ashes, ashes, we all fall down

by everythingsace

Summary

“Mr. Stark?”

Tony’s heart stopped.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

“Steve?”

Steve didn’t like that voice. He didn’t like the inflection that there was, didn’t like the uncertainty, the concern, the fear.

He turned, his shield still deployed, but there was nothing to beat it against. Nothing to deflect.

How could you deflect something like this?

“Bucky,” he whispered, racing forward, but it was too late. His best friend, the man he lived for, slipped from his fingertips again.

He stumbled to the ground, his breath short as panic started overtaking him. He watched as Wanda stumbled, her hand going towards her chest, before her eyes flickered with recognition.

He watched her smile.
Okoye stabbed her spear through an alien, rolled forward, and pierced another. She stood straight, her knees still bent, twirling her weapon in order to swipe out another few. She was exhausted, but the exhilaration of battle was enough to keep her from feeling any pain.

She jumped forward to kill another enemy. Unfortunately, her target had the same idea, and while she managed to kill it, she was flung in the opposite direction. She was able to catch the landing with her shoulder, but it still knocked off her balance.

She began to use her spear to get up, when the sudden terrified screams, not the traditional bellows of war, but screams, erupted from the battlefield around her. It caught her off-guard, perhaps slow-witted, but then she heard her king’s voice.

“Okoye!”

He rushed to her side, kneeling, but she couldn’t keep her gaze on him, watching in shock as nearly half the fighters on the land, whether they were on their side or not, simply dissipated before her very eyes. Her mouth fell open, her eyes widening at the scene.

But T’Challa simply took her arm, said, “This is no place to die,” before pulling back, but then--

Then, there was no pull. Okoye stared in horror at the ashes of the king.

Laura Barton rolled her eyes, shaking her head as Cooper taunted his little sister, holding all his Monopoly money and dancing around her. Lila sat cross-legged, pouting and crossing her arms petulantly.

Laura simply shook her head before swirling another spoonful of applesauce through the air towards Nate’s mouth. Nate giggled, his eyes bright as always, sticky hands grabbing at the air. He dramatically chomped down on the food, giving his mom a grin.

She couldn’t help but smile as she placed down the empty spoon. “Good job, kiddo,” she said, grinning, before turning her head back briefly towards the older two. “Cooper, stop bragging.”

“Yeah!” Lila shouted, before she quickly stood up and ran into the kitchen. “Winner cleans up.”

“Yeah, yeah, whate--”

Laura frowned, immediately standing at the choked cut-off. “Cooper?” she said, rushing in, only to stumble backward. “Oh, my G--”

“Mom?” came the panicked response, as Cooper stared at his hands that were-- that were disappearing. “Mom?”

She ran towards her, her brain nothing but static and terror as she watched her son’s legs disintegrate into cinders. “Cooper, no--”

Her boy was crying, as was Lila behind her, who had rushed in to the doorway. “Mom, what’s happ--” he started, but he didn’t get to finish because then there was just a pile of dust where he’d been.
She covered her mouth, a strangled scream coming out of her mouth, reaching backward to grab at her daughter. Her hand made contact, and she quickly grabbed blindly, only to feel the skin disappear from her touch. She quickly whipped her head sideways, already choking on another scream.

“Mommy, what happened to Cooper? What-- Mommy, what’s happening to me?” she sobbed.

Laura cried, pulling her daughter towards her, but even as she did, she felt her slipping away from her fingertips. “No, Lila, no!” she screamed as her daughter fell away into a puddle of ash.

She fell to her knees, screaming as she heard her only child left cry with her.

They were in the middle of a decathlon meeting, seeing as the district had (stupidly) decided not to cancel school, despite the spaceship scare that morning.

“Okay, and the final question-- whoever answers it gets one free fake pass ‘signed’ by the assistant principal.”

Mr. Harrington made a protesting noise, but it was drowned out by several nice s.

“Kay. Into what sea, does the Elbe River flow?”

There was a second’s hesitation, but then Abe slammed the bell. “The North Sea?”

“Yup,” said MJ, pulling the forged pass from her pocket and sliding it across the table. Abe grabbed it with a fist-pump, grinning.

MJ swung her bag onto her shoulder, stood up, and was out the door within a minute.

She hovered outside, near the closest walls of lockers. When Ned stepped out, she said, “Hey.”

The boy jumped, and she couldn’t help but roll her eyes. However, he didn’t hesitate in walking over. “Yeah?” he said, gripping the straps of his backpack.

“Where’s Parker? He’d finally had a good streak of showing up,” she said, crossing her arms.

“Oh!” Ned said, and she held back another roll of the eyes at his immediate floundering. “Oh, you know, I’m sure it was important-- it always is, I mean--”

“So you don’t know where he is?” she clarified, raising an eyebrow.

“Uh, not exactly, but--”

She didn’t hold back again, shaking her head. “Whatever. Just tell him not to miss next week. I’m supposed to get an email with a list of questions that might be at the next meet, and we’re gonna start going through them.”

Ned nodded. “Yeah, sure.”

By this point, they were the only students left in the hallway, so MJ just nodded. “Cool. See you tomorr--”

They heard a sudden shout from behind them, unmistakably the voice of Mr. Harrington. MJ and
Ned shared a hurried glance before running back to the classroom.

MJ flung the door open to find… no one. She frowned, stepping further into the room, only to see what looked like a scattering of embers across the floor. “What the fuck?” she said, allowing for the barest hint of alarm to shine through.


MJ’s eyes widened, reaching a hand forward to grab Ned’s arm as his legs started to… crumble? “Ned?” she said, her voice rising. As the deterioration spread up his body, she grabbed onto his other arm, shouting, “Ned!”

He only managed a “what?” before he was gone.

She hissed another, “What the fuck,” before pinching herself. Then, she heard another shout, she thought it came from Flash, and then she was pulling out her phone, breathing too quickly, and dialing 9-1-1.

There was immediately a hurried response. “9-1-1, what’s your-- what the shit--” before there was a clatter and the line went dead.

MJ couldn’t breathe as she fell against the wall.

“Mr. Stark?”

Tony’s heart stopped. He turned his head, looking at his kid, and he saw the way he stumbled. Saw the way he was--

“Mr. Stark, I don’t feel so good,” Peter said, and Tony fumbled forward, his hands reaching out.

“No,” he was whispering, his voice somehow sounding both deafening and so, so far away. “No, kid, you’re going to be okay.”

But Peter was shaking his head, looking at his hands and reaching for Tony. “No, no, I don’t want to go. Mr. Stark, I don’t want to go. I don’t want to--”

And he fell into Tony’s shoulder, but he was getting lighter and lighter with each passing second. “No,” Tony was whispering, clutching his boy, holding him closer, tighter, like maybe it will hold him together. “No, you’re going to be okay, you’re not-- you won’t--” he choked, pulling him closer, shaking his head, but Peter was falling backwards, down to the ground.

The next thing he knew, Tony was cradling the boy as his body fluttered away into ash. Tony couldn’t stop the tears from rolling down his cheeks, but he didn’t want to. His fingers scrabbled at Peter’s suit, like maybe he could stop it, like he has a chance, but then Peter says, “I’m sorry,” and then he’s gone.

“No,” Tony said, his hands grabbing at the ashes around him. He kept muttering, cupping the remains of-- of his son, shaking his head. His hands were shaking, his vision was blurred, and his ears were ringing. “No, no,” he mumbled, pulling the ashes to his lips.

Tony’s hands curled as he brought his fingertips to his forehead, his palms pressing into his eyes as
he cried, as he sobbed, because Peter was fucking gone.

He felt the ashes stick to the blood on his forehead, felt the ashes against his skin, felt the raging hurt and sorrow beating at his chest mercilessly. He felt like his heart had been taking out of his chest. He felt every fiber of his being ignite in pain and grief as he held onto the embers of his child.

End Notes

Hey, so I'm in pain from this fucking movie, how are you guys? You guys doing okay? Need any tissues, need some water? Need a healthy dosage of denial? I'll hopefully have some up soon.

Terribly, terribly sorry for this angst fest, but Jesus Christ, that movie was rough on me. On the bright side, it got me writing again! Also, sorry it's been so long since I posted anything; let's just say it's been quite the shitty year.

Hope you liked this uhhh badness, hopefully next time, I'll have some more fluff

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