoenix, your target is gonna come at us head-on.’ She smirked. ‘Never met someone who could match her powers so she won’t be expecting it. Archangel, your target’s coming from above.
Take Gambit with you. His target will be using that ledge,’ she pointed to an upraised section of the building, ‘as a vantage point.’

Archangel extended his wings, grabbed Gambit’s arm and pulled him up as he flew to the top of the hull. The rest of the team lined up at the base of the X-Jet, ready to help if they were needed. Jean Grey walked alongside Lennie as they slowly moved across the roof.

‘How long until he gets here?’ she asked.

‘Couple of seconds,’ Lennie said. ‘Fight won’t be long after that.’ She began counting down. ‘Ten, nine, eight, seven.’ The door was kicked out and Lennie’s friend stepped through, holding the child to his chest. He slowed, not even looking puffed, and walked over to them. ‘Six, five.’ Lennie took the girl from him. She looked a bit confused. Lennie started walking away. ‘Four, three, two, one.’ She stopped and ducked.

The shield flew over her head in a deadly arc. Jean, remembering the instructions she’d been given, watched it arc back to Captain America.

‘That’s far enough!’ he barked authoritatively.

*That* was extremely dangerous. If Lennie wasn’t a seer, he could have taken her head off. Jean did a quick scan of his mind. The thought had never occurred to him. All he wanted to do was stop her. He was full of self-righteous indignation – something Jean felt he had no right to. He thought it was perfectly acceptable to persecute a child the way one would persecute an adult.

Lennie straightened up and sighed. She smirked. ‘Fine, but you’ll have to get past the X-Men to get the kid, including the super-soldier that’s better than you in every conceivable way.’

Jean watched her target walked out from behind the faux-hero. The Scarlet Witch narrowed her eyes. ‘I don’t think so.’

Lennie’s smirk just widened. ‘I do.’

The Scarlet Witch scoffed and lifted her hands. Jean stepped up next to Logan and flicked her hand. Wanda Maximoff was lifted clear off her feet and thrown across the roof a good few feet. Cap jumped and looked over in alarm. He then looked back at Jean. She ignored him and turned to face Maximoff.

‘Well, Cap,’ Logan flicked out his claws, revelling in the look of shocked confusion, ‘looks like we hash this out the old-fashioned way.’

Chapter End Notes

I am aware that the Triskelon was the S.H.I.E.L.D. base in the Peggy/Howard era of S.H.I.E.L.D., but I decided to use it for this. I also had it moved to a small artificial island just off of New York for the purposes of this story.
Avengers Vs. X-Men

Chapter Summary

Time for the fight. Who is the better team? The Avengers or the X-Men?

Steve stared at the man. He wasn’t very tall, clearly no match for himself. The only thing to really worry about would be those claws. He must’ve been one of those mutants they kept talking about. All the same, there was something about him. He’d broken into S.H.I.E.L.D. Headquarters, broken X-23 out, and made it up to the roof for this rendezvous.

Fury had said mutants were stupid. There was nothing stupid about what had been done here. This was pre-meditated and pre-planned. Ordinarily, Steve would feel bad about locking up a child, but she had killed. She was unpredictable and dangerous. She couldn’t be allowed to continue. He readied himself for a fight. Regardless of anything, even if Wanda was occupied with that other mutant, Sam, Clint, Natasha, Vision, Tony, and Bruce had been called in.

They couldn’t beat all the Avengers.

All the same, there was something familiar about this guy. It took him a moment to work it out. Then it hit him – the war. He, Bucky, and the Howling Commandos had encountered a man who looked just like this guy. In fact, he looked like he could be the same guy. Lucky James.

Lieutenant James Howlett had been a soldier in the Canadian Army back in the war. No matter what happened, he never seemed to get hit – even when he surely would have. He should have died of old age by now. The logical explanation, of course, was that this was his son or grandson. It didn’t matter.

Steve charged and threw his shield again, aiming for this guy’s head. He was stunned when the guy sidestepped and grabbed the shield out of the air. He slammed it down, imbedding the shield into the ground and then used it as a springboard. He came so fast all Steve heard was, ‘Yeah, he does that a lot,’ before those claws sliced into his stomach.

Steve cried out, the metallic taste of blood flying over his tongue, and staggered back.

*****

Sam flew for the top of the building. The attack on the building had Steve calling him in and he’d answered the call. He could see Cap struggling with some guy and Wanda was having trouble with a redhead. He zoned in on the guy fighting Cap and dived down. He was so focused on them he didn’t see who was lying in wait for him.

He only saw a flash of white before he suddenly had a fist buried deep in his gut.

‘Hello, I’m Archangel. I’ll be your opponent today.’

Sam was propelled back. He barely managed to recover himself and maintain flight. He took a good look at this Archangel guy – and wasn’t that just pretentious as hell? He was a blond with white wings extending out of his back. They looked real, so he had to be one of those godforsaken mutants.
Sam attacked, but he quickly found himself at a disadvantage. The Falcon wings were a marvel of engineering, true, but they were nowhere near as manoeuvrable as real wings. Also, unlike Sam, this Archangel guy had his hands free. While Sam could only swoop and shoot, the mutant could dodge and flip and punch.

Sam needed to think of a way to get one up on him fast!

*****

Clint occasionally came out of retirement to help when Cap called him – like today. Nat was gonna sneak around from behind and grab the kid. His job was to fire arrows into as many of them as he could. Fortunately, they’d stupidly attacked the home base for that kid, so he knew where the best vantage point was.

Clint knocked an arrow in his bow and aimed. The woman fighting Wanda was no good. She could probably stop it in mid-air, so he’d go for the guy fighting Cap. Aiming for the guy fighting Sam was useless. He was moving around far too erratically. Clearly the guy was used to air-battle and knew how to use it to his advantage. Even a perfect shot like Hawkeye would have a one-in-a-hundred chance of hitting him.

Clint let the arrow fly, aiming right for the short guy’s head.

The arrow hadn’t even passed half the distance when it was stopped in its tracks. It was shrouded in a purple aura and it flipped, aiming at Clint instead. It was fired right back. Clint ducked and rolled out of the way. He was on his feet again in an instant. ‘What the hell?’ The arrow had stuck in the ground.

The same purple glow caught his eye again and he turned. A man with longish brown hair rolled onto the ledge with him. He came to rest on his feet with a devil-may-care grin. His red eyes glinted. A staff was strapped to his back. When he spoke, it was with a Louisiana twang. ‘Shall we start, mon ami?’

It hit Clint. ‘You brought somebody to fight each of us!’

‘Correct.’

So what was lying in wait for Nat?

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Natasha flipped onto the building and ran for the battlefield. Her main objective now was to reclaim the child. Coming around from the back was the perfect way to do it. For such an obvious trick, no one ever anticipated it. She could see the brunette woman with the girl now. She was standing there, watching the fight. Apparently the weight of a ten year old had been a bit much for her and she’d put her down. A dark-skinned and white-haired woman was standing with them.

That would be two to take out.

Natasha was slightly surprised by the girl that suddenly stepped in her path. She was a small thing, probably about nineteen, with brown hair and a white streak at the front of it. She’d be easy to take down. Natasha moved to cover her mouth first before she knocked her out. The girl swiftly reached out and grabbed Natasha’s neck.

She didn’t squeeze. She didn’t have to. As soon as the girl’s skin touched Natasha’s, her entire body became paralysed. Then there was a pulling sensation that grew and grew. Natasha was frozen. All
the strength was sucked out of her. She felt her knees buckle and one thought hit her as her body failed her.

*I underestimated them.*

And it rankled.

*****

‘Damn,’ Rhodey muttered.

Tony chuckled. ‘Better start counting out that cash, honey-bear.’

Reed shook his head. ‘It makes more sense for Logan to be better anyway. With his healing factor alone, nothing the Captain could do would take. That’s not even mentioning the excess weight of his adamantium skeleton. The heaviest thing Cap lifts is the occasional weight that’s thrown at him.’

Ben nodded. ‘So Wolvie would be used to hefting weight and his muscles are always gettin’ a workout. What? Cap thinks just because he’s been juiced up, he’s the strongest guy in the world?’

‘Something like that,’ Tony remarked.

‘I’m pretty sure that’s it, actually,’ Rhodey remarked. He looked at Tony. ‘Hey, say you were as dumb as the rest of them. Who do you think would be sent after you and Bruce?’

‘The Professor would try to contain the Hulk,’ Bruce said. ‘I think they also have a mutant in there that can control emotions.’

‘Yeah, he’s right there.’ Tony pointed to one of the mutants lined up in front of the X-Jet. ‘He’d slow Bruce’s heartbeat right down and bye-bye Hulk.’ He leaned back. ‘Shadowcat would be enough to stop the armour.’

‘Shadowcat?’ Johnny asked. ‘You mean Kitty Pryde? That tiny girl that can pass through solid objects?’

‘Yes,’ Reed said. ‘We did some tests at Stark Mansion. We discovered that whenever Kitty passes through any form of device, it malfunctions and crashes. The suits wouldn’t stand a chance.’

‘They crash?’ Sue asked.

Reed nodded. ‘From what we can tell, even though she’s intangible she’s interrupting the circuits. The signals stop passing through for less than a second but that’s enough for the computer to overload and crash.’

‘So the Avengers really have no chance against the X-Men,’ Pepper remarked.

*****

Lennie stood back, holding the kid by the shoulders, and watched as the X-Men trounced the Avengers. Romanoff was already out for the count. It would be a couple of hours before her strength returned. Rogue had already pulled her gloves back on. She was waiting patiently.

Maximoff had apparently never encountered someone who could outdo her before – never thought it possible. She was having a small breakdown as she threw everything she could at Jean – parts of the building antennae, even one car from the street below. Jean just caught the lot and held it aloft while she watched the Scarlet Witch freaking out.
The funniest part was when Maximoff tried to force her way into Jean’s head and slammed face-first into a wall – first metaphorically, and then literally. Jean did not take kindly to people trying to get into her head and mind-rape her. Unlike Maximoff’s other victims, she knew exactly what it was. And she gave the blatantly childish Sokovian a well-deserved belting for it.

Up in the air, Wilson was discovering the rules of in-flight battle in a whole new way. Warren was outmanoeuvring and outflying him. Wilson’s wings were designed for warzone combat, not for fighting another flier who was far more dexterous. It wouldn’t be long until Wilson came crashing to Earth.

Barton had one arrow in his leg above his knee, one in his shoulder. It seemed he’d finally worked out that Remy wouldn’t be defeated by projectiles. It was almost admirable how he still tried to fight him, despite the wounds. But, even without them, it was clear Barton was used to long-range fighting rather than close range. Remy had trained himself for both, before he even came to the mansion.

Lennie turned her attention to Logan.

For all Cap’s reputation, his records gave a much more accurate picture of his skills. One week of boot camp, months in the USO tours, a little over a year serving with the Howling Commandos. Logan’s first war had been the Civil War. He’d consistently joined war efforts since, including the Second Boer War, the Boxer Rebellion, both World Wars, the Korean War, and his last one was the Vietnam War.

Now, Cap just kept trying to punch or kick Logan. He didn’t seem to have any of the tactical genius that he was so famous for. Instead, his efforts to get his shield back were the obvious diving for the weapon in question. That usually ended with Logan’s boot slamming into his back.

‘This guy’s meant to be a tactical genius?’ Storm asked doubtfully.

‘Propaganda.’ Lennie shook her head. ‘Take it with a grain of salt.’

Logan, on the other hand, was slashing and cutting. He was precise where he was inflicting these wounds. There were no crucial arteries being cut or stabbed, but it was enough to make Cap very uncomfortable. Logan snarled as he fought, showing all the ferociousness of an angry papa. He was very much like his namesake in this regard. It was easy to see why the Blackwater Tribe had called him “Wolverine”.

A vision suddenly flashed across Lennie’s mind’s eye. She spoke into the comms. She knew Logan didn’t have one and he was close enough not to need one. ‘Okay, I think we’ve been here long enough! Let’s finish this up, ladies and gents!’

Logan slammed Cap into the ground with enough force to make a dent in the roof. The wind was knocked out of the American icon. He still tried to get up. The Wolverine slammed his boot down, pinning Rogers. Logan glared down at him and gave him a very clear warning. ‘Touch my daughter again and I’ll kill you.’

Rogue walked over, the Black Widow slumped over her shoulders. Lennie had known about the Black Widows. No X-Man had the fighting skills to match her, so she had to be incapacitated. Logan glanced up and removed his boot just as Marie swung the Widow down and slammed her on top of the Cap.

Logan turned his back as Maximoff screamed like a bitch. The Scarlet Witch flew across the roof and landed on top of the Black Widow. Before she could recover herself, Archangel slammed the
Falcon down from above and landed, tucking his wings away. In the next moment, a completely immobilised Hawkeye was thrown on top of the pile and Gambit jumped and rolled down from the ledge.

Logan strode right over to where Lennie and Storm were standing with Laura. The little girl reached up as Logan scooped her up into his arms. Lennie just turned and let him into the X-Jet. She led all the mutants up into the craft and got in behind the controls. She wasn’t worried about S.H.I.E.L.D. following. They could try to reclaim Laura all they liked but Xavier’s school was defended by Stark tech.

Lennie knew for a fact that they would never even consider that.
Chapter Summary

Logan and Laura are brought to Xavier's mansion.

Tony says his piece.

Laura walked alongside Logan, clinging to his hand.

Logan didn’t like flying but, frankly, it was the quickest way out. The place they landed in Lennie said was Westchester. Lennie was walking alongside him as she took him into the proper part of the mansion, out of the clinical chrome-looking part. It seemed to calm Laura down.

‘This is about where the school starts,’ Lennie said.

‘I suppose it’s converted from a home?’ Logan looked around and followed Lennie up the stairs. The redhead that’d flattened the little red bitch walked just behind them. Jean, she’d said to call her (gorgeous woman too).

‘The Professor’s home, yeah,’ Jean said. ‘Most of us have lived here since he found us.’

‘She only left for medical school, for instance.’ Lennie chuckled. They headed down a polished corridor.

‘So why’d he stay here?’ Logan asked. ‘Seems like you brought the whole gang.’

‘Most of ‘em,’ Lennie said. ‘The Professor would have liked to come but he took a slug to the spine in his 20s. He’s been stuck on wheels ever since. Doesn’t get onto the field as much as he’d like to.’

Lennie opened an office door and led Logan and Laura in.

*****

Triskelon

The doors to the conference room slid open and Tony strode in, followed by Rhodey.

‘Sorry we’re late,’ Tony breezed over to the nearest chair. ‘Brucey still isn’t comfortable being in the same room as her.’ He directed a pointed look at Wanda. He sat down and kicked his feet up, completely ignoring the hiss sliding out from Wanda’s teeth as she glared at him. ‘Vision’s tracking that bunch, but they seem to have completely disappeared. He wants to keep on trying though, so he won’t be showing up either.’

Rhodey just sat down next to him.

Steve scowled. It was bad enough they didn’t show up to help with the mutants, and as a result X-23 got away, but now he was late and making stabs at Wanda. What was wrong with him? And what was wrong with Bruce for that matter? She was just a kid! She made a mistake!
Instead, Steve gave Tony his most disapproving glare. ‘Where were you, Tony? There was a call for
the Avengers to assemble.’

Tony didn’t even look up. ‘I was in the middle of something. In case you’ve forgotten, I have an
actual job.’

Natasha scoffed, sounding worn out. That girl had really done a number on her. ‘Please! Pepper runs
your company. What could you have possibly been doing that was more important that stopping a
break-out?’

Tony finally looked up, levelling her with an amused smirk. ‘In case you’ve forgotten, I’m a civilian
consultant – read: civilian. I don’t have to come running every time the Avengers get the call to
assemble.’

Steve resisted the urge to go over there and grab Tony to shake some sense into him. ‘X-23 escaped.’

‘Really?’ Tony asked, infuriatingly indifferent. ‘How?’

‘Some guy with the same powers came in and broke her out.’ Sam was glaring at him too, still
pressing the ice pack to the bruise on his back.

Tony quirked an eyebrow. ‘Oh, so her father or something?’

Fury suddenly froze – for just a second. Then he lifted his head and looked at Tony. He looked
supremely unimpressed. ‘That kid has no parents, Stark. She’s a clone. If by father, you mean her
donor, then yes. That’s exactly who came in and tore this place apart.’

Tony looked around, Rhodey looking inappropriately amused beside him. The billionaire shrugged.
‘Looks pretty in tact to me, Nicky. As for the clone argument, clones are exact replicas of the donor.
If her donor is a male, she’s obviously not a clone, so I’m going with “daughter”.’

Steve had enough. ‘Tony, you’re not taking this seriously enough!’

Tony gave him a side-eye. ‘I didn’t even approve of your treatment of the girl. Why the hell should I
have come in and helped you stop her father from saving her?’

‘I gave you a direct order to assemble!’ Steve barked.

Tony inclined his head. ‘I’m a civilian. You do know what that means, right?’

Rhodey cut Steve off before he could think of an answer. ‘No civilian is under any obligation to
obey a military order.’

Steve chose to ignore that statement. He’d given Tony plenty of orders before. He was under his
command. ‘And now look! X-23 is loose and we don’t know where she is!’

Rhodey spoke up now. ‘And her detainment was completely illegal.’

Steve drew back. ‘What are you talking about?’

‘There’s this thing called the “age of criminal responsibility”,’ Rhodey said. ‘Until you hit that age,
you can’t actually be held responsible for crimes you commit. That girl was below the age of
criminal responsibility for this state.’

‘She’s guilty of killing hundreds of people!’ Steve insisted, frustrated. Why couldn’t they get that?
‘Hmph!’ Tony scowled at him.

Rhodey interrupted him again. ‘And that’s another thing! You’d have to prove that in a court of law. But she was never going to get a trial. We were watching for that. That’s a gross abuse of a basic human right!’

‘Is this seriously all we’re here for?’ Tony demanded. ‘I’ve got better things to do than this.’ He rolled onto his feet. ‘Come on, Platypus, let’s go.’

The whole room stared in shock as Tony and Rhodey stormed out of the conference room.

*****

**Westchester**

‘You want me to stick around?’ Logan asked. ‘Why?’

They were watching as Jean and Hank conducted an examination on Laura. While the prime concern was on her triggers, there was also concern for her physical health as well. Everything seemed to be perfect, though, despite the poor conditions in which she had lived out her life.

‘There are two reasons,’ Charles Xavier said. Actually, there were three. ‘The first is that Laura is still a child and she will need stability and safety. My school can provide that. The second reason pertains to the other children.’

Logan looked at him, eyebrow cocked.

‘There is only a small percentage of them that understand what the world is like outside of these gates,’ Charles explained. ‘For every ten students that graduate from this school, only one will come back. They hear the stories, they hear the words, but they do not truly comprehend.’

‘It’s had to comprehend what you don’t experience on a regular basis,’ Logan pointed out.

‘True,’ Charles said. ‘My hope is that you can teach them how to respond appropriately to these situations.’

Logan affected a thoughtful look as he considered that. Charles’s third reason was the exact same reason why Lennie had remained friends with the man for over 70 years. He was a good man, reliable and compassionate, who craved the stability he had involuntarily traded for his mutation. He was a protector who had been forced into a violent lifestyle. He was a good man.

Maybe it was time for him to find that out himself.

Logan studied Laura as Jean offered her a lollipop – something the ten-year old had clearly never seen before. Then he looked at Jean. He studied her a moment and then looked down at Laura again, his mind turning over what his newfound daughter needed and whether it was compatible with what he wanted.

‘Yeah,’ he finally said. ‘I can teach these kids a set of reflexes that’ll save their cans when they get outta here.’

*Well, this could be a problem.*
Chapter Summary

Fury thinks he's found a weak spot.
He hasn't.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Force Fitness Gym, New York City

Lennie grabbed her sport jacket and shrugged it on as she walked away from the latest clientele. She zipped it up and grabbed a pole as she walked past the equipment stand. This was almost laughable, but she supposed they were so used to doing things this way it never occurred to them to do it any other. No wonder they’d been infiltrated.

And they still didn’t learn from mistakes.

Lennie stepped into her office and snapped the pole to her left. She shut the door behind her and smirked. Turning her head, she looked directly at Nick Fury. She couldn’t decide if he was surprised at being caught so quickly or if he was unhappy with having a metal pole in a steady hand pressed directly to his Adam’s apple.

‘Next time,’ Lennie said, ‘make an appointment.’

*****

Several S.H.I.E.L.D. Agents were outside the Gym, waiting to enter and apprehend the woman at the Director’s orders. However, they were not anticipating the ambush that came for them. He came out of nowhere and grabbed the first agent, throwing him face-first into the side of the building.

The surrounding agents turned, trying to find him and training their guns at him. Several of them shot, but he was gone again. He reappeared in front of another agent and kicked him in the face before vanishing again. Again, the agents shot at where he had been.

This would go on for the next few minutes.

*****

Lennie leaned on the edge of her desk, twirling the staff. She kept her expression open and amused. This was an old spy, but she knew exactly how to play him like a puppet. All she needed was to buy Kurt a few minutes. But this was really gonna hurt Fury’s ego, and S.H.I.E.L.D.’s for that matter.

Certainly he would not give up, but he’d learn she was not the easy target he imagined her to be.

‘You broke into a government building,’ Fury said.

‘No, I landed on top of a government building,’ Lennie said. ‘I never actually entered it. That was
Fury scowled. ‘You’re gonna have to come with me.’

Lennie smirked. ‘Come on, let’s be honest. If anyone called the police and they walked in right now, who do you think they’d arrest? It certainly wouldn’t be me. You’re a scary-looking African-American with a gun. I know America likes to say it’s above petty things like racism but we both know it’s not. The treatment of mutants is a testament to that.’

Fury kept a straight face. ‘You’re saying you helped those freaks because you think they’re victims of racism? For that to work, they’d have to be human.’

‘They are.’ Lennie chuckled. ‘They’re born from humans, they live like humans. Sure, they don’t all look like humans, but they are still genetically humans. But we’re dodging the issue here, aren’t we? You’re upset because I refused to allow a child to be held without due process. And don’t think I don’t know what you were doing. We saw you looking for her trigger scent.’

Fury’s expression tightened. ‘The girl…’

‘Was arrested by Captain America,’ Lennie interrupted him, ‘I know. Here’s the thing, though, I doubt that Captain America has any authority to arrest anyone. The “Captain” title doesn’t grant him immediate rights to take someone hostage, especially considering he kept it because it’s the only thing he liked from his time as a dancing monkey. Secondly, he takes your orders as suggestions. That indicates he’s not an agent of S.H.I.E.L.D., because he’s not under your authority. He’s a freelancer with ties to you at best, and freelancers have no right to arrest anybody.’

Judging from that glower she’d hit the nail on the head.

‘As I said, unlawful arrest.’ Lennie smirked. ‘But I suppose you guys always ignore the law when it suits you. Case in point: December 16, 1987.’

Fury didn’t move a muscle.

Lennie quirked an eyebrow at him. ‘I’m an enhanced, Director Fury,’ she used the word he was familiar with, but the correct term was “human mutate”, ‘I see things. And I saw what happened that night. I was five miles away, but I saw what happened. And I saw your cover-up.’

Fury finally spoke, sounding almost constipated. ‘We had our reasons.’

‘You and Carter let Tony hate his father for years for something Howard Stark had no control over.’ Lennie let her anger seep into her voice. ‘I don’t know why and I don’t particularly care.’

‘Too bad Stark will never believe you.’

Lennie bit down on the urge to cackle with unholy glee. ‘Perhaps not.’ She inclined her head. ‘You might want to check on your men though.’

‘What makes you think I brought any?’

Suddenly a blue-skinned man appeared next to him. Before Fury could react, he snatched his guns right out of their hidden holsters. The mutant teleported off again and came to rest in a crouch on Lennie’s desk. For the look on Fury’s face, you’d think someone had just pissed in church.

That probably wasn’t wholly appropriate.
Fury most likely had no concept of “sacred”.

‘I don’t imagine you’ve met Nightcrawler.’ Lennie took one of the guns from the mutant in question. ‘He can teleport.’ She looked over at him. ‘So how are his men?’

‘They’re all having a little sleep.’

‘Hm.’ Lennie twirled the gun on her finger and then she set it down on the desk behind her. ‘Nightcrawler, here, is one of the X-Men. That’s the bunch that trounced your so-called Avengers. And that was only a few of them. The X-Men are headed by a telepath with a range of 250 miles. On the average day, there are 30 or 40 miles between me and him. I can communicate with him any time I like.’

Even as she watched the calculating look cross his eye, Lennie knew he was coming up empty.

‘Don’t let the door hit you in the ass on the way out.’

*****

Fury stepped out of the Gym and walked around to where his agents were supposed to be. They were there – all unconscious and dumped together in a pile. That mutant really had knocked all of them out – by himself. Fury ground his teeth. Lenience Alice had checked out as the best way to get access to X-23.

Highly religious upbringing, apparent immortality (which he’d wanted answers for), starting off in secretarial training, marriage and widowhood with one child who currently lived on the other side of the country, and clear mutant sympathies. He hadn’t counted on those sympathies paying off in such a way.

In order to get her, he’d have to get the leader of these X-Men first. To do that, he had to find the headquarters of the X-Men, which he’d been hoping for when he went in to the damn gym. That was the whole point of taking her into custody. Then, not only did she get a warning, but a single mutant had been able to take out the entire squad that Fury had brought as back-up.

For once the Avengers weren’t an option. Those damn freaks had annihilated them. They hadn’t even broken a sweat. Sure, Stark could probably work something out, but Stark clearly wasn’t in the mood to be attacking mutants. Romanoff had tried manipulating him (guilt, catering to his ego, and goading him to name a few), but her methods had been getting increasingly futile over the last two years. Now, her words just fell on deaf ears.

So Stark wasn’t an option, and Banner seemed to be holding some fellow-feelings towards mutants. Fury personally didn’t see how Banner’s “condition” could be likened to these freaks in any way. And he was the only one who took Stark’s space-adventure-parasite-discovery hallucination seriously too.

Regardless of those annoyances, Lennie Alice had proven herself impossible to bring in.

It wasn’t a situation Fury was at all happy with. Maybe he could still find this X-Men place though.

*****

**Westchester, New York**

Jean sat across from Laura, teaching her how to make a flower crown.

Logan was just a few meters away, lying on his back and watching them. For such a tough-looking guy, Jean had actually found him to be one of the kindest men she’d ever met. Sure, he put on the
scowl and gruffness and he had a temper but he also never raised a hand against anyone. He would sit through anything Laura, or even one of the other kids, asked of him.

Jean could see why Lennie had been friends with him for so long.

Scott, though, didn’t like him. And Logan wasn’t fond of him either. In fact, it had plainly annoyed Scott when the Professor gave Logan a job here, but he’d accepted the Professor’s reasoning. Jean had actually found out why Scott didn’t like Logan one day by accident.

Scott had always prided himself on being trained to be the leader of the X-Men. Then, one mission, the situation went far out of his control way too fast. When Scott stumbled, it was Logan who knew what to do. It was Logan who took command and got them all out alive. That fact had bothered Scott more than he cared to admit. But it made sense if you thought about it.

Logan had been around for over a century. He’d been in nearly constant conflict since he was a teenager. He was familiar with all forms of battle and warfare. If it could happen, he’d have been in the situation before. So he’d know what to do. But that wasn’t all Scott was bothered by.

Apparently, Scott thought Logan was in love with her.

Jean would never admit to him that he shouldn’t worry about Logan looking at her. Because Jean had started looking at him. Despite the lack of height, Logan was extremely fit. He’d also opened her eyes to a side of the world she hadn’t considered before. Often, on late nights when they couldn’t sleep, Logan and Jean would sit up talking.

Logan would talk about his experiences – as he could remember them – and about what life was like outside the school. Never before had Jean considered how some mutants would have to live outside. She’d always thought stealing and killing were bad. But the way Logan put it…it made her start to think. What if there was no other options. They couldn’t hold down a job and they had no money. What choice was there but to steal. And killing…well, if they were in a situation where it was either that or die…

Jean remembered several of her classmates had gone out…and had been found beaten to death. Would they still be alive if they’d been willing to fight back more, if they’d been willing to kill? Did they die because they held back on people who were fully willing to kill them? It wasn’t a pleasant thought, and it was one, she realised now, that she had avoided thinking about. Now, with Logan around, was there was no avoiding it.

Sure, she’d watched Logan train the kids. The methods he advocated were generally for incapacitation and escape, but he had warned them “sometimes it ain’t enough”.

…Maybe having her eyes opened by a world-weary man was what drew her in.

Or maybe she was attracted to someone who had reacted so well to sudden fatherhood.

*****

Charles sat in his wheelchair on the patio, watching the residents of the mansion enjoy the summer sun. There was a game of baseball on the left field, a game of Frisbee by the pond and various cliques just sat or lounged on the grass. Lennie was reclined on a seat next to him.

‘They tried to bug your car?’ he asked.

‘My car, my phones, everything. It was laughable, really.’ Lennie smirked. ‘The funniest part was when they tried to follow me. Never follow me through New York City. I will lose you, whether I’m
trying to or not.’

Charles smiled and looked over again, still somewhat concerned.

‘Is something wrong?’ Lennie asked. ‘You keep looking at those three.’

‘Do you know Logan’s in love with Jean?’ Charles asked.

‘Doesn’t surprise me,’ Lennie said. ‘He falls in love very easily.’

‘Well, the feeling is mutual.’ Charles looked at her. ‘Why are you smiling?’

‘I think you know.’ Lennie sat up properly and stretched. ‘Scott and Jean were always a high school romance. With each other, they explored their sexualities, and their bodies. But it wasn’t real love. I always held the theory that they were only together now because it was safe, familiar. But it never let them explore their independent identities or desires. It was a child’s fairytale love. But children grow up. It’s taken them far too long in my opinion.’

Charles wondered if she could possibly be right.

Chapter End Notes

That's it for this. If I get hit by the inspiration bug later, I may write a story about a grown-up (or at least teenaged) Laura kicking Cap’s arse.

Right now, though, I'm working on a Xmas pressie for my readers. :)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!