**Point of No Return**

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Point of No Return

by Brickgirl101

Summary

The bridges are burning, the heat's on my face
Making the past an unreachable place
Pouring the fuel, fanning the flames
I know, this is the point of no return

Bruce was right... they were just a chemical mixture. A bomb set to explode.

Tony sat in the wake of it all...

No he still had a promise to fulfill... his life wouldn’t be put to waste.

Watch out world Tony ‘Fucking’ Stark is back... Iron Man Lives Again

Note: Update schedule is wonky.

Notes

Wait? What? Am I seriously doing this? Why, yes... yes I am! I’m so obsessed with Ironstrange and even though I’m working on one story already I really wanted to get this one out there too! I love the New Avengers dynamic and cannot wait to play with it! Hope you Enjoy my story!

See the end of the work for more notes
Nothing was the same.

Everything was different.

Nothing could go back to the way it had been.

Bridges had burned.

The more Tony thought about it, however, the more he realized he didn’t want things to return to how they had been.

He didn’t want to rebuild bridges.
He had been abused and betrayed by his team--his supposed friends--for years.

It took him literally being stabbed in the back, or in this case taking a vibranium shield to the chest, and nearly dying for him to truly realize where he stood.

Bruce was right.

The Avengers were just a chemical mixture, a ticking time bomb, and here was the aftermath of the explosion.

Tony was laid up in a hospital bed with a whole list of medical issues and too many problems he needed to fix.

No more.

He wasn’t going to take this lying down.

No, he was going to get back up on the horse and grab his life by the reins.

He had been working on plans for a while now, but now it was truly time to start putting those plans into action.

But first things first, he needed to fix himself.

Well, at least physically.

********

The next month of Tony's life was hectic. On top of being gravely injured and needing to work on a permanent fix for his chest, he was also dealing with the UN.
Everyone had so many questions and even more demands. They all wanted to talk about the ‘Civil War’ and know what was going to happen next.

What was Tony’s Plan?

With his very obvious health issues, he did most of his meetings over the phone to keep up the illusion that he was fine, promising for in-person interviews and meetings at a later time.

He wasn’t entirely sure why he was protecting Rogers, hiding his injuries and lying about his health, but he just figured it would be better that way.

He felt like if the public knew what Captain America had done, there would be riots or something, and there didn’t need to be more bloodshed; not over him. He needed to take care of damage control, keep things calm.

Luckily, with his silver tongue, he was able to buy himself some time. In a private holograph meeting with the UN council, he provided them with a very vague explanation of why he wasn’t able to give them complete plan that they could work with, but that he had one in the works that just needed some kinks ironed out.

Pun completely intended.

While Tony was still working on his fix, Rogers had broken his team out from the Raft.

Thankfully, this was one thing that Tony and the Accords committee were able to come to an easy conclusion on. If the Rogues (or Ex-Avenger, as many had started calling them) showed up anywhere, they would be arrested.

Tony just hoped they would lay low. He knew where they were, but he wasn’t about to say anything unless they did something, figuring that if they were safely tucked away, they would stay out of his way.

...Right?
Tony was given about 4 months to get whatever he had planned together before he'd be requested to come forward with the full blueprint. If not, the UN would take matters into their own hands. He wouldn’t need that much time, but he wasn’t about to fight them on it.

It was then that he activated the New Avengers protocol. FRIDAY had already begun searching and documenting crimes, watching those who responded to said crimes. Though research had already started a while back, with the protocol active it became a top priority to track all potential heroes that Tony had deemed worthy.

Peter was already safely in Tony's line of sight and being initiated into the New Avenger roster, but there were plenty of others around, especially in the New York area.

As Tony worked on his new chest piece, he watched videos--so many videos.

About a month later, he finished his nanobot arc reactor hive, along with modifying the extremis virus to make it safer.

He planned to fix himself with Extremis and use the nanobots to help regulate the virus inside of him. They also had an added bonus of being programmed to become an Iron Man suit, along with some other effects he might receive, though he was unsure of all the possibilities at the moment. He had theories, of course.

Finally, he was ready.

Well, as ready as he could be, at least.

He had spoken with Vision, Peter, and Rhodey about his plans.

He had the new itinerary of what he wanted done prepared, and if he didn’t survive he was leaving it to them to continue what he had started.

There was a lot of fighting (mainly Rhodes’ stance on this craziness), but in the end there was nothing any of them could do.
Tony had more problems convincing Pepper than anything, but eventually she came to the same conclusion: there was no changing this man’s mind.

So roughly two months after Siberia, Tony went into surgery. Extremis was added to his system and the new sternum and nanobot arc reactor were placed. Funnily enough, the metal plate stabilizing his sternum and the nanobots were made of the vibranium from Rogers shield (Oh, did Tony have fun melting that bad boy down).

All of which was placed in his chest with success.

Watch out world: Tony Motherfucking Stark was back in business.
Before Tony had gone in for his surgery, he handed Rhodey a tablet.

With a somewhat serious face, he said, “If something happens to me you’ll need this. FRIDAY will release any information I have locked and it will be available for you to go through. Otherwise, while I’m in surgery, go through this and read the files.” Exhaustion was apparent on Tony’s face, but he was smiling nonetheless, almost in excitement.

“I expect you to come back for this. This isn’t my plan-- You need to follow through with it. Not me.” Rhodey spoke firmly waving the tablet slightly.

Tony laughed, patting Rhodey’s back. “You worry too much, sour patch.”

*****

Reading through the roster and files that Tony had put together, Rhodey couldn’t help but be fairly impressed at how extensive they were.

Tony had Charles Xavier and the X-Men, down along with some notes on what to speak with Xavier about.

There was a file on Deadpool--apparently, most of the information on the guy came from Peter. The loyalty to the kid could prove useful; the Defenders, a group of 4 that Tony had found out about after the fiasco happening in and around Hell’s Kitchen; Luke Cage, who apparently had unbreakable skin and some serious super strength, and some stuff about Harlem too; Danny Rand, who was apparently known as Iron Fist, has his own company, along with a very strange history; Jessica Jones, who was a very strong and impressive PI.
Rhodey shivered at Tony’s notes about Kilgrave, one of the members being Daredevil. His eyebrows shot up as he read about the Devil of Hell’s Kitchen; Tony’s notes seemed to point to the idea that he knew the true identity of the masked man (knowing Tony, he probably did), but was remaining to keep it a secret out of respect.

As if that wasn’t enough, there were several more names and files: Hope Van Dyne (the Wasp), Jennifer Walters (wait--a she-hulk?), Reed Richards and his group of misfits (Tony’s words), Kamala Khan (Ms. Marvel. Great, another teenager), and he even had Harley Keener. Rhodey looked over that last one, squinting at the words “Iron-Man replacement?”

The next two files had even lengthier notes. The first one was that of a Doctor Stephen Strange, a former surgeon, now… unknown? There weren’t too many facts, but there were plenty notes of Tony’s findings, along with some theories. It seemed like whoever that man was, it had piqued Tony’s interest. There were also reports from London, a crazy story from Hong Kong, energy readouts from some areas a few months back...

It didn’t make much sense to him, so he moved on.

Rhodes stopped filtering through the files for a moment to really look at the one Colonel Carol Danvers, AKA Captain Marvel.

“What the actual fuck, Tony,” Rhodes muttered.

She was his candidate to the UN team leader, along with Rhodey as a co-leader.

He swears Tony does this shit on purpose, sometimes.

The memory of when Carol had returned to earth after leaving in the 90’s was one that Tony and Rhodes would never forget. Some redacted information was also in her file and it appeared that Tony and Fury had been in cahoots regarding the Air-Force Colonel turned superhero.

There was a filer separate from the roster list and it appeared to be a plan for a family safety protocol (Keep Them Safe) to keep Cassie Lang and her family, the Keeners, and Laura Barton and her kids safe. It also included several others: Darcy Lewis, Jane Foster (There were notes that she might be able to assist finding Thor), Betty Ross (What is going on in that head of yours, Tony?), May Parker, Claire Temple, Colleen Wing, Franklin Nelson, Karen Page, Trish Walker, and even Pepper and Happy. It was clear that the protocol wasn’t active yet and it seemed to be a work in
progress, but it still called for red flags in Rhodes’ head.

How the hell did Tony find all of these people, and who the hell were they?

There was one last file that made unease rise in Rhodey's gut.

There were videos, documents, letters, everything you can think of, that had been compiled in a category solely consisting of evidence against Secretary Ross.

In Tony’s notes, he mentions that if he could get Betty on board, they could completely ruin the elder Ross--bury the man with all of his dirty laundry.

Rhodes thought about that for a bit; the Secretary of State has done a fairly good job ruining his image and the UN had promptly booted him from the council after finding out about the RAFT, and the escape that the Ex-Avengers had pulled off. They replaced him with a trusted CIA agent Everett Ross, who had been doing a phenomenal job working with the other countries.

The elder Ross was a loose cannon, and it was clear to Rhodes that Tony had been keeping an eye on him for a long time, just waiting for the right moment to strike.

Rhodes shouldn’t be surprised. Ever since Afghanistan, Tony had changed. Many things were different, but one thing that remained the same was that the billionaire had a plan for everything, even when he was dying.

He’d given Pepper control of Stark Industries, he kept the Iron Man suit out of everyone else’s hands except Rhodes (that suit had fit him too perfectly).

Tony always had a plan, the only exception Rhodes could think of now was that Tony had gone to Siberia without a plan.

He had trusted Rogers. They all had. Tony never trusted easily, and for the first time Rhodes truly understood why.

Rhodes stared blankly ahead, really, truly thinking about everything he had just read.
What was Tony’s endgame here? There was so much planning he had put into all of this, but for what?

What is he preparing for…?
Tony’s chest was hot and itchy, but compared to how it had been feeling a few hours prior, he
would take it. The surgery was a success and Tony was already back in his lab.

“So whatcha think, honey bear?” Tony smirked, typing away on the projected keyboard.

Now that he had extremis in his body and the Nanobots were ready, he was booting up the system.
His excitement surprised him. He hadn’t felt this good about anything in a long time, but now he’d
be waiting for the other shoe to drop. The universe liked to stay balanced, but hopefully it would
take its time.

“What the hell are you planning for, Tones?” Rhodey asked, concerned etched onto his face.

“End of the world type shit. Sorry if I sound crazy, but something is coming. I know it. I want
Earth to be ready, and that means creating a new Avengers team--one that can actually work
together.” Tony explained, still distracted by the projections and codes in front of him.

“I trust you, Tony. You know that, right?” Rhodey asked tentatively as he wheeled over to where
Tony was sitting, resting a hand on his shoulder. “I got your back.”

Tony flinched, remembering Clint’s words from the RAFT.
“Thanks, Platypus.” Tony’s voice cracked, and he shook his head to shake off a prickle of tears. He could cry later. Right now, he had work to do.

“So, what’s the game plan?” Rhodes asked, making Tony smile.

“Well first, now that I have a roster of candidates, I need to go meet with the UN and brief them on my plan. Then, from what I’m seeing, Secretary Ross has officially gone off the deep end since the Rogues escaped, so I’m thinking I might need to initiate KTS and retrieve Laura Barton and her kids, along with getting a hold of Hope Van Dyne to get Cassie, her mother and stepfather to safety—oh man, is that conversation going to be fun. Once I explain everything to the UN my hope is that all the pieces will fall into place, but knowing my luck, there will be few bumps in the road.”

Rhodey crossed his arms, letting out an impressed whistle. “Jesus, Tony. You just went through surgery. Take a week off, or something.”

“No can do, platypus. First off, that what extremis is for. It gives me an amazing healing factor almost as good as Wolverine’s. Numero dos: UN needs direction, and quick. They need help getting traction and finding the correct path to take. And third, the Older Ross is searching for the Rogues’ family’s and I need to stop him.”

“Fine, fine, I get it. But I get to help with the recruiting, right?” Rhodey inquired, making Tony pass him a smirk.

“I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

******

Tony let his fingers hover above the keyboard.

This was it. All his planning, all the calculations, came down to this.

Rhodey was gone at physical therapy, which left Tony relatively alone, especially since Vision had started taking some college courses and everyone else in the vicinity was preoccupied with their
own problems.

Tony pulled his hands away and rested his elbows on the table, putting his face in his hands.

“This will work,” he quietly reassured himself.

“Everything is quadruple checked, Boss,” FRIDAY said, interrupting Tony’s thoughts. “I am here if something is to happen, but don’t doubt your calculations.”

“Thanks, baby girl.” Tony smiled and moved his hands back over the keyboard, typing in the last bit of code before pressing ‘Initialize.’

A warm sensation engulfed him. Nothing felt hot, thankfully, just a comforting heat.

“Whoa.”

“Extremis and Nanobots are coming online, Boss. Information readouts are on screen.” FRIDAY paused a moment before announcing, “Extremis and Nanobots are online and in proper working order.”

Tony felt a twinge in his head as she spoke. He tilted it to the side at the feeling, and then suddenly the whole world opened up to him.

He exclaimed in shock and fell out of his chair at the onslaught of seemingly the entire universe coming straight at him, but it went as quickly as it came.

“What the hell was that?” Tony asked, standing up. His body felt like it was cooling down.

“That, Boss, was the Internet.” Despite FRIDAY’s robotic voice, Tony could swear he heard a little laughter mixed in there.

“What?” Tony asked in disbelief.
“This was a theorized possibility. The Bots and Extremis are allowing you to mentally connect to the Internet.” FRIDAY spoke softly, as if she was talking to a child.

“Y-Yeah... but that was only a theory--and a stretch, at that. It was some kind of sci-fi shit that I honestly thought was a joke.”

“Breath deep, Boss. I can help you. I’m acting as a barrier in your mind.” He could hear her voice in his head, surrounding his mind similarly to how his own thoughts would. “I can ease you into this.”

The following hours were spent learning about what had happened and how he could work with it. They decided to keep his uplink to the Internet a secret for the time being.

By the time he was heading to bed, he was effortlessly browsing the World Wide Web, and was able to disconnect and reconnect with no issues.

It was something of beauty to him to be able to connect on a more tangible and intimate level with FRIDAY, and Tony looked forward to all of the possibilities.

********

The next day found Tony in front of the Accords Council.

“So you’re saying that Thaddeus Ross is hunting for Clint Barton's family?” One of the few dozen councilmen asked incredulously. “How does he even know about Mr. Barton having a family? It’s not on any record.”

“Because of a conversation Clint and I had on the RAFT. Well, that and the data dump Romanoff pulled off. Apparently Director Fury had made a--” he paused to find the right word “--mistake in some of his files on Barton.”

“We are aware of the threat that Secretary Ross possesses. What do you plan to do about it?” A different council member asked.
“I’ve been monitoring him for years, basically right after Banner’s Hulk-out. I have tons of evidence, so I’m going to reach out to Betty Ross and hopefully get her to testify against her father. If we can get a trial going against him, that is.” Tony added that last bit as an afterthought.

Most of the faces around Tony nodded, though some others still looked skeptical.

“I don’t see why we can’t approve of your plan of action against Mr. Ross,” Eleanor, the head councilwoman, said before bringing down her gavel. “Unless there are any objections that you are to follow through with your family safety protocol, as well.” She paused, prompting Tony to lightly shrug and shake his head. “Keep us in the loop and let us know if and when trouble arises. We will assist you to the best of our ability.”

“Thank you, ma’am,” Tony sighed in relief. He hadn’t really been asking permission, but was more informing them on his plans out of respect--and the hope that their approval would make it a bit easier. Though if they wanted to take it as him asking, who was he to stop them? So long as at the end of the day he was saving people, that’s all that mattered. “Now on to the second order of business.”

“Yes,” Eleanor nodded.

“I have the plans you all requested and I think this will really help give the Accords committee some traction.” Tony spoke firmly, determined to show them that he wasn’t playing around.

Tony went on to explain about creating a whole new team, built correctly and in a more controlled environment.

The counselors around the room seemed nervous that Tony wanted to get more people of power under his wings, but only until Tony explained how he would be splitting up roles and leadership. He showed them Colonel Danvers’ file, explaining how he wanted her to be the head of the New Avengers, along with Colonel Rhodes as a co-leader. Tony was willing to stay as the liaison between the Avengers and the Accords, but wanted to step back and work on his own company as well; observe and help with the new team, hoping to even be part of it, if accepted.

He went on to explain how he wasn’t getting any younger and with as many close calls that he’s had in the past several years since becoming Iron Man, he was looking forward to trying to get a little bit of a break.
“Well, you promised to have a plan, and you sure did deliver.” Tony smiled at the impressed inflection in Eleanor’s voice. “Does anyone object to Dr. Starks plan for the New Avengers”

No one raised their hand.

“Well in that case, you have clearance in putting you plans into action, Dr. Stark. Though I do hope to hear from you frequently. Let us know of the statuses of your recruits and how things are coming along. If you get Colonel Danvers on board, we hope to be meeting with the both of you relatively soon.”

“Thank you.” Tony felt like a small weight had been lifted off his shoulders. “I promise, I’ll stay in touch.”

Chapter End Notes

So I do have a few chapters set to go but I think I’ll space them out a bit now... but who knows! I’m glad to see everyone is enjoying this story
Chapter Summary

Meeting Carol

Chapter Notes

Edited 4/10/19- A bit more Captain Marvel Complient. Added mention of Monica

“How do I look?” Rhodes asked for the millionth time.

Tony rolled his eye “You look wonderful honey bear”

Tony and Rhodes had just landed at Edwards Air force Base in California.

Rhodes dismounted from the War Machine suit, straightening himself out the best he could, though as he went to walk forward he stumbled slightly. Cursing as he nearly fell flat on his face.

He was still having difficulties getting used to the mechanical braces that Tony had put together.

Tony steadied his best friend and activated the portable wheelchair he had taken the liberty of making (and very possibly planning on putting out as a Stark Industries product)

Rhodes flushed in embarrassment but didn’t dwell on it further as he sat down.

Tony’s Iron Man nanosuit had retracted into the reactor seamlessly and Tony beamed at the success of it. His uplink to FRIDAY was active, but for the sake of show he kept his earpiece in. Tony slipped a pair of his glasses on and stepped up behind Rhodey, pushing the chair as they continued forward towards the hanger.

A young woman with dark skin and dark brown hair stepped out of the large building and made her way towards them, a smile spread across her face.

“Dr Stark! Colonel Rhodes! I was told you would be here looking for Aunt Carol, but I wasn’t going to believe it until I saw it, and here you are! I’m Monica Rambeau” the girl spoke excitedly.

Rhodey chuckled at the woman who was clearly fangirling.

Tony held out his hand to her “Tony Stark, it’s a pleasure”

Rhodes followed “James Rhodes, at your service”

“If you follow me I can take you to her. She wasn’t sure when you boys would get here and had some matters to handle.” Monica explained as she spun around and basically skipped back towards the hanger.
Entering the large building Tony could see tension leave his best friends shoulders, looking around he noted that this must feel like home to the Colonel and felt a pang of sorrow for his injured friend.

Though the billionaire would be damned if he wasn’t going to fix his Rhodey to the best of his abilities.

“That’s Aunt Carol’s’” Monica pointed to an aircraft to the side. It read Carol “Avenger” Danvers. “You know that’s where you got your name right?” she said offhandy and she continued forward towards a blonde who appeared to be reaming on a younger man.

Tony paused and Monica moved forward to approach the blonde and spoke to the seemingly older woman, though they looked to be the same age.

When the blonde turned to the men, Monica moved to usher the male that had just been scolded away.

“Hello boys, what can I do for you two?” Carol asked as she walked up to them.

“Do you have an office or someplace private we can talk?” Tony questioned immediately feeling a bit antsy all of a sudden.

“Of course” Carol turned and ushered the duo to follow.

As they walked to the destination Carol and James made small talk about the base and the running of it along with other boring Air Force stuff that Tony tuned out.

His thoughts revolving around how he was wanted to approach her, how to ask her to take on such a huge responsibility, and how he was hoping she would say yes.

The trio settled in a cozy office that was labeled as Carols.

“So what can I do you for boys?” She asked again once they were comfortable.

Rhodes looked over to his best friend and saw a flash of emotion under the glasses Tony wore.

Tony extracted his phone, tapped it a few times and then squared his shoulders as if preparing for a blow and then began. ”I need your help Colonel”

“Oh?” She questioned with a quirk of her eyebrows

“Yes, I need you for both your leadership skills and you special abilities” Tony spoke softly.

“I see and may I ask why?” She asked curiously, she was guarded but curious nonetheless

“Well you see, I’m sure you’ve seen the extensive coverage on what everyone has dubbed the Civil War. It’s painted enhanced humans in a bad light. I have a plan in motion to do some damage control, and hopefully get the public to relax a bit. My plan requires me needing your assistance, but before I explain further I would like to know if you are interested at all” Tony stopped himself before he gave too much away

Carol hummed “Dr. Stark May I be frank…”

“Of course, please do, and call me Tony” Tony insisted, also what was with everyone using his Doctor title lately? It was weirding him out.
“Only if you call me Carol” she smiled softly “it’s clear to me that you have a very extensive plan in the works.” She saw Rhodes nod “I won’t make you tell me everything at this moment in time because even if this is my office it might be better to talk about certain things in a different more controlled environment”

She saw Tony smirk and flashed his phone screen towards her “Don’t worry I already disabled any bugs in the room, its surprising how distrustful the United States government is, but back to the topic on hand, I’m fine taking this conversation moving elsewhere, this is definitely something that needs to be discussed as soon as possible in in great detail”

She sat stunned for a moment, she had known that her office had a good possibility of being bugged but it still shook her a bit to actually see the evidence. She shook her head slightly to attempt to stay on topic.

“Regardless I think I’m very interested in your offer and would love to talk more in depth” Carol concluded

“I didn’t really even make my offer” Tony grumbled slightly which got a chuckle from Rhodes.

“True, but I’m sure my assumption of what you want to ask me isn’t too far off. And as I said I would rather meet somewhere else, perhaps on your turf and talk details” Carol spoke softly, Rhodes head snapped to her, his eyes narrowing in on her slightly.

She knew, how she knew he had no clue, but Carol Danvers was very aware that Tony Stark had a severe case of PTSD and Anxiety and she was trying her best to make Tony comfortable, especially when he was coming to her to ask for help. Rhodes infatuation with the woman intensified tenfold, this woman was amazing.

“You’re thoughtfulness is appreciated” Tony spoke in a smaller, quiet voice, as though he was trying to hide his relief that the woman in front of him wasn’t demanding a million answers from him. He contuned on in a more sure tone “Well as of right now I’m doing a massive upgrade and construction on the Avengers Compound in upstate New York so a meeting there is a no go but I can get us a quinjet and we can head back to Starktower and talk there.” Tony explained “Are we wanting to do our little pow wow today?” He asked

“I don’t see why not, I’m sure you have a time crunch on you so it’s probably best to get started right away. I forgot you transitioned the tower back to Starktower after everything. Between us I like that better then Avengers Tower”

“Yeah, and it’s definitely become a better home to me than Malibu, I missed living on the east coast, and me and my CEO put a lot of work into that building, I can’t just toss that away.”

Carol watched the man, as he seemed to reminisce in his head until Rhodes nudged him.

“Right, so meeting at Starktower?” Tony sounded hopeful

Carol nodded and smiled.

As the trio walked out of Carol’s office and back onto the tarmac a quinjet was landing. Carol knew she shouldn’t have been as impressed as she was but that didn’t stop her.

To the side there were several soldiers around the War Machine armor checking in out in fascination. Monica was among the group.

Tony whistles and the armor startled everyone around it as it moved towards Tony and Rhodes.
Carol laughed at the surprised faces and gave her honorary niece a small wave.

The quinjet landed and the hatch opened.

The armor entered and went to stand on a platform in the corner of the jet.

Tony pushed Rhodes chair up the ramp, helped him out of the chair and move to sit in the pilot seat.

Carol looked around; the quinjet in question seemed to be more of a luxury style one, there were a few comfortable seats opposed to the benches that normally lined the side. And there were a few amenities around (like a fridge) that you wouldn’t normally see in a combat ready quinjet.

“Please get comfortable Carol” Tony instructed as he milled around briefly and then patted the jet in satisfaction “Ok Fri, take us home”

The jet started up and began to take off, Carol turned surprised seeing that Rhodes wasn’t actually piloting it but had turned the seat to face the others in the jet.

Tony laughed slightly at the bemused face Carol had on “Friday say hi and introduce yourself”

Suddenly there was a projection of a massive ball in the center of the jet “Good afternoon Colonel Danvers, I’m Friday, I’m Mr Stark’s AI, I run basically everything. Anything Boss needs I get done” an Irish accent rang out and the ball moved and waved as the voice talked.

Carol’s mouth was stuck in an ‘O’ shape before she found her words “I heard a while back about your self learning AI’s Tony but wow. What is this I’m looking at exactly? I’ve dealt with AI’s but this is definitely different from what I’ve encountered and interacted with”

“This is her program in a physical state, it what she looks like, it’s her brain.” Tony explained beaming at his baby.

“You’re probably one of the only other human that I’ve met that has technology close to what is back on Hala, the Kree home world. I don’t know how much Fury has told you. But we definitely need to look into some of your stuff maybe I can even help a bit” Carol suggested

Tony’s eyes sparkled a bit at the opportunity suddenly offered to him, and It looked as though he was about to say something, but he was promptly interrupted.

“Boss there’s a call coming through from Miss Potts, she’s saying it’s urgent” Friday spoke up

Tony looked apologetically towards Carol and tapped his earpiece.

“Pep, what’s-“

“And I’m needed there?”

“When?”

He looked down to his watch and sighed

“I mean I have a few things but I suppose-“

“Yes Pepper I am aware of that fact that it’s still my company” Tony snapped and pinched the bridge of his nose. Carol watched Rhodes and he looked concerned for his friend
“Am I needed in person?”

“Obviously I’m talking holographic meeting-“

“I’m heading back to New York now”

“Ok I’ll let you know when I’m there”

“Bye”

“I’m sorry” Tony spoke softly to the blonde

“No it’s no problem. We all know you’re a busy man we can even have our meeting here if you so choose” Carol tried to placate the clearly exhausted man in front of her.

“Yeah that’s maybe a wise idea, I’m sorry” He frowned

And suddenly there were projected files of several people in front of her

“The world need Avengers as I’m sure you know, but also needs people that it can trust to protect it, people that are willing to work with the government and together as a team” Tony started Carol nodding in agreement

“Since even before the ‘Civil War’ I’d been looking for talent around the globe, watching crimes that popped up and seeing how they were dealt with. This…” Tony gestured to the projected files “is what I need your help with, getting a new team together and managed. I have the necessary approval from the UN, and the Accords council to put this plan into action along with a few other things. Even if I’d do it anyway” Tony grumbled the last sentence

“What is it exactly that you will need from me?” Carol asked as her eyes gazing over the many faces in front of her. She caught sight of the young girl who she knew idolized her and had taken on the mantle of her alter ego, just as she had with Mar Vell.

“As I said before I need your leadership skills, you and Rhodes will be the team leaders, co-leaders if you will” Tony explained

“I see, and where will you be? What’s your position in all of this?” She gestured in front of her

“Well for one I planned on getting this ball rolling, starting with you and then, if you so choose, have you, Rhodes, and myself recruit the members that I have narrowed down, then I plan on backing off, hopefully being part of the team, I’m aware that many think I’m unable to work in a team so I’ll stay back and help how I can, even if I’m not accepted. Though I promised the Councils that I would stay the face of any agreement between them and the Avengers as a whole. There are a few clauses I have added to the Accords and plan on negotiating a few more, so staying around will be beneficial to all parties included” Tony rattled on

“What exactly are the clauses that you have added?” Carol had read the Accords and was concerned about a few of the statements but she knew Tony had been working hard to repeal some of them and straighten the Accords out.

“There is a massive one that took me a while but I finally got it through, It’s about those heroes that wish to keep there two lives separate, basically if I get a team member on board that wishes to keep their identity a secret, I activate the good faith clause, which will protect the person in question and the team. If the contract is broken though consequences will be severe. It’s a loose end, yes I know, and if it fails then I’ll have to look into it further but as of right now the Accords
council seems fairly happy with me so I’m kinda getting a few free passes. Besides I already have Spiderman who agreed to the conditions, but I need to be careful because he’s still a minor.”

“Wow, that’s pretty impressive” Carol was definitely impressed.

“There’s also a few others but it’s all in the Accords paperwork that you would be required to sign if we move forward, so Colonel Danvers… Captain Marvel. What do you say? Will you help me protect our world?” Tony held his hand out

Carol reached forward and took his hand “It would be an honor to work with you, Tony Stark, and Iron Man, I do have a couple conditions though, but they are more of a personal request if anything.”

Tony raised an eyebrow in question

Carol took her other hand and enclosed Tony’s “You don’t need to tell me now, or even a month from now but I want to hear about how you and the ‘Ex-Avengers’ worked, so that I know what to avoid and how to adapt, because it’s very obvious that you have trust issues and I would like to help you remedy that.”

Tony nodded in silent agreement his face had paled slightly but he kept his gaze on her.

“Also I would like you not back away and stand in the background, this will be your team too. Be proud, stay with us, as we learn and you can show us who Tony Stark really is. Okay?”

Tony nodded again silently. His ears were ringing at her words.

“Damn Tony she has you pegged!” Rhodes let out a laugh and it broke whatever tension had been building in Tony’s head, his shoulders relaxing

“Thank you Carol” Tony spoke softly and sincerely; Carol could hear the deep emotions behind his cracked voice.

“Anytime Tony! Now! We should probably discuss my retirement from the Air Force!”
Chapter Notes

Wow! I love the response!
Ok to touch on a few things
There was concern about Tony asking permission to follow through with his plans. I would like to point out he wasn’t. They asked for a plan he showed it to them. The Accords Council took it upon themselves to grant Tony permission because honestly they want to feel useful but in actuality they are just the middle men and have no traction yet like Tony had already said.
I love how someone finally pointed out that T’Challa and Black Panther hasn’t been mentioned! Let’s just say Tony is a salty bastard at the moment... I’ll leave that there for now
Ok please enjoy the chapter! See you in the end notes!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rhodes, Carol and Tony ended up staying up late into the night discussing the plan, which was after Tony solved an issue happening in the R&D department.

Carol and Rhodes were to head to Xavier’s school, they had a meeting scheduled to talk with Charles Xavier himself about getting him and the X-Men on board. Along with a discussion about the Accords.

The hope was to get mutants properly protected by the Accords. Thanks to a few of Tony’s additions to the documents parts added were in favor of mutants. Tony hoped that this would help the younger children with gifts there feel safer.

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It was mid afternoon as Tony stepped out of the cab. He looked around observing the street he was currently on, in Hell's Kitchen. While Rhodes and Carol were off doing their thing Tony decided that he should get a jump on his part of the plan. He pulled his hood up and ducked his head moving towards the apartment building he knew was his target. Tony had to stay as inconspicuous as possible because the minute someone found him out the plan to keep secrets would be ruined.

Tony knocked on the door, after triple checking that he had the correct number apartment, and the door opened immediately.
There in front of Tony stood an average sized man of an age of about 30. He was wearing sweatpants and an old T-shirt that said Columbia University. His dark brown hair was disheveled as if he had just gotten out of bed. His eyes stared forward unseeing but Tony knew he could see more then he let on.

“Hello how can I help you?” The man asked

“Matt Murdock right?” Tony inquired

“That’s me” the man's head cocked to the side

“I’m Tony Stark but I’m sure you already knew that” Tony chuckled.

“What can I do for you Mr. Stark?” Matt seemed unsure and nervous if anything.

“Do you mind if we take this conversation inside?” Tony asks, glancing down the hall to make sure no one has seen him.

Matt moved to the side and gestured Tony in.

The genius settled in Matt’s living area

“I’m sorry if this is rude but I’m very confused as to why someone such as yourself has graced my doorstep” Matt quipped a smirk twitching his lips.

Tony chuckled again “Oh, I’m sure”

Matt’s head cocked to the side once again, he could hear the nervousness in Tony’s voice, and the sudden increase of his heart rate.

“Mr. Murdock I want to assure you first and foremost that I come here with no ill will and simply hope to talk with you, I have no agendas outside of discussing some business with you, which obviously you can decline and I will leave and be on my way” Tony rung his hands.
“Boss your heart rate is a bit high you might want to take a few calming breaths before continuing, don’t forget you’re still technically recovering from surgery” Friday’s voice rang out in Tony’s ear piece and the man nodded silently and took a deep breath. He realized he had closed off his uplink to Friday in his nerves. Oops.

“I understand” Matt’s voice was tight, he had heard the AI speak to its maker and decided that he would play nice, to make Tony feel more at ease.

“First I would like to know if it was the chemicals that cause your abilities or if you had you echolocation and super hearing skills before your accident?” Tony blurted before thinking, cursing his insomnia and lack of sleep there of. He had apparently lost his brain to mouth filter. He’s going to have to been really cool from here on out so not to mess this up

“I’m sorry what?” Matt asked defensively, his face hardening, jaw clenched.

“It’s a genuine question. I’m very fascinated in your ability to see even through you can’t actually see! It truly amazing, but it sucks if you got it after your accident. But I guess it might be a blessing too you know a message from a greater power. Anyway I’m getting off topic” Tony took a breath after his rambling “I need both of you, I need Matt Murdock the badass lawyer and I need Daredevil the kick ass hero of Hell’s Kitchen”

“I’m sorry Mr. Stark you must be confusing me with-“

“Please don’t try to insult my intelligence, it’s offensive, given it took me a bit more work then figuring you out versus Spider Man, but with my determination and insomnia I can basically get anything done”

Matt’s shoulders were tense, hands clenched, and teeth grinding.

“I’m positive that you’ve heard the news right? About the Avengers and the Accords?”

Matt nodded his head not giving anything else away, verbally that is.

“I’m going to be brutally honest with you here Mr. Murdock. You see I nearly died fighting for
this cause and I’m going to keep fighting for it because there is something coming, something big, and I’m terrified. My fear is what helped release Ultron on this world, and I realized now that I went about it the wrong way, yes Machines and weapons and tech are great and all but good’s old fashion teamwork can easily get the job done too. And sadly being nearly killed made me realize that the team I thought I had, didn’t actually trust me regardless of all I had done for them. So now here I am without much of a team, but I have a plan. A plan that I truly think can and will work. And I would love for you to be apart of it, both on and off the field”

Matt sat in stunned silence, his tension easing slightly.

“I know of the fighting and vigilante life you have going on and I would never risk that for you. I promise that if you do decide to join me, and the team I am trying to put together, your Identity will be safe, I don’t suppose you’ve gone through the Accords have you?”

“I have” Matt supplied

“Recently?” Tony pried

“No, only when the controversy first broke out” Matt admitted.

“I see so you wouldn’t know about the good faith clause I have added?” Tony asked

“No” Matt responded curtly

“Well you see as it stands I’m in good graces with the UN and Accords council so I’ve been able to broker a deal that will protect those of you who wish to keep their identity a secret, like you and Spidey for example, and were you to sign the Accords, it would be as Daredevil. Though if you break the contract then consequences will have to be made, but I don’t see that being an issue for you.” Tony explained

“Mr. Stark-“ Matt was conflicted he had been taking a break from Daredevil since Midland Circles collapse. It took him awhile to heal and even get back into society. But lately the Devil has been itching to get out, so maybe, just maybe...

“Please call me Tony”
“Tony I’m not sure about this. I can tell you’ve put a lot of planning into this but am I really the best person for a position like this? And if I do this the people I care about get put more into danger-“

“Mr. Murdock-“ Tony started

“Matt…” the blind man interpreted and recuperated the sentiment of first name use.

“Matt I can assure you that all your concerns will be addressed. I already have started the Keep Them Safe protocol, which I put together to protect civilians and loved ones of the team I’m trying to put together. It will keep an eye on your them and alert you when they are in danger and help you get them to a safe place. I’m still working on some details but the basics of it is all running I already have Mr. Nelson and Miss Page being watched by my AI.”

“So what is it exactly that you are wanting from me?”

“I want Daredevil to join the Avengers. I plan on having you, Jessica Jones, Danny Rand and Luke Cage stay as one unit, the Defenders, and as missions come along have you available to help as needed. As Matt Murdock well Stark Industries is very impressed with your abilities in the courtroom and would like to hire you as a consultant to help represent itself and SI’s relationship with the Avengers. Obviously you would be paid and you are more then welcome to take on whatever cases you want outside of Stark Industries and the Avengers but so long as you are available when we need your expertise.”

“Wow, I… Wow” Matt was speechless

“Think on it-“

“I don’t think that will be necessary”

**********

Rhodes and Carol had done well getting the X-men of board. The protocols in place to protect mutants and children with gifts had greatly appealed to Xavier and he was immensely impressed at
Mr. Stark’s plans.

The Accords contracts that were written up for any of X-Men had been presented. The members that wished to join the New Avengers as consultants promptly signed. Everything was very well put together and relief had coursed through Xavier when he saw that the paperwork would protect all of his students, now and in the future.

Tony had left a note with the paperwork stating if things needed to be changed to let him or either of the Colonels know and they would adjust it to the best of their ability.

“Is this really a good idea professor?” Logan asked the man in the wheelchair after Carol and Rhodes had left.

“Mr. Stark has done well to provide us with the protection we will need during these trying time. With the Accords we will have less to worry about, especially with the anti mutants riots, currently taking place. I am also with Mr. Stark’s assessment that there is something coming, something or someone very powerful and we will all need to stand together against” Charles spoke solemnly as he gazed out of the window.

Chapter End Notes

Hey So I know kinda short but I’m just setting everything up... but you guys won’t believe how long the Stephen Chapter is getting I’ve had to cut it up a few times already!
Well if you are bored and want to read more I got 2 other story’s in the mix cause I apparently just can’t stop.

Get Out Alive- Tony has a daughter (It will proceed through the MCU)

For Your Entertainment- Dom Stephen/ Sub Tony smut story post Infinity War

Oh! And I am Beta to this really good story
Hold Me Close (And Never Let Me Go)
By: ronoman
It’s a Post Civil War story!

Until next time!
Tony was tired. It had already been an impossibly long day, especially when dealing with the hustle and bustle of New York. The talk with Matt had encouraged him slightly so he figured he would stop and take care of one more meeting for the day.

He held the paper bag tightly as he entered the older looking apartment building.

As he walked down the hall he observed the glass on the door. Alias investigations, thoughts of having a PI on the team appealed to him, but first he’d have to convince her, hence the reason for the booze, in the bag, in his hand.

When talking with Matt about details and what not he was warned about Jessica, Matt told Tony it might be best to bring alcohol for the woman.

He rapped lightly against the glass and watched as a figure moved behind it.

The door opened to reveal a young woman with black hair, jeans and a tank top on, and a very haunting look in her eyes, he sympathized with her.

“What do you want?” She snapped.

“Jessica Jones? I was hoping to talk to you” Tony spoke calmly.

The woman looked him over, raised the bottle of liquor she held in her hand and took a swig of it.

“Wow, it’s Tony Stark, to what do I owe this great… honor?” Jessica’s voice dripped with fake enthusiasm and sarcasm.

He already liked her.

“I am in need of your assistance”

“I’m not taking clients as of right now”

“Give me a few moments of your time, I promise I’ll make it worth your while” Tony took the rather large and very expensive bottle of whiskey out of the paper bag that he held.

Jessica’s eyes narrowed for a moment before she hummed in appreciation.

The dark haired woman stepped to the side and opened the door further, allowing Tony in.
He walked in and made his way to the chair in front of her desk, as she walked around and sat behind her desk

“What can I do for you Mr. Stark?” She spoke her voice guarded and on edge.

Tony placed the bottle on the desk “You could start by taking a shot with me”

Jessica’s mouth twitched slightly. She got up and walked to the kitchen retrieving a couple of glasses from the sink and rinsed them out.

“Normally I just drink from the bottle but I suppose I’ll humor you” Jessica grumbled slightly and placed the cups on her desk.

Tony in turn opened the bottle of whiskey and poured a decent amount into both her cup and his.

Jessica raised her eyebrows at this and picked up the glass, Tony put the bottle down and lifted his own glass.

“To being alcoholics” Tony toasted and threw his head back taking the rather large double shot Jessica followed.

“I don’t babysit” she huffed as Tony poured her another rather large shot but gave himself a smaller one.

He smirked at that and then got somber “Alcohol is your medicine right? Is that how you forget?”

Jessica was surprised by his question, her eyes hardening.

“Ever since the Chitauri came to New York, no ever since Afghanistan, no matter what I do I can’t forget, hell I’ve even gone as far as create tech that can dig memories out of a brain, and to change them, but the nightmares always return” Tony rambled and threw back his next shot

“Mr. Stark…” Jessica suddenly felt sympathy for the broken man that sat in front of her.

“Please call me Tony” he said as he leaned back in the chair “I’m sorry I shouldn’t be unloading off onto you and I know bringing up that past isn’t something you probably want to deal with at the moment” Tony spoke softly

“Tony, I’m sorry I’m not sure how to help you, what is it you need from me?” Jessica said I’m an unusually soft voice.

Tony laughed, his voice sounded as exhausted as he looked, and Jessica winced as she truly sympathized with him.

“I’m sorry Miss Jones this was not my intention when I can here to talk” Tony’s mask slipped on “I require your assistance, But first what’s your views on the Accords?”

Jessica was slightly shocked by this question and quickly narrowed her eyes in suspicion “I mean accountability is good, and so long as there isn’t someone else controlling your actions, which from when I read over what they have posted about it and your revisions so far, it appears that you have done well keeping it from going that direction”
“Miss Jones there is something, some outside force coming, I can’t explain much more than a feeling that I’ve had for several years now. And clearly I don’t have details yet but this fear has stuck with me for a while, which I will admit was what lead to Ultron being let loose. As of right now I am attempting to put together a proper response team; I’m trying to put together a New Avengers team, one that will be put in a better light and under the Accords so that way we have a fighting chance. I already have Captain Marvel and Daredevil, along with War Machine, Vision, and Spider-Man—“

“Whoa hold up! You actually got Devil boy on board? He told me he was staying off the grid for awhile” Jessica was floored.

Tony smirked “Surprisingly enough, yes he has agreed, with some conditions, he has signed the Accords as Daredevil. Oh and I suppose you should know that I also hired a new consulting lawyer for Stark Industries and the Avengers” he winked

If Matt agreed to help Stark on and off the field, I meant he trusted the man to an extent.

She hummed thoughtfully, and took a swig if her drink “So what do you need from me?”

“I would like you as yourself, We need a heavy hitter, along with you remarkable investigative abilities”

“You flatter me” She fanned herself playfully

“I try” Tony smirked

“So let me get this straight you and the Ex-Avengers had a falling out, now you are going around recruiting New Avengers to prepare for… what was it exactly?”

“End of the world type shit” He deadpanned

“And you want me to sign the Accords and join your boy band? I mean I kinda, sorta am already part of a team first of all, and second why me?”

“Well to answer the first question I want you, Daredevil, Mr. Cage and Mr. Rand to all join, The Defenders would just be an extension of the Avengers. Second you’re very talented Miss Jones and I would appreciate your assistance.” Tony was careful with his words

“Will there be booze involved?” Jessica asked smiling wickedly, for once she was actually kind of excited.

Chapter End Notes

And now we got my girl covered! I love her so much! Sorry for and inconsistencies or mistakes! Hope you enjoyed the chapter!
The next day Tony visited Luke Cage and Danny Rand. He also met Claire Temple, and Colleen Wing.

The talk with them was much easier than the previous two. It helped that Luke and Danny were already trying to start a business ‘Heroes for Hire’ which in the end Tony offered to sponsor them. He also offered to add there business to the Accords agreement, so they would be protected and government compliant.

Danny was very star struck when meeting Tony, he had to hold back his laughter as he did his best to calm the other billionaire down.

Colleen was unsure and made sure Tony knew about her fears.

As he had done with everyone else he gave a brief explanation of the falling out of his previous ‘team’ (obviously without talking about being nearly being killed which he had only told Daredevil) and explained the dynamics of what he was attempting to put together. At the same time he was trying to ease their concerns.

Luke and Danny were both excited to hear that Daredevil and Jessica would be part of the upcoming plans and they both promised to be ready for when Tony called everyone together for the first meeting.

Colleen then brought up a question.

“What about me? I’m not some side kick, I can be part of the team too” She huff indignantly

“I’m sorry Miss. Wing I was unaware of you interests in joining. I have you categorized under the Family Protection protocol for a couple of reasons. You see I figured you might not want to be in the fray, and for the fact if someone or thing decides to attack anyone I have under protection you would be there to assist, but if you would like I can write up a Accords contract for you”

“Oh, I- yeah I mean if you already have plans set out and I’m needed somewhere sure I’ll stick to that” Colleen stuttered

“I do also have a plan in the works of adding a Dojo to the compound where you can train and work there with Danny and anyone else that would want to train with you,” Tony told Colleen “as for you” he turned to Claire, who had been silently watching everything unfold in front of her “I heard from that you’ve had some issues at Metro General and I would like to offer you a job at Starktower on the medical floors and when the Avengers compound is done I would appreciate your help there as well. If you are up for it.”
“Are we taking about working for the Avengers or Stark Industries?” Claire questioned

“You would be employed by Stark Industries and be a consultant for the Avengers when needed, but you will be protected by Stark Industries. Daredevil, and Jessica told me about how amazing you are and I would like to have you around. Especially since I have people that wish to keep their identity a secret.”

Claire blushed “Wow I’m flattered,”

“All of you please think about my offer I will send over a copy of the updated Accords, keep in mind I’m still working on making changes. I’ll get the drafts of your own Accords contracts and Stark Industries contracts, that way you can read through everything and let me know if there are any issues, or just let me know if you are not interested” Tony was packing up

“Both Jess and Ma- Daredevil agreed to sign and be part of your plan right?” Danny asked.

Tony smirked “Yeah, I was a bit over excited to get Daredevil, Matt Murdock, and Jessica Jones on my payroll so I already had a temporary Stark Industries contracts written up for them so I could get them employed and protected as soon as possible. I am hoping to use Mr. Murdock’s legal expertise going forward.” Tony smirk at the groups face “Oh please I’m a genius it not difficult for me to figure out someone’s true identity, given it took me a little longer and a bit more work to figure Daredevil out versus Spider-Man but it can be done”

“Why are we not signing a temporary Stark Industries agreements?” Luke asked trying not to take offense.

“Because you my dear sir, I want you to have the very best contract. I want everything written in very plain text so there’s no confusion about your business, and I also wanted to have discussion with Mr. Rand and his CEO for a possible partnership, so there are multiple reasons I don’t want you to have a flimsy open ended contract. Also as I said I was a bit over excited.” Tony flushed a little hoping he hadn’t hurt anyone’s feelings in his rush to push paperwork through.

Everyone in the room nodded in agreement and understanding.

Looking to Danny Tony quirked a brow “Is that something you might be interested in? I can have a meeting set between our CEO’s and us if you’re so inclined”

Danny still trying to process the last hour or so nodded numbly. Colleen giggled a bit at Danny and bumped his shoulder “Oh yeah- Yes please that sounds good” Danny collected himself.

“Well then I will be on my way, you’ll be hearing from me or my people” Tony concluded with a wave over his shoulder.

Chapter End Notes

Since I’ll be recovering through the weekend I might get another chapter up here early we’ll see! Let me know what you guys think!
Also wish me luck! I’m super nervous about tomorrow!
What’s up in Wakanda? And Widow Learn’s

Chapter Summary

T’Challa is realizing he screwed up, and Natasha realizes she really screwed up!

Chapter Notes

Guys! It was bad! They only took two out, one of my teeth caused so many issues getting out! And then when they were drilling the other one I was feeling it and ughhhhh! I’m going to have to go back in a couple weeks for the other two! So here I am trying to ignore my swollen and sore jaw... here’s a new chapter.

Also time line happening here is kinda loose but basically Civil War happens at end of June 2016 I’m having from then until September Tony setting up, oh and T’Challa’s Black Panther story line happening so now we are mid September... So FYI it will be Spiderman homecoming compliant...

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“It been almost 3 months since The Avengers Civil War and silence from both side are deafening. Concerns about Tony Stark has become more apparent in the recent weeks though.” A random talk show host was speaking to her co-host

“Yes, Mr. Stark has always been very transparent to the public, especially since his return from Afghanistan. So it is concerning that after such a fall out that we haven’t heard much from him at all.” The man responded

“Miss. Potts Stark Industries CEO has recently commented that Mr. Stark was still recovering, though from what in unknown. Though we have seen a influx of amendments to the Accords and from what I can tell they look to be from Mr. Stark himself, so regardless of where he is he’s obviously still hard at work.”

“Well we all hope that Mr. Stark is doing ok and that we hear from him soon, we’ll go to commercial break and when we come back we will be meeting with-“ the TV switched off

Wanda scoffed in a disgusted manner “Tony Stark this… Tony Stark that! God! You think people would be happy not to hear from him all the time, cause he never shuts up!”

“To be fair they have a point he’s always been fairly transparent and he was the voice for the Avengers. If there was a press conference or something along those lines Stark was the one that PR would put front and center” Clint said quietly, his head resting on his arms staring ahead blankly.

“That was a large reason Fury kept him around… if anything he was great at talking down the
press or even diverting attention away from a situation."

“Is it true that Shield had Tony go and talk with Ross after the whole Hulk and abomination thing?” Sam asked curiously.

Clint’s chuckle was dead in a way but it was there “Yeah good old Thunderbolt wanted Abomination on the Avengers Initiative, so Stark went and played his little mind game and got Ross to change his mind.”

“I don’t get why was he siding with Thaddeus Ross then with the Accords?” Sam asked

“Because the Accords weren’t Secretary Ross’” a new voice entered the room

“Your Majesty!” Steve said standing up surprised at seeing the king in front of them. Steve had been sitting back drawing and trying to ignore the group as they once again were discussing Tony.

“Is everything ok? We were on lock down for a while. We got worried. What the hell happened?”

T’Challa made a small hand gesture motioning the super soldier to calm down and sit. “All is fine now, I just had some family drama and a few issues to settle. But all is fine now”

“They said you died” Scott said quietly from the corner

“Well I am here now and Wakanda is back on track, I’m actually here to discuss a few things with you and your team Mr. Rogers” T’Challa said with firm authority.

“Captain-” Steve went to correct but got cut of by T’Challa pressing one of the beads on his wrist and a holographic video popped up.

A US Government official was talking behind a podium “Today is truly a heart wrenching day for America as we say goodbye to Captain America, what he stands for now is not what he stood for before. And it’s on that note I regret to inform everyone today that the US Government and Army has revoked Steven Grant Rogers honorary title of Captain, and the petition for the dishonorable discharge has been approved.” the video cut off

“So as you see Mr. Rogers you do not actually hold the title of Captain anymore. I am sorry about that,” T’Challa said, though not actually sounding sorry.

Before the King could continue. Protests rang throughout the room.

“They can’t do that!” Wanda yelled red magic flared up around her hands

“But why?” Scott asked genuinely confused

“What about me?” Sam asked loudly

“I bet Stark has something to do with that” Clint muttered but was loud enough to be heard.

“But I’m C-Captain America” Steve stutters in a broken voice

T’Challa did not look appeased by the intrusion and the yelling around him, but he waited regardless, with a pinched look on his face. He felt like a preschool teacher with an unruly class.

After a few more moments it became quite again.

“First before I continue I would like to inquire once again about the state you left Mr. Stark in at Siberia, because it’s come to my attention that you have left out some key details out of the story you told me.” T’Challa had an arched brow while facing the super soldier. Steve’s forehead
pinched up in confusion

“This is what? Like the third time you’ve asked him this question” Wanda hissed, Steve placed a hand in her shoulder in a calming manner.

“I’m sorry your Majesty But may I ask why you’re asking me this again?” Steve asked

“You may ask, doesn’t mean I am going to answer though. Since a lot of my information has come from being a UN leader not all the information I have received is privy to you.” T’Challa smirked slightly at the obvious lie, but obviously none of them could question him.

“He was moving, talking, and his suit was still functional” Steve recited the same words he had the last few times he was asked.

“Like he even deserved that much” Wanda muttered T’Challa’s eyes hardened.

T’Challa muttered a brief sound of acknowledgment, and frustration.

“Why, have you heard something about Tony that I should know?” Steve asked worry crossing his features. T’Challa ignored the question

“Also you still have yet to tell me the details of what happened after I had gone to retrieve Zemo” T’Challa spoke tensely “What were you shown that made Mr. Stark so angry?”

Steve gulped nervously his eyes dashing away from the King to his team. They didn’t know the entire truth, and Steve had been fairly good at pushing that particular question away, but there was something different about the way T’Challa was asking the question this time, as though he already knew the answers.

“You’ve asked him all of these questions before why are you asking them again?” Sam asked sounding genuinely concerned and curious, he too was ignored.

“He found something out he didn’t know, got angry, and attacked Bucky and I. So I disabled him enough to get away. You know all this you’re being over dramatic” Steve was biting back his frustration the best he could, but he also felt the sudden need to flee.

“You see for the last couple months I have tried to get in contact with Mr. Stark and I come to find out that he has been avoiding me for multiple reasons, though he has been in contact with my sister—” T’Challa got cut off

“So he is alive and okay?” Steve asked ever so hopeful.

“I am unsure of his well being because my sister won’t tell me, Mr. Stark wants to keep an alliance with Wakanda but does not in fact want anything to do with me because of the fact, and I’ll quote this, ‘He left with them, left me to die’ so explain to me Mr. Rogers how someone with a functioning suit was left to die.” T’Challa hissed.

Wanda and Clint both rolled their eyes both muttered something about Stark being over dramatic. Sam and Scott stayed relatively quiet and were observing the scene in front of them. Steve looked like a deer in headlights.

“Left him to die?” Steve choked out the question.

“May I inquire on how you ‘Disabled’ Iron Man, Mr. Rogers” the way T’Challa spat Steve’s name made him flinch.
“I hit the Reactor in his suit to hinder the suits power, giving us time to leave” Steve muttered quietly. Scott gasped from behind him causing Steve to turn and face the engineer Sam was giving and equally shocked face. Clint looked confused while Wanda looked almost giddy.

“If Rhodes Rector was shot at and he plummeted to the ground with the suits power out, that mean if Tony’s went out he was stuck in a dead suit- In the cold- with no support” Sam choked out seemingly horrified as he continued his thoughts “Tony went there as a friend, what on earth changed to cause him to attack you? And why would you leave a man behind?” Sam was visibly shaking, in anger, fear, he couldn’t be sure.

“Tony told us a while back that the suits had enough spare power to release him, so he could get into a new one if needed.” Clint whispered understanding dawning on his face “Otherwise if the Reactor went out the suit was dead- and if he still had the shrapnel in him you would have killed him”

Faces paled.

“But he was fine- I was- I didn’t-” Steve was obviously at a loss of words

“I offered your friend refuge Mr. Rogers, because of my mistake, not your whole team, but I allowed it due to reasons of my own, and even against my better judgment. And then I find out you have lied to me and hid details of events that I asked about a few months ago.” T’Challa looked visibly frustrated “I am going to move forward and show Wakanda’s allegiance to the UN and Accords. My sister is heading the outreach program and Wakanda will begin opening up to the public a bit more as we move forward. And again against my better judgment I have come up with a solution on where to house you and you team Mr. Rogers-”

“What do you mean” Steve cut him off, T’Challa gave an exasperated sigh

“We have some huts on the outskirts by the border I am willing to offer you refuge there, to stay, to lay low, but if you leave Wakanda you will not be allowed back.”

“I don’t understand”

“You seem to be going around with expectations that I don’t believe you have the right to.” T’Challa sniped

“What’s wrong with were we are now?”

“Since I have come to the realization that I am disregarding my father’s wishes by housing you in my home I have decided a removal to be an appropriate action but instead of kicking you completely out. I am still offering you accommodations.”

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“How’d they take it brother?” Shuri asked from her desk as T’Challa entered her lab, she quickly shut out of something.

He sighed and plopped on one of the other office chairs there. He gave her a look.

“That bad, huh?” She giggled, his look turned into a glare “Hey! Don’t give me that look, you made your own choices, or as many say, you made your bed now you have to lay in it.”

He groaned and rubbed his temples. Shuri looked at him, worry swimming in her eyes.
“How’s Mr. Stark doing?” T’Challa asked

The teen hummed at his question “You know my answer to that.” She said simply

“Did he receive the vibranium?” T’Challa pried further Shuri looked at him exasperated.

“Seems like Rogers is rubbing off onto you because apparently you don’t know when to stop” Shuri said hitting him where it would hurt.

She picked up a pair of glasses sitting in front of her and spun them in her hand “I have Tony’s device and he got his payment so don’t you worry brother. Though there seems to be a few issues that I will be needing Tony’s direct help with so we are needing to figure that out, but currently he is very busy, so I’ll do what I can with him over telecommunication and with his instructions.”

“Do what you must sister, I trust you” T’Challa said earnestly “The Accords Panel has scheduled an appointment with the UN is there anything you know about that?” T’Challa tried to pry about a different topic Shuri just rolled her eyes and went back to working on coding that was projected in front of her.

Natasha’s whole body shook at the cold around her. Reminding her of one of the reasons she hatred Russia. It had been a couple of months since her betrayal and she had been on the run, hiding. She quickly realized her mistake. Her many, many mistakes to be honest. She was self-destructive and that was one of the reasons she was in the cold wasteland of Siberia.

Something had happened here and it was eating at her. After the last couple weeks she had hunted down the trail that lead to a Hydra base in Siberia.

What she found caused her whole body to tremble as she caught sight of the other Winter Soldiers all with bullets in their heads. She remembers fighting against them as a spy of the Red Room, a true Widow at the time.

“Fuck” she hissed, glancing around the room saw toppled metal, while blast marks marred the walls. “Tony” she whispered. What ever had happened here he hadn’t been thinking anything through it was obvious that he had been irrational and not in his right mind.

She made her way through the halls and into the control room. There was a tape in the player that was wired up the TV in the main chamber.

After catching the date on the tape the puzzle pieces were falling into place. She felt her already cold body grow colder.

“What did you do Steve?” Natasha whispered anger making her fist shake “What did I do?”

She found a newer computer set up to the side and went to examine it. Finding it was hooked up to surveillance that appeared to have been set up recently. She typed away and what she found, made her knees feel weak. She watched the entire ordeal from the multiple cameras that had been set up. She looked a bit further into the information and found that the footage had been copied.

She clenched her hands, trying to stop her fingers from trembling.

“I need to talk to Tony,” she hissed.

But first she needed to delete everything here and destroy all the evidence.
“I am so sorry Tony” her voice broke “I don’t know how he will ever forgive me.”

She decided that it wouldn’t matter if he did or didn’t, the fact is she would never deserve any forgiveness. But she knew if and when she ever saw Rogers again he was a dead man.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed! I’m going to go rest some more! Until next chapter, and who knows I might get another one up here soon!

Comments appreciated
All errors are my own and I’m sorry!
Carol Hard At Work!

Chapter Summary

Carol gets Kamala
Carol goes to Jennifer Walters, Betty Ross is there too
Hope is caught up too.

Chapter Notes

Ok so I don’t know much about Kamala Khan other than what I’ve read in others fics and what I’ve read up on the Wikis. I don’t know how much justice I’ll be doing to her character but I really wanted to put her in cause I mean I need her cause for kids we have Peter, Harley, Cooper, Lila, Cassie, and Nate (but you know he’s a baby so…)… so more kids! Shuri is gonna be initiated into the group too. Jennifer Walters I know next to nothing except she’s Bruce’s cousin and she hulk having complete control and is more comfortable as she hulk… but that’s it oh and Betty is part of that boat too but I kinda want all these characters in so I hope I do them justice… but technically this is my story and I get to play with them how I want… even though they aren’t my characters… without further ado here the chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Carol turns her neck from side to side, cracking it. Jim and her had decided to separate to cover more ground. The first person to see on her agenda was the girl she found out idolized her alter ego. Tony wasn’t sure who should go talk with the young girl but once Carol found out a bit about Kamala Khan she volunteered.

Tony had given Carol the paperwork to put the young teen on the New Avengers young recruits roster. Along with some papers on the internship that Tony had started as a cover for Peter, but it was quickly becoming an actual thing at this point. Though Tony had been having difficulty lately with the whole lying to minors parents and guardians, but in the end he knew their secret identities weren’t a joke and he decided just take initiative by keeping the young kids safe with gear that he could supply and help them with, that and keeping them on the sidelines unless needed, while encouraging them to be honest with their guardians (Specifically he was working on getting Peter to understand why his aunt should know.)

Tony and Carol had talked in length about the younger kids and figured if they worked on training them they were less likely to get into trouble on their own.

She could remember all the trouble Monica had given her and Maria back when she was a kid, who was she kidding Monica still got into trouble a lot.

Carol sighed, her hand hovering in front of a door of the Khans Jersey City residence. She rapped on the door lightly, nerves getting to her slightly, this has been a long couple days since Tony had picked her up and had started filling her in on the details of his plan, with Jim’s help. But she was
getting the grasp on everything and was ever thankful for Tony and Jim’s patience. Staying isolated at the base had been good for her, to an extent, but it was time to come forward help finish whatever war was coming, because she too felt the incoming threat. After returning to Earth she felt discord around her but there was the need to stay where she was. Sure it was selfish, but she needed a little time to stay in one placed she could trust.

The door opened a crack, and a head peeked out. “How can I-?” The young girl starts to ask until she realizes who is standing on her front step. “No way!” She whispers excitedly.

Kamala slips out the door and closes it behind her gently.

“Miss Danvers- wow- um, Ah! I can’t believe it’s you. You’re here, on my doorstep! Wow! Is everything ok? I don’t understand.” The teen rambles off. Carols lip quirk, Tony’s going to have a great time having this girl and Peter around at the same time. From what’s she has heard of Peter he’s pretty excitable as well.

Carol begins by introducing herself and goes on to talk about the New Avengers and how Tony Stark has seen what she can do and would like her to come by the compound for training and supervision while Kamala was still young and the plan of putting her on the young recruits team.

Kamala was excited but nervous about her parents, but Carol quickly reassured her that if she accepts all the terms she would be part of an exclusive Internship that Tony had begun to set up for Peter and Harley and wanted to include Kamala. The squeal that escaped the young girl caused Carol to flinch, but the smile on her face softened at the exclamations of “No way! No way! No way!”

The door had opened behind Kamala and a older woman peaked out speaking in her native tongue to Kamala, who replied earnestly while bouncing on the balls of her feet.

Carol was invited in and offered tea. She accepted and Carol went on to explain the internship to Kamala’s mother who seemed genuinely surprised and maybe concerned that Tony Stark has interest in her daughter but by the end of the sit down Carol had a signature and a very excitable mentee raring to go. Carol handed Kamala one of the Starkphones that Tony had given her, to give to the people she would be meeting with.

“This is how we will get in touch with you” Carol explained “you may use it for personal reasons but keep in mind that this will be the way to get in touch with me or Tony”

“Mr. Starks number is on here?” She whisper screamed Carol smiled in amusement and nodded her head in an affirmative manner. “Thank you so much for this chance Miss. Danvers- I mean Colonel- I mean-“

“Carol you can call me Carol”

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Most of Carol’s morning had been spent at the Khan residence. But after a quick phone call she was ready to depart to her next destination. Los Angeles thankfully wasn’t as daunting of a trip because of Tony’s high tech jets that went a lot faster than a normal jet. Carol had the distinct feeling of being a kid in a candy shop with all the tech and what not around her. Sure she could fly on her own but there was something about flying such beautiful tech that made her squeal.

When she arrived in California she landed at Stark Industries airstrip and got into the rental car
waiting for her. She made a mental note about thanking Tony because she knew without him her tasks would have been a million times more difficult. She would definitely had to have jumped through more hoops than necessary

As she approached Jennifer Walters’ office she felt a twinge of excitement. She was really doing this. Working together with Tony Stark and putting together a team.

When Nick had brought up the Avengers team she had just returned to Earth, and they had just battled a Chitauri army. She left a few time through the following years but when returning she would lay low and observe. She worked at the Air Force base with Monica, but she wanted more.

She felt as though this right here, putting together this new team was exactly why she was here. She hoped beyond hope that this would work better than Tony’s old team, though she felt good about it, she still worried for the man who obviously had serious PTSD and anxiety.

It was almost 5 PM as she enters the office space that Jennifer Walters worked from. The secretary looked to be packing up and glanced up giving Carol a disapproving look.

“Ma’am we are closing for the day, Ms. Walters is no longer meeting with clients today. You can come back tomorrow, we open at 10 AM” The annoyed secretary spoke in a crisp tone.

“It’s okay Olivia, this is my dinner date for tonight” Jennifer spoke and she exited her office with her purse over her shoulder and a briefcase in her hand. She was gently smiling at Carol.

“Oh I’m sorry” Olivia supplies a halfhearted apology as she continues to pack up her stuff.

“Shall we?” Carol asked offering her elbow playfully.

“We shall” Jennifer giggled slightly at the Colonel and put her arm in the offered elbow. “Lock up will you?” Jennifer asked over her shoulder as they left.

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“Wow, um, wow. I heard quite a bit of what’s been going especially with Betty ranting on about her father but I didn’t quite realize how bad everything was. I saw the amendments the Accords have received and I could tell they were being worked on. I even explained all the legal mumbo jumbo to Betty. What was Rogers thinking?” Jennifer was floored by the story Carol had just told her.

“He wasn’t, that’s the problem. And now Tony has been left to clean up this mess and thankfully being the futurist that he is has come up with a decent plan moving forward.” Carol spoke softly as she rested her chin on her folded hands as he elbows rested on the table. Jennifer shook he head in disbelief.

“So why exactly am I being summoned? What is it you need from me?” Jennifer seemed a little nervous at that. Internally she hoped she wasn’t just being asked because she was Bruce’s cousin or because of She Hulk.

Carols gaze softened at the look of nervousness that crossed the young lawyers face.

“Well Tony has a couple of reasons for requesting your presence. For one your outstanding work protecting enhanced humans and your ability to maneuver through the law while respecting all parties. He’s hoping you and another he has recruited will team up and become the Avengers voice as you both are lawyers and can be of use to keep the government from taking advantage of the Avengers.” Jennifer felt her cheeks redden at the praise, Carol continued “The fact that you have a
connection to The Hulk and Dr. Banner helps but it’s definitely not the reason Tony is asking for you, though he is hoping that you and hopefully Dr. Ross will both see fit in helping him try find Bruce. We know that you have been helping keep Dr. Ross protected and Tony hope that both you and her will consider moving out East and live at the Avengers compound. I have all the paperwork here. Tony has even offered you your own level at Starktower to move your practice their and work from there of you so choose.” Carol was pulling papers out of a briefcase.

“Okay, just hold up one second.” Jennifer took a breath trying to ground herself from being knocked over from all this information she was receiving “So Mr. Stark wants me for my legal experience and She Hulk?”

Carol chuckled at the obviously overwhelmed women setting the file down she folded her hands in front of her and rested them on the table “I am deeply sorry that I am overwhelming you with information. Yes. Though mainly Tony would like your assistance with the Accords. She Hulk is just an added bonus. To make your life easier Tony has offered you a place to live and run your practice from out east. Any other details we can go over later or you can go over with him. He does apologize for not being able to come out himself and talk with you.” Carol tried to simplify everything after realizing how much she was throwing at the woman.

“Wow, this is a lot to take in Ms. Danvers.” Jennifer exhaled “and what was this about Betty?”

“Tony knows that with both of your connections to Dr. Banner that you have both been staying away from Secretary Ross” Carol spat the elder Ross’ name “Tony wants Dr. Ross to come east as well, but that is something I’m hoping to talk in details with her about.”

“Well let’s finish up dinner and we can head to the apartment and talk with Betty.” Jennifer concluded

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“And where was Bruce in all this?” Betty asked timidly her hands wringing in her lap nervously.

“He disappeared after Sokovia” Carol explained simply sitting back on the couch of Jennifer and Betty’s apartment. Both women had looks of disapproval.

“And Mr. Stark has enough evidence against my father to convict him?” The hope in Betty’s eyes twinkled.

“Yes, even without your testimony Tony should be able to convict Ross pretty quickly but there’s a lot on his plate so that’s why it hasn’t happened yet. After we get this ball rolling and Jim and I take over at the Compound Tony should be able to go forward with the trial.” Carol cleared her throat and looked at Jennifer “That’s where you and Mr. Murdock will come in, that is if you agree”

The 2 women looked at each other.

“I’m concerned about my work” Betty expressed her forehead wrinkled slightly.

“Well” Carol drawled out “Jennifer if you sign the Stark Industries and Avengers Initiative contracts you would be able to set up an office both at the Compound and Starktower. Your compound office would be strictly for Avengers and Accords work but your Starktower Office, who am I kidding you’d have your own floor, you’d be allowed to run you own practice out of it and Tony can help you set everything up. And Betty, Tony feels it wise to offer you a position at
Stark Industries and you will get your own floor at the tower that would have your own lab to do whatever work you are pursuing.” Carol went through a quick explain of their contracts after that and the other amenities.

“I feel like this is all too much” Betty looked ghostly white, her eyes wide and dilated. Jennifer hummed in agreement.

“What can I say Tony never does anything half assed.” Carol chuckled, but put her elbows down on her thighs, leaning forward a serious look crossed her face. “Tony has a lot riding on this, which is why he wants to make this work for all parties included. He trusts Bruce and knows that you both mean a lot to him so Tony wants to get to know you both. I know it looks like Tony is throwing a bunch of stuff your way as bribes, but in actuality it isn’t that much to him. I know how bad that sounds. Anyways, what he really needs are people that will support him and trust in him.” Carol looked down slightly, she’d only known the billionaire for a few days but her and Jim had talked quite a bit in their travels and what she had been told floored the Colonel. Carol would never understand how the Rogues had failed to be decent humans and helped the billionaire.

“It will take a couple weeks but I say let’s do it!” Jennifer said bouncing a bit on the couch. Betty nodded along in agreement.

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The next day found Carol staring up at the imposing building in front of her. This was one of those errands that she had to pry away from Tony. Since she was already going to be out West she decided she would be the best to stop by and meet Hope Van Dyne and solicit her help on getting Lang’s Daughter, Ex Wife and her husband up to date and to safely.

Tony had wanted to meet with his childhood friend and explain everything to her himself but he had business on the east coast to take care of so she had Tony write a letter to Hope and told him he could catch up with Hope later. Carol had proceeded to tell Tony that he needed to work on his delegation of tasks. Which caused both him and Jim to laugh, but Tony agreed that it was smart and then commented that this was one of the reasons she was being designated as the leader of the New Avengers.

“How may I help you this afternoon Miss?” A Secretary asked as Carol approached the front desk.

“I have a meeting with Miss. Van Dyne” Carol said simply. A few minutes later she found herself in a small conference room. Hope entered a small smile on her lips.

“Colonel Danver’s as I live and breathe! Wow it’s an honor to meet you!” Hopes smile had widened during her approach

Carol blushed a bit at the attention “Thank you for meeting with me”

“Star sent me a message saying it was urgent and that he was busy so he wasn’t able to come himself” worry crossed Hope’s face.

“I’m sorry, Star?” Carol assumed she was referring to Tony but was still a bit confused.

“Oh!” Hope laughed, “I’m sorry I meant Tony. When we were kids we spent a lot of time together before our fathers had their falling out, especially since we went to the same boarding school for a bit before Tony skipped ahead a bunch, I called him Star cause he always loved be the star of the show and center of attention and without the ‘K’ in his name it spells Star. It was clever when we were kids, I swear.” Hope had a gentle smile on her face as she reminisced. “So what’s going on?”
And Carol handed her the note from Tony before saying anything. Hope read the note, more like letter, many expressions crossing her face. In the note began with Tony apologizing for not staying in touch and gave a brief description of everything that had happened. Including the part where Scott was involved, which had surprised him especially when Lang had made a comment about Hank Pym. He wrote about Rogers and Barnes and how he found out about his parents and how he had gotten angry, causing him to almost die at the hands of the two super soldiers. One who his parents’ murderer, and the other who was supposed to be his friend and his teammate.

Tears leaked out of Hope’s eyes at Tony’s words.

She looked up at Carol “So what is needed of me?” A fire was lit in her eyes. She looked ready for war.

“Tony is putting together a new team and he needs your help” Carol says simply “and we need to alert Lang’s daughter and Ex Wife of a possible threat against them”

Carol went into details about Thaddeus Ross, explaining Tony’s plan and also touched on Tony’s fear that others would try use Cassie as leverage to get Lang out of hiding. The fear for the Barton’s were the same but Tony was already on that.

Hope cradled her head in her hands as her elbows rested on her desk. “This is a mess”

Carol chuckled humorlessly and agreed.

Hope then proceeded to talk through logistics with Carol the two of them came up with a plan to get Cassie and her family safe, and a middle ground that would allow Hope to still run Pym Tech and help the new Avengers.

“Alright let’s do this” Hope said standing up

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed! Any issues I apologize! I love hearing feedback! Until next time!
Tony woke up as the bed he was sleeping on was bouncing. And not in a fun way. Thankfully there had been no nightmares to cause him to panic so he knew immediately what was happening. He turned quickly in the bed and snatched the young girl who was using the bed he occupied as a trampoline.

She squealed as she was snatched from the air. He pulled her down and started tickling her. She screamed and giggled while trying to wriggle away.

“Uncle Tony!” Lila got through her giggles “S-stop”

It had been a long night Tony had made his way to Waverly, Iowa after finishing up with some stuff in New York.

Ever since the Raft breakout Tony had opened a line with Laura Barton and her family. He had shown up one day, out of breath and in pain due to his rib cage still needing to be fixed, but he was determined to make sure that Laura and her kids would be safe. It took some explaining but Tony told Laura all of what had happened. It was a long hard night for them, but they were able to hash
out a plan of action.

Tony would leave a couple of suits for protection and as an extra pair of hands so Laura wouldn’t be alone and Tony would come by on the weekends and help watch the kids and spend some time with Laura so she had adult human contact.

So now here was Tony laying in what had been dubbed his room as he now cuddled the young girl who had started calling him Uncle Tony, Cooper had even followed her in doing so.

“Good morning Princess” he kissed the crown of her head, her hair smelled of strawberries.

“Why are you here so early?” the young girl asked referring to the fact that Tony was here in the middle of the week opposed to the weekend. Her head nearly coming in contact with Tony’s chin at her quick movements of looking up at him, her big eyes watching him intently.

“You remember when I asked you how you would feel about moving with me to New York?” Tony supplied

The bed bounced slightly as she jumped up in excitement a loud squeal escaping her little body “Really?” She asked hopeful, she had been wanting to go to the tower for the longest time.

“Lila Barton!” Laura’s voice called “You better not have woken your Uncle Tony, I told you not to”

“Uh oh” Tony whispered at the girl “someone’s in trouble”

Lila squeaked and slid off the bed running out of the room.

Tony chuckled and stretched groaning as his muscles ached, sitting up he looked around he figured he got 5 hours of sleep by the look of it, fairly decent considering.

“It’s okay Laura” he called “I’m awake”
Tony heard wood creak as Laura walked down the hall, the door opened and the woman poked her head in.

“I’m so sorry she was super excited to see that you were here.” Laura walked the rest of the way in Nate on her hip. The minute the toddler saw Tony he lit up, and made grabby hands for the genius. Laura smiled affectionately as Tony opened his arms for the toddler and accepted him from Laura.

“So it’s time?” She asked in a whisper.

“The pieces are beginning to fall into place, it would be much safer if you come stay at the Tower. You and I have been preparing for this. I have your floor ready I have the schooling stuff all figured. You and the kids will be safe Laura.” Tony spoke as he held Nate against his chest.

Laura walked over to the window and looked out. “This is the Farm Clint grew up in. Him and his brother. But Clint isn’t here, and it’s no longer safe.” Tears started falling down her face, she hiccuped a sob.

Tony climbed out of the bed precariously with Nate attached to him. He padded over to the Brunette and gathered her in his free arm.

“I got your back Laura, you know that” he comforted and rubbed her back.

The door swung open again and Copper strutted into the room looking excited, Laura kept her back to him wiping her tears while Tony blocked her and faced the preteen.

“Hey Bud!” Tony greeted, Cooper frowned taking in the scene.

“Everything… Okay?” Cooper looked to be thinking hard now his previous excitement forgotten.

“Yeah everything is okay your Mom is just feeling a bit emotional about leaving the farm but she’s okay” Tony said honestly to the preteen.

Excitement lighting his back up on his face. “So it’s time? We really get to come to your tower?”
Tony laughed and moved forward towards Cooper and the door, Nate on his hip, he tousled the boys hair and put an arm over his shoulders.

“Yeah I think it’s safer for you guys to come stay with me for now, I’m glad you’re excited”

Cooper started excitedly rambling about all the things Tony had to show Cooper when he got there. Tony looked back briefly and watch Laura’s shoulders shake as sobs rocked through her petite frame. Tony led Cooper out of the room allowing the woman to have some alone time.

Cooper, Tony and Nate made their way to the kitchen where Lila was happily eating her cereal and jumped on the train of telling Tony everything he had to show them and teach them.

“I might be really busy guys but I promise I’ll make time for you.” Tony told them as he handed Nate a bottle, the toddler was refusing to graduate to sippy cups no matter what was tried.

They both suddenly looked very dejected

“Daddy promised the same thing” Lila said sadly

“He promised that he’d always make time for us. And then he left” Cooper was the most bitter over Clint’s departure.

“Hey, hey you guys!” Tony tried to soothe “When have I let you guys down?” Tony proceeded to talk about all the fun things they would and could do when they got there “And if you both promise not to touch anything in the lab I’ll even let you guys come down and play with the bots”

“I don’t know if going down to the Lab will be pa good idea” Laura says walking into the kitchen.

The kids groaned “But Mom!” Cooper dragged out Mom, “we promise not to touch anything and FRIDAY will keep an eye on us and everything! Right uncle Tony?”

Tony looked over at Laura “It’s up to your Mother Coop, what she says goes, but Laura I promise you they will be safe no matter where they are.”
Laura smiled at Tony and mouthed ‘talk later’ at him. The billionaire nodded in response.

Laura clapped her hands “Alrighty you guys finish breakfast and we are going to pack up a bit and head to New York. Who’s Ready?” She said in an excited voice but Tony could see it didn’t reach eyes.

The kids exclaimed a “We are!” And began to eat more feverishly.

Tony looked to Laura and mouthed ‘Everything will be okay’

And he really hoped that that was the truth.

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Peter laughed, his mask hiding the grin behind it as he watched Colonel Rhodes, who was staring dumbfounded at Deadpool.

“Wade you do understand this means no killing” Peter urged after a moment.

“Not even a little bit of killing? Yellow is angry. He says we should be able to kill within certain parameters. Geez look at you trying to sound all smart”

Peter glanced over to Rhodes who looked ready to bash his head against the wall. The man was muttering something under his breath about Tony needing to deal with this shit.

Peter stepped in again capturing Deadpool’s attention.

“Wade I am sure that is something we can discuss later. I’m sure Mr. Stark and you can work something out but are you willing to agree at the moment to put a hold on your mercenary work, and sign the temporary contract Colonel Rhodes has for you.” Peter asked Deadpool

“But Spidey” Deadpool whined, Peter could literally see the pout through the mask.
“Mr. Wilson you can think on it and come by the compound or find Spiderman and let him know your decision.” And with that Rhodes motioned a quick goodbye to Peter and took off.

Peter rolled his eyes exasperated. Wade wasn’t as bad if people would stop and just listen, yes sometimes it was annoying having to constantly repeat the same things over and over but after awhile one gets used to it.

“Well that wasn’t very nice” Deadpool said sounding dejected slightly.

Peter frowned and looked on after Rhodes.

“There’s a lot happening Wade” Peter whispers looking over to the Merc. “A lot has happened. That’s why Mr. Stark is putting together a team, one that won’t turn on him” Peter’s voice got dark the eyes of his suit narrowing in a dangerous way as he looked away from Deadpool.

Deadpool was surprised to hear his Spidey get so serious. White and Yellow were both going back and forth about the sudden mood change in the air.

“I’m going to go patrol” Spiderman suddenly said and webbed away before saying anything else.

Deadpool watched after him for a moment before deciding to follow the young spider and watch his back tonight especially since he was very obviously emotional. Or so that’s what white kept telling him.

*****

It took Deadpool a bit to catch up to Spidey. What he saw though when he did surprised the mercenary. Peter was fighting some baddies in a bank entrance and there was some serious tech being used. Deadpool dropped to the the ground as a purple ray almost cut his body in half and caused the store behind him, the one with the sandwiches that Peter liked, to go up in flames.

White urged Deadpool into action to get the store owner out of there. Peter appeared next to Deadpool and grabbed the cat, The masked men escorted the injured Mr Delmar out of the fire.

Peter shot off after that with Deadpool on his tail. When the attempt of getting a hold of Tony failed Peter tried Happy who was apparently busy getting the Compound ready for all the new recruits, and apparently childproofing the Tower.
“They had alien tech or something Wade. Something serious is going on here, and I need to figure it out” Peter sounded on edge and frightened after hanging up with Happy, who had dismissed him.

“Don’t worry Spidey I got your back.” Deadpool patted the teens back. The two of them dropped into the alley where Peter had left his backpack and groaned when he saw it was gone. “Ohhhh your aunts gonna be mad” Deadpool sang and bumped shoulders with Peter playfully.

Deadpool offered to travel with Peter back home, mentally hoping to get some more information about the whole Accords ordeal, since they hadn’t been able to talk much since Peter had come back from Germany and with a new suit too. But the teen was looking awful tired and slightly dejected after a hard night so he and both the Boxes agreed to just offer Spidey support and go from there.

Peter accepted and the two of them heading towards Peters home in silence

Chapter End Notes

I do love seeing everyone’s feedback it really does help me stay in a positive place!
Until next time! Hope you enjoyed
Sorry for any mistakes!
Fantastic Four (AKA Reed and his Band of Misfits) and Spidey in trouble

Chapter Summary

Tony is recruiting Fantastic four
Spider-Man nearly drowns (Thursday)

Chapter Notes

How to keep depression away? Just keep on writing and forget the world! Right? Idk if it’s working but it’s whatim doing! I got another chapter for y’all but first gotta rant really quick.
They really screwed up time stuff in Spiderman homecoming! Not only did they screw up the amount of time after the battle of New York but like with Liz’s party it’s supposed to be on a Friday but the next day Peter meet Ned and the get the core out of the weapon (at school and in the US we don’t go to school on weekends) and the next day they go to the dc for the decathlon and the next day is the decathlon… and that’s all supposed to be in 3 days cause when they get to school they say “over the weekend… what were people smoking when they were trying to set it up…
So the party and first vulture sighting will take place on Thursday.
Then they get the core out of the weapon and the dudes come to the school on Friday
Then Peter goes to DC with classmates on Saturday. Ned and him hack into suit and all that stuff
And Sunday is decathlon and Washington monument incident.
Yeah that all works!
Sorry for the rant and long explanation! Without further ado!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Reed” Tony shook the man’s hand

“Tony, it’s been too long” Reed smiled

“It has and we’re basically neighbors.” Tony looked out the window and saw his Tower. He hoped that Laura was settling ok. She knew he had a lot to do and told him not to worry, that she and the kids would work on unpacking and getting settled.

Sue walked in, her confident stride reminding Tony of Pepper.
“You of course remember my beautiful wife Sue” Reed said with flourish causing an eye roll from the woman.

Tony chuckled at Reed showing off and went to take Sue’s hand. Kissing the top of it “Mrs. Richards, a pleasure as always”

“Tony please, call me Sue you know this already” the woman chided the billionaire

“Yes but Reed is obviously feeling possessive so I had to make sure he knew, I knew you were taken” Tony explained and Sue just smiled.

“Hey when is dinner going to be ready?” Johnny asked skidding into the living room with Ben following in after him. “Oh, Stark is here”

“We’re about to have dinner you are welcome to join us. You can catch us up to everything while we eat” Sue suggested gently placing a hand on Tony’s shoulder showing him that he was indeed welcome to stay.

“I wouldn’t want to intrude” Tony felt self conscious for some reason.

“Nah, Don’t worry about it! Besides Sue need more people to compliment her cooking.” Johnny waved his hand dismissively.

They made there way to the dining room as Reed and Tony talked briefly and quietly about the projects that Reed had been working on lately.

“You really should come by the tower, there are a few things there that might make your trial period a bit easier” Tony suggested.

“So” Bens deep voice interrupted any further conversation “Where the hell have you been? And what the fuck is happening?” Sue gave him a scathing look but it was ignored.

Tony chuckled nervously “I see straight to the point.” He put the fork down his hunger suddenly leaving him.
He scrubbed his face with his hands and combed through his hair.

“How much do you know of what has happened with the Avengers and the Accords?” Tony asked.

“The Avengers were divided with the Accords. You are working on the Accords to make them fair and safe. Rogers didn’t believe you or care and went off on his own and somewhere in the mix James Barnes appeared and problems arose. And then you disappear from the public for like 2 months” Reed lists off while Tony nods along.

So Tony tells them everything, well everything except for the almost being killed part.

The first meet up with Secretary Ross and the realization that Tony needed to keep Ross from having power on or around the Accords. The meeting with team after his MIT speech and the arrogant thought process of everyone against the Accords. The Bombing. Barnes, Rogers, and Wilson’s attempt to ‘save’ Barnes.

Which reminded him that he still need to talk with Sharon and figure out what the hell happened.

The triggering of the winter soldier, which hadn’t been realized at the time. The fight at the Airport. The aftermath of that, because of the distinct differences that Tony’s side had been going easy versus Rogers side who wasn’t. Natasha letting Rogers and and Barnes go. Tony finding out about Zemo. Finding that Ross unlawfully imprisoned the rogues in a place they didn’t deserve. The meet up at Siberia.

He cut off there not really wanting to go into the rest of it since none of that at that point had anything to do with the Accords.

“So they got away and now I’m the wake of everything. I’m currently concerned that there won’t be a response team for if something goes wrong and I was hoping to enlist your team to sign with with Avengers and Defenders and ask if you would like to join us with training and what not. I know the Fantastic Four have their own things to worry about especially with Doom constantly popping up to cause mayhem. If the Four of you sign the Accords you would be protected as well.” Tony still has so much to say but he tried to cut it short at that point because he had been talking for awhile now and other then darkening features across the table as he spoke, no one said anything.
Reed cleared his throat and leaned forward on his elbows which rested on the table. “Tony-“

Before Reed could say anything though Friday’s voice rang out from Tony’s phone.

“Boss!” She sounded panicked, he could feel her panic as well through the uplink.

“What?” Tony’s heart rate increased

“Spider-Man’s vitals are high with adrenaline and his altitude is rising at a rapid pace. I believe it imminent that you go to his location.” As FRIDAY spoke his got up and made his way to the balcony.

“Send a suit to his location in case I don’t make it in time.”

“Parachute was deployed he’s falling and will be landing in water I believe he’s tangled in the chute Boss, I have a suit on the way to retrieve him”

Tony looked over to the group at the table “I’m sorry, talk it over. I’ll get in touch with you later.” He then tapped his chest twice and the nanobots swarmed over his skin, encasing him in his suit, he rocketed off.

“Ok, what just happened, and where did that suit come from?” Johnny asked dumbfounded.

Reed looked over to Sue. “What do you think?”

Sue was staring at the place Tony had just departed from “He needs help Reed” she paused and looked over to him “There was something else, something he wasn’t saying.”

“Yeah I noticed that too” Ben said solemnly

“Ok but why is no one freaking out about that suit that just came out of nowhere, oh and that voice who was that?” Johnny was stuck on that topic instead of moving on. Sue shot him a look that shut him up.
Reed hummed in thought. “I think we need to do another look over the Accords and make notes of any changes we think should be made before we commit to anything. But I think regardless, yes we should try assist Tony, he’s not the same. Something happened, his eyes…. .” he trailed off trying to find the right words

“They lacked life, they looked dead Reed” Sue whispered tears pricking her eyes.

Ben and Johnny were both silent at this. Everyone turned back to the balcony that Tony had departed from, dinner long forgotten.

“Well now what?” Ben asked

Reed pulled out his tablet for seemly nowhere.

“Now we re-read through the Accords”

********

“Anyway Mr. Stark you didn’t have to come all the way out her. I had that. I was fine” Peter said dismissively after telling Tony about the Vulture.

The face plate lifted up and Tony stared at the teen with an unreadable face “Really now, because from where I’m standing it looked as though you almost drowned.” Tony shook his head “Okay here’s the deal, you need to forget about the flying vulture guy, please.”

“Why?” Peter asked definitely

“Why?” Anger flashed across the billionaires face “Because I said so!” He shouted, and then took a breath and sighed “Stay close to the ground. Build up your game helping the little people. Like the lady who bought you the churro.” Peter bows his head at Tony’s words. So Tony was getting his messages. “Can’t you just be a friendly neighborhood Spiderman?” Tony’s eyes softened as his voice did.

“But I’m ready for more!” Peter exclaimed frustrated.

“No your not,” Tony said simply sighing “Peter I promise you I’m working out a plan, and when
I’m done you will get to come to the Compound and train to your little heart's content. But until then please just listen to me.” Tony pleaded suddenly feeling very tired

“You thought I was ready before, when you brought me to Germany and I took on Captain America.” Peter fought back.

Tony grimaced “Trust me kid if Rogers wanted to lay you out he would have.” His voice broke slightly, clearing his throat he continued “Listen Peter and listen good if you come across any more of these weapons again call me or Happy.”

“But you didn’t answer me and Happy dismissed me!” Peter had the feeling as though he wanted to pull at his hair.

“I promise to answer.” Tony swore “You know it’s never too early to start thinking of college. I have some pull at MIT. I can make the call.”

“I- I don’t need to go to college” Peter stutters “Mr. Sta-“

Tony cuts him off with a look. The face plate covers his face “Think about it kid, and stay out of trouble” Tony flies away.

Landing far enough away from Peter his suit seeped back into the hive he collapsed to his knees breathing heavily and uneven.

“Boss” FRIDAY said gently his mind flooding with her warm presence, as if she was hugging him.

Tony fought back the sob that threatened to escape him. Peter could have died. And it would have been his fault. He had hoped supplying the teen with a suit that would keep him safe would be beneficial but it seemed as though the boy had in his head now that he could do more that what Tony had asked of him.

“FRIDAY, what am I supposed to do?” He whispered, his voice hoarse from holding back emotions.

“You keep doing what you have been doing Boss. You’re doing everything that you can. When Colonel Danvers returns have her assist with Mr. Parker. You aren’t alone in any of this Boss.”
“I should never have brought the kid to Germany” Tony gripped at his hair in frustration.

FRIDAY was silent at that for a moment, and then spoke up “Maybe not, but you also thought you were meeting up against who you thought were friends and you had only instructed Mr. Parker to restrain the Rogues. I believe there are a lot of variables here. But you cannot change the past Boss. We must continue forward. Right?”

Tony smiled, the weight of his chest lifting slightly. “You’re right Baby Girl.” After a few moments he stood straight up, wiping of his pants. “God this is all a mess.” His suit wrapping back around him after he activated the nanobots again.

“Boss Dr. Richards is on the phone for you.” She said after a few minutes of silence. He had been taking his time as he made his way back to Manhattan. That shook him back to reality.

“Put him on” Tony commanded “Reed, I am so sorry for leaving the way I did.” He immediately went to apologize

“It’s fine Tony” Reed soothed “So we are going through the Accords and I was hoping to take down some notes on changes we feel might make a difference.” Reed said looking for approval.

“Yeah I wasn’t done talking with you about everything. Please do that, and then send them my way. I have several others doing the same thing. Once I compile everything I’ll meet with the Accords panel and get the amendments rolling. It’s going to take a bit but they have been fairly lenient with me on everything, so it’s a good chance we get it all figured out sooner rather than later, and then hopefully all your concerns will met.” The billionaire sighed as he approached his tower knowing that there was no way he was getting to sleep tonight especially after Peter almost drowning.

“Go home and rest Tony, we can talk later” Reed spoke gently as though knowing why Tony sighed.

“I’ll try, and talk with you later Reed”

“Tony”
“Yes?”

“The Fantastic Four will stand behind you, just so you know.”

“Thank you Reed” Tony sighed a little more weight leaving his shoulders at those words.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed the Chapter! I’m more of a fan of the first Fantastic Four. So in my head that’s who I’m basing them off of... which is funny cause Chris Evens is Johnny and all that!
Sorry for any mistakes and until next time!
I Missed You

Chapter Summary

Tony finally goes to see Stephen Strange

Chapter Notes

ITS TIME! Guys I needed this! I was therapeutic to write Ironstrange! There is still so much they need to go over but here’s some fluff I guess? This also get across how I am having the relationship pre-established! Next update won’t be for awhile... but I just... I needed this chapter to be out there!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tony ended up sleeping for roughly 3 hours. After that though he was stuck to his halo projections. Looking over notes and details Carol and Rhodey had made after their meetings.

It looked as though Tony was going to have to talk with Deadpool apparently as his platypus didn’t have patience for the mercenary, which was kind of funny to Tony since Rhodes dealt with a hormonal teenage Tony Stark.

Tony switch screens as daylight broke; he was going to go see the one person he was most excited and nervous to see

Doctor Stephen Vincent Strange.

He’s had numerous run in’s with Doctor Strange before Iron Man became a thing, in his old life. At galas the men would send many quips back and forth and it had always been great entertainment for Tony’s bored mind. There had even been flirting and a heat filled kiss here and there as well, but nothing much more than that. They always held back in the end though because their lives just didn’t hold room for a relationship.

After Tony became Iron Man though he went to less galas and had lost touch of the amazing neurosurgeon. He had heard through the grapevine about his accident, and was saddened to hear about the end of the man's career. He will admit shame of not reaching out but then the attack on New York occurred and then the rest of Tony’s hectic life followed pushing Dr. Strange far from his mind until the Data dump that Widow and Rogers did. All of shields encrypted file were out for the world to see.

And Tony jumped into damage control mode and pulled as much as he could off and away from the public but most of the damage had already been done so he started reaching out to old Shield agents that he knew could be trusted and worked on getting them each to a safe place, and even giving a few of them jobs within Stark Industries, that would keep them safe for now.
He also dug through the files finding some intriguing and interesting, information. First and foremost Phil Coulson was alive due to Project TAHITI, not happy about what was in that file he stored it away and moved on, he started reading up on project INSIGHT that had been a Hydra plan in the hiding.

He understood exactly what their goal was and was shocked to see the list of potential threats and on that list was a Dr. Stephen Strange right under his name. On top of making sure the list was promptly destroyed he then reached out and attempted to find out as much as he could of what happened to the man that had intrigued him so in the years prior to his capture, what happened to him after the man accident.

Tony tracked as much as he could about the man through the next several months but then was sidetracked again by his life rearing its ugly head and now here he was here standing in front of 177A Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village in New York City, about to see the man had captured his attention so long ago, or at least that’s what he hoped.

He knocked on the heavy wooden door. No one on the streets pay him any mind, which truly relieved the billionaire, who knew wearing comfortable clothes and a baseball cap could hide one’s identity. Tony sure didn’t and he was pleasantly happy about it.

The door opened and Dr. Stephen Strange, with a fabulous goatee, was staring at Tony. Tony felt his heart skip in excitement.

“Ha! I was right!” Tony said almost sounding surprised with himself “I mean of course I was right!”

Stephen Strange analyzed the man in front of him only taking but a moment to realize whom he was staring at.

“Mr. Stark, it’s been awhile, to what do I owe this…pleasure?”

Tony’s aura took a hit, Stephen watch him wilt a bit and was shocked to see behind the mask for a brief moment before Tony got the grasp on his emotions but now Stephen was painfully aware of the man’s aura. It was damaged and splintered. Stephen wondered what happened to him, he’d seen some stuff on the news but nothing to point of what happened after the dust settled.

“I don’t suppose I could come in and we could talk?” Tony asked timidly, very out of character.

Stephen was shocked at the display in front of him, though he quickly came back to his senses and opened the door further for Tony to walk in.

“So Dr. Strange it has been awhile, mind catching me up with you before I spill my guts to you?” Tony prodded as he glanced around the museum looking building he had just entered

“Not much to tell”

“Bullshit” Tony deadpanned “you fall of the face of the earth after your tragic accident and then reappear when some crazy shit goes down in London and Hong Kong, and now what your a
museum curator? Never mind the fact that when Shield fell and the data dump occurred I go to find out you’re right under me in whatever list Hydra had put together to list potential threats”

“I didn’t realize I had a stalker, I also was unaware of such list”

“Oh please don’t flatter yourself, and I got rid of it immediately no one need to have that knowledge or fear of people”

“You would know plenty about flattery wouldn’t you Mr. Stark, and I guess I should thank you for deleting the list”

“I’m waiting”

“I said I should not that I would”

Tony and Stephen were inches away from each other as if magnets had pulled them together Tony realized this and backed off, his checks dusted pink.

“I’m sorry about you accident, and that I didn’t reach out after, after I became Iron Man life got busy but I hope you know I missed our meet up’s and our oh so enjoyable talks” Tony spoke softly

Stephen scoffed playfully “You just missed having someone around with the guts to call you out on your shit and talk back to your arrogant ass”

“I missed you Strange”

“So why exactly are you here other than to reminisce of the good old days?”

“As I said I’m curious where you fucked off to”

“I went to Nepal and then got to a place called Kamar-Taj, where I trained in the mystic arts”

“Hold up, what?”

“I found out about this paraplegic that had been fully recovered, I went to search for a fix for my hands” He held up his gloved hands, Tony saw them trembling “and ended up finding the way to but at the same time found a new path in life.”

“So long story short you joined a Cult to learn, what?, magic?”

“It’s not a cult but in layman’s terms yes”

“Bullshit, your a man of science, there’s no way you bought into it”

“I can assure you Mr. Stark I’m not shitting you” Stephen drew a mandala in the air and then let it sparkle away

“Huh, well I mean it’s not like I don’t believe in Magic, I’ve seen plenty of shit the last several years, you’re a good magic user not a bad one I assume. Right” Stephen could see the unease swim in Tony’s eyes as fear radiated off of him.

“Yes” he said gently wondering the story behind Tony’s fear.

“And you’re not going to intrude on my thoughts or anything right?”

Stephen raised a singular eyebrow “No I don’t intrude on thoughts or anything. I sense auras but
that’s just the energy field around one’s body so it’s not really intruding. What kinds of magic have you dealt with?"

“Well for one it doesn’t look like yours so at least there’s that…” Tony mumbled shrugging “anyways this means I can kill two birds with one stone.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah so I’m not sure if you’ve heard of the Sokovia Accords, which by the way I’m attempting to get the name changed because Sokovia is not the only reason that the UN wants to do something, but I’m getting off track…”

“Yes I’m aware of them, I’ve been keeping up with the on-going work on them, I must commend you on your hard work, I am curious though where has Captain Rogers disappeared too? And why have you not done a press conference or a statement release, there are many worried about your disappearance.”

“I’ve stayed out of the public view and been working behind the scenes on damage control, while I was healing, and getting my next 100 steps planned out before I told anyone other than the UN and Accords Council.”

“Healing? What happened with Rogers” Stephen pushed

“Personal things went down and Rogers and I fought I got hurt so I had to recover no big deal” Tony downplayed it and Stephen knew it too “and then he went and disappeared god knows where” his voice broke slightly “I have suspicions but I know he won’t stay in one place for too long if I call him out so I’ve left him alone”

Stephens’s eyes narrowed in on the billionaire “You don’t have to tell me now because obviously you are still healing emotionally from whatever happened but I do expect to hear what happened in details at a later time, Tony I know it’s been awhile but I hope you consider me a friend”

“Awwww you said my first name! I didn’t even know that you knew it!”

“I can tell that your emotional capacity is at a 0, but I meant what I said”

Tony’s face sobered up and he gave a small nod “Thank you Stephen” Tony then clapped his hands “Ok back to business!”

“Yes please get to your point”

By this time Tony realized that they were toe to toe again. He turned away and walked towards the bench that was in the entryway, as they hadn’t left the foyer

“Well you see since the original team broke up I’m left in a very tough spot, not only do I have to worry about the UN staying happy I now have more weight on my shoulders to protect our tiny blue/green marble of a planet against the big bad universe”

“What makes you think we are in danger?” He wasn’t asking accusatively but with genuine concern

“I feel it, I know there is something or someone out there gunning for us, I’ve known ever since New York, and then there was the vision that the witch gave me which in turn caused me to awaken Ultron”
“Wait witch? You talking about Wanda Maximoff right?”

Tony hummed “Yeah, the mind stone, in Loki’s scepter at the time, gave her and her brother powers after Hydra tested it on them.”

“So was this forced test or were they there willingly?”

“Willing”

“Why?”

“Because of me, everything seems to turn to being my fault” Tony bowed his head in exhaustion

Stephen walked over and sat by the man, he put a gloved finger under Tony’s chin, and pulled his face upward to connect gazes.

“Why do you think that?” he asked simply and softly

“You know about Stark Industries change from weapons to Tech and energy and other non violent things right?”

Stephen nodded

“Well before that a man I thought I trusted was selling products both useable ones and ones that hadn’t passed the quality test under the table, a story for another time, anyway that’s how I can assume that a bombshell with my name on it made its way into the home of the Maximoff’s, killing their parents.” Tony tried to look away but Stephen kept him looking directly at each other

“And then what? Just because your name was on it they came after you?”

“No the two of them volunteered to be tested on by Hydra so they would received the means to dispose of me or something. Anyway Wanda played with my head after we infiltrated the Hydra base in Sokovia, she showed me my biggest fear after I found the scepter,” Tony shuttered “I didn’t know it at the time, and I took the scepter home and did tests on it finding that the gem on it, which we later found held an Infinity Stone, the mind stone to be exact, it held codes that it could basically be compared to a computer, but with more evaluation, we discovered it was closer to a massive brain, it could think for itself the neurons we saw were firing. With the vision I got from Maximoff fresh in my head I tried to implement it into my iron legion protocol to create Ultron, a peacekeeping program I had begun to create after New York, while I had the scepter there. Nothing I tried worked though, it wasn’t integrating though, Bruce Banner was helping me at the time and we weren’t even close, but then something happened when I left the lab. And JARVIS was attacked. Long story short Ultron became an evil super bot because of me”

"From where I’m standing I don’t see it that way, you said the program, the codes you found thought for itself obviously it was triggered by you poking it but everything else was its own doing it just used you and your tech so obviously anyone on the outside is going to think it’s your doing, and from what I can tell, you fixed it, given it caused a tragedy yes, but the world is still intact. What I really don’t understand why Maximoff was allowed to join your team after everything was said and done I mean most of the Ultron issues were because of her, right?”

“Rogers loves to point out how ‘she’s only a kid’ when she what like 25? She could do no wrong. And I even tried to keep her safe during the ‘Civil War’ but even that got twisted to me being the bad guy, I was doing something wrong, again” Tony paused realizing how off topic he’d gotten “How do you do that?”

“Do what exactly?” Stephen was frowning as he thought over Tony’s previous words.
What the hell happened the last 7 years to cause this man so much turmoil and suffering?

“How did you get me so far off topic, and get me to open and feel safe enough to talk with you?”
Tony tilted his head to the side quizzically

“It’s a gift, I’m the Tony Stark whisperer, remember?” Stephen chuckled, his shaking gloved hand moved to caress Tony’s cheek. Tony leaned into the hand and placed one of his own hands over Stephen’s.

“I’m not crazy right? There is still something here, right?” Tony sounded so unsure

“Tony everything I said 8 years ago doesn’t apply anymore, you and I are two completely different people then we were back then, so yes there is something here, and you’re far from crazy,”
Stephen whispered

Their eyes were burning into each other.

“I’m sorry I didn’t reach out to you sooner. So much has happened” Tony felt the emotion well in his chest his throat nearly closing up

“And I want to hear it all, but for now let get back to the reason you are here”

“Oh right, but first things first I’ve been dying to do this” Tony reached up and weaved his hand in the Doctors hair, gently grasped the silky strands and gently pulling him closer. Stephen leaned in with no fight, their lips met and they were kissing. It was a tender kiss full of promise, longing and other emotions. It ended too soon as Stephen pulled away and rested his forehead against Tony’s.

“I missed you,” he whispered his blue and green eyes twinkling at the billionaire a hidden smile on his face.

“And I you”

Stephen leans back in, touching his lips lightly to Tony’s. The tender kiss held so much emotion behind it. Stephen vowed to himself at this moment he wouldn’t leave this man again, he would stand behind him and be the support he so obviously needed.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed! Was that ok? I suck at slow burn so I decided to just skip it all!
Hopefully you liked it!
Sorry for any mistakes!
Let me know what you thought!
Until next time!
Stay

Chapter Summary

More Ironstrange! Fluff, angst, and some lust! But really Tony gets the comfort he deserves.

Chapter Notes

I don’t know what’s happening anymore! I think I’m going to go one way with the story and then it’s like HA! Nope! I’m giving myself emotional whiplash! I swear this story is writing itself at this point! Also I lied apparently! Since I’m at the Ironstrange part apparently I can’t hold back! So I guess you all get a new chapter! What are these two dorks doing to me? We got a bit of Angst, fluff, and lust, all in one chapter! Hope you all enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

After they broke apart Tony and Stephen migrated to a more comfortable area. Stephen led them to the living room of sorts; it was a mix between a library and living room. There was a comfortable loveseat that they curled up together on.

Tony had been shocked to meet the Cloak of Levitation. And Stephen had been even more shocked when the Cloak wrapped itself around Tony in its greeting. They settled down and Tony spent the rest of the day with talking with Stephen. Tony told Stephen the gist of the upcoming plans and pulled out his phone, bringing up the holographic files for Stephen to look at, the man with his photographic memory got through it pretty quickly.

As Tony and Stephen had lunch, which was just some sandwiches they had delivered, Stephen explained to Tony what his job as Sorcerer Supreme entailed and briefly discusses how to play out Stephen's involvement in the Avengers. Tony suggested using the Good Faith clause and just sign as a consultant. “At least for now just to protect the rest of you and your wizard buddies” Tony explained

“I’ll write up a draft contract for you and you can let me know if there are any issues” Tony told the sorcerer.

Stephen agreed as long as Tony understood that this was only a temporary fix and that they would revisit this at a later time. Stephen wanted to be there for Tony, but he also needed to talk to Wong so it seemed like a good plan for now.

Tony lost track of time after lunch as they curled back up together, The Cloak draping itself over their laps, and Stephen listened as Tony unloaded *everything*. Tony didn’t mean for this visit to turn out this way but he wasn’t going to complain about it either. This was the most relaxed Tony had felt in a very long time.
Tony started at Afghanistan, and Stane's betrayal, moving on to talking about the time he was
dying of palladium poisoning, and that entire year.

“I observed you during that time you seemed too irrational and erratic” Stephen observed

When talking about New York both of them shuttered “You know you saved me that day” Stephen
said off handedly

Moving on to the Mandarin and Killian was hard for Tony because that was a very tough time for
him right after New York. Tony also briefly shared how that was when Tony and Pepper had
realized their relationship was strictly platonic, and it was better if they stayed best friends and
partners at work.

It was then that they touched back on to the conversation of Ultron, Tony giving more details.
How at this point in his life his PTSD, anxiety and lack of sleep had made him miscalculate many
choices.

Tony touched on the treatment he received from his ‘team’ before and the after Ultron. The
differences on how they spoke to him and treated him before and after.

“They never really appreciated you did they?” Stephen asked softly.

Tony had moved and was sitting between Stephens legs, on the couch, with his head resting on the
taller man's chest, Stephen, who had shed his silk gloves, was carding his hands through Tony’s
hair gently.

Tony turned his head up to face the other man and Stephen halted his petting.

“Not really, but I guess at the time I wasn’t looking for thanks, I just wanted my friends around me
and I thought doing things for them and giving them a home, luxuries and gear would show them
that”

“They used you Tony, that not what friends are supposed to do, they took advantage of your
generosity, and maybe they weren’t aware of it themselves. But truly Tony that is not what
friendships are supposed to look like”

Tony melted back into Stephen as he continued on.

After Ultron Tony had backed away from the Avengers and focused on his Tech and inventions.
He had built the Avengers compound and stayed at Starktower, as he had redubbed it after the
compound had been completed. He put more hours into Stark Industries than he had the previous
years combined, and was throwing himself and his mothers foundation into working on relief for
Sokovia.

The billionaire had briefly touched on the fall Shield and spoke about how he had found Stephen’s
name on the list of potential threats, which in turn shocked Stephen. He touched on the damage
control he did. The sleepless nights going over the files and helping some Shield agents out,
keeping them from being killed. But many agents were murdered after their cover was blown.

Looking back now Tony realized that all of Rogers’s missions following the fall of Shield were in
attempt to find Barnes.

When the realization hit, Tony had started breathing heavily, near hyperventilating. Stephen was
able to soothe him effectively and Tony told Stephen about the Winter Soldier and his side of Civil
War.
“Ok hold up let me get this straight for 2 years Rogers was using you money, jets, gear, etcetera to look for your parents murderer, without telling you either, of what he was doing and what the man he was searching for had done?” Stephen fumed; his already shaking hands had gotten worse as the story had progressed. The sorcerer continued to run his hands through Tony’s hair trying to calm himself.

Stephen was a patient, nonviolent man, but right now the thoughts in his head had to have been the most violent he has ever had.

Tony nodded, word failing him

“And then you find out, lash out, rightfully so might I add, and Rogers almost kills you?”

“I mean I did attack them first but I wasn’t aiming to kill. I’ll quote from what I am sure is one of your favorite books, I never meant to kill, I only meant to maim, or seriously injure” Tony’s lip twitch in amusement. Stephen huffed at the jab.

“Regardless, Tony… how many know exactly what happened… in Siberia?”

“Rhodey, Friday and you. Vision has an idea since there was a shield size indent in my chest when he found me, but I haven’t told him out right. Oh and I told Mr. Daredevil about the fact that I almost died, in my attempt to get him to trust that I wasn’t going to take advantage of him.”

Tony glanced at his watch and was surprised to see it was 11:00 PM.

“Damn the day is gone” Tony was shocked

Stephen was clearly lost in his thoughts only hummed in vague acknowledgment.

As Tony went to sit up the Cloak, which was still over the two of them, pushed Tony back, and Stephen came back to reality, he wrapped his arms around Tony.

“And where do you think you are going?”

“I mean it’s getting late and I figured you’re a busy man, and would want to go to bed, and I have to…” Tony trailed off as Stephen started gently kissing his neck, he had leaned over and his arms were still around Tony’s waist. Tony tilted his head to the side giving Stephen more access but swallowed and finished his thought. “I have a meeting tomorrow I- I have to get ready for” But he didn’t sound very convincing to himself or Stephen.

The sorcerer smiled against Tony’s skin taking in his Tony’s smell, his aftershave, or cologne smelled like home to Stephen.

“FRIDAY?” Stephen inquired out loud, knowing the AI would hear him.

Tony had told Stephen about FRIDAY’s activation after JARVIS, and how much he missed his best friend but FRIDAY was doing an excellent job learning, and in the over 2 years of her actively learning she was getting on par with where JARVIS had been. It helped that she had found scattered data of the lost AI, but she still had a bit further to go.

“Yes Doctor?” Her voice rang out from Tony’s phone, which had been placed away from the genius while the two of them had talked.

“Clear Tony’s schedule for the weekend and put him in blackout mode until Monday, barring any catastrophic emergencies that Colonel Rhodes and Danvers can’t handle alone. Also send the two
of them oh Happy and Pepper too, a message saying Tony is taking the weekend to rest. Doctors Order” Stephen dictated staring Tony down as He spoke, daring Tony to fight him, which of course he did.

“Stephen, I can’t there’s too much-“ Tony began but was cut of with a heated kiss. Stephen’s tongue touching Tony’s bottom lip asking for permission. Tony opens his mouth without a second thought. Stephen deepens the kiss. Their bodies were twisted awkwardly, but Stephen fixed that while Tony was lost in the kiss. Somehow Tony found himself on his back as the sorcerer was now over him, pinning him down with his longer body. The Cloak had made itself scarce.

Stephen pulls back and stares down and the now panting Billionaire “Doctors Order” He said firmly

“It’s done Doctor. Colonel Rhodes sends his appreciation, as does Miss. Potts” FRIDAY’s voice trilled out of the phone, sounding amused.

“Traitors, the lot of you” Tony pouted. Stephen smiled and leaned down kissing the pout off the billionaire’s lips.

“Tony you had a massive surgery what like a week ago?” Stephen debated gently. “You need to rest”

“There’s so much to get done though, I can rest when I’m dead-“ he cut of the sentence there realizing what he was saying and went a different route “I have a modified version of Extremis, I’m fine, really Stephen”

Tony had told him about Extremis and had briefly touched on the Nanobots and Extremis to fix his chest with the new Rector in place as well. And while Stephen definitely wanted to learn more, he knew now was not the time.

“Well in that that case, if your fine, you can stay here and we can,” Stephen started roaming a hand downward as his other arm was keeping him on his elbow over the billionaire “catch up” Stephen whispered huskily into Tony’s ear.

A shiver ran through his entire body, a moan escaping his lips as Stephen’s shaking fingers danced around Tony’s hips and across his crotch.

“Stephen” Tony begged, for what he wasn’t sure at this point.

“Tony” Stephen whispered back directly into his ear, air caressing his check and ear.

“I-“ Tony wasn’t even sure what he was going to say. It didn’t matter though. He was suddenly being kissed again. Stephen’s body was covering his and pressing hard against him, as Stephen showed Tony just how he was feeling about the present situation. Electricity shot through the billionaire as their cocks brushed each other through fabric.

A groan escaped both of them.

“Stay” Stephen pleaded pulling away again staring deep into the amber eyes that were watching him. They were full of questions and worries “Let me take care of you” as he said these words the emotions swimming in Tony’s eyes became more raw. Stephen made a shushing sound trying to soothe the billionaire. The atmosphere shifted as emotions took over “It’s okay, I promise you I’m here. I promise I won’t leave you. Please Tony let me love you”

Tony moved his left arm; it shook as it always did these days, and caressed the doctor’s face. “I’m
damaged Stephen” Tony’s voice broke, emotions welling up inside “Is this really a good idea?”

“Tony we aren’t the same men we were before. I am so sorry for ending things the way I did. At the time surgery meant more to me than a lot of things, but I learned from my mistake. And I am not going to let you go again.” Stephen sat back up pulling Tony up with him. He positioned them so Tony was now straddling the sorcerer’s lap. “This is up to you Tony. It’s your choice. I’ll only stop if you tell me to.”

“And if I don’t want you to stop?” Tony whispered

Stephen wraps his arms around Tony tightly and buries his head into Tony’s neck. “Then I’m yours forever” Stephen’s s goatee tickled Tony’s neck.

“I suck at relationships.” Tony confessed brokenly, something between a laugh and a sob escaped him.

Stephen laughed humorlessly into Tony’s neck “I don’t have the best track record either, but we’re better together Tony. We can do this together. Trust us.” Stephen pulled away from the billionaire’s neck and looked him back in his eyes.

Tony caressed Stephen’s face, his hands cupping the sorcerer’s cheeks.

“I’m going to screw this up” Tony mumbled, “I screw everything up”

Stephen moves his hands to cover Tony’s.

“I don’t believe that for one moment. But regardless there’s nothing you can do that will push me away. Like said the only reason I would back away from you know is if you told me too and even then I don’t know if I’d be able to.”

“Fuck Stephen, what are you doing to me?” Tony groans, dropping his hands and leans forward his forehead resting on the other man’s forehead.

Stephen chuckles entangling his fingers in with Tony’s “What?”

“You’re giving me emotional whiplash or something. God, going from serious to lust back to serious.”

“Stay” Stephen said simply in response their eyes were locked together.

“Are you sure?” Tony sounded so uncertain and broken; his amber irises swam with uncertainty.

Stephen smiled and moved an entangled hand up using the back of his hand he softly brushed Tony’s cheek with it.

“Stay”

Tony closed his eyes, his brain working a mile a minute. He wanted this, oh god did he want this.

“I’m broken” Tony confided again as though it would change anything.

“Let me fix you” Stephen croaked his voice full of emotion. Tony’s eyes opened back up locking gazes again. “Stay” he whispered again, pleading.

“Okay” Tony said simply
Stephen released his hands and moved his arms around Tony pulling him in for a hug. Tony tried to remember that last time he was hugged. It had to be back with Pepper right after the battle of New York.

Tony lightly wraps has arms around Stephen’s waist his hands hiding between the sorcerers back and the couch, he ducks his head into the taller man’s neck. Stephen’s grip tightening ever so slightly. Safe. He felt safe.

Tony hiccupped back a sob. Realizing it too late, he started to cry. He hadn’t felt this safe or secure in a very long time and after telling Stephen everything he felt raw and exposed, and now here he was sitting on the lap of a man he had thought he lost. A man, he knew deep down that he loved.

So for the first time in a long time Tony let go, and cried hard. He cried for his mother, and his father, the many betrayals he had experienced through the years, the lost friends, lost relationships, the lies, everything.

His body racked with sobs, broken sounds escaping him as his chest ached.

Stephen was rocking him, not shushing him but making comforting sounds while whispering endearments and comforting words. “I got you” and “Let it out” were among this words.

And so Tony did. He let it all out.

Chapter End Notes

Tony got his hug! You know I really thought I was going to be going the smut route but suddenly I wasn’t and Tony just wanted comfort... so yeah!
Sorry for any mistakes!
And as always I love seeing all of your comments!
Hope you liked it!
Until next time!
Only if you want to...

Chapter Summary

Saturday Morning

Chapter Notes

Guuuuuyyyyyys! This story is getting ridiculous! So as it currently stands with the outline/timeline I have made I am at 91 chapters! I have been scowering for headcanons and fun tropes to put in and I am just so obsessed with these two! We got fluff this chapter so enjoy! next chapter I promise you will get some smut! Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tony had cried himself to sleep. His breathing had evened out after awhile but Stephen didn’t stop his rocking. The sorcerer, at some point had even started humming songs he could think of.

The Cloak appeared from around the corner and made itself known, it gestured to Tony in a questioning manner.

Stephen nodded and the Cloak fluttered over wrapping itself around Tony. The sorcerer let go of the sleeping man and the Cloak proceeded to lift Tony up, cradling him in it like a hammock.

“Take him to my room I’ll be right there” Stephen whispered and moved through the Sanctum to the kitchen. Grabbing a mug he poured himself tea, and grabbed a glass of water. Walking silently through the quiet building he walked into his room and found Tony curled up in his bed on his side, in a fetal position, while the Cloak laid protectively over the genius.

A small smile tugged at the sorcerer’s lips.

Guilt then tugged at his heart as he examined the sleeping man further seeing the tear stained cheeks of the man he left behind so long ago. Bruises of exhaustion were prominent under his eyes even while sleeping he looked exhausted.

Tony had been through so much, how he was alive let alone standing Stephen had no clue.

Stephen went to retrieve some ibuprofen and set the water and medication on the nightstand beside the bed.

Stephen silently pulled a chair over to the bed, grabbing a book off the nightstand he sat and read, sipping at his tea. It was peaceful, until it wasn’t.

Small noises were escaping Tony after about an two hours of silence. Stephen set his book down and leaned forward slightly rubbing his hand across Tony’s cheek unsure of how to proceed. A crease was placed between Tony’s eyebrows where it had been relaxed a while ago.
A cry escaped Tony as he jolted upwards. He was clutching at his chest in panic. The Cloak was surprised at the sudden shift and skidded away.

Stephen moved swiftly to sit in front of the panicked genius. Cupping his face gently between his hands they stared at each other. Tony’s eyes were wide an darting around as his breath was labored. Stephen realized that he wasn’t actually seeing what was in front of him, but that of his nightmare.

“Tony, you are here with me. You’re safe. No one is trying to hurt you.” Stephen murmured quietly. “It’s about 1 AM you’re in my room at the Sanctum that’s in Greenwich Village. You are safe. I got you.”

That broke Tony out of whatever was going on in that head of his, as he suddenly crumpled into Stephen’s arms. Silent tears poured down his face.

Stephen adjusted them so they were laying down.

Tony curled into Stephen, his silent crying almost as heartbreaking as the loud ones from earlier.

The Cloak laid itself over the genius and doctor.

Stephen adjusted himself a bit, to get comfortable, and pulled Tony closer to him, The genius appeared to have fallen back to sleep, though it was definitely restless.

Stephen was tempted to cast a sleeping spell but decided to talk with Tony before doing such an action especially with his shaky past of magic exposure.

Stephen soon drifted off after another little tug to ensure the genius was close and safe.

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Light filtered into the room. Stephen squinted, blinking away the blurriness in his eyes. It took him a moment to reorient himself and when the cobwebs of sleep left his brain he realized he was alone in the bed. Where was Tony?

Stephen noticed the water and medication was gone.

He looked around and didn’t see the Cloak anywhere either.

Climbing out of bed he stretched, groaning a bit as joints cracked.

He left his room and listened for any sounds that were out of place. He heard some movement and talking down the stairs. As he followed the sounds it led him to the kitchen.

“Levi, remind me, to remind FRIDAY to get this kitchen upgraded” Tony spoke looking to the collar of the Cloak as it was draped over Tony.

Stephen took in the site in front of him. Tony was standing at the stove making pancakes, by the smell of the room, with the Cloak draped over him. He looked completely at ease and it caused a warm feeling to pool in the doctor’s stomach.

“So Levi, do you do anything fun with Stephen or is it as boring as it looks?” Tony inquired as he flipped the pancake currently on the griddle.

Tony hadn’t noticed Stephen yet and the sorcerer was enjoying the view too much to interrupt so he quietly leaned against the frame of the doorway.
Stephen watched at the Cloak, now apparently dubbed Levi? made some motions.

“I mean I guess if the missions are fun there is that, but you should really come over to the Tower one day and meet my bots, I think you guys would get along well, although thinking of it now it may not be a good idea cause of the amount of trouble you would get into.” Tony was talking to, and understood the relic?

Stephen’s eyebrows rose in shock. Stephen to this day still had difficulty deciphering what the relic was trying to communicate on the best of days.

And here Tony was effortlessly conversing with it.

The Cloak, oh to hell with it, Levi was kind of catchy, Levi vibrated in excitement and Tony laughed. It wasn’t a fake laugh either it was a genuine happy amused laugh.

Stephen decided to make himself known; he knocked on the wood of the doorway to alert Tony that he was there.

“Hey Stranger” Tony looked over his shoulder and smiled.

Stephen’s lips quirked “Hey yourself, so Levi?” The sorcerer inquired

Tony placed the pancakes from the griddle on to a plate on the counter and put more batter on the hot surface.

“Yeah calling it The Cloak just didn’t feel right and Cloaky almost feels to demeaning, or childish, I don’t know” Tony shrugged “Levi, short for Levitation seemed appropriate and it liked it so we’re sticking with Levi.” Tony explained.

“You understand it?” Stephen asked curious walking closer to Tony.

Tony looked over at Stephen quizzically “You can’t?”

“It and I are still working on certain ways of communicating” Stephen confesses

“Hm, I thought that it was normal, I mean I don’t hear a voice or anything specific from it, but I understand what it’s trying to get across and kind of what it’s saying, if that makes any sense. Maybe I’m just a tune to non-language objects that communicate through sounds and gestures or whatever. I can understand my bots at home just fine and they communicate through beeps and other sounds” Tony shrugged again, but Stephen could see and hear the defensiveness that was being portrayed. Tony flipped off the stove as he had finished the last of the pancakes.

Stephen came right up behind Tony, Levi moved off the genius’ shoulders to get out of the way.

Stephen pulled Tony back and wrapped his arms around the shorter man’s waist, having to bend over a bit to nuzzle his face into Tony’s neck, he nipped lightly at the skin.

A soft moan escaped Tony’s mouth at the feeling. Any tension that was in Tony’s shoulders ebbed away as he leaned into Stephen’s embrace.

“I missed you this morning when I woke up, I was looking forward to waking up with you.” Stephen noted softly, his facial hair tickling the genius.

Tony frowned feeling slightly guilty. “I’m sor-” he went to apologize but was cut off when Stephen spun him around fluidly, so he was now facing the sorcerer. Stephen had a soft smile on his face,
as he leaned down and kissed the genius. Stephen proceeded to move them away from the stove, and pinned Tony between him and the counter.

Stephen deepened the kiss the men both moaned at the heat that was once again tangible between them.

Stephen pulled back to catch his breath “Don’t apologize, Tony. You didn’t do anything wrong. I was simply stating how I missed you” Stephen whispered while giving and Eskimo kiss.

Tony scrunched up his nose and smiled. “Well I made breakfast,” He stated

“I see that. So you learned how to cook?” Stephen asked playfully stepping away from Tony, who pouted at the loss of contact, and went to retrieve 2 clean plates from the cupboards.

“Hey! I knew how to cook before I just choose not to.” Tony defended taking the offered plate from Stephen.

“Right that’s why you burnt pasta that one time” Stephen quipped back.

Tony gasped, clutching at his chest in dramatics “You promised never to speak of that incident!”
The genius exclaimed in mock horror “I has a hangover and was sleep deprived and I was trying to do something nice for you”

Stephen grabbed two pancakes and moved aside to put butter and syrup on them while Tony got his together.

“I’ll give that to you I suppose” Stephen had forgotten how tired the genius had been. He had been pulled to several board meetings before going out and letting loose a bit, had run into Stephen. Tony had taken Stephen back to his house and the two of them played their usual game, they would mess around and make out, but they had never gone all the way and had sex, and it was clearly showing by how horny they were both feeling at the present moment.

The two men sat at the table and ate quietly for a few minutes.

Tony was picking at his food more than eating it though. With a quick look over Stephen put, get Tony fed more, on his list of things he needed to do with and for the genius. Protect him being on the top of that list.

“Last night happened right?” Tony suddenly asked.

“What part of last night exactly? The part where you told me how fuck up your life has been since Afghanistan? Or the fact that I promise to be here and help fix you. Or maybe the fact that you cried yourself to sleep and woke up in a panic, only calming down once I got into bed with you? Oh it must be the sexual tension that’s currently a very real thing right now” Stephen tried to lighten the mood with that last comment. His foot rubbing the genius’ leg in comfort.

Tony laughed a little; it wasn’t a forced laugh, Stephen’s shoulders relaxed slightly at the sound.

“All of the above” Tony answered.

“Yes last night happened” Stephen replied and took another bite of his pancakes humming in appreciation. “These are really good Tony.”

A blush flashed across the billionaires face as he ducked his head down “Um, thanks”
Stephen laughed lightly at Tony’s embarrassment.

“That’s good to hear,” Stephen hummed thoughtfully “apparently I have the gift to make Tony Stark blush, whatever will I do with this ability”

“Not abuse it hopefully” Tony deadpans taking a bite of food to hide his smile.

“Oh I wouldn’t dream of it” Stephen purrs, and watches Tony’s eyes darken.

They slip back into a comfortable silence as they continued to eat.

Finishing breakfast the two cleaned the kitchen.

“I’m going to upgrade this kitchen,” Tony states in a matter of fact voice, as he wiped off the stove. “If you hadn’t had FRIDAY block me out I could have started by now too.” Tony muttered.

“You don’t have to,” Stephen stated “but I won’t stop you if you want too, just don’t put too much on your plate babe.” The sorcerer’s eyes widened at his liberal use of a pet name, not sure it that was going to far to quickly, but was pleasantly surprised to see Tony’s head duck as pink tinged his face.

What else could Stephen do to cause the genius to blush he wondered.

Tony gestures to the stairway after a moment as though saying ‘let go sit’

Stephen and Tony once again settle on to the love seat.

“So you showed interest in the Extremis virus and Nanobots that I have set up in my system yesterday. Did you want to learn more?” Tony inquired. Stephen curious where this was going gestured for Tony to continue.

This was one of those things that Tony had to hold back with his old ‘team’ they never wanted to hear the explanation behind the tech or the genius’s work. So a simple go ahead gesture meant the world to Tony.

Tony spoke excitedly about the Vibranium chest piece, the nanobots and their hive in the reactor, along with the reactors effects on his quality of life and the overall usage of the extremis virus that he had adapted to his situation. How the bots got replenished if they depleted to a certain level, he touched briefly of Princess Shuri’s help with the vibranium.

“Remind me to tell you about T’Challa and Wakanda after this, it’s a whole different can of worms.” Tony interrupted his own train of thought after realizing he hadn’t really spoken too much about T’Challa’s involvement in all this. Stephen only simply nodded but Tony could see his eyes shifting downwards to his chest. A look of curiosity, and longing in the doctor’s eyes.

Tony swallowed hard. “Do you-“ he coughed as his throat cracked, his stomach heavy with what he was about to ask, and do “Did you, um, want to see?” He got the question out but his stomach was in knots. He was offering to show one of the most vulnerable pieces of himself, and he wasn’t talking about the reactor.

Stephen’s eyes shifted up to Tony’s “Only if you want to show me,” he mumbled soothingly placing a hand on Tony’s knee. Levi floated towards the duo showing his curiosity what the two were talking about.

Tony’s fingers, that were shaking slightly gripped at the hem of his shirt, it was double layered so
the light of the reactor hadn’t been showing through. Ever since he had placed it back in he had become extremely self-conscious of it and scared to show others he had a arc reactor in his chest again.

“Tony, don’t force yourself, please Love” Stephen went to reach for Tony’s hands

“I want to show you” Tony pushed, his words halting Stephen’s hands, they fell into Tony’s lap though and the sorcerer's finger spread out on his knees, they began to rub gently.

Tony took a breath and pulled his shirt up and over his head, exposing his bare chest and stomach.

Stephen felt his stomach flip-flop.

There were two things Stephen noticed immediately.

First was that Tony’s abs were very well defined and delicious to look at, Stephen licked his lips wondering what those abs would taste like.

The second thing he saw was that light of the triangular reactor placed right in the center of his sternum. The piece of technology looked fascinating.

What quickly followed through was horror as Stephen truly saw what Tony was afraid of.

Scars.

Lots of scars.

They littered his chest and stomach.

Stephen had scooted closer, if that was possible, and raised a hand off of Tony’s lap. Watching the billionaire’s eyes in question his shaking hand aimed for his chest.

Worry and tears swam in Tony’s eyes, but he gave a small quiet nod.

Stephen looked back down as his hand made contact with Tony’s skin. His fingers danced lightly across the raised skin in horror.

“I thought you had extremis?” Stephen asked

“I dulled it down quite a bit, it gives me an amazing healing ability but I still get scars, all these scars though are from Afghanistan and beyond” Tony proceeded to categorize his scars.

He pointed to the smaller ones and spoke about the shrapnel from Afghanistan, and continued on until he pointed to the long one across his chest, it was interrupted in the center by the reactor.

“Ste- The shield Rogers slammed down cause the reactor and suit to cut into me causing most of this. I already had bad scarring after I had removed the original arc reactor.” Tony was moving Stephen’s fingers along as he had pointed them all out.

A hard look passed through Stephen’s features. He pushed Tony back so the genius was leaning on
the armrest of the couch, the doctor leaned forward, his eyes locked on Tony the entire time, Tony watched apprehensively as Stephen leaned forward.

Getting no negative signs Stephen leaned all the way in placing his lips on the sensitive skin of the large scar. He continued on to kiss scar after scar, paying no mind to Tony’s now very red face.

What was this man doing to Tony, in a matter of 24 hours Tony had opened up more to him than anyone else in his life, and now he was here, getting kissed on his scars. Though now he understood now why kids like getting kissed on any injuries they received, even if they weren’t bleeding, because even though the genius’s cheeks were warm his chest was just as much so at the feeling the doctor was giving him.

“Does it hurt?” Stephen asked suddenly, referring to his chest.

“Yeah” Tony said simply and honestly “it’s manageable though.” Though it was a good thing Tony had a higher pain tolerance or it might not have been, Tony thought silently.

“Ok so what happened next? And what side effects has all this given you?” Stephen asked pulling the genius back up to a sitting position.

Levi gently placed itself over Tony’s bare shoulders, a small smile from both men were seen, Tony also patted his now covered shoulder in a silent thanks.

Tony continued on to tell Stephen how he had been working on his nanotech for awhile and after getting ahold of the Princess of Wakanda, still trying to avoid talking about T’Challa, he had gotten permission to used the Vibranium from the shield and was offered more in payment for help to fix one Winter Soldier.

“Wait hold up, what?” Stephen deadpans, Tony had moved onto Stephen’s lap at this point, as they had situated on the couch comfortably, Tony still shirtless, but covered by Levi to keep warm, and Stephen gently was tracing lines on the billionaires stomach. The Safe and content feeling had returned.

“Um, well you see” Tony stuttered, “I may or may not know where Rogers and his team are”

“T’Challa” Stephen spat the name like a curse, Tony nodded his head and proceeded in tucking it under Stephen’s chin, his body tense, and unhappy of how the conversation was taking a turn but at the same time Tony had started to feel slightly relieved at getting all of this off of his chest, having someone to tell all of this too, so he wasn’t about to push away from the first person in a long time that he felt safe with.

Sure he felt a level of safety with both Pepper and Rhodey but they had their own lives and Tony never felt right talking with this sort of stuff with them.

“Honestly though” Tony whispered “If I can help Barnes get the trigger words out of his head it will make the world of difference”

“That’s not your job Tony” Stephen stressed

“No it’s Shuri’s I just helped provide the tech and the means to help her get it done, and I am getting paid in return” Tony attempted to sound light and unbothered.

“Tony” Stephen sounded as though he was going to scold him, but the doctor sighed and kissed the top of Tony’s head, his hair disheveled and messy still “Do what you think is right. I have your back just please tell me before you do something stupid so I have time to prepare.” The sorcerer
chuckled a bit.

Tony’s lip twitched, he looked up, “Me? Doing something stupid? How dare you! I am a genius; I’ll have you know. I never do anything stupid.”

Stephen gave Tony a look that said ‘Bullshit’

The two of them laughing. Tony took that moment to get back on track and tell Stephen about the side effects and what came with the Nanotech in his system with extremis. The most fanatic effect being able to access the Internet and technology around him mentally.

“So you are technopathic now?” Stephen asked wonder twinkling in his eyes

“Essentially, Yes” Tony answered mirth lacing his tone.

Stephen laughed “Only you Tony.” The sorcerer was shaking his head “Only you would be able to do something like that.”

Tony huffed playfully, crossing his arms over his bare chest and pouted. The genius looked up at Stephen, who leaned down and kissed the pout on his lips.

“You are definitely a wonder to this world Tony.” The sorcerer moves to sit up pulling Tony along.

He cupped the genius’ face, thumbs lightly grazed over Tony’s cheeks. His hands just as shaky as ever but it didn’t bother either of them.

Tony placed his hands over Stephen’s, his face turning slightly to one side as he kissed a palm of Stephen’s hands.

“Stephen” Tony whispered against the palm of the sorcerer’s hand, facial hair tickling the cool skin.

Their eyes burning into each other.

“Hm?” The sorcerer made an inquisitive sound.

“Enough talking for now, you know more about my life now than even my best friend, I’ve spilled my heart and soul to you. I trust you with my mind and heart, but right now…” Tony was whispering huskily “Right now I need you”
... I want to

Chapter Summary

The wait is over.

Chapter Notes

Y’all ready for this?
SMUT ALERT!
Hopefully it’s not too bad! Keep in mind I am a female so I’m going off of what knowledge I have had at my disposal!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Enough talking for now, you know more about my life now than even my best friend, I’ve spilled my heart and soul to you. I trust you with my mind and heart, but right now…” Tony was whispering huskily “Right now I need you” his voice dropping deeper

Stephen swallowed thickly, a small confident smirk slid onto his face.

“Hm, do you now?” He asked cockily

Tony nodded mutely.

Levi lifted off of Tony’s back exposing his bare back to the cool air of the room, causing a tremor to shutter through the billionaire.

“We can wait” Stephen said genuinely, his thumbs rubbing Tony’s cheeks as his hand still cupped the billionaires face.

“No need, you promised you are staying, even though I think it you are making a mistake. I trust you. And I really do need you” Tony assured

Stephen didn’t wait any longer. He situated them back into the position they had been in last night, with Tony under Stephen, his tall body pressed into Tony’s. Deep heated kissing ensued.

Tony’s hand weaves into Stephen’s hair as he moaned into the kiss. Stephen’s tongue overwhelming the billionaire’s mouth. Stephen’s available hand, the one not holding him up, roamed down Tony’s exposed side, the billionaire squirmed in response a small squeak muffled by there connected mouths.

Stephen pulled back, a firm cocky smirk planted on his lips. “Since when are you ticklish?” Stephen asked moving his fingers again. Tony once again squirming.

“I don’t know I’ve gotten more sensitive in my sides since I’ve gotten cracked ribs and what not” Tony answered honestly.
Stephen’s eyes darkened a bit but he pushed the dark thoughts away, he leaned in to Tony’s neck and sucked on the sweet spot causing more noises to escape the billionaire.

“Fuck” Tony dragged out. Stephen pulled away smug at the fact that Tony would have a small love bites all over him after this. If he had it his way, which hopefully he will, the billionaire will always have a small mark, showing everyone just who he belongs to.

That thought cause a jolt of excitement and pleasure to run through the sorcerer. He decided to make his idea known to the billionaire squirming under him, begging for attention.

“Hm, Tony look at that beautiful mark” Stephen whispered licking the spot that the small bruise was forming. “You’re mine, and I swear I’ll mark you everyday just to show everyone that fact.” Stephens voice was deep and husky, he latched back onto a new part of skin, and began to nip and suck as his free hand had made its way to the front of Tony’s jeans. Tony only moaned in response.

Many beautiful sounds escaped Tony’s mouth as the sorcerer was literally reducing him writhing mess.

Stephen’s shaky hand fought with the zipper for a moment before he realized something and waved his hand. Tony’s jeans vanishing, leaving boxers and Stephen’s own is clothes still between them.

A gasp escaped Tony as Stephen grasped his erection. Taking his attention back to Tony’s face Stephen watched as he made small movements with his hand. Testing the waters. It had been awhile since they had been together like this so Stephen was slightly nervous, especially if today goes as far as he thinks, and hopes it will.

“No fair” Tony pants out

“Hm?” Stephen inquired as he slowly moved his hand up and down.

“I want to touch you too” Tony pouts, Stephen smirks as Tony’s hips bucked under him, at his teasing.

“You will” Stephen whispered directly into Tony’s ear, the billionaire threw his head back as the sorcerer sped up the pace a bit.

“Fuck, Stephen”

The sorcerer laughed in response.

A few more minutes passed of Stephen’s teasing and slow movements before Tony made his needs known. “Strange I swear if you don’t hurry and fuck me I’m going to lose it” Tony snapped his voice thick. Amber eyes bore into Stephen’s and all playfulness ebbed away as lust swam full force in those beautiful irises.

Stephen reached into his pocket. “Close your eyes Love” Tony did, and Stephen made quick use of the sling ring portaling the two of them directly onto his bed.

Tony’s eyes opened at the shift around them and he realized he was now in Stephen’s bed. But before the billionaire could dwell or think on that fact Stephen’s was dominating his mouth again.

Another hand wave from Stephen made his own clothes vanish as well, leaving both men in their boxers.
Pulling back Stephen observed the scene in front of him. Tony lay panting, and erect on his bed. His eyes wide in excitement and lust.

“You know if you keep using magic like this I might actually grow to enjoy it” Tony smiled genuinely.

“Good to know” Stephen quipped simply.

Tony saw Stephen’s question in the sorcerer’s eyes. The billionaire smirked as he also noticed the sudden shyness that the sorcerer was exuding.

Tony took that moment to take over. He used his weight and strength to flip the two of them around. The sudden movement caused a gasp of shock from doctor.

Tony straddling him now a cocky smirk firmly planted on his face, as he also looked smug at getting the upper hand.

“Have you ever?” Tony asked simply and softly to the tall man bellow him. Tony’s hips rotated gently as their covered balls rubbed against each other.

In an unusual shy gesture Stephen shook his head no. Stephen had never dated much. Tony and Christine were his only sexual interests since he’d become an adult, and he only had sex with females as a young adult.

Tony nodded in what appeared to be approval. “Well this should definitely be fun later on.” Tony smiled excitedly “but for now let’s make this easy and enjoyable, what do you say Doc?”

Tension Stephen hadn’t realized was there flooded away from him at Tony’s words. Small shots of electricity rocked through the sorcerer's body as Tony was still moved his hips. Stephen nodded at the billionaire as though to say ‘Do your thing’

“Mind, uh, mind helping out here?” Tony asked gesturing to their boxers.

With another few hands waves they were now both bare-naked. Stephen had even used a lubricating spell. Tony’s eyes widened in more excitement, if that were even possible.

“Yup I can definitely get used to this magic,” Tony declared and we to position himself over Stephen’s erect cock.

The men gazed deep into each other’s eyes, both watching for any signs of any negative emotion. Receiving none Tony lowered himself and Stephen lifted his hips.

Both men groaned at the contact as they met. The slow torturous movement of Tony lowering himself almost made Stephen cry.

“Oh god.” Tony whimpered his head thrown back as he sheathed Stephen fully inside of himself, sitting for a moment to adjust himself.

Stephen’s hands rested on Tony’s thighs. “Fuck you’re so tight. Oh you feel so good Tony” Stephen moved his hips slightly and Tony groaned as his prostate was rubbed.

Stephen saw Tony’s cock twitch; he moved a hand off of the billionaire’s thigh and gripped the twitching cock firmly.

Tony moaned at the touch. And as Stephen went to move his hand up and down the erect shaft,
which seemed to awaken Tony as he too started to moved.

Finding a steady rhythm, they both got lost in the heat of passion. Moans filled the air, as did lust filled words.

“Oh fuck Stephen I’m going to come.” Tony groaned as Stephen had increased his pace. Tony’s pace became erratic in the process.

“Do it baby, come all over me” Stephen responded speeding up even more; though his hand had started to ache he ignored it. Groaning at Stephen’s words, Tony pushes himself down firmly on Stephen causing the cock inside of him to rub his prostate.

“Fuck” Tony shouted jerking at the orgasm that hit him, his hips moving back and forth grinding against Stephen. Semen spilt from Tony at his climax, it coated the doctor’s stomach.

Even out of breath Tony began moving up and down, but Stephen could see the exhaustion hiding in Tony’s eyes. In a flash of quick movements Stephen was once again above Tony.

Semen that coated Stephen’s stomach was now slick between the two of them as Stephen lean in to kiss Tony.

Stephen pressed hard into Tony before starting a rhythm up again.

“You ready to take it?” Stephen asked after a few deep thrusts. Tony only nodding in response still spent from his own orgasm.

Stephen jerked as he hit his climax and spilt hot semen deep into Tony. The billionaire groaned below him.

Stephen collapsed gently to the side, pulling Tony with him, obviously not wanting to rest on his chest and not ready to expel himself for the billionaires ass just yet either.

“Fuck Stephen. Why did we wait so long?” Tony asked his voice muffled by skin as the men hugged each other tightly.

Both panting.

There skin hot, sweaty and sticky, but they held onto each other nonetheless.

“It just was never the right time.” Stephen said after a few heartbeats “This” the sorcerer punctuates his word with a kiss “This was the right time.”

“It really was, though I really wish it hadn’t taken so long,” Tony mumbled

“You and me both” Stephen whispered and kissed the billionaire again.

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After they had separated and Stephen cast a simple cleaning spell on the bed, the two decided to hop into the shower. Yes Stephen could easily clean them but then it would have taken away from the fun of washing each other up.
The two men stood in the cramped shower scrubbing each other. Suds slick between their bodies.

“How mad do you think your friend Wong would be if I just came and did a upgrade at the Sanctum? I promise I’ll leave all your mystic arts stuff alone, but an upgrade to the kitchen, and bathrooms wouldn’t be a bad idea.” Tony asks as Stephen was rubbing his back.

“That’s really not necessary Tony” Stephen interjected.

“I mean if I’m going to be here as often as I think I will be it kind of is. I mean not to sound like a spoiled brat, but there are things that I can’t live without and one of those things is good old water pressure, and let me tell you Doc. This,” Tony gestures to the showerhead “is not decent water pressure. Oh and imagine if we get a bigger shower here, there will be plenty of use we could make of it.” Tony proclaimed his voice getting deeper as he went on “but as you can see there’s not much room to move let alone room for me to get down on my knees to show you how much I appreciate you”

Stephen’s body reacted to Tony’s word in several ways. First and foremost was the fact that Tony feels as though he was going to be spending a lot of time at the sanctum really got Stephen feeling emotional.

“You don’t have to stay at the Sanctum” Stephen said without really thinking of his words.

Tony turned around and looked up at the sorcerer.

“Do you not want me here?” Uncertainty laced Tony’s voice as fear filled his eyes.

Guilt flooded Stephen as he suddenly realized how his words sounded.

“I’m sorry I didn’t mean it like that” the sorcerer cupped Tony’s face and kissed him on the forehead “I just don’t want to make you feel like you have to be here”

“But what if I want to be? I mean you have a job to protect this place right? You can’t always stay with me at the tower so there has to be some compromise. Right?” Tony explained his thoughts

And Stephen realized exactly what Tony was doing; he was figuring out his next 100 steps, even Stephen hadn’t thought that far ahead yet. Yes Stephen had to stay at the Sanctum to protect it as he was the master of it and all, but there were other Masters and Wong that offered to help so Stephen could fulfill his duties as Sorcerer Supreme as well. Now Tony was in the picture along with the New Avengers. So to make sure Stephen could get his jobs done and so Tony could still spend time with him, he was essentially asking to move into the sanctum part time.

“How about we finish here and order dinner, I’ll call Wong and we can talk with him about the New Avengers and the Upgrades and see what he thinks.” Stephen asked smoothly, Tony nodded in agreement and the two of them continued their cleaning of each other.
Sorry for any mistakes or inaccuracy!
So happy people are loving this story! It makes it so fun to write when I see all the response!
Until next time!
Wong enters the picture, and he’s really trying not to fangirl

What do you need Ste- Holy shit” Wong started to ask his question while walking into the kitchen before freezing at the sight of Tony Stark sitting at the table eating what appeared to be beef and broccoli.

“I don’t think I’ve ever heard you cuss before.” Stephen said smirking from beside Tony.

Wong’s eyes were wide as he watch Tony pick up a piece of beef with chopsticks and bring it to Stephen’s lips, the sorcerer took the bite and smiled at the billionaire.

Tony turned to look at Wong, extending a hang “Hey, nice to meet you Wong, obviously I’m Tony Stark” he said confidently “come help yourself to some food” he continued with a gesture to the table after Wong shook his hand.

Stephen leaned into Tony’s ear “I think we broke him” the sorcerer whispered.

“Yeah I think he blue screened” Tony chuckled and took a bite of food himself.

“Do you know Beyoncé?” Wong suddenly blurted

Stephen laughed, while Tony looked on curious. “Uh, yeah we’ve met in passing, she’s come to a few Stark Industries events a time or two.” Tony answered. “I think she was at my birthday party a few years ago too”

Wong made a sound; neither men could decipher it though.

“I’ve never seen him like this” Stephen said and went to reach for his chopsticks, he had let his hands rest for a bit, but Tony beat him to it again and held a bite out for the sorcerer.

“I don’t understand what’s happening right now” Wong was so confused.

“What’s happening is you are sitting down and going to eat and then we can talk after” Stephen told Wong; taking a bite of the crab rangoon he was holding.

Wong shook his head and focused on grabbing a plate and sitting down. Dishing up food, his mind was running through a ton of different scenarios. But the fact that both Stephen and Tony both had damp hair pointed to a very obvious one.

Furthering his investigation Wong also was aware that Tony was wearing a old Columbia university T-shirt that hung off him a bit. He wondered briefly if he looked down if he’d find that the billionaire was wearing pants too long for him.
“You never told me you knew Tony Stark”

“You never asked if I knew him” Stephen shot back with a smirk. Wong rolled his eyes in annoyance.

Tony laughed.

Wong dug into his food not realizing how hungry he actually was. The three of them sat in silence while they ate. Tony was helping Stephen take bits of food here and there, allowing the sorcerer the ability to rest his hands, and also help him avoid making a mess.

Wong observed them in fascination. Never seeing this side of Stephen. It was truly something else. After knowing this man for over 2 years it was refreshing to see a new side to the man that had essentially become his best friend.

Moments after Stephen and Tony put away leftovers, the trio made their way to the sitting area Tony plopped onto the Loveseat and kicked his feet on top of Stephen’s lap when the sorcerer sat.

“So you obviously have questions…” Tony trailed off leaving room for Wong to speak up.

“How long have you known each other the” Wong asked quickly taking advantage of the opening

“The last time we actually saw each other was in 2008. Right?” Stephen asked looking to the billionaire, his hands were resting on Tony’s ankles they looked so damn domesticated.

“Yeah I think it was that one summer function, actually.” Tony offered. “We knew each other from that one stupid conference in June of 2000, I remember cause I had just turned 30 and you were just going to turn 27. And we were both bored out of our minds.”

The two of them went back and forth reminiscing. Wong watched on as though he was watching a tennis game. Another minute after ironing out details Tony looked to Wong “Yeah so we’ve known each other for about 16 years, if we are just counting the years since we’ve met.”

“So I’m curious how this” He gestures the two of them “has suddenly became a thing now”

So Tony began telling Wong about the New Avengers, and how he had caught glimpses of Stephen throughout the years, and deciding to finally investigate. “I’ve come to the realization, through the years, that we are definitely not alone, and there are threats out there that will require more than just hitting your way through. My hope of reaching out to Stephen was coupled with the hope that everything I had seen in my research was correct about magic, and though I don’t have the best history with magic it’s definitely something that we need on the team.” Tony concluded “This” he gestured between them “was just a bonus”

Wong whistles and looks over to the Sorcerer Supreme “It looks as though you made your choice.”

Stephen nodded slightly “I have, but that’s why we were both hoping to talk to you”

Stephen and Tony both went into the details that they had talked about between themselves earlier. The contract, and Stephen’s ability to juggle all of his responsibilities.

Wong looked on thoughtful, nodding at them as they went. He couldn’t say that Stephen wasn’t taking any of this seriously. The look Stephen kept giving Tony, it proved to Wong that there was a much bigger back-story here as well.

“I don’t see an issue in talking with the Masters at Kamar-Taj about any of this. We might want to
buckle down on training a bit with the looming of an unknown threat too.” Surprise flashed it Tony’s eyes, as though he was shocked that someone was trusting his fear of such an unknown event. “As for protecting the Sanctum that’s easy enough to remedy as well, just let me know when you are leaving and I’ll come here or have another Master come.”

Stephen looked relieved, Tony looked antsy.

“Is there something else?” Wong asked focusing his question to Tony. He still couldn’t quite wrap his head around the fact that Tony Stark was really in front of him.

“Well” Tony dragged out the word. “I, uh,” the billionaire stuttered, letting out a nervous chuckle and rubbing the back of his neck in a nervous way. “I would like to do a bit of renovations around the Sanctum” Tony suddenly spit out Wong raised an eyebrow in question. “Well because Stephen and I have this thing” he gestured between them “I figure I’m going to be around and there are some serious lacking of certain things that I think would be easy to fix. And that I think would make your lives a bit easier here as well.” Tony explained looking excited as he went along

It reminded Wong of the face Stephen got when he learned a new spell or read something new and exciting.

“I promise to leave all the Mystic stuff alone.” Tony continues, “Anything I would be doing would be mainly be on the first and third floor anyway”

“Honestly I say go at it, but if you do anything here I’m afraid that the other Sanctum Masters might get jealous” Wong shot a look to Stephen who looked concerned and glanced at Tony.

“Well actually that was something I had thought of and as long as all parties included are ok with it I don’t mind upgrading you guys to the 21st century” Tony admits the excitement gleaming in his eyes “Stephen told me you are the librarian at Kamar-Taj, and looking around there are a lot of books here so I can imagine you have a lot of books there and at the other Sanctums. I would love to make a digitalized system for you to help you maintain the books and relics in all four places.” Tony bounced a little. Stephen was watching Tony shock on his face, so clearly this was something Tony had yet to disclose to him yet.

“Tony that’s too much-“ Stephen whispered hoarsely and was interrupted by Tony

“It really isn’t and it’s not like I don’t have means to get help, plus it’s a fun little side project” Tony confesses

“Mr. Stark, I-“ Wong began not really sure how to respond to this situation at the present moment.

“Tony, call me Tony” The billionaire laughs at the face Wong made at those words.

“It does seem like a lot of work to put on yourself Tony” Wong wanted to fan girl a bit at being able to speak to Tony Stark on a first name basis but he had to keep his cool.

“Well I mean yeah I would probably be doing the setting everything up but you know I have stuff at my disposal to make it easier” Tony said looking at Stephen as he spoke, there eyes locking together.

Wong almost felt as though he was intruding on a moment.

“That very generous Tony” Wong said politely

Tony looked at Wong “You know from what Stephen was telling me about you I figured you and
my Honey Bear would get along but I don’t know now, you’re too polite” The billionaire said thoughtfully

“He’s being weirdly polite, is what it is, I think it’s just because he’s a little star struck. Don’t worry when he warms up to you you’re going to wish for this version of him” Stephen leaned in and whispered to Tony, though it was loud enough for the other sorcerer to hear.

“Excuse me for trying to be polite” Wong snapped at Stephen playfully,

“When you realize how much Tony and I act the same you won’t be feeling the same way” Stephen shot back.

“Oh, great so there’s two of you now?” Wong asked in fake horror.

“Hey! Don’t compare me to him; I’m more of a genius than him and much better looking. Besides I have less grey hair then him” Tony quietly shouted indignantly

“Well at least my grey hair is better looking than yours Mr. salt and pepper” Stephen quipped.

Tony stuck his tongue out at Stephen, and looked back to Wong.

“So?” He inquired

Wong shrugged “I mean if you want to” Stephen shot him an exasperated look at those words, where Tony bounced again slightly. On the inside through Wong was truly excited to see what was about to happen.

*****

“That went well,” Tony said as he and Stephen laid in bed. Naked except for their waists that were covered by a thin sheet. Tony’s head rested on Stephen’s shoulder as the sorcerer had his arm under Tony’s neck.

“I mean I thought it was better than just well” Stephen whispered referring to the sex they had just had, apparently he was on the verge of sleep, Tony glanced up and gave him a look.

But Stephen paid him no mind as his eyes were closed.

Tony’s mind wasn’t ready for sleep. There was still so much planning to do, there were contracts and paperwork to get done, products that needed to be released. There was so much to do. And he was still being blocked from the uplink and ignored by FRIDAY.

As though sensing Tony’s active mind Stephen shifted and pulled Tony’s body against his chest. Tony followed the shift and became the little spoon in this embrace.

A few minutes passed and Tony was already working on his 5th project in his head.

Stephen sighed from behind him. “I can hear you thinking,” he didn’t sound annoyed, more worried if anything.

“That’s what happens when you’re a Genius, insomnia is just a part of the package since my brain won’t shut up” Tony mumbled embarrassed.
“I can help you sleep if you want me too,” Stephen offered kissing the back of Tony’s head.

Tony’s stomach did a flip flop at the mention of magic. “Um, will I feel it?” Uncertainty laced his voice.

“It’ll feel like you’re falling asleep.” The sorcerer mumbled against his hair.

“Ok” Tony consented with a whisper. The hand resting on Tony’s waist lifted made a quick fluid movement and a light blue butterfly appeared in a spark of light.

Tony watched fascinated as the butterfly landed on his nose, though he didn’t actually feel it. In a sparkle it dissipated and Tony felt a fog, the kind he got when he got so tired that he would eventually pass out, sweep over his mind.

The last thing he heard was “Sleep, My love, I got you” and he was out.

Chapter End Notes

So hopefully I did ok with Wong! I feel like I stayed to his true form... what do you think?
Hope you enjoyed the chapter!
Tony squinted as light filtered in the window waking the billionaire up.

Tony turns away from the light “FRIDAY close the blinds” he muttered sleepily into the pillow.

A chuckle beside him causes a jolt of panic to rush through his system, though it quickly dissipated as a shaky hand landed on his back.

“It’s just me Love” Stephen whispered.

Cobwebs of sleep tugged at his mind as he worked to wake himself up.

He shifted to his back and stretched, groaning. He looked over and saw a book resting on Stephen’s lap; the sorcerer was sitting up, his back resting against the headboard.

“What time is it” Tony asked, voice cracking as his throat was dry, he licked his lips trying to get bearings on what was going on. He can’t remember the last time he had slept so hard.

A little after 11 AM” Stephen responded after a glance to the nightstand.

Tony remembers Stephen casting the spell to help him sleep. “Geez Stephanie what was behind that spell you casted”
the melatonin in your system, so you know it gives the added bonus of actually feeling rested when you wake up. How do you feel?” Stephen asked

“The most rested I’ve felt in a very long time” Tony admits.

Stephen smile lights up his face. Tony feels warmth pool in in stomach, emotions causing his throat to close up.

“That’s great Tony, we can’t use it all the time but if you’re having a really tough time I can use the spell to help you get some rest.”

“Thank you Merlin.” Tony whispered and scooted his body closer to Stephen, resting his head on the sorcerers lap. Stephen moved his book to accommodate the genius’ head and held it in front of him with one hand and started to comb through Tony’s dark brunette locks with the other.

Tony closed his eyes. God he could get used to this. No one calling him, or bothering him for time, no one is demanding his attention. Tony felt so damn relaxed.

“God tomorrow is going to suck” Tony mumbled into Stephen’s leg.

“Hm?” Stephen made an inquisitive sound.

“This is the first time in a long time I’ve had a weekend to just relax. Tomorrow I’m going to have to face reality again. Oh god so many people are going to be angry that I took a couple of days off” Tony groaned “And my phone is probably going to blow up with all the notices and alerts”

Stephen chuckled and turned the page of the book.

“Well they can just suck it up. And if anyone gives you shit turn him or her my way. I still teach and practice medicine, given not surgical, but when I said Doctors orders I meant it.” Stephen glanced down past his book at Tony’s face.

“I didn’t know you still practiced.” Tony said sounding surprised.
“Stephen looked back to his book. “Yeah I volunteer at a free clinic down the way. And I’ll go to the community college some weekdays that I’m bored and they’ll usually throw me into a biology class or something.” Stephen answered “I’m not going to let my PHD and MD go to waste”

“Makes sense to me.” Tony shrugged slightly “I’m just surprised I never heard about it”

“Yeah I’ve done pretty well staying on the down low. With all the Inhuman, mutants, and everything else happening I figured it would be best to stay off the radar as much as possible” Stephen admits.

Tony nodded in agreement. He sighs “I wish I could stay here forever” hugging Stephen’s leg, the one that his arms were wrapped around.

“I wish you could too, but sadly I have to share you.” Stephen sighed, setting his book on the nightstand. Tony had to release his leg as the sorcerer slid down into a lying position by Tony. “But even if we can’t do this forever we can still plan for weekends to put you in blackout and everything can go away for a couple days.” Stephen suggested one arm resting under his head the other one coming up to caress the billionaires exposed check.

“I don’t really see that flying with, well anyone.” Tony said sighing a slight pout on his face

“I doubt that” Stephen argued “I know for sure Rhodes would support you in this. This is something we can discuss with the new team at the first meeting.” Stephen suggested

Tony’s lips quirked at that sentiment ‘New team’, It will definitely be interesting to see how that first meeting is going to play out.

“Oh right Saturday October 1st.” Tony blurted remembering. “That’s the day we are planning the first meeting. Everyone’s paperwork will be prepared and ready to go by then, everyone will meet and I think Carol said something about wanting to do a game night after everything is said and done” Tony said listing off the details.

“Sounds,” Stephen paused “fun?” He concluded.
“You’ll be there, right?” Tony asked uncertain

Stephen leaned in placing a gentle kiss on the billionaires nose. Tony’s nose scrunched up in response. “Of course I’ll be there” Stephen soothed

“Mm,” Tony hummed in relief “Good, because I can’t do this without you.” The billionaire confessed, leaning his head toward Stephen. The sorcerer leaned his own head in. Their heads met and gently touched. They laid like that soaking in the intimate feelings that were bouncing between them. That was until Tony’s stomach made itself known.

Stephen smiled, kissed Tony on the nose again and sat up.

“How do you feel about leftovers for brunch?” Stephen asked

Tony shrugged after sitting up “I mean my normal breakfast is just some coffee most days, a smoothie if Dum-E doesn’t screw up and put motor oil in it” while he spoke Tony stood and slipped on his boxers and the pajama pants he had borrowed from Stephen. Tony made sure to tie the string tight enough so the pants wouldn’t slide of his narrow hips. Tony decided to forgo a shirt since he was a little warm at the present moment, thanks to extremis of course.

“That’s something that’s definitely going to be changing” Stephen stated firmly as he was putting his own clothes on, when the sorcerer faced Tony he licked his lips hungrily.

Eyeing the billionaire, Stephen briefly thought of the attention that he had given Tony’s abs the night before. The sorcerers eyes continued to rake over the shirtless man as he saw the love bites that scattered the tanned skin.

“Stop eye fucking me Stephanie” Tony commands, stepping around Stephen to get to the door. Stephen watched as Tony swayed his hips in exaggerated movements as he walked, he felt his pulse increase.

“You are going to be the death of me Stark” Stephen muttered and followed after the billionaire.

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When Tony reached the kitchen the resident, sentient, red cloak suddenly attacked him.

“Hello Levi, I was wondering where you fucked off to.” Tony comments making his way to the fridge.

Stephen followed him in and rolled his eyes as Levi hung off of Tony.

That was something the sorcerers had briefly discussed yesterday. Stephen had commented of Tony’s connection with the ancient artifact and Wong seemed shocked. He was surprised not only
of the fact that Tony could communicate with it but that it appeared to be just as protective over Tony as it was over Stephen, maybe even more so though, especially when seeing displays like this. But Stephen couldn’t find it in himself to feel jealous or upset, if anything it gave the sorcerer a warm fuzzy feeling, knowing that the fickle Cloak that had become a close companion to him, was also willing to protect the one thing in this world that the sorcerer could not want to live without.

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The rest of Sunday was spent lounging about, the two of them talking about everything and nothing at the same time.

Tony rambled on excitingly about all the things he wanted to add and change at the sanctum. The genius continued on to asking Stephen a ton of questions about Kamar-Taj. Stephen offered to take him the following weekend or even sometime during the week, but Tony informed Stephen he’d need to wait to see. Next weekend he had plans to be in Europe meeting with the UN and Accords panel, and during the week he would be preparing for the meeting.

There was a lot of cuddling and touching through the afternoon and evening as well, they really couldn’t get enough of the physical contact.

“Stephen I’m scared” Tony confessed after a few minutes of silence. Levi was draped over the two of them as they had made their way back to lounging on the bed.

“Of what Love?” Stephen asked confusion etched on his face

“Of this” Tony motioned between them “everything has happened so fast this weekend but I can’t find it in me to feel regret, for any of it. And that terrifies me because you have become a lifeline, and what happens when you realize that I’m no good? What happens when-“ Tony’s rant got interpreted with a kiss.

“Are you quite through?” Stephen asked pulling away from the kiss. Tony shook his head in a negative answer.

“Stephen I told you I’m broken, I’m a fuck up. My own father thought so. How can you believe that I-?” Tony was once again getting interpreted by an even deeper kiss, one that made his toes curl.

“God damnit Stephen” Tony huffs out when Stephen pulls away.

“Tony listen to me.” Stephen commanded “Are you listening?” he asks waiting for confirmation, Tony nods “You are a brilliant man that deserves all the love in the world. I don’t care if no one else sees that, because I do! And I’ll be damned if I let you keep putting yourself down like that. Tony you do so much, for so many and you never asked for anything in return. It’s time that you had someone in your life that helps you be a little selfish. And who better than me? The one person that was selfish and stupid enough to think that his career was more important than you. But I learned. I know where my priorities lay.” Stephens’s hands were cupping Tony’s face as they were laying facing each other. Tony felt tears prick at his eyes. ‘Not again’ he thought but he let the tears fall nonetheless.

“Tony” Stephen’s voice caresses the genius’ name like a warm blanket. “You deserve so much
more than what life has handed you. And I will forever be sorry for my actions all those years ago, but I know with you words only mean so much.” Stephen inhales deeply, wiping some of the falling tears away. “But it is all I have for you at the present moment.” Stephen leaned in kissing the billionaires forehead “I promise to be here for you, everyday and every night, if I can’t be there for you in person I promise there will be some way that I will be there for you. So never doubt that, please give me time to prove to you that I will never leave you” Stephen pleaded tears forming in his eyes at his own words.

“Fuck Stephen what are you doing to me?” Tony hiccups a sob as he wiped his cheek aggressively trying to get rid of the even faster falling tears.

“I’m doing what so many others should be doing. I’m showing you that you deserve to be loved, and cared for. I’m showing you that you don’t have to throw yourself away. And I’m showing you that you can still be loved. It will take some time but hopefully someday soon you will be able to trust and love yourself and those around you again. But until then, please just trust me and lean on me. I won’t let you down again. I promise.”

“I trust you Stephen” Tony pledged

Tears fell down both men’s faces as the leaned in kissing each other.

Chapter End Notes

Did you cry? It’s okay if you did cause I did.
As always thanks for reading!
Until the next chapter!
Monday morning came all too quickly for Tony.

He felt the moment that FRIDAY unblocked him from the uplink, and sighed as he realized that reality was waiting for him.

He laid on his side staring at the sleeping sorcerer, as FRIDAY started listing off things he’d missed.

A major one being, Peters team won the decathlon in Washington DC, and then Spiderman saved the team from the elevator falling at the Washington monument after a detonation of some kind?

This was definitely something Tony had to follow up on. A message from Rhodey assured Tony that the boy was okay and that he had taken care of clean up in DC.

It had caused some serious backlash though since it had happened on 9/11. Tony sighed as he continued.

Rhodey also had a written statement about the alien tech weapons that Tony had told him about, and had asked him to keep an eye out for. Apparently there was a deal going down tomorrow morning. Rhodey had set the FBI on the case but would be keeping a close eye on the entire situation.

What would he do without his Honey bear?

In a note from FRIDAY he was shocked to find that she had made contact with the AI copilot that he had placed in Peter’s suit, over the weekend, who was apparently now named Karen. He closed his eyes in concentration and pulled up the suits coding following the IP address to the computer that had accessed the suit.

Edward Leeds goes by Ned. Hm, so Peter had his friend hack the suit. Yup, there was a definite conversation, with possible yelling, in Tony and Peter’s future.

Tony scrubbed his hands through his hair gripping at it in frustration. He flipped onto his back and
stared at the ceiling.

Why was the kid so damn persistent? He was so hard headed and strong willed. Way to choose a protégée. Both Harley and Peter were going to be the death of him at some point.

Though his lips quirked when thinking how much like him they really acted, though that probably wasn’t a good thing, it flattered him nonetheless.

He would need to call Peter but at the present moment he figured it wasn’t the best time.

“Tony?” A groggy sounding Stephen called out from beside him.

Tony pulled out of the uplink and looked over to the sorcerer.

“I’m sorry, did I wake you?” Tony asked shifting his body back so he was laying on his side again, Stephen mimicking him so they were facing each other.

Stephen yawned shaking his head no. “No” he said through the yawn “I was already waking up I just felt you suddenly shift and saw you looked upset so I got worried” Stephen explained

“Oh, uh, yeah I was going through everything I’ve missed.” Tony responded while tapping his temple.

“We never went into to much detail about all of that” Stephen confessed, he reached out and took one of Tony’s hand, weaving their fingers together.

“Not much to tell, I don’t really have a great explanation on how it happened. But with the modified extremis and nanotech in my system it gave me this ability. It was a far-fetched theorized side effect. But I can’t be too mad about it, since it actually gives me a better connection with my tech” Tony explains. His thumb rubbing Stephen’s hand, he felt the raised skin of his scars.

“Anyways apparently Peter got into trouble this weekend and I’m going to have to talk to him” Tony sighed. “There was a detonation at the Washington monument yesterday so there are quite a few of Americans twitchy about everything right now especially since yesterday was 9/11.”

“But everyone is ok right?” Stephen asked squeezing Tony’s hand gently.

“Yeah Spiderman saved everyone that was stuck in the deteriorating elevator. I have a request from the White House to look into it since the explosion wasn’t a normal one. I have a feeling though that Spidey knows something about all this.” Tony sighed realizing the time. “I have to go”

Stephen frowned slightly “Are you coming back tonight?”

Tony smiled realizing Stephen sounded just as disappointed about Tony was about leaving.

“If I’m welcome to.” Tony said in an uncharacteristic shy manner.

A gentle smile slid its way into the sorcerer’s face “Always” He whispered leaning in and kissed Tony

“Well in that case, I’ll be here, When? I’m not sure but I’ll be here.” Tony smiled and pecked Stephen’s lips back.

Tony stood and grabbed his jeans and sweater off of the dresser. He had set them there the other day, after Stephen had cleaned them with a spell. But by then Tony has decided to just steal some of the sorcerer’s clothes, and save his clothes for when he left. Dressing, Tony looked around
thoughtfully, “We should talk about the living situations.” Tony said sounding nervous.

Stephen got out of bed, as he had been watching the billionaire get dress, and had been enjoying the show immensely, padding over to the billionaire. Wrapping his arms around Tony’s waist he pulled him close. There chests touched and Stephen felt the hard press of Tony’s arc reactor against himself, he had noticed the other day there was a slight hum to it, it was almost a comforting sound.

“We can talk about it later, don’t worry too much about it love” Stephen soothed and leaned in, Tony’s head tilted up. The soft and gentle kiss that followed made butterflies flutter in Tony’s stomach.

Is this what love felt like?

Stephen pulled away and Tony pouted. “Don’t give me that look you are the one that said you had to go” Stephen sniped but the pout stayed firmly planted on the billionaires lips until Stephen leaned in again for one more kiss.

They broke apart a few moments later.

“Boss” FRIDAY spoke from his phone “wouldn’t it be appropriate to exchange numbers so the two of you could communicate throughout the day. It would also be imperative so I have it on file for if I need to get ahold of the doctor for you.” Her voice almost sounded smug. Tony’s lip twitched at his baby girl because as always she was watching Tony’s back.

“Mm, very true my darling girl” Tony hummed and held his hand out to Stephen, “Let me have it” Pink tinged Stephen’s cheeks slightly as Stephen reached for a old flip phone from the nightstand.

Tony gasped in mock horror. “No” he whispered

Stephen shrugged “I knew you would say something about it, anyways it’s all I can afford. Don’t send me a plethora of messages please, I have a limit on data usage and stuff.” The Sorcerer handed the phone to Tony to put his contact in.

Tony bit his lip realizing that Stephen was genuinely embarrassed, so the billionaire decided not to say anything, but plans were already forming in his head on how to fix this.

Tony grasped the phone and entered his information; he threw himself a message from Stephens phone, memorizing the number.

It took a few more minutes, which included Tony pouting and whining, oh and a few more lingering kisses but goodbyes were said and Tony was off to face reality.

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“Sup Cuz?” Tony asked stepping up behind Sharon, causing the woman to jump and clutch at her chest.

“Tony, Geez where have you been? I’ve been on and off trying to reach you the last month or so” The blonde stood from the table she was sitting at and pulled Tony into a hug, the billionaire
returned it half-heartedly. “You weren’t at Aunt Peggy’s Funeral, then the whole thing with Steve and the Avengers happened and you disappeared. And then suddenly your AI contacts me asking me to meet with you. What the hell Ed?” Sharon slipped in his childhood nickname.

“You know, I could ask you the same damned thing Shaye” Tony snapped back, using her childhood nickname. The blonde grimaced. Tony sighed, “I didn’t ask you here to fight Shaye, I just want to clear the air. I was hoping to figure out what happened on your side. It appeared as though you were really buddy buddy with Rogers.” Tony spat the name like a cuss word he moved around the blonde and pulled her chair out for her to sit and pushed it in when she did, proceeding to go sit at the chair across the table.

They were at an old hole in the wall cafe that they used to visit all the time as kids. Peggy loved it because she claimed it had the best tea in New York. So when there was fear of it going out of business a few years back Tony had bought it and continued to help with the financial part of the business, well more like his lawyers did, but the family that owned it would be able to keep it without fear of the rug being pulled out from underneath them.

This was the place that Tony and Sharon had started meeting at after Sharon had started working at Shield. Especially when she was undercover.

It was their place. It was special. They could be themselves. It was also the place they could both feel close to Aunt Peggy.

“Why did you do it?” Tony whispered brokenly.

“Tony I-“

“Why didn’t you just come talk to me after Rogers started going off about other winter soldiers. The only time he brought it up was at a point that I just needed him to come in so we could talk. Better yet why did you tell him something about a shoot to kill order on his bestie? Or even better can you explain to me why you gave him the shield that my father made, and that very nearly killed me?” Tony ranted his voice low and dangerous. Sharon’s face had begun paled as he had gone along.

The dim light of the cafe made it more intimate but it was making Tony look very dangerous at the moment.

“Killed? What?” Sharon was floored she couldn’t remember that last time Tony had been spoken so seriously with her, actually no, it had to be right after Afghanistan. That was that last time he looked so threatening and scary.

“What happened?” Sharon whispered hoarsely.

“God isn’t that the question of the century. But I asked you first.” Tony’s eyes softened “Shaye, seriously, what were you thinking? Why didn’t you come to me?”

“I don’t know” Sharon blurted her voice raised in slight hysteria.

Tony’s eyes widened in sudden realization. “You love him,” he didn’t ask, he stated. Her head fell, blonde hair covering her face as Tony saw her cheeks redden. “Oh Sharon, No. Did you kiss him?”

“I got played Ed” Sharon hiccupped.

The chair that Tony was sitting on scrapped against the wooden floor as Tony stood up, and moved around the table with the chair to get closer to his cousin.
“I’m so sorry” tears started flowing down her eyes as she whispered, her voice cracking.

Tony had sat back down with his chair right beside her, moving his arm over her shoulders he pulled her to him.

She turned her head into his neck and cried. Tony rubbed her shoulders. The situation making a bit more sense to him as the puzzle had started coming together.

Rogers had played off her feelings. Here was a girl that was showing him interest while she was undercover, and then he finds out later that she could actually have a use to him. Maybe he had a crush on her. Maybe. But he still should have known better then to use her position to his advantage.

And here was the woman that Aunt Peggy had raised, that had made the badass that woman that was here today, being reduced to tears by the same man that claimed that he had loved his Aunt.

He turned and kissed her head.

When Steve showed his face again he was getting a punch right in the jaw, not some wimpy openhanded backhand he had hit the super soldier with in Siberia. That or Tony would be sure Sharon had means to make the fucker bleed.

No one makes his Cousin cry. No one.

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“Ed, I-“ Sharon was stumbling over her words after Tony told her about everything that had gone down since, well the beginning.

He explained that with Ross’ involvement on the Accords, if Tony had left and gone to London for Peggy’s funeral, like he wanted, the Secretary of State would have wreaked havoc on everything Tony was trying to work on. Tony figured Peggy would have understood, but he still felt guilty over it. He continued on to explain the entire thing that was being called the Avengers Civil War. Even touching on Siberia where he was nearly killed, taking the count up to 4, on the amount of people that knew the whole truth.

“No Shaye! Do not apologize.” Tony interpreted her apology “We were both played and lied to, I see that now. Apparently we have a weakness for a super soldier with baby blue eyes, wonder if we got it from Aunt Peg?”

Tony and Sharon laughed quietly.

“But really Shaye? You kissed Rogers? Cause that’s seriously disgusting cugino” (Cousin)

“Sta ’zitto” Sharon spat. (Shut Up)

“I mean he’s like 90, and there’s the fact that he had a thing with Aunt Peg”

Sharon groaned
“Like you only got to kissing right? Cause I have always wondered if his equipment would still work after being on ice for so long” Tony jested bumping her shoulder with his.

Sharon smiled ruefully at Tony, before something caught her eyes, discoloration on Tony’s neck.

She gasped quietly and reached for the collar the hoodie he wore, pulling it down she revealed several small bruises.

“You have hickeys. Oh my God. Who is leaving hickeys on you? Not Pepper! That was never her thing.” Sharon bounced in her seat in excitement “Holy shit Ed you let someone mark you! That’s serious! Who?”

A blush rose on Tony’s cheeks as he pulled his sweater collar out of Sharon’s hold. He muttered something under his breath before answering.

“I may or may not have gone and visited and old flame of mine and we may or may not have proceeded to spend the entire weekend together” Tony said sounding confident while looking bashful, clearly avoiding naming said ‘flame’ but she’d let it drop.

Sharon cooed at him “Awl, that’s so sweet! Honestly Cuz I’m happy for you!” The blonde hugged Tony.

“So anyways” Tony went to change the subject “There was another reason I wanted to meet you today.” Tony began.

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“Oh. My. God.” Sharon stared out the window of Tony’s car as they approached the compound.

“It’s almost all done, completely revamped and upgraded. I’m preparing all the paperwork for the rental agreements. All New Avengers contracts will come with the room rental agreement and compound usage agreements included. The dormitories here aren’t the most comfortable though. The Core team will mostly be staying at the Tower in New York, after signing a few agreements of course. You though still have your floor there since you’re family. Uh, what else” Tony trailed off in thought as the car came to a stop in front of the massive building.

“So who’s all going to be here?” Sharon asked

“Well for one the obvious, being Avengers, the ones who have signed the Accords and any and all agreements that me and my lawyers have set up. A few US based sectors hope to use the facility for training. So I set up a lower quality section for those people. The UN and Accords Council have their own areas and offices. Carol, Rhodes and I will have our primary offices here since this is where all the Avengers work will be taking place. Oh! I will be transferring some old Shield agents that I was able to get out of harm’s way, from Starktower to here. What else? Oh I have a Master Samurai setting up shop here, she’s the girlfriend of Danny Rand, Fellow rich white boy, also known as Ironfist. I have a few trusted medical professionals going to be onsite. One of them is going to be Claire Temple; she’s affiliated with the Defenders and Luke Cage’s girlfriend. A few others, and you, if you’re up for it.” Tony concluded as he then proceeded to exit the car

“Wha-?” She began to ask.
“I saw the discharge paperwork.” Tony stated simply interrupting her. Sharon bowed her head embarrassment flooding her.

“I thought he- I thought I was helping, and I fucked everything up.”

“In your defense, he does have a killer puppy dog look.” Tony slung his arm around her shoulders leading her towards the imposing building. The doors opened automatically and the two stepped inside. Sharon whistled in amazement.

“This is impressive” she stated fascinated with her surroundings.

Tony had and excited gleam in his eyes when she looked over to him. “So how would you feel about working here?” Tony asked

“Doing what exactly? I can’t really work with the government anymore, they don’t trust me.” She said quietly and bitterly.

“True but you can still help with the day to day running’s of this place and help with training and what not right?” Tony asked “and you’d be my employee so the government can’t touch you with me here”

“Tony you don’t have to. I made my mistakes; I need to live with them. This is my consequence.”

“Yeah well fuck that, you’re family and Aunt Peggy is probably already rolling in her grave, but she would have beat me senseless if I turned you away.” Tony smiled affectionately at the blonde.

**********

“So I forgot to tell you the best part!” Tony said bouncing on the balls of his feet in an out of character manner.

“What’s better than giving me a job?” Sharon inquired.

“Ok so I decided that I wanted to be a bit selfish and keep FRIDAY, my beautiful baby girl to myself, and with the Avengers initiative getting as big as it is, especially as of late, I’ve decided to make sure not to double her already difficult workload” Tony began to explain

“Even though I’d have been more that happy to do so Boss.” FRIDAY interjected

“I know baby girl” Tony waved his hand in a dismissive gesture.

“Anyway so I figured I would set up the compound with its own AI.” Tony was positively vibrating

“Oh?” Sharon inquired.

“Yes! Before I came and met with you this afternoon I swung by here and initiated her. And she should be ready to go, right Fri?”

“Yes” the AI chirped

Tony clapped his hands and rubbed them together.
“Hello CARTER, how are you doing?” Tony inquired

“Good evening Chief, I am well, FRIDAY is still helping me set up, and gather my bearings” A female British accent rang out. Tears sprung in Sharon’s eyes, her head whipped to look at Tony, who was absolutely beaming.

Chapter End Notes

Can’t you see it? I mean if Tony had JARVIS if Peggy was close to Tony (like she is in this) wouldn’t he name an AI after her? And what’s a better way to remember her by keeping her namesake around?
Anyway I Hope you enjoyed the chapter!
I apologize for any spelling of grammatical errors!
And as always until next chapter!
The rest of Monday breezed by as Tony showed Sharon around and they talked. After the younger blonde had left, taking Tony’s car at his insistence, Tony made his way to his office to get some paperwork done.

A bit later found him leaning back in his office chair relaxed while he was connected with FRIDAY. He was helping her and CARTER integrate the new AI into the system when he received a call from Stephen. Pulling out of the uplink he answered the phone.

“What’s up Doc?” Tony asked smirking at his own words. He placed the phone between his shoulder and ear as he pulled out a thing from his desk that he almost forgot about, he examined it and pulled up a hologram of coding for it.

“It’s 9 PM and I was wondering if I’d lost you to the abyss since I hadn’t heard from you all day.” Stephen sounded worried

“How’d that go?” Stephen asked curious

“Better than I anticipated, but you know me I’m a pessimist. She actually fell in love with the idiot. Though I’m not surprised, I had a crush on him at one point, how could I not? For how often my old man and Aunt talked about him, he was God’s greatest gift to earth.” Tony admitted. “He played her like he played me Stephen. Just I hadn’t actually, you know gone and kissed him, oh that and I wasn’t really ready to throw my company and career away for him. Though Sharon was and did, and is now facing consequences, so add that on my never ending list of things on my to-do list” Tony chuckled “well I got that issue partly figured out, she’s going to be working at the compound, and I brokered a deal with the CIA for her. So I think I handled that situation well enough” he rambled as he finished the final touches on the device he was working on.
Stephen sat through the entire ramble feeling multiple emotions but the main and more persistent one being affection, the fact that Tony was just spilling everything out without second thought showed Stephen that the billionaire really did trust him.

“Well when will you be back?” Stephen asked stopping himself from saying home.

“I’m finishing up with the integration process of CARTER and then I’ll head over. I say 40 minutes tops” Tony pocketed the device he had just completed and spun in his chair. The feeling he got as he talked with Stephen was foreign but welcoming nonetheless.

“Oh that’s right you were activating your new AI, how is she?” Stephen asked genuinely excited for the genius.

“She’s beautiful Stephen, and I wasn’t anticipating her sounds just like Peggy.” Tony’s throat closed with slight emotion

“You Godmother right?” Stephen inquired

“Yeah, But she sounds closer to when she was younger. Oh Stephen, I remember the day I showed JARVIS to Peggy and she was so fascinated.” Tony laughed tears spiked at his eyes “And then after her Alzheimer’s came about she and JARVIS would talk, and talk” Tony reminisced

“Well how many kids do you have now?” Stephen asked diverting away from the emotional wreckage that Tony was heading to. Tony laughed and felt immense relief at the subject change.

“Well there’s Dum-E my first born then Butterfingers and U follow along with JARVIS, the Vision as an extension of JARVIS, then FRIDAY, and CARTER. Oh and there is Karen, the AI in Peters suit. And that’s just my AI’s.” TonyGroaned “I have the little shit Harley who’s still around after 3 years, and his beautiful little sister Rebecca. I consider them family after everything. And I’ve picked up Spider-Kid, he’s too much like me then I care to admit, I really like Shuri so I might need to add her to the list in the near future, and I got another super powered teen inbound and I can only assume that I’ll attach myself to her because apparently that’s a thing I do now” Tony listed off “That’s what like a total of 13? Oh are we counting kids that call me Uncle? That would make it 16 then. Even though Nate can’t talk yet”

Tony finished his rambling again.
The Smile on Stephen’s face could probably cracked the man’s face in half.

“Geez when I start this collection of kids?” Tony mumbled spinning in his chair again. “I never thought I’d be one for that sort of thing, especially with my upbringing.”

“Well looked like I have my work cut out for me.” Stephen stated. Tony raised a questioning eyebrow to no one in particular. “I mean I feel like I have a slight advantage in competing for your affection since I can give you certain things others can’t” Stephen finished his voice growing a bit deeper.

“Fucking hell” Tony whispered softly.

“So how long till you get back” Stephen asked in the same deep voice.

Tony swallowed thickly “Give me 5-10 Minutes, I’m leaving now”

“See you soon” the sorcerer sang and hung up the phone

“Fuck, ok so he’s going to be the death of me, not the kids” Tony said out loud
“CARTER, how are you doing Sweetheart?” Tony asked his new AI gently as he stood and stretched, god he was getting too old.

“Very well, I think.” She seemed to think, “There’s a lot to learn,” she sounded so nervous. His heart soared. She was exuding emotions already.

“Take your time sweetheart, you have a couple weeks before anyone but me and a few workers will be here so FRIDAY and I will help you. Fri show her how to connect to the uplink. CARTER if you have any questions ask FRIDAY or me. Fri keep an eye on your baby sister. I have a sorcerer to get to,” Tony instructed as he strutted down the hall of the Avengers office wing.

“On it Boss” FRIDAY dutifully answered at the same time as CARTER said, “Thank you, Chief”

Passing by he saw the office that was being worked on for Hope, he smiled looking forward to seeing his childhood friend. He passed by Jennifer Walters’ and was pleased to see the altercations that he requested were being put in. He wondered how the labs were doing but he wasn’t about to distract himself to go check as he had someone waiting for him. Patting his pocket to double check and make sure the device he had finished was there; he stepped outside and activated his suit. Flying off towards the city. Flying towards Stephen, flying… Home.

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Tony woke up gently, which really was a welcomed change, stretching out he groaned, his calf muscles tightening in threat of getting a charlie horse but thankfully the muscles relaxed and he didn’t have to deal with the painful muscle cramp.

Arms wove around Tony and pulled him in. Tony’s back came flush with the front of Stephen. Both men were naked and lounging in bed for as long as they could as the daylight broke outside.

“I don’t wanna get up” Tony whined wiggling into the sorcerer’s chest. Stephen’s mouth landed on Tony’s neck as he gently sucked the sweet spot. Tony’s groan of pleasure and annoyance.

“Sharon saw your little marks yesterday, thanks for that by the way,” Tony chided but doing nothing to stop the sorcerer.

Tony felt Stephen’s mouth tug into a smile, “Excuse me if I like to mark what’s mine” he said against Tony’s skin. The billionaire’s stomach twisted in excitement at that statement. Electricity shooting through him straight to his cock.

“Fuck” Tony hissed as Stephen moved to a new place on his neck and nipped skin with his teeth.

“I know you love it Babe,” Stephen spoke in a husky tone, he thrusted his hips gently making his growing erection known against Tony’s tailbone.

Tony whined pathetically as Stephen’s hand brushed against Tony’s very erect member.

“So you want something?” Stephen asked directly into the billionaire’s ear.

“You, always you” Tony groans his hips thrusting with a mind of their own, trying to get traction.

“Well you will always have me.” Stephen stated and firmly grabbed Tony’s cock giving the man the friction he needed.
It was 9 and Stephen and Tony were still in bed. The sorcerer had brought up breakfast after their
good morning sex, and had proceeded to pull a book out after eating. The two of them were
enjoying the silence. Tony had been doing his best to procrastinate but it was becoming
increasingly hard due to the constant flow of messages and alerts he was receiving. Tony had gone
to pull out his phone to activate the holographic images of some work when he felt the present he
had set up for Stephen the day before.

Nerves coiled into his stomach, as he mentally prayed that he was doing the right thing with this.

“Oh Stephanie! I forgot! I have something for you!” Tony tried to show excitement even through
his nerves, he should have known that Stephen would see through it.

The sorcerer set his book down and gave Tony his full and undivided attention.
Tony nervously reached over the edge of the bed and pulled something out of the pocket of his
jeans that he would be going on day three of wearing, he should probably head to the Tower and
check on stuff and get new clothes, maybe pack a bag while he was at it so he had other clothes
here, that or he could just steal Stephen’s clothes.

He shook his head as it started going off on a tangent of worrying about Laura, who had assured
him everything was going smoothly and was happy that Tony had been able to take some time for
himself through the weekend.
Tony sat up, the sheets pooled around his waist as Stephen had sleep pants and was the only one
partially dressed.
Holding his hand out he revealed a sleek looking Starkphone. One that screamed Tony.

“This is one model older than my current phone, this was mine before I upgraded, and I figured I
don’t have use for it and-” Tony could hear his nerves and could tell he was about to go on a full
blown ramble, as did Stephen.
The sorcerer did what he did best and cut Tony off with a heated kiss. Pulling back he grasped the
phone with shaky hands and smiled at the genius who was watching the sorcerer with a look of
shock.

“Thank you Tony. I will admit I was worried what you would do when you saw my old phone, but
this is perfect.” Stephen smiled gently at the genius “Thank you Love” with those words Stephen
leaned in and gave Tony a bit more of a gentle kiss, one that showed his gratitude.

Tony was frozen reevaluating what had just happened. Not only did Stephen accept the gift, which
the billionaire was worried he wouldn’t, or would have to fight with him about it. But he thanked
Tony for giving him a hand-me-down.

“You thought I was going to fight you on it” Stephen stated. Tony nodded dumbly. Causing
Stephen to laugh a bit. “So long as you don’t shower me in gifts it’s fine to give me things here or
there, but know that I don’t expect it from you. I don’t need things from you to know that you
care.” Stephen placed a hand on Tony’s cheek; the billionaire leaned into the touch. “And again
Thank you Tony” Stephen thanked Tony again.
Tony swore that his brain broke at those words.

When was the last time he was thanked for something?

“I broke your poor sensitive brain didn’t I?” Stephen laughed at the dumbfounded face on Tony’s
face.
“I don’t remember the last time I was thanked for something” Tony whispered “I was trying to, and I just can’t think of a time”

“Well you better get used to it from me” Stephen insisted kissing Tony again, oh god he just couldn’t get enough of this man. “So tell me all about what the phone does.” Stephen urged Tony who didn’t hesitate as he began his very long explanation.

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Stephen floated off of the floor as Levi held him up. The sorcerer was meditating as Tony was getting some work done with the holograms projected in front of him.

In a sudden realization he came to the conclusion that he should probably call Peter it had been a day. The boy was at school but he decided to call and at least leave a message for the kid. He knew he couldn’t talk in length with him quiet yet, but at the very least he could leave a message congratulating him and let him know that they would need to talk later. Maybe ask him to come by the tower later.

Though Tony definitely did not expect what happened next to happen.

When Peter had cut the call off after Tony had heard the foghorn, Tony felt his entire body go cold as blood drained from his face. The deal that Rhodey had detailed was supposed to be happening on a ferry. At 11 on Tuesday. And it was 11:05, on Tuesday. No. He wouldn’t. He couldn’t be that stupid.

“FRIDAY where does the tracker say Peter is?” Tony’s voice croaked out.

“The track is offline Boss” FRIDAY sounded concerned “It was active during the weekend in DC, I didn’t even notice it go offline, looking into it now, the data is showing me that it got unplugged, and has lost power at this point.”

Tony flew out of the couch and ran through the Sanctum. He had no time to tell Stephen, he needed to get there now.
He browses through the Internet quickly as the Nanobots swarmed around him.
He searched for anything pertaining to Spiderman or Ferry incident. Repulsors activated and Tony was off.

There were a few live videos being streamed at the moment from some cell phones.

Peter was really going to kill himself and it would all be Tony’s fault.

******

“Fri make note to send reimbursement to everyone who lost their car in the water. And get a team out there to help with the extractions of the cars.” Tony sighed as he flew towards where Peter was sitting “Also prepare a report for the Accords Council, put this on me and inform them that Spiderman will be benched”

“On it Boss” she sounded as solemn as he felt.

Here goes nothing.

“Previously on Peter screws the pooch. I tell you to stay away from this, instead you hack a multimillion-dollar suit so you can sneak around behind my back. Doing the one thing I told you not to do” Tony was so angry; he hovered over the roof Peter was sitting on looking upset. Good.
“Is everyone ok?” The teen asked quietly.

“No thanks to you” Tony stressed the words.

“No thanks to me?” Peter getting angry he spun around and stood “Those weapons are out the, and I tried to tell you about it, but you didn’t listen.” Peter approached Tony who was slowly lowering himself “None of this would have happened if you just listened to me!”

Tony’s boots touched the ground and the suit retracted. Leaving Tony’s angry face staring down at the teen.

Tony huffs slightly as he walked towards Peter who was now backing up “I did listen Kid. Why do you think the FBI were there? Huh? Did you know I’m the only one who believes in you? Everyone else thinks I’m crazy for recruiting a 14 year old kid-“

“I’m 15” Peter interrupts with less heat than before.

“No! This is where you zip it!” Tony yells. He feels the hot flash of anger shoot through him. “Alright? The adult is talking” Tony continues walking at Peter, as the boy is still moving backwards. “What if someone had died today? Different story right? Cause that’s on you” Tony points at Peter trying to get the point across “And if you die?” Tony held back the emotions as he held his hands up and shrugged “I feel like that’s on me” his voice became a whisper at that sentence. “I don’t need that on my conscience”

“Yes sir I-“

“You-“

“I’m s-sorry”

“Sorry doesn’t cut it”

“I understand” emotion lacing Peter’s voice as he was clearly holding back tears “I just wanted to be like you”

“And I wanted you to be better” Peter looked down ashamed at Tony’s words, Tony took a breath “Okay so it’s not working out. I’m going to need the suit back.”

“For how long?”

“For awhile. You are benched Spiderman.”

“No. No. Please. Please. Please.”

“That’s how it works”

“Please. Please”

“Let’s have it”

“Please you don’t understand, this is all I have I’m nothing without this suit” Peter pleaded.

Tony grips his wrist as it had begun to hurt and shake with all the adrenaline in the billionaires system. The next words he said, hurt as he said them but hopefully they would hit home.

“If you’re nothing without this suit, then you shouldn’t have it. Okay?” Tony froze a second at a
realization “God I sound like my dad”

Peter stuttered trying to find the right words “I don’t have any other clothes.

“Ok we’ll sort that out.”

*********

Tony had Happy bring clothes for the boy and come take him home.

Tony made it clear to Peter for the time being he was grounded from being Spiderman. If Tony saw anything at all about the webbed hero, that he would be breaking the good faith clause and Tony would go talk with his aunt and he wouldn’t be able to work with the Avengers when the time came.

The teen consented with his head bowed, apologetic puppy eyes staring up at Tony under the fringe of hair, breaking the billionaire's heart.

He separated from Happy once making sure the kid got home safely and landed on a messy balcony full of pizza boxes, Taco Bell wrappers and other trash.

“Oh, Goody! A guest” Deadpool sang out from inside the apartment.

“Hey Deadpool mind if I come in and we can talk briefly?” Tony asked softly. Deadpool’s head cocked to the side taking in the billionaire while the boxes gave him their input.

“You’re here about Petey” the Merc states plopping on his well-worn leather chair. Tony walked in and silently nodded.

“I need you to keep an eye on him. Wade he really screwed up and I have some serious damage control to do before Spiderman can come back onto active duty.”

“Yeah, I heard about the ferry” Deadpool said with an odd tone of seriousness. ‘Yes I can be serious too’ he thinks.

“Yeah, I’ll keep an eye on him”

Chapter End Notes

Any grammatical mistakes or spelling issues I apologize for! I’m excited that everyone is excited about CARTER! I was thinking of just doing JOCASTA as the compound AI but that’s just too easy and not fun enough!

Until next time!

Love you all and your reviews and kudos!
Broken

Chapter Summary

Tony’s a broken man, thankfully he’s not alone anymore.

Chapter Notes

Angst.
Warning: Brief suicidal thoughts
Small chapter but just a little bit of angst to fill in before Homecoming.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tony and Deadpool spent about and hour hashing out details. Tony talked with him about the New Avengers and what he was hoping to accomplish. Especially if Deadpool signed on, at least as a consultant.

Deadpool was very concerned about his ability to kill and continue his amazing work as a Merc. ‘Ha! He was a poet and didn’t even know it’

Tony assured him that as a consultant as long as he didn’t break the rules of the contract and few other rules that Tony had in place Wade would be safe, with his livelihood in tact.

Tony couldn’t fault the man for his job, especially considering Tony used to profit off of killing as well, Hell the name Merchant of Death still followed him around even to this day.

Deadpool was tame compared to what Tony used to do, or at least what his company used to do. Regardless of what he told Christine all those years ago. No he wasn’t his company, but he still had responsibilities inside of the company, and he had failed for so many years.

It was dark as Tony walked through the streets, not feeling like flying. He had the distinct urge to go hide in his workshop, lock himself in and sulk. And he almost was about to when his phone went off.

Stephen.

He ignored the call, his heart ached as he did so, but he didn’t deserve to feel good right now. He didn’t deserve to have someone comfort him.

He could feel FRIDAY try to connect with him through the uplink and pushed her out. Making a quick swipe on his phone he disabled his tracker and turned off the same for the nanotech in his system.

He needed some time alone. He really had screwed up and now he needed to figure out how to fix it.

He hailed a taxi and told it where to take him. Keeping his hood up he rested his head against the
Tony entered the code and the gate opened.

The billionaire walked down the long driveway surveying the area around him. Sure the lawn was well kept but it lost its life of flowers and other decorative greenery when Jarvis died. A pang of sadness rocks through Tony as he makes his way into the house. Anything making it a home wasn’t there. Though there were large pieces of furniture still there.

Tony walked through the dark house making his way to his mother's piano. Sitting down he placed his hands on the ivory keys as though to play. But quickly changed his mind pressing down making a loud jumbled sound comes from the piano.

He hadn’t played in so long, but he missed it, it was always something that made him feel closer to his mom. A broken sob tore out of him. What was he even doing anymore? He keeps thinking he’s doing the right thing, but then things like, nearly being killed, or nearly killing others keeps happening. Why was he still here?

A while ago he thought it had been for a reason. But thinking now he wasn’t so sure anymore. Would the world be better off without him?

He stopped that thought before it went anywhere else.

“Fuck” he gripped his hair. Tears flowing down his face. His elbows resting on the piano key causing another reverberating sound around him.

“Tony” Stephen’s soft voice called out from behind him. Tony didn’t turn or acknowledge the sorcerer. He just held his head and cried. Tears dropping onto the piano.

“Tony” Stephen’s voice was closer “I’m going to touch you love.” The sorcerer alerted the billionaire, before hands landed on his shoulders. Somehow that broke whatever dam was up and suddenly Tony launched himself into Stephen. Levi helped Stephen catch the billionaire.

Tony latched onto the sorcerer like a little kid, arms and legs wrapped around him. Tony tucked his head into Stephen’s neck he cried.

He could have lost Peter today. Someone else could have died and regardless of what Tony told Peter that still would have been on Tony.

Too much death, too much blood was on Tony’s hands and he couldn’t understand where to go from here. He just kept screwing up.

Levi held Tony up against Stephen as the sorcerer made some movements with his hands and arms but Tony was too busy taking in the sorcerer's sent and crying.

A whoosh of air happened around the two of them and Tony found him and Stephen, in Stephen’s
“I’m sorry” Tony wailed

“Whatever for?” Stephen inquired

“I ignored you, I just thought I needed to be alone I deserve to be alone” Tony cried

“Oh Tony.” Stephen’s heart broke for the broken man clinging to him
Stephen spent the night holding a crying Tony.

When Tony would start hyperventilating Stephen just rocked him back and forth attempting to lull the man to sleep.

It was at about 3 am when he received a voicemail from and angry and scared May Parker. He listened to it with Stephen.

Apparently Peter had told May he had been suspended from the intern program and she was raging trying to figure out the missing pieces of the puzzle. She knew there was something that was being kept from her and she was begging Tony for answers.

That caused another bout of tears as his stomach twisted in guilt.

“Stephen what am I doing? I feel like even when I think I’m doing the right thing something goes wrong” Tony whispered wide awake.

“Tony, go to sleep, you’re exhausted” Stephen soothed not answering his question because Tony was in hysterics as is, so anything the sorcerer would say wasn’t going to register

“I slept enough already, I have so much I need to get done.” Tony babbled bruised under his eyes said otherwise.

“There is nothing you can get done at 3 in the morning, I know you are having problems going to sleep. Let me help you, please” Stephen pleads

Tears trickled down Tony’s face. He nodded solemnly “Fine, But was when I wake up, I need to prepare, I have to make a trip to Europe. I need to get Peter cleared before October, and all the paperwork needs to be finished too.”

Stephen didn’t answer he simply conjured the spell and Tony was out.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the short chapter!
And if there are any mistakes I apologize as well!
Thanks for all the love guys!
Until next chapter!
The following week was subdued for young Peter Parker. Though he had an underlying feeling of guilt after everything that had happened he wondered how his mentor was holding up.

Peter knew that he was being watched now, he could feel a presence there, though it was never a ‘you’re in danger’ feeling.

With that though he wasn’t sure if he should feel relieved and thankful or annoyed. He went with the former because it most likely meant that Mr. Stark still cared.

Peter knew he had screwed up, and hoped that Mr. Stark would reach out to him soon but in the meantime he would focus on school.

The next thing Peter knew he was getting ready to go to homecoming with his crush. He missed Karen and wished she was around so he could tell her. But May was also excited for him.

It was time. He was going to dance with Liz. Maybe even get his first kiss tonight.

Those were the thoughts in the boy’s head right before the door opened.

******

Deadpool sat on the roof of the school watching kids filter in. When he saw Petey and his date arrive he smiled underneath his mask. He was proud that his Petey had finally gotten the courage to get past his fears and just ask the girl out.

It had been amusing watching his Aunt and him get ready.

The smile left quickly as he narrowed in and saw the face Peter was making. Something was wrong. He was pale as though he had seen a ghost.

The young girl left the car and from the position Deadpool was in he saw the older man pick up a gun and lounge his arm showing Peter the gun.
Deadpool felt all his anger seep into his bones. Something wasn’t right here.

This was more that a dad talk.

This man was threatening Peter about something.

Deadpool had to make a choice. When Peter left the car, does he stay here with Peter and follow Peter if- no when Peter ends up doing something stupid, by the look on the teens face, or follow the root of what Deadpool feels is the problem.

The boxes were being very vocal but they seemed to all agree on following the car.

*******

“You are not who I was expecting”

“Awww that hurts my feelings.” Deadpool stalked forward examining his surroundings, he had seen something about Starktower and the Vulture wings when he had entered, so the puzzle started to come together “So you’re behind it all” he said in a dangerously low voice his hands reaching up for the katana’s on his back.

“Hey!” Peters voice echoed in the large area, stopping Deadpool after unsheathing the weapons.

Deadpool’s eyes widened ‘Shit, fuck’

The man eyed Peter, so he was expecting him.

“Oh hey Pete”

The motherfucker knew who Spidey was; he wouldn’t live through the night at this rate. The katana’s in Deadpool’s hand twitched, ready for blood.

Spidey looked over to Deadpool in question but stayed focused on the man after that.

“It’s over, we’ve got you” Spiderman shouts. Deadpool feels like laughing does he really think that Deadpool was going to let this man live? After everything?

“I gotta tell you Pete, I really, really admire your grit,” the man was putting on a coat “I see why Liz likes you”

Peter stops and Deadpool listens half heartedly as they discussed this Liz, who Deadpool understands was Peter's date, explaining the gun and the face from Peter in the car.

Deadpool really was having a tough time not just running forward and slicing the man in half as he dragged on about how the world works and the little guys and some shit like that. Very obviously stalling.

But for what.

Deadpool has the distinct feeling like he should take over the situation but at the same time was proud how Spidey was holding himself until he realized what the man was stalling for.
The roof collapsed and Deadpool was incapacitated, until he could heal Peter was on his own and stuck.

Peter could feel panic gripping at his chest.

He couldn’t move.

He stared down at his reflection.

Tony’s words echoing in his head.

Getting the encouragement in his body back, he repeated “Come on Peter, Come on Spiderman” because he wasn’t going to take this, If Mr. Tomes got that plane everything would be done for.

He was Spiderman and Peter Parker no matter what form he was in he would always be both.

The heavy concrete was lifted, as Peter stood.

In a glance around at the area he saw Deadpool pinned his head crushed slightly as rebar stuck out.

The teen grimaced and moved the concrete, and removed the rebar flinching at the sound.

Knowing that Wade would be ok once he healed.

Peter saw the Vulture and quickly moved to attach himself to the wings as the man took off.

When Deadpool came too he had a killer headache. But the main thing in his head was where is Petey?

He heard a large mechanical sound and glanced up seeing a obviously very damaged plane steering away from the city.

“God damnit” the Merc shot up, running towards the road he sees a car, he smiled as he saw the damage to it, concluding that Petey must’ve driven it, he really shouldn’t, but he does anyways, he hops in the vehicle he pulled out the hot pink phone that Stark had given him. Cursing at himself for not calling sooner, thinking that he could do it himself.

White scolded him as yellow was just pissed. He should have just killed the fucker.

He makes his way towards where he can see the plane will crash, running in other cars along the way oops. He’s good at crazy taxi he swears. Deadpool called the line Stark told him to, getting FRIDAY.

“Friday get me Carol”
By time everyone had converged to the crash sight Peter was nowhere to be seen. But Deadpool knew he was close by.

The man that had threatened and hurt Peter was webbed up. Rhodes and Carol were busy surveying the surroundings with Happy.

So Deadpool made his way to the man. Pulling out one of his small daggers he knelt down and held it to the man’s throat.

“You are lucky, very lucky that Spidey has a heart, me not so much. You ever come near him again; you’re a dead man. You know his true identity and if that gets out I’m blaming it on you. And there is nowhere you will be that I can’t find you, and get to you.” Deadpool’s voice was dangerous as he pressed the blade into the man’s throat a small slice was made and blood trickled out of the wound. “Do I make myself clear”

“Crystal” the older man rasped out his throat bobbing as he swallows, the dagger cutting a bit deeper.

“Deadpool!” Carols voice rang out from behind him.

“Yes dear?” The Merc sang as he stood and stepped away, tucking the dagger away into its hiding spot.

Carol looked at him apprehensively.

“He needs to stay alive for now” she said quietly.

“But that’s my thing, I unalive people. But yeah I know.” Deadpool pouted. “I’m going to go check up on Spidey.” And with that the Merc was gone

********

Clean up was a hassle, but it got done quickly and everything that was being moved to the compound made its way there.

Tony had been over seeing his part from Europe as he had been working with the Accords Council on the final batch of contracts, and some of the amendments that some of the others had asked about.

That Friday night he had gone into a full-blown panic attack after he had found out what had happened. Especially when he realized that Peter went up against this man in his old suit. Yet another mistake on Tony’s part.

He had called Stephen just expecting to talk to the sorcerer to calm himself so when he came face to face with the portal, and the doctor stepped out of it, his already bad panic attack got worse.
That was something Tony would have to talk about with the sorcerer. Tony wondered if that’s how they had gotten to the Sanctum so quickly that Tuesday night. He hadn’t questioned it because at the time his brain was more jumbled than he’d like to admit.

A week passed and Tony was back in the States. Needing to go back one last time before the first meeting but everything was basically ready.

He tapped the manila envelope against his leg as he waited for CARTER to announce Happy and Peter’s arrival.

When she did alert him he walked down the hall slipping on his mask of nonchalance.

“Oh there they are! How was the ride up?” His attempted to sound light, feeling like he nailed it.

“Good” Happy answered with a nod

“Give me a minute with the kid” Tony demanded looking to one of his long time friends, even with his frustration at Happy with how he handled Peter and the entire situation, Happy was still a friend.

Though that hadn’t stopped Tony from yelling when he found out that Peters friend Ned had tried to warn Happy and the man had ignored the kid. Yeah not a great day for Happy.

“Seriously?” Happy frowning

“Yeah, I gotta talk to the kid” Tony pressed

“I’ll be close behind” Happy was trying, Tony had to give him that at least.

“How about a loose follow, alright? Boundaries are good” Tony attempted to tease

The billionaire turned to Peter and bumped his fist gently against the teens shoulder, and proceeded to wrap an arm around him. Resisting the urge to pull him into a full-blown hug. Tony turned them to walk towards his office.

“Sorry I took your suit, I mean you kind of had it coming” Tony was a responsible adult or at least he had been trying to be. Though that really didn’t stop him from feeling bad about taking the suit. “Actually it turns out though it was the kind of tough love moment you needed, right? To urge you on? Don’t you think? Right” Tony tried say light heartedly even though his heart was anything but light and it’s not what any of this was supposed to be.

Peter nodded and spoke a quiet “Yeah”

“Let’s just say it was” Tony sighs

“Mr. Stark I rea-“ Peter tried to start

“Screwed the pooch, hard, big time.” Tony interrupted “But then you did the right thing. You took the dog to the free clinic, raised the hybrid puppies,” the billionaire flinching slightly “alright not my best analogy.”

They walked into Tony’s office. Happy walked in with them but stood by the door while Tony led Peter to the couch. Sitting down with the boy. He turned to the teen, setting the envelope down. “I was wrong about you.” Tony admitted, his throat closing slightly. He coughed to clear it “I think with a bit more mentoring. You could be a real asset to the team”
“T-To the team?” Peter stutters.

Tony picks up the envelope, and hands it to the Teen. Opening it Peter stares at the thick packet of documents that he now held.

“That has all the copies of the paperwork that will be presented to you at the first Avengers Meeting on October 1st. Geez that’s a week from tomorrow.” Tony rubbed the bridge of his nose.

“I don’t understand, what is all this” Peter leafed through the documents.

Tony sighed, “Here’s the deal. The Accords Council wants Spiderman on the team, but I brought to their attention after the ferry accident that you were a minor. Thankfully you aren’t the only one so I already have something set up for your situation. Ms. Khan will be a bit of an issue but I think I can work around it. But I need you to talk with your aunt. That’s my only exception. You and I go talk to your aunt get everything out and into the open, hopefully she agrees to let you come train and you stay as a reserve Avenger until your of age. We can discuss your vigilante work too. But the main thing right now is talking to May and getting her approval.” Tony says firmly

“She’s going to kill me,” the teen whispered

“No she’s going to kill me. You, she’ll probably yell at until you can’t hear anything. But Pete she deserves to know especially if you are joining the team. I’ll be there with you.” Tony knows he should definitely fear for his life.

“What if she doesn’t let me be Spiderman anymore?” Peter expresses his fear

“I have a feeling she’ll be mad, like really mad, but I really think she’ll understand your need to be Spiderman, or so I hope” Tony admits “If not there are other things I am hoping to do with you. I’m actually starting an internship program, but this time when I’m talking about an internship I actually mean it. So we’ll see.”

Peter flips through the pages thoughtfully.

“So what do you say Peter?” Tony’s voice is soft and cautious.

Peter looks up a fire lit in his eyes with excitement.

“Okay! Let’s do this!”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you liked it! Ok well now from here on out it should be my story, well at least for a little bit. I have until October 2017 before Thor shows up so hope everyone is ready for this!

Next chapter discussion with May and set up for meeting then 23 should be the meeting! Everyone has been waiting!

I love seeing everyone’s comments and kudos!

Until next chapter!
Chop, chop, wiki, wiki

Chapter Summary

Saturday September 24th
Talk with May

Thursday September 29th
Anniversary of when Killgrave took Jessica

Chapter Notes

Well here’s another Chapter! May turned out calmer than I anticipated... Obviously hurt and upset but definitely more level minded!
Enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday September 24th 2016

“Aunt May?” Peter called out timidly to the woman.

She was sitting on the couch reading, when she heard her timid nephews voice. Looking up he looked extremely nervous.

“What’s wrong Hun?” She set her book down.

“Well… err… um” he looked like he was trying to find the right words “I saw- I met with Mr. Stark yesterday after school”

That caused a massive mood change in May.

She had called the billionaire after Peter had gone to sleep after the whole incident about 2 weeks ago. She left a frustrated filled message begging the other adult to explain what happened. Tony in turn had left a vague message saying it wasn’t entirely his place at the moment but assured May that they would talk in person soon.

The cryptic message caused her more anger and frustration as the Billionaire was essentially brushing her off, or that’s how she took it.

But the following week Peter had started focusing on school again and looked to be getting back to a more solid normal. One he had before Ben was shot.

Homecoming had been an ordeal and Peter coming home with injuries was becoming an increasing problem.

So now a week after homecoming Peter was standing here saying that the billionaire met with her boy caused anger to flood her system.
“- And he… um, well is going to stop by this afternoon. He… I mean we want to talk, and um… I guess tell you what has been happening” Peter stumbled through his sentences.

“And why can’t you just tell me?” May asked her, voice dangerous, Peter swallowed nervously.

“I… I am slightly afraid of your reaction and Mr. Stark promised to be here, and he… um wants to explain some stuff to you?” Peter looked down as his feet and shuffled them.

May sighed, at least Peter was giving her a heads up so she didn’t tear the billionaires head off when she saw him, but now her head was swimming with possibilities of what her Nephew and Tony Stark had to tell her.

********

“Mrs. Parker” Tony greeted, being led in by Peter.

“Mr. Stark” May said coolly as she surveyed the atmosphere.

Peter and Tony were nervous. But Tony held a underlying guilt in his eyes.

“Peter said you wish to speak to me” she started as the sat in the living room.

Tony looked to Peter “This is your show at that moment, I’ll explain my part, I’ll help you with yours but it’s your story”

Peter nodded and looked to his Aunt.

“Remember that field trip last year- and the next day I was acting weird?” Peter began.

He told her about the spider bite and the start of what he realized his powers could do, taking advantage of them until his mistake led to Ben's death and after that he started his vigilante work.

May was frozen in place. Tears had started to fall when Peter had told her about the mugger that shot Ben.

“I’m so sorry Aunt May, It was all my fault.” Peter cried.

May pulled Peter in and hugged him tight, trying to process everything that has been said so far, her head putting pieces of the puzzle together.

“Earlier that day before our fight Ben told me ‘With great power comes great responsibility’ and I took it to heart.” Peter whispered

May released the teen.

“I- I’m….” she tries to grasp at words “What the fuck?” She finally blurs. “All this time, all the sneaking out, all of the injuries, everything that was-?”

“Spiderman” Peter whispers

“What the fuck?” May hisses out and a glare is suddenly aimed at Tony “You knew.” She accused her voice low and dangerous.

“I did Mrs. Parker.” He said simply

“Oh god the fight in Germany Spiderman was there. The internship retreat. You lied to me.” Her
eyes widening in realization. Her sentences coming out in huffs “and the bank robbery, and the ferry. Oh my god” she’s looking between the two males as though trying to decide who to strangle first.

“If I may say something” Tony interjected quietly. “Peter was already out and about as Spider Man before I met you and him. That meeting here was the first time we had met. I lied originally to you because I wasn’t sure if you knew and what Peter’s goal in all this was. I admit I played everything out wrong from then on. Although the one thing I did that I can’t find it in me to regret is giving him an upgrade because he wasn’t as protected before I stepped in. But not informing you definitely was the worst oversight in all of this.” Tony admits.

“I- this whole time? I just- oh god and Peter you- and…” May stood up and started pacing “I knew it was something, but this? You are telling me you are Spider man?”

“Aunt May I rea-“ Peter began

“Peter go to your room please-“ she demanded pointing towards his room, her breathing was heavy looking as though she was going to say something more but she stopped and continued pointing. The teen nervously glanced at Tony who just motioned him on. Peter scurried off.

“Mr. Stark” She started with he voice quiet as though on the verge of tears. She swallowed her emotions as she stared at him. “Why now? What changed? Why push Peter to tell me. It’s clear that he wasn’t going to tell me on his own” tears welled inside of her eyes.

“May” Tony said tentatively scooting closer to her, she allowed him to use her first name so he placed a hand on her shoulder and continued. “I’ll be perfectly honest, I’ve been trying to get Peter to tell you the truth since the beginning. I was the adult I should have pushed it as I am now.” Tony sighed and leaned forward the weight of the world heavy on his shoulders. “I fucked up, when I asked Peter for help, and brought him to Germany I thought I was meeting with friends I thought if I could get them restrained and brought in to talk-“ Tony cut himself off shaking his head “I have no excuse. But I figured if Peter wasn’t going to tell you I could keep him safe at the very least especially after my oversight in Germany. But then everything the last month has happened, well even before then.” Tony sighed “What I’m trying to get at is I care deeply for your nephew, as though he’s one of my own, I know I haven’t known him that long, but I feel responsible for him which is why I punished him after the ferry accident- and then- I just-“ Tony’s own emotions got the better of him as he hiccupped a small sob. “I’m sorry” He croaked, “I’m not normally this-“ he gestured to himself “it’s just been a really rough couple of months. Regardless May I am extremely sorry for not coming to you sooner. Not being a responsible adult sooner.” Tony concluded looking down ashamed.

“Well you see…” Tony sighed and pulled out his phone throwing up a projection he showed her an overview of the New Avengers Roster. On the bottom there were 3 pictures separate from the
“I’m hoping with your permission Spider Man can become part of the team, reserve team at the moment until he is of age of course. And if he signs on with the Avengers and Accords he can be trained properly.”

May covered her mouth with her hand her eyes darting over the information.

“I- I really don’t know. I’m still so mad right now, I just. I need time to think. I need time to talk with Peter.” She admits

“Of course.” Tony nods standing up. “Peter has a copy of all the paperwork that you can look through. One other thing before I leave. Peter is a smart kid, and I want to offer him and these other two along with a few other children that I am housing a part of my legitimate internship I’ve set up, to work with me, and learn from me. If you don’t want Peter to be Spiderman at least consider that.” Tony paused and smiled ruefully “but even when I benched Spiderman he still went out and saved the day. So just think about it. And again Mrs. Parker I am extremely sorry.”

With that Tony left.

******

May had been pacing for the last hour. Peter laid on his bed chin resting on his pillow reflecting on everything he had heard. He had caused so much worry for the… two most important adults in his life.

Hearing what Tony said about him made his stomach churn with guilt.

May was right all of this was such a mess.

Tony had said he cared for Peter as though he was his own. That meant so much to the teen. Peter had no idea if his Aunt would let him continue a relationship with the billionaire. But if she tried to forbid him from seeing Tony ever again Peter was ready to fight against her.

Even after everything Mr. Stark still cared for him.

It was a refreshing thought to think that he had a strong father figure that cared for him in his life again.

He briefly wondered if he’d ever feel comfortable enough to call the billionaire by his first name to his face, or even call him dad.

******

“Peter” May called from the living room. It was 8 at night and Peter had stayed hidden in his room all day. Sneaking into his stash of snacks to hold him over until he felt it was safe to exit his room. But with his Aunt calling him she was apparently ready to talk.

Peter glanced at the envelope on his desk, sending a silent prayer he left his room.

Entering the kitchen he found her at the table in front of her computer. A video of him pulled up, and paused. It was the one of him stopping the car from colliding with the bus.

“Why didn’t you just tell me?” Her voice breaking her back faced him but he was sure she was
“I didn’t want to worry you, after everything that has happened I knew it was something you would have troubles understanding and—” Peter sighs and bows his head “I have no excuse, I should have told you. I’m sorry… I’m really sorry.”

May sighed and cradled her head in her hands as his elbows rested on the table.

“What happened after the ferry accident?” May asked

“Uh, Mr. Stark confiscated the suit and benched me.” Peter answered simply,

May nodded in approval. “I did the math. The amount of injuries you had before Tony and after. He definitely helped keep you safe, at least after Germany,” the woman whispered. “I just… your just a boy Peter and you can get seriously hurt. And I can’t live with myself if I let that happen.”

“Aunt May, I have these abilities for a reason, I have to believe that. And I’m really good at helping the little guy” he smiled lightly.

She hid her eyes in her hands and sobbed. “I know-” she swallowed and looked up the ceiling “I know you, I know you won’t be able to just quit this. I just- I’m so scared for you. I’m so mad that you’ve lied to me, but above everything I’m terrified.” She turned to look at him “Go grab the paperwork, I’m going to order pizza and we are going to go over everything. Tomorrow we can call and talk to Tony about moving forward.” She smiled as his face started to light up at her words “You know he cares about you. I think I might have to start sharing you and I’m not sure if I like that idea or not.”

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Thursday September 29th 2016

“You don’t have to be here. I didn’t ask you to be here.” Jessica said annoyed as she stood in her doorway, looking more worn down then when he saw her last.

“Yeah, well you need someone right now. And I’m sure as hell not gonna leave you alone today.” Tony soothed “Come on, come spend some time with me! It’ll be fun. I promise! I’ll show you around the compound and everything and then we can head back to the tower and hang out. All my good booze is there.” That caused Jessica’s eyes to light up a little bit.

“You don’t need you coming here just to pity me Stark, I said I’d join your team, and that I’d be there on Saturday. What more do you want.” Jessica snapped not really meaning what she said, but you know depression and alcohol is a fickle thing. Mix them together and you never know what you’ll get.

“Me pity you?” Tony asked “Please! If anything I look up to you, admire you even. Definitely not pity. No I honestly want to get to know you better, bring you by the compound and tower before the meeting, offer you a place to stay, stuff like that. It just so happens it landed on today that I decided to stop by, but in my defense I am a very busy man.”

Jessica’s eyes narrow in on the billionaire. Tony produced a paper bag from behind his back.

“Here, to tide you over, from one alcoholic to another. Yay PTSD and all that shit” Tony smiled gently and offered the bag with what was obviously a bottle in it to the dark haired woman.
“Fine,” Jessica consented “Lead the way Stark”

Tony turned and walked down the hall, Jessica following after locking her door, She took a look into the bag seeing a very expensive bottle of whiskey. A small smile twitched at her lips.

“Oh I can’t wait for you to meet CARTER!” Tony said exuberantly from the elevator looking back at Jessica. “Come on Jones, Chop, chop, wiki, wiki

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for a grammatical or spelling issues!
Y’all ready for the meeting! That’s gonna be one heck of a chapter!
Thank you for all the love and feedback it means a lot!
Until the next chapter!
We Stand With You

Chapter Summary

October 1st Part one

Chapter Notes

Well if anyone is wondering where I’ve been I’ve been hard at work on this... I got 8,000 words for you! And this is only part one.
Tony opened up even more then I was expecting but our poor boy just wants people to hear him and everyone listens to him.
Hope you enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday October 1st 2016
3:00 am

Stephen flipped over in the bed finding Tony gone. The sheets cold.
Tony and Stephen had put the sorcerer’s new ensuite shower to the test that night.
The doctor had to admit the luxury shower, with the wonderful pressure, and increased size to the water heater was very much appreciated.
The fact that the bed was cold meant Tony must’ve stayed in the bed until Stephen went to sleep and then left to work on his upgrade’s, as he had been doing the last couple weeks.
Between Tony’s trips to Europe, the compound, Starktower, The Sanctum's upgrades, and even trips to Kamar-Taj Stephen felt as though he hadn’t see much of the billionaire.

“FRIDAY? Where’s Tony?” the sorcerer asked groggily. He was getting used to having the AI around. Tony had quickly set up several speakers and a few cameras around the Sanuctum, and introduced her to Stephen.

“He’s on the second floor setting up the haloprojectors Doctor” FRIDAY answered faithfully, Stephen and her had initiated a fantastic relationship. They both cared for Tony’s well being, Especially after the ferry incident she really had grown a soft spot for the sorcerer.

Stephen groaned as he stood and saw that it was only a little after 3.
The sorcerer made his way to the 2nd floor.

“JOCASTA, darling scan all the artifacts in section ‘F’ and categorize them with the parameters in
Wong’s notes” Stephen heard Tony instruct from the corner of the room. The brunette was reaching up making some adjustments to a projector there, a small strip of skin exposed of his stomach, and Stephen looked on hungrily.

“On it Mr. Stark” A southern twang, female voice spoke out through the room, as a small drone moved to a further part of the 2nd floor, the scan began.

Stephen smiled at another one of Tony’s ‘children’. Tony decided to make Wong’s life, well everyone’s lives easier at the Sanctum’s and Kamar-Taj and activate yet another one of his AI with the sole purpose to help with the cataloging of Artifacts and books. And assisting anyone, as they needed. Tony placed her in all three sanctums and Kamar-Taj, along with a drone in each area to help her do her job. Tony stating by the end of it all, once the database was complete, you could simply ask JOCASTA what you're looking for and she’ll get it for you.

Wong’s reaction when Tony told him all this was the funniest thing ever. Stephen was surprised he hadn’t seen tears from his friend if he was honest; he had definitely been on the verge of them.

“Come to bed Tony” Stephen spoke out gently, as he said this Levi zipped around the sorcerer and moved to Tony. The sentient cloak tended to stay around Tony if it wasn’t required to assist Stephen.

Both Wong and him were still wondering why the Cloak has essentially chosen 2 Masters. Wong hinted at something along the lines of fate and soul mates or something like that, there were multiverses with those dynamics. So what’s to say it wasn’t possible?

Levi handed the genius a water bottle, it must have just gone to retrieve.

Tony got off the step stool he was on, took a drink of water and turned to Stephen.

“I can’t sleep Stephen, there’s way too much.” Tony admitted, wiping his forehead of sweat, as it was a bit on the warm side in the sanctum right now.

“Besides I’m almost done with all the upgrades here” Tony beamed excitedly.

“Tony” Stephen scolded lightly “Come, we have a busy day today. Just come lay with me until 7 let your body rest at least” the sorcerer pleaded gently walking forward.

Tony set his water bottle on the step stool and stared up at Stephen as he approached.

“You know this height difference between us is stupid” Tony pouts going off of topic.

“Tony” Stephen caresses the billionaire’s cheek “Come to bed with me” he whispers and leans in to gently kiss the genius.

With Tony’s head swimming from exhaustion it was easy to lead him back to the room.

“Traitors,” he mumbles as Stephen lowered him onto the bed peppering the billionaire in kisses.

“Just lay here with me, if you can’t sleep that’s fine, just lay here and rest” Stephen said softly as he lays beside Tony and pulled the covers up.

“Fine” Tony pouts and scoots in so his face is hiding in Stephens’s neck.

Tony laid there taking in the sorcerer’s sent, he listened as Stephen’s breathing even out, and felt when the man’s muscles went lax with REM sleep.
But Tony didn’t feel the urge to get up like he would have with Pepper. He was content laying here listening to the Sorcerer’s steady heartbeat.

Not even 10 minutes later Tony’s eyes slipped shut, the genius falling asleep too.

*******

7:00 am

After a couple hours of sleep FRIDAY woke the duo up. The two of them began preparing for the day. Stephen went to the kitchen to prepare breakfast and coffee. While Tony stared into the mirror in the bathroom. Examining his freshly trimmed facial hair.

Tony was a bag of nerves and he could see it in his own eyes.

Everything the last couple months lead to today. All the planning, all the paperwork, all the meetings. Today was the moment of truth.

Stephen came up behind him with a fresh cup of coffee from the french press. He set it on the counter for Tony to pick up.

Doing so the billionaire took a sip while staring at Stephen through the mirror, which really should not had cause butterflies in the genius’ stomach, but it did, and they were there fluttering around, distracting him from his nerves.

Tony set the mug back onto the countertop and turned around to face Stephen, the sorcerer stepped forward and pressed Tony against the counter, their lips meeting.

This never got old it’s only been a couple weeks but each kiss felt like they were kissing for the first time.

Stephen pulled away, looking nervous. Tony felt a flash of worry.

“So I know you are picking up Peter and Kamala so I think I’ll just meet you there.” Stephen said his voice laced with an emotion Tony couldn’t quite place.

“Oh right, um with a portal” Tony got anxious remembering the orange circles he occasionally saw now, each time seeing them he would push down the panic.

Oh.

He had the same tone.

Tony tilted his head to the side examining the sorcerer. Eyes widened in realization.

“Oh” Tony said simply before he started to laugh, it was a nervous, near hysterical laugh. “I’m sorry, Stephen.” He said as he calmed down. Stephen had been watching the display with curiosity.

“It’s a sad kind of funny, that I’m afraid of the way you travel to and from places and that you’re afraid of the way I travel about.” Tony rubbed the back of his neck after finally admitting his aversion to Stephen’s portals.
“Wait” Stephen froze “You are afraid of the portals?” The sorcerer asked shocked.

Tony nodded picking up the coffee mug and took a sip of the cooling liquid.

“Ever since the New York battle, I’ve had an aversion to the night sky and all the stars, and recently, since I’ve reconnected with you, I have found myself on near panic attacks when I see one of yours or Wong’s portals” Tony shrugged as though this was all no big deal. “So I completely understand you fear of cars especially since your accident. I actually had an aversion to cars right after my parent’s death but then I realized my fear wasn’t of the car itself but that of who was driving it. Ever since then I drive myself, except a rare few amount of times.” Tony explained.

Stephen stared thoughtfully at the billionaire.

“I’m so sor-“ Stephen began but was cut off by Tony’s hand covering his mouth.

The billionaire set the mug down on the counter again. And moved his hand to weave through Stephen’s hair.

“Don’t apologize, please.” Tony whispered and pulled Stephen down into a kiss. “I wasn’t sure how to tell you, if I’m being honest. You know it’s kind of refreshing to see a little bit of your weaknesses. Makes me feel less like a screw up.” Tony tried to joke after pulling back.

Stephen’s lips quirked “I have plenty of weaknesses” the sorcerer purred “You definitely being one of them” he said into Tony’s ear

“Ditto” the genius grinned.

“Ok so that’s something we should work on together then,” Stephen concluded after a moment of silence.

“What? You get in a car? And me being able to look at a portal without panicking? I’ve already been working on that one.” Tony admits “You don’t have to worry about the car thing cause if I get used to the portals we can just travel together without a hitch.” Tony smiled

“That’s not how this works. I should work on my aversion to cars especially since you love them so much, and I can find an easier way for you to get used to portals” Stephen caressed Tony’s face as he talks “easier than immersion therapy” he finishes.

“Ok Doctor, but for now let’s just go with your plan. I’ll go pick up the kids and meet you at the compound.” Tony nodded his head happy with the plan. He lifted up to the balls of his feet gave Stephen a quick kiss, grabbed his coffee and left the bathroom. Stephen watching after him.

The sorcerer knew Tony was nervous for today, and hoped beyond hope that everything would run smoothly.

**********

11:30

“Whoa” Kamala gasped as she surveyed her surroundings. They had just entered the property of
Tony had picked Peter up first and talked with May. The woman was very adamant about reminding Tony of all her conditions. While Peter rolled his eyes, Tony stayed patient and listened to her.

May started to crying at one point about her baby boy growing up, and how Tony had better take good care of him.

After Peter was able to pry himself away from his Aunt and they made their way to Jersey City.

Peter kept grumbling about how Queens was better or something along those lines. Tony simply rolled his eyes and nervously tapped against the wheel.

Kamala Khan was just as excitable as Peter. The two of them hit it off immediately.

Tony was able to communicate with Kamala’s family with ease.

Assuring them she would be safe, he felt the twinge of guilt for lying to another guardian about what their child was doing, but as Carol had pointed out with Kamala, things had to be played a bit differently with her being inhuman and all, and the ‘New and improved’ Shield doing damage control it was important to keep certain things a secret, on top of the religious aspect of all of it too.

“I talked Mr. Stark into designating a room in the Avengers wing as a game room!” Peter bounced as he started listing off all the fun things at the compound Tony tuned him out, coming back briefly as he pulled up to the front. “... and the training rooms are ridiculous! The whole West wing is reserved for the Avengers the East wing is essentially for everyone else, UN, any government officials, people like that” Peter was pointing stuff out. Tony then tuned the Teen out again as he left the car.

The two Teens followed him. As Kamala started asking Peter questions. The two of them going back and forth while following Tony.

The automatic doors opened, and Tony glanced around. In 2 days the compound would be open and outside parties that would be setting up shop would move in. This weekend though was for the New Avengers team to meet and bond.

Lunch would be had in the meeting room as everyone was introduced to one another. Tony was supposed to give everyone the layout of why everyone was there, and if anyone had any questions or anything they wanted to share with the new team, the floor would be open. Then after the air was clear Tony would explain all the paperwork and legal crap with Jennifer. Matt hadn’t decided if he wanted to share his identity yet so he was coming as Daredevil at the moment.

After all of that the large living room in the Avengers Wing would get its first use. Dinner would be Pizza a movie would be played, and a game night was in the plan too, that is if everyone was up for it.

“Chief, Colonel Danvers has requested your presence in her office to finalize one last thing” CARTER called out. Tony couldn’t stop the smile that nearly broke his face. Every time he heard her talk he had a burst of emotion.
The billionaire looked over to the Teens.

Kamala was looking around trying to find the source of the voice.

“That’s CARTER” Peter explained to the girl.

“She’s the Compound’s AI” Tony furthering the explanation. “If you have any questions, need to know where something or someone is, or really anything she’ll be the girl you want to turn to.”

“Hi CARTER! I’ve never talked to an AI before!” Kamala bounced excitedly.

There was a lot of bouncing today.

“It’s a pleasure Ms. Khan. Please if you need anything just let me know. I’ll be of service however I can.” The British accent rang out sounding amused.

Tony closed his eyes while she talked, missing his godmother, he knew she would have been extremely excited and honored. She had cried when he introduced her to JARVIS. God he missed him so much.

Tony shook his head to clear it and looked at the two teen.

“You two head to the conference room. Carter sweetheart be a dear and show the two kids where they need to go.” Tony strode away to the south side of the main building where the offices were, as the two teens literally skipped down the hall that CARTER had illuminated for them.

Entering Carol’s office he found the blonde sitting at her desk looking over some paperwork. She looked up as he entered and smiled at the billionaire.

“It’s all coming together,” she cheered lightly.

“Of course it is I was directly involved” Tony smirked at her; she only rolled her eyes in response.

“Are you doing ok?” She asked after a minute

“I’m doing” he shrugs “that’s all I got right now”

“Fair enough” she stands up and walks around her desk. “Have you decided what you are willing to disclose? I feel like everyone has the right to know most of the details from that whole debate about the Accords with the previous team. But other than that I feel like everything else is at your discretion.” She spoke gently placing a hand on each shoulder.

“I feel like I should try be as open as possible, whatever form that takes I’ll just have to suck it up, right?” Tony sounded so unsure of himself.

“As I said it’s at your discretion, I stand behind you no matter what. I hope you know that. Oh! There’s a reason I wanted you here” Carol suddenly remembered jumping slightly. “So I know what you said about leading and what not, but watching your plans unfold and everything you’ve been doing with the compound and the Accords, and so much more. I had some papers drawn up by Jennifer and Matt I would like for you to look them over.” She slid the papers she had been looking over to the edge of her desk and motioned to them.

He doesn’t remember ever telling her his adversity to being handed things but he brushed the thought to the side.

Reading through the file he quickly got a grasped at what she wanted from him, but before he
could get in a word edgewise she held up a hand to silence him.

“Jim and I will be field team leaders whereas you and I will team leaders everywhere else. Jim only wants to be in charge on the field that’s where he excels, but you Tony, we are going to walk into that room and everybody there will be there because of you. Don’t you see? This is your legacy. Making the world safer, making a true team that can kick ass and hopefully be a family at the end of the day. I can’t imagine you stepping back and watching it all from the sidelines while just dealing with the Council.” Carol’s eyes twinkling at him. “I’ve met almost everyone, and they are all waiting for you, you brought them here, you’re the guiding light of this whole thing.” She sighs and faces Tony dead on placing her hands on his shoulders again. Damnit Tony could feel his eyes prickle and throat close with emotions flooding him. “You were taken advantage of before, you have so much to offer the team. Tony I can’t and won’t lead this team without you by my side.” Carol professed.

Tony set the papers down on her desk. He turned towards her large window showing the expansive property. His hands streaked through his hair and he closed his eyes tight, a couple tears leaking out.

“You said-” He began but once again she stopped him

“That was before I truly realized how amazing you are. I need you by me on this. Like I said-” as she was talking she made her way next to him “everyone in there, all of this-“ she motions to the compound “it’s all from you.”

“You has a little to do with it” Tony said quietly with a smirk after a few beats of silence.

“Yeah I just went and told people your plan, your plan Tony, not mine, not Jim’s, not the council’s. Yours.”

God he had to admit she was good.

He wiped any lingering tears and turned to her desk. Read through the paperwork quickly one last time, before looking up at her.

“Are you sure about this, I’ve been told that my leadership skills are lacking?” Tony joked while lifting a pen from his suit pocket.

“I wouldn’t have it any other way,” Carol confessed.

And Tony signed.

*****

12:00 pm

“Chief everyone who said they’d be here are all in the conference room” CARTER informed Tony as he and Carol were walking down the hall. The AI sounded nervous.

“You’re doing fantastic sweetheart!” Tony praised the young AI “Remember if you need help ask
FRIDAY or send me an alert. It’s ok to ask questions that’s how you learn.” The billionaire soothed.

Carol watch him interacting with the AI and still couldn’t get over how gentle he was, she remembered all the rumors about Ultron and seeing now what it looked like as an AI was gently introduced to the world and taught, she understood the Ultron trial a bit more and why Tony was found not guilty.

Rhodes was leaning up against the wall outside of the massive conference room, noise could be heard from behind the doors.

The man kick off the wall and Tony smiled as he watched his best friend walking to him and Carol.

“You two ready?” Rhodey asked eyes lingering on Carol for confirmation or something, she gave a small nod and Tony watched as his best friends face light up.

“Why do I feel as though you two just had a private conversation without me? How rude!” Tony pouted

“Don’t worry you big head about it! Let’s get this show on the road!” Rhodes clapped his hands.

“Together?” Tony asked swallowing

“Together!” Rhodes and Carol parroted

Tony walked forward with genuine excited smile on his face and opened the double doors.

Sound echoed around him. As he, Carol, and Rhodes entered.

Charles, Ororo, Logan, and Jean from the X-men were present.

Reed, Sue, Johnny and Ben were there, a large chair that could handle the even the Hulks weight had been brought in for Ben and it looked like the man was comfortable, so that was good.

Luke, Danny, Coleen, Jessica and Daredevil, in his full suit, were quietly talking among themselves. Jessica had sent Tony a small smirk as they made eye contact.

Peter and Kamala has their heads bowed together, and close as they were obviously discussing about everyone in the room.

Deadpool was beside Peter putting his own input into the teens’ conversation. Causing Kamala to laugh at whatever the Merc was saying.

Vision was watching them with interest.

Hope stood and embraced Tony, as he was passing her chair, without a word.

After about 30 seconds she let him go.

She smiled at him mouthed ‘Talk Later’ and sat back down. A little shocked but relatively happy Tony continued forward, now following Carol and Rhodes to the head of the table.

His eyes met with Jennifer and the woman beamed at him from behind her Starbucks cup, raising it slightly in a motion of ‘cheers’ to the billionaire.
Lastly his eyes ran over the Sorcerer Supreme, he felt chills run down his spine as he took in Stephen in all his wizarding glory. Tony saw Levi wave its collar at him. Stephen had a neutral look on his face but Tony noticed the small twitch of his lips.

The trio made their way to the head of the table. All talking around the room stopped as eyes looked to the three of them.

“Hey everyone! Thank you for coming today I can see that most of you have already dug into lunch. Please help yourselves with whatever you want” Carol welcomes everyone while pointing to the sandwiches, chips and pop that was spread across the table.

“So first things first is Tony is going to go over why everyone is here, now I know everyone knows why they are here, but I’m talking a bit more detail. Then we can conclude by going over the Accords contracts and signing stuff. If anyone has questions please express as such, by the end of this meeting hopefully any and all unanswered questions or concerns will have been answered and addressed. And by then after all the work is said done we can order dinner and go break in the Living Room, maybe play some games, get to know each other a bit more” Carol went over the outline for the afternoon. She followed after that with a brief explanation of the leadership roles among the 3 there and most seemed pleased when Carol admitted she had convinced Tony to take on a leadership role.

“Alright Tony the floor is yours” Carol spoke flourishing her arm out. Tony simply rolled his eyes and stepped up to the head of the table as Carol and Rhodey sat.

“Alright! There’s a lot for me to cover. But first I would like to welcome you to the Avengers compound there are a lot of fun things I want to share with you about it but I’ll get into that a little later. For now I would like to introduce you to one of my few children, Carter, my darling introduce yourself, a purple ball of codes and waves appeared over the table with the haloprojectors in the room.

“Greetings, I am CARTER, one of Mr. Stark’s AI’s I will be in charge of the compound’s security and basic running’s. If anyone need assistance I’m your gal” her young British drawl was thick, the ball that was projected moved as she spoke.

“As she said she will be running the compound from a tech and security standpoint. Now Friday if you will come out for a moment”

A larger shaped sphere that was green appeared next to CARTER. “Friday introduce yourself”

“I am FRIDAY my primary objective is to ensure boss’s safety and health. I assist with running and maintaining most of Mr. Stark’s schedule among other things.” Her sphere moved differently then CARTER’s. You could tell by looking CARTER was still young very young.

“I wanted to introduce you to them first so that way they won’t frighten anyone by mistake.” Tony said shooting Friday’s projected matrix a look.

“I am unclear of what you are talking about boss.” FRIDAY sasses, Tony rolled his eyes

“Carter is new and like her sister she is a learning AI. One that I have been able to nurture and raise. So have patience with her please. Trust me once she gets her bearings she’ll be an unstoppable force” Tony smiled and waved away his two girls.

He clapped his hands. “Alrighty who’s ready to see the reason we are here.” Nervousness laced the billionaire’s tone. A swipe on his phone and a picture of the Tesseract, some footage of the New
“Since 2012 I’ve had this inclination that something wasn’t right. It started with…” Tony enlarged the Tesseract and brought video footage from The Battle of New York, to the front causing many to flinch at the reminder. “This…” he brought the footage from the Iron Man Suit that had recorded through the portal, that was until the suit had died of course. “is what was beyond the portal” everyone gasped at the fleet that they were seeing.

Stephen’s eyes widened, realization hitting him. Tony didn’t have some inconsequential fear of portals; it’s what the portals reminded him of.

“So fast forward. The Tesseract is brought to Asgard with Loki and Thor, but the scepter gets left here with Shield” Tony sighs “Shield is actually infested with Hydra” Tony then mutter “So another reason it was wise not to trust them” and then returns to his normalized tone. “So Thor comes back to retrieve the scepter. The-“ Tony choked slightly and clears his voice “-T-team searches and raids every Hydra base we can find.” Tony sighs and pulls up footage from the suit again showing Tony finding a secret wall. “At their Sokovia base I find this and it leads me down to where Hydra was definitely using stuff from the Chitauri invasion and trying to replicate my Tech among other things.” Tony’s voice gets tight, this wasn’t something he was sure he should share but he really wants all the card out on the table. But why did it have to be him?

He swallows and pulls up a picture of the scepter again.

“This bad boy is down there, and before I reach it I see…” Tony taps his screen and turns away from the BARF recorded memory, as it plays out.

Tony hears the distinct voice of Steve Rogers ‘Why didn’t you save us, you could have done more’

Tony paced slightly as it finished and turns back to the table, avoiding others eyes, he knows that pity will be there so he continues to focus on his task.

“So that clip was released to the courts during the Ultron trial, proving that I was put under extreme duress along with the manipulation that the mind stone, which we found in the jewel of the scepter, did during the entire ordeal.” Tony paused “everyone keeping up?” The billionaire asked

Charles spoke up “Did the mind stone show you that?”

Tony moved his jaw a bit in a nervous way, he sighed.

“A product of it actually,” Tony confessed.

“The female Maximoff, correct?” Xavier asked, Tony quirked his brow in question. The bald man chuckled, “I felt when her abilities were awakened.” The mutant explained “She is a very powerful and dangerous force, with a very strong power allowing her abilities, that even the most experienced telepath wouldn’t be able to stay sane with.”

Tony closed his eyes collecting himself at Xavier’s word.

“She showed me my greatest fear, that’s what that was, but at the time it felt more than that. It still feels more than that.” Tony confessed.

“Anyway Ultron happened, Vision here” The billionaire points to the android “Is created, and Sokovia falls” Tony laughs humorlessly “A lot more happened but for the sake of time I’m just going to skip that for now. Dr. Banner disappears, and Rogers adds Maximoff, Wilson, Rhodey and
Vision to the Avengers. I decided not to stay around, especially with the Ultron trial, Ross becoming Secretary of state, and with Rogers and a few others not necessarily trusting me anymore, though it was never said to my face, I decided it was best to just back away amicably” Tony heard a few sounds of disapproval from around the room.

Jennifer was the one to speak up “But you were proven innocent in that entire ordeal”

“It was my tech used though. I was also the one poking around with something unknown” Tony admits ashamed.

“With the mind stone and witches intervention though” Stephen cut in. Tony met his eyes and Stephen had a fierce, hard look.

“What exactly are Maximoff’s abilities?” Daredevil’s rough voice rings out the question.

“Mind manipulation being her preferred use of it she is able to move objects and manipulate matter around her” Vision answered for Tony.

“Hold up, so she goes beyond showing fears? She’s able to control and manipulate people?” Jessica stood angrily, wood chipping off the table as she gripped at it.

“Um, Yeah?” Tony said slowly “The little scuffle the Hulk and I did in Johannesburg was because she was in his head. Though in Sokovia she changed sides after realizing Ultron didn’t just want to kill me but instead destroy the entire world” The billionaire explained.

“Wait, Kill you?” Carol asked from the side.

“Oh right… That was a thing Rogers and I kept on the down low, I always forget” Tony muttered “What” Rhodes snapped visibly upset.

“We are way off topic here, our concern isn’t Maximoff and we can discuss her at a lat-“ Tony tried but Stephen the traitor interrupted him.

“Just tell them Tony, they have the right to know.” the sorcerer pushed, that causes Rhodey to do a double take between the two of them, before his eyes landed back on Tony.

The billionaire surveyed the room, everyone was leaning onto the table with their elbows, with various looks of anger or frustration on their faces, which Tony had the odd feeling that they weren’t aimed at him. Jessica had sat back down but looked extremely agitated, surprisingly Deadpool looked just as agitated too. It appeared though that the only thing keeping the Merc down was Peter's hand firmly on his shoulder.

“Everyone knows about Stark Industries change from weapons to tech. Not everyone knows why. I’m way off topic here but here’s the gist.”

Tony gives the highlights of Stane's betrayal and the under the table dealings. Even years later Tony’s old weapons were circulating around, some even still trying to copy them.

“The Maximoff twins’ parents perished after a bombshell with my name on it crash landed into their apartment, never detonating though. Since then the twins vowed to make me pay, they volunteered to Hydra and the mind stone in the gave them their abilities. I was supposed to destroy myself after her little party trick, but then Ultron activated and he was supposed to destroy me, but when she realized his true plan she jumped ship.” Tony explained.
Rhodey was gasping like a fish “And Rogers knew this?”

Tony nodded

“Oh, I can’t wait for him to show up! That’s another thing on my growing list of reasons I get to kill him” Rhodes was serious.

“Shit Tony, how fucked up was the old team?” Johnny asked without tact and Sue didn’t reprimand him for it. Everyone at the table seemed to be on that same mind set, which was a weird thing for Tony to see. The fact that there were so many people agreeing on the same thing and on his side of it.

“No wonder the Civil war happened” Reed inputted looking as though he wanted to say more but Tony jumped ahead of him.

“Speaking of, let’s jump back into that, that’s where I was leading to.” No one seemed happy to move on but allowed it.

“Lagos happened, and the UN, which had been working on the Accords behind closed doors, released the idea out in the middle of all the panic trying to show the world that there was a fix. Of course Thaddeus Ross jumped aboard the ‘let’s get these extra strong humans under my thumb’ train.” Tony grinded his teeth remembering that moment, thinking that the team would stand together, that they would trust Tony in having their backs and that he wasn’t just going along with Ross for the hell of it.

“So I called together the team hoping to show Ross a unified front but we were split right down the middle…” Tony sighed and after a moment tapped the controls to bring up security footage of the debate.

Chuckles around the room were made at Rhodes comment to Wilson.

Visions talk of the causality and ‘Conflict breeds Catastrophe’ comment caused some low mummers to echo in agreement, especially those in the room that had experienced this such event since receiving their abilities.

Tony was surprised to watch and see the entire interaction from the outside. At the part that he brought up Charles Spencer the billionaire looked away subtly, guilt flooding him as it always did when he would research all the lives lost because of him.

All the young minds that he had a hand in wiping off the face of the earth.

“All the safest hand are our own” Steve’s words rang out from the speaker. Tony’s fists closed as the recording continued with his response and the conversation that continued. The mumuring around the room got louder especially as the recording cut off.

“That sounded so much worse the second time around” Rhodes admits as he stares ahead.

“Ok, but I’m legitimately wondering what the serum did to Rogers brain, because that sounds like a delusional man” Reed inputs

“I agree!” Deadpool yells raising his hand exuberantly “and that’s coming from me, a crazy person. Like that’s bad right? A not mentally with it person can admit that they think someone else is more delusional then them? I feel like that’s bad.” The Merc continues to mutter trying to figure it out and discussing it with the boxes.
More talking and inputs were shared, the majority all agreeing that Rogers sounded insane, along with a quick discussion about how far up Rogers ass Wilson’s head was.

Tony sat quietly observing, he met Stephen’s eyes and the sorcerer winked at him, the corner of Tony’s lips twitched.

“So what happened next?” Jennifer asks

“Well then the Winter Soldier can into the mix” Tony began and reiterated everything up to the Finding out that Barnes was framed and the Rogues were illegally place inside the RAFT prison.

Tony pulled the chair behind him and sat. This was it. Was he going to tell them? He wasn’t sure if he should. Though everyone had been adamantly supportive of him through his entire spiel. On top of that they were all here right?

Tony swallowed nervously.

“So in the spirit of getting everything out into the open I would like to share something with you that only a few people know about” Tony’s mask was slipping away and he glanced at Stephen for a moment before the sorcerer made a gesture and Levi flitted over to the billionaire. No one commented, silence echoed through the room.

“CARTER, Blackout The room” Tony instructed. This was the moment of truth, Tony’s metaphorical leap off the cliff with the new group in front of him.

His hopefully new team, that is if they stuck around after all was said and done.

“So when I found out from Wilson were Barnes and Rogers were at I…” Tony began, his voice quiet as he told them about his arrival and finding the other Winter Soldiers already dead. The billionaire paused. Not sure how to continue.

“I-“ Tony sighed Levi squeezed his shoulders. Tony sighed and made the decision to try make it easier on himself. He pulled up the hidden video that the suit had recorded and Tony had buried in his private severs. “This way is easier” the billionaire muttered and turned away. As the video began to play over the conference table for all to see.

“An empire toppled by its enemies can rise again. But one that crumbles from within? That’s Dead. Forever.” At those words Tony leaned forward covering his ears and jumping into the uplink, refusing to listen to his mother's pleas, like he had to during most of his nightmares.

Stephen had been closely watching Tony through the entire meeting so far. He could see the nerves of wanting to be accepted and the shock when others around the room were showing him support.

The sorcerer wasn’t expecting Tony to say as much as he had, he didn’t think Tony himself had expected to let as much as he had let out, out. Given it was all an abridged version, but still.

The biggest shock though was the video now playing in front of them all.

“I know that road” Tony’s voice rang out from the speakers “What is this?” He shouts the video is facing a old TV screen.

The video plays out and it didn’t take long for Stephen to catch on to what they were watching
everyone else seemed a bit confused.

“Sergeant Barnes”

“Howard”

At that it was like a light switch turned on in the room, everyone gasped in horror as they witnessed the murder of Howard and Maria Stark. Stephen was frozen in place not able to imagine the pain Tony had been in watching it.

With a look over at the billionaire he was happy to see Levi holding him tight as Rhodes was facing the man rubbing his back while also watching the video.

The camera jerked as the suit turned to face Barnes with Tony ready to lash out.

“No. Tony” Steve Rogers voice was heard

The camera moved to face Steve only showing his chest so the camera must’ve been on Tony’s chest or something. Meaning the faceplate was probably off his face. The angles making a bit more sense.

The camera swayed a bit and a quiet “Did you know?” Was heard.

“I didn’t know it was him-“

“Don’t bullshit me Rogers. Did you know?

“Yes”

The camera jerked, and then switched as obviously the helmet came back on. A flying Rogers was seen and the fight following was hard to follow, Stephen also didn’t want to see it because he knew where it led to. So the sorcerer left his chair and made his way to Tony. Rhodes appeared not to notice the sorcerer as his eyes were transfixed on the video.

Stephen knelt in front of the billionaire and used his index finger to lift Tony’s chin up.

The billionaire’s eyes were glazed over like they would when he would throw himself into the uplink.

The minutes passed as Stephen stared at Tony, in the background he heard the recording of Tony and Steve.

The sorcerer’s eyes were stuck on the man into front of him; he kept reminding himself that the billionaire was safe and here.

“He’s my friend”

“So was I”

This is why Tony was so insecure when he had come to the sanctum the first day. Hearing about it all through Tony’s words was one thing. Having video evidence placed in front of him and shown to the people around the room was a whole other step.

The sorcerer felt immense pride in what Tony had accomplished today, the way he had opened up. He knew though that if the two of them hadn’t made the progress that they have in the last couple weeks, that this would not have been how the meeting would have gone.
In the background the camera switched back to the chest one after Steve had wailed on Tony’s face and tore off the helmet. There were lines through the footage now so clearly the lens had broken.

Everyone physically flinched as the shield came down right below where the camera was placed with realization; people around the room knew that that was where the arc reactor for the suit was.

“That shield doesn’t belong to you, my father made that shield,” Tony yelled, the video was moving as he was clearly trying to get up.

A clatter of metal was heard. Then Tony’s labored breathing was all that could be heard as the recording went dead a few moments later.

Stephen had placed his forehead against Tony’s in that last bit, his eyes shut tight.

All the pain that this man has been through. It wasn’t fair. But he was selfish enough to admit he was thankful that Tony was still standing, maybe not standing at his full height and definitely damaged but he was here nonetheless, and Stephen vowed to keep it that way.

Tony blinked his eyes coming back after FRIDAY must have informed him that the video was done, and the first thing he was met with was Stephen’s overwhelming sent and his forehead right against his.

Stephen blinked his own eyes open, and stared intensely at the billionaire. Tony’s cheeks flared a bit when he realized where they were. They hadn’t really discussed how to introduce their relationship, nor did they really care. But in this case Tony was showing his weakness and Stephen had come over to him, displaying a very intimate position.

The two of them broke apart and before Stephen stood he placed a simple kiss in Tony’s cheek, and made his way back to the chair he had been sitting at.

Tony looked to face his best friend and found tears in the man’s eyes.

“I knew it was bad, but that—” Rhodes cut off and stood up pulling Tony up too and crushed him in a hug. Levi tightens itself on Tony’s shoulder in support too.

After escaping Rhodes embrace he nervously faces the rest of the people in the room.

“So when do we go after Rogers?” Jessica asked darkly. Deadpool enthusiastically nodding his head in agreement.

“No I want to run his name though the mud” Jennifer hissed.

Tony chuckled a bit as others jumped into what they wished to do to the Rogue Avengers, specifically Rogers.

Xavier and Tony’s eyes met and the elder man nodded his head in a show of respect to Tony.

The billionaire cleared his throat after a moment.

“We leave the Rogues where they are for now.” Tony simply said

“You know where they are?” Rhodes asked from beside Tony.

Tony looked offended and glanced at Rhodes with the affronted face. Rhodes sighed and rolled his eyes
“Of course you do” the colonel muttered

Tony sighed and leaned forward on the table his palms pressing up against the cool wood top.

“As long as their location stays the same it will be easier to call them in when the time comes-“ Tony started and the room erupted. Tony whistled loudly in attempt to quiet the others “this is the point you are all here!” He continued with a shout over the protests. They quieted down. “I showed you everything that’s been plaguing me since 2012 because I need you all to understand what’s at stake here. None of the others believed me. Regardless of what I said or showed them.” Tony’s voice had slowly gotten quieter. “I learned too late that they had some of the others had hidden agendas. Which is funny since they would give me shit for my own plans, but not my point” Tony shook his head as the realization as to why Steve had pushed to keep Wanda, after the fall of Shield it had all been about Bucky. Son of a bitch.

“Anyway, when this threat finally shows itself we will need all hands on deck.” Tony paused swallowing thickly. “Regardless of my history with any of them this is bigger than me” Tony’s lips quirked at that. “But I asked all of you here because I wanted to put together a decent team. One that can and will work together. The Avengers Initiative was an idea Nick Fury came up with and he handed it to me, I feel like I dropped the ball the first time around, even though I thought I did everything right, but you can clearly see something went wrong” Tony took a breath in “but I’m hoping that this time around- that if we can move forward and show the world that they can still trust enhanced humans, inhumans and mutants, that maybe we can actually do some good, and be prepared for whatever is coming. Because I’m not crazy, I have a lot of issues but I know what I saw, and what I feel, and Earth is in danger.” Tony concluded sitting down looking across the table.

“Dr. Stark” Charles was the first to break the silence. “I myself have been feeling an oncoming threat, so I can safely assure you that if and when you need assistance the X-men will come. I also would like to voice my appreciation, I’ve read through the Accords and the changes that you made on our behalf are phenomenal. Thank you”

“I believe I can safely speak for my team,” Reed began looking over to the other three of his team as they nodded at him “and assure you that we stand with you Tony.”

“I don’t know about these idiots” Jessica jabbed a thumb towards the rest of the Defenders “But I’m with you, just promise me I get to take on the bitch witch when she comes back, in training or something though” the dark haired woman had a scary smile on her face. Tony made no comment but he was greatly amused at the moment, though he really tried not to show it.

Luke, Danny, Colleen, and Daredevil all nodded their head at Jessica’s declaration. “We’re with you,” they said in unison.

“Ohh, oh!” Deadpool was once again enthusiastically waving a hand in the air “Me too!!!”

Jennifer took a sip from her coffee “I already moved into your tower so you ain’t getting rid of me now, besides when my cousin shows his ugly face I got some choice words for him” the brunette shrugged and took another sip

Stephen spoke up then. “The Masters of the Mystic Arts has come to the conclusion that we may have stayed in the dark for too long. As Sorcerer Supreme I am safely able to assure you that any needed assistance from us will be given”

Tony had already kind of known this but knowing that Wong and the other Masters at Kamar-Taj fully stood behind him was a weight of his shoulders.
“I mean I know I’m still a kid and you got me on the reserved team but I’m definitely excited to move forward and help however I can!” Kamala bounced in her chair.

“You know I with you Mr. Stark” Peter smiled at Tony

“My me too was about the witch but I can easily say that it was about me staying around too, besides the boxes have taken a liking to you Stark so looks like I’m hanging around too” Deadpool professed.

“It’s been too long.” Hope said quietly “My Dad is gonna love this though,” the woman laughed “I’m with you Star” Tony felt a flutter at her use of his childhood nickname.

“Don’t act so surprised Tony.” Carol said walking up beside the billionaire. “I told you so,” she whispered into his ear. Carol clapped her hands and rubbed them together in excitement. “Alright so let’s finalize some paperwork and get some signatures and then we can move on to the fun part of our night, for those who are staying and what not.”

Chapter End Notes

I’ve proofread several time but I apologize for any mistakes or spelling issues!  
I hope I lived up to what you were hoping from this chapter!  
Next chapter bonding and game night anyone Cards against humanity?  
Haha!  
I love comments! You know this!
“Ok so X-men, you will stay as your own private party. Any and all gear and equipment comes from yourself. If you wish to request any gear or equipment from Tony Stark you have the ability to. Otherwise the only thing that really is changing here is that your team is signing onto the Accords so you are recognized and protected under them. You have the conditions and such listed in the paperwork. And you are a private extension of the Avengers Initiative. Does everything make sense? Is there any questions?” Jennifer concluded her speech to Xavier and his group.

Jennifer and Tony had started going over the paperwork with everyone. They had highlighted parts of the Accords and Tony’s own private contracts that were included in the mix of documents.

The X-men and Fantastic Four were the easiest of them all; under them was the Masters of the Mystic arts. Those three groups specifically were signing the Accords and recognizing the legality of everything, and though they were becoming an extension of the Avengers Initiative they had their own abilities to take care of themselves, along with their own things to worry about, Tony understood that and made sure that their contracts reflected as such. But when they would be needed they would be called upon and be of assistance to the Avengers as a whole.

“I think we are all on the same page,” Xavier confirmed by looking over to his three most high-ranking members who all nodded in agreement with their leader.

“Good” Jennifer smiled and looked over to Matt, who had actually taken off his helmet after everyone had declared their loyalty to Tony, much to everyone’s surprise.

He briefly elaborated that if this was going to work that full disclosure was definitely something that would be needed, and as such, since Tony had already revealed so much to them it was only fair that Matt be honest with the people he would be working with, so long as everyone understood that he wanted to keep his identity a secret. Peter jumped on that too saying that Spider man’s identity needed to stay a secret as well.

Matt had started to go over the Defenders contracts with his team. “... and since we aren’t privately funded the contract there, with Stark Industries, simply is stating that any and all gear provided to
us from Tony Stark are his property and he has the ability to seize control if the situation calls for it.” Matt paused as the group signed the papers and flipped to the next page. “The next couple agreements are about housing at Starktower and the Compound…” Matt continued until the Defenders were all signed on and ready to go.

Tony watched as Jennifer and Matt took over the explanations of each contract, to each person. All of Tony’s hard work was coming together, and was being recognized, as everything had been met with approval and appreciation so far.

Tony had personalized each agreement and contract to each person’s abilities and standards.

Tony felt Levi shift on his shoulders in an anxious and bored way. The day had been dragging on and Tony agreed with Levi, he was getting a bit antsy too.

“Just a bit longer bud.” Tony muttered to the cloak.

A bag of chips and a water bottle slid across to table in front of Tony as Stephen moved a chair and sat beside the billionaire.

“Eat” the sorcerer simply said quietly as Matt had moved on to Deadpool. Everyone watching that interaction with amusement. Thankfully Matt had the patience of a saint.

“Not hungry” Tony muttered his chin resting on his arms; nerves were still twisting around inside of him as he was dwelling on everything that had just occurred.

“Tony…” Stephen reprimanded. His hand moving to rest on the genius’ back. “Just eat some chips please,” the sorcerer pleaded

Tony turned his head to look at the man, seeing the sorcerer looking at him with worried eyes made Tony groan lightly “Fine” he pouted “only so you stop staring at me with that ‘I kicked your puppy’ look in your eyes” He opened the bag of chips and started munching on them, quickly realizing how hungry he actually was.

The sorcerer’s hand was tracing circles and other patterns on Tony’s back.

“How’d you do that? How’d you get him to eat?” Rhodey asked from beside Tony. The billionaire hadn’t noticed that his best friend had been watching his and Stephen’s interaction.

“Rhodey, this is Stephen, remember the guy from before I became Iron Man?” Tony said as he was breaking into another bag of chips much to Stephen’s amusement, the sorcerer also slid a sandwich in front of the billionaire, without his notice.

“Wait the same guy that you were going to-?” Rhodes began to ask a question to but Tony cut him off with a look and a quick “Yes”

Rhodes then turned to Stephen a hard look in the colonel’s eyes. “If you hurt him, Magic or not there will be no stopping me from ending you” the dark skinned man threatened.

“Understood” Stephen nodded at Tony’s best friend, knowing full well that if he did hurt Tony, he’d allow this man his revenge.

“Aww honey bear, you do care” Tony cooed light heartedly as he took a bite from the sandwich that Stephen had set in front of him.

Rhodes and Stephen’s eyes met over the billionaire’s head and they both nodded to each other in a
mutual respect kind of way.

Matt finally finished up with Deadpool after some very amusing banter and Jennifer started going through the paperwork with Hope.

It continued on like this for a little longer until Matt and Jennifer had gotten through everyone.

The two lawyers concluded with their final statement to the entire group, and gave the floor back to Carol and Tony.

Wiping his mouth Tony started “I apologize for all the paperwork” he genuinely looked upset about having to do that to everybody “But the hope here is to protect and preserve a healthy relationship that I hope will form. Now before we close this meeting I just have a few more things I want to bring up. Wednesday the 5th, so in 4 days I have a press conference set up. This will be when I reveal what I’ve been working on with the UN and plan on introducing the New Avengers and company to the World. I’d appreciate if everyone here came but it’s not mandatory.” Tony glanced at Xavier “I respect wanting to stay in the dark with certain things” the two nodded at each other. He then glanced over Kamala, Peter and Matt “Come in full costume to preserve your identity.” The three nodded. “And expect backlash, with everyone still on edge from the Civil War and my disappearance there’s a lot of apprehension. We can talk more about the conference on Wednesday everyone please be here by 10 am if you wish to be apart of it, if you’re not on time I can’t promise your safety from Ms. Potts” at that he smiles as people around the room laugh, because everyone has heard of the famous Pepper Potts.

Tony had a serious look cross his face has jaw moving a bit in a nervous tick “I want to thank everyone for coming today, and hearing me out.” He smiles humorlessly “It’s sad that that’s what gets me excited, that I actually had people listen to me and trust what I had to say. I can’t promise that this is how I’ll always be. I’m a private person, always have been, regardless of what others say or think. But I know if this is going to work I need to give before I can get. So truly and honestly thank you.”

“You say that now” Jennifer laughs

“Right? Soon enough you’ll get annoyed with us being around especially since you’ve opened your doors to us” Jessica follows

“I feel like that might have been a mistake on your part” Deadpool includes

“We all meant what we said” Sue speaks in a gentle tone

“Hell yeah! This should be fun too; I’m excited for these team trainings and bonding exercises! It’s so boring just hanging around these three” Johnny exclaims.

“I’ll admit I know many of my students are looking forward to meeting you and some have expressed their excitement about spending time with Spider Man” Xavier inputs

“Cool! They know about me? That’s awesome!” Peter bounces.

Tony simply smiles as the display continues. Stephen’s shaking fingers still lightly drawing on his back.

“Oh!” Carol proclaims loudly to get everyone’s attention “I think on that note we should all move to the Avengers Wing, and actually do something fun! Anyone leaving, as Tony said thank you for coming. Now if everyone who is planning on staying and is going to hangout for the night, if you will follow me…” Carol instructs and begins to walk towards the exit.
Peter, and Kamala are quick to fall into place behind Carol, Deadpool, quickly follows them like a lost puppy. Jessica gets up and follows, quickly followed by the rest of her team. Matt moves beside her and they exchange some banter.

Hope looks to Tony in question and he responds with “Be there shortly.”

Jennifer and Hope both stand and leave.

After some debate with Sue, Reed decides to stay. Tony shoots Sue an amused look, she simply smiles, shrugs and strides out with a satisfied smirk on her face.

Looking to Xavier, who was exchanging some words with his colleagues. After a few moments Logan stands and follows out the way the others left.

“Tony, thank you for everything” Xavier wheels up to Tony’s chair

“Of course Charles, I wouldn’t have had it any other way,” Tony says shaking his outstretched hand.

“The woman and I must return to the school to ensure everyone has behaved, Logan has decided to stay” Charles informed Tony who simply nodded. “Until next time?” Charles asked not really elaborating on when next time was but Tony nodded nonetheless.

“Yup, until then” Tony smiled “You know the way out?”

“I’m sure CARTER can show us” Xavier spoke about Tony’s AI with respect, and that always made the billionaire happy, when others did that.

Rhodes and Vision followed them out talking among themselves, leaving Stephen and Tony alone.

Tony sighed and put his face in his hands. Feeling the emotional toll the last couple of hours had taken on him.

“You know you won’t need them right” Stephen says after a few moments of a comfortable silence.

“Hm?” Tony asked coming back to the present, at Stephen’s voice.

“The Rogues, you won’t need them, no one will need them. Everyone here who has shown loyalty to you, they are all the people that you will need.” Stephen proclaimed caressing Tony’s cheek. Tony leaned into the touch.

“Well at the very least they’ll be good cannon fodder, right?” Tony attempts to joke.

Stephen smirked, “True, I guess whatever threat comes around we just throw the Rogues out first and see how that goes.”

Tony sighs and places his own hand over Stephen’s “Besides if we try to exclude them they will just get in the way to try include themselves, this way when the threat does come around, and the pardons that I know certain people will push for go through, we can be prepared and try keep them in control. That’s a massive reason I needed Carol” Tony smirks “Captain Marvel vs. Captain America, though he lost that title, I’m sure he’s trying to cling to it like a toddler would with candy.”

Stephen laughed lightly at Tony’s statement, his eyes darkening quickly at a thought “If they end
up being pardoned and they are brought here, they won’t be allowed to be around you alone, you know that right?” Stephen whispered his face coming closer to Tony’s as their chairs now faced each other and Stephen was leaning in.

Tony swallowed, his Adam’s apple bobbed

Tony nodded not able to say words, as he was lost in Stephen’s eyes.

Their lips almost meeting as CARTER’s voice suddenly breaks them out of the trance,

“Chief, Doctor, Colonel Danvers is asking how long you two will be. The young AI sounded sheepish for intruding in on their intimate moment.

They pulled away, right, there were people waiting for them.

“Later” Stephen declares and stands. Pulling Tony up, or more like Levi lifted Tony up he kissed Tony’s forehead, took Tony’s hand. Intertwining fingers they walked out of the conference room.

CARTER shutting off the lights behind them

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“I was preparing to come find you gorgeous ass and drag you here if you didn’t show up soon” Darcy shot at Tony as the two men entered the large living room. Stephen looked around impressed. Tony really went all out. There were big comfortable sofas tons of pillows and blankets, a huge TV a fireplace the massive room looked comfortable and cozy but it had plenty of room at the same time.

“Darcy got impatient while waiting for all of you and just ordered a bunch of pizzas” Jane explained gesturing to the Mountain of Pizza boxes on one of the Coffee tables.

“I mean I was getting hungry and impatient too” Betty spoke up from her place on a couch in between bites of Pizza.

Laura shrugged at Tony as their eyes met she was holding Nate while the toddler was drinking from a bottle in her lap.

Tony saw Lila, and Cassie bombarding Kamala with questions at the were sitting on the floor munching on pizza.

Cooper and Peter were talking adamantly about something, the younger boy bounced a bit as Deadpool walked up to the boys with a box of pizza and plopped down joining their conversation.

Seeing Cassie Tony looked for her mom and step dad. Laura saw this and gave Tony a quick explanation on how they were taking advantage of the time alone, and were going out on a date. Tony had a look of concern flash across his face; the woman then assured Tony that they were taking all the proper precautions while they were out.

As Laura talked with Tony, Nate got curious who his mother was talking to, looking around he caught sight of Tony and babbled a bit through his bottle, when his mother ignored him, he made a noise of protest which got her and Tony’s attention.
Tony knowing exactly what the boy wanted he released Stephen’s hand and walked over to Laura and the toddler. Levi flares out behind him, causing Stephen to roll his eyes at the eccentric cloak but enjoyed the warm feel in his gut at the sight of Tony.

The billionaire picked Nate up from his mother’s arms and the child babbled happily. Tony took the bottle from Laura and handed it to the boy who latched back on without fuss.

Laura smiled sadly wishing that was Clint here doing these things. Protecting his family, caring for his kids. Instead here was a man that her husband had turned on, was caring for her family as though they were his own. And by any means necessary Laura would make it so, that’s precisely why she encouraged her kids to address Tony as Uncle Tony, this man didn’t deserve the shit he had received and she was determined to show him that he still could be happy. Though seeing him with the man he had entered with, holding hands, had been a slight shock but she quickly deduced that, that’s where the billionaire must have been disappearing too most nights.

“You mind if I go grab some food? He’s been really needy since we left the tower I-“ she began but he cut her off with a look and a head motion of ‘go’

He sat on the couch and grabbed a pillow to help prop the boy and his arm up so they could lounge comfortably.

“So any movies anyone wants to watch?” Carol asks after grabbing food and sitting, everyone was getting comfortable after grabbing pop and Pizza.

Stephen slid onto the couch with a plate with a couple pieces of Pizza and two water bottles.

“We should probably watch something kid friendly” Laura spoke up as she came back to the couch.

“Inside Out!” Cassie and Lila shouted. Kamala nodded her head in approval.

“Nooo! Big Hero 6.” Cooper whines

“You watch that all the time Coop” Laura says softly.

“Anyone have any child friendly movies they are interested in?” Claire speaks up for the first time since Tony had entered the room; she was sitting by Luke with her legs resting over his lap.

“As long as it’s not Minions I’m cool” Jessica comments Colleen agrees.

“We could watch the live action remake of Cinderella” Kamala inputs

The two younger girls eyes lit up as they shouted their approval.

Tony had done a quick look through the uplink of movies they could watch as people around the room debated

“How about that Alexander movie?” The billionaire asks after pulling out of the uplink.

“Oh Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY?” Peter asked perking up.

Resounding sounds of approval were made around the room.

“Carter, my girl would you please?” Tony requests, the lights dim, and TV turns on. The movie popped up after a second.
Sounds of amazement were heard.

“I’m never going to get used to that,” Jane mutters from her place on the couch, referring to having and AI at your beck and call.

Stephen had begun to help Tony with his pizza by holding it in front of his mouth for the billionaire to take a bite every now and again, along with helping him with his water, due to the fact that Nate was falling asleep, and wasn’t holding his now nearly finished bottle, but he was still nursing from it. So Tony’s hands were a bit full. Stephen has no qualms helping though, and doing such a domestic action while Tony held a sleeping child caused a warm sensation to pool in the sorcerer’s gut.

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The movie finished and Laura took a sleeping Nate from Tony. She proceeded to take him to her room where her and the kids would stay if they were at the compound.

The kids, Peter, Cooper, Kamala, Lila, and Cassie all decided to go hang out in the game room, which had a lot of fun things to do as Peter kept hyping it up. “There is even a Bowling Lane!” the teen exclaimed as the kids ran down the hall.

Tony briefly wondered how much crazier it would be when Harley started coming around. He wasn’t going to be able to make it until Winter break sadly but Tony was excited to see what would happen when he did come, but at the same time maybe he should be more nervous if anything.

Johnny and Deadpool showed interest in joining the kids until Card Against Humanity came into the conversation. The two adult children then started pushing the fact that they needed to play that.

Carol had suggested splitting up and playing different games in different groups because the amount of people. Which was quickly shot down, especially after Tony revealed he had plenty of expansion packs of Cards for everyone to play.

Johnny got even more excited at that. “Did you get the special bigger, blacker dick card that was hidden?”

Tony laughed and nodded, “Actually Harley told me about the hidden card.”

After collecting around the large dining room table that was just in the next room the game was brought out at the rules were quickly explained. During the time of set up Jessica carried in several bottles of alcohol proclaiming Rando had to be in the game. Which in turn needed a brief explanation. Tony passed around a few blank cards to allow people that wished to add a black card or a white card, to do so. Stephen smirked at Tony as he added a couple of his own, Deadpool and Johnny added a few, Jessica cackled after adding some, and took a swig for a bottle she had claimed as hers. A few more were added and the game was ready to go.

“Ok everyone knows the rules? We have a lot of people, and now we have alcohol in the mix so this should definitely go well” Tony laughed rubbing his hands together. “Vision since you aren’t playing and obviously can’t drink you are in charge of putting Rando in.” Tony pointed at the android. “If anyone chooses Rando's card or cards everyone has to take a shot. If you are going home tonight you are allowed to take a shot of water or something” Tony reiterates one last time.
“Let’s do this” Johnny pumps his fists

“I’ve never played with this many people” Deadpool admits sounding excited. “So who pooped last?” The Merc asks. It is decided that Hope starts since she just went to the bathroom.

“Introducing the amazing superhero/ sidekick duo! It’s ‘BLANK’ and ‘BLANK’” She reads out.

Tony instructs Vision to pick two cards from a pile and to give them to Hope.

Everyone makes their play.

“That everyone?” Hope asks everyone nods and hope begins reading out the cards. chuckles are heard through the room as she reads the cards she was given. “Ok hmm” Hope had narrowed it down to ‘Spectacular Abs’, ‘sea of troubles’ and ‘Attitude’, ‘Hot mess’ “Who is Attitude and Hot mess?” Carol raised her hand and received the black card

Reed was next “Science will never explain ‘BLANK’” the man smirk at that, several exclamations in excitement were made around the room as people slammed their cards down proclaiming that theirs would be the winner.

The couple options that caused laughter or any kind of response was: ‘Drinking Responsibly’ which caused laughter from Jessica and Tony and others to chuckle, ‘My sex life’ caused Johnny to nearly topple off his chair as Sue smiled in amusement, ‘Teaching a robot to love’ made Tony release a sound of indignation and everyone had amused smiles at his reaction, the winner though was ‘Getting your dick stuck in a Chinese finger trap’ which had been Deadpool’s card. The Merc even admitted to trying this at one point and recommended that no one ever try it themselves, causing many to nearly fall out of their chairs in near hysterics.

Next was Tony “I don’t believe in God, I believe in ‘BLANK’” Tony took a sip of his rum and coke as he waited for everyone to give him their cards. He had never felt this relaxed or at ease with the original Avengers. It was fascinating to him how simply having someone around who showed that they cared, and a group of people that actually listened to him, gave him a whole new outlook on life in general.

Coming back to the game he read off the options narrowing it down to: ‘A genetic predisposition for alcohol’ which he had yelled a resounding “FACT” after reading the card, that cause a few chuckles and some sad looks at that comment. The other card he liked was ‘Bill Nye the Science Guy’ which was the one he chose because it was funny, turns out that card was Rando’s so everyone had to take a shot.

When Stephen read out his black card, everyone laughed that the deck was set up. “What will I bring back in time to convince people that I am a powerful wizard?” A bright smile was on the sorcerer’s face in amusement as he waited for people to choose their white card. Reading out the cards, Stephen narrowed it down to ‘Nothing’ and ‘A really cool hat’ which he didn’t understand why that was so funny to him, but it was and it won. The black card went to Hope for that one. The game continued on like that.

A few turns later was Matt’s turn. Jessica picked the card for him and laughed before reading it.

“In the beginning there was ‘BLANK’ and then the Lord said “Let there be ‘BLANK’”’ Cards we’re collected, Jessica continued to laugh as she read through the complete sentences for Matt, inserting the white cards collected. The last one nearly caused her to fall over “In the beginning there was World peace and then the Lord said “Let there be White people”, oh god that’s too perfect!” Matt had a large smile on his face as he declared that the winner, the black card went to
Tony who sang a “Thank you” as he took the card.

A lot of Rando's were chosen and the adults around the table were getting pretty drunk.

Tony made sure to Inform CARTER and FRIDAY that they were to keep an eye on the kids and make sure they got to sleep which CARTER informed the billionaire that Kamala had already told the AI to let the adults know that they would probably end up asleep in the theater room at the end of the night.

Tony was thankful that he was able to control extremis to an extent that allowed him to be able to get drunk and have a good time with friends. Friends, that was such a foreign feeling, as he sat there he realized all those time he thought he was with friends, deep down his gut was just never into it, and now he knew why. But this right now laughing, making inappropriate jokes, drinking, having fun, all of this is what he had been missing.

“That was perfect” Carol chuckled as Stephen accepted the card.

“Alright!” Hope’s sudden exclamation surprises several adults around the room. “I think…” she slurs a bit and trails off “I think we are drunk enough to play some truth or dare” she finishes

“Fuck yes!” Deadpool, obviously not drunk but very much enjoying himself, shouted

Laura decided it was getting late and she had, had enough. Opting out she decided to go check on the kids and probably go to bed. She gave Tony a kiss on his head and squeezed his shoulder, he smiled at her, thanked her, and everyone bid her goodnight.

Logan also decided to bow out for the night, he thank Tony for the hospitality, in his own way, and promised that they would talk later. Deadpool and him exchanged some quips back and forth before the mutant left.

Darcy had a tough time talking Jane into staying but Betty was able to intervene and talked the fellow Doctor and scientist to staying

“I say let’s move back to the living room,” Jennifer suggested. The said woman was still fairly sober due to the gamma radiation in her system, she couldn’t really get drunk but it never stopped her from enjoying a drink, and catching a small buzz.
The group of adults meandered back to the living room.

Tony had his arm tucked into the crook of Stephen’s arm. They were both pretty drunk. The two had been exchanging heated looks, that were causing others to make fun of them through the game of Cards, but they definitely didn’t care. And the slight contact plus alcohol. Tony was ready to jump the sorcerer.

“Ok so I vote that Tony starts us out.” Hope slurs with a wicked grin, no one fights it “Truth or Dare Star baby” Tony rolled his eyes, oh boy Hope was really drunk, he forgot how much of a lightweight she was.

“See I know you, and I know this is a trick question, you’re really drunk” Tony was rambling slightly “So I’m afraid of what you’re gonna ask me to do. You were always so awful to me in boarding school” Tony admits. “Fucking A, fine Dare.”

Hope cackles evilly giving a glance at Stephen her grin widening.

“You have to do an body shot on Stephen, without a glass” her smile widened as she spoke.

Tony bit his bottom lip looking at Stephen to see the sorcerer’s reaction.

Holy Fuck.

The darkened stare that Stephen had on the billionaire made him gulp.

“I… uh… I need salt and a lemon.” Tony’s voice was low, his eyes stuck on Stephen’s

“Oh god we really don’t need to see this” Rhodes complained.

“Dude speak for yourself,” Darcy states running out of the room to the kitchen.

“You ok with me doing this Stephanie?” Tony asked his voice low and husky; they were easily able to tune out the others around them.

Stephen smirked, and with the heavy feeling of alcohol buzzing in his brain he slowly stripped off his shirt keep his eyes locked on Tony’s golden amber eyes.

Wolf whistles echoed around the room and Darcy skidded back into the room with salt and a cut up lemon.

“Jesus Christ the sorcerer has fucking abs” Jennifer licked her lips. Betty was smiling widely at the events in front of her. Colleen and Claire were leaning forward interested.

Stephen lays on the floor propping his head up so he can watch. Tony straddled his hips, a wide grin across his face.

Darcy handed the salt and a lemon wedge to the billionaire, and backed away.

Tony smirked and put the lemon wedge up to Stephen’s lips, the sorcerer gave Tony a wink and took the lemon between his teeth.

Sue and Jane were a bit red faced as Tony sprinkled some salt up Stephen’s chest and poured tequila into the sorcerer’s belly button.

Cheers rang through the room as Tony licked the alcohol out of Stephen’s belly button. The billionaire continued upward, licking his way up Stephen’s chest getting all the salt off the sorcerer
before taking the lemon out from between Stephen’s lips. Biting down on the lemon he then spit it to the side and leaned down, kissing his lover. Both men moaned into the kiss.

The room was drowning in cheers especially from the women… and Deadpool.

Deadpool was very loud in his approval of the show.

“Hot damn, was not expecting that.” Hope fanned herself.

Tony sat back and looked up at his childhood friend. The billionaire felt the erection beneath his and smile widened “Enjoyed the show?” He asked in general

“Fuck yes! Oh god dammit!” Darcy exclaimed after a moment as Tony sat there allowing Stephen to calm down a bit before getting up. “I didn’t record it! No one is gonna believe me when I tell them I witnessed Tony Stark doing a body shot!” She pouted.

Tony then got up and held his hand out to Stephen, helping the sorcerer up. Stephen sat down on the couch preparing to put his shirt back on when Tony snatched it away, and threw it across the room. The billionaire plopped on the couch and kicked his legs on top of Stephen’s lap “Keep your shirt off baby, I’m enjoying the view” Tony purred and turned his focus back to the group.

“Ok Claire you’ve been far too quiet over there, Truth or Dare” Tony prodded the nurse.

“What he really means is Dare or Dare cause honestly if anyone chooses truth they are chickening out, Just saying” Johnny says from his seat on the couch, taking a sip from his beer.

“Obviously Dare” Claire rolled her eyes waiting for Tony to choose her fate.

“Go over there and do your best sexy crawl to Luke” Tony pointed to where she needed to start. The nurse smiled flirtatiously at Luke and did her thing causing many of the men to wolf whistle.

Claire dared Jessica to give Matt a lap dance, and he was allowed to touch her to get the true experience. Matt was a bit red through the performance but he clearly enjoyed it, as did Jessica for that matter

Jessica dared Johnny to grab a broom and do his sexiest dance with it. Which got recorded by Sue.

Johnny dared Sue to whisper the names of all 50 states into Reeds ear in the most seductive way possible. Reed ended up moaning which cause a riot of laughter from everyone. Sue flipped her blonde hair over her shoulder in pride.

Sue turned to Darcy and dared her to demonstrate her best technique for a blowjob using her fingers for one minute.

Darcy did it without hesitation and throughout the minute she was keeping eye contact with Johnny, who was watching her with hungry eyes.

Darcy Turned to Jane and dared the shy scientist to get blindfolded and tickled for a minute. Jane nearly peed herself as several hands had tickled her in spots she didn’t know she was ticklish in.

It continued like this as everyone was eventually given a dare, by 3 am they started to unwind and those who had gotten drunk were coming down.

It was decided that a movie would be put on and everyone could find a spot to curl up and sleep or make their way to their own room.
Tony didn’t notice or care what movie had been put on he had already comfortably curled up on Stephen’s lap by the time the decision to go to sleep was made.

Stephen, with the help of Levi, of course, who had been flitting around through the night checking on the two of them and from Stephen could figure, was also spending time with the kids as well.

Stephen laid down on the wide couch, Levi brought a pillow for him and they adjusted Tony so the billionaire was draped over Stephen’s still bare chest. The sorcerer hugged Tony closer, if that was possible and closed his eyes listening to the shuffle of others getting comfortable around the room. Levi draped over the two of them offering itself as a blanket. The Sorcerer and Billionaire passed out without much more fuss.

Rhodes watched this display from across the room as he had been watching their constant displays throughout the night. What bothered the Colonel was Tony had given no notice to him about being in a relationship. He had noticed a difference in the billionaire shortly after his surgery but had attributed it to finally getting a decent plan in action and surrounding himself with trustworthy people. After seeing Tony today with Dr. Strange everything made a bit more sense. The fact that Tony had opened up as much as he had at the meeting had shocked the Colonel.

There had even been things he himself hadn’t known, revealed.

It was very clear that whoever Stephen had been back before Tony became Iron Man definitely wasn’t the same as the man here, right now, holding the broken man that was his best friend.

Rhodes had been so relieved to see a bit of the old Tony tonight. He got a glimpse of the young, carefree Tony again while the new team had been bonding. Rhodes hoped that there would be more nights like this before the universe would come back full force and rest itself on Tony’s shoulders as it had been for awhile now.

But looking around the room Rhodes felt hope that this was the start of something new.

“Jim, come lay with me” Carol slurred tiredly. Since Jennifer had dared Carol to make out with him she had become a bit more clingy, and who was Rhodes to deny the beautiful lady some cuddle time. With one last look to his best friend, who was covered by the weird cloak, he turned and laid down on the comfortable floor, Carol curling up into him.

‘This was definitely a good start’ was the last thing Rhodes thought before falling asleep.

Chapter End Notes

I’m fairly happy with this chapter!
I apologize for any errors in my writing I am literally too impatient to ask someone to Beta read...
Next chapter Natashalie shows her face, the press conference, and I wonder how the Rogues will feel about Tony’s new team?
Wednesday came around quickly. Tony was laying in bed, his arm resting under his head. A quick glance to the side showed that Stephen was sitting beside the bed, meditating. The billionaire turned back and stared at the ceiling deep in thought.

The weekend had been amazing. He couldn’t get over how easily and effortlessly everyone just fit together.

Sunday morning had been a massive affair. There had been breakfast and coffee, which Tony soon found that Jennifer shared his love for coffee. So when Tony showed the fellow coffee lover his good stuff, very expensive imported coffee, she nearly blew his eardrums out with the squeal she made.

The kids had stampeded into the kitchen retrieved their food and quickly retreated back to where they came from. Tony later found out that they had holed themselves up in the theater room and were binge watching the plethora of movies at their disposal.

Breakfast was comfortable as the adults talked. Tony asked Hope at one point how she figured out about him and Stephen being a thing, at that she gave a look.

As did many others around the room.

“You weren’t really hiding Hun” Hope said softly “But he appears to be really good for you Star.” His childhood friend smiled at the billionaire, who blushed a bit in embarrassment, he ducked his head, taking a bite of eggs.

Breakfast continued on with easy conversation.

Reed and his group left shortly after breakfast. Sue hugged Tony, promising him that they would be there on Wednesday. Ben thanked Tony for a great night, and Johnny said a distracted goodbye as he continued to stare dreamily at Darcy as he had been all morning. Sue ended up dragging her young brother out as they were going to leave him behind if he didn’t get moving.
Deadpool ate and decided that he had some things to check in on before Wednesday came about. Tony called a car to take the Merc back to the city.

Everyone else opted to hang out and spend the day together. Conversations were had, some light, some serious.

Tony disclosed some more information to the adults, who were curious of King T’Challa’s whereabouts in all of this. Since the king of Wakanda had teamed with Tony during the airport fight. Tony told them how he had found out about T’Challa being there, and how he apprehended Zemo, leaving with Rogers and Barnes, and essentially leaving him behind. Which then took a brief explanation to Darcy, Jane, Betty, and Laura, as to what had occurred in Siberia, which much to Tony’s relief Jessica and Jennifer had taken over the explanation as the billionaire ad obviously not wanted to discuss it himself.

Darcy’s pleaded for Tony to make her a strong enough taser to knock out a super soldier, he laughed, and quickly agreed.

Tony continued to tell them how he was actually working with the Kings kid sister, who was almost as smart as him, on repairing Barnes’ mind, to help the soldier to become trigger free.

Everyone praised Tony in their own way at his ability to do something like that for the man that killed his parents, brainwashed or not.

Jessica got a weird look on her face and had then proceeded to rant about hypocrites. How Wanda was after Tony’s head for her parents death and how T’Challa was prepared to kill Barnes himself when he thought he had killed his dad. But Tony? Apparently Tony couldn’t be mad, and was nearly killed in the process of his grief.

After that the topics went to lighter, more fun options.

Carol brought up ideas for team bonding activities, and with Tony, Hope, and Danny there were many options available to them.

Hope and Danny were both very insistent in helping fund the Avengers core team in such cases. It had even been part of their contracts so Tony couldn’t fight with them.

Tony and Stephen went back to the Tower that night since Wong had cleared Stephen to be out of the sanctum for the Weekend.

So Stephen portaled himself, and everyone else except Peter and Kamala, who Tony was driving home to the Tower.

Carol, Rhodes, Vision, Jane, Darcy, Jennifer, Betty, Laura, her kids, Cassie and her mother and stepfather were all permanent inhabitants of the Tower everybody else had their own rooms available to them but had decided to strictly use them when staying there, when hanging out or what not.

Same with the compound, with, well everyone. The compound would be used for team stuff and if they stayed there it would basically be for a sleepover or something like they had the previous weekend.

Tony blinked coming back for a moment, sighing he looked at his watch 6:30, only 30 minutes had passed since he last looked.
He was so nervous for today.

Looking to the side again he watched his man sitting peacefully.

God in the few weeks Stephen had been reintroduced into the billionaire’s life so much has changed.

Tony went back to staring at the ceiling.

He flinched remembering who was currently back under his roof, though she was in a cell. It still made him uneasy

Natasha had shown up Monday morning. Tony had been taken his sweet time getting out of bed especially with Stephen distracting him with his glorious mouth.

He was going to be needed at the Compound soon though, as people where setting up there today.

But when FRIDAY announced that Natasha was in the lobby of Starktower, the billionaire almost passed out for lack of oxygen due to the panic attack that hit him.

Stephen took control of the situation, alerting Carol and Rhodes who went to retrieve the spy while the sorcerer worked to calm his lover down.

Carol and Rhodes put her into a containment cell until they were ready to talk with her.

When they did get around to talking with her it was after Tony had eaten and calmed down.

Carol, Rhodes, Tony, and Stephen, as support for Tony, went down and talked with her.

What she told the billionaire sent him into another panic attack.

Apparently she had gone snooping around in Siberia and found the bunker. She then proceeded to find evidence that Rogers and his encounter had been recorded, by Zeno or Hydra no one was sure, but there was a copy made by the looks of the equipment there and from what the codes Natasha found, same with the video of his parents murder. So now he had to wonder and worry who had the copies and when they would release it. If they would release them.

The spy assured him she had destroyed any lasting evidence that was there, but that didn’t stop Tony from asking FRIDAY to alert the council that she would be remote piloting a suit to check on the status of the bunker and to check for any more evidence that might be there.

Natasha then continued on to apologize for trusting Rogers, and pleaded with him to please understand that she had made a mistake. Rogers had told her he would tell Tony, so she had dropped it after that.

He shook his head at her in sad way. “It’s going to take more that an I’m sorry,” he had told her bitterly before leaving her with Carol and Rhodes to deal with. He had too much other shit to worry about. He really didn’t want to deal with the two timing bitch, that he realized too late, was only in it for herself.

Tony sighed and flipped himself into a sitting position. There was no way he was getting back to sleep the nerves of the upcoming press conference were eating at him. Sitting on the side of the
bed he stared at the sorcerer. He was shirtless, and his hair was beautifully bedridden.

Levi settled himself around Tony’s shoulders, surprising the genius.

“Hey bud, Stephen asked you to make sure I stay in bed?” Tony asked the cloak as he felt fabric try pull him back into bed. “Levi, stop, I’m not leaving the room I promise.” The genius vowed.

He made a decision after a moment and stood up, grabbed a pillow from the bed, and padded across the plush carpet towards his sorcerer.

He really needed to get a soft rug like this for their room at the sanctum, currently they were at the Tower because Tony had been up late with Carol preparing for the Conference and Stephen had shown up, and dragged the billionaire to bed so he was rested for the next day.

Levi ruffled itself in a questioning manner.

“I’m just finding myself somewhere more comfortable.” Tony explained at the cloaks question.

Placing the pillow on Stephen’s lap the Billionaire lays down placing his head on the pillow in the sorcerer’s lap. Levi moved itself so it could rest over Tony, blanketing the billionaire.

A few moments later Tony felt his eyes droop and the feeling of his exhaustion hit him.

Yup he was definitely going to get a plush rug for Stephen to meditate on at the sanctum, just so Tony could cuddle up to him while he did, because this was definitely going to be a thing that happens again.

Tony quickly fell asleep after that.

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Stephen blinked his eyes open his brain slowly starting back up after his meditation.

Today would be a very long and tough day, Stephen would be lying if he didn’t admit he was a bit apprehensive of what today would bring.

As his senses came back to him, he felt a weight on his lap that hadn’t been there before. Looking down he was met with the sight of Tony sleeping, curled up in front of him, with his head resting on a pillow that had been placed in the sorcerer’s lap. Levi draped over the billionaire. It collar lifted in acknowledgment at the sorcerer’s attention.

“Did he do this?” Stephen whispered, asking Levi, while carding a hand through Tony’s hair.

The Cloak bobbed its collar in an affirmative answer.

A gentle smile twitched at Stephen’s lips, “Can you place him in the bed for me?” He asked the sentient cloak, which Levi responded by lifting the billionaire up and moving him to the bed.

Stephen stood, his feet numb and asleep from the lack of blood flow, but honestly he wasn’t going to complain. The sorcerer limped slightly to the bathroom as feeling began returning to his legs.

After taking care of his business he made his way to the bed. Wincing a bit at the pins and needles
as he climbed back into the bed, and looked at the time. It was a little after 7:30. They could probably get away with another half hour or more of sleep before they had to get up and get ready for the conference, which was taking place at the compound.

Stephen closed his eyes and pulled Tony’s back against his chest. Kissing him behind the ear.

“Fri, wake us up at 8:30” Stephen decided to give them a bit longer.

“Of course Doc” She said quietly.

Stephen buried his face in Tony’s hair and went to sleep.

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Wakanda

5 pm (11 am New York)

A knock on the hut door was heard, Wanda grumbled from her place on the dirty cement floor. She was laying on the floor in attempt to stay cool, she was currently fanning herself the best she could with what she had, and trying to suck in the cold from the cement, which wasn’t all that cold.

“Who is it?” she moaned in frustration.

Steve walked past the woman and opened the door to be greeted by Okoye.

“Ma’am,” he bowed his head in respect to her “What can I do for you?”

“You and your team have been requested to attend audience with his Majesty.” She replied holding back an eye roll at the man’s pretend show of respect.

“Why?” Clint barked out from behind Steve.

The woman gave Clint a look of annoyance.

Sam nudged Clint hard in his ribs as he stepped up beside the archer to see who was at the door.

“He has requested you be there, that is all I know” Okoye lies easily.

Wanda narrowed her eyes at the woman from her spot on the floor “And what if-“ she began but was cut off by Steve

“We will be there. What time?” The Ex-Captain asked.

The Dora simply said “30 minutes” and then turned away, to begin walking away from the hut.

“Bitch” Wanda muttered everyone ignored her.

“Who was that?” Scott asked groggily rubbing his eyes of sleep.
“One of T’Challa’s guards, apparently the King wishes to see us.” Steve answered looking thoughtful.

“When are we leaving this stupid place?” Wanda whined not liking that she was being ignored.

“We are safe here for now.” Rogers glanced down at her “Besides Bucky is here and he’s getting help so we stay” he said firmly.

Wanda groaned, “It’s so hot” she laid back and continued to fan herself.

“Get over it princess” Clint snapped at her suddenly and sat down on the couch, kicking his legs up, Wanda shot him a look of hurt, and frustration.

“T’Challa made sense when he kicked us out, at least he still gave us a place to stay” Scott said quietly as he made his way to a chair.

“I wonder what he wants to see us about?” Sam asked the group, specifically Steve, but it looked like the super soldier was lost in his own thoughts.

After a few minutes of silence he responded with a shrug

“Well maybe we should, you know, clean up a bit and, uh head over?” Sam asked trying to poke their leader into giving some sort of instruction.

“Um, yeah” Steve said after another moment of silence. “Everyone wash up and let’s head out”

Clint muttered something about going to get some water from the pump to wash up with and shuffled out the door.

The archer had been alternating between anger, and depression since they had arrived in Wakanda 3 months ago, it had gotten worse after the truth of what Rogers did came out. Clint was mad at Tony but was also mad at Steve, he was mad at himself and he was extremely pissed at the world. He missed his kids and wondered how they were doing? Was Nate still having a tough time with teething? Was he keeping Laura up? Clint should be there helping. They had just celebrated the baby’s first birthday and he was going to go to the lake with Cooper and Lila so they could have some one on one time without the baby. Clint fucked up, and he was just so angry and annoyed all the time. What was he going to do?

Wanda got up and went to find a new pair of clothes that wasn’t dampened with sweat. She made a high-pitched noise of irritation at finding no clean clothes.

“Everything ok Wanda?” Steve asked poking his head in her ‘room’; the hut had small pockets off of the main room that held a mattress and a dresser in each.

“Steve” she whined dragging his name out “I don’t have any clean clothes”

“Oh Hun you were supposed to wash clothes the other day while we had the tub full of soapy water” Steve said gently to the red head.

He was referring to the fact that their bathroom had a large tub, but the only water source being the water pump outside, they would have to fill the water themselves if they wanted a bath, given it
was cold water but in this heat it felt good. Anyways every week they filled the tub with soapy water so they could wash their clothes.

“But I’ve never done it like that” she complained, feeling her magic spark at her fingertips at her irritation.

“I’m sorry Wanda that just how we need to do it right now, we can’t force T’Challa to let us stay in his palace. And he’s been gracious enough to let us stay here. So please just try find something clean and I’ll help you with your laundry later. I really don’t want to make the King wait too long” the super soldier tried to placate Wanda.

With an exasperated sigh she said a quiet “Ok” and dug through her dirty clothes. If T’Challa didn’t have so many people watching him maybe she would be able to ‘persuade’ the King to do the right thing but since they’ve been in Wakanda something has been dulling her abilities. At first she thought it had been lasting effects of the collar but now 3 months later she wasn’t so sure any more. Picking out some clothes she sighed and got dressed.

Sam watched as the others separate to get ready. He watched Steve, who had gotten more and more distracted lately, go off to comfort Wanda. He groaned hating how he continued to coddle her like she was a kid. He sure as fuck believed she was Steve’s erratic behavior got exponentially worse after finding out what happened to Tony, the super soldier started obsessing over the billionaire, asking anyone who got information from the outside, if there was any news on the man. Sam sighed, he missed his friend

The ex-pararescue wasn’t sure what he should be doing anymore. With his dishonorable discharge from the Air Force and the status of wanted criminal on him, he was stuck. Forever being labeled as Captain America’s sidekick. Fucking hell. Steve was sure that they would get pardoned eventually, but how long would that take? Oh and if he ever did get back to the states he was not looking forward to seeing his mama. She was going to lay into him good.

The man got up, stretched and went to change, wondering what T’Challa had to tell them.

Scott missed Cassie. He hoped she was a okay. He missed Hope. But knew that the woman was going to whoop his ass if he ever got back.

He fucked up big time. Captain America had called him, and he came running, hoping to prove himself. Only later finding out that the Captain was just as selfish as next person.

He had been talking with T’Challa about surrendering, but the King ask the man to wait that there were things at play that even he didn’t know about yet, and how it was unwise to throw a wrench into plans until there was a set course. Or something along those lines.

So Scott hoped that whatever the King wished to see them about tonight had something with them going back home. If not he knew he would definitely need to work a bit more on his patience while he was here.

*****
Almost 6 pm (Nearly 12 pm in New York)

Steve took a deep breath attempting to center himself. A few Dora Milaje were leading his team down the hall.

A door opened revealing a conference room of sorts.

“Wait here.” One of the women demanded and the door shut hard, closing them in. Everyone but Steve sat down. The super soldier started pacing nervously wondering what was happening and why they were here.

The door creaked open and Shuri’s head peaked in.

“Oh good!” She said excitedly a smile that matched her tone on her face. They had no clue what she was excited about and definitely weren’t going to ask about it. “You’re here,” she says as though she didn’t already know.

The teen plops down in one of the bigger more comfortable chairs and spins, lifting her wrist up she messes with the beads on her wrist and a projection, much like Tony would have, pops up over the table, at the same time the door to the room opens again and T’Challa strides in.

“Hurry brother it’s almost starting” Shuri spun in the chair again, a wide smile on her face.

The King rolls his eyes at his kid sister and pauses looking to Rogers who had stopped pacing. His eyes locked onto the projection over the table.

“You wished to be informed about Dr. Starks well-being and such, I figured you would wish to see the press conference he is having today” T’Challa said simply and continued walking to where his sister was sitting, moving to sit beside her.

Steve, Sam, Clint, and Scott watched the video feed in front of them dumbfounded. Wanda just looked pissed. The display was currently a view of a camera panning around showing the yard of the Avengers compound; there were dozens of seats for press and media members and such, which were packed. There was a large stage setup with the obviously newly renovated Compound sitting in the background; there was a long table with microphones in front of each chair.

“Looks like they are going with the panel style meeting” Shuri clapped her hands excitedly.

“Wha-?” Steve began to ask what this was all about but was cut of with Shuri’s “Shhhh!” As she points at the display.

Tony, Rhodes and some Blonde woman walks up the stage each holding a microphone.

“Holy shit that’s Carol Danvers” Sam hisses leaning forward onto the table. Steve sits down.

There was applause as the Trio came to the center of the stage in front of the table.

“Oh my god it’s the billionaire!” The billionaire points to himself and bows a bit. Rhodes rolled his eyes at his friend’s tactics, as the press laughed, “It’s been a long time. For 3 months I’ve been hard at work, putting together what I hope will be exactly what we need. But before I continue I’d like to introduce you all to my best friend Colonel James Rhodes, you all remember him he’s been
my right hand man for many years now, you may also know him as War Machine.” The crowd clapped their hands respectfully.

That was when Sam realized that Rhodes was standing. How? Guilt had been plaguing the man for months, that’s when he caught sight of the obviously mechanical braces of the Colonel. Oh.

“And now I want to introduce you to my left hand woman Colonel Carol Danvers, many know her as Captain Marvel. I have been blessed with her presence and help in getting everything put together and ready the last month.” The crowd clapped again.

Steve examined Tony on the display. He looked good, maybe a little tired but he looked better than he had before the Accords fiasco occurred.

“Hello and thank you for coming here today, I’m sure many of you just came to see Tony, Right” Carol smiles brightly looking around as everyone laughs and some affirmative yes’s are heard. “I’ve been so honored to work with this man here,” she places a hand on his shoulder, Steve feels a twist in his gut at the gentle smile they shared, Tony replaced him. “And I really hope you are all excited to see what we’ve been able to accomplish in the last couple of months.” Carol lowered her microphone as Rhodes raised his.

“We ask that you hold all questions until we are all sitting down and prepared to take them”

Carol and Rhodes left Tony’s side and moved to sit behind the table placing their microphones in the empty holders.

Tony lifts his microphone back up. “So many of know about the Accords. The original Avengers team and I had a bit of a falling out over them. It’s sad, but the truth.” Tony had a sad smile on his face Steve wondered if Tony missed them or not.

Wanda was grumbling something and Shuri shushed the red head.

“I wish I could say that they had faith in my ability to have their back, but I don’t think that was the case” Tony’s voice got bitter for a moment, Steve remembered that tone well, especially when the billionaire was offended he’d use it. The genius cleared his throat “But I’ve been working tirelessly to amend any laws that would hurt, harm, or restrict anyone in a negative way. And honestly I can’t take all the credit.” Suddenly Tony’s smile became a genuine smile full of warmth. “Since before June I had kept a list of enhanced humans, inhumans, and mutants. People with exceptional abilities, people that I would be able pass the baton onto” cries of outrage occurred and Tony smiled fondly, and raised his hand in a placating motion. “I went to Colonel Danvers and asked her assistance, preparing to back off once I helped her get everything together.” So Tony was just going to hand the Avengers away? Even after Steve had specifically given the team over to the billionaire?

“But no fear everyone! The beautiful Colonel Danvers appealed to better senses and talked me into hanging around and co-leading with her and Colonel Rhodes. So without further ado! I would love to introduce you to the New Avengers team! Everyone ready?” The crowd cheered at Tony’s question.

Tony looked so much younger at that moment the smile on his face brought so much youth forward that it nearly knocked the wind out of the super soldier.

Shuri clapped excitedly with a small squeal escaping her body.

T’Challa leaned forward interested.
“New Avengers?” Sam whispered

Wanda looked horrified at the idea of what Tony was saying.

Scott sat forward intrigued, so this was why he was told to wait l, because it would have complicated more lives than necessary

Clint had his head in his hands. The only visible thing from the man was his hands were shaking, from what, was unknown at the moment.

“Great! But one last thing I would like to include before I do. The Avengers Initiative now includes more than just the New Avengers, we now have partnered up with a few outside parties. Though I assure you everyone who has joined the initiative has signed the Accords and also have legally binding contracts with myself. I trust everyone I will be introducing you to today, but keep in mind there are also some who wish to stay anonymous, so please respect that. Everyone has somebody they wish to protect, including heroes.” Tony spoke in a solemn tone but still smiling.

“Anyways the first group who has joined the initiative is the X-Men, which they aren’t her at that moment but that’s ok. Now I know many of you know about their team’s existence, just not much else, and I’m sorry to say you won’t be learning much from me. I again assure you that the US government, UN, and Accords Council know everything they need to, so please trust that. I have been working closely with the mutant community, and I hope that going forward and with the X-Men becoming part of the Avengers Initiative that we can work on making lives a bit easier for the mutant community.”

Mutants? Really Tony, wouldn’t it have just been easier to get pardons for the team? What was the billionaire thinking?

“The second team that has signed on as an extension to the Avengers Initiative are the Fantastic Four, Reed Richards, Sue Richards, Johnny Storm, and Ben Grimm” as he said the names four people walked up the stairs onto the stage and sat in chairs behind the table. The guy Tony had introduced, as Ben wasn’t really a person though he was a large rock man? Steve remembers how a while back Tony had talked about a Dr. Richards and his team and a thing that happened up on a satellite. Steve hadn’t really cared to listen to the billionaire’s ramblings, but now he wished he had.

Tony smiled back at them as they sat.

“Ok the next extension to the initiative is The Masters of the Mystic Arts. I’m not going to disclose too much information and any questions you have about this order can be turned to their current Sorcerer Supreme, Doctor Stephen Strange” Tony smiled widely, flourishing his arm out. A man in a navy blue robe like outfit, with belts and leather straps and red long cape that flowed behind him ascended the stairs to the stage. Cameras flashed much more as muttering was heard at the reaction of the… Sorcerer?

Steve watches the man wink at Tony, but Tony’s back was to the camera so the soldier didn’t see his reaction.

The first thought running through Steve’s head was that he definitely didn’t like or trust this guy one bit.

Wanda got a bit twitchy when Tony had said Masters of the Mystic Arts, it had caught Shuri’s eye, which was definitely something she was about to pass on to Tony.
Stephen sat down and Tony brought his attention back to the crowd.

“Now we are going to switch gears to the New Avengers. These individuals are part of the Avengers Initiative core team. Which on field will be run by Colonel’s Rhodes and Danvers, I’ll be on the team don’t worry” Tony soothed a few people that had started to cry out.

Clint peeked up holding his hands as though he was praying, and resting his mouth against them his eyes were red, eyebrows knit together.

“Introducing Hope Van Dyne, CEO of Pym Tech and a childhood friend of mine, even with our father’s rivalry, her alias is the Wasp”

Scott perked up, or more like shot out of his chair causing the chair to fly back. Embarrassed he picked the chair up and sat back down.

Hope waved as the crowd clapped and cameras flashed, sitting down Tony continued.

How many people had Tony recruited? Had he even tried getting them pardons? Steve had hoped the letter would have been enough for the billionaire to move past their rift and look to the future just as he always did

“You all remember Vision” Tony reintroduced the Android and Wanda reached out as though she could touch him.

“I was able to wrangle up Deadpool and for anyone who knows anything about this man he is a hard one to pin down, let me tell you” Tony joked as the Merc with the mouth skipped onto the stage and right over to Tony, he dipped the billionaire who simply laughed in response as the man place the spot his mouth was, but his mask covered it, right on his cheek making a loud smacking sound.

Many camera clicks were heard.

Sam’s eyes were wide in surprise at seeing the Mercenary on the display in front of them.

“No fucking way! He added a fucking Mercenary to the team? This is bull shit” Clint slams his hands down on to the table standing up in anger.

Shuri and T’Challa looked over at the archer as he lashed out and after a moment turned their attention back to Tony as he had finally gotten Deadpool to sit down

“I have Dr. Banners beautiful Cousin here, Jennifer Walters, she is one of the Avengers, and my own lawyer, on top of that, with an emergency blood transfusion she has retained her own ability as She-Hulk” The brunette woman smiled fondly at Tony during her introduction.

“I didn’t know there was a She-Hulk” Steve muttered

“Shield kept it on the down low” Clint muttered from behind his hands, the archer had sat back down his whole body appeared to be shaking though.

“He’s just replacing everyone.” Wanda spat “Got a new captain, regardless of his feelings on magic he got himself a sorcerer now-“ Shuri shushing her cut off her rant.

“Bitch” Wanda muttered.

T’Challa sent the red head a look but Shuri ignored her in favor of watching Tony introduce 2 of
New York younger Vigilantes as a part of his ‘new and improved team’

Steve wondered how young they were. Was Tony bringing kids out to fight his battles for him?

He remembered Spider-Man from the airport and felt a sudden wave of guilt for trying to pin the boy with a jet way.

“Both Ms. Marvel and Spider-Man have signed the Accords as their alias’ and are protected by me and the good faith clause. Any of you try digging around for information on their true identity you’ll be dealing with me. So just watch your step” Tony smiled sweetly into the crowd.

Now Tony was threatening the public? And what was the good faith clause? How much had Steve missed in his 3 month absence?

The soldier wondered if he could get a hold of Tony. The billionaire hadn’t used the phone he had been given by Steve; maybe the soldier should initiate contact, and figure what the hell is actually going on? Because there is no way Tony would actually replaced them. Right?

“Now staying close to home, I found a group of people that recently saved us all from a threat we knew nothing of, and I’ve decided to adopt them.” Tony jokes, laughter is heard from the crowd as well. “The first couple teams I introduced you to, were simply an extension to the initiative and they privately fund themselves. I have opted to take responsibility for the team known as the Defenders. Consisting of Luke Cage the man with unbreakable skin, Danny Rand, a fellow company owner/ rich guy, and known as Iron Fist” Luke and Danny both were coming on stage after Tony said their names.

The billionaire looked back at Hope

“Hey so when do we start our club?” Tony asked the woman simply rolled her eyes at him, Danny laughed.

“The next member of the Defenders many may remember her for her heroics a while back but I’d like to ask for everyone to hold any questions on that particular event” Tony held someone’s look in the crowd after a pause “Jessica Jones, Private eye and an all around a badass woman”

Tony held his arm out and the said woman came on the stage.

Gasps and whispers were heard over the clicking of cameras and clapping she received.

“She’s the one that was mind controlled” Shuri whispered to T’Challa, Steve picked it up with his enhanced hearing and caught the teen glancing at Wanda for a moment.

“And the last person of this group, who is also protected under the good faith clause, and myself. The Devil of Hell Kitchen himself, Daredevil!”

Loud cheers where heard for the man clad in red.

Once everyone was sitting Tony did a sweep over the table with his eyes.

“Whoa! I really have been busy!” Tony laughs and looks back to the crowd, who follow him in his laughter.

“So do anyone who missed it, the Avengers Initiative, covered by the Accords, now includes the X-Men, The Fantastic Four, The Masters of the Mystic Arts specifically the Sorcerer Supreme at the present moment, The Defenders, Captain Marvel, War Machine, Iron Man, The Vision, The
Wasp, She-Hulk, Spider-Man, and Ms. Marvel. If you lost count that’s over 20 individuals that have signed and agreed to protect you, the people.” Tony smiled widely as applause rang out.

Steve glanced around the room at the various looks of disbelief and shocked on his team’s faces.

“Now” Tony continued, “I will go sit down and the panel will open to those who have questions. Questions don’t have to be answered, and don’t ask any questions I already told you not to ask.” At that the billionaire turns and walks around the table. He sits in between Carol and Rhodes at the center of the table. More camera clicks.

“That’s a lot of people,” Sam said quietly surveying the panel of heroes now on display.

Voices erupted as everyone in attendance tried to get a question in.

Tony gave everyone a look, and the crowd silenced themselves. “Okay since your going to all act like rowdy kids, Cuz, can you come up and help regulate the questions?” Tony looked to the side of the stage and Steve and Sam gasped when they saw Sharon Carter ascend the stairs with a microphone in hand.

“Everyone this is my cousin Sharon Carter, and she is the new director of the Avengers Compound. No one may ask her any questions she isn’t an Avenger, she will strictly point to you, and you ask one of us your questions. Understood?” there was a hard look in Tony’s eyes as he looked around.

Sharon nodded at Tony and turned to face the crowd in from of the stage.

“Sharon.” Steve whispered “Wha-“ he cut himself off at Shuri’s look.

“Cousin?” Sam questions and looks over to Steve seeing the soldier staring at the display in disbelief.

Shuri giggles to the side behind her hands. She was so happy she had been recording this entire thing so far. She couldn’t wait to show and tell Tony about all their reactions.

Her brother’s reactions to Tony’s new team had been funny as well, but really she was here to see the reactions from idiots that had betrayed Tony, and who had invaded her home, it wasn’t any sort of revenge she wanted but it was satisfying enough at the moment.

“Dr. Stark what really happened to you at the end of June? Why were you off the grid for so long?” A females voice asked.

The billionaire chuckled “Hello to you too Miss Everhart. I’ll be honest, I had some lasting physical damage from the Civil War and with that and getting these guys together” he gestured his arms out to both side “I was staying out of the public eye, sorry for worrying you all” Tony smile is a bit more tight at his statement. It causes a twist in Steve gut as Tony said ‘lasting physical damage’. Especially when T’Challa shot the soldier a look.

“Miss Van Dyne?” A males voice hollers out, he says what his name and who he’s a reporter for before asking his question.

Scott perked up as he always did when Hope was mentioned.

“Everyone knows of Stark Industries and Pym Technology’s rivalry and Hank Pym’s hate for all things Stark. How does your Father feel about this?”
Hopes lips twitched “We’ll find out after this won’t we?” she chuckled “But in all seriousness, Tony Stark is not his father just as I am not mine. We’ve been friends from back when we went to the same boarding school. So I honestly don’t care of what my father feels about this. He gave me my suit to use it as I see fit. This is where I choose to place my alliance” She glanced around and then stared at the camera at the last sentence.

Scott felt a chill go through him as though she was talking directly to him.

Another reporter introduced themselves and asked their question.

“What of the Ant Man suit that was used in Germany?”

Hope had a look of irritation cross her face. “It was taken and used without permission and Pym Tech and my father’s lawyers are on that case. Stark Industries and Tony Stark himself has nothing to do with the fate of Scott Lang and the Ant Man suit. And honestly he has enough to worry about anyways.” Hope answers haughtily.

“Dr. Richards, what does your team and yourself hope to accomplish by becoming an extension of the Avengers Initiative?” Another question

Reed smiles and explains how they simply hope to help each other out and work together to keep the world safe. “It’s also fun to be around Dr. Stark and all of his toys, there is so much of my research that I can work on with his help” Reed geeked out a bit, to everyone in the crowds amusement. Tony and Sue laughed too

“God does he just buy his friends? Offer them toys and unlimited resources?” Wanda hissed.

“Yeah, I mean maybe not consciously, but that’s a thing Natasha said he did, look how much gear and weapons we got” Clint said his eyes glued on the display his frustration seeping away from him as he just felt exhausted now. He didn’t know how his life had spiraled so out of control but he really needed to get a grasp on himself.

Shuri, vaguely hearing this, shot a look at her brother, her eyebrows raised at him as they held as silent conversation.

The questions continued to pour in. Was everyone getting along so far? Everyone had laughed as though there was an inside joke and Carol answered the question with “Oh yeah, the chemistry so far between everyone has been exceptional”

“How are the leadership roles working out with as many people as there are?” At that Carol, Rhodes, and Tony each pitched in and explained.

“That just seems so dysfunctional” Sam muttered after their explanation.

“What of the Rogues?” There it was, the question everyone had been waiting for.

“What of them?” Tony asked coolly

Steve felt himself bristle at that.

“Are they going to be joining the Avengers Initiative?” The reporter asked

“At the present moment we are going to refrain from answering that” Carol cut in. “They are truly of no consequence at the present moment. Our sole focus right now is to become a functional team that works with local and foreign governments.” Carol finished
“We’ve heard of the Ex-Avengers concerns of fearing being controlled, of being told where you can and cannot go and that fact that the Accords will just shift blame. What’s the current stance across the table on this?” Steve looked surprise as the reporter repeated his words from the beginning of all this. Had Tony leaked that conversation?

Scott leaned forward curiosity peaked.

“At that I must admit that their fears were not completely unfounded” Jennifer started to answer, before she could get much more out an eruption of noise echoed around, she simply waited, like a teacher would with a class, until everyone silenced themselves. Sam leaned forward wondering where the woman was going with this “May I continue?” She asked clearly irritated “At the time the documents had first been released they were in their infancy. The only reason they had been brought out was because of Lagos and the fear of where the Ex- Avengers would pop up next. Sadly this meant there were many pieces of it that contradicted itself, could have put people with abilities in danger, et cetera.” Jennifer had to wait again until the crowd quieted down. Sam knew there was a ‘but’ there always was. “But after they had been brought to Mr. Starks attention he started working hard on the amendments and such. It was during that time that Ex-Secretary of State Thaddeus Ross saw his opportunity to try get his hands on enhanced humans just as he always has. Now if the Ex-Avengers had listened and trusted Mr. Stark they might not be fugitive’s at the current moment, but I guess we will never know.” The lawyer shrugged her shoulders as though she was uncaring one way or another. “So to answer your question though, there is no fear at the moment and everyone at this table has complete and utter faith in Mr. Stark and his ability to work with the UN and Accords Council, and also the US Government to keep us safe and protected.” The brunette smiled sweetly directly at the camera and Rouges around the room distinctly felt like that last comment was directed at them.

“Speaking of Thaddeus Ross there is rumors of a trial taking place against him. Any comments on that?” Yet another reporter asks

Sam bit his knuckles at the question he hadn’t heard about a trial against Ross. That man had been a large reason as to why he hadn’t signed the Accords.

“Sadly we cannot release that information to you at the present time.” Jennifer simply said and the reporters moved on.

There were questions about Deadpool and his line of work and how he ended up on the team. For that was when Spider-Man came to the Merc's aid and vouched for him.

Questions about Spider-Man and Ms. Marvel, and by extension Daredevils, night activities were asked.

Tony explained briefly of the deal the US Government had with the local heroes.

As they started to come to a close. Tony stood and smiled; Steve felt jealousy pool in his gut. Tony looked so carefree and young at the moment. The smile on his face was one he had never seen before.

“I thank you all for coming today to meet the new faces of the Avengers Initiative. I am honored and blessed to have these people standing beside me as my team. I hold on to the grief of the lost team that crumbled under such harsh circumstances. But I can’t completely regret it because I wouldn’t have these amazing people here and now. The next couple of weeks will take some adjusting and getting used to everything but I assure everyone you will be hearing from us on a regular basis. You all like the panel style, meet and greet?” Tony asked as though it was an afterthought. Many affirmative sounds were heard. “Well you can thank Ms. Marvel and Spider-
Man for this idea of a meeting” Tony smiled over to the two he mentioned who simply waved in excitement.

“Until next time” All the Members of the initiative stood and filled off the stage.

You could clearly see them joking and bantering and they left. The camera cut off and a news anchor popped on. “And that was our live coverage of the Avengers Initiative’s meet and greet. What did you think Kyle?”

“Wow, Just wow. Stark clearly has been hard at work, to get that many people together and signed under the Accords, it’s impressive, Faith. They looked like a team.” The man responded to his co-host

“Yes they do. You know that’s one of the things that always bugged me about the Ex-Avengers, and how Former Captain Rogers ran the team; it never looked like a team. It was like a hodgepodge of idiots that thought they knew what they were doing. Lagos being a perfect example.” Faith said shuffling some papers on the desk.

“Keep in mind Rogers only had a few days at boot camp and then was given the honorary title of Captain because of the serum. He has no actual training in leadership. And it shows.” Kyle responded. The two anchors continued to talk about what just happened and about different things they knew about the New Avengers.

Steve was frozen, between seeing Tony moving on, and reporters talking about him like they were he felt like he was in some sort of nightmare.

“Why.” Wanda spat “Why bring us here to show us that?” Red mist crackling at her fingers.

Steve wasn’t doing anything so Sam jabbed Clint in the side and motioned at Wanda. The archer sighed and moved to calm the redhead down.

“I was under the impression you were interested in the wellbeing of Dr. Stark, I’m sorry if I assumed too much” T’Challa said with a almost smug look on his face.

Shuri was enjoying the show but suddenly her phone went off, she excused herself, excitedly answering her phone with a “Oh my god that was amazing” and the teen was out the door, with Sam, and Scott looking after her. Clint was calming Wanda down and Steve just stared ahead in a daze.

How did everything get so out of control?

Chapter End Notes

So? What did you think? God apparently I’m making Clint freaking bipolar in this... Steve’s just his delusional self... Wanda acting like the kid Steve treats her as... and Sam I don’t know about him... Scott’s just a lost puppy...

Anyways I hope you enjoy!
I apologize for any spelling of grammatical errors!
Next chapter will be a filler, fluff chapter. Anyone wanna see Tony take the kids
costume shopping for Halloween? Haha!
Until next time!
What a Pair They Are!

Chapter Summary

Wednesday October 5th
Post conference

Saturday October 8th
All the Ironstrange love! (And Tony being amazing)
Breakfast with Wong
Rhodes and Stephen Talk
Tony gave permission for the video to be watched
Post Training
Barton Family needs comfort (Tony’s got this)
Italian! (I’m a sucker for Tony talking Italian)
More talk of Rogues (Tony shows a security footage video)
Dinner and Movie
Talk with Natasha
Game night
Stephen’s hand hurt

Sunday October 9th
(Nepal is 9 hours and 45 minutes ahead of New York)
Kamar-Taj (Training and Tony is appreciated)

Chapter Notes

Well the Halloween costume shopping didn’t happen this chapter… but so much more is happening!
God!
Over 9,000 word chapter!
That’s nuts!
I put a lot in here hopefully it flows well enough. Cause legit I started writing and one thing lead to another * Shrugs* 
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

October 5th Wednesday

After the Conference.

The team all convened in their living room at the Compound. Deciding to watch a movie and then order dinner before leaving. Peter and Kamala were to the side excitedly talking on Peters new phone, that Tony had given him, after the billionaire was sick of complaining about how damaged
the teens phone was, he had decided just to replace it with a more durable one.

Stephen walked up to Tony and collected him in his arms, Levi wrapping itself around them to join in on the hug.

Stephen leaned down and kissed the top of Tony's head.

“You did fantastic,” the sorcerer whispered and Tony smiled up, his chest swelling in the praise he received.

The day progressed on, and the team discussed plans for training and bonding nights. Dinner was had and devoured, and with the plans to met on Saturday everyone dispersed.

Stephen kissed Tony on the head and left the room to portal to the Sanctum.

On the drive back to the city Peter and Kamala were telling Tony about their discussion with Shuri, who Tony had recently introduced them too.

Tony’s grip on the wheel was tight as they told the billionaire of what Shuri told them, and that she had recorded the entire thing. Peter and Kamala both wanted to watch it but as Shuri had told them Tony should be the one to make the decision if he really wanted to see it or not, let alone let others watch. Tony had told everyone the whereabouts of the Rogues before the conference so everyone was on the same page.

After Tony dropped Kamala off he and Peter talked a bit about everything that had been going on. Tony even told the boy a bit about Stephen, and the teen bounced in the seat excited for his mentor, but mentally trying to figure out the best approach in how to ask the sorcerer to teach him some magic.

After a quick good night Tony was heading to the Sanctum. Not really anticipating being able to sleep tonight but he still had a lot of work to get done, so at least his mind would be busy.

*****

Saturday October 8th

Early Morning

“Tony you really outdid yourself” Tony muttered looking around the 2nd floor pleased “Jo? How’s everything looking on your end?” He voiced out louder.

“Everything appears to be up and functional. I’m still working on cataloguing at Kamar-Taj due to the massive amount of books there” She sounded slightly annoyed, Tony smirked “But the 3 Sanctums are done and are all added to the database. Wong has expressed his appreciation and excitement multiple times over this news.”

Tony smiled and checks his phone briefly.

All the upgrades to the Sanctums were completed the prior day, along with the food deliveries he had set up.
You see after Tony realized many of the Masters didn’t hold an occupation and how barren the Sanctums and Kamar-Taj was of food and basic amenities Tony decided to remedy that.

Looking over the list he had completed upgrades to kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms, JOCASTA had been integrated, food and supply deliveries were set up monthly, and the Wi-Fi in all the areas had been upgraded to Tony’s to allow efficient and effortless internet access.

Tony had a deal with the idiots in charge of the Internet, and he got his access a different way then everyone else. Because there was no way he was about to let the companies that just want to monopolize on it, and think they can sneak around without notice, while thinking they can get away with controlling the speed of internet, companies loved taking advantage of consumers idiocy.

Tony smiled and chuckled as he remembered that debate a while back. How they promised him the unlimited access as long as he didn’t go out and profit from it. Well he didn’t profit if he just gave it away…Right?

His smile turned soft as he remembered after Pepper and he had finished the remodeling of the Tower and it had become Avengers tower, how he would find teenagers loitering around the entrance with laptops and such, mooching off his internet. After that he made one of the conference rooms that was right off the lobby into a lounge for the younger community. Steve had hated it, that Tony had opened the lobby up to kids just to come hang out and spend time in the lounge. But Tony just smiled and waved off Steve’s concern because obviously the soldier didn’t understand.

Tony was brought out of his thoughts as arms wrapped around Tony’s waist, a chin resting on his shoulder.

“You really did outdo yourself Tony” Stephen purrs into the billionaire’s ear after turning his head a bit, goose bumps popped up on Tony's skin. The sorcerer nibbles a bit on his ear, Tony tilts his head and Stephen proceeds to give even more attention to the billionaire’s ear and neck.

He sighs and leans into Stephen. “Mmmm, good morning” he moans as Stephen sucks on sensitive skin.

“And to you as well” the sorcerer cooed.

Tony feels a shock run through him and straight to his dick at the way Stephen spoke to him. He doesn’t remember being turned on so easily, but apparently Stephen just knew what to say or how to say it. Whatever it was Tony moaned and grinded his hips backward, meeting Stephen’s own hardened cock. Well fuck.

The following heated moments found the two of them stumbling over each other a bit.

Stephen eventually thinks 'screw it' and leads Tony to the nearest empty wall. Pushing the billionaire’s back against it as he attacks him, in the most glorious way.

“If Wong walks in, you’re taking the fall for this” Tony’s breath hitches and he moans as Stephen’s shaking hands pull at Tony’s sleeping pants.

Instead of answering Stephen drops his own pants, Tony kicks his off of his ankles.

The smile on Stephen’s face makes Tony’s cock twitch. Stephen kisses Tony hard against the wall their rock hard erections rubbing against each other. Stephen moves and ends up lifting Tony up, using the wall to help hold the billionaire’s weight.
Tony squeaks in surprise, and he suddenly feels wetness coat his asshole lubricating him. Goddamn magic.

He swallows thickly, biting his lip in anticipation.

Stephen is watching his with hooded eyes as he lines himself up with Tony.

Tony bites his lip a bit harder, and releases a guttural moan as Stephen enters him.

“Fuck Tony you’re so tight like this” Stephen breathes leaning his head into the billionaire’s neck. By the time Stephen was sheathed inside of him, Tony’s arms and legs were wrapped around the sorcerer. Tony hugged Stephen close basking in the feeling. His hard erection was sandwiched between their stomachs, twitching as I begged for its own attention.

Stephen rotates his hips creating some friction for the billionaire at the same time as rubbing against his prostate.

Tony’s grip on the sorcerer relaxed as Tony groaned. “Oh fuck me.”

“Don’t worry, I am” Stephen said cockily.

At that he started thrusting the little that he could with Tony’s legs wrapped the way they were.

Tony loosened his grip up a bit more, and Stephen was able to give the billionaire longer harder thrusts.

Their lips met in a heated wet kiss. Moans echoing around the relics room.

Tony’s cock receiving the friction it had been begging for.

Stephen felt himself nearing his own climax, but decided to switch focus and get Tony to have his own orgasm first.

So pressing his hips against Tony, and bracing him against the wall Stephen leaned back and grasped at Tony’s cock. Pre-cum leaking and coating the bottoms of the men’s shirts.

Stephen started his motions, jacking Tony’s cock their eyes staring heavy into each other. Stephen brushed his thumb against the sensitive head of the billionaire’s erection causing the man to throw his head back a loud moan escaping him.

Stephen smirked and continued pumping his lovers cock. The sorcerer made small movements with his hips as well causing his own cock to rub against Tony’s prostate.

At that Tony came undone. Semen shooting out every which way. Covering their shirts, hips and Stephen’s hand. Neither caring though as Stephen moved to support Tony’s hips and started his hard thrusts again, quickly bringing himself back to the peak of his orgasm.

“Oh fuck, Tony you are so perfect.” Stephen spoke into the billionaire’s neck as he was coming down from the lust induced high.

“Mn” Tony hummed running his hands through Stephen’s hair as the sorcerer kept him pinned against the wall the two of them still connected “I feel like you’re a bit biased there Merlin.”

“Doesn’t matter” Stephen simply says and goes to add yet another hickey to the billionaire’s neck. Tony smiles loving the fact that the sorcerer always wanted to keep mark on him, to show him that
he was wanted and that he was all Stephen’s. That’s what the sorcerer had told him when Tony had asked him why he kept leaving love bites on him.

The makeup artist hadn’t been happy the other day before the press conference, but Tony honestly couldn’t find it in him to care too much.

The two men clean up and made their way to the shower, or in this case Stephen casted a cleaning spell on the floor and themselves so they wouldn’t make a mess heading back upstairs, and then took a shower.

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Around 10 AM

They enjoyed the lazy Saturday morning get up.

Tony made breakfast while Stephen mediated for a bit.

Levi rested on Tony’s shoulders as the billionaire eased through the kitchen, enjoying the upgrades he had made. The Cloak and Tony were making small talk as Wong walked into the kitchen.

“I know it confusing, but yeah that why humans do that.” Tony waved the spatula as he spoke.

“Do what?” Wong ask sitting at the table and dished himself up some food.

“Levi is just wondering about certain behaviors and things that humans do that confuse it” Tony said without looking back at the sorcerer. “How’s Jo treating you?” Tony asked turning around after turning off the stove and placing the bowl of scrambled eggs on the table.

He proceeded to sit at the table and dished himself up some food.

“Wonderful! Honestly, she has made my job infinitely easier to the point where I’ll be able to assist watching the Sanctum more and Stephen will be able to get his duties done and assist with the Avengers.” Wong smiled “ You’re coming to Kamar-Taj tomorrow for Stephen’s training right?” The sorcerer questioned suddenly

One of the ways Tony was working to get comfortable with magic was to hang around and watch as beginners started to learn, so he can watch the slow progression of it, if he chose to, but would be able to focus on his own work if he was feeling anxious. It also allowed Tony to watch Stephen work out and train, and oh boy the sex after Stephen trained, after he was all loose and stretched, was fabulous. Well honestly any sex with Stephen was fabulous.

“If I’m still welcomed,” Tony said quietly feeling a bit self-conscious. Wong gave him a look.

“Tony you are more than welcome, you realize you are one of us now. Magic abilities or not. You have done a lot for us already, and many of the Masters consider you our equal. Besides do you honestly think I wouldn’t figure out where the anonymous donation of food and supplies came from? I’m not going to turn away the help. I’m simply going to say thank you and leave it at that.” The sorcerer smiled at Tony and went back to his food.
Tony kept being thanked for these little things and it was weird.

Levi flutters itself on Tony’s shoulders as though he could hear Tony’s thoughts. Maybe it could.

“Oh shush you” he said quietly and took a sip of his coffee.

“That is so bazaar that you understand it so well.” Wong said with a bite of food in his mouth

“Oh Wong how was the concert yesterday? I’m sorry I didn’t ask sooner!” Tony suddenly remembered how he had been able to get Wong a VIP pass and tickets to Beyoncé’s last concert on her world tour, luck had it that I was in New Jersey so it wasn’t too far away.

And Wong was off, the man started going on about the whole event and ordeal.

Tony listened to him rant and rave about how amazing Beyoncé herself was.

A motion against Tony’s neck was Levi letting Tony know that Stephen had enter the room.

“Oh you asked him about yesterday?” Stephen whispered sitting down beside Tony his leg resting up against Tony’s as he proceeded to dish up food for himself.

Tony smiled and nodded.

A few others stopped by for breakfast, as it had become a thing that Saturday mornings they would come by the New York Sanctum to grab some breakfast that Tony had prepared.

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Noon

“We’ll probably end up staying at the compound tonight. We’ll just meet you at Kamar-Taj tomorrow.” Stephen said to Wong after watching Tony drive off to get Peter and Kamala.

“8:15 AM Stephen don’t forget. Your class starts at exactly 6 PM. Please don’t be late. You know better yet. FRIDAY? Can you set a reminder for Stephen and make sure he and Tony are going to be at Kamar-Taj on time?”

“Already done Wong,” the AI sounded amused.

After a few beats of silence Wong looked over to Stephen.

“Tony really isn’t used to being thanked for things is he?” Wong asked as a second thought.

Stephen looked over surprised at Wong’s comment. He shook his head sadly at his friend.

“No he really isn’t and it breaks my heart every time he gets that confused look whenever me or someone else shows him any sort of appreciation.” Stephen really was ready to murder every single person that ever made Tony feel unworthy of being thanked. Starting with Howard.

Wong had a sad smile “How do you think he will react tomorrow?”
“I think he’ll be a bit embarrassed but he’ll definitely feel appreciated” Stephen smirked

“Alright then, well you go have fun, and I’ll see you tomorrow.” Wong shooed the Sorcerer Supreme away and decided to kick back and binge watch some shows. Though he didn’t know what to choose because thanks to Tony he had anything he dreamed to watch available to him.

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1 PM

Tony pulls into the compound, music blasting, Kamala and Peter were singing to the top of their lungs.

Stephen looked out the window, watching Tony zoom down the long driveway to the compound. The bass of the car easily being heard.

“So car accident?” Rhodes asked coming up to Stephen. The sorcerer looked over surprised “it was in your file that Tony had me look over while he in surgery, in case he didn’t survive.” Rhodes explained.

“Ah, um, yeah and now I am a bit hesitant about entering a car.” Stephen said rubbing the back of his neck.

“You know Tony was terrified of cars after his parents died. Then he realized that his fear was more of the people driving. Since then he hates being passenger” Rhodes said staring out the window as Tony did some circles around the area the teens obviously enjoying it.

“Yeah, he told me about that, we are working on it, as we are also working on his aversion of magic and portals.” Stephen glanced over to Rhodes. They sat there for a few more minutes staring out the window, watching as Tony parked his car.

“You know he was going to ask you to marry him right? Before you left back in 2008” Rhodes said not looking at the sorcerer.


“Yeah, he went ring shopping and everything” Rhodes looked down at his feet. “Please don’t hurt him again, I know I already said the thing and you and I seem to be on the same page here. I just—he’s been through so much, and you make him happy” Rhodes placed a hand on the sorcerer’s shoulder, a gentle touch as he pleaded with the sorcerer.

“Colonel we are on the exact same page. Tony deserves the world, and I won’t be leaving him unless he tells me to. Even then though, I don’t think I’d be able to even if he asked me too.” Stephen couldn’t believe what Rhodes had just told him. Stephen really had screwed everything up back before his accident.

“Please call me James, or Rhody, we’ll probably end up being brothers here in the future, at some point” Rhodes held his hand out. Stephen grasped it with his shaking one.

“Stephen” The sorcerer smiled
“I have an aversion to that name apparently” Rhodes grimaced

“Does it help that mine is spelled with a ‘PH’?” Stephen asked

Rhodes smirked “I guess it might”

Stephen chuckled “I also have a PhD”

“I can definitely vouch that he has a ‘D’” Tony interjected with a wide smile, as he walked up to the men. Rhodes groaned. “How are my two favorite guys doing?” The billionaire asked ignoring his best friend’s groan.

Stephen went and put his arm over Tony’s shoulders, pulling him in, he kissed the billionaire’s head, enjoying the smell of his shampoo.

“Ugh you were never this lovey dovey with Pepper” Rhodes complained half-heartedly.

“Pepper was never that kind of woman” Tony smiled leaning into Stephen’s side. “Besides I was touched starved as a kid, so let me have this” Tony joked back, being serious in his own way.

Stephen squeezed his shoulders; Levi moved to rest itself on Tony’s tailbone in its own show of support.

“Anyway what’s the plan for tonight?” Tony asked Rhodes, changing the subject quickly.

“Training for a couple hours, dinner, I think there was talk of watching the Princess Bride during dinner, and the kids want us to play some video games tonight.” Rhodes listed

“Who’s all here?” Tony inquires

“Reed and his crew are dealing with Doom right now apparently, the Council says they are okay for now and seem to be fine on their own, and Xavier and his crew are busy. But otherwise everyone else is here.” Rhodes responds

“We already knew the X-men weren’t going to be as active in our training so I’m not too concerned.” Tony shrugs; he turns his head a bit to take in Stephen’s sent.

“Come, let’s go get ready for the training simulation that Carol and CARTER worked on” Rhodes said from over his shoulder as he started walking away from the two men.

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A Little While Later

Stephen entered the living room to see Peter and Kamala they were having a snack, before training started, huddled over a Starkpad. Tony and Rhodes had gone to prepare for the training session; the sorcerer had decided to grab a water bottle before the work out he was sure to be receiving.

Stephen heard voices coming from the device, but didn’t really pay attention.

The sorcerer made his way past them to go into the kitchen to grab the water when Jessica and Matt, in his suit. entered the living room.
“What are you guys watching?” Matt asked his voice sounded dangerous, catching Stephen’s attention.

Peter looked up a frown on his face. “Mr. Stark gave us permission to watch the video Shuri recorded.”

“They just seem so dysfunctional” a voice spoke from the tablet and Peter returned his attention back to the device; Jessica and Stephen approached the table to look over the teens’ shoulders.

The tablet was showing multiple angles of the room that the Rogues along with T’Challa and Shuri were sitting in.

The conference went on and Stephen’s eyes drifted from Wanda to Steve. The sorcerer was stuck as he watched the soldier stiffen at the questions that were being asked, and how he was shifting around while he listened to the answers.

The way he was watching Tony on the display made him feel uneasy.

“So you notice it too?” Jessica asked looking over at Stephen.

“Hm?” He inquires quietly.

“The jealous look Rogers has, it’s almost as though a possession was taken from him.” Jessica explains her thought.

Stephen steps away from behind the teens after seeing enough.

“I think when shit hits the fan we’re going to have to watch out for Rogers and the Witch over everyone else” Jessica hiss’s lowly coming up beside Stephen as he walked into the kitchen. The sorcerer nodded in agreement.

Matt was being awfully silent as he entered the kitchen. Stephen grabbed the water bottle he had originally set out for.

“I think we need to set up some contingency plans,” the blind man said after a few more moments of silence. “Especially with the witch, she sounds extremely hostile towards Tony.” Matt observed.

“FRIDAY, Can you have Shuri send me the video please?” Stephen asked.

“It’s already save onto the phone doc” she replied “Boss was planning on showing it during the next meeting but Kamala and Peter begged him to let them watch it” the underlying sentence there was Tony could not say no to Kamala and Peter no matter how hard he tried.

“I’ll go over the footage and we can discuss a game plan later” Stephen calmly spoke trying to keep his body relaxed.

“Can I get it too?” Jessica asked out loud, obviously aiming her question at FRIDAY.

“I’ve taken the liberty of sending it to the entire team after Boss gave the permission to the teens” FRIDAY sounded proud of herself.

“Tony isn’t going to be entirely too happy with you.” Stephen chuckles at the AI

“Who me? I did nothing wrong though doc, he gave permission” FRIDAY defended herself mirth lacing her voice.
“Chief is requesting everyone’s presence in the simulation room, and I’d like to quickly point out I don’t see how FRIDAY could possibly be in trouble for what she did” CARTER voiced, defending her older sister.

Stephen simply laughed “You girls are so good to him” he praised to two AI’s as he, Matt, and Jessica left the kitchen.

“Come on you two” Jessica says to the teens, “we have training to do, we can go over that later”

The two looked up and nodded at the dark haired woman. The group of them making there way to the training simulator.

******

Few hours later (Around 3 PM)

The training session went well and everyone left the simulation room cheering. Praising each other.

“There are a lot of us so I really feel like we should split up into even groups make sure to have heavy hitters, aerial support and such spaced out evenly.” Tony observed, “Also Kam and Peter your teamwork is looking fantastic. You two patrolling together? Cause it shows” Tony praised the teens, the two beamed at Tony.

“Yeah I agree about splitting up a bit more. We’ll discuss it later though. And yes I also agree with Tony you two did fantastic in there” Carol agrees with Tony.

“Hey I helped out too!” Deadpool whined

“You help a lot too Wade, we know” Peter patted the Merc’s shoulder.

The teens then ran off to their rooms to change.

Entering the living room Lila ran at Tony who effortlessly braced himself and threw her into the air when she reached him.

Her loud giggles captured the attention of the adults in the room that had been in the room waiting for the heroes to finish their training.

Whatever was being watched on the Tablet in front of them was paused.

Cooper looked up at his sister who was now clinging to Tony, giving the billionaire a long hug.

Tony sighed and passed everyone, making his way into the kitchen, he knew exactly what they were watching by the looks he was getting.

‘Traitor’ he thought to FRIDAY through the uplink.

“Uncle Tony” Lila touched the man’s face as he held her “Daddy isn’t being himself anymore, I’m sorry he hurt you” the young girl apologized causing Tony to freeze.

“Oh, Lila, you sweet girl, don’t you dare apologize for your father, he is a big boy. It’s not your job to apologize for his mistakes.” He sat at the breakfast bar, on a stool, adjusting the girl on his lap.
“She heard his voice, as did Coop, I let them watch, and I’m not going to hide their father from them. Even if he seems to be on the brink of a psychotic break” Laura spoke, walking into the kitchen, and answering Tony’s unasked question of why she was allowed to watch the video. Laura sighed and shifted Nate on her hip. Lila proceeded to tuck her face into Tony’s neck, hugging the billionaire tightly. “I want to get a divorce.” Laura says looking out the window “He needs help Tony, that much is obvious, but I can’t let him keep hurting the kids” her voice broke.

Tony was running a hand through Lila’s soft hair while the other rested on her back. The young girl whimpered at the word divorce.

“Laura-“ Tony started.

“I’ve already talked about this with them. I want to be open and honest with them. Because of Clint’s screw ups they’ve had to grow up faster then I’d have liked, they need to understand what’s happening and why it’s happening.” Laura turned her head into Nate, fighting back a sob.

Tears dampened Tony’s neck. “I’m here however you need me Laura. They’re still kids. I promise I’ll help you with them, I’ll help you through this Laura.” Tony professed; he opened his arm with the open shoulder, as Lila was on the other one. Laura steps forward and leans in, adjusting Nate so she is holding the toddler and able to hide her face in Tony’s other shoulder. Her shoulders started to shake, and now both his shoulders were wet.

Stephen and Cooper walked in the kitchen looking hesitant. Stephen’s eyes softened at the view in front of him, but Cooper’s hardened, hate lacing them, Tony recognized that look well, and it had been one he had as a kid. Whenever Tony would sit in front of the mirror after some confrontation with his father, that’s the look he would get.

“Coop, bud” Tony said softly. Their eyes met, the look of a broken, lost, and angry boy made Tony frown. “Hey, I’m here, I’m not going to leave” Tony vowed, Laura’s sobs got a bit louder, Cooper’s eyes hardened at the sound.

Stephen watched the scene in front of him in awe of Tony’s strength as he attempted to soothe the broken family.

“Stephen can you take Nate, and go to the living room? I have to go talk with Laura, Cooper, and Lila.” Tony asked his eyes soft as he looked to his lover. A light smile crossed his face as he nodded silently and left the room with the Toddler.

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30 Minutes Later

The video was now projected larger for everyone to watch, they had gone over it a couple time, replaying certain parts.

“Did you see that?” Jennifer asked looking to Stephen

“The twitch from Maximoff at the mention of Masters of the Mystic Arts? Yes I did.” He responded, “I wonder if Hydra warned her to stay off our radar?” He thought aloud offhandedly.

“Did Clint ever get help after New York?” Carol asked randomly.
We have his old partner in our basement we could ask her.” Deadpool said in a low voice, his eyes sweeping across the footage, they kept landing on the witch and Rogers though, and the boxes were making it well known that they didn’t trust these people at all.

“Hope, Scott really doesn’t seem like your type, he seems too much like a lost puppy,” Tony says as he enters the room. Everyone froze. “So did anyone order dinner yet?” The billionaire asked ignoring the video that was still playing.

“Yeah we ordered Italian” Rhodes looked over to his best friend a light smiled on his face.

Tony smiled widely “You know me so well honey bear! Grazie!”

Rhodes gave Tony a smirk and responded in Italian “Of course I do, and You’re welcome”

Peter perked up at the conversation between Rhodes and Tony “Oh! Are we talking in Italian now?”

“I taught Rhodey at MIT. This way we could talk about others without them understanding” Tony explained to the teen in Italian

“I feel left out,” Deadpool pouted

“You taught me too” Hope interjected in Italian a wide grin on her face

“Can we please continue this conversation in English? I think a few of us feel left out,” Luke asked. Danny and Stephen looked amused

“They were just discussing how Tony taught Rhodes and Hope how to speak Italian so they could talk about others.” Danny looked to his teammate, at that Tony looks over to him question in his eyes “I can understand Italian, I just can’t really speak it well.” He explained

“I speak a bit of Italian, I understand it better than speak it” Stephen inputted

Tony’s face lit up excitedly “Mio Dio! How do you know Italian?”

“I was a famous Neurosurgeon at one point, it was easier for me to learn a few different languages. That way I could communicate more fluidity with patients from around the world” Stephen answered in English.

“My mom and I always spoke in Italian, it annoyed the ever living shit out of my old man. Speaking Italian has always been something I hold dear to me, so that’s why I taught Hope when we were kids, and Rhodey in college” Tony gave a explanation to the people in the room that were confused. Tony looked back to Peter for an explanation.

“Aunt May wanted me to know more languages, Italian was always a language that intrigued me.” Peter explained, Tony beamed.

“How are Laura and the kids?” Stephen asked, changing the subject. The sorcerer shifting his gaze over to Levi to check on Nate. The Toddler was cradled in the Cloak as though it was a hammock, passed out.

Tony looked to Levi too, motioning the sentient cloak to come to him. Tony sighed and picked up the sleeping toddler.

“I’m one thing, I was betrayed by supposed friends and teammates… they were abandoned by their
husband and father, and the video here isn’t showing them the man they know and love. So they are confused and hurt.” Tony explains and holds Nate close to him. The billionaire exhaled sounding exhausted “I should have done more to check on him. Especially after finding out about Hydra hiding in Shield” Tony muttered watching as the video kept playing in the background.

“What do you mean?” Betty asked softly.

“Both Barton and Rogers were manipulated” Tony shook his head and turned away from the projected display “Hydra therapist cleared them. Rogers’ case, after he was taken out from the ice was basically open and shut after 24 hours. Supposedly they showed him videos—“ Tony let out a harsh laugh “that was a fun conversation with the man…” Tony trailed off in thought. Stephen approached the billionaire and gently placed his hand on his shoulder.

Tony looked back a sad smile on his face, and then faced the others in the room,

“You wanna see? I got my hands on the security footage after Shield fell.” Tony asked a small smirk on his face.

“Only if you want to show us” Carol said gently.

“Fuck that!” Darcy exclaimed, “I wanna see it.”

“Friday please pull the video off of my private server and display it” Tony instructed giving Darcy a warm amused smile.

They watched as Fury enters the room Bruce and Tony are in, demanding answers from Tony, as Tony does the same.

Steve enters with the ‘Phase 2’

As Fury tries to lie, Tony calls him out.

Thor and Natasha enter as Steve makes some quip about the world not changing at all.

Jennifer can see Bruce’s well-placed frustration at the situation as he asks Natasha if she knew. When she tries to tell him to remove himself from the conversation, he shot back how he was already well removed before she had dragged him in. Watching the banter between them, made Jennifer really want go down and lay into the spy but she resisted the urge.

The footage continues on as Fury explains why Shield was using the Tesseract to make weapons.

“Nuclear deterrent, cause that always calms everything right down” a much younger looking Tony spoke up in between Fury and Thor’s back and forth

“Remind me again how you made your fortune Stark?” Fury shot back.

“I’m sure if he still made weapons, Stark would be neck deep” Steve said walking up to Tony.

“Wait, wait, hold on how is this now about me?” Tony on screen asks confused.

“I’m sorry, isn’t everything?” Several noises of disbelief were heard at Steve’s comment.

And that’s when the room in the footage exploded into multiple arguments. It continued like that
until Bruce made the comment about the group being a time bomb.

Everyone watching the video couldn’t have agreed more to that statement.

“You need to step away” Fury stepped towards Bruce, Jennifer tensed unsure of what would happen, she had never heard of this encounter before.

“Why shouldn’t the guy let off a little steam?” Tony joked placing a hand of Steve. Jennifer shot the billionaire a look. No wonder Bruce admired this man so much.

“You know damn well why. Back off.” The super soldier snapped pushing Tony’s arm away.

“Oh I’m starting to, want you, to make me” Tony squares up with the soldier. Snickers are heard as Tony antagonized the super soldier.

“Yeah? Big man in a suit of armor. Take that off what are you?” Rogers asked. Many people around the room were tensing up unsure of what to expect.

“Genius, billionaire, playboy, philanthropist” The on screen Tony shot back. Several cheers throughout the living room nearly drowned out what Rogers said next.

“I know guys with none of that, worth ten of you, and I’ve seen the footage, the only thing you really fight for is yourself. Your not the guy to make the sacrifice play, to lay down on the wire and let the other guy climb over you.” The super soldier spoke.

“Bullshit” Jessica spat, Stephen looked over at Tony, who was still hugging Nate close, if this was the start of the original Avengers, no wonder Tony was the man he was today. The sorcerer wondered if FRIDAY would give him access to other encounters that had been recorded between the old ‘team’. Stephen needs to know how much of a threat Steve and the other really posed against Tony.

“I think I would just cut the wire” Tony quipped back, Peter and Kamala yelled, “Got ‘em” causing some laughter.

After a pause “Always a way out” Steve continues “You know you may not be a threat, but you better stop pretending to be a hero” Rhodes tensed at this. He had never seen this encounter, heard of it sure, but seeing I and hearing how Roger spoke to Tony made him want to go to Wakanda and actually murder Rogers. But Tony made him promise that if he knew the Rogues location that he wouldn’t use it. So just like everyone else who knew exactly where Roger was now, he needed to just sit and bare it.

“A hero? Like you? You’re a laboratory experiment Rogers. Everything special about you came out of a bottle” Tony steps into Rogers face.

Throughout the room the adults glance at Tony.

Steve squares his shoulders “Put on the suit.”

Thor laughs and then the conversation turns to Fury attempting to get Bruce out again, causing Bruce to go on his rant on how he can’t be killed. Jennifer closes her eyes tight remembering her cousin telling her this, a while back.

“The mind stone was manipulating the negativity in the room,” Vision says as Bruce picks up the Scepter.
The alarm that the Tesseract was found went off and the banter continues on who should get the cube.

Stephen’s eyes are glued on Steve and Tony’s interaction though.

“‘You’re not going alone’” Steve attempts to grab Tony

“You gonna stop me?” Tony bats his hand away

“Put on the suit, let’s find out.”

“I’m not afraid to hit an old man” Tony got in his face

“Put on the suit” Steve says lowly.

“Oh my god” came from Bruce before an explosion erupted and the camera shook. The footage cutting off

“‘That’s when shit hit the fan.’” Tony explained, “‘but yeah that’s the gist of it, and I never thought of it at the time when he said how he had seen the videos it didn’t make sense to me until it was too late. I should have figured out that someone was trying to manipulate him against me. And then Barton barely got help after the New York invasion’” Tony sighed “so yeah that was how the original Avengers started”

“‘Holy shit’ Deadpool cussed

“Okay, But Mr. Stark those comebacks though were amazing” Peter gushes

“I see why my cousin took a liking to you though” Jennifer said quietly. That caught Tony’s attention. “You never feared him, he was always your equal”

Tony nodded at her in agreement of her assessment.

“I will kill him Tony. I am not joking.” Rhodes hissed angrily in Italian

Tony smiled sadly. “I'm fine. I'm here, stay calm. Do not do anything crazy” Tony tried to soothe his best friend

At that Carol changed the subject deciding that any conversation regarding the Rogues were banned for the rest of the night, Tony wholeheartedly agreed and went to retrieve Laura and the kids because dinner was almost there and besides he just needed a couple seconds to breath on his own. Cradling Nate he left the room.

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4 PM

Many different Italian dishes were laying out when Tony, Laura and the kids returned to the living room.
Plates were being filled up and people were finding comfortable spots to lounge while they ate dinner and watched the movie.

Lila quietly complained about Cassie not being there and clung to Kamala as the older girl went to comfort the younger one.

“Cassie is celebrating her moms birthday sweetheart you’ll see her later, I promise” Tony explained to the young girl why her friend wasn’t there.

Tony dishes himself up and moves to sit on the soft floor in front of Stephen’s legs. The sorcerer was sitting on one of the couches, he smiles and spreads his legs a bit allowing Tony to sit between them. Tony rests his back against the couch and enjoys the feeling of such a domestic position.

He looks up and gives his lover a crooked smile. Moving his plate to the side for a moment Stephen leans forward and gives the billionaire a quick kiss.

“Ok so I heard something about Princess Bride?” Tony asks.

Cooper groans, “It sounds boring”

His complaint causes every adult including Deadpool to laugh.

“CARTER cue it up sweetheart” Tony instructs as the laughter dies.

Cooper looks confused and turns to his mom who was focusing in trying to get Nate to take a bite of pasta.

“Don’t worry kid you’ll like it” Tony tells the preteen as the movie starts.

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Almost 6 PM

As Cooper ranted about how he had enjoyed the movie, much to everyone’s amusement. Tony made his way quietly to the table of food. He dished up a new plate of food bed turning around to face Stephen who had come over.

Peter and Kamala were starting to get everyone to go the game room to play some video games for the night activities.

“Tony” the sorcerer said softly

“I’ll be there in a bit, a half hour at most,” Tony promised the worried looking Stephen.

“Don’t take too long” Stephen leaned in kissing Tony.

Pulling away Tony smirked “As you wish” the billionaire said quietly and turned away, making his way out of the Avengers Wing.

He entered the holding area where Natasha was.

“CARTER blackout please” Tony requested and the AI dutifully did her part.
“Tony!” Natasha shot out of the cot, surprise lacing her tone. “I’m surprised you’re here. Alone.”

“Well I figured you might be hungry, and I know you share my appreciation of good Italian food” Tony said sliding the plate with a large helping of food and a fork through the slot made for such purposes in the clear door.

The entire holding area was clear, well except for the outside walls now that had been blocked out at Tony’s request.

Natasha was still surprised but a gentle smile twitched at her lips. “Grazie” She said as she grabbed the plate, and sat back on the cot.

“Prego” Tony grabbed a folding chair from the far wall and sat in front of the spy’s cell. “Why did you do it?” His voice cracking slightly as he asked the question that had been plaguing him for a while now.

“I thought at the time, that if I let them go I could keep us from killing each other” she said in between bits. “They were so certain that more Winter Soldiers would be released, and with my history against the soldiers in general, I was scared. I miscalculated. Each time I thought I did the right thing I was just making things worse.”

“You’ve lied and manipulated me several times now. How do I know this isn’t one of those times?” Tony asked leaning forward.

She bowed her head in shame “You don’t, hell even I don’t. I was trained to a manipulative bitch. So I can’t blame you for that assessment. I deserve it and more. I am surprised you haven’t turned me into the authorities yet” Natasha comments.

“They know you’re here. They feel it’s safer to keep you here under the initiatives watch. I have a meeting with them this week about you actually. They want to make an example of you. Show the world what happens when an advanced individual breaks the rules. Thankfully the documents you signed are null and void due to all the changes I’ve made. But it doesn’t change certain facts.” Tony tells her. She takes a few more bites as he talks.

“I was able to watch the press conference. I think your AI, CARTER was it? Wanted me to see how you were better off now” Natasha smiled ruefully “I presume she’s named after Peggy Carter?”

“Yes, She was my Godmother after all” Tony said in a clipped tone.

Natasha hummed not going any further with that topic because it was obviously a sensitive one

“Anyways they look much more functional then we ever were.” She chuckled humorlessly “You know Bruce was right. From day one. We were just a Chemical bomb”

Tony nodded in agreement “I thought the same thing as I laid in a hospital bed with my rib cage collapsed.” The billionaire spat bitterly

The spy sighed, “Tony, I know it means nothing. But I am so sorry for how everything turned out. I came back here to try and show you that. I put my fate in your hands, not because I felt bad, though I do, it’s because I failed you. I thought one thing, and stood by that one thing no matter who said what. Never thinking once of anyone or anything else.” Another humorless laugh shook her body “I love how we all made comments about your ego and whatever, and look at how we all treated you. I don’t know how I let myself get so blinded.”
“Because he was Captain America. He could do no wrong. I was just Tony Stark and I wasn’t recommend.” Tony’s voice still laced with bitterness.

Natasha cocked her head to the side “You’ve made that jab at me before what do you mean by aiming that at me ‘Tony Stark not recommended’?”

“Your assessment on me back when I was dealing with being slowly poisoned” Tony elaborated

The spy’s eyebrows knit together in obvious confusion.

“You said Iron Man Yes, Tony Stark Not Recommend, in your assessment report to Fury, that’s why I became a consultant, and why I was never really on the team regardless of how much I supported you all.” Tony wasn’t even trying to hide the bitterness in his tone anymore.

“Wha-? I…” She stutters and trails off “Son of a Bitch” she suddenly cusses in Russian she places the plate down on the bed and gets up. She starts pacing agitatedly.

The spy was muttering in Russian.

“Natasha?” Tony speaks softly trying to get through to her. Her eyes shoot to meet his. He is surprised to see her eyes a bit red, no tears but there was emotion there that he had never seen before.

“I was played,” she whispers

“What?” Tony asks her to elaborate.

“Hydra, they tampered with my report. I never said that. I had elaborated that due to your poisoning, and near death experiences, that any assessment I made during that time would have been inaccurate to who you normally are.” Her eyes widened in realization “Pierce asked me to send the report to him, because he had wanted to talk to Fury himself.” She braced her forearms against one of the wall and banged her head gently “Fucking bastard” She cussed again in Russian

Tony sighs “It appears that Hydra has been playing us like a fucking concert this entire time.” Natasha goes back to sitting on the bed while the billionaire tells her about how the therapists that worked with Rogers after his defrosting was Hydra, and so was the doctor that cleared Clint after New York.

Tony touched on Laura briefly too.

“Oh god, Laura. She’s safe right?” Natasha cupped her hand over her mouth in horror

“I got her out of dodge when Ross became a threat” Tony admits

That’s when tears actually formed in her eyes “The kids?”

Tony smiles sadly “Coop and Lila are hurt and confused but Laura is doing what she thinks is right, and keeping them in the loop, letting them know what their father did, and being honest with them while she is talking about divorce. Nate is obviously too young to understand” Tony answered her inquiry.

“Thank you Tony” her voice actually broke.

Tony tilted his head to the side as he examined the now apparently very emotional Natasha Romanoff
“Those kids—” she swallowed thickly and wiped the mist away from her eyes “Those kids deserve so much more than what they’ve been given. And the fact that you stepped in and helped when you didn’t have too—”

“But I did, because those kids didn’t deserve any of this. And instead of staying put, Clint made a poor decision. I have no clue of his mental health at the moment, but those kids don’t deserve what he did to them and I’ll be damned if I let them go around thinking that they aren’t cared for or wanted.”

There heat in Tony’s voice that Natasha has never heard before “You care about them.” She states simply

“They call me Uncle Tony.” The billionaire shrugs “What can I say? They’ve grown on me”

“I’m glad they have you,” she says softly, a small smile aimed at him.

“I’m glad to have them” Tony replies simply.

“Tony, what’s going to happen with me?” She asked her voice wavering a bit

“I’m not sure at the moment, but as of right now your under the initiatives protection, so we’ll go from there. If you truly are sorry, and you do everything that is asked of you, I’ll see what deal they are willing to give you” Tony informs the spy

“Chief” CARTER chimes in “Doctor Strange is wondering how much longer you will be?”

Natasha smirks “You should get going, thanks for the dinner Anton”

Tony tips his head to her “Good night Natalia”

He leaves the holding area feeling a bit lighter than when he had entered it.

*******

Tony had made his way into the game room and was immediately thrown into a game of Guitar Hero.

Everyone was amazed to witness Tony’s ability to play Through the Fire and Flames on the hardest difficulty.

“Shit man, that’s a skill not many have” Jessica watched amazed.

Through the next couple of hours they switched to different games and Tony surprised the kids by beating them at some games they thought they had in the bag.

They got stuck on Mario Kart for a while. Since that was a game that the others understood and got really competitive with.

Tony caught sight of Stephen rotating his wrist and flexing his fingers, flinching in discomfort. After passing on the controller to the next player Tony turned and walked over to where Stephen was sitting.
The billionaire sat down crossing his legs under him, he faced the sorcerer, and he took the man’s shaky, scarred hands in his and rubbed them gently.

Tony was always surprised how cold the man’s hands were whenever he didn’t wear gloves.

The scars and lines were smooth under Tony fingers.

The billionaire brought the damaged hand to his lips and kissed them, he watched Stephen with a gentle look.

“You okay Merlin?” Tony’s lips moves against Stephen’s knuckles.

“Just a little sore. After holding a controller and working them throughout the day they get stiff and sore. And with poor circulation they get cold. I’m okay though” Stephen could feel his heart flutter a bit at the concern in Tony’s eyes.

“Underoos,” Tony glanced over at Peter who was waiting for his turn. “Run to the med bay and grab some heat packs for the wizard” Peter shot out of the room without any more prompting.

Skidding back into the room after a few minutes he tossed the packs to Tony

“Thanks kid” Tony smiled at the teen

“Anytime Mr. Stark”

Tony adjusted himself so he could continue to gently massage the sorcerer’s hands and press the heat packs against them as well.

Stephen leaned back enjoying the heat that seeps into his bones relieving some of the soreness and returning some heat into his frozen digits.

“Tony your turn” Danny goes to hand the genius the controller; Stephen pushed the feeling of disappointment down.

“No, I think I’m done for now” looking at his watch “Actually I think the wizard and I are going to call it a night we have to be up and ready before 8.” Tony smiles at Rhodes “Honey bear you cool taking the kids home tomorrow?”

“I’ll make sure they get home,” Carol promised.

They said their goodbyes and Stephen and Tony headed to their room.

Preparing for bed Tony stops and faces Stephen concern swimming in his eyes.

“Stephen, next time let me know when your hands start to hurt. Don’t push through the pain. I know all about chronic pain” Tony smiled sadly and removed his shirt, tapping the arc reactor “I live with it daily.”

Stephen approaches Tony “You never told me” the sorcerer whispered his hands went to rest against the humming arc reactor.

Tony shrugs nonchalantly “I have high pain tolerance, how do you think I survived the surgery in Afghanistan? They definitely didn’t use anesthesia”

“Why don’t you use anything for pain?” Stephen asks tracing the edges of the reactor.
“I am still an alcoholic I don’t want to add narcotics back onto that list. That was a really rough time in my life. Aunt Peggy kicked my ass into gear and I promised never to rely on narcotics again. Alcohol though is a different story, it helps me loosen up and relax. I can’t seem to give that up”

“Oh Tony.” Stephen whispers his hands moving to cup Tony’s face. “We really are a pair aren’t we?” Stephen chuckles and leans in, kissing Tony’s forehead.

“We complete each other” Tony beams up at the sorcerer.

“That we do” Stephen wholeheartedly agreed “Come we have a busy day tomorrow let’s go to bed”

Clad in only their boxers, the two men curled up together, Stephen spooning Tony. The billionaire intertwined their fingers, and not even 5 minutes later Stephen heard quiet snores coming from him. Stephen smiled gently, and slowly drifted off.

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The next day Stephen portaled to Kamar-Taj. Opening it into his room there he helped keep Tony calm.

Tony was facing Stephens’s chest and was walking backwards, being lead by Stephen while Levi stayed behind him.

When Stephen had waved away the portal he gave Tony the all clear and they shared a quick kiss. Tony chest loosening.

Stephen’s class went well and Tony didn’t have a single twinge of panic, so all in all a successful night… day? The being over 9 hours ahead of his regular time was definitely something the billionaire hadn’t gotten use to yet.

Tony was then shocked as the inhabitants of Kamar-Taj surprised him with a party. He smiled gently, blushing a bit at the attention he was receiving.

That fact that this was an intimate setting and everyone here knew him on more of a personal level made him feel things that he wasn’t used too.

A few hour’s later people turned in and Tony and Stephen traveled back to New York it was a little after 1 PM when they got back.

“The time difference is so hard to get used to! And I travel for a living” Tony commented as he went to the kitchen to place leftover food he had brought home.

“It takes a while, but It’ll get a bit better” Stephen follows him. “Did you have a good time?”

Tony put the food away and turned smiling at the sorcerer. “It was really fun. I’ve never had a surprise party or anything like that. It was fun”

Stephen stepped up to the billionaire pinning him against the fridge.

They shared a few gentle kisses.
“You know we have the whole afternoon to ourselves now” Stephen smirked

“Whatever will we do with all that time?” Tony playfully asked

“I can think of a few things”

Chapter End Notes

I kept stopping and was like should this be the end? Nah. How about this? Nope!
Lol so y’all ended up with this!
It’s funny there was complaints of the chapters being too small before! Well look at me know! Haha!
Anyways! What did you think? Let me know how I did!
(Especially with the smut... as I said before I’m not a guy so I don’t know how certain things feel... and I’ve only been with one guy and we’re getting married so yup)
Next chapter should be the Halloween costume shopping and some fluff with the kids!
Hopefully there weren't too many mistakes or errors!
Until next time!
The following days bleed together. Between Stephen and Tony’s busy schedules, traveling to and from Kamar-Taj, the compound and what not. Tony was feeling drained. It had come to the consensus that weekends would be more for personal moments.

The whole team agreed. Whether it would be for relaxed and fun training, whereas training during the weekdays were more serious and involve a lot more work. Or they would do fun activities, or really whatever they felt like.

Unless of course they would be needed and called upon, but to non-emergent events there was now an actual consulting time.

Which greatly amused Tony when Carol and him had discussed this.

This also meant that Tony would be able to take a break and actually enjoy life a little bit.

Stephen and his relationship was flourishing, the new team was coming along amazingly.

Tony was genuinely happy for the first time in years he thought back to when he was first activating extremis and the nanotech. How excited he had been then, what he felt now could barely hold a candle to that moment.

The fear of when the other shoe would drop was still there but with all the distractions, and the sex, oh god the sex, he wasn’t dwelling on the negative like he used to though.

Through the week Tony had been meeting members of the Council, through teleconferences of course, and discussing details about Natasha.

After talking with the spy Tony had a bit more insight on the redhead, that had manipulated him several time throughout their years of knowing each other.

She was wasn’t wrong in her fears of the Civil War ending in someone’s death, or almost death in
Tony’s case. And Extremis could probably save Rhodes back. But after looking at the scans Stephen had suggested against it.

Carol and Tony brokered a deal for Natasha, that the spy hadn’t even finished listening to the terms before agreeing to it.

Essentially Natasha was on house arrest at the Compound. CARTER was her warden, and the spy had to wear a tracking bracelet. If she tampered with it or took it off severe consequences would be had, ones that even Tony wouldn’t be able to save her from, or that’s what he had said, with a smirk on his face.

She would be allowed to train during the weekdays with the team or individuals that were training, but she was not allowed in the Avengers wing without explicit instruction.

She was allowed to stay in the housing unit that was there for others workers and agents, though she had to do jobs around the compound to allow her to stay there free of charge. The cafeteria that was there, for the other parties that used the compound, had cheap options but since Natasha obviously didn’t have an income and couldn’t actually go get a job, Tony fronted her some money, much to his team disapproval.

On Wednesday Tony was able to move her to one of the dorm style rooms. Jessica cornering Natasha, after Tony left. The dark haired woman held the spy against the wall with her forearm, pressing hard against the other woman’s windpipe.

Natasha breathed as evenly as she could with the restricted airway their eyes locked together.

Natasha pushed any panic away and waited as Jessica stared her down, searching her eyes, for something.

“I don’t trust you” Jessica said in a low threatening voice after a few strained breaths from Natasha.

Natasha sent the woman a small smile “That’s smart. Even I don’t trust myself” she shrugs trying to play nonchalant “I’m glad Tony has you guys, I honestly don’t see anyone from the old team going around threatening others for him”

Jessica smirks “Oh sweetie if you think this is me threatening you, you have another thing coming” the PI steps closer, if possible, pressing harder against the spy’s throat. “And there is nothing to threatening here, it’s simple, you just don’t initiate any communication with him. He will come to you. Do not look for him. If you need something go to Colonel Danvers or Rhodes. You stay away from Tony” Jessica presses in hard and releases the spy who starts coughing slightly as air rushes back to her lungs, she places her hand against her chest.

“Are we clear?” The dark haired woman asks the spy.

“Crystal” Natasha rasps out past her coughs

Before Jessica leaves though she looks over her shoulder “Just heads up there might be more of these kind of talks in your near future from the others. Watch your step Romanoff.” At that the PI left a smile firmly planted on her face.

Jessica wasn’t wrong; by the end of Friday she had basically met the entire new team in passing, all leaving her with generally the same message.

In the trainings she had joined both Thursday and Friday, she had received some well-placed hits that left her a bit sore and bruised.
As she laid in bed Friday night thinking about how she got to where she was and how she should proceed forward a knock on the door shook her out of her thoughts.

Sighing she hoped that I wasn’t anyone asking her to come clean some mess up, or even a New Avenger with a message for her.

She was surprised to open the door and find Laura standing in the doorway.

Natasha heard the slap before she felt it. Her cheek flared up, and her face turned slightly in response.

Natasha lifted her hand to her cheek and felt the warm skin.

“I’m afraid to see what Clint will get when he shows up” Natasha commented holding her cheek lightly, attempting to joke.

There were tears swimming in Laura’s eyes as she stood there.

“Divorce papers” Laura said simply anger flashing in her eyes.

“Laura I-” the spy tried to explain.

“I don’t want to hear it Tasha!” Laura snapped “I named my son after you, and after the witches brother because he saved my husbands life. His whole name is tainted now! My husband left me and our- my kids, to fight something he should have just stayed away from! He was supposed to be retired.”

Natasha watched helplessly as a woman she considered a sister broke down in front of her. She went to reach out, and her hand was shoved away.

“And you, I don’t even know who you are. I thought I did. But I keep hearing and seeing these things about you-“ Laura hiccuped a sob

“CARTER can you get someone down here to get Laura” Natasha asked quietly as Laura collapsed to the floor on her knees, she was hugging her chest and broken sobs escaped her.

The sound broke Natasha’s heart.

A few minutes later Tony came down the hall to find Laura outside of Natasha’s door, on the floor sobbing so hard her entire body shook. Natasha was kneeling in front of her looking lost and unsure of what to do.

The spy looked up as she saw movement.

“She uh- she came here and broke down. She won’t let me touch her.” Natasha explained her eyes looked haunted as she looked to Tony.

The billionaire nodded. Stepping forward he gently touched Laura’s shoulder.

“Laura honey, come let's get you to bed” Tony spoke softly.

Natasha watched as the woman spun around and clung to Tony as though he was her lifeline.

He pulled her up and moved to pick her up bridal style as she hides her face in his neck sobbing.

“Thanks Natalia” The billionaire whispered.
“Of course Anton” the spy said sadly and watches as the man carried away the broken woman.

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Saturday October 15th

Around 9 AM

After Laura’s break down the night before Tony ended up comforting the woman all night. She had fallen asleep on Tony and whenever he had moved to get up she would wake up and start crying again. Tony didn’t think she was too aware of what she was doing so he sent a message to the group letting them know he and Laura wouldn’t be joining them for any games or movies that night. Stephen was off doing wizarding stuff anyways, so Tony got comfortable and connected to the uplink, getting some stuff done while he was laying there.

When morning came around a read faced Laura apologized as she woke up on Tony’s shoulder. His shirt was damp from her tears, snot, and drool. Tony simply smiled and shrugged saying something about Stephen being away and needing a cuddle buddy anyhow.

That didn’t lessen Laura’s embarrassment but she felt slightly relieved that Tony was able to joke around with her.

“So I had Carol get the kids up and fed, and I think I’m going to take them out for the day. I set up a spa day for you and all the ladies, Hope helped don’t worry. You should go have a good time today” Tony said as he got up and stretched walking towards the door

“Wait, Tony” she called standing up, she walked over to him. “Thank you” she wrapped her arms around his waist and hugged him tightly avoiding the part of his shirt that was damp.

Tony smiled and returned the hug, kissing her head gently in a calming manner “I got your back Laura, you know that”

She nodded into his chest.

“Now seriously, go have a good time today, I’ll take care of the kids” Tony instructed and after one last squeeze he left Laura’s room.

Leaving the woman to wonder what would everything be like if that man hadn’t come to get her, what if he hadn’t save her and her kids.

She shivered not wanting to think about it further, and decided to go take a shower.

*******

Around Noon
“Why did I think this was a good idea?” Tony asked the babbling toddler he had on his hip. “We are going to be here all day,” the billionaire groaned as he watched Kamala, Cassie, and Lila tearing through the princess costumes. As Peter and Cooper were checking out the hero’s section.

Tony heard a sudden yelp and a whispered yell “Mr. Stark!”

Tony pushed the stroller with one hand as he shifted Nate in his other.

“What’s up Peter?” Tony asked the Teen who was basically vibrating.

“Peter found Spider-Man costumes,” Cooper said smiling at the older boy.

Peter squeaked as Cooper spoke.

Tony smiled widely; he leaned in and spoke quietly. “I think your costume is a bit better than this one.”

As the billionaire looked around he caught sight of various hero’s outfits made into costumes. He flinch a bit when he caught sight of a plastic version of Captain America’s shield. He had a slight twinge of happiness to see that those along with the actual Captain America outfits appeared untouched.

“Look Uncle Tony! It’s you!” Cooper exclaimed, pointing to the dwindling display of Iron Man costumes. Tony chuckled in amusement.

Peters brain restarted by then “This is nuts! I have kids dressing up as me! I’m an actual hero that is being placed with the others!” Peters whispered ramble made Tony smile at the teen, the billionaire bounces a bit to adjust Nate.

“It’s really not that hard to believe Pete, because you are a hero” Tony sees Peter tear up at his words and quickly looked away from the billionaire. Tony looks over and can hear the girls go on about what they should dress up as.

Peter turns back and smiles widely at Tony, and then he and Cooper continue on looking.

Cooper comes over after a moment and hands Tony a hanger with a small version of the Iron Man costume.

“For Nate, I think mom would approve” the Preteen suggests. Tony chuckled and examined it wasn’t too awful looking if he was honest.

Nate babbled and reaches for it. The material is soft between the toddler’s hands and he does his loud squeal of excitement. Tony flinched at the sound and smiled down at Nate.

“Uncle Tony!” Lila calls from across the way.

The billionaire smiles and makes his way over to the girls, having to pull the costume away from Nate, who suddenly thought it was food, he should probably grab the boy a bottle, he was bored and hungry and Tony could tell he was getting fussy.
He made his way to the girls, and Lila asked him what she was allowed to get, when Tony told her anything, her eyes widened. Tony told them not to go crazy but they were allowed to get what they wanted, Kamala and Cassie followed with an “Us too?” And Tony smiled and nodded, the girls proceeded to squeal and run off.

Tony smiling he was really excited for winter break now. Both Harley and Rebecca were coming up to New York. Tony had been able to talk Bethany into allowing it.

Also since Tony was working on getting comfortable with Portals he was hoping to get Harley up to New York more, especially since Tony was now working on a armor for the teen. With Bethany’s approval of course.

But there were still a lot of finite issues to iron out so Tony had to stay patient and wait a bit to get the teen up to him.

Tony sat the Toddler back in the stroller, much to the child's disapproval, and grabbed a bottle with water already in it, mixed formula in, and handed the toddler the bottle. The child latched on and started nursing it happily, staring at the genius as he did.

Tony was brought out of his thoughts when a hand touched his shoulder.

“Do you need anything Mr. Stark?” A store associate asked.

“Can you point me to your masks?” Tony asked remembering that in about 2 week’s Stark Industries was holding their Halloween Masquerade Event.

“Right over here” the woman, said leading him through the massive store. Tony pushed the stroller following her. She attempted to make small talk but Tony was really good at evading question and she soon left him alone in front of a wall of masks, there were tons.

He laughed when he saw Iron Man and War Machine one’s. Grabbing them, he decided to get them for the heck of it, not quite sure when of if they would wear them. But he’d have them nonetheless. He knew if he wore that one to the event Pepper would kill him so he kept looking.

Browsing specifically through the masquerade masks he found a maroon one with gold designs around the eyes. Picking it up he held it up and looked to Nate.

“What do you think?” He asked the toddler.

The only response he received was a slow blink as the child’s eyes were half closed obviously on the verge of sleep.

Tony set the mask on top of the Iron Man costume and the other two masks that were resting on tops of the sunshade of the stroller.

He looked back over and gazed over them again deciding that he would take the liberty of getting Stephen a mask, because if Tony had to go to the event he sure as hell was dragging his man along with him, even if they hadn’t announced they were a couple to the public yet. It was nice not to be hounded by the press about such things, and how he was actually able to enjoy the relationship without others butting in. And Tony had also hoped that he could spare Stephen from entering the spotlight for as long as possible.

Tony spotted a silver one with intricate designs; he knew that Stephen’s eyes would just pop in it. Smiling stupidly at that thought he added it the pile.
Now to go see what the kids were up too.

Walking back over he caught sight of a costume he knew he had to get; I mean if he would be
taking the kids trick or treating he would need a costume… right?

******

1:30 PM

All the kids had picked out their costumes for Halloween and the bags got loaded into the back of
the SUV.

“Uncle Tony I’m hungry” Lila whines while Tony is strapping in the half asleep Nate. He woke up
a bit after the transfer from the stroller.

“Me too’s” ring throughout the vehicle.

Tony climbed into the driver's seat deciding not to take the hour or two drive back to the
compound he maneuvered his way towards the Tower. He briefly asked FRIDAY through the
uplink to get some pizzas delivered.

When they arrived Tony pulled into the underground parking and had the kids grab the bags while
Tony grabbed a more awake Nate.

“Hey Bud, how’re you doing?” Tony picks him up and the toddler cooed in response.

He grabbed the diaper bag and followed the kids to the elevator. Everyone cheered as they saw the
pizzas laying out for them.

Dropping the bags, the pizza was taken and they were soon planted in front of the TV, eating.

Tony rolled his eyes and changed Nate. The billionaire thought about how domestic he was being
and how doing little things like going shopping with kids was giving him the stupidest smile.

“It must be the old age” Tony concluded telling Nate who simply babbled back like he always did,
not quite forming words yet but it was a work in process.

Tony heated up some pasta that he had made the other day and worked on feeding Nate. The
young boy had been having a tough time with teething lately but thankfully it seem he was getting
a slight reprieve from the discomfort.

Nate wanted to play with the pasta more than eat it but Tony was still able to get him to eat quite a
bit.

By the time Nate was done and washed up, he was placed in his playpen, Tony walked over to
check on the others. Lila and Cassie were curled up on the floor passed out cold.

The other three were watching their show and not paying attention to Tony at all.

Tony ruffled Peters hair “We are going to head back to the compound at about 4. Don’t forget
Xavier his bringing some of his students over tomorrow”
Peter perked up “Oh yeah! I’m super excited. Wade was telling me all about Ellie and Yukio. He’s excited for me to meet them. Maybe not in those words exactly but you know Wade.”

“I’m actually really excited to meet some of the older students” Kamala inputs. At that the teens turned back to focusing on their show.

Tony moved to sit on a recliner and pulled up a projection of some paperwork he had to read through.

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Couple hours later

Tony’s phone went off, a soft trill that was different from the other sounds his phone made told him it was from Stephen

Stephen: Hey I probably won’t make it back stateside tonight. I should be back Sunday Night. I’ll let you know when I know.

Tony sighed slightly disappointed; Stephen had left after they had gotten up Friday morning. He missed his wizard. But knew he was busy so he wasn’t about to alert the sorcerer about how much he really needed him at night for sleep and throughout the day for comfort. Because that would just be him being clingy and stupid.

Tony: nah it’s cool. You get your wizarding business done I’ll see you when you get back.

Stephen: Are you okay?

To lie or not to lie. He didn’t want to worry Stephen but at the same time…

Tony: I’m fine. I always am

Tony: I miss you

He decides to stay honest but simple.

Stephen: Have you been able to sleep?
Tony sighs again. How does the sorcerer know? Tony hesitates in his answer. Because what he wants to say just is him being ridiculous and clingy and stupid. But he types it anyway

**Tony**: no haven’t really tried though. Too much to do, and no wizard to force me to sleep. I’m ok though. I’m only on what? Like hour 31 of being awake. I’ve been awake longer than that before

**Stephen**: Tony...

Tony chuckled cause he could basically hear Stephen’s voice through the text reprimanding him. Tony realizes the time and messages Stephen that he has to go, and he will talk with him later the sorcerer responds with a ‘Try to get some rest’. At that Tony gets the kids set to go and they head to the compound.

********

The following 2 weeks passed just as quickly as Tony was extremely busy, with preparations for the end of year launch of Stark Industries products, working with Shuri on trying to properly calibrate BARF to work on Barnes, Training and co-leading the Avengers, along with working on all the political crap. Tony was exhausted.

Stephen had to use the sleeping spell multiple time throughout the period just so Tony’s brain would properly go into REM sleep.

The sorcerer was busy as well and the two men were finding it difficult to get some time together. So when Tony invited Stephen to be his plus one to the Halloween Masquerade Event Stephen immediately said yes, and proceeded to give Tony a long and heated kiss.

Tony sighed as he put on his suit for the night. One of the hardest part of his last couple weeks was working on BARF.

The BARF technology was still in its infancy and there was still so much that needed to be done. Tony’s work on BARF for himself was one thing trying to get everything set up for the brainwashed super soldier was a completely different thing.

Shuri wanted to have all the kinks worked out before waking the super soldier up, and offering him the treatment, but there was something’s that would be easier to get done if Tony and Shuri were together in person. But with the Rogues in Wakanda and Shuri being need there to help and such they were stuck with what that had at the moment.
Shuri had shared her concerns to Tony about the Council pushing the Avengers to search for the Rogues and Barnes. Because of her position on the Council she was concerned about the implications that her knowledge would pose against her people. Tony assured her that he had already talked with Eleanor, the head councilwoman, on that. He and Eleanor had a silent agreement going.

You see it was a he knew she knew, and she knew he knew scenario.

During one of their teleconferences she had discussed concerns about Rogers and his crew, knowing fully well that Tony would have already tracked them, he had continued to reassure her if they did pop up, they would be taken care of. Which she wholeheartedly agreed.

After that they were on the exact same page.

The silent agreement that it was better to focus on training and working with the Accords rather than hunting down the Rogues so long as they stayed out of the way.

Though Tony admitted that they might need to wake Barnes up and bring him back to the States for his therapy.

“That’s going to be a cluster fuck,” Tony admits as Shuri and him were talking

The teen looked nervous. “I don’t see how we’ll be able to accomplish that without throwing my Brother under the bus”

“Don’t worry Princess I have few ideas” Tony smiled and they left it at that for now.

Tony slipped his suit jacket on after finishing tying the maroon tie he was wearing that would match his mask.

“Boss, Peter and Kamala just arrived” FRIDAY alerted the billionaire.

“Let Laura know, and what’s the ETA on the limo?” Tony asked as he was working on putting his cufflinks on.

“Laura has been told, and 20 minutes” FRIDAY replied

“Thanks baby girl, your the best” Tony praises and he goes to stand in front of the mirror to adjust himself.

“I try” the AI said modestly, Tony smirks at that.

2 weekends ago Peter and Kamala had been super excited to meet members of the X-men. It was definitely an interesting time when they arrived in their jet.

Deadpool was standing beside Peter.

“You should feel lucky Spidey these guys kept trying to get me to join them” The Merc whispers loudly in the teen’s ear.
“I feel honored Wade” Peter deadpans playfully.

“Oh! Look! Hi Yukio!” Deadpool points and them waves

“Hi Wade” A pinked haired Asian waved at Deadpool

“She’s cute” Kamala whispered to Peter

“She’s dating Negasonic Teenage long ass name there,” Deadpool pointed to another girl with short hair, who stuck the middle finger out at him “they’re a super cute couple”

Peter and Kamala has a great time showing some of the younger students around especially the game room and the fun hang out areas.

While Tony and Carol discussed Training and ideas on integrating some of the younger students into the young recruits training regimen with Ororo and Logan.

Running a hand through his hair, giving it the shape it needed Tony nodded approvingly.

He paused as he watched Stephen enter the closet through the Mirror. The sorcerer looked amazing in his suit and silver bow tie.

Tony’s face could have easily broken at the smile that nearly cracked it in half.

Stephen strode over to Tony, the billionaire turned to face him.

The sorcerer was raking his eyes over Tony and proceeded to pin the billionaire against the mirror and capture him in a kiss.

“Fuck Stephanie, you look amazing” Tony groaned as the kiss broke.

“You don’t look so bad yourself” Stephen smiled and kissed Tony’s nose, the billionaire scrunched it up in response.

“God I can’t wait to get home after tonight” Tony moaned fighting the urge to have his way with Stephen or letting Stephen have his way with him, either way, it didn’t matter.

“Come, let’s go meet the others before we undo all our hard work on preparing” Stephen gave Tony one last kiss, before Tony grabbed the masks and they left their room.

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October 28

6 PM

Melrose Ballroom

“You think they’ll be ok without us?” Laura asked for the hundredth time.

“Relax Laura and enjoy yourself” Tony soothed the anxious mother. “Pete and Kam are smart
kids, Wade is there Incase something happens and FRIDAY is there too, she won’t let anything happen to any of them” the limousine pulled up to the venue and Tony sighed seeing all the press and cameras.

Tony, Stephen, Danny, Colleen, Luke, Claire, Jessica, Matt, Jennifer, Betty, Jane, Darcy, Carol, Rhodey, Laura, Hope, Vision, Maggie and Jim were all in the large limo. Stephen’s hands had been shaking more than normal and were clenched. One of them had been holding Tony’s hand tightly, but the billionaire wasn’t complaining, he’d just gently remind the sorcerer to take deep, even breaths and had kept him distracted with small talk.

“You ready for this Danny? There will a lot of light on you tonight with the deal just going through this last week” Tony asked referring to the partnership that had just been forged between Stark Industries and Rand Enterprises

Danny looked out the window nervously.

“How about you hang by me on the way in and follow my lead while talking to the press. Does that sound okay?” Tony asked the fellow billionaire, who’s face flushed in sudden relief. “Carol, Rhodey you already know what to do. The rest of you can head straight in, if you want to avoid the press just wave politely and keep walking, don’t stop or they will swarm you.” Tony instructed

Everyone gave various signs or sounds of approval.

“You going to be okay?” Stephen asked as Happy was coming around to open the door, his voice shaking slightly from the adrenaline still.

“I always am” Tony smiled and said his usual line and touched Stephen’s cheek gently “But honestly yeah I’ll be fine, just go wait for me and save me a dance.” Tony kisses the sorcerer quickly before the door opened.

“Game time everyone,” Jennifer said

Matt smirked “This should be fun”

Everyone filed out of the limo Danny and Tony being the last two and when they exited cheers roared around them.

Tony watched as his team makes their way into the venue, a few stopping to make comments and letting pictures being taken of them.

Darcy, Jane, Betty, Maggie, and Jim made their way in without stopping since they didn’t have much to say and wanted to stay out of the spotlight as much as possible, though not really Darcy but Jane was keeping the girl beside her so she didn’t really have a choice.

Danny and Colleen followed Tony, and the genius jumped from reporter to reporter in quick succession, which was answering questions and giving statements like the pro he was. Danny quickly fell into a steady rhythm with the fellow billionaire as questions were being asked to the both of them.

Most of the team had made it into the venue by the time Tony and Danny were a little over halfway through the crowd, though Tony was speeding it up a bit, Colleen had gotten bored and kissed Danny on the cheek, which had caused a lot of flashes, and told the billionaire’s that she would see them inside.

About 10 minutes later Tony bid everyone goodbye and promised that there would be a press
conference regarding the partnership soon, and just to hold tight.

Placing his mask on he proceeded to sling an arm around Danny.

“You did great Danielle!” Tony praised smiling at the nickname he’d given the man

Danny smiled and put his own mask on. “You did most of the work. I don’t know how you do that! It’s exhausting,” he said as he adjusted his mask.

The two men walked in the venue.

Whoever Pepper has decorate the place did a wonderful job.

Speaking of Pepper the woman was walking up to them a small thankful smile on her face.

She stepped into a hug from Tony and kissed his cheek “Thank you!” She breathed in his ear

Tony looked confused “Whatever for?”

She smiled at him and shook her head as though he wasn’t quite understanding something “Just thank you, now go, have a good time, and please do try not to get too ridiculous”

“Me? Get ridiculous? What is this madness you speak of?” Tony help his hand to his chest in mock horror.

Pepper rolled her eyes “Dinner starts at 7, so that gives you time to mingle, I’ll see you at the head table” Pepper patted his cheek and lifted her mask back up to her face.

“Save a dance for me” Tony called after her, she simply raised her hand in acknowledgment.

Danny continued to look a bit lost so Tony started bringing him around, introducing him to top investors and sponsors. Helping lead the conversation and helping Danny answer questions that he would benefit from.

Tony’s eyes kept sweeping over the room and he kept catching the eye of one of his teammates, they appeared to be everywhere.

It was almost dinner and Tony decided to grab a drink. He slid up beside Jessica; she just finished throwing her drink back.

“Whatcha having?” Tony asked coming up and leaning on the bar.

“Whatever you are” she flirts back playfully twirling a piece of hair.

“Whiskey on rocks” Tony instructs the bartender. “And put whatever she had and is having on my tab” he lays down a hundred dollar as the bartender brings the drinks.

Jessica raises an eyebrow at him but ends up shrugging.

“Oh my God! Jess? I thought that was you! It was hard to recognize you in a mask” a preppy blonde comes striding up to the dark haired woman.

Tony takes a sip of his drink observing Jessica as she grimaces slightly at being caught.

“Trish, Hey” She turns to look at the blonde
Oh right Trish Walker.

“I’ve been trying to get ahold of you! You went and joined the Avengers? Even after everything you told me? And then you don’t even come by for an interview! I mean that’s just-“ Trish started to go off on Jessica

“Trish, Tony Stark. Tony, Trish Walker” Jessica interrupts and points to the two while introducing them.

Trish squeaks in surprise and covers her mouth in shock. She glances between Tony and Jessica. Landing her gaze on Jessica.

“Tony Stark?” She whispers “As in the Tony Stark?” She asks for confirmation.

A smile twitches at Jessica’s lips as she takes another sip of her drink nodding slightly.

Tony chuckles at the fish out of water look Trish got. Her mouth opening and closing, but no words coming out.

Tony holds his hand out to her; Trish obviously on autopilot raises her hand to shake his.

“It’s a pleasure Miss Walker” he raises her hand and kisses it softly. The blonde blushes in response.

Jessica rolls her eyes and fights the laughter. “You’re such a goddamn flirt Stark” She quips

“It’s a gift,” Tony says as he releases Trish’s hand

The blonde quietly watching the interaction unsure of what to say.

A few beats of silence pass and Tony downs his drink placing the glass on the bar.

“Well it’s almost dinner and I’m expected to make a speech so I’ll be on my way” Tony says and he parts from the bar. “Jess let me know when your ready to close the tab” he says as his parting words, disappearing into the crowd.

Trish looks back to Jessica. “Did that just happen?”

The dark haired woman ignores her though and finishes her drink

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A little after 7 PM

“Thank you all for coming, my beautiful CEO really knows how to throw a party doesn’t she?” He asks the crowd, lights flashed. Mummers of agreement ring around the room.

“Now tonight is about Stark Industries, though I’m sure many of you are itching for me to say something about the Avengers Initiative, I’m sorry to disappoint you, but that won’t be happening tonight.” Some awww’s were heard
“In the next coming months you will be seeing new and improved tech coming from SI and their partners. Our new partnership with Rand Enterprises should definitely bear some very exciting fruit for all of you and I’m excited to see where the new direction takes us.” Tony beams in genuine excitement.

“Now something big that I am extremely excited to show you in the near future is Stark Industries new medical technology line which hopefully by the start of 2017 I’ll have started implementing my ideas into local hospitals and clinics in the area.” Loud applause rang out at that.

“I am a very busy man but I assure all of you my wonderful investors and sponsors that I have so much more to give and to share with you.” Tony looked around everyone seemed happy which was always good.

“Now please, eat, dance, and enjoy yourselves!” The billionaire concluded, and bowed his head, passed on the microphone to whoever was waiting for it and sat down.

The round tables only held 10 people per so they were split up. At Tony’s table Stephen sat beside him, their legs gently touching under it, Rhodes sat next to him on the other side and Carol next. Jessica, Matt, Jennifer, Hope, Danny and Colleen were sitting there as well.

Hope had been helping Danny too, as well as sell her own business, which Tony had no problem with, he enjoyed the friendly competition between them.

Luke, Claire, Laura, Reed, Sue, Johnny, Ben, Darcy, Jane, Betty, Vision, Maggie, and Jim were spread out between two other tables while sitting with some other random people. But they all seem to be handling themselves quite well.

Pepper was flitting around the room, when she reached Tony’s table he pulled her onto his lap. “Eat,” he simply instructed gesturing to his plate.

She sighed and looked back at him, before trying to get up, Tony held tight.

“Pep, eat” he said softly

The red head looked exhausted and Tony could basically feel her stomach rumble under his hand.

“I can sit in my own chair,” She pouted slightly

“But then you wouldn’t actually stay seated” the billionaire shot back. “I’m not letting you go until you eat a bit Pepper you look pale, your blood sugar is low, eat please. I know it’s hard too when you have so much to do, but take a minute” Tony insisted

“You’re one to talk” Rhodey shoots at the billionaire, giving him a look

“Exactly! Because I’ve been in her shoes so I am one to talk, I thankfully got myself a Doctor Wizard so I’m covered in the taking care of myself department, at least while he’s around” Tony smirks looked to the side, Stephen bumps his leg a bit in a secret reply.

Pepper sighs and relents.

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8:30 PM
“May I cut in?” Stephen asks as Hope and Tony had just finished their dance. Tony playfully went to hand Hope off before she spun away.

“Nice try Star, he meant you.” Hope smiled and waved at the two men.

Stephen wraps an arm around Tony’s waist and holds his other hand. The band was playing a gently, and easy song, that was easy to sway to.

“I feel like I’ve barely seen you all night, and I’m supposed to be your date” Stephen smiles easily, his eyes twinkling at Tony.

Tony grimaces “Sorry Stephanie” he looks upset about it.

“Hey, it’s ok, I get it, I’m only playing around Love” Stephen squeezes the hand he’s holding.

“I just really am enjoying this” Tony motions with his head referring to them “No one hounding us. We are able to enjoy this without others butting in. It’s the most normal I’ve ever felt.” Tony scoffs “and my life is anything but normal”

“Tony you don’t have to explain, I really do understand” Stephen said spinning them around. “Oh but I cannot wait to get you home tonight” the sorcerer purred in Tony’s ear as he dipped the Billionaire slightly.

Tony felt his face flush at Stephen’s words. “Shit Stephen you can’t say stuff like that” the billionaire ducks his head to hide the blush.

“Why ever not?” Stephen asks mirth lacing his voice.

“Just because” Tony states after a pause looking up at the sorcerer defiantly.

“I need a bit more than that” Stephen has a wicked sort of smile on his face that makes Tony’s stomach do a flip-flop.

“Screw you Strange” Tony hisses biting his lip trying not to pay attention to how the sorcerer is staring at him.

“But you already are Stark” Stephen replied in a relaxed tone, his eyes twinkling even brighter as a smile graces his face.

“Fuck me” Tony whispers exasperated

“And I’ve already done that, and plan to do just that tonight as well” Stephen responds his smile growing if that was even possible.

A click of heel alerts the men that they’re no longer alone and turn to see Pepper standing there watching them closely.

“Mind if I have that dance now Mr. Stark?” She asks sweetly.

Tony and Stephen release each other; Stephen squeezes the billionaire’s hand before letting him go and turns to head to where some of the team was relaxing by the bar.

“Of course Miss Potts” the billionaire holds his hand out and spins Pepper in.
“So how long has that been a thing?” His former assistant asks

“Hmm?” Tony makes an inquisitive sound.

Pepper gives him a look “Your comment at dinner kind of gave it away”

Tony’s face breaks into a smile.

“September 9th” Tony admits.

Peppers eyes go wide “Over a month?!” She squeaks in surprise. A small squeal followed.

Tony nods in response.

“Oh my god! Why haven’t you said anything? I haven’t seen or heard anything about it” Pepper whispers to the billionaire. She pouts slightly “Why does everyone else know but I don’t?”

“I’m sorry Pep both you and I have been busy so I didn’t really think about it. What Stephen and I have, it has just been happening naturally. The others have seen it and are around us. For the reason why it’s not all over the tabloids is because I just want to enjoy this without others hounding me for details. It’s the first normal thing I’ve had in I think forever. And I really want to avoid throwing Stephen to the wolves.” Tony explains

Pepper nods in an understanding sort of manner.

“Yeah I get it, it was a lot for us. The press always following us around. I understand. What happens when it leaks?” She smiles as he dips her.

Standing up straight he spins her and brings her back in close.

“When it comes out I’ll deal with it. Stephen knows what will happen when it does” Tony smiles sadly “sometimes I wish I wasn’t as famous as I am so I could actually live a normal life, that’s so bad of me to wish. There’s so many that would kill to be where I’m at”

“Yes but at the same time if they got it they might realize it’s not all it cracked up to be” Pepper offered some comfort. “I’m happy for you Tony.”

Tony smiled and they danced in a comfortable silence. The song came to an end and Tony kissed her on the cheek.

“Thank you Pepper for everything” Tony squeezes her hand, “I don’t think I’ve ever thanked you enough for all that you do and have put up with”

“It’s been my pleasure Tony” she smiled fondly

“Is that all Miss Potts?” Tony asked smirking

“That is all Mr. Stark” she replied and they separated, Tony heading to see what his team was up to.

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11:00 PM
The rest of the night passed smoothly. Pepper, Tony, Hope, and Danny were busy going around talking and schmoozing.

Tony got dances from everyone, even Rhodey much to the Colonels dismay.

He was all smiles as he started bidding some guests goodbye, many of them commenting on how good he looks as they said their farewells.

Stephen stood behind him stealthily touching the billionaire every here and there. Slowly driving the billionaire insane and he knew it too.

“I think I’m just going to portal back to the sanctum,” Stephen whispered quietly into Tony before the next person came up to Tony.

“Take me with you” Tony begged looking over his shoulders seeing if Pepper or anyone was watching him.

Stephen laughed, “You have a job to finish here. Just come after you are done.”

“But-“ Tony started to beg again but was interrupted

“Tony come here a second” Pepper calls him.

Tony groans and looks over to see her waving him over.

“Duty calls” he whispers wishing he could kiss the sorcerer without others around instead he just squeezes his hand, and watches as the sorcerer walked away from him, already missing him he turned and made his way to Pepper

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Sometime past midnight.

Tony walked into sanctum and walked up the stairs tiredly. Loosening his tie, he slowly started stripping out of his clothes.

He got to the room expecting Stephen to be asleep.

What he wasn’t expecting was candles lit around the room, some AC/DC was playing quietly in the background, and Stephen was laying across the bed in black lace briefs.

“Took you long enough” Stephen purrs, he sets his book down and rests on his elbow. Making a come hither motion with his finger at Tony.

Tony’s throat got dry as he took in the sight in front of him.

“Fucking Hell” Tony whispered. He dropped his suit jacket and tie, kicked his shoes off, and stripped the shirt that was already unbuttoned off, as he walked forward his belt and pants dropped, he got his socks off while he kicked his pants off, leaving him only in his boxers.
Stephen simply smiled as he watched Tony eagerly stop out of his clothes. His cock now pressing hard against the lace briefs he wore.

Tony jumped into bed and straddled the sorcerer; all exhaustion he was feeling a few moments ago was washed away from him.

“Why hello there” Stephen smirked up at the billionaire.

“I’m sorry I made you wait so long” Tony purrs and rotates his hips grinding against the hard erection “But if this is what I get to come home too. I might need to delay coming home in the future”

Stephen bucks his hips. “Fuck me Tony.” Stephen demands and with a wave of his hand Tony’s boxers and the lace briefs vanish.

Tony smiles wickedly, excitement swimming in his eyes. “Oh I’m going to, you know how maddening it is not touching how I wanted.”

“Well you can touch me however you want now.” Stephen moves his hand up Tony’s side and pulls him down into a kiss.

Tony adjusts himself so he’s between Stephen’s legs, as the sorcerer adjusts himself to allow Tony to enter him, a pillow getting placed under his hips for support. The sorcerer already lubricated and prepared to take the billionaire.

“Oh Fuck Stephen, I’ll never get over how tight you are.” Tony groans as he slowly moved his cock in to place.

The two men had been switching positions lately, playing with new positions and what not. It had been amazing and both men were also enjoying getting a quickie in here and there.

“Tony” Stephen whines slightly and moves his hips begging Tony to move.

Tony reached in between then and grasps the sorcerer’s cock.

“What do you want?” Tony asked in a deep husky voice.

“Oh god Tony, move I need you to-“ his sentence is cut off as Tony starts his thrusts, Stephen moans loudly.

Tony is working the sorcerer’s cock as he thrusts deep and hard into him.

Moans echoing around the room were music to Tony’s ears.

“Oh, fuck” Stephen moans as Tony hits his prostate “Oh god”

Tony smirks and speeds up his hand around the throbbing cock in his hand.

It wasn’t much longer until Stephen spouted semen all over his own stomach with Tony quickly following him to an orgasm.

Stephen cleaning them with a hand movement, and the two of them curled up together falling asleep quickly with smiles on their faces.
Chapter End Notes

I’m sorry if there were any mistakes!
I hope you enjoyed!
Saturday October 29th

“How long do you think we should wait?” Tony asked Stephen out of the blue as they lay in bed. It was sometime in the morning and they were still in bed, enjoying the company of each other.

Tony drew lazy circles on Stephen’s chest.

“For?” Stephen inquired shifting a bit, his arm rested under Tony’s neck as the billionaire was laying on his shoulder.

“Going public, they are going to find out sooner or later, and I don’t want any backlash on you.” Tony frowned looking up.

“You worry too much” Stephen said kissing the top of Tony’s head. “Just let it happen when it happens. Tony, I know you hate this feeling of wanting to be public and not at the same time. I’m with you no matter what you do. If you had wanted to kiss me in front of all the reporters yesterday I would have let you. But I understand wanting to be private too. Just let it come out when it does and we will deal with it then.” Stephen soothed, Tony moved to wrap his arm around the sorcerer in a hug. “And seriously don’t worry to much about me, I promise you I knew exactly what I agreed to when jumping into a relationship with you, public image is part of it too I already knew. I can handle myself, I’m a big boy”

Tony sighed and kissed the sorcerer’s neck. “Pepper thought the same thing but it all became too much for her,” he mutters

Stephen chuckles “Well she also wasn’t able to make sure you stay safe while you’re out kicking ass, me on the other hand, I can follow you and watch your back, and make sure you stay safe.”

“Thank you Stephen.” Tony chokes out his voice full of emotion.
Stephen flips them and pins the billionaire underneath him.

“What for?” The sorcerer inquires as he rests his elbows beside Tony’s head and his hand comb through the billionaire’s hair.

“For being you” Tony smiles widely, Stephen copies the smile and leans in to kiss his lover.

The sorcerer grinding his hips a bit, the now prominent erections were both very apparent.

“How about I show you something else you’ll be extremely thankful for” Stephen purrs.

“Bring it, Merlin, show me your best”

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“God! Do you two ever stop? It’s like you both are freaking energizer bunnies. You just keep going, and going, and going” Rhodes asked exasperated as Stephen had Tony pinned against the wall. They had just portaled to the compound after another round or two in bed. But there was a team meeting and activity today so they both ended up taking a shower and by the time they were going to have to be at the meeting it was too late for Tony to drive all the way to the compound. So Stephen portaled the remaining team members from the tower to the compound, and actively distracted Tony when going through the portal by kissing him senseless, which worked mind you but that’s also how Rhodes found them a few minutes later.

“What Platypus? You haven’t gotten any action for the beautiful Capitan Marvel yet? That’s a shame. I know you’re a bit jealous” Tony said breaking away from Stephen gentle smiles were shared between them and Tony mouthed ‘Thank you’ before stepping away and slinging an arm around Rhodes.

The Colonel rolls his eyes, and bumps his shoulder over.

“You excited about tonight? We haven’t done this in years” Rhodes asked his best friend

“Hell yeah!” Tony Shouted exuberantly

“Do I get to know what the plan is? Or do I have to stay in the dark over here” Stephen asked from behind them, as they had started walking towards the meeting room.

Tony looked back and smiled sweetly at the sorcerer. “You’re just going to have to wait like everyone else babe” he turned back and he and Rhodes started discussing something in a low quiet voice.

Stephen tuned them out in favor of just observing the two of them, more specifically Tony.

7 weeks has gone by extremely fast, the two of them were in a extremely good place right now and Tony seemed to be getting better as the days progressed. There were still nightmares and panic attacks, on both ends, but they both seemed to fit together perfectly. Their trials and tribulations in life seemed to have made the two of them an even more perfect match for each other.

One of the biggest problems lately, on top of everything, was Barnes. That’s what the meeting today would be regarding, that and whatever the leaders had up their sleeves for a bonding
exercise, training, or what not.

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Everyone but the But the X-men were there.

“Ellie sent me a message saying that there was an issue with a rogue mutant and they are working with the Council and US government to fix the situation.” Kamala piped in when someone asked where they were.

Tony walked in on it and nodded. “Yeah I’ve already talked with Xavier and Eleanor they seem to have gotten the situation under control” the billionaire commented and went to sit in a chair beside Carol. Stephen moved to sit beside him; Tony grinned in response and moved to hold the sorcerer’s hand, and squeezes it gently.

The group around the table consisted of Carol, Rhodes, Tony, Stephen, Vision, Luke, Danny, Colleen, Jessica, Matt, Jennifer, Hope, Reed, Sue, Johnny, Ben, Deadpool, Kamala, and Peter.

There were two empty chairs but they were ignored for the time being. Easy discussion was had around the room, though it soon became a sound war.

Carol whistled after a bit to get everyone’s attention.

“Okay, so let’s get everyone’s attention it’s 1 now so let’s try get this done so we can move on. But before we bring in our guests for this meeting I need everyone to keep a level head and stay calm” Carol looked at everyone with a stern face.

Tony shifted uncomfortably as Stephen’s eyes rested on the billionaire to check on him.

Tony taped a screen on the table and Shuri and T’Challa’s holographic imagine took up the 2 empty seats.

Tony felt T’Challa’s eyes on him but actively ignored him as he looked to Shuri.

“Hey Princess long time no see” He smiles a bit regardless of his anxiety of being in the vicinity of T’Challa, even if the King hadn’t realized what he had done at the time, his actions nearly killed Tony and the billionaire wasn’t really ready to let that go.

“Hey there yourself Tony” she smiled wide at him “Thank you all for allowing me and my brother to join you today.”

“I can speak for myself sister,” the King said looking a bit embarrassed.

“Maybe so but considering the looks several of them are giving you, you talking might not be the best course of action. You are strictly here since you won’t leave me alone to work in peace, so you can find out the plan we are trying to work out, to keep your ass from getting placed on the chopping block.” Shuri seemed to get gradually more upset as she spoke. “Because your choices have now put our people in danger, so trying to work on damage control with the only people that could actually help us takes precedence over your own ability to speak for yourself.” As Shuri finishes her rant Kamala and Peter stood and clapped. Hope, Jessica and Jennifer were laughing, especially at the kids’ antics. The others around the room looked amused. Even Stephen’s shoulders shook a bit at repressed laughter.

“It’s fine Shuri” Tony tried to quell the situation and he could see T’Challa’s embarrassment, though he was amused that the King got his ass handed to him there was actually work that had to
be done.

“Let’s discuss with everyone what we have figured out, and let them know what we think the best options are” he instructed the teen who was preening slightly at Kamala and Peter’s attention.

Tony clears his throat and pulls up a projection of Scans that Shuri had completed.

“Holy shit” Stephen gasped leaning forward.

“This is Barnes’ Brain scan,” Tony began but got interrupted by Stephen

“When was this taken?” The former neurosurgeon asked looking between Shuri and Tony.

“I took scans, and a few readings of his brain activity and baselines, before putting him in cryostasis.” Shuri said looking at the scans, though she’s already seen them a million times each time she saw them she felt sick.

Stephen put his folded hands over his mouth.

“Stephen do you want to explain to everyone what they are seeing? Since you’re the expert here and all.” Tony suggested.

Stephen nodded and went ahead with explaining how damaged the brain looked. He highlighted the scarred tissue and as soon as he did horror flashed across everyone’s face.

“So you’re saying that’s all damaged tissue?” Carol asked.

Tony nodded solemnly “From this” he says simply pulling up a picture of a chair. “In my digging around the file dump I found some information about the Winter Soldiers, more specifically Barnes. But this his how they wiped his memory, started him fresh for the next mission.” Tony grit his teeth together.

“Holy fuck balls! How is this guy not more insane than me?” Deadpool asked

“The super soldier serum” Shuri answered simply.

“That stuff is straight up bullshit” Johnny spat

“Shit man, so what’s the plan?” Rhodes asks leaning forward on his forearms.

Shuri motioned for Tony to continue as he looked to her. He sighed and rests his chin on his folded hands.

“We need to get Barnes Stateside for any treatment we do. The problem at the moment though, regardless of how confident his Majesty is of his ability to protect his country, is that if we give away that we know that Wakanda has him and by extension the Rogues. There will be no stopping a war against them.” Tony says honestly glancing at T’Challa who looked genuinely worried.

“So the first step is to honestly just wait until the Council gets antsy, which they already are, and then they will express to me how they are worried and how others are on their case about seeing something done. Secondly I talk them into allowing a pardon for Barnes, since he was a Prisoner of War, and manipulated by both Hydra and his wayward childhood friend. Explain to them if we can get him to the states for rehabilitation, that it would take a lot of pressure off the UN.” Tony explained the general idea of the plan.

“Our concern lies with the fact that fact that Rogers isn’t going to want to let his best friend go, and
if Barnes leaves, there is no reason for him to stay” Shuri finished for Tony who was looking increasingly uncomfortable.

Stephen moved closer their hand intertwined and legs touching. Tony was able to take a few calming breaths.

“I believe I can be of an assistance with that” T’Challa spoke “Though it will be difficult especially if it goes public. If Mr. Rogers sees you anywhere near him Dr. Stark I don’t see him sitting tight”

“So long as you can keep them there for a little while I’m sure I can keep the press away for the knowledge that the Winter Soldier is being rehabilitated. Honestly probably would be for the best anyway. Shuri you can come up with lie and just keep Rogers in the loop with Barnes’ treatment. That should keep him happy for a little while, right?” Tony suggests

“Do I have to?” She whines, and then smirks at her joke “Coming up with a lie will be easy, though getting him to retain the information might be an issue, but my brother here is getting good at speaking to Rogers. Aren’t you?” She patted his shoulder, her voice holding a condescending tone.

T’Challa groans and rubs his temples. Tony chuckled a bit at that, remembering all the headaches he used to get.

“800 milligrams of ibuprofen usually does the trick” Tony smirks at the King, who simply gave him a tired and guilt-ridden look. Chuckles around the room is heard at Tony’s comment

“What do you think are timeline looks like Tony?” Reed asks

“Honestly I wouldn’t be surprised if they ask me a week of two into November. Since everyone seems to think that me preparing for the end of year launch with Stark Industries means I have nothing else to do.” Tony says with obvious frustration. “I think we should expect to have Barnes here around Thanksgiving.”

“How is his treatment plan coming along?” Stephen asks as he shuffles through the holographic files in front of him, with his free hand of course, that he pulled up.

“Once he gets here I’ll be able to get a better coding set for him. Shuri only has so many resources at her disposal, and there are a few key elements in play that I need to be in person to help with, and obviously I’m not going to Wakanda.” Tony trailed off

“Basically Tony is the one that can complete it. I’ve done my part and will help James through his treatment but honestly it’s Tony that we really need” Shuri concluded.

“We will have to discuss housing and what not for Barnes” Carol comments looking around the room. “Does anyone have objections to Barnes being brought here for treatment?”

Peter and Kamala, both in their outfits, since T’Challa wasn’t aloud certain details yet, both raise their hands.

“What are your objections?” Carol asks calmly a small smile tugging at her face.

“We both believe if Mr. Barnes is brought here he should get the same treatment as Miss Romanoff, at least a tracker and a housing in the residential wing.” Kamala states maturely

“And he’s not allowed around Mr. Stark without a second person there, CARTER and FRIDAY don’t count.” Peter’s words rang with authority, which was unusual for him, though it made Tony
smile widely.

Carol nodded at their comments.

Jessica raised he hand and spoke “I’m all for his rehabilitation, but I agree with those two.”

Agreements on what the teens said rang around the room.

“Alright so we wait until the Council brings it up to you and we go from there” Carol said speaking to Tony who nodded in agreement.

After that farewells were said and T’Challa and Shuri disconnected.

Tony lays his head on his arms, on the table and took a deep breath. Stephen’s hand gently rubbed his back.

“Tony you okay?” Jennifer asks

“No, but I will be” The billionaire says honestly his voice muffled by the fact that his face was hiding in his arms. He looks up and rests his chin on his arms. “Seeing him just brings it all back and reminds me how I almost died and all.”

“On that note” Carol cut in giving Tony a kind look. “I think we should get ready for our activity and actually do something fun”

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“Oh my god I’ve always wanted to do this!” Peter says bouncing a bit on the balls of his feet.

“Right? Same!” Kamala said as she was putting the vest on

“Alright we have myself, Tony, Peter, Vision, Hope, Jessica, Jennifer, Darcy, Sue, Claire, and Cooper.”

“Are you sure you want to do this kid?” Tony asked while putting his vest on.

“Yeah!” The preteen exclaimed excitedly

“Okay and on team two Rhodes, Danny, Colleen, Luke, Stephen, Johnny, Reed, Wade, Betty, Kamala, and Ben” she glanced over as the man turned ‘Thing’. He was adjusting the altered vest Tony had set up for him.

“Alright team one is red team two is blue, grab your weapons” a employee of the Laser Tag facility they were at instructed. “Zombies are on the playing field, they are just an added obstacle, I’m sure everyone here knows how to play” with a glance around everyone nods. The guy goes over some last rules, before setting them up to go.

Smack talk flows between the teams.

“I’m definitely making us our or laser tag field. I would love to see what Matt could do,” Tony said to himself.
“That would be awesome! It we could play laser tag anytime we wanted!” Peter nearly yelled

“Everyone ready” the intercom called. Resounding affirmatives were heard, and the doors opened and people ran forward and spread themselves out.

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Tony was breathing heavily, attempting to catch his breath, which was harder now in his older age and the fact that he still had lingering issues from, have shrapnel in his veins.

His back was against the concrete wall listening as others ran around.

He turned to peek around the corner and saw Carol take down a Zombie that had ran at her. He heard Peter and Kamala laughing in the distance.

He hadn’t seen Rhodey yet but he was searching. Though the same could be said about Stephen, and Tony had a worrying feeling that the two might gang up on him.

Staying as stealthy as possible Tony moved through the play field past a tower of tires and some concrete blockades. He shot at some opposing team mates that ran past, making them have to turn back to base to ‘heal’. This game was almost too easy for him; several times he would run across his own teammate, and team up with them for a moment to take someone or a zombie down.

They had been in there for about 20 minutes and they had about 10 minutes left.

Tony smirked as he found Cooper in a hiding spot perfect for him, sniping anyone who passed him.

Another 5 minutes passed and Tony was disappointed that he hadn’t seen Stephen yet in the craziness around him. And a little annoyed that he couldn’t find his Rhody.

With 2 minutes remaining he finally caught sight of Rhodes a wide smirk on his face the billionaire closed in and shot at his friend who cussed and spun around

“Damn it!” Rhodes shouted out, and turned to walk towards the exit since the game was ending anyway.

Tony dodged out of the way, as he heard someone coming up behind him fast, and had decided not to risk being shot. He saw Stephen turn the corner and shoot a Zombie. The sorcerer leaned up against the wall. Tony slid up beside him.

“Hey hot stuff come here often?” Tony flirted

Stephen looked over, smirked at Tony, raised his gun and shot at Tony before running off laughing.

Tony pouted dejectedly and made his way to the exit as well.

The game was called and everyone came together.

Wade and Tony were tied for the lead.

Deadpool complained that Tony had an unfair advantage while Tony just rolled his eyes at the Merc.

Everyone was bantering on their way out of the laser tag facility.
Monday October 31st

Around 3 PM

“No touching anything do you all understand me?” Tony asked the kids while entering the sanctum. “We are getting changed and heading down the road to the park.”

Stephen came down the stairs as Tony and the 4 kids and 2 Teens entered, Tony had picked everyone up from school and was now preparing for their Halloween night.

Peter and Kamala looked around in amazement.

“Jo make sure they don’t touch anything,” Tony instructs.

“Of course Mr. Stark.” The AI answers

“So you’re the one going out with them tonight?” Stephen asks approaching Tony the kids made a line for the bathroom as Tony instructed them to stay strictly on the 1st floor.

“Laura and Maggie are enjoying a quiet night, though there’s talk of a movie after trick or treating.” Tony shrugs.

“Mind if I join you in your celebration?” Stephen asks looking at the kids.

“You don’t have to ask.” Tony says as he tilts his head a bit. The sorcerer leans in to give the billionaire a quick kiss. “Mind keeping an eye on them while I go change?” Tony asks, Stephen nods and the billionaire sprints up the stairs.

Nate is in a Iron Man suit outfit, sitting in his stroller, sucking happily away at his bottle.

Peter came bounding out of the bathroom in a Luke Skywalker costume, fake lightsaber and all. Kamala was next and came out in a… something?

Stephen watched on, confused. The skirt was short but she obviously had short, shorts under it to solve the issue of underwear showing. The one piece had a light pink bow on the chest, and green accents throughout the outfit.

“Tada” She said holding her hands and arms out, which had elbow high gloves with green accents on them. She had her dark hair in a high ponytail.

Peter looked at her incredulously as Cooper snuck into the bathroom.

“Jupiter really? Why not a good one? Like Mars? Or even Saturn?” The teen asked

“What you failed to ask was, who’s your favorite Sailor Scout? And why is it Sailor Jupiter?” Kamala shot back, reaching up to adjust her hair. “My parents would kill me if they saw me in this outfit, to much skin showing” she said after a moment smoothing out her skirt.
“Are we really needing to sit down and binge Sailor Moon? Just so I can prove who the best scout it?” Peter asked.

“Oh have you seen Crystal? It’s so much better than I was expecting!” Kamala and Peter started going back and forth.

Stephen was lost at that point so he just tuned them out. Cassie and Lila were talking about their favorite candy and what they would be will to trade for what. Stephen had to laugh at that.

The sorcerer heard stairs creak and turned around to see Tony walk down the stairs, in something similar to his own robes, but obviously a lesser quality version. They were dark brown and actually really good looking on the billionaire. Stephen might need to adjust a few of his own to fit Tony so he can see him like this more often.

“See something you like?” Tony asked seductively, walking up to the sorcerer.

Stephen hummed and leaned down to kiss him “Very much so, I might make you wear some of my own robes at some point” Stephen spoke in a low husky voice. Tony blushed a bit at his words.

The door opened and Cooper came strutting out of the bathroom in a Hiro costume from Big Hero 6, which he had gotten the adults to sit down and watch with him during one of the many movie nights that had already happened.

Lila skipped into the bathroom for her time as Peter and Kamala were still discussing their topic and Cooper was now talking to Nate who was babbling back, Cassie was just watching and waiting for her friend. Cooper was telling the toddler how fun he would have and how this would be the first time they would be doing something this big. The preteen was obviously very excited.

Lila came out with a red wig on and a fake bow and arrow in her hands, and Stephen knew exactly what she was dressed up as. Her favorite Disney princess. He watches Tony smile fondly as the young girl. As she twirled around for her friend.

Cassie moved into the bathroom last and was just as excited as the people before her.

Tony discussed the plans with Stephen while they waited they were going to the Washington Square Park which was only about 2 blocks away from the Sanctum. They were going there for the parade, the candy, and the games. After they were done there they would do their trick or treating around Greenwich Village.

“After we will probably head to the Tower for a movie and some pizza or something, you joining us there too or will you need to come back?” Tony asked

“Nah you keep him for the night, I’m fine here for the night” Wong said from on top to the staircase making both the men jump slightly.

“Damn it Wong! No need to scare the ever living crap out of me” Tony said leaning forward holding his chest “I was just getting over the fact that this place isn’t a haunted house, but with Wong around I’m not so sure anymore”

Stephen laughed and looked at his friend “Thank you” 

“Yeah, yeah. You two need to come to Kamar-Taj soon people are asking about you both and Stephen there is some business you need to attend to as well,” Wong said

Before anything else was said Cassie came out looking extremely happy and spun around.
“I’ve always wanted to dress up as Anastasia but I never could cause the dress was too much! Thank you so much Uncle Tony!” The girl ran at the Billionaire and jumped into his arms as he had braced himself for her attack. She had started copying Lila in the calling of Tony, Uncle.

Maggie had not felt the need to correct it or say anything; she had simply smiled and watched her child interact with the man that was housing herself, and her husband and child, while supporting them.

“No problem Princess.” He smiled and released her.

“Alrighty then let’s get ready to go!” Tony called out the kids cheered

Stephen looked around briefly and caught as Levi went to rest on Tony. The billionaire rolled his shoulders in a silent welcome, as he had started to do when the cloak would land on him.

“Hey!” Stephen pouted a bit at Tony “So you’re just stealing my look for Halloween?”

Tony smirked as he moved to the stroller taking everyone’s bags from underneath it, and handing them out.

“Hey I was fine just wearing the one thing, Levi seems to think I’ll look better like this, which I can’t really argue with it, I do look pretty damn good I think.

With that Stephen nodded in agreement and decided that he would be fine in his own robes, right?

“Merlin you can’t go as yourself for Halloween!” Tony said after looking over the sorcerer. “Go upstairs I have something laid out for you” the billionaire smirked and looked away to help Lila adjust her wig.

The sorcerer went upstairs and found clothes laying on the bed. He laughed as he realized with the billionaire had done, shaking his head he got dressed.

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“Hurry up Doc the kids are getting restless” Tony calls up the stairs and was rewarded with sounds of footsteps on the stairs.

“So we’re just trading places for the night?” Stephen asks rounding the corner and coming down the rest of the stairs.

The sorcerer was decked out in skinny jeans that fit him comfortably, a tattered shirt that smelled of Tony, but again fit him just right, some comfortable but good looking shoes and a pair of tinted glasses on. He was wearing Tony Stark’s signature look.

Tony wolf whistled and Stephen felt his cheeks heat up slightly at the attention, but rolled his eyes to try hide the embarrassment.

“Let’s go” the sorcerer says

They say a quick goodbye to Wong, and Stephen and Tony got the Stroller down the few stairs of the Sanctum.

The group heads to the park, everyone with smiles on their face.
The night past quickly. The kids had a great time at the park, and as dusk started to set, the trick or treating commenced.

It was funny that no one recognized Tony or Stephen but neither of them would be caught complaining.

They returned to the tower after a couple of hours of collecting candy and the kids all sat in a circle sorting and organizing candy. Searching for candy with open wrappers and such, after that they traded.

The adults all watched on, as they were getting very serious about the trades and biddings on certain candies.

Pizza was delivered and everyone that was there, which only excluded the Fantastic 4 and X-Men, started watching some Halloween movies.

It was almost midnight and the kids were sprawled out in various positions passed out, the Teens were awake and enjoying watching Hocus Pocus, as were the adults when FRIDAY chimed in.

“Boss backup is being requested by the chief of police. There seems to be a man firing of a high tech weapon, your services are required.” The AI alerted the team.

Carol and Tony stood up “Just one guy?” Carol asked.

“Yes Colonel” FRIDAY confirms

“Hey! I’m coming too!” Peter says following after the two, Kamala jumps up after him.

“Nuh uh, no I’m not having this discussion with you Pete you could have died last time, if these are the same weapons-“ Tony started before getting interrupted

“If they are I know how to disable them, you and I are the only two that know how. I can help!” Peter defended “I promise I’ll stay in the background, as back up as needed”

“I say he should come, the three of us should be able to handle this” Carol says giving a look at Kamala to sit down.

“Fine” Tony said begrudgingly, Peter ran out quickly.

“Call if you need back up” Stephen called out as the Nanotech swarmed around Tony. The billionaire nodded in agreement.

Carol’s new suit spread across her as effortlessly as Tony’s did.

“I love this Tony!” She praised as it encased her body. He beamed up at her as she had started to hover, getting ready to take off.

Spider Man skidded into the room.

“Alright Underoos latch on and hold tight” Tony instructed as handles appeared of the back of the suit.
“Good luck!” Jennifer called out and the three were off.

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They got the guy down after both receiving and giving a few well-placed blows.

“Ugh” Peter groans and rubs his neck as he turns over. Making sure his mask is still on. He hand been knocked from the tree he had been perched in.

The man who had been firing the alien tech weapon, as they soon figured it was, was down and appeared out, Carol was approaching him, cautiously, to restrain him.

Tony took that moment to jog up to a sprawled out Spider-Man, his suit retracting inward.

“You okay kid?” Tony asked kneeling down and placing a hand on the teen.

“Yeah, I just thought I was done dealing with these stupid things after Mr. Tomes was taken care of.” Peter whines starting to get up with the billionaire’s help.

The next few moments happened extremely fast. The worst part of it was there was several ways to prevent what had happened next, but mistakes had been made, and they couldn’t be taken back.

Carol had a feeling that something was off but hadn’t anticipated that the criminal was playing possum, nor had she prepared for him to have another high tech weapon on him.

She was able to dodge, but the energy blast that had been fired found its way right into Tony’s side as he was helping Peter up, and without his suit on it made direct contact with him.

The billionaire cried out in surprise and pain, his entire weight suddenly on Peter. The teen grunted as Tony fell into him.

Tony’s clothes were singed and the smell of burnt flesh hit Peter like a tidal wave.

As Peter was lowering Tony as gently as possible to the ground, Carol tackled the shooter, and restrained him.

Tony hissed as he reached for his side. “Shit, fuck that hurts”

Blood was oozing out of the opened wound, onto the grass. The burnt flesh in the area causing more pain than he would have anticipated

“Something’s wrong” Tony slurred his voice sounding very lethargic suddenly.

“Karen what’s happening?” Peter asked his AI panicked

“It appears the weapon that was used on Mr. Stark had disabled the nanotech in his system and extremis isn’t responding to the wound. I don’t understand why, Backup should be there momentarily. FRIDAY is aware of the disconnect and is trying to figure out why.” Karen answers worry lacing her voice.

Tony simply moans, his eyes drooping further.
Carol is on the phone suddenly and talking fast, Peter decides to focus on Tony.

“Mr. Stark, stay with me. Backup is coming, just hold on.

Peter tries to cover the billionaire’s bleeding wound, put pressure on a bleed right?

A whooshing sound is heard behind the teen and voices swarm the area.

“Oh god Tony!” Stephen calls out and rushes forward. The sorcerer falls to his knees beside the billionaire. Tony’s head lulls to the side to look at him.

“I’m sorry Stephanie” Tony whispers as his eyes basically close, his eyebrows scrunched together in pain, the billionaire whimpers. The last time he has felt this cold, was in Siberia.

“Don’t you dare apologize, Tony stay with us.” Stephen begs as he is pulling stuff out of the emergency kit he had grabbed, planning on stabilizing Tony and then getting him back to the med bay.

Claire slid in beside him and took over Peter’s spot.

Wade pulled Peter away; the boy moved numbly, he was staring at his gloves hands that were now covered in his mentor’s blood.

“FRIDAY any luck getting the nanotech online and extremis activated?” Stephen asked and he and Claire worked on slowing the bleeding.

FRIDAY spoke from his pocket, from his phone. “The energy blast acted as some sort of EMP for his system. I can’t do anything about the nanotech, because of the safety protocols. But Extremis is not recognizing the wound either. I don’t fully understand what’s happening, though it appears to be assisting with keeping blood levels at a certain point, but for how long though, I’m unsure.” Worry and panic evident in her voice.

“Fuck this hurts” Tony says quietly his words still slurring “Doc, too tired”

“Tony stay awake, we’re almost done here, and we can move you” Stephen pleads with the billionaire “Keep your eyes open and on me.”

A slight shake of Tony’s head shows that he is trying to rouse himself but his head lulls to the side as he passes out.

From pain or blood loss or both is uncertain. Stephen and Claire work frantically, and the sorcerer opens a portal to the compound med bay after he’s stable.

Levi gently maneuvers itself and picks Tony up. Without much response from the man himself as he was moved.

“Claire go with him, I’m going to figure out what’s happening here and I’ll be right there” Stephen instructed, the woman nodded and left through the portal following Tony and Levi.

When Stephen looked around to survey his surroundings he was surprised to see how many of the team actually followed him through the portal.

Carol was leaning against Rhodes, talking to Jessica, Matt, Jennifer, and Hope.

Jessica held a foot on the back of the criminal that had been firing the alien tech weapons, her foot digging hard into him.
“Where’s the weapon that hit Tony? I need to bring it back for analysis. Whatever it was hindered the nanotech in his system and extremis isn’t responding either.” Stephen rubbed his neck as he approached them.

“Is he okay?” Carol asked guilt lacing her voice.

“He’s stable for now” Stephen sighs “but that fact that extremis isn’t healing him is cause for concern.”

“We’ll stay here and deal with the authorities, and make sure this guy gets brought the proper place. You just head back and make sure Tony is okay,” Rhodes instructs, as he hands the small alien tech gun over to Stephen.

“Will he be okay?” Jessica asks tensely, digging her foot harder into the perpetrators back, before Stephen turned away.

Stephen swallowed hard “I hope so” his voice cracking “I really hope so”
Tuesday November 1st

Early morning

Tony slowly became aware of his surroundings.
The first thing he was aware of was pain.
Burning pain in his side.
Though he had to admit it wasn’t the worst pain he had felt, it was still unwelcomed.
The next few things he became aware of helped him come to the conclusion that he was in the med bay at the compound.
He then became aware of a conversation
“.... The way he programed the extremis in his system makes it impossible for him to get any repairs from the cradle. I’m sorry Doctor, I can’t help” Helens voice came in over the speakers. Stephen bid the other doctor farewell and everything was quiet
Tony groans a bit as he shifts himself. His eyes opening slowly, even though the lights were dimmed, he squints
“Tony” Stephen whispers his name; his hand is grabbed and squeezed.
“Fuck, What happened?” The billionaire’s head felt heavy. He turned to face the sorcerer.
“You got hit with one of the Chitauri core powered weapons, apparently it acted as an EMP to the nanotech in your system, and without that online Extremis can’t heal a wound that it not programmed to understand and with the nanobots offline everything just spiraled. Though extremis did keep you from bleeding out, so small blessings” The sad, guilt ridden look broke Tony’s heart.

“Stephen, don’t-” Tony whispered, taking and a breath in he winced. “I know that look, don’t blame yourself” the billionaire rasped out.

“I promised you that I’d be there to protect you” Stephen’s voice broke and tears welled in his eyes “You lost so much blood Tony, I could have lost you.”

“But you didn’t, I’m here. I’m not going anywhere.” Tony reached up and caressed the doctor’s cheek; he leaned into the touch placing his own hand over Tony’s. The sorcerer turned his face so is mouth was against the genius’ palm.

“You’re on a week of bed rest Mr. Stark. No negotiations.” Stephen said after a few beats of silence.

Tony sputtered for a moment. “Stephen seriously, that’s unnecessary, I can get the nanotech back up and running, extremis can heal the majority of the burns and open wound, I’ll be fine in a day or so.” the genius tries to argue his case.

Stephen kisses the billionaire’s palm again. Giving Tony a sad look “Please Tony, just until Sunday. Rest. Recuperate. Doctors Order” Stephen leaned in and rested his forehead against Tony’s. “Just imagine. You and me a whole week of relaxing”

Tony sighed, and frowned “There is so much that needs to get done though-”

“And we will take care of it” Carol said gesturing to Rhodes and herself as they entered the med bay. Stephen pulled away and stood beside the hospital bed. Tony tried to sit up and hissed holding his side.

“Tony what happened, shouldn’t have happened but it did and you got fatally wounded, please take the week of to rest. I’m sure we can keep the compound from imploding.” Rhodes implored.

“Are you guys sure? I don’t feel like it a wise move for me to go out of commission for a week.” Tony insisted. “Should we make an announcement or just have me sneak off quietly in the dead of the night?” the billionaire asked, sass lacing his tone.

“I think it’s unwise to let others know of your injuries. Telling the world that Iron Man is injured is like telling them the world is ending” Vision phases into the room.

“Vis, Hey” Tony waved at the android.

“Mr. Stark how are you feeling?” Vision asked.

Tony shrugged “It’s not as bad as open heart surgery in the middle of the desert with no medicine. So I can’t really complain”

“That sounds really fucked up, you know I don’t think I’ve actually heard your origin story” Deadpool walked in with an arm slung around Peter’s shoulders.

Peter had a heavy look in his eyes and Tony felt his stomach drop realizing quickly that Stephen wasn’t the only one blaming themselves, and he could bet money that Carol felt guilty as well.
“Pete, hey” Tony called out, he let go of Stephen’s hand and scooted over in the bed a bit biting back his wince of pain. “Come here kid” the billionaire patted the open area on the bed opposite side of his injury, the teen walked over with his head bowed and sat on the bed.

Tony’s heart broke for the kid at the look he had. Tony sighed and opened his arms “Come here Pete” the billionaire whispered.

The boy didn’t take anymore prompting, he turn and curled into Tony’s side, his entire body racking from sobs that were escaping him. Tony easily ignored his pain as he moved to hug the teen.

“Give us a minute” Tony said quietly his voice thick as his own emotions leaked out.

Everyone in the room nodded and turned to leave. Stephen added a small squeeze on the billionaire’s shoulder with a forehead kiss before leaving. A quiet ‘call if you need me’ was said too.

Tony made soothing noises as he rubbed the teens back. The boy’s sobs had increased and his head was dug into Tony’s shoulder.

“Peter” Tony said quietly after a few minutes passed. “Hey bud look at me.” The billionaire kept rubbing his back.

Peter looked up after a few seconds, sniffling “You fell into me, all that blood-” he hiccupped Tony shushed him gently.

“I’m here Pete, I’ll heal, I’ll be okay” Tony soothed

“I went with you, and I still got in the way regardless of what I promised” Peter wails slightly.

“Peter I need you to listen to me. This was no one’s fault but my own and the criminals. I took off my suit. Not even thinking twice. It’s not your fault of Carol’s or Stephen’s. Please don’t blame yourself for my oversight.” Tony pleaded to the teen.

“You could have died! If extremis wasn’t replenishing your blood you would have.” Peter argued, “it’s only because of me your back was turned and suit was off”

“And Extremis will heal the burns and open wound enough to make it easier for me to handle the injury. And regardless of why my back was turned it isn’t your fault. Please Pete don’t blame yourself” Tony argued back.

The Teen simply placed his face back into Tony’s shoulder “I can’t lose you Mr. Stark” Peter sobs “You mean too much to me” the boys arms wrap around to Tony’s other shoulder, avoiding all of the billionaires injuries, Peter hugs him. Tony closes his eyes and leans his head back fighting his own tears at Peters words “You’re the closest thing to a father that I have, and if something happens to you. I’m not sure how I’ll survive it.” The boy confesses.

“Well let make sure you won’t have to find out for a very long time,” Tony tells him after another few minutes of silence. “You know you mean a lot to me too kid.”

Peter nods into the billionaire’s shoulder. Tony clears his throat and pats Peter’s back. “Why don’t you grab me a tablet from around here somewhere and let’s get the nanotech back up and running. I’ll show you the coding for it and the Extremis virus, so if anything like this happens again you know what to do. It’s probably wise if I give you and Stephen secure access codes incase of an emergency anyways. I never anticipated this issue which is a new one for me” As Tony talked;
Peter got up and wiped his face with the sleeves of his sweater, and moved to find a tablet. “CARTER, can you send Stephen back in here?” The billionaire asked.

The next half hour was spent showing Stephen and Peter what to do, and fixing it as he went along. He also gave the two of them access to the system if he was incapacitated and unable to himself.

The relief in Stephen’s eyes at that was palatable.

Tony winced after he rebooted the system; he felt the system start up, quickly realizing he was connected to the uplink again. He felt FRIDAY’s relief through it as well as CARTER’s. He twitched in surprise as he felt Extremis and the nanotech go to work on the injury to his side.

“I’m fine” Tony said as both Stephen and Peter hovered over the billionaire “It’s just doing its job” He said through gritted teeth.

Tony closed out of the system and pushed the tablet away, not able to focus on anything at this point now as his skin stitched together and repaired itself.

Peter and Stephen talked quietly to him in attempts to distract the billionaire, as he healed.

The billionaire soon passed out from pain, exhaustion or both.

Wednesday November 2nd

Afternoon

“Stephen I’m fine, you’re being ridiculous. I can walk. Seriously Levi, just put me down” Tony exclaimed in frustration from the hammock that was the Cloak of Levitation.

“It did it on its own I have nothing to do with it” Stephen held his hand up in surrender, referring to the fact that Tony was being carried to bed in the sanctum by the Cloak.

“You sure didn’t do anything to stop it either” Tony grumbled as he pouted.

Levi flicked Tony’s cheek lightly with its collar, as Tony was set on to their bed.

Stephen moved to sit next to Tony “We wouldn’t want you to over exert yourself, I wouldn’t hesitate to extend your bed rest” the sorcerer threatened.

Tony rolled his eyes “Jokes on you, you have to cater to me while I’m on this so called bed rest” Stephen leaned in and spoke directly into the billionaire’s ear.

“You act as though that will bother me” he spoke breathily into the billionaire’s ear.

Tony shivered in response.

“You have work you need to get done too” Tony said turning his head to face Stephen, who leaned in and gave him a chaste kiss.

“Well technically me just being here is doing one of my jobs, and Wong and everyone knows I’ll be here catering to you. Oh and most likely everyone will swing by at some point or another to
drop off food off for you, and say hi.” Stephen admitted to the billionaire.

A blush spread across his face. In the past when he had gotten hurt, no one paid him this much attention. Since he’d woken up in the med bay he hadn’t really been left alone. Someone was always hovering. Asking him if he needed anything.

It wasn’t unwelcomed though, he appreciated it and made sure everyone knew he appreciated everyone’s care and concern, it didn’t mean it wasn’t weird though.

“So Doc what is the plan to keep me in this bed because obviously you’re going to withhold sex for a bit” Tony pouted at that and looked to Stephen with a sad look.

“I have a few ideas in mind” Stephen smiled sweetly at his lover.

Later that night

“Okay So Pete wasn’t wrong. That’s weird” Tony admits rubbing the back of his neck.

The two of them had finished the Sherlock Holmes 2011 movie a couple hours ago. And had proceeded to watch 2 episodes of the British Drama, Sherlock. At the request of Peter.

Because apparently a big thing on the Internet was comparing Tony to the actor who played Sherlock in the movie. And recently since introducing the sorcerer supreme, it has been realized that Dr. Strange looks like the Sherlock from the show.

“You know who Watson from the show looks like?” Tony asked suddenly.

“Hm?” Stephen asked not really wanting to guess.

“He looks like Everett Ross!” Tony blurted as if it were obvious.

Stephen nodded his head in agreement to that assessment.

The two continued their binge of Sherlock into the night.

Thursday November 3rd

Afternoon

“How do people do this?” Tony complains. His head was in Stephen’s lap, the doctor was sitting with his back to the headboard, his hand carding through the billionaire’s hair, who had a projected holograms of plans in front of him, though it didn’t stop him from complaining.


“Sit in bed all day? Like I know there’s people that enjoy this, but I’m so bored” the billionaire whines.
Stephen’s lips twitch in amusement. “You have your tablet, you have the uplink, and there’s even TV and books. There is plenty to do.” The sorcerer listed.

“We should play a game or something,” Tony suggests. “Oh! Let’s play Chess! We haven’t played that in years, I wonder if I can still whoop your ass.”

Stephen sets his book down “Alright, bring it” he smirks and Tony brings up a holographic chessboard.

Later that day

“Okay maybe this isn’t so bad” Tony admits as he picks around at the plate in front of him, after a few quick matches of chess Stephen had heated up some food people had left for them. “Also holy shit your weren’t lying about the food”

Stephen laughs “They care about you, you’ve made a large impact at Kamar-Taj.” The sorcerer smiles fondly at his lover. He leans in and kisses his temple “You know I care about you too”

Tony blushes in response. “Fucking Hell, how do you keep doing that?”


“You keep making me blush like a schoolgirl, and same with the butterflies, whenever you say something like that or talk to me in that tone, directly in my ear, I swear my stomach swims with butterflies.” The billionaire admits

Stephen moves the tray from over Tony’s lap and sets it to the side of the bed. He then proceeds to pull Tony to sit on top of his lap.

Shaky hands move to caress the billionaire’s cheeks.

“Is something wrong with that?” Stephen asks smirks, enjoying the fact that Tony was admitting the fact that the doctor had such an effect on him.

“No” Tony stutters out, and swallowing thickly at the heavy look that the sorcerer was giving him. “I’m just not normally one to have such a weakness and I’m wondering how you have such an effect on me,” he admits

“Must be magic” Stephen whispers and pulls Tony’s face gently towards his own, kissing the billionaire softly. Causing Tony’s stomach to flip flop.

“Mmm” Tony hummed into the kid and pulled away after a few seconds “I really love this kind of magic” He smiles, almost shyly and the grin on Stephen’s face widens. “There is so much more to show you.” The doctor flirts.

Tony can feel his body slowly reacting to the words, and before he realizes what’s actually happening Stephen flips Tony and himself over and is now over the billionaire.

“Has the Doctor come to the consensus that the patient is well enough for sexual activity now?” Tony asks with his normal sass.
“Keep giving me lip like that and we’ll see how far that takes you” Stephen banters back threateningly.

Tony pouts but stays quiet, as Stephen continues to basically worship his body.

It was a little while later that Tony finally was able to return the favor.

The two of them comfortably curled. Up after. Both of them feeling relaxed.

Tony came to a conclusion after a bit of silence, he looked up at his lover “Nope, this is definitely not so bad”

Stephen simply leaned down and kissed his head, before returning to his book

Friday November 4th

Late Evening

Kamala and Peter were sitting on the large bed as Chinese food laid out in front on them. Stephen sat behind Tony as the billionaire sat between his legs and had his back against the sorcerer’s chest. The two men in relaxation clothes while the tens were in their street clothes.

The teens came by after their patrol to check on Tony and have dinner since they both missed dinner in their own homes.

“So Kam does her thing and I surprise them by webbing them up and then the police show up and thank us! We are such a good team, and I really think we are getting better the more we train” Peter rambles on about the bank robbery they stopped.

Kamala just enthusiastically nods with Peter as she is stuffing her face.

Stephen wonders briefly to himself how he got here. The last couple days had been extremely relaxing, and sitting here with Tony against him and two of the kids that Tony had taken under his wing, chatting on about their day, while they ate Chinese food, in bed. It was all so domesticated. And Stephen never thought he would be that kind of guy. But he sure as hell wasn’t regretting anything that was for sure.

“That’s good kid, I’m happy you have someone else to watch your back” Tony smiled and took a bite of his food.

“Speaking of, have you spoken to Wade lately? He’s acting weird and I mean more weird than his normal self.” The boy asks his mentor.

“No, but I will” Tony says simply

Easy conversation was had the rest of dinner. A little after conversation was through and food was put away, the group ended up relaxing in the bed, watching some cutthroat kitchen, which had become one of their favorite shows. It was about midnight when Peter and Kamala decided to head home. Stephen portaled them home, since he’d found the best location to drop them off at by their homes and with Tony unable to drive them that’s how they worked it out.
Saturday November 5th

Saturday passed much like the previous days had. Tony had visitor’s come, talk, and check up on him. Jessica had stopped by and made fun of the sanctum much to Tony’s amusement, not much to Stephen’s though.

Matt had been with her and spent some time bugging the billionaire a bit more about setting up a case against Rogers and the Rogues. There were multiple charges that could be set against them.

Both Matt and Jennifer had been on a warpath to run the traitors through the mud.

Tony had to keep explaining why that wasn’t the wisest of decisions. That dragging out personal issues would just cause more drama than Tony wanted to deal with.

But they were slowly chipping away at him and he was close to telling them to just go at it so they would leave him alone about it.

Tony called Wade in the afternoon and talked with him. The Merc was indeed acting off, the billionaire talked with him for a while.

Wade felt guilty that Tony got hurt. When asked why the Merc explained how if he had been there to help watch Spidey like he had been since Tony asked, none of it would have happened if he would have been there.

Tony was ready to hit his head against a wall because now 4 people were blaming themselves for his own mistake of taking his suit off.

If something like this would have happened with the Ex-Avengers they would have blamed him entirely and made him feel bad about his mistake.

But right now he felt care for.

For the first time in along time.

Pepper was the last one to care for him this much, but she had also been paid for it for a very long time.

Is this what it felt like to have a family?

Having people constantly nagging you, hovering over you, worrying about you.

This was all so new to the billionaire he didn’t even know what to think of it all.

But he also really couldn’t find it in himself to complain.

He truly looked forward to the future. His future with this new… family.

There was so much hope.

But at the same time...

There was still something coming.
But he could do this.

As long as he had his people around him.

Chapter End Notes

I’m sorry for any errors... like I said I’m not in a good mindset right now so I probably missed more than I would have liked.
Next chapter: Stephen and Tony’s relationship comes out, and reactions from Rogues.
Thanks for reading! Until next chapter!
“Stephen” Tony calls out quietly, poking the sorcerer in the side. The man groans in response and shifts around.

“What? The sorcerer responded he was facing away from Tony his head tucked in the pillow, so his voice was muffled.

“I’m hungry” Tony complained, smirking a bit.

“Then go get food, you know where the kitchen is.” Stephen snipped at the billionaire obviously half asleep and annoyed.

“But I want donuts” Tony confesses shaking the Doctor. “I would go out on my own, but you said you don’t want me alone until my bed rest is up, and today’s the last day but I want donuts now, not tomorrow. So can you please get up and go with me to get some?” Tony concluded his ramble and heard a slight snoring sound from Stephen. The billionaire rolled his eyes, and moved to exit the bed.

“That’s fine I’m just going to run out then and grab some myself. I’ll be back” Tony sat up and was quickly met with Levi, and Stephen sitting up behind him.

“Wait where do you think you are going?” The doctor asked Tony.

“I told you, donuts,” The billionaire said while attempting to get up, attempt keyword there. Levi was actively blocking him.

“It 3 am” Stephen states looking over to the nightstand
“Yes, and?” Tony inquired.

“And we should be asleep” the sorcerer groaned

“You can sleep, I need some donuts. Move Levi” the billionaire went to stand and was wrapped in the Cloak. “Come on, why have you been so clingy lately?” he asked as though he didn’t actually know, the billionaire made a noise of protest as it lowered him back to the bed.

“Levi, come on” he whines “Merlin call off your attack Cloak.”

The sorcerer moved to sit on the edge of the bed by Tony.

“Let him go” Stephen aims at Levi.

Tony was allowed up, the sorcerer followed him.

“Oh! You joining me?” Tony asked looking hopeful.

“I suppose, donuts do sound kind of good right now. Question though where do you expect to get donuts at 3 in the morning.” Stephen asked curiously

“Seriously? We are in the city that never sleeps.” Tony shakes his head at him “Anyway, There’s a really good 24 hour cafe that I used to visit often when I couldn’t sleep.” Tony spoke as he slipped jeans on and a T-shirt. He grabbed one of Stephen’s sweaters that was hanging over a chair in the room, and slipped it on, enjoying the Doctor’s scent around him.

Stephen followed suit and dressed as well.

Walking up to Stephen, Tony pulled up a holographic picture of a street view.

The sorcerer quirked a brow at the billionaire.

“Do your thing” Tony motioned

“You sure?” Stephen asks nervously.

Levi disguised itself as a scarf and draped over Tony’s shoulders, Stephen smiled gently, he was happy that the Cloak has taken to watching over Tony diligently, when it wasn’t needed by Stephen.

Tony shrugs “I’ve been watching when you take Kam and Pete home, and other then some slight tightness in my chest, I haven’t had a full blown panic attack. Besides I really want donuts” Tony grins up at the sorcerer.

“Priorities” Stephen shakes his head in amusement and leans down to press a quick chaste kiss to the billionaire’s lips “Alright let's go”
“Can you please tell us why we are here?” Steve asked a Dora Milaje, as their group was lead into the conference room they had been in a month ago.

The woman gave the soldier a look and turned to close the door.

Clint moved over and sat in a chair, his head moving to rest in his arms. The archer had been plagued by nightmares lately and wasn’t sleeping through the night.

Scott was leaning against the wall, away from the others. In the last month the man had been spending a lot of time away from Steve and the others. When asked why, he told the others that Shuri offered him a position to help around her lab, and he had taken it.

Wanda looked angry as she found a chair, which was nothing new. In the last month her magic had become unstable and tended to lash out easily. Steve was able to calm her down but that only lasted for so long. Clint had stopped trying to comfort the girl and when asked why by Steve the archer snapped and yelled at him about how she wasn’t a kid, and they needed to stop treating her like one. He continued on to state that his own kids were god knows where and he was missing out on their lives, and how he wasn’t going to baby a 20 something year old anymore.

Sam had pulled Steve away from furthering the confrontation that was about to occur between them after that. Thankfully Sam still was talking with Steve, but the soldier could tell the difference, something had changed in his friend and it made Steve miss Bucky even more.

Sam himself was unsure of where he stood in all of this. And he felt like he couldn’t even express how he felt about anything, because apparently now he was the rock of the ‘team’, the level minded of the group. That made him think, was Steve ever level minded because from where he stood everything seemed to revolve around Bucky, after the Winter Soldier had surfaced.

Steve sat next to Wanda; the red head leaned over and rested her head against his arm.

Lately Steve had been carrying the flip phone around with him again, making sure it was charged and on standby for when Tony was ready to reach out. He had to soon right? He had invited a ton of random strangers, so why wouldn’t he call the rest of the original Avengers back as well. Or maybe that was just wishful thinking.

His eyes traveled to the display over the table. It was showing a US morning News show. It was muted so no one was really paying attention that was only until Steve caught sight of Tony on the display behind the hosts. Though that’s not what caught his full attention, it was the picture the billionaire was in and who he was with in the position they were in. The two hosts were sitting at the couch discussing something about the picture on the display behind them.

“TV Volume up” Steve said his voice tight, throat closing. The voice controls activated and the sound was now playing through the speakers

“.... confirmed now” the female smiles.

“After the Internet broke yesterday with the release of this photo it’s about damn time if I do say so myself. What details do we have Marie?” The male asked.

“For anyone who lives under a rock and was not on any social media yesterday, Tony Stark was trending, as pictures of him and Dr. Stephen Strange was posted by a New Yorker who caught
sight of the billionaire in this compromising position.” Marie starts to explain. The picture enlarges across their screen.

Tony was pinned against the wall of an entrance of an alley, while being kissed passionately, from the looks of it.

“Moments later they were found in 24 hour cafe down the road, and another picture released shows them close together, and in a very obvious intimate manner.” A different picture is then displayed, it shows them with legs touching under the table, Stephen was wiping something from the corner of Tony’s mouth matching smirks on both of their faces.

“You have got to be kidding me,” Wanda hisses sitting up straight. Steve can see the red swirling beside him but his eyes are glued on what he is looking at.

Tony was kissing another man. Steve was aware of such changes in the world today. How most everyone’s opinions had changed on the subject since his time, the Supreme Court’s ruling a year ago brought it to the forefront of his mind. It was then Steve had difficulty figuring out what he wanted. He had been looking for Bucky but at the time he could have tried to pursue something with the man that had facilitated him since the Battle of New York.

But Tony was in a relationship, Ultron has just happened and everything was on very unstable ground between Steve and Tony, there was also the fact that Steve was actively looking for the billionaire’s Parents murderer, without telling him. Then Tony went on break with Pepper but the Accords happened and Steve was never able to pursue his interest in the billionaire and now he was staring at the proof that Tony was indeed moving forward with his life.

Had he just forgotten about him?

The phone in his pocket felt heavy, a hand twitches, as he is tempted to call Tony and confess his hidden feelings.

Would that change anything?

“Huh, I didn’t know Stark was Bisexual” Scott comments quietly.

”Actually he’s Pansexual” Clint mutters the information quietly

Wanda scoffs loudly “This is just a stunt. Like seriously people say and do stuff like this, do it just to get attention.” She waves her hand at the display. “It’s disgusting-“

Clint’s head shoots up, a sneer on his face. “Stop.” He interrupts her. His voice low and threatening. “Say one more word along those lines and shit will hit the fan so fast…” the archer’s threat trails off, he was still glaring at the witch.

“Clint” Sam says calmly, Wanda is ignored but her magic still looking just as dangerous, the girl glaring confused at Clint.

The news in the background continues.

Attention is brought back to that.
“You said something about a confirmation.” The male host tried to redirect his co-host who had gone into details about the pictures or something.

The woman chuckles embarrassed “Yes there has been a confirmation, in the middle of the night Stark Industries releases a statement signed by Tony Stark himself. It goes on to detail that he is indeed in a relationship and has been since before the New Avengers press conference. Which puts a lot of theory’s to rest Tyler” Marie says smiling at the man.

“True, many could see a difference in Mr. Stark it’s good to know that a healthy relationship, from what it appears to be, is the cause of this.” He smiles at the camera.

Marie continues, “Tony Stark also asks everyone to understand that He and Dr. Strange would like to be left alone and that a Q and A will be set for a time in the future when neither are so busy. He goes on to thank everyone for the support and love they show him, even the haters,” Marie laughs at that.

“They really are a cute couple aren’t they?” Tyler asks

Marie agrees and they move on to the next story losing everyone’s attention.

Sam was glancing back and forth between Steve and Wanda who seemed to be the two most affected by the news they just heard.

Wanda looked like she wanted to say something but kept glancing over at Clint, her eyes showing her hurt and confusion by his treatment towards her lately.

Steve looked damn near broken hearted. His mouth was opening and closing like a fish.

Scott broke the silence with a “Oh right” causing attention to go on to him. “I remember when same sex marriage became legal, Stark sponsored a bunch of weddings and parties. That makes a bit more sense now” Wanda got a look across her face.

“As I was trying to say” she glanced at Clint their eyes boring into each other. “I’m not against same sex relationships,” Clint seemed to relax a bit at her words but still glared at her “but it is clear that Stark is just using this as an attention grab.” She sneers.

Before anything else can be said the doors open to the conference room and Shuri skips in.

She glances around at the tense atmosphere she just walked into, as though she had no clue what was going down.

“Ohops” she put her hand over her mouth innocently after looking to the picture playing over the table, hiding the smile that was on her face, she was wondering what the security footage would show. “Sorry that wasn’t supposed to stay on, I’ll have to look into that.” She moved to sit at the head of the table. Tapping a display on the table the projection over the table disappeared.

“We were told King T’Challa wanted to see us,” Sam inquired, as it was obvious that Steve was very clearly stuck in his own head.

The girl nods “Yup, but he’s a busy man so you’ll just have to settle for me” she shrugs “besides I’m much more fun than him anyhow”

“Why did you show us that?” Wanda spat suddenly at the princess.

The girl raised her hand in a placating manner towards the Dora by the door, as they moved
forward, hearing the anger towards their Princess from the witch.

“As I said, it was an accident. I’ve been having issues with the tech in this room, it’s in need of an upgrade, I apologize for any distress it caused.” Shuri smiles innocently Wanda’s eyes narrowed but she didn’t say anything else.

Steve seemed to come back to reality, as he looked over to Shuri.

“What was that exactly?” He asked

“Uh, the morning news?” Shuri said genuinely confused, she knew Rogers was slow but this was a bit excessive.

Anger flashed in the soldier’s eyes, surprising the teen.

Sam moved over and placed a hand on Steve’s shoulder. “Let’s discuss this later.”

Shuri cleared her throat and with a raised eyebrow she gathers everyone’s attention, though obviously everyone is lost in their own thoughts but Shuri continues anyway.

“I asked my brother to update you on Sergeant Barnes’ treatment plan, but being that he is busy, I’m stuck having to deal with it.” She said bitterly as she brought up some files on the projectors.

“Most of this will go over your head so I’ll simplify it the best way I can. There is means to healing James Barnes but it is not here—" cries of outrage escapes Steve.

“You’re the smartest—“ he begins

She cuts him off with a scathing look and he goes silent.

“I have my areas of expertise, psychology and the brain isn’t really one of them, the tech I have for him isn’t even mine and I’m not actually authorized to use it.” She paused and smiled ruefully at Steve “Though I have good news, as of right now there might be talk in the next couple of days, of getting a pardon for Sergeant Barnes, on the case that he is a Prisoner of War. After we should be able to transfer him to the proper facility that he will be able to receive the help he needs, and will be able to get rid of the triggers.” Shuri looked happy about the news but Steve felt cold, fear clenched at his chest.

He stood up banging his hands against the table. Not only was Tony moving on and showing off his pretty new team, now they wanted to take Bucky away after everything he did to keep him safe. After nearly killing Tony, that thought made Steve’s chest tighten more.

Everything was spiraling out of his control faster than he could grasp at it; it was like water running through his hands.

“No! He needs to stay here, your brother promised to keep him safe, why can’t he get treatment here?” Steve exclaimed loudly, definitely louder than he had anticipated, the Dora twitched again preparing to protect their Princess.

Shuri rolled her eyes “Mr. Rogers” her lips twitched as she said his name, as did Scott from across the room, as it always did when they addressed him as such “I already told you why I cannot, and I really do hate repeating myself. And honestly this isn’t your choice to make. It is his. And once the Accords Council and the UN coordinate and the pardon goes through I will be awakening Sergeant Barnes to give him his options.”
“What about our pardons?” Wanda asks. Steve nods in agreement to her question. Scott looks over incredulously, an eyebrow raised at the red head.

Shuri has to fight back a barking laugh that almost escaped. “What pardons? There is nothing of the such as of this moment, you are all still fugitives and should be thankful that we are still allowing you shelter here.” Shuri snaps her eyes hardening

“So the US will allow a mass murderer a pardon but actual heroes they won’t” Wanda snapped and Shuri didn’t hold back the sharp laugh that escaped her at that.

“Prisoner. Of. War.” The teen said slowly, dangerously “They would be giving an American man who was used against his will as a weapon. Where as you Witch are not an American citizen, and you went willingly to become a weapon with the sole purpose to kill one man. So don’t be surprised when no one jumps at the chance to take you in. As for the rest of you pardons might be in the future but for now you should enjoy the fact that you are being allowed to stay where you are safe and unharmed.” Shuri looked over everyone in the room. Wanda was seething but Steve was standing behind her hands on her shoulders appearing to keep her down and brace himself at the same time.

Clint looked dejected but seemed to understand and agreed silently with what Shuri said.

Scott and her had already talked in length about the future and the possibility of his pardon and the sentence that the US government would give him.

Sam kept an eye on Steve and Wanda but also gave Shuri a nod in understanding.

“I was simply giving you an update on what I have been able to accomplish for Sergeant Barnes so on that note I will take my leave” Shuri wipes away the display of scans and what not.

The screen glitches slightly and images flickered above the table. She taps the controls a bit and the projection disappears.

“I really got to get this thing fixed,” she mutters for show, ducking her head she hides her smirk, she waves goodbye and skips out of the room.

Four of the five Dora Milaje followed their Princess out. The remaining one escorted the Rouges back to their hut.

—-

Shuri smiles widely as she walked away from the conference room. That went as well as she had hoped.

The day before she had received a message from Tony:

**Tony:** Heads up cats out of the bag. I’m breaking the Internet!

After Shuri immediately went online to check out the news. Gleeful laughter escaped her the entire time.
Shuri: On purpose I presume?

Tony: Yup! That’s what happens when I’m a week on bed rest. I got bored and decided to have a bit of fun with it. Besides I had to make a donut run.

Shuri: Happy for you Tony! Also a Council meeting was call for on Wednesday, just so you know.

Tony: Thanks Princess, talk later? Gotta go. Bye

Shuri: Later Loser.

And while she wasn’t lying about the reason for the meeting, and had actually asked T’Challa to call them for the said meeting, regarding the frozen super soldier in her lab, she had decided to have a bit of fun and reveal the news of the man who was one of her best friends, coming out, and showing off something that makes him happy.

She was genuinely surprised by Rogers’ reaction and it furthered her agreement with the others that Rogers definitely had feelings for her fellow techie and she was afraid for the future, if the UN, and Council did put pardons through for the Rogues, like even Tony seemed to believe they would, Rogers and the witch would be an issue.

Shuri tapped at a bead on her wrist and sent the security footage of the meeting to Tony. Carol was sent a copy as well; she had requested to be part of anything regarding the Rogues.

She then pulled out her phone, and grinned widely as she sent a text to Kamala and Peter in their group chat, telling them what happened.

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“This is unfair!” Wanda whines from the floor as she laid on it, trying to retain as much of the cool she had in her system from being at the palace where there was air conditioning.

“What’s not fair? The fact that you don’t get a pretty shiny pardon and the Winter Soldier does?” Clint glared at the red head

“His name is Bucky, don’t call him the Winter Soldier” Steve said from the couch, his hands holding his head. He was ignored though.

“What is your problem” Wanda snapped, sitting up suddenly, setting a glare on Clint.

“Oh girly I have a ton of problems. You are one of them. You keep walking around like you’re this
privileged little girl. What I thought I saw in you back in Sokovia, I don’t see in you anymore. The reason I came for you a few months back was because I thought you were in danger,” he turned to glare at Steve “I trusted the wrong people. And now I’m paying for it.” Clint rambled angrily

“How is that my fault? Stark had me lock away-!” Wanda shrieked but got cut off

“He was protecting you!” Clint shouted over her

“He unfairly imprisoned her” Steve said quietly “What happened in Lagos was an accident”

Clint glared at Steve “I went there and what I saw wasn’t what you told me, but I trusted you. I don’t understand why anymore. My head-” Clint flinched and leaned forward “Nothing is right, and I don’t understand how everything just spiraled so far out of control. And I will not stand by anymore and listen to that little bitch complain. And you are over there sulking because your bestie is probably leaving to get treatment. Treatment you nearly beat Tony Stark to death over. Or is he why you’re sulking?” Realization dawn on Clint’s face a sharp manic laugh escaping the archer “Holy shit, you have feelings for him. No way.”

Sam’s eyes widened at Clint’s words, he stares at Steve, as the soldier pales, getting caught.

“I-“ Steve stutters but can’t seem to say anything

“No” Wanda whispers horrified covering her mouth with a hand.

Scott took everyone’s shock as a distraction as he slunk away deciding to go lay on his mattress instead of staying part of the madness that was taking place.

Clint’s hysterical laughter echoed around them “This is rich. You nearly killed Stark over your best buddy and you are sitting here sulking because he has moved on. He has a new team and a new partner and none of it involves you” Clint says through his laughter, though it was slowly dying down. The archer stood from where he was sitting and moved towards where his own mattress would be found, laughter nearly gone as he shook his head. “You deserve this. All this emotional turmoil. It’s about time everything catches up to you. You think being frozen for some amount of years and waking up in a whole new world with no one you know around you is suffering? You are sorely mistaken. And I can’t wait to be there to see it all hit you in your face.” Clint turns back to look at Steve “It’s not like I have anything better to do now because of you” he turns back and heads to his bed.

“Oh I need to go lay down, I just- Nope, I’m not doing this right now” Sam says and walks away.

Steve looks to Wanda “After everything he did to me? And how he treated you you’re willing to show feelings for him? Sorrow for losing him to some sorcerer that I’m sure I can best.” She sounded hurt, her eyes watering.

Steve swallowed thickly “Wanda it’s not like that-“

“I thought we were on the same page Steve. I thought you were on my side” tears slipped down her face her voice breaking.

“Wanda you are misguided in your hatred for Tony. Yes he did things that were unfair and uncalled for but he’s not the enemy you think he is” Steve said softly while talking about the billionaire.

Wanda scoffed in a disgusted manner; she stood and left the hut, leaving Steve alone.
He felt more confused and lost than he did when he first woke up after being thawed.

Steve rested his head back in his hands. He really was losing everyone and everything, and he had no clue how to fix any of it.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter:
Buckys pardon is discussed by UN
Stephen finds out about the cell phone from Steve
And possibly some more Tony needing some help.

I hope this chapter was therapeutic in some ways for others.
Clint really is an unknown for me at the moment as he appears to be moving to team Iron Man at the present moment.
Anyways reviews and kudos are always appreciated!
Until the next chapter!
Chapter Summary

Wednesday November 9th- Barnes’ Pardon goes through. Stephen reminds Tony he’s not alone

Monday November 14th- Meeting in DC

Chapter Notes

Hey! Sooooo I’ve been busy play Monster Hunter Generations Ultimate, so not as long of a chapter as I would have liked.
I put some fluffy stuff, that even made my chest swell a bit at how adorable these boys are.
Also! OMG I GOT ADDED TO 2 MORE COLLECTIONS!
I’m so immensely proud of this story! And I appreciate everyone who comments! And everyone’s patience on my spelling and grammar issues!
Alright without further ado!
The next chapter!
Hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Wednesday November 9th

Tony stared down at the offensive piece of garbage on his desk.
The billionaire had just disconnected from the Council, after speaking with them for over an hour.
Leaning forward his head hits his desk with a clunk.
“Everything okay?” Stephen’s smooth voice carries through the billionaire’s office. Tony doesn’t bother looking up.
“Well I have to finalize details on Barnes’ Pardon and Treatment plan. And then figure out how to get Barnes here without the UN knowing where his exact location was and without the world finding out anything. Otherwise I’m peachy” Tony groans “And there is so much to do.” The billionaire starts rambling off a list of other things as well, his head still against the desk.

Stephen walks around the desk while Tony talks and comes up behind him, shaking hand start gently massaging Tony’s shoulders. The genius moans in pleasure at the touch, his shoulders loosening ever so slightly as tension melts away at the sorcerers touch.

“Breath Tony, you aren’t alone.” Stephen comforts, he glances over the desk and catches sight of
the flip phone, sighing, “Is that what I think it is?” He asks gently, his fingers still moving over Tony’s shoulders.

Tony nods silently against his desk.

“Why is it out?” The doctor pries gently.

“I honestly don’t know” Tony sits up and glances at it before leaning back and looking at Stephen upside down.

The sorcerer smiles gently at Tony and leans in to kiss him softly, before pulling back. He turns Tony’s chair around and takes his hands.

“Come, sit with me” Stephen demands calmly, pulling the billionaire up and towards the comfortable couch that was in the office “Tell me what happened”

Tony went on to explain that the heads up Shuri gave him was spot on and the Pardon for Barnes was approved. Tony knew that it wasn’t wise for Steve to know certain details but Tony was getting this slight feeling that he needed to talk with Rogers, though he didn’t understand why, but the feeling was there.

The phone suddenly vanished from Tony’s desk after a hand wave from the present sorcerer.

“There I took the trash out.” Stephen smiled ruefully and moved his hand to hold Tony’s face “Tony, you do what you can, no more than that. Don’t go jumping through hoops just to make others happy. Especially Rogers.” The sorcerer’s thumbs were rubbing Tony’s cheeks. “Just take a deep breath Tony and focus on the here and now. Right now you have several people behind you, ready to help you anyway they can. Let’s focus on that. Let Jen and Matt help you with Barnes’ contract, let Carol and Rhodes help with the tactics and planning.” Stephen smiled and leaned in resting their foreheads together. “Let me support you.” He leaned forward and kissed Tony pulling back “Take support from your team Tony”

Tears pricked at Tony’s eyes. “Goddamn Merlin, way to make a man cry” the billionaire hiccupped; something between a sob and a laugh escaped his lips. “Barnes coming here is a step I’m not sure I’m ready for. I’ve been helping Shuri plan and work towards this but now theory is becoming reality and I’m not sure I’ve prepared enough” Tony admits openly

“You don’t have to be Love, and honestly you may never be. Regardless of the mindset of the man you will see, he will always be the weapon that killed your parents. But the fact that you are willing to fight past the hurt and anger, and help his lost soul heal, that makes you a better man than most.” Stephen and Tony were still face-to-face as the sorcerer spoke honestly to the billionaire.

Tony shook his head. “How can you be so sure?” His voice cracking in emotion.

“Because I know you Tony, I know your heart. You are a wonderful, generous, loving man Tony. And you know me, I don’t waste my time on something that’s worthless.” Stephen attempts to joke, but flinches at the reminder of their past

“You know you’re not worthless either.” Tony smiles gently and moves his hands up to hold Stephen’s cheeks.

As they moved in to kiss the door bangs open, startling the two men apart.

“Carol told me- Ugh seriously do you two ever stop?” Rhodes came in Tony’s office like a bull in a China cabinet but froze when he caught sight of the two of them in their intimate position.
“Come on now Platypus, we are in our honeymoon phase. Can you blame us?”

Stephen simply smiled at the Colonel and moved to pull Tony on to his lap as Rhodes moved to sit on the couch.

Tony did not protest and only received an eye roll from his best friend.

“Okay So What happened?” Rhodes asked as soon as he sat.

And Tony went started telling him everything.

*****

Monday November 14

Tony stretched, and groaned and his joints cracked. “Oh god I’m getting too old for this”

Stephen laughed from his position on the bed, an am under his head and he lay lazily, watching his lover get up. “You could just call off the meeting and stay here with me all day, we had a great weekend. Who’s to say that has to end?” The sorcerer purred

Tony started getting dressed. “I can’t just cancel a meeting with The President of the United States Stephen” Tony rolled his eyes, though the temptation to crawl back into bed was very much there.

“Oh but you totally could and then it would just be you and me for a little while longer” the sorcerer purrs while turning to his side give Tony the most seductive, come hither look.

“I hate you, you evil wizard. You know I can’t especially with the UN expanding results soon.” Tony whines while tying his tie, Stephen smirks and gets up.

“I suppose I’ll just have to let you go” Stephen walks over to Tony and reaches forward to adjust the billionaire’s tie. He leans forward when he’s done and whispers in the billionaire’s ear. “I’ll have a surprise for you when you get back, so don’t take too long sweetheart” the sorcerer pulled away and kissed his cheek before standing straight up, he enjoyed seeing the slight blush that dusted Tony’s cheeks.

They bid each other some lingering goodbyes before Stephen opened a portal to the Tower, Tony sighed relieved that he was getting better at handling the sight of them. Stepping through he blew a kiss to his lover and the portal closed, leaving Tony to hop into a Stark Industries helicopter and make his way to DC.

~~~

Tony groans as he became aware of his surroundings. He rotated his neck to get some of the kinks out.

It was then he realized something was wrong.

His eyes flashed open as he remembers finishing his meeting with the President and the two of them coming to an agreement on Barnes. Though Rogers was a whole other fish to fry since the
President was still somehow a hard core Captain America fan.

Anyways Tony was leaving when he mysteriously doesn’t remember anything else.

With a quick evaluation he took in the dark room he was in. Tied to a chair, quite poorly he might add.

He was tempted to just get out of there, but he was curious who would attempt to kidnap Tony Stark. So with a quick resolve, after realizing that if he didn’t tell anyone his entire team would be pissed, he quickly up linked to FRIDAY

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**Boss!**

*Hey baby girl you sound worried*

**I lost connection with you; someone used an specialized EMP, disconnecting us**

*Eh, don’t worry about me, I’m ok for now, are you able to reboot the system now that I’m awake and connected with you*

**Yes**

*Atta Girl, can you let Stephen, and the others know that I’m okay and that you have my back at the moment. I wanna see who decided to kidnap me and why.*

**Doctor Strange is insisting on speaking to you**

*Put him on*

**Tony, I swear to god you’re going to be the death of me. And I’m seriously never leaving your side again. Oh and you think Levi was clingy before.**

*Hey I’m just fine, you know how many kidnappings I’ve had in my life? Too many is how many. Hell that’s how Iron Man was born. Besides now that I have the suit directly attached to me and the uplink I got even new ways to escape.*

**What if the EMP had completely disabled the uplink? What would you have done then?**

*I’d have figured it out, I always do. Anyways let me figure out what’s going on here and then FRIDAY will send you my coordinates and you and the cavalry can come storming into save me. Sound like a plan?*

*I don’t really like it but since you did take the time to update me before you did anything stupid I guess I’ll let it be for now. Just be careful Tony please*

*I will, also I should have just stayed in bed like you suggested.*

**Yes you should have, be careful Tony, we are on standby**

---

The link quieted as Tony became aware of his surroundings once more. FRIDAY staying in the background observing closely and sending information back to Stephen and whoever else was with
Tony groans in annoyance, ‘Why me?’ He thinks to himself ‘Why can’t I get a fucking break?’

A door creaks and light floods the room, causing Tony to squint for a moment to allow his eyes to adjust.

“Mr. Stark” a familiar Voice booms.

Of course.

It all makes sense now.

Tony gave FRIDAY go ahead to give Stephen his whereabouts as he stared ahead at Thaddeus Ross.

“Hey old Thunderbolt. Fancy meeting you here” Tony smiled friendly. “You know I was wondering where you fucked off too. After your failed attempts at retrieving the Barton’s, and Lang’s family you disappeared on me. You took a page out of Bruce’s book I presume?”

A sudden punch to his gut had the billionaire winded “Enough games Stark. Tell me where the Rogues are. Tell me what I want to know and you might still make it out of here in one piece” Ross demands.

Breathing heavily to catch his breath, he smiles at the former Secretary of State.

After his initial attack on the Barton’s Tony had enough proof for the US government to stripe Ross of his title, but the slippery man had been able to get away before anyone could arrest him.

Tony was surprised it took Ross as long as it had to retrieve and threaten him.

“I couldn’t have said it better myself” the grin on Tony’s face disappears behind the faceplate of the Iron Man mask. “Thaddeus Ross, you are under arrest” Iron Man’s altered voice say as the chair and rope that Tony had been tied to and by broke as he stood.

Ross paled in horror as Tony shot binders at him. The nanotech wrapped around the man as he was quickly restrained.

Commotion is heard from the hall and the door to the hall opens with a bang.

“Hey guys” Tony waves from his position over a bound and pinned Ross. His helmet retracts and he smiles at Stephen, Carol, Luke, and Jessica as they survey the area.

“You’re not the average damsel in distress” Jessica quips with a smile.

“Nope” the billionaire pops the ‘p’

Levi shoots off of Stephen’s shoulders and wraps itself around the armor.

Carol and Luke stride forward and retrieve Ross from under Tony’s boot. Before leading him out, Jessica following them.

“See ya in court buddy” Tony called after him, waving cheerfully.

This left Stephen and Tony alone.
“I just can't ever leave your side apparently” Stephen whispered and walked up to Tony. The nanobots retracted to their hive and Levi firmly rewrapped itself around the billionaire.

Tony wraps his arms around Stephen’s waist while the sorcerer’s arms wrap around the billionaire’s shoulders and back.

“I’m sorry to worry you, though you already knew this was an occupational hazard of mine.” Tony shrugged and tucked his head into Stephen’s neck.

“Come on let’s go home” Stephen said softly placing a gentle kiss on the top billionaire’s head

Tony hummed tiredly feeling the effects of the stress, adrenaline and possible concussion, plus a few bruised ribs. “Mmm, home sounds perfect.” The billionaire goes limp as he felt Levi lift him and brace him against Stephen. The sorcerer and the Cloak basically carrying him out.

Not too long after Tony found himself lounging in the large jacuzzi tub that he had installed in the Sanctum for himself and Stephen. His back was leaning against Stephen’s chest. The sorcerer had a sudsy sponge and was lazily massaging Tony’s body, being careful about avoiding his sensitive front.

The sorcerer had been pissed when he saw the forming bruise that had been left by Ross, but Tony calmed him with assurance that he was fine just tender, FRIDAY seconded the assessment and suggested a relaxing bath, which Stephen had immediately had Levi take Tony to their bathroom.

Tony was talking quietly about the meeting with the President, while enjoyed the hands and sponge that danced over his skin.

Tony sighed and laid his head back on Stephen’s shoulder, looking up at him.

“What do you think I should do? Right now even with everything Rogers has done the President wants to eventually work on a Pardon for The idiots, but if I let Matt and Jen do their thing, that might go away, but then I get dragged out, and by extension so do you.” Tony was gnawing at his bottom lip in a nervous way.

Stephen made sure soap was of his hands as one of them moved up to Tony’s face, his thumb moving across Tony’s lips, essentially stopping the billionaire from making his lip bleed.

“I’m with you no matter what you choose. Though I am partial to seeing Rogers suffer.” Stephen smirks “But as I said I support whatever you choose”

Tony closed his eyes and snuggled further into Stephen, as if it was possible.

“I’m sorry I worried you,” the billionaire whispered

“Stop apologizing Tony” Stephen said firmly but gently “You obviously didn’t ask for what happened to happen, and you handled the situation without an issue, and we have Ross now so his Trial can get going. So I think all in all, apart from the slight abuse you took, today was a good day” the sorcerer smiled and easily situated them into a more intimate position, splashing water, but not caring. “Now what do you say we finish out day off with a bang and I follow through with that promise I made to you this morning?”

“Mmm, I like the way you think Stephanie” Tony purrs and pulls Stephen into a heated kiss
So next chapter will be longer!
We’ll have Thanksgiving and Barnes so that should be a fun family orientated chapter with some drama.
As always thank you for reading.
And I do apologize for any spelling or grammatical issues I missed.
Until the next chapter!
What We Are Thankful For

Chapter Summary

Thanksgiving 2016

Chapter Notes

Hey! So I’m splitting up thanksgiving and the Bucky chapter cause I wanna enjoy the family fluff in this chapter!
I don’t plan on doing a ton of religious stuff but since Matt’s catholic and it’s kinda a big part of him I intend to use a bit of that (Daredevil season 3 trailers are scaring me BTW!)
And oh my god the Captain Marvel trailer! Oh this is such a good time to be part of this fandom... though now I’m gonna have to figure out what I want to keep similar, or ignore or stuff like that.
Hope you enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Thursday November 24th

Tony silently thanked himself for making the penthouse as large as he had.
His go big or go home attitude had been coming in handy lately. With the over 20 people that were on his team, part of the growing family, and since a good portion of them were living at Starktower. It really was a blessing. There were almost 30 people currently there for Thanksgiving.
The billionaire sighed, and closed his eyes; he smiled at the sounds of laughter and conversation that floated through the penthouse. The smell of food intoxicated the air around him, making Tony’s mouth water.
As the sounds of people lingered around him he opened his eyes and stared at the piano he was sitting in front of.
The dark colored wood silently spoke to him, as did the ivory keys. He hadn’t played piano since before Afghanistan.
Another thing he thanked himself for was the fact that he had kept his mother’s piano in New York stored safely away, especially since he had obliterated the piano that had been in his Malibu house, back in 2009.
His hands hovered over the keys for a second before he closed his eyes and set his hands back in his lap.
He thought back to the last week or so, how busy everything had been with preparing for Barnes’ arrival, and the trial against Ross, and also with the coming of Thanksgiving, and the holiday season beginning.

Tony and Stephen’s time together had dwindled. Bedtime was really the only alone time they were getting at the moment, but they made the most of it.

Tony would wake up, make a small breakfast and bring it up to Stephen, he would gently wake the sorcerer and ask him for an assist to the Compound, and groggily Stephen would kiss Tony goodbye and open a portal for the genius, most of the time Levi followed him through as well leaving the sorcerer alone.

Stephen would then smell the breakfast and tea Tony had set out for him and go at it.

Though Tony had started doing something else along with leaving breakfast. Something he knew was sappy, but he really didn’t care.

The billionaire, in the spirit of the season, had started leaving notes around the Sanctum for Stephen to find.

Notes with messages of his appreciation, and thankfulness. They were as simple as, ‘I’m thankful for your support’, to ‘Thank you for never judging me’ all the way to, ‘I appreciated the glorious cock of yours’, that one had been on the mirror when Stephen had gone to the bathroom one morning, the blush had made his face look like a tomato.

The sorcerer, not one to be upstaged, even if it was Tony Stark, started portaling notes around, with FRIDAY’s help of course. The AI would let the sorcerer know where Tony was going to be or if he left his office and Stephen would jot a messily written note and portal it to the correct place.

The Doctors notes entailed messages of what his favorite things about the billionaire was, and appreciation and thankfulness as well, since it was clear that the billionaire wasn’t ready for the ‘Love’ aspect of things yet.

Tony tended to freeze up a bit when Stephen used the pet name ‘Love’ as if the billionaire wasn’t sure what Stephen was trying to portray. But that was fine the sorcerer had patience, he could wait until Tony was ready.

Tony smiled remembering some of the notes that had appeared on his desk recently. They literally made his heart skip and his stomach flutter.

His hands returned their hovering over the keys and as Tony thought about Stephen and how grateful he was to have the sorcerer, his fingers began to play notes, as though they had a mind of their own.

Without any thought they danced along the ivory. With his eyes still closed and his mind focused on the music he didn't hear the silence that rang around him as soon as he had begun playing.

Everyone had entered the living room quietly.

Rhodes had a soft smile on his face as he walked in; he then looked over to Stephen. The sorcerer had an awestruck look on his face. The Colonel took the couple of steps over to him and lightly
bumped their shoulders together.

“He hasn’t played the piano in a very long time.” Rhodes spoke quietly to Stephen. He motioned to Tony “This is because of you. Just so you know”

The sorcerer responded with a thick swallow, tears forming in his eyes as he truly listened to Tony’s song. He watched the billionaire’s fingers masterfully dance across the keys.

It was decided then and there that this was one of his new favorite things, and he would definitely be making sure there was a piano at the Sanctum.

~~~~~

The dining room was packed.

Vision, Carol, Maggie and Laura were coming and going bringing food in, as they were finishing.

Hope, Sharon, Jennifer, and Betty had been helping in the kitchen as well, but were now sitting at the table chatting.

Luke, Claire, Danny, Matt, and Jessica were discussing with each along with Johnny, and Ben. Jim, who had been helping his wife and the others carry things in, sat and joined whatever conversation they were having.

Sue and Reed were talking quietly to each other, with smiles on their faces.

Deadpool, without his mask and suit, because Peter convinced him, was in a conversation with Logan, who had opted to join in on the Thanksgiving celebration at Starktower. Charles and the others were over seeing their own celebration at the school, for the students that weren’t going home.

Cooper, Kamala and Peter were excitedly talking with Shuri, who was sitting between Peter and Kamala.

——

The Wakandan Teen has decided that she wanted to join Tony and the team for their celebration, so she came to America, with her brother and mother’s permission of course, a bit early.

Barnes was set to arrive on Saturday, so Shuri thought getting a head start would be a good idea, and besides it gave her more time to converse with new people, people that she considered friends at this point.

——

Cassie and Lila’s giggles were heard as they two were talking about something, obviously it was very important.

Nate was simply babbling away in his high chair enjoying the many people around him.

Pepper had her focus on the babbling child as Happy watched her in awe.
Tony was sitting at the head of the table with Stephen to his one side and Rhodes to his other. The three of them were talking among themselves as well, though the billionaire’s eyes kept glancing over the expansive table.

This was what a family looks like.

Though they were missing Darcy and Jane. But with scientists work the two of them tended to travel quite a bit to keep all of the reading up to date and monitored. Especially since they were keeping an eye out for Thor

A year ago Tony would never have thought he’d be here, with this many people, celebrating thanksgiving.

Hell he hadn’t really celebrated this holiday since his parent’s death. His mother had always organized it and made sure Howard and Tony both showed up.

Except for the Thanksgiving of 1991, he hadn’t come home because he had been across seas, but he had come home for winter break to spend time with his mother and by extension his father.

The billionaire swallowed his emotions, and shook his head slightly. Now wasn’t the time to mourn, Tony wanted to enjoy the lively atmosphere around him.

Stephen squeezed the genius’ hand, as they were intertwined under the table, bringing Tony back to the present.

~~~~~

Matt stood up as the last dish was set on the table.

“I know many of you aren’t religious but I was hoping that all of you wouldn’t mind allowing me to lead a prayer before we eat” the man asked quietly.

Everyone made sounds of agreement.

Tony remembered his mother would say grace before a family dinner. His mother wasn’t ultra religious but she had raised Tony with some of her own beliefs, that had rivaled Howard’s, regardless of the man’s protests.

“So this prayer is actually a poem and saying it during the holiday season was a family tradition of mine, and I’m hoping that sharing it will benefit more than myself.” Matt smiled and ‘looked’ over to Jessica, who had stood up beside him and pulled out a lighter.

Matt cleared his throat and opened the prayer with the sign of the cross, and a few words. As continues Jessica pulls the first candle closer to herself.

“This first candle represents our grief. The pain of losing you is intense. It reminds us of the depth of our love for you.” Matt waits a moment as Jessica lights the candle and reaches for the second one.

“This second candle represents our courage. To confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to change our lives.” Another pause and a bow of the head while the dark haired woman lights the second candle.

“This third candle we light in your memory. For the times we laughed, the times we cried, the
times we were angry with each other, the silly things you did, the caring and joy you gave us.” Matt’s words were hitting all the right notes, several eyes around the table were misted over, as others were remembering their own families, and loved ones they had lost. Stephen and Tony included.

“This fourth candle we light for our love. We light this candle so that your light will always shine. As we enter this holiday season and share this night of remembrance with our family and friends. We cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for you. We thank you for the gift your living brought to each of us. We love you. We remember you.” As Jessica lit the last candle everyone around the table bowed their heads.

A resounding “Amen” echoed around the room.

Tony remembers that prayer, or poem more like; the priest in charge of his Mother’s funeral service had given it to him.

In his anger Tony had separated the services, giving his mother more attention than his father.

The poem was for those grieving during the holiday season.

He remembers reading it several times before tearing up the paper and throwing it in the fireplace, though the memory was foggy due to the alcohol in his system.

The boy had nearly killed himself with alcohol poisoning that year.

He remembers Peggy finding him drunk off his ass on Christmas, the woman had dragged him out of bed cleaned him up and took him home for Christmas dinner.

After they had talked Tony sobered up a bit and started moving forward with his life.

Hearing that poem now, after everything, hit home how everything had truly changed for him.

——

Tony stood and cleared his throat as soon as Matt went to sit.

“I know everyone is anxious to eat but I would like to say a few word of my own.” Tony looked around and at everyone’s nods he continues.

“My mom always made my dad and I say something we were thankful for before eating, so I’m going to follow through with that in mind.” Tony’s nerves were apparent but everyone seemed to lean back a bit and go into a relaxed stance while the billionaire spoke.

“In the last couple months I’ve come to the shocking realization that I’m bad at accepting help. I apparently have no problem offering it both when it is and isn’t needed. But when it comes to someone else coming to my aid, I never felt worthy of that.” Tony paused and looked around. Pepper and his eyes lock for a moment, tears in her eyes. Many others around the room had various looks of understanding and empathy.

“That what I want to thank everyone here for. In about a month’s time you all have showed me what being part of a team truly entails. What it feels like to be accepted for who you are, not who others think you are. Thank you all for standing by me.”

He looked to Pepper, Rhodes, Sharon, and Happy glancing at Stephen for a second as well “Thank you those who have stood by me through the years, through the thick and thin, the life and death,
the happy and sad.”

And he glanced around the rest of the table; at everyone else “And to my new team-“ Tony clears his throat “My family, thank you for accepting me and standing by me. I have so much hope for the future now with everyone here by my side.” Tony smiled and raised his wine glass “I am thankful for my family. To us!” Tony cheers

The rest around the table, most with misted eyes raise their glasses “To Us” was echoed around the table

“I think we should all go around the table and say what we are thankful for” Carol announces while everyone is passing around food, loading up their plates “There are a lot of us here so it should work that we just go around the table while we eat.” Carol smiles and looks around, everyone agrees. They decided to go around the table and since Tony started it was Rhodes or Stephen next. The sorcerer volunteered to go next, and then they would go on from there.

Stephen finished with the plate he was dishing up from as he thought about what he was thankful for. “I’m thankful for having another chance with you Tony, to get another chance to have a life with you, one that I was stupid enough to throw away years ago” the sorcerer smiles at the billionaire who ducks his head to hide a blush.

“I’m thankful for a prospering and well maintained company” Pepper jokes with a smile on her face “I’m thankful for you Tony, without you I wouldn’t be where I am today, hell I wouldn’t be who I am today. And of course I’m thankful for you Happy” the red head smiled at the man who reddened at her words. They had started dating almost a month ago, with Tony’s blessing and urging.

“I’m thankful that I’m not the only one watching out for your back anymore Tony” Happy jokes as well, Tony made an indignant sound “and I’m extremely thankful for you getting my head out of my ass and helping me realize that this woman might just be it for me” It was Peppers turn to blush.

Sharon followed, “I’m thankful for being given a second chance after I screwed up and almost threw away the only family that has ever stood by me no matter what.”

“I am thankful for my Children, and as apparently there is a theme happening here, I am extremely thankful for you Tony, for keeping me and my children safe, for stepping in as a Uncle for them, and loving them the way they deserve” Laura chokes over her words a bit, but got them all out.

Jennifer was thankful for the unlimited coffee and great new friends.

Betty was thankful for the amazing new lab, and not having to worry about her father anymore.

Maggie was thankful for her husband and daughter and the great new opportunities she had at the moment.

Jim was thankful for his wife, and stepdaughter. He was thankful about his new job as well and as his wife had said the opportunities that had opened up for him since his arrival in New York.

Luke was thankful for Claire and his Team, and new friends.

Claire was thankful for Luke being her rock and keeping her grounded in the craziness that their lives had taken a turn towards, and expressed her gratitude towards her new job as well.
Danny was a ball of thankfulness, from thanking Colleen, to his appreciation to his company and the partnership that was thriving, to his team, and other things as well.

Colleen was thankful for the new opportunities Tony had given her and treating her as a part of the team opposed to just a sidekick, and of course she expressed her appreciation for Danny.

Matt was grateful to have a team, and people he could rely on, and get help from.

Jessica made a joking comment about being grateful for booze but then got serious, “But in all honesty I haven’t really opened myself up to anyone in a very long time, many of you know why. So I am extremely thankful for everyone’s patience.”

Johnny spoke about how thankful he was for his sister and such an amazing team.

Ben was thankful for the support others gave him.

Sue and Reed smiled looking at each other and spoke about how grateful they were for everyone’s support and proceeded to announce that they were expecting, which caused an uproar throughout the table. Sue was almost 3 months pregnant; this caused a sidetrack of what they were doing.

Soon Wade’s pouting and complaints about not getting his turn yet caused the ‘What we’re thankful for’ activity to resume.

The Merc continued on to say how grateful he was for all the chimichangas and tacos in his life, and started going off as though he was reading a acceptance speech. Peter cut him off with a look after a few seconds and Wade finished with a quick “I’m thankful for all of you too” while he was wiping away fake tears.

Logan was exasperated with the man beside him but rolled his eyes and in his gruff voice he spoke about how he was thankful for his family and friends and for the being part of what they had been creating here, since it was a bit more entertaining then babysitting a bunch of students.

Cooper smiled and took his turn to thank his mom for everything she has done for him and their family and he did the same with Tony. He added a quick appreciation towards Peter because now he has a friend outside of his family.

Peter quickly got tearful when he said what he was grateful for, and that in and of itself was Tony. The teen said a quick speech of how much the billionaire meant to him and how he wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for him.

Tony made a mental note to ask him about that later because he felt like he was missing something there. He smiled and nodded his head towards the boy.

Shuri wasn’t really sure what to say since this wasn’t something she had ever done but she quickly improvised and thanked Peter and Kamala for becoming her friends and how she was grateful to have others, other than her brother, that could keep up with her.

Kamala was next and thanked Carol and Tony for supporting her, inspiring her and helping her. She also said a quick thanks to Peter and his amazing job at watching her back while they paroled, since she had a tendency to get awfully clumsy.

Cassie was thankful for her parents, her new home and friends.

Lila follows Cooper’s lead and thanks He mom and Tony for everything, for keeping her safe and happy.
Vision seemed to catch on to the trend and what needed to be said, and followed through with a heartfelt appreciation for Tony and everything he has done for the Android.

Next Hope spoke about her appreciation of Tony always including her, even when her father treated him and his family name like it was the scum of the earth.

Carol gave a small speech of how thankful she was for everyone there and gave Tony a little extra attention, speaking about how if it weren’t for him she wouldn’t have an amazing new family and friends.

“I’ve known your annoying ass for far too long” Rhodes starts his piece with a rye smile on his face, he continues on giving his own small speech about how Tony, his brother in every way but blood, was one of the best things in his life and how grateful he was for him. He looked over to Stephen and gave a quick thanks to the sorcerer for being someone else that the billionaire could trust. And then following that up with thanking the new team as well.

Steady and easy conversation occurred after everyone was finished saying what they were thankful for.

The woman had started bombarding Sue about details of her pregnancy so far, and the blonde simply smiled and excitedly spoke about it. Pepper brought up planning a baby shower and ideas started getting thrown around as well.

Dinner continued on like that, with everyone relaxed and enjoying the discussions around the table.

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“I’m so full” Kamala groans from the floor as she laid on her back.

“Plus side of high metabolism I don’t get the uncomfortable full feeling anymore” Peter gloated as he plopped onto the couch “Down side I get hungry a lot”

“I’ve never celebrated Thanksgiving. Is there always that much food?” Shuri asked from a spot on the couch.

“That’s more food than I’ve ever had for Thanksgiving. Aunt May normally works Thanksgiving since she gets time and a half for working holidays and she like to have Christmas off. And Ben and I used to visit her at work and have lunch with her there” Peter spoke with a nostalgic look on his face.

“I’ve had my fair share of large meals. But never Thanksgiving” Kamala admits

The group of kids which soon included Cooper, Lila, and Cassie, started comparing their lives and how they grew up, while all the adults were working on clean up, and still conversing in the dining room.

All of the kids were fascinated by Shuri, and listened intently as she told them about here lab and tech, and what life in Wakanda was like.

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“How’s my Daddy?” Lila asked quietly after a pause in the conversation, hugging her knees as she asked the question.

Cooper looked away not really wanting to hear the answer, but at the same time he did.
“How-?” Shuri asked surprised, as far as she knew the younger ones were unaware of the Rogues location.

“My mom told us he was safe in Wakanda” Copper answered “but we weren’t supposed to say anything” the preteen shot his sister a withering look, the young girl shrinks back at the reprimanding.

“I’m sorry.” She wailed lightly “I just am worried about him. He hasn’t acted the same for a very long time Coop and you know it! I miss him.” The young girl stuck her thumb in her mouth, a nervous habit that she had recently picked up again.

The preteen sighed and moved to hug his sister, before looking over to Shuri expectantly.

The genius teen sighed “I really don’t know him all that well, but it appears that he is angry with Rogers and Maximoff the most and he seems to be coming to his senses on his mistakes. He misses you guys” Shuri smiles at the two “He says often how much he regrets following Rogers and leaving you.”

Lila nods looking relatively pleased, Cooper looks mad though. “Too little too late” the boy spits bitterly.

Peter and Kamala quickly threw them all into a new conversation, Shuri sent the two a grateful look as the conversation did indeed move in a different direction.

~~~~~

The night progressed in a relaxed and easy manner, as everyone was lounging throughout the living room.

It was decided that a movie night was in order, which lead to a great debate of movies.

They eventually settled on a movie and everyone got comfortable.

Couples seemed to team up and find a place to lounge together through the movie. Whereas the teens and others just found a comfortable place to be.

Though Wade made a bit of a scene with Logan as the Merc insisted that he wanted someone to cuddle and that clearly it had to be the fellow mutant.

Attempting to keep it PG Logan has difficulties getting the Merc to back off but eventually he did and the movie began.

If this is how the Holiday season began Tony looked forward to what the coming months would entail, even if there would be some unpleasant moments, at least he had his family

Chapter End Notes

Awww! I love this not so little family! Like seriously there are a lot of people and keeping track of them is difficult!
I hope you all enjoyed
As always I apologize for any and all errors.
Next chapter Bucky arrives!
(Spoiler Alert: I’m making him Team Iron Man)
Shadow and a Weight Lifted

Chapter Summary

Friday November 26th
Shuri and Tony Talk
And Ms Marvel and Spider-Man have a new pet for Tony

Saturday November 27th
Part 1: Bucky’s Point of View

Chapter Notes

Not much to say, other than I hope you enjoy the chapter!
I hope I do Bucky justice!
Happy reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Friday November 26th

“Wow” Shuri looked around in awe, holograms and tech surrounded her. She spun around a smile lighting up her face. “I’m favorable to my own lab but there are definitely things here that would definitely improve my own tech. When do we get to share trade secrets? I help you, you help me?” The teen nudged Tony’s shoulder lightly Tony laughed lightly.

A few moments later found the two geniuses in front of one of Tony’s large holographic displays.

The two were discussing plans.

“So you never told me. How did he take it? I mean obviously he accepted but is there going to be an issue with me being in charge of the treatment?” Tony asked nervously.

Shuri turns her chair to face him. “Would you like to see the security feed? It might be easier to show you rather then tell you.” She asks softly.

Tony nods an affirmative and she proceeds to mess with the beads on her wrist for a bit, a video pops up on Tony’s display after she finishes and Tony plays it without further prompting.

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Shuri had already started the initial process to awaken Sergeant Barnes.

The super soldier was laying on her diagnosis table.

It didn’t take long for the man to become aware of his surroundings.
As his came to, his body tensed as though waiting for pain, when it didn’t come he looked around in surprise.

“Sergeant Barnes, good morning. Do you remember where you are?” The teen asked quietly, non-threateningly.

The soldier slowly sat up and looked around, realization dawning on his face.

“Wakanda, right?” The man asked his voice cracking; he clears his throat, and takes the water handed to him by Shuri.

“That’s right, and I’m Shuri, T’Challa’s younger sister. I’ve been working on getting a cure together for you mind. To heal the damage that has been done and erase the brainwashing you have received.” She spoke so softly and calmly that one could see the tension melt away from the former assassin.

The hope him his eyes lit up at her words. “Did you?” He asked eagerness lacing his voice.

The teen nods with a small bob of her head “I have, though the technology is not mine and the person who’s it is, well he’s not really up for making a trip her to assist me in healing you” Shuri explains.

Bucky frowns, “Oh” he says simply

The smile never left her face though so hope was still in the man’s eyes.

“Though he has agreed to take you in and heal you in America” Shuri finishes.

Bucky feels his stomach drop “I’m a fugitive how ever is that going to work?” He tries not to sound hostile as he almost can feel his heartbreak, why had she woken him up just to pull the rug out from under him.

Though the irritatingly calm smile still rested on the girls face, “You are under the assumption that that issue wouldn’t have been resolved before I awoke you Sergeant” she states

“How?” Bucky chokes out.

“Tony Stark has quite a bit of sway from where he stands currently and was able to negotiate a contract for you.” Shuri stopped there trying to keep the information she gave him to a minimum at the moment, at least until he was a bit more aware.

“Stark?” The soldier asked surprised guilt flooding his system at the name.

“How about you take a shower and get changed and then you and I can sit down and talk details of everything you have missed?” The teen insists before the man can ask too many questions.

The soldier numbly nods and takes the clothes being handed to him.

“Hijra will show you the way to a bathroom you can use, and will show you where to go after you are through,” Shuri explains as she gestures to one of the guards.

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The video cuts to a new scene.
“Before you start asking questions how about you eat, and I’ll go over what I’ve got figured out for you and then if you have questions your will be more than welcome to ask any after I am through” Shuri instructs as Bucky enters a office he was lead into. The man was clearly freshly showered, as his hair was long and damp, he also looked relatively relaxed and refreshed.

There was food laid on a table in front of the couch there.

He nods and walks over to the couch.

Shuri waves away her guards and the door is closed.

The display on the wall lights up, and brings up pictures of scans that he knew was his brain.

“You have been through a great ordeal Sergeant-”

“Bucky”

The teen nods “Bucky, there has been serious trauma to your brain and Dr. Stark and I have been working hard on finding a fix, for both the physical damage and relieve you of your trigger words.”

“Stark- I don’t understand, why would he want to help me? I killed-” Bucky is choking on his word as he tried to speak.

The teen calmly smiles and raises a hand in a calming gesture. “Let me go through what we have worked and I promise after I will answer all your questions to the best of my ability”

Shuri continues after the soldier nods at her to continue.

She goes over the treatment and therapy plan first. She explains with the damage to his brain, it needs to be healed first, she explains the details of how they will accomplish that and during that process he will be meeting with a psychiatrist who will be working closely with him, especially when they move on the phase two of the treatment, which will involve Tony’s BARF technology.

She moves on to briefly highlight what his pardon entail and explains how he will have a lawyer to help him go over it all as well when he arrives in the United States.

She explains the plans on sneaking him into America without raising the public’s suspicion that he was hiding in Wakanda, to keep the African country safe, and how it was known that James Barnes was receiving help as a prisoner of war but where and how was confidential information at the present moment.

“Do you have any questions? I know I’ve thrown a lot of information at you. I hope you don’t feel too overwhelmed” Shuri is inquisitive as she sits beside the soldier on the couch.

“Where’s Steve in all this?” Bucky asks realizing with some guilt that since he had woken up he hadn’t once thought of his best friend.

“Mr. Rogers and his…” Shuri pauses as though to find the right word “Team? I suppose that still the best name for them. Though most of America has taken to calling them the Rogues. They currently are still safely in Wakanda, though they are being housed in a hut along the border, as my brother has decided to open Wakanda up to the world and show them what we are capable of and how we can help others. It was a whole thing, shortly after you went back into cryosleep. Anyways he and the others have not been given a pardon yet. Mainly because they acted for themselves by themselves whereas you have been controlled by HYDRA and then coerced by Steve Rogers who is willing to ignore over 100 countries that all agreed on the same thing. Oh!? Where you ever told
about the Accords?” Shuri asked after a moment seeing Bucky’s confused look.

The tilt of the soldier’s head spoke volumes.

“So the bombing in Vienna happened during the UN signing of the documents called the Sokovia Accords…” Shuri continued to tell the soldier about her father and the other country leaders setting up the Accords.

“Wait so everything with Zemo just happened to occur at the same time as the Accords became public knowledge?” Bucky asked.

Shuri told Bucky the issue about Lagos and the disaster that was left in Steve’s wake and how the UN panicked and ended up releasing the unfinished Accords, causing Tony to have to jump through a lot of hoops to keep the HYDRA witch safe and keep the others from being detained.

When Shuri mentions Wanda and slips by calling her the HYDRA witch Barnes freezes his eyes going cold.

“How about this?” Shuri comes up with a pretty decent idea on how to catch the super soldier up on his own terms “I’ll give you the tablet that Dr. Stark has set up for you it has all the Accords document and revisions, so if you decide after you’re done therapy that you want to sign you will be allowed to. It holds copies of the all Stark Industries contracts that will be explained to you later if you decide you want to follow through with the therapy.-“

“I do!” Bucky says quickly interrupting the princess, she simply smiles at him, nods and continues.

“It also has the files on all of the past and current Avengers on the roster. So you have some reading material while you wait.”

“How long until I leave? What do I tell Steve?” Bucky asks

“Today is Monday November 21st 2016 if you are serious about going through with the therapy we have everything set for you to fly to Avengers Compound on Saturday. And regarding Mr. Rogers he is on the need to know basis. We aren’t informing him that Dr. Stark is assisting in your therapy and feel it’s for the best that we don’t.” Shuri answers.

Bucky nods in agreement at her assessment.

He swallows thickly and asks the question that’s been nagging at him “Why is Stark willing to help me?”

“I can’t speak for him in this instance. That’s something you should ask him. But something you should know is that Mr. Rogers knew that you killed Howard and Maria Stark, for 2 years, and didn’t tell Dr. Stark, instead he used his money and resources to look for you.” Shuri looked the soldier dead in the eyes “A lot of the anger that day in Siberia came from being lied to by a man who constantly ridiculed Dr. Stark for not being open and honest with his team” Shuri paused her eyes darkening “If Tony Stark wanted you dead you would have perished that day. Tony trusted Rogers and look where that lead him.” Shuri but her lip realizing she might be saying too much especially since Bucky’s own eyes were darkening.
She hadn’t meant to turn the man against his childhood friend. But hell this could actually become kind of fun.

“You should read what Tony has set up for you and let me know if you have any questions. Hijra will show you to the place you can stay for the next couple days. If you wish to go see Rogers and the others just let one of the guards that are around know.” Shuri instructed and stood up, preparing to leave.

“Princess?” The Soldier, a slight Russian accent can be heard again “Thank you, and can you thank Mr. Stark for me as well.” Bucky asks as he holds the tablet that had been given to him close to his chest as though it was a lifeline.

The girl nods and the video is cut off

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Tony sits there chin resting on his folded hands as he takes it all in.

Could he really do this?

Could he help the man that was used to kill his Mom… and his father?

Shuri was right most of his anger in Siberia had been at Rogers. Barnes never had the chance to lie to the billionaire though he didn’t seem like he would if he had the chance.

“He seemed to take all that awfully well,” Tony thought aloud

“He’s desperate to feel safe in his own body. Though did you see what I saw?” Shuri inquires.

“He has a Russian accent when emotions take over, specifically rage at the present moment from what I can tell” Tony nods as he confirms her observation.

“I think we are dealing with a split personality here.” She proposes her idea

Tony nods again “Almost like Bruce and Hulk. We might need to adapt our plan a bit. If the Winter Soldier is his own entity within Barnes we need to figure out a way to communicate with him, without his violent tendencies appearing, and without having to trigger him.” Tony scrubbed his face “this just got a lot more complicated. Why can nothing ever be easy?”

“That would be too boring! Where’s the fun in that?” Shuri jokes a bit trying to liven up the billionaire’s mood “Oh!” She exclaims, “I didn’t show you the best part!”

“Whatever could that be?” Tony sasses

She follows up with showing Tony some footage from the previous day of a confrontation between Bucky and Steve.

At the end of it the billionaire shakes his head in disbelief.

“It seems like even Barnes isn’t standing behind him anymore” Tony comments on Rogers and Barnes’ interaction

“That’s a good thing though” Shuri exclaims and gives a small bounce in her chair.

Tony and Shuri talk logistics for a bit longer before Peter and Kamala showed up and drag her away to go Black Friday shopping. Since they had allowance now thanks to Tony. He had started
giving them money for doing the work they had been around the city, compound, and tower.

He figured that since they didn’t have actual paying jobs, and they went to school, and especially since their superheroing was basically working a full time job with no payment he decided giving them some money was something that was needed.

He did the same with Harley. Since his mother was working hard to keep his sister and him taken care of, Tony used the guise of allowance to help them.

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It was quite a few hours later that found Tony resting in Stephen’s lap as the sorcerer meditated on the floor of their room, on the comfortable plush rug Tony had made sure to get.

The billionaire was lying curled up in the Doctors lap, connected with FRIDAY as the worked on a few projects through the uplink.

**Boss it appears that Peter and Kamala are at the Sanctum door**

FRIDAY interrupted their current debate on what Tony should make Stephen for Christmas.

Tony blinked his eyes becoming aware with his surroundings again.

Stephen was still meditating.

Tony could hear the light rapping of the door downstairs being knocked on.

He got up, stretched, and looked at the time. It was almost 11 pm. He was surprised Stephen was still doing his thing but sometimes the sorcerer got lost in it and Tony wasn’t one to interrupt him. He slipped on sleep pants and one of Stephen’s shirts that was laying out. Levi moved to gently rest on the billionaire’s shoulders, and they left the room.

Making his way downstairs he opened the door to find the two teens in their full hero garb.

Spider-man was hanging upside down as Ms. Marvel was standing there looking nervous.

What caught his attention was the cat that Kamala was holding its dark body standing out against Kamala’s outfit.

It looked malnourished and cold, as it appeared to be shivering in the girl’s arms and skinnier than a cat should be. Its black fur was matted in certain places; it had bright green eyes that seemed nervous but generally curious in where it was, and what was happening.

“Hey Mr. Stark! I, uh- we found uh-“ Peter stutters as he maneuvers himself and drops quietly onto his feet.

“Look we found a cat!” Kamala exclaims bouncing her arms a bit to bring attention to it.

“I see” Tony replies simply with a raised brow as though to ask the two what they wanted this late at night.

“Well um,” Peter rubs his neck nervously “you see Kam’s Parents won’t let a cat in their house and Aunt May is severely allergic so we were wondering…” Peter trailed off his question and looked over to Kamala to finish.

Tony watched the two curiously, though he saw exactly where this was going.
“We thought maybe you wouldn’t mind taking him.” Kamala said softly looking at Tony with pleading eyes, her mask making her eyes even more striking than usual. She held the cat towards him and it mewed slightly at being disturbed.

Tony gave the girl a look but silently took the feline. Levi wrapped itself around the billionaire and covered the shivering animal now cradled in Tony’s arms; the billionaire mindlessly started scratching behind the creature’s ear.

“Awww, look he likes you” Kamala cooed

Peter bounces a bit in response at the sight in front of him.

“You both realize I’m not the one to be asking here. If we were at the Tower then sure, but the Sanctum isn’t mine, and I can just take in a cat. Besides I have too much to take care of already without having to worry about and animal-“ though Tony stopped his rant as he felt a rumbling in his arms and quickly realized that the cat had started to purr.

“But he’s a cat! And they aren’t high maintenance-“ Peter started

“I don’t even have anything to take care of it, litter box, food, soap to wash it-“ Tony sighed exasperated at the teens, though he wasn’t about to admit how that cat purring in his arms at the present moment was giving him such a relaxed feeling he was tempted to go out and get the supplies and beg Stephen to let him keep the creature.

But as Tony spoke Kamala turned and went down the couple of steps to grab a couple large bags that were hiding behind the concrete column, and held them up.

Tony sighed and looked down to the cat in his arms. “So what are you expecting out of this?” He asked them.

“Well um you see I’ve seen this cat before” Peter began “and I used to feed him spare food I had but he always slunk off before I could help him, and tonight on patrol Kam and I heard some awful sounds, when we investigated there were a bunch of older teens harassing him. Kam and I Intervened, and I really don’t want to have him go off again besides he seems pretty traumatized now, and black cats aren’t really popular and bringing him to a shelter would probably be more harmful than helpful” Peter spoke fast, his explanation making Tony feel sad for the cat he was holding, he even felt as though he could sympathize with it as well.

“What did you name him?” Tony asks after some silence.

“Huh?” Peter inquired

“You say you’ve seen him before, feed him. What name did you give him?” The billionaire looked at Spider-Man with a raised brow.

“Oh, uh Shadow, since he always snuck off into the shadows” Peter explained.

“Guys I know you’re trying to be helpful here but I really don’t think I can keep him here and the tower would be fine but people come and go and same with the compound…” Tony was trying to let them down easy; he just didn’t see how having a cat in the midst of all the chaos of their lives would be beneficial.

Though the cat was super cute and there was something about it that made Tony want to keep it.

Levi brushes Tony’s neck with its collar giving him their signal that Stephen was coming.
“What’s going on?” The sorcerer’s voice rang out from the top of the stairs.

Tony turned around and Levi moved away from sheltering the cat a bit, to show him. “These two saved this cat from being tormented and are trying to pawn it off onto me, but I’m saying with all of our busy lives and the fact that I mainly stay here, I can’t really just take in an animal.” Tony explained to the doctor who was descending the stairs to join them. Stephen tilts his head to the side in question. “I mean the Sanctum is home, but it not mine and I can’t just take in an animal and assume everyone will be ok with it.” Tony explains.

“But it’s not like he can’t just follow you where you go. He’s super chill” you could basically see the pout from behind Peter’s mask as the boy debated with the billionaire.

Tony looked to Stephen again in question. The sorcerer was looking down at the still purring bundle in the billionaire’s arms.

“Honestly if it was a dog I would say I agree with you, but I have a feeling this cat might be perfect for you Love.” Stephen said softly stepping forward a bit closer.

“We even have everything you need for it!” Kamala says loudly, holding up the bags again, causing the two adults to jump out of whatever trance they were just in.

“Stephen…” Tony whispered softly

“It’s up to you. But I don’t think anyone here will have an issue. And when we aren’t here it can stay in the Avengers wing of the compound or stay at the tower. I’m sure the kids would love having a pet around. Though he does seem awfully fond of you.” Stephen observed.

And that is exactly how Tony found himself with a clean black ball of fur curled up in his lap as he sat in bed talking with Stephen.

The billionaire was expressing his concern about the coming day and having to confront Barnes.

Tony was petting Shadow without thought as they spoke.

A few minutes later Stephen changed the subject. “So we should probably take him to the vet” the sorcerer suggested “Though we can get that done on Monday, other than you working with Barnes I don’t think there are any other plans this week”

“You are correct Doc” FRIDAY confirms “would you like me to schedule an appointment for Shadow on Monday?” The AI asks.

“Sure” Tony confirms, his eyes drooping ever so slightly. Stephen smiled gently and maneuvered himself and Tony so they are laying down in the center of the bed. The sorcerer curled around Tony’s back and pulled him close.

Shadow, unhappy with being shifted, moved to curl up in front of the billionaire.

“He really seems to like you” Stephen observes quietly.

Tony only made a quiet humming sound, though the doctor could hear the slight traces of his heavy breathing turning into a snore. Shadow had looked up at the attention Stephen gave him, his bright green eyes reflecting the dim light in the room.

The sorcerer watched as the cat blinked at him a few times and then rested its head covering its nose with its tail.
Stephen stayed awake a bit longer as he listened to Tony snoring. Tomorrow was going to be a tough day. The sorcerer snuggles in, kisses Tony’s neck and quickly follows Tony’s lead in falling asleep.

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Saturday November 27th

Wakanda

Bucky was fascinated that a nearly 17-hour flight could be reduced to 12 hours. He was looking over the flight plan, while also having a quick bite to eat before he boarded the jet to head to the States. Shuri had told him to prepare for a pretty heavy case of jet lag since Africa was ahead of the states’ time zone.

He sighed deeply as he heard heavy footsteps enter the conference room he was eating in.

“Buck, please reconsider all of this. I can’t come with you to protect you” Steve pleads with his best friend

“Steve don’t” Bucky snaps.

The two had a fight the other day on Thanksgiving, and everything had been pretty tense after.

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Bucky had been doing his best to avoid Steve since he had woken up. The first full day the soldier had been studying the information and files left on the tablet for him along with browsing the Internet. Trying to catch up with the times and get a grasp on what he had missed and what Steve had failed to tell him when they reunited.

The more he read the angrier he got.

He was surprised that he was even given access to a few security footage videos, though he felt that Stark didn’t have much to do with that, but that of his AI who he had the pleasure of meeting.

It had strictly been through a texted based chat but FRIDAY had reached out to him and let the man know that she was willing to answer any and all questions he had as she wanted to help transition him to the modern world, that was if he would like her help. After some inquiring Bucky found out how close minded Steve was to the new world that they had woken up in and really was stuck in the 1940s.

Since then FRIDAY and Bucky were breezing through data of the past and present Avengers, the ups and downs of world government and US government, the many advances that the world had made, and so much more.

Thanksgiving was when Steve had found out that Bucky was indeed awake and leaving soon. The ex-assassin had hoped that he could leave Wakanda without a confrontation with the man known as his best friend.
Both men were not who they used to be, but where Steve had expectations of who Bucky should be; Bucky did not have any expectations of anything.

His brain was far too damaged; sure he had memories from their time growing up together. But it was foggy and almost like he was looking through a window at them.

The longhaired soldier was lounging outside the small hut that he was staying in when Steve appeared almost out of nowhere.

“Bucky!” The blonde exclaimed excitedly.

Bucky sighed, he had learned so many awful things about Steve the last couple days he wasn’t sure how to feel about this man anymore.

“Steve” Bucky nodded his acknowledgment as he kept his focus on the tablet.

Steve rubbed his neck nervously, “Um, T’Challa is hosting a Thanksgiving dinner for us, and well I found out they woke you up. I’m surprised I haven’t seen you at all. And well I thought you might want to join us for dinner.” The blonde rambled.

Bucky bit his tongue to keep back anger that had begun welling up inside of him. Steve sounded so entitled, especially at the mention of Bucky not seeking him out after waking up.

“Will the witch be there?” He settled with that question instead of others that rattled around his head.

“You mean Wanda? Well yeah she is part of the team.” Steve’s tone was quiet; it almost sounded like he was talking to a kid or a mentally unstable person. Anger flashed through Bucky’s eyes

“There no thanks I’m good, anyways I have things to catch up on before I head back to the States.” Bucky turned down the offer, eyes on the tablet once again.

Steve frowned. “You’re really leaving?” The sound of disapproval just dripping from his tone, causing the other soldier to roll his eyes. “Please Buck. There has to be another way,” the blonde pleaded giving his best you kicked my puppy look.

“Stevie,” If Steve wanted to play the guilt card, well two could play that game. At his nickname Steve’s eyes twinkled slightly. “I need help, and Shuri has assured me that the help I need is in America. Don’t make this harder than it needs to be. This has nothing to do with you. Let me get the help I need”

“But if Tony finds out you’re-“ Steve began before getting interpreted.

“Only a select few know that I will be there. I’m not in any danger from Stark. You worry too much Punk” Bucky said trying to stay calm and keep the conversation light.

“Why don’t you want to join us for dinner Buck? It’s Thanksgiving, we should stand by each other and spend time with the family we have around us.” More guilt from the former Captain America.

Holy shit, is this what FRIDAY was referring to? In his confusion of why Tony was willing to help he had asked FRIDAY about it, and even though he didn’t get a straight answer since she was adamant about Tony speaking for himself, she did refer back to the beginning of her life and the observations between the team and Tony and how they spoke to him and treated him.

“Because I don’t trust the Hydra Bitch” Bucky spat, anger filtering into his words and the Russian
accent even making an appearance, he felt the Winter Soldier rumble behind the wall that he was placed behind.

“Buck she’s not Hydra, I don’t know who told you that--”

Bucky stood up angrily “Are you serious!? Are you really about to lie to my face and tell me she isn’t Hydra? Are you seriously going to tell me that she completely one hundred percent safe to be around? I’ve seen the footage Steve.” Bucky shouted cutting the blonde off as he surly about to spout some bullshit story. He also felt a slight pang if glee at using the works that he had used against Tony all those years ago. FRIDAY had been doing a great job at catching the ex-assassin up.

The words seemed to register slightly to Steve.

“I think you ought to go” Buck said lowly his accent between Russian and Brooklyn, which really was an interesting mix.

“I don’t understand what have you seen? Who has told you what? Buck please we’re best friends. Till the end right? Wanda has changed. She’s not Hydra. Please I need you by me for Thanksgiving especially if you are leaving for treatment. No one is telling me anything.” Steve was rambling, grasping at straws as he went.

“Steve, I’ve done some research and reading on my own, and I realize how lost you truly are. I would love to help and support you but I really need to focus on myself first.”

“We can support each other Buck”

“When didn’t you tell me about the Accords? Why didn’t you catch me up on why were we’re fighting Stark in the first place. Everything could have been so different. Better yet if you knew that I killed Starks parents why didn’t you tell him?” Bucky rattled off questions that had been eating away at him.

“I messed up” Steve admits, “I see that now”

Bucky shakes his head. “You only are saying that because you think that’s what I want to hear. You don’t believe that. You think that you did nothing wrong and instead you are the one who was wronged. I can’t stand behind you when you can so easily think that. Like I said. I need to focus on myself, healing myself and finding my own place in this new world. You can stay stuck where you are and dream about the 1940s I’m going to be progressive and move forward.” At that Bucky turned around and went into his hut, ignoring Steve as the blonde called out after him but thankfully he didn’t intrude further on his space

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Later that night the two had another confrontation in the palace that cause Bucky to blow up at Steve yet again, it was escalated as Wanda had tried to step in.

It was when Wanda found herself pinned against the wall by her neck, by the one armed soldier that she realized that if she wasn’t careful she would indeed meet an untimely demise. So she submitted to the soldier holding her as Steve was laying the guilt on strong towards Bucky. Though the longhaired man was unfazed by it and simply walked away to the King’s chambers, after dropping Wanda to the ground unceremoniously.

—-
Which brought the one armed soldier back to the present.

“Buck please” the blonde, pleads

“Give it a rest Steve” Bucky says as he takes another bite of his sandwich.

“Tony will find out you are there and will come to finish the job. There is a reason I didn’t tell him about you. He wants to hurt you now, regardless of my feelings for him, my feelings for you trump what I feel for him.” Steve was clearly desperate.

Bucky was shocked by those words though “Feelings for him?”

Steve blushes and goes to rub the back of his neck. “Yeah, well, uh, apparently I may or may not have a slight crush on him.”

Bucky felt the Winter Soldiers bang against the wall in anger. “Fucking Hell Rogers! Haven’t you done enough damage? You left the man behind, you chose me over him and you seem to be going around thinking that he will eventually just take you back in with open arms, as though you didn’t lie to him and almost kill him.”

“Bucky you don’t understand. He——“

“I understand better than you know. I’m going Steve, and I swear if you try to stop me or follow after me I will make sure you are arrested. I plan on signing the Accords, maybe you should read through them it might give you a new outlook on the thing you thought was trying to just trying to shift the blame” Bucky made another reference to a prior conversation that Steve had, had with Tony. Where was he getting this information?

“At least take this” the blonde held out an old phone to Bucky, hope glittering in his eyes. The one armed soldier looked at it in near disgust. “So that way I can get a hold of you if need be or you can call me if you need me.”

“No thanks” Bucky says simply. Steve gets this confused hurt look on his face as Barnes continues on to explain. “I know how to get a hold of you if I need you. I’m going to go take care of myself, and I don’t want to have some sort of line of communication that you can control. I need to do this for myself Stevie. Please trust me”

“I do trust you. It’s everyone else I don’t trust. There are people that can still hurt you” Steve sounded so sad. Bucky rolled his eyes seeing right through the man’s manipulative ways. “Please take it, because if I leave here there will be no way for you to get a hold of me”

“Precisely if you want to hear from me you stay here where you are safe” Bucky smiled at Steve. The Blonde hit the main reason why Bucky did not want to take the phone. But he didn’t actually seem to suspect any malice behind it.

Steve sighed frustrated. “Will you at least tell me where you are going?”

Bucky shakes his head no “I don’t need you coming in guns ablazing if I don’t reach out to you. Steve I’m concerned about you, I think you need to get some help too. Figure out where you belong in this world, because that’s what I’m going to do.” Bucky stood and threw his trash in the garbage can by the door, opening the conference room door that lead to the hall.

He looked back.

“Stay out of trouble Punk. I’ll let you know when I get to where I’m going after that we’ll play it
by ear. Don’t do anything stupid. And seriously read through the Accords” at that Bucky closed the
door behind him, cutting off anything Steve was about to say in response, and made his way to
the hanger.

A smile on his face as he felt a slight weight lift off his shoulders.

Everything was going to be okay.

Chapter End Notes

So whatcha think?
Next chapter we have part 2 Bucky arriving at the compound.
Also I needed to add a cat! I have this head cannon of Tony just doing his thing,
whether it’s working in the shop or doing something in his office and him having a
shoulder cat. (I actually trained the cats I used to live with to climb up and chill on my
shoulder) lol so yeah that’s a thing now! Lol Tony has another protector! Haha!
Anyways I hope you liked the chapter and I hope I did Bucky justice.
As always I apologize for any errors in my writing!
And until the next chapter!
A New Beginning

Chapter Summary

Buc- James settles in.
A new start begins.

Chapter Notes

So I’m giving Bucky or now in my story James freedom to make his own decisions, and to decide who he wants to be. Let’s see how well this works!
I hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday November 27th

Around 1 in the afternoon.

Upstate New York

Avengers Compound.

Tony sat back and watched as Lila and Cassie were playing with Shadow. The black cat was panting a little at the exercise he had received so far, but he just kept going.

Though when Tony stood to make his way to the kitchen, to grab himself some coffee, the girls whined in compliant as the cat followed him. It was chattering at him as though to ask where the billionaire was going.

“Bud you don’t have to follow me wherever I go you are free to roam as you please,” Tony explained to the cat as though it understood what he was saying.

Ever since they had arrived at the compound Shadow had become, well his shadow.

“Well at least we know you live up to your name” Tony comments, taking a swig of coffee that he just poured himself. The feline hopped up onto the counter and Tony pet him.

“Chief, Barnes’ jet is preparing to land. Shuri is wondering if you are coming out to greet him with her.” CARTER spoke surprising Tony.

Levi, who was resting on Tony’s shoulders, squeezes him slightly as the billionaire’s heartbeat sped up.

“Yeah I’ll be right there” he choked out taking a deep breath.
Stephen had been summoned to Kamar-Taj but had left behind Levi to help with any anxiety Tony might encounter. And at the moment he was eternally grateful.

Grabbing his cup of coffee of the counter he made a clicking noise with his tongue, that he found Shadow responded well to, and patted his shoulder.

It had shocked Tony earlier that morning when the cat had climbed up him, thankfully he was wearing thick enough clothes at the time so claws didn’t pierce him, and had planted himself on the billionaire’s shoulders.

Shadow mewed in response and leapt from his place on the counter to Tony’s shoulder. He adjusted himself to drape himself over Tony’s left shoulder, and technically over Levi as well, the billionaire felt the cat’s legs dangling behind his back.

“We really need to get more weight on you bud” Tony commented on the weightlessness of the cat and scratched behind the felines ear.

A purr started at the gesture and Tony holding his mug in one hand and scratching Shadow with the other made his way to the landing pad.

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The jet lands and wind blows around. Shadow huffs a sneeze, and Levi moves to block the excessive amount of wind from disrupting the animal too much.

“You ready for this” Shuri asks quietly and the billionaire simply nods silently.

The ramp lowers and there stands the one-armed soldier, nerves apparent in his eye. That made Tony ease up a bit more, seeing the super soldier as nervous as he was helped.

“Sergeant Barnes, I hope the trip was alright.” Shuri said softly, switching back to his formal name knowing Tony’s aversion to the man’s nickname.

The soldier doesn’t comment on it and simply nods at the princess with a quiet “It was fine” he starts his decent off the plane as Tony and the soldier lock eyes. The sadness and guilt that was present shook Tony slightly,

Tony squares his shoulders, the Cloak and Cat on them helped keep him grounded, as Barnes approaches the billionaire.

Tony holds a hand out to Barnes, who steps up to the shorter man and takes his hand. They firmly yet gently shake hands “Sergeant Barnes”

“Mr. Stark” the soldier nods his head at the billionaire.

A small signature Stark smirk graced the billionaire’s face. “Mr. Stark was my father, please call me Tony”

“In that case-“

“Let me stop you there, I cannot and will not refer to you with the name Rogers referred to you by.” Tony interrupts the Soldier holding a hand up, Barnes simply responds with a small chuckle.

“I was going to say, please call me James” the smirk on his face mimicked Tony’s. “St- Rogers calls me that because that's how he remembers me, though that me is dead and gone, has been
since I fell off the train all those years ago.”

Tony hummed in appreciation and understanding.

Shuri was looking between the two as though a tennis match was happening. The two men were acting so relaxed together, where moments earlier the both of them had been nervous and worried about what was about to happen.

Tony realized then that maybe his fear really was unwarranted. He obviously wasn’t ready to trust Barnes with unwavering loyalty but he could tell by the footage he had seen so far, and the reports from FRIDAY, Barnes definitely wanted change, he wanted to heal, and who was Tony to hold something over the soldier when he was really just angry at Rogers.

“James” Tony gave a small smile to the man “Let’s head to my lab and we can talk a bit, and then if you feel up for it you can meet with our team lawyer, she can explain some of the fine details of the document you’ve read.”

Buc- James smiled; this was a fresh start. A new beginning.

There was no one here telling him who he is, and who he used to be. He could become his own person. That in and of itself was such a freeing and liberating feeling.

James nodded at the billionaire and followed after him and he walked away, Shuri followed close behind. The Cloak on Tony seemed to flow as though it had a mind of its own, surprising James when it appeared to wave at him.

When the trio made it to Tony’s lab James looked around in astonishment.

“Whoa” he breathed a gasp.

Memories flashed in his mind, he saw flashes of the Stark Expo he had gone to so long ago.

Blinking he came back to the present.

“Cool, huh?” Tony asked softly.

The cat that had been draped over the billionaire’s shoulder jumped down and meandered across the floor to where there were two bowls placed under what appeared to be a holographic table a robot with a claw beeps and tries to follow after it.

“Dum-E leave him alone” Tony snaps but it doesn’t seem that there is actually all that much anger behind his words.

The robot droops and makes a dejected sound.

“You can play with him later, go find something to clean up or do.”

The bot whines low and wheels away.

“Sorry about him, he’s excitable, just wait till he starts bugging you. Anyways there’s a reason I wanted to bring you down here” Tony pulled a large case out of seemingly nowhere.

“So I uh, I kept the remains of your old arm and did some research, and with Shuri’s resources, we were able to make you this” Tony opened the case with flourish, showing the soldier a new arm.

James stares down at the arm that laid in the case in front of him, not really believing it was there,
he reached out his fingers brushed them against the cool metal.

Tony was rattling off the specs and description of it. I was made of vibranium of course and it would be billion times better than his old arm.

“Though I would like to get your treatment going and you to have a few therapy sessions before we work on installing this bad boy onto you. But I wanted to show you this because I know having something to work towards, having something at the end of the tunnel, can be a great motivator.” Tony concludes watching James’ amazement

The soldier nods in agreement to what, he’s unsure but his head is bobbing “I don’t understand why though” the flabbergasted look matched his tone.

“Well for one I blasted your previous arm off-“

“I had that coming”

“James, What happened, already happened, it’s done. Now we need to move forward. My anger lays on Rogers, he knew for 2 years and didn’t tell me a thing.” Tony sighed and scrubbed his face a bit; he didn’t really want to go over this right now “We can talk more about this later though, how about for now we discuss details about your treatment and the plans moving forward.”

The soldier nodded.

Shadow jumps onto Tony’s lap as he sits and pulls up the hologram of digitalized documents.

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A few hours later finds James talking with Jennifer, after being introduced to her and many of the other lingering members of the team, that were hanging around the compound this weekend, after enjoying their Thanksgiving at the Tower.

James looked forward to seeing the Tower, as he was told about it but for the sake of safety and what not it was decided that he should stay at the compound for the time being.

Jennifer was going over the rules, and what was expected of him. He had been introduced to CARTER and was fascinated that there was more than one AI.

CARTER would be in charge of helping him around the compound and keeping tabs on him and what not. Though surprisingly he didn’t feel that it was too intrusive.

“You are in a private and secure hall, the only other resident there in Miss Romanoff” Jennifer was talking about living arrangements at the moment.

“Widow is here?” James asked surprised.

Jennifer looked up from the tablet. “Yes she is on house arrest and probation. You actually have a bit more freedom than she does at the moment. She came here a while ago and was allowed to stay under certain circumstances, which she has been good to follow so far.” The brunette explained.

James made a thoughtful sound, deciding in his head that he was going to need to talk to the spy.

Jennifer watched the man for a brief moment and then continued her reviewing of the documents.

“Sergeant Barnes, is everything making sense? Do you have any questions?” Jennifer asks, observing the soldier as he was surviving everything they walked pass.
“So, as long as I stay on the compound, and only go into the Avengers wing when invited I have free reign to the entire compound?” James was surprised about how much freedom he was being given. The building was huge and there would be plenty of new things for him to explore between his therapy sessions.

Jennifer gave him an affirmative answer.

James asked a few more questions about what would be expected of him in a more detailed manner and a few other questions.

He took a breath and concluded with the one question that had continued to nag at him since he found out he was heading back to the states.

“Why is everyone being so nice to me? Like I feel like I don’t deserve any of this.” The soldier asks

“Simple, because Tony asked us too. He knows logically that you’ve been through a few massive identity crises, and he wants to make sure you can get a grasp on who you are now with no one putting expectations on you. Which in turn involves having a relaxed and stress free environment around you. Sure there are quite a few of us nervous and wary but the trust has to start somewhere, and so long as you follow the rules and pull your weight around here it will grow pretty fast.” Jennifer explains softly, Barnes can feel a warm sensation move through him at her words.

She was sincere and honest as she spoke.

They were approaching the private sector of the dormitories, and CARTER opened the door for them.

“So this is your room” Jennifer motioned to one of the doors and it opened in response. “Would you like to turn in for the day? If not you’re welcome to join us for dinner and movie night tonight” The woman offered.

“I wouldn’t mind taking some time to unwind and take a shower or something, and if the offer for dinner and a movie is still available after…” James trails off nervously.

Jennifer smiles “Of course it is. Just let CARTER know when you are ready.

Jennifer hands the tablet she was holding to James.

“Tony told me that this is upgraded a bit from the one you had in Wakanda there’s some reading material and videos on in now if you’re interested. You also have a direct link with both FRIDAY and CARTER if need be.” Jennifer explains and the man looks over the tablet

“Thank you” he says sincerely and watches as the lawyer smiles and leaves.

James turns to enter his room when a sound alerts him that he isn’t alone.

“Widow” he says simply, his back still turned towards the redhead.

“Soldat” she responds tensely

“Is there something I can help you with?” His body grows tense, unsure of what Natasha was up to. He turns around slowly, standing straight in an intimidating pose.

“I’m surprised to see you here” she says honestly, looking confused.
“As I am you, you’re not one to stay in captivity for long, what exactly are you playing at?” James hasn’t been here long but he could already feel himself at ease around the people he had met.

Tony himself had been graciously welcoming.

And both James and the Winter Soldier both agreed that the compound was indeed a safe place.

Though the Widow might have something up her sleeve, or so the Winter Soldier kept saying from behind his wall. So this meant that James would be keeping an eye on her.

“I made too many mistakes. I’m trying to rectify them. I’m not playing a game here,” She states honestly.

“Excuse me while I don’t entirely believe you. Anyone from the Red Room only has one goal, and they do what they must to survive. Don’t forget Natalia, I know who you really are” the man spoke, and as he did the Winter Soldier slowly made his appearance. The Russian accent became prominent causing Natasha to shiver.

“I’m curious, how much of you is Bucky and how much is the Winter Soldiers,” the spy blurts

The man raised an eyebrow at that “Bucky isn’t someone who’s around anymore, regardless of how many people wish it. I have his memories but it’s either James or the Soldier and right now with everything happening the soldier is lingering but I, James have control. That doesn’t mean I don’t remember though.” The man explained his eyes hardening towards the woman.

Natasha was clearly assessing the situation. “I am no threat to anyone on this compound Soldat,” she states with her tone dripping as much honestly as she could muster, and trying to hide her fear of the one man that could best her.

“You best hope it stays that way, or you and I might find ourselves at an impasse” James says before turning his back and entering his room. The door promptly shutting behind him.

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Tony was sitting at his desk watching the feed from the private dormitories hall.

CARTER had alerted him to a confrontation between Natasha and James that he had might want to see

“That gives us a bit more insight, though we had already figured out most of the split personality thing.” Shuri observes

Tony is rubbing his goatee in thought. “Yes, But there is more there than I thought.” Tony mused

His fingers moved fast over his coded keyboard and pulls up Hydra’s Winter Soldier file off of the saved files from the dump.

He specifically searches for the Red Room deciding it was time to learn a bit more of the Spy and Soldier’s history.
So yeah I’m playing this a bit differently then others have in their stories, or even than the MCU, but that’s kinda the point right?
I hope you guys like what I’m doing with him so far!
Next chapter: Progression of time, Some bonding... and December 16th
Don’t forget to let me know what y’all think!
Until the next chapter!
Saturday December 3rd

“So how’s the last couple days been James?” Dr. Nicole Williams asks the soldier as he sat in the incredibly comfortable chair in her office as she moved from her desk to a chair across from him.

Nicole was an ex-Shield agent who was almost killed during the fall of Shield. She had become a highly recommended psychiatrist after leaving Shield to pursue her dream job, and to get away from the craziness of being a agent.

James had met the woman for the first time on Sunday, the day after he got to the compound, as she introduced herself and showed him to her office, where they would be meeting on Wednesdays and Saturdays for the foreseeable future.

“I’m still adjusting. As is the Soldier. It’s strange without Rogers around, or having the fear of him making an appearance randomly, there’s no expectations on how I’m supposed to act, or who I’m supposed to be.”

“The Soldier has been surprisingly subdued, except when Miss Romanoff is around, he tends to get agitated and make more of an appearance. The fact that no one is controlling us though has given both of us a bit more time to understand what this thing is between us.” James talks easily with Nicole.

The woman jots down notes as he speaks. “And what have the both of you figured out?” She asks resting her elbow on the armrest, and then placing her chin on her palm, she watched the man with calm eyes.

James leaned forward and rested his elbows on his knees. “It’s a work in progress. It’s different
now than before. Back when I was on the run, before Zemo, I was pushing him back, ignoring him. I was just trying to find my place in this world, even while on the run. I had saved Rogers, but I didn’t stay around because I knew the man that he wants me to be isn’t there anymore. Then Rogers came after the bombing, and everything got complicated. Everything happened so fast. The Soldier got activated again, but this time there wasn’t a mission, I- He was asked to give a mission report. The leash had been put on the Soldier again, even for as brief of a time as it was, and all he knew was we needed to get out of there, and regroup. Since then there has been two of us up here,” He taps his temple “Though he lets me be in control the majority of the time. Anger tends to set him off though, but with no one using the trigger words and the torture no longer being the norm.” James sighs, “We are figuring it out though. He really likes you though, you have such a calming presence”

“So I have been told” The corner of her lips quirk. “I am an empath, it’s an ability that got enhanced when I went through terrigenesis back in 2015”

“I read about that,” James said simply

“You have been doing a lot of reading lately, or so I’ve been told” Nicole observes pushing the conversation away from herself and back to the man.

James nods “I want to know everything I’ve missed. I want to know about the world around me and the people around me.” He swallowed thickly “I don't want to be stuck in a past I am no longer part of. What's the point of dwelling on such when there’s nothing that can be done?”

“That really is a problem for you isn’t it?” the blonde doctor asks. “You mentioned that on Wednesday. Your irritation of being stuck in the past and worried about the inability to move forward.” she comments

James nods and elaborates about his irritation towards Rogers on that subject.

“From what we could tell,” Nicole smiled at James’ reference to his other personality “Rogers has no regards towards the world he is in now he only wishes it was what it used to be. And complains at the changes, showing no effort towards trying to advance. And in the process almost dragged me down with him. I understand he thinks he is helping or thought he was. But Jesus Christ that man just confuses the ever living shit outta me” James’ Brooklyn accent making an appearance during his rant, he moved to hold his head as it started to throb at his growing irritation.

Nicole promptly shifted gears and moved to a different topic. A lighter one at that.

“So Wednesday we only talked briefly about the New Avengers and how your night with them last Saturday went. Do you want to go into a bit more detail about your experiences with them so far? How are you and Soldier feeling about everyone?” The doctor asks a couple of questions to distract the man, while also exerting some calm waves through the room. It’s was important to remember she couldn’t control emotions only feel them and give the people around her a boost of any strong emotion she was feeling, that’s what she said quietly as James watched her after a moment of silence.

He then proceeded to tell his tale. “The whole team wasn’t there last Saturday, I think they were trying not to overwhelm us with too many people, which I know I appreciate. I’ve met almost everyone in passing at this point, well except the kids, which I’ll be meeting tonight, Tony was telling me about them though, giving me a head up per say.” James continued on discussing who he’s met and how they have made him feel.

“The Soldier is actually getting attached, which makes the both of us nervous” The man comments
“Why is that?” Nicole inquires quietly.

“We don’t want to hurt anyone, and what happens if someone gets ahold of the leash again?” James admits.

The doctor gives him a small smile “Don’t live for the ‘What If’s’ James. You are safe. Tony wouldn’t put anyone in unnecessary danger.”

“I’m still worried about Widow,” the man hissed, his voice getting that twinge of Russian laced in. Nicole nods “Tell me some more about that, what exactly makes you uneasy about her?”

“She’s manipulative, she does what she wants, how she wants, to survive. The fact that James and I are growing attached makes her a threat.” The Soldier himself made his appearance and spoke with Nicci, as she soon insisted on them calling her, briefly about their history.

“Hydra was using the Red Room to recruit new members to infiltrate Shield. Natalia was one of those spy’s. Shield fell into her trap, and maybe she did fully turn to Shields side, but deep down I know, just as she does, that her training runs as deep as mine does. I don’t trust her.” The Soldiers deep Russian accent echoes slightly around the room.

After a little more talking The Soldier retreats and James and Nicci talk a little while longer about the team meet-up for tonight that James was joining, and then followed with what he should work on until their next session.

“How are you acting like me having two people in one mind is the most normal thing ever?” James asked at the end of their session.

Nicci smiles “Because James, it is your normal. And what’s so wrong with that? The Soldier isn’t a threat so long as he isn’t controlled. You both have said that, and have made it abundantly clear. And we are all working on fixing that, you know that. Dr. Stark and Princess Shuri both noticed your dual personalities immediately and have adjusted your treatment plan accordingly, to work with The Soldier, opposed to against him. Why fight a part of yourself? When it’s only going to harm you in the end if you try.” James looked thoughtful at Nicci’s words.

“Besides you’re not the only one I’ve worked with that holds more than one personality in their brain and at the very least you are willing to work with him instead of hiding him away” the doctor speaks referring to Bruce Banner, Tony had spoken a bit about the scientist to James, letting him know that James wasn’t the only one with a dual personality that reacted to anger. James was just thankful he didn’t actually shift into a completely different being.

The two exchange goodbyes after a bit and James headed to the gym to get a bit of exercise in, before meeting up with the others.

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James enters the advanced training room that he had been given access to. He love it, the room had battlebots that learned from your fighting style and would analyze any patterns, making it so the person fighting it would end up having to change up what they were doing to surprise the machine. It fascinated him, that a computer and machine could almost best him.

When he looked around the large room he caught sight of Jessica and Matt doing a few training exercises of their own.
“Hey James” Matt greeted warmly.

Both The Soldier and James has been shocked when they first met the blind man and found out about his secret.

They even went up against him and were pleasantly surprised by his speed and agility.

“Matt” James nodded, his shoulders tense, after his session with Nicole, even though he did feel a bit better after being able to talk with someone, which was a huge help, at the same time dredging up certain feelings and thoughts always made him feel weary and needing to let off some of the stress physically.

“Wanna spar? Jess needs a break” Matt offers glancing to Jessica who was leaning over breathing heavily. At the comment towards her she throws a middle finger in his direction, and glares at him, though it was playfully.

“If you’re up for it, I got some pent up energy that we need to release” James explains.

Jessica laughs, “Oh don’t worry he and the Devil got some pent up energy as well. You two were made for each other, go at it” the dark haired woman gestures James forward.

For the next 15 minutes the two man danced around the room fighting. Even one-armed James had no issue keeping up. Both men had a bloody lip and a few well-placed bruises but neither stopped. The smile on Matt’s face making it clear that there wasn’t an issue. The Soldier was basking in the ability to fight with someone, though the punches were being pulled a bit, but it was still therapeutic for the two of them especially after a therapy session.

After a little while longer Jessica stopped them and made them take a drink of water and bit of a break.

During their break the room door opened and two teens skipped in, dressed in workout clothes.

Both were surprised to see the adults there and in the condition they were in.

The teenage boy’s obvious curiosity got the better of him as he came sauntering up to the adults.

“Whatcha up too?” The boy bounces a bit on the balls of his feet. James recognizes the voice.

“These boys are beating each other to a pulp because somehow it’s therapeutic.” Jessica says as she reaches into her pocket and takes out her flask “Where as I’ll happily stick to drowning myself in alcohol thank you very much.”

At that Matt makes a sound but nothing else is said to that.

“That’s cool, I get it I like to patrol after having a bad day. So I makes sense” Peter nods at the two men. James was trying to place the voice, where had he heard it before?

Peter noticed the look he was receiving from the soldier with long hair.

“Nice to see you again Sergeant. Especially on better terms” the teen straighten his back and got a serious look on his face as he held his hand out for a handshake. “The last time we met was at the airport. I’m Spider-Man.” Peter introduces himself “Peter Parker to everyone else though, secret identity and what not.”

“You’re a kid,” James gasped; it was something between a statement and a question.
Peter bristled a bit at that.

James backpedaled trying not to offend the teen.

Kamala’s laughter rings out, at the man’s panicked face. “Pete chill he didn’t mean it in a bad way”

“Why were you at the airport?” James asked confused.

Peter tilted his head to the side. “What do you mean?”

“I mean if it was going to turn into a fight why did Tony bring you?” James asked genuinely curious.

“It actually wasn’t supposed to turn into a fight. Tony instructed everyone to go easy and restrain only. Obviously that wasn’t a two way thing,” Peter sounded bitter towards the end there and James felt a twinge of guilt.

Rogers really had just screwed everything up.

“I’m sor-“ James started but quickly got cut off

“Don’t worry about it. My endurance is a bit low since I’m still new to this whole hero thing but I can handle myself.” Peter waved off Barnes’ apology, though James could see the anger lingering in the boy’s eyes, though it was clearly not aimed at him.

“Do you two want to train with us a bit?” Matt asked surprising James. The Soldier was even hesitant. Neither one of them wanted to hurt anyone, especially the kids.

Kamala jumped in excitement and quickly accepted the offer. Peter hesitated for a moment his eyes locking with James’.

“You okay with couple of kids intruding on your time?” Peter asked.

The man was shocked for a moment. He was being asked his opinion. This small gesture made James feel immensely grateful that he had been given a second chance there was so much more to his life now and he couldn’t wait to see where life will take him.

He smiled at the teenage boy. “Let see how much better your endurance has gotten”

“Bring it old man” Peter smirks while him and Kamala crouch into their fighting stances, and the fighting begins again, with the addition of the teens.

Chapter End Notes

So a bit more James love!
Anyways like I said I’m getting married tomorrow to the man I’ve been with for 10 years! So this is exciting!
And I’m not sure when my next update will be I’m pretty busy so we will have to see!
As always sorry for any errors
I hope you enjoyed!
And see ya in the next chapter!
Observing and Hanging Out

Chapter Summary

Part 2 of December 3rd- adults hang out

Chapter Notes

I’ll admit this chapter gave me a case of writers block. There were things I wanted to add that didn’t fit, or look right.
I don’t know this is a weird chapter for me.
Though I hope you guys like it.
Thank you everyone for the well wishes on my marriage, it meant a lot!
I have a project at work I gotta focus on and then I promise I’ll work on updating regularly.
Maybe go back to settings a specific update day.
Anyways hope you enjoy this small chapter of some family fluff.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Sanctum

December 3rd

Tony groans, throwing his head back.
“Fuck me harder Stephen” the billionaire demands.
The sorcerer quickly follows through with the demand and the noises from both men increase, the headboard of the bed banging against the wall.
Stephen’s face moves to bury into Tony’s neck. Teeth and lips making their mark in the billionaire’s skin.
—
The two lay in bed spent, after Stephen basically collapsed onto Tony pinning the billionaire down.
Stephen says something but his face is smothered in the pillow.
Tony laughs and shifts himself. “What was that?”
“I said we should probably head to the compound soon” Stephen said turning his head and spoke directly into the billionaire’s ear.
“I don’t wanna” the man pouted in response to the sorcerer’s suggestion.
“Ugh” Tony groans. His feet dragging as he walks down the hall beside Stephen.

Shadow happily trotted beside the two of them.

“Mr. Stark!” Peter tells from down the hall

The teen runs up and starts animatedly telling the billionaire about training with Matt and James.

The soldier walked up from behind Peter followed by Kamala, Matt and Jessica.

“He’s stronger than me,” James admitted looking impressed at the teen “With a bit more training he could definitely beat me, even on my best day.”

Peter bounced at the praise. The group made their way to the Avengers Wing living room.

James was surprised by the wall of sound he basically hit them when they entered the room.

“Tony!” A blur yelled and tackled the billionaire in a hug.

“Oomph” the wind was knocked out of him, and it was only thanks to Levi’s presence on Tony’s shoulders that he didn’t fall backwards.

“Thank you, Thank you, Thank you” It was Darcy who had attacked Tony and now was proceeding in kissing Tony’s cheeks and face.

The billionaire looked over the younger woman’s shoulders, at Jane, his eyebrows quirked in question.

“She’s thanking you for the Thanksgiving dinner you sent us while we were working. She was extremely disappointed about missing out and would not stop complaining” the scientist explained.

Darcy simply squeezed Tony tighter at the explanation. The billionaire followed by patting her back.

“Jane never has enough food for a good old meal and it’s been forever since we had a big meal like that! It was beautiful!” Darcy wailed dramatically, not actually crying, though she totally did when the food had appeared.

“We have big meals with these guys all the time, stop being so dramatic.” Jane roles her eyes and approaches Tony, she rests a hand on his arm, “But she is right it was definitely special getting a Thanksgiving meal, even away from home. Thank you”

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“So any luck?” Tony asked aiming his question to Jane.

Everyone, excluding the X-men, much to Deadpool, Peter and Kamala’s dismay, were gathered around the large table.

Also excluding Shuri since the princess had been needed in Wakanda, but plans for her to stay through winter break were being made.

Many various conversations were happening but silence fell when Tony asked his question.
“It’s clear that a wormhole did open up over the Pacific but it doesn’t match any of my other readings and the readings that I got the other week is a completely different signature.” Jane explains “Though I’m hopeful that I’ve gotten something across to Asgard, though I’m not sure, I would have hoped for an answer from Thor by now.”

Tony nods, “He did express his concern about the Infinity Stones so perhaps he isn’t actually in Asgard.” He observes.

“Well wherever he is he better show up before this threat shows up or so help me I’ll be trying my new taser on him,” Darcy mutters darkly.

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Conversation flowed easily after that.

James was thoroughly enjoying the atmosphere around him. The Soldier was even calm as well.

Deadpool had finally backed off and stopped bugging the man about his dual personalities, well he did after Peter distracted him, as the younger people in attendance, and the ones that act like kids, went and planted themselves in front of the TV.

Talk of a game was going around, but at the moment the kids; specifically Kamala and Peter were trying to introduce James to a new side of the Internet.

Memes.

The man was astonished at what some people thought was funny these days.

Though there was one, what was it called? A Vine? That the two pulled up for James and the other adults in the room that caused mass hysteria to break out.

“Fri, save that, I need that,” Tony said between laughs. Stephen rolls his eyes at the billionaire but smiled fondly as well.

Some other funny videos were shown and the kids explained Internet trends and challenges to the adults who didn’t know or understand.

Stark Industries and Tony’s Ice bucket challenge from 2014 was shown. Tony’s video from 2013, of his robot’s and a couple of Iron Man suits doing the Harlem Shake was something everyone enjoyed.

“I never saw that before” Rhodes commented after laughing at Dum-E and his obsession of the fire extinguishers.

Rhodes would never admit or deny, but he may or may not have something to do with that.

“We should move on to something else” Peter said after a bit “Kam and I legit could do this all night, but Shuri will be mad if we keep doing this without her”

Watching a movie was discussed versus playing a game.

Darcy was sitting on Johnny’s lap a wide smile on her face. “Let’s kick the kids out, they can go watch a movie and us adults can get wasted and play some games. I’m so up for truth or dare again”

Peter and Kamala groaned
“We’re old enough we should be allowed to stay.” Kamala argued for the two of them

Cooper looked on a bit put out.

“Sorry Coop you’re still a bit young, especially if the adults are going to drink.” Peter said quietly trying to soothe the boy.

“It’s not fair for the others if you two-“ Laura started

“They are in high school Laura, at their age I was doing things much worse than hanging around drunk people and playing truth or dare” Tony interrupted the woman who turns to glare at him but with a quick wink towards her he continues, “If they wanna hang around and see us do stupid stuff and not so appropriate stuff at least we know they aren’t out somewhere else doing something equally stupid themselves.”

“You know what,” Peter looked panicked and glanced at Kamala who was grimacing “I think us kids are going to go down to the game room and figure out what we are going to do from there”

The 5 kids quickly leave at that, with Shadow following them.

Laura smiles at Tony “Okay I’ll give that one to you.” She bows her head a bit at him and shifts a sleeping Nate in her arms “I’m going to put him to bed really quick, I’ll be right back.” And she sauntered out of the room.

James seemed to hesitate as the adults all gathered. Tony and Hope started pouring drinks as everyone collected together.

“James what’s your drink of choice?” Tony asked from behind the bar.

“I favor drinks with Rum,” the dark haired man said self-consciously.

“Rum and Coke good?” The billionaire asked over the noisiness of everyone, James nodded.

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“Alright, So before we play truth or dare we have to get a bit of alcohol in our system. At least for those with the ability to get drunk.” Jennifer comments

“Oh! Let’s play ‘never have I ever’” Jonny suggests

Groans and along with agreements were heard around the room.

“Tony’s about to get obliterated” Rhodes commented quietly causing a few chuckles around the room while the billionaire glared at his best friend playfully.

“Ok so for anyone who doesn’t know this game basically you say something you never have done or said or basically anything and if anyone in the room has done or said the thing then they take a drink. Make sense?” Carol looked around, her gaze lingering on James; with a positive answer from everyone they began.

——

Sure enough Tony, regardless of his higher tolerance for alcohol now due to Extremis, was plastered, along with several others.

Stephen was definitely feeling the alcohol as well.
“It’s time!” Darcy announces in a singsong voice.

James was thoroughly enjoying himself, even without alcohol just being around these people, laughing, and enjoying each other’s company, which in of itself was amazing.

“Hope!” Tony shouts, though he didn’t have to, “you Miss Sparkles made me start last time, this time it’s your turn to go first.” The billionaire smirks at Hope. The woman made a face at the old nickname.

“Bring it Star” Hope smirked

“Remember our rebellious phase?” Tony asked the shorthaired woman, she quickly paled, and Tony smirked.

“Fuck. You.” She emphasized her words while standing up. “You’re next” She glared, with a tap on his phone Tony started up some high beat music, and Hope strutted around the room doing a very seductive dance, Johnny and Deadpool were her the two loudest supporters, right along side Darcy.

James watched fascinated in the strength and power behind the woman dancing.

After her dance was done the applause around the room was very loud, near deafening.

“Damn Tones I thought you were bad at MIT! What the hell was boarding school like?” Rhodey exclaimed.

Tony laughed and took a drink from his cup after shrugging. “What happens at boarding school stays at boarding school”

“Your turn.” Hope announces after sitting down, her drink refilled.

Tony smirked; his drink gets set down and tapped his phone.

AC/DC’s ‘You Shook Me All Night Long’ blasted around the room.

Rhodes eyes widened, he groaned and buried his head in his hands, knowing exactly what this song meant.

Tony stands and exaggerates his steps a bit, with smooth twisting of his hips.

He turns to face Stephen, and the sorcerer quickly realizes that Tony isn’t just dancing, he’s about to give the doctor a lap dance.

“Fuck” The man hisses under his breath as Tony places a foot on his lap, thrusting his hips to the music.

The dance progressed and Tony was eventually rubbing his ass against a very erect cock that was straining against Stephen’s pants.

Stephen didn’t understand how Tony was so flexible, he knew the billionaire was flexible, but seeing exactly how the mechanic was moving currently was giving the sorcerer ideas of things to try in the bedroom.

Darcy was holding her phone up as she had remembered to record Tony’s performance this time, much to her relief because she definitely needed proof of this.
The music ended with Tony straddling his lover, foreheads touching. The billionaire was breathing heavily; a small seductive smile graced his lips.

“Christ I haven’t done that in years.” Tony muttered sitting back a bit.

“Shit man, where’d you learn that from?” Johnny asked loudly over the wolf whistles that were occurring around the room. Though Rhodey had his head leaned back a look of exasperation still clear on his face.

Tony plopped himself to the side of Stephen, onto the couch, keeping his legs over Stephen’s lap to help conceal the sorcerer’s dignity somewhat, even though the other definitely knew why he was doing it, nothing was said about it.

“The 80’s were interesting times. Sparks- Hope and I were in a rebellious phase against our father’s and did some crazy shit before I left for MIT.” Tony explained briefly as someone handed him his cup back. “Okay, next!” He suddenly exclaimed.

James primarily watched as the others dared each other to do crazy, and embarrassing stuff.

“Hey James, you wanna give it a go? Or are you happy just watching everyone right now?” Tony asked as everyone was distracted watching Reed thoroughly embarrass himself as he was dared to perform some precise knot tying with his own body.

James looked over surprised; he made an unsure noise with a slight shrug.

“Viz just likes to watch, that’s okay if that’s all you want to do. I just don’t want you to feel left out if you wanted to be dared to do something, because we never play the truth part of truth or dare” Tony rambles drunkenly a bit.

“So I’ve noticed” James looks around. Vision was indeed sitting comfortably on a large lounge chair observing the madness happening. “Thanks, though I think I am good right now.” James was feeling a bit more sure of himself, so he wasn’t really going to push anything quite yet, and Tony had made it clear that it was ok for the soldier to sit it out and just observe, so that’s precisely what he was going to do, and so far he was having a great time just being around the atmosphere of everyone Who was just enjoying themselves.

Tony smiles at James warmly and looks back to his family, as Sue was now trying to help Reed untie himself.

Life was good.

‘For now’ The Soldier thought solemnly

‘For now’ James agreed, hoping that he would be able enjoy this a bit longer before the next fight showed itself.

Chapter End Notes

Ok so I feel like I’ve gotten James pretty well placed, now I think we need to rock the boat a bit!
Next chapter will be December 16th...
Again thank you all for your comments and well wishes!
Until the next chapter!
Chapter Summary

December 16th

Chapter Notes

So my observation at work went well and my Portfolio got finished so there’s a massive stress off my shoulders!
I also got to see NSP again so that was super awesome (So excited that they came to Minnesota!)
Holy shit!
I binge watched DD season 3! In one night! I stayed up and watched the whole thing I couldn’t stop!
So when starting this story I put in that I was doing DareJones and I realize I hadn’t done enough of what I wanted.
So this chapter I put a bit of them to make me happy.
So you know, I haven’t actually watch the Punisher, Iron Fist or Luke Cage, I can’t ever seem to get through the first bit of it. Though I promise I have done my fair share of research on them.
So I will tell you regarding the Defenders I’m not Luke Cage or Iron Fist season 2 compliant (and I’m not going to worry about them) Jessica Jones Season 2 has already happened in my story and I’m thinking of using some of Daredevil season 3 (though for my story Maggie revealed herself after Matt was through healing) also I’m taking back what I thought before and am thinking that Frank will be making his appearance in my fic.
But seriously if Netflix touches Jessica Jones or Daredevil I’m rioting!
Sorry the update is small... I’ve been distracted reading fics opposes to writing them...
Hope y’all enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Friday December 16th

The Sanctum

Stephen groans and rolls over expecting to meet Tony’s body, and surprised when he couldn’t find the billionaire.

“Fri? Where’s Tony?” The sorcerer inquired while looking to the nightstand to see it was only about 5 AM.
“In the kitchen Doctor.” Her voice sounded sullen and subdued.

It only took Stephen a moment longer for his brain to really wake up and figure out exactly what the mood of the day was.

“Oh.” He simply said when he realized the date. The covers quickly came off and he dressed in his night pants and shirt that laid on the floor, where they had been discarded the night before.

Walking into the kitchen he was hit with the smell of espresso, and what sounded like an Italian lullaby was playing softly as Tony sat at the table, his head in his hands.

“Tony” Stephen whispered and approached the mechanic.

With a quick overlook of the man the sorcerer observed the sight in front of him.

Levi was perch on his shoulders as Shadow was curled in his lap under the table.

“I blamed him. This whole time I blamed my father. I mourned my mother, and blamed my father.” Tony rambled quietly.

“‘You and I both know your father had his faults, he didn’t treat you the way he should have. You had the right to be angry at him.’ Stephen sat beside Tony placing a hand on the genius’ shoulder. “Don’t beat yourself up over this, move forward. You know when you showed me the video that he left you. He called you his greatest creation. And I never liked that, but thinking back, I truly think he just didn’t know how to communicate with you. Tony you are a genius, and he knew that, and we’ll never know his thoughts, but maybe he wasn’t sure how to connect with you. I’m not justifying how he treated you. I’m simply saying you and I both know there is more to a person than meets the eye.” During Stephen’s speech Tony leaned into him.

“I blamed him for so long. I grew up hating him. But since his death I’ve learned things about him that I never knew, and today I feel like I really need to figure out how I feel about him.” Tony took a sip from his coffee.

“I’m here for you however you need it, you know that right?” Stephen squeezes Tony’s shoulders in comfort.

The billionaire gives him a small smile and looks up “I know.” He whispers and their lips lightly meet.

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Compound

“Sergeant Barnes your presence is being requested by Doctor Williams” CARTER announces as James was wailing on a souped up punching bag, that Tony had created to withstand a super soldiers beating.

Being with only one arm complicated some of his punches but he and The Soldier needed this outlet.
“Tell her not the best time” James grunted out.

“She says it’s no longer a request, but an order Sergeant.” The AI pushes sounding authoritative herself, which James was thoroughly impressed with.

James stops his assault on the bag and grabs a towel off the bench to the side. The Soldier growls a bit in irritation.

‘We don’t need to talk about any of this’ The Soldier spits angrily

‘It might help’ James admits in a defeated tone. He wipes his face of little sweat that was there.

‘How is talking going to fix what I did’ The Soldier sounded almost hurt behind his anger, there was guilt somewhere in there too.

‘It will help us heal.’ James reiterated what Nicci would say when he asked how talking would actually help.

The Soldier sighed and let James be. As the man told CARTER to pass on the message that he would be there after he took a shower and freshened up a bit.

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Stark Mansion

New York

“My mother loved this garden,” Tony whispered as he knelt in front of her head stone.

Currently Tony and Stephen were in the expansive backyard of the Stark Estate. Surroundings them were bush-lined walkways and covered flower beds, as a way to preserve and care for the flowers under the covers.

Snow coated the ground a bit but the sun was out and it helped Stephen appreciate the beauty around him.

Tony places a bouquet of white carnations and pink calla lilies down into the vase that is attached to the front of the head stone.

He stands up and takes the other bouquet of white carnations and forget-me-nots and placed them in front of his father’s headstone, as there was no vase.

Tony moves to sit on a bench placed by their headstones.

“Mom,” Tony chokes on his words a bit “Dad” he doesn’t remember the last time he called his father ‘dad’ in a serious way.

“I learned the truth.” The billionaire hiccupsed. Stephen steps forward and moves to sit next to Tony.
Levi, who was on Stephen’s shoulders for once, wrapped itself around the two of them.

After a few moments of silence Tony began to talk.

“I’m sorry Dad for blaming you all this time, not really like I had much else to go on, but I’m sorry nonetheless. I-“ Tony cut himself off and shook his head “Mom, Dad, this is Stephen.” The genius looks to the sorcerer; they lock gazes and smile at each other. “He’s become very important to me, and I don’t know if I would be here right now if it wasn’t for the undying support he’s given me the last couple of months.” Stephen feels his throat close up at Tony’s words.

The sorcerer leans down and kisses the top of Tony’s head.

“I’m sorry I haven’t come by more often” the billionaire apologizes to his parent’s headstones. “A lot has been happening, but I really wanted to come see you guys today and let you know I’m okay, I know the truth, but I’m moving forward like I always have. That I forgive you Dad, for everything. It’s not worth holding onto the hate for a man that I never did truly understand.” Tony sighs and leans to the side, putting more weight onto Stephen. “I wish we could have had a decent relationship, Thank you mom for trying.” Tony stood walked to the headstones, whispered some words in Italian, and kissed the cold head stone. Moving to his father’s he whispered some words that Stephen ignored, and the genius followed with a kiss to his headstone as well.

“Let’s go to the compound. Carter is telling me that James is having a tough day.” Tony speaks softly as he tucks himself under Stephen’s arm, the sorcerer nods and conjures a portal to the Compound.

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“Who’s behind the wheel right now?” Tony’s question breaks through the deafening silence around The Soldier, he growled in response.

“Ok, so The Soldier, ya know I’m gonna start calling you Winter, Pete came up with it and I think it’s pretty catchy and The Soldier is a bit, I don’t know, ostentatious.” Tony rambled a bit as he approached the man who was hunched over his shoulders tense.

The billionaire moves to sit next to him, giving him space though.

“Is that ok? If I call you Winter?” Tony asked softly.

The Soldier grunts and gives a small nod in approval.

“Nicci told me you left her session early today. I don’t think that was the wisest thing to do. It’ll look bad on your progress report.” Tony tries to joke, though it falls flat “Okay I know, not something to joke about.” Tony sighs and leans forward resting his elbows on his knees.

“Winter I don’t blame you or James, I’ve told both of you this before. We all know it was Hydra’s fault. As you also know the only reason I reacted the way I did was because Rogers lied to me. So why are you beating yourself up? Why are you throwing a wrench into your amazing progress?” Tony asks, his voice pleading with the man in front of him to listen.

“Talk to me, please.” The mechanic whispers, “this is part of therapy you know?”
“Will you ever forgive Rogers?” The Soldier’s gruff voice breaks the brief silence.

Tony huffs a humorless laugh, “That’s completely different, and irrelevant.”

“Maybe so, but I’m curious nonetheless”

“Rogers and I had known each other for 4 years, and during that time he constantly reminded me on the fact that we were a team and how we weren’t supposed to keep secrets from our team, etcetera, etcetera, and I found out after everything he said to me he was the biggest hypocrite of them all. He stole from me, he lied to me and he used me. So no Barnes I will not be forgiving him” Tony snapped, and then froze. “I’m sorry raising my voice was uncalled for.”

“No, that’s fine. It’s nice to hear some honest anger from someone else” The Soldier was speaking in a thicker accent as he went along.

Tony scoffs, “I got plenty of pent up rage. We’d be here for the next couple of years.”

Winter cocks his head. “You getting help for that I can only assume”

“You assume correctly. After everything I’ve lived through, endured, bared, and such, I’ve been told I should find professional help.” Tony confirmed

The Soldier is quite for a bit as the two men sit in silence. “I suppose that makes sense” The Russian accent loosening a bit “The fact that you wouldn’t forgive Rogers, after everything, but I still can’t fathom why you are forgiving me.”

“You were simply the weapon used to kill my mother and father. And it’s not like you ever lied to me about it.” Tony shrugged nonchalantly

“I-“ James was coming back to the forefront.

“Don’t. Stop apologizing. Move on James. They are gone. Nothing can fix that. I’ve made my peace. Now it’s time to make yours”

——

“Fuck off Murdock” Jessica snapped and tried to push the blind man away as he invaded her space. “Aww, you two are so cute together,” Claire cooed playfully

“Fuck You Temple” the dark haired woman glared at the nurse.

While the PI was distracted Matt snatched away the pizza off of her plate, pleased and smirking he took a bite.

Jessica simply rolled her eyes and took a swig of her beer.

“Hey Tony” Matt greeted through the pizza in his mouth.

The Defenders all looked to the entrance of the living room to see Tony leaning against the doorframe a small smile on his face.

Jessica stood and walked over to the billionaire placing a hand gently on his shoulder she squeezed lightly.

“You okay?” She asked quietly.
“Careful Jones your emotion are showing.” Tony replied quietly and smirked, which morphed back into a small smile “Surprisingly I’m doing okay.”

Jessica cracked a small smile and with her hand still on his shoulder she squeezed.

“Anyone else creeped out by how much Jess has been smiling lately? Cause I’m getting weirded out. It’s not normal” Danny said from his spot on the floor.

The woman in question raises an eyebrow at him and moved her hands to crack her knuckles “I can show you other emotions if that’s what you wish.” Her grin turns sinister and the young billionaire shudders.

Matt finished the pizza slice he had stolen from Jessica, and he pipes up with a chuckle “You should really be careful what you wish for Danny”

“You gonna join us?” Jessica turned back to the genius. “I think Iron Boy was trying to talk us into playing a game or something. Though The Devil is itching to get back to the kitchen and patrol”

Tony looked on at the scene and the small smile on his face lingered.

“Nah I was debating the merits of getting a drink but I think I’ll just head down to my workshop. I’m a bit peopled out after today. And with Strange doing some work and Barnes taken care of I think I need a bit of time for myself.” Tony elaborated his plan to the group.

Worry crosses over Jessica’s eyes; Matt stood and expertly maneuvered to her. Standing beside her Tony watched as the blind man brush his hand against hers; in response the woman grasped it tightly.

“If you’re sure. Let us know if we need to set up an orphan club meet up.” Jessica folded after a moment, giving Tony a skeptical look.

With a nod the genius vacated the living room leaving behind the Defenders

“Jess you of all people understand what he’s going through” Luke spoke quietly; Jessica nodded in response, and turned to Matt.

“I feel like getting some energy out mind if I join you on patrol?”

“Of course Jess” he responded calmly squeezing their still entwined hands.

“How about we go try that new fancy portal Strange made and we can head back into the city.” She rolled her shoulders obviously wanting to get some action in. Though the darting of her eyes to where Tony just left portrayed her true feelings.

“Sure. You guys staying or…?” Matt looked to the rest of the team

“It Friday night we were planning on just spending the night hanging here. You and Jess go” Luke supplied

“Don’t have too much fun without us,” Colleen piped in.

And with that Matt and Jessica left the rest of them, heading to the doorway that Stephen had charmed to be a doorway to Starktower.

“Jess?” Matt inquires quietly.
“I realized that you and I aren’t actually orphans, well I guess I am again, but you aren’t.” She spoke distractedly. “Have you spoken with her lately?”

Jessica asked.

Guilt crossed Matt’s face, as he shook his head no.

“Maybe we should attend Mass on Sunday and you can see about talking with her. And by ‘we’ I really mean you.” Jessica smirked

“I don’t-“

“Think about it. It’s a big deal to have your mom come back into your life. It’s a gift. Don’t forget that” Mat could hear her heart stutter at her words.

“Have you talked with Trish?” He asked as they approached the door.

Jessica ignored the question, let go of his hand and walked through the charmed doorway, leaving Matt to follow her.

Chapter End Notes

So?
Whatcha think?
I might need to go write a DareJones one shot for myself cause I’m really in the mood for those two.
Anyways Tony survived the day and in a fairly healthy way too!
Sorry for any errors or mistakes.
Hope you enjoyed the chapter.
Hope to have another chapter for you next week. (Hopefully I don’t get too enthralled with other fics)
Until the next chapter!
See Ya!
Another Trouble Maker

Chapter Summary

Harley enters the Tower

Chapter Notes

I’m sorry! It’s been awhile and I’m having a rough time with small details of life. Though Insurance is a big one at the moment causing me some issues. Anyways nothing y’all need to concern yourself about!
Hope you enjoy this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday December 17th

The following day Stephen brought Tony to his parents, and sisters grave. They sat and the two exchanged stories about their childhood. Stephen did most of the talking though.

“You ready for tomorrow?” Stephen asked

A wide grin spread across Tony’s face.

“Having another trouble maker around is exactly what we need. I’ll probably end up staying at the tower while Harley is in town.”

“I wouldn’t expect it any other way, I’ll do what I can to find some Masters to watch over the sanctum for me. Though your upgrade to it has definitely increased the appeal of spending time there” Stephen smiled at the billionaire who blushed a bit at the praise.

The duo was walking hand in hand through the park that was attached to the cemetery that Stephen’s family was buried in.

“So what are plans for the next couple of weeks?” The sorcerer asked after a few moments of comfortable silence.

“Well tomorrow Harley and Becca fly in and we’re going to have dinner at the compound. The 23rd we have that charity ball to go to. Then Christmas the 25th and New Years. Probably some stuff in between. Harley wants to go snowboarding while he’s here. And I know Kamala wanted to throw a party for the younger members and kids of the team. So all in all we got a couple of busy weeks ahead of us. Thankfully Carol is helping me keep the UN happy so at the moment I’m not too worried about them, and Shuri is handling her brother and the Rogues.”

Stephen nodded along as Tony listed off their upcoming plans and details.
“It’s weird. Everything is going so smoothly, even with the small hiccups here and there. Though Matt has alerted me that Fisk is apparently getting released on parole for good behavior which he and I both agree is bullshit. He has asked me to stay out of it for now. But that’s something I might need to be looking into here soon.”

“Don’t fill your plate up too full Tony. Enjoy the small things. I know you’re the futurist but enjoy the present.” Stephen squeezes their interlocked hands.

Tony flinched at the word ‘futurist’, Clint’s word’s echoing in his head. He bobbed his head, his hands clenched.

Stephen noticed but didn’t call attention to it. This wasn’t the first time he had responded to a comment like this. There was digging to be done, just not now.

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The duo made it back to the tower and Tony set about to make sure everything was prepared for the arrival of the 2 incoming kids.

“Come Love, everything is ready, stop worrying.” Stephen comes up behind the billionaire who was tinkering with a wall panel.

“I know, I know. I just needed to update the system a bit, with all my time spent at the Sanctum maintenance here was lacking a bit.” Tony explained leaning his head back a bit as Stephen had started rubbing his shoulders.

The sorcerer leaned in and kissed the genius’ neck right under his ear where the sensitive skin was. Goose bumps spread across Tony’s skin, his body went hot and his eyes rolled back.

The panel on the wall was quickly closed and Tony twisted to face his lover.

Stephen’s small smile grew into a large grin as he proceeded to pin the genius against the wall, and capturing his lips against his.

“Public area assholes” Jessica spat halfheartedly from the couch.

Stephen jumped away surprised and embarrassed.

Tony turned and smirked at the P.I.

“My tower” he quipped.

Jessica was sitting on the couch her back to the armrest, laptop propped up on her knees, while Shadow was slung over her neck and shoulders. She rolled her eyes at Tony and didn’t give a comeback, only putting her ear bud back in and resuming whatever it was that she was doing.

Tony glanced at Stephen and the sorcerer motioned towards Jessica with his head. “I’ll go order dinner. Meet me in our room when you’re done here”

With a quick kiss Stephen left.

Tony approached Jessica slowly; capturing her attention he made a motion for her to take out her ear buds.
“I was only kidding Stark. I just didn’t want you guys thinking you were alone and exposing something I don’t wanna see”

The genius sat and leaned back examining her body language.

“You okay Jess?” He asks quietly.

The darker haired woman scoffs in reply “You already know I don’t talk about feelings”

“Where’s Matt” Tony decides to take a different approach

“Out patrolling with Iron Clad,” she whispers her voice breaking in a rare show of emotion, revealing her current insecurities.

“He’ll be okay, you know that right?”

“He’s only human, he’s as much of a masochist and a martyr as your ass is. Though I swear he enjoys the pain a bit more than you.” She rambles.

A bottle appears out of nowhere and she takes a large swig. “I am here because I can’t go to my place without running into people I’ve lost or hurt. But even when I’m here I’m afraid of losing even more.” Suddenly the bottle in her hand shatters causing glass and whiskey to splatter everywhere. Shadow makes a loud angry sound and leaps away from her. “Shit! Fuck” Jessica cusses and moves to stand, her laptop falling without a second thought.

The tiny cleaning bot that were installed into the walls made noises and set out to clean.

Jessica froze, watching them. A scoff escapes her and she reaches for her laptop and sits back down.

“Sorry” she mutters to Tony, but he ignores the apology.

“You know I get it Jess. I really do. I won’t pry, but I’m here for you if you need someone. I know what’s its like.” the billionaire spoke softly. “Do you want to join Stephen and I for dinner and a movie?”

“No, I don’t want to be a third wheel besides I have a case I have to work on here.” She responded harshly her eyebrows knit together, before they relaxed and she met his gaze. “Thank you though. I uh-“ Tony could tell she was trying, a small smirk appeared on his face.

He interrupted her after a moment of her struggling with the right words.

“It’s fine Jess.” He said simply before getting up, walking over to the small bar, and grabbing one of his better whiskeys.

Without any more words he handed her the bottle and walked away before she got the chance to say anything else, Shadow following him.

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Sunday December 18th
Peter was bouncing on the balls of his feet in anticipation. Kamala was lounging on the couch behind him, as the male teen couldn’t sit still.

“Seriously Pete can you calm down.” The girl asked clearly exasperated, she was scrolling through the settings of her new phone that Tony had just given her as a early Christmas present, due to the fact that she had broken her last one while patrolling.

Peter ignored Kamala and started pacing, muttering lowly under his breath.

Several of the team were milling around the tower that day due to a shut down at the compound for the holiday break.

Tony decided that the year had been rough and many employees at both his company and the compound, so everyone deserves a break. He had declared that all employees get a winter break with pay and sent everyone on their way.

Pepper nearly had an aneurysm, and the stock market had gone a bit bat shit crazy too, worried that Tony was about to pull a crazy stunt.

Though thanks to CARTER and FRIDAY, everything was running smoothly so far, but it had only been about 24 hours.

Matt, who was doing some work on his computer, laughed at Peter’s rambling.

His hands froze over the braille pad in front of him. It had been a gift from Tony; the genius had set out creating a handicap accessible gadgets for Stark Industries. Prosthetics, accessibility equipment for the hard of hearing, blind, deaf, etcetera.

So using the fact that there was a blind man on his team, and he needed a beta to test the devices, so Matt agreed to test out the new products without argument, much to Tony’s pleasure.

“He’s not going to replace you Peter” the blind man comforted.

Danny perked up at Matt speaking and through a mouthful of rice he made a unintelligible comment, rice falling out of his mouth.

“Ew, that’s why you don’t talk with your mouth full, geez” Kamala cringed. “Matt’s right though, calm down Pete. You position isn’t threatened. Besides Harley has been around longer than you anyways, so” she drew out the so.

Peter whipped around to look at her a large gasp escaping him “Oh crap you’re right. But he obviously has a favorite and that has to be me right?”

Kamala rolled her eyes “You’re hopeless”

Jennifer and Jessica were huddled over Jessica’s laptop discussing some work that they were doing
Vision was in the kitchen multitasking between making dinner and homework.

Hope, Jane and Laura, with Nathaniel too, were helping him with both cooking and his schoolwork.

Danny was eating old takeout after one of his and Colleen’s workouts.

Luke and Claire weren’t there yet and they had called saying they might not show since there were a few issues occurring between themselves and in Harlem, Danny was ready to intervene but Matt talked him down for the time being.

Maggie and Jim were somewhere around there though Cassie was attached to Lila side as per usual and Cooper was watching Peter amused.

James was spending his down time huddled in the corner on his tablet.

Darcy was somewhere. As were Carol and Rhodes.

Several people around the room perked up as they heard the district ding of the elevator.

“The wiring is a bit tedious but all in all it’s looking good. I could definitely use you expertise though.” A young male voice filters in from the opening elevator.

Stephen walked out first a small smile on his face, followed by a shaggy haired preteen, and then Tony exited the elevator with a girl who appeared to be around 8 attached to his back.

“Wow Har, actually asking me for help—“ Tony started

“Nuh uh, not help! Just your opinion on what I’ve already done.” The boy whipped around pointing at Tony, smiles on both of their faces.

“Whoa, Mech you really change up the tower again” Harley marveled as he looked around.

Tony started rambling off new amenities and upgrades as they fully entered the living room.

The girl on the billionaire’s back squeaks at the sight of people and hid her head in Tony’s neck.

Stephen moves to sit on the couch looking tired.

“Oh wow, hi” Harley waved a bit awkwardly “Geez Mech, I can already tell the difference. They’re all hovery and everything. Though not in the bad way.” The boy noted his assessment to the genius, who simply smiled gently.

“Everyone this is Harley” Tony motioned to the boy “and Rebecca” He jolted the girl on his back adjusting her a bit “she goes by Becca or Becky though.” Tony glanced over to Peter who was shuffling nervously. “You okay Pete?”

Peter almost squeaked in panic.

“He is realizing his position as your favorite is being threatened” Kamala inputted from behind him.
Peter made an alarmed noise, and turned to glare at her “Traitor” he hissed

Harley laughed, “He’s so cute,” he said looking back to Tony “I assume you’re Peter” the preteen states stepping forward talking to Peter directly, a hand reaching out in greeting.

“Har.” Tony warned

Peter nervously moved forward to shake the younger boy’s hand, jumping back right as their hands touched, a small shock that had just surprised the teen made him yelp.

A muffled laugh from Becca came out with Harley laughing lightly. “Sorry, I had too”

Peter flushed a bit as others around the room chuckled a bit.

Harley moves around Peter to introduce himself to Cooper and Kamala.

Cassie and Lila both curious about the girl attached to Tony approached the two.

Tony had his head turned and was talking quietly to the young girl.

“Hi Becca, I’m Cassie, I’m 8”

“I’m Lila and 7, how old are you?”

A muffled sound comes from Tony’s neck. The genius smirks a bit, rolling his eyes. “Hey stinker, you were all excited and now you’re acting all shy, we both know that you’re just playing this up.”

Becca shook her head no digging her face further into the genius’ neck.

“She 9 girls,” Tony smiles at the two in front of him right now. “Give her a bit to warm up and she’ll come around”

The duo nodded enthusiastically and turned to introduce themselves to Harley.

Tony moved Becca so she was now clinging to the front of him; he moves to walk into the kitchen.

“Hey, How was your trip?” Hope asked surveying her childhood friend with a 9 year old attached to him.

“It amazing how effortless it is being able to portal around” Tony sighed thinking of all the times that instant travel could have come in handy.

“So who’s this pretty girl?” Laura asked soothingly hiking Nate up a bit on her waist.

“This is Becca and she’s acting awfully shy for someone who was bouncing around not even 30 minutes ago” the billionaire introduced her while

“I didn’t realize how many people were here,” the young girl whispered into Tony’s ear. He simply smiled and patted her back gently.

——-

“So he that’s how I saved him.” Harley finished bragging about putting the arc reactor back in Tony after saving EJ.

Dinner was full of laughter and stories, though Becca was sitting quietly on Tony’s lap picking at
the food on her plate.

That didn’t stop Cassie and Lila from talking her ear off though.

It was after dinner when all the kids wanted to go off and do their own thing that Becca started to warm up.

When Kamala insisted they head to the recreational floor away from the adults, Becca looked to Tony for approval.

He gave her a small smile and a nudge, encouraging her to go spend time with the others.

She bounced over to her brother’s side. Harley slung an arm around her shoulders and the group left.

“They are sweet kids” Hope commented gently while the adults around the room finished up their meal and started cleaning.

“Yeah, they really are. Harley’s a little shit, causes me more issues that Peter has but he is a smart kid. And Becca has been through a lot that she doesn’t understand, and with their mom working all the time, I’m happy to see they have adjusted well in the last 3 years.” Tony rambled slightly eyes glazing over a bit.

“Hey so what do you say to movie night since the kids will probably be down there all night” Jennifer suggested.

Everyone was agreeable to the idea, except James who was a bit wary but after everyone encouraged him to stay, the adults all settled in for a movie.

——-

Recreational Floor of Starktower

“So you just called him Tony just like that?” Peter asked flabbergasted.

“Well yeah that or Mech, short for Mechanic” Harley shrugged looking around the room.

He smiled gently as his eyes landed on his little sister who has warmed up even more to Lila and Cassie.

Tony had assured the two of them that they would love it there and be welcomed. Which they had, and it had been a big relief to the boy.

Peter’s obvious jealousy was amusing to Harley, and his head was coming up with all the ways to exploit this weakness in the teen hero. Nothing too awful, just small harmless things that might cause a fun rivalry between the two boys who were as close to Tony as sons might be. To the point where you might even call such actions sibling rivalry.

The next couple of weeks would definitely be fun.
Ok so next chapter will hopefully have some pranks/ rivalry, the Charity Ball, and maybe Shuri accidentally allows the Rogues to see a feed of the New Avengers oh and maybe James is there! Who know? *shrug*
I promise to try my best getting chapters up but with the holidays and everything I can’t assure anything for sure.
Please let me know what you think of my story!
Sorry for any errors
And until next chapter!
The Week Before Christmas

Chapter Summary

The week leading up to Christmas

Chapter Notes

Hey, so here’s some filler. This chapter is going to lead to oneshots in the future hence for some of the vagueness.
Enjoy

Monday December 19

Tony groaned as he became conscious. He felt warmth shift around behind him and what was obviously an arm moved a bit under the pillow, under his head. The other arm was slung over his waist.

Tony shifted his body a bit and sunk himself further into the hold.

It was peaceful; the quiet of the tower was so different from the Sanctum. Though Tony loved the Sanctum, especially after all the work he put in. His Tower really did hold a special place in his heart.

All of his creations did.

“Boss, Becca wishes to enter” FRIDAY interjects into the quiet room.

Looking to the nightstand he sees its only 5 AM. Doing a quick survey of his and Stephen’s current state of dress he finds it appropriate to allow the young girl in.

“Oh Tony?” she whispers into the dark of the room as the blinds were closed.

“Over here sweetheart” he responds back quietly.

Stephen shifts behind him but stays asleep.

Becca moves over to him quietly and looked over Tony, getting an embarrassed look on her face.

“It’s okay Hun, he’s asleep and I promise you we’re wearing clothes” he winks playfully at her and in the dark her blush deepens. She was old enough to know what he was talking about and be thoroughly embarrassed about it.

“Harley is sleeping and I had a bad dream and got scared. Friday told me you could help, but I
don’t wanna intrude” the 9 year old looked down as she spoke her hair moving to cover her face and her misting eyes.

Tony shifted his body, causing the sleeping sorcerer to shift as well, and opened up the blankets to her. There was enough room for her to curl into the billionaire’s chest, and not even 5 minutes later light snoring sounds escaped her mouth.

Smiling gently Tony closed his eyes, going back to sleep.

——-

Stephen moves to wrap his arms further around Tony, embracing the man as he woke up. Though stopped when he felt what appeared to be a small body that was curled in front of his lover.

‘Becca’ he thought. Tony had alerted the sorcerer that the young girl tended to have night terrors and would seek out an adult to comfort her, hence the reason why the two had gone to bed in sleep pants and a shirt each. No need to traumatize a 9 year old.

Stephen smiled and snuck out of the bed as quietly as possible.

Not wanting to disturb either of the inhabitants he had left on the bed.

He had heard a groan from Tony but the snoring quickly resumed.

Leaving the room after getting dressed and such, Stephen heard sounds echo through the halls.

Finding a small group in the kitchen he joins them as they work to make breakfast and wait for the others in the tower to wake up.

——-

Tony woke and went to the bathroom only to find a note left by Stephen on the mirror.

The smile on his face could have cracked his entire face in half.

Stephen had started leaving notes in binary for Tony and the genius swooned every time he found a new note.

The day continued on a good note as the large group that were inhabiting the Tower used the lazy day to binge Christmas movies and just enjoy the new company.

**Tuesday December 20**

“Please” the pout coming from each of the girls nearly broke Tony as the group of young children and teens stood in front of the billionaire begging him to take them to Rockefeller Center to see the tree and to let them ice skate.

Stephen smirked and wrapped his arms around Tony’s waist and whispered in his ear.

“I’ll even come with you,” the sorcerer said quietly.

Groaning Tony finally conceded, all the kids cheered
Wednesday December 21

Tony was once again grateful for his go big or go home attitude when planning and building. On this night he and nearly everyone were lounging in the living room preparing for karaoke night.

There was some singing alone, others in a group and a few duets.

A song that Tony choose had him sitting at the piano to play causing Stephen to nearly burst into tears.

Darcy sneakily had recorded the performance and after releasing it to the Internet it quickly became a viral video.

The portmanteau nicknames for the two men that were floating around were IronStrange, StrangeIron, Dr. Iron, and IronDoctor.

This caused a lot of debate around the room on which name was the best.

Thursday December 22

The day passed by quietly as the kids entertained themselves on the recreational floor.

The team Tony had hired had just finished adding the small laser tag course so that’s where they were. Most of the adult inhabitants were getting work done so they could enjoy Christmas weekend early, as there was a ball to attend the next day.

Tony sat on the floor of his lab. A pile of letters scattered in front of him. He was going through them and making note of the few that caught his attention.

He had a halo screen up and was clearly doing some shopping as well

Stephen entered the lab and looked around Christmas music was blaring.

A smile spread across his face.

FRIDAY automatically turned the music down.

“Hey Stranger, how are you?” Tony asked without turning around.

“Good, Wong says he has everything covered so I’m yours for the entire weekend. No intrusions, nothing.”

Tony looked back, beaming happily. “Perfect, we have a busy couple of days. Fri make sure to have a suit deliver Wong’s gift on Sunday.”

“Of course Boss. Your transaction at the Children’s hospital has gone through and they send their profound gratitude.”
Tony claps his hands and rubbed them together. “Perfect let’s finish these up and get the Iron Legion set to go Saturday night. Do me a favor and sent notice to the proper authorities that Santa will be occupying the sky.”

“Already done”

“What are you doing?” Stephen asked looking over the billionaire’s shoulder.

“Well a few years ago kids started realizing the futility of asking Santa for Christmas wishes and started asking me. I started getting letters and so I created a system, so throughout the year all fan mail and wishes letters get sorted properly and around Christmas time I go through a few of the really tough ones and see what I can do to help. I’ve set the Iron Legion to deliver gifts to billions of kids around the world, and I personally visit a few of the children that don’t make the qualifications to receive a wish from Make-a-Wish. With everything happening I’ve fallen behind but I’m trying to get a few last minute things done.” Tony explains

Stephen’s heart swells at his lover’s explanation. People never saw this side of Tony, and the billionaire never announced such, not really wanting the attention. Though he totally deserved some of this good press, Stephen knew Tony didn’t want to sully the meaning behind his actions with other people’s opinions.

Friday December 23

The afternoon had been spent getting last minute fittings for their suits.

Tonight was the ball and Stephen was nervous for some reason.

Maybe it was because he was officially out as Tony’s boyfriend and they hadn’t really been out in public together, in front of a ton of people.

Stephen should feel relaxed and at ease he had been to a ton of these events, but this one was so much more different then the ones he had gone to. Before as the cocky full of himself doctor.

“Motherfu-“ Stephen cut off his curse with a groan.

“Are you okay Doc?” Tony asked from the shower.

Stephen slammed his hands down on the counter in frustration; the razor he had been trying to use fell into the sink.

“No…” he growled out his teeth clenched as he watched his shaky hands. “For some reason my nervousness is causing my tremors to worsen and I can’t even shave” the sorcerer’s eyes prick and he fights back the tears of his frustration.

The shower shuts off and Tony with a towel around his waist walks over to the man who was very nearly breaking down.

Without any words the billionaire guides him to the toilet, the sorcerer sits and the genius straddles his legs getting comfortable.

Reaching over Tony starts up the water and grabbed the razor.
Slowly and methodically Tony shaves Stephen.

No words were spoken but the fire in the billionaire’s eyes causes Stephen to realize then and there how much he truly loved the man sitting on him, shaving him.

Sitting there feeling Stephen’s hands shake and seeing the obvious frustration Tony realized exactly what Stephen’s Christmas gift was going to be.

He’d been having difficulty coming up with the perfect thing for the sorcerer and since Christmas was in a couple of days he was on crunch time. But he now knew what he needed to make.

~~~

“Are you sure about this?” James asked nervously looking to Tony. The group of adults had split up between 2 large limousines since there were a lot of them.

“Your Therapy is going well, and Jen and Matt have already started on your Accords contract. The Council thinks this will be a good way to start you public image.” Tony explains

Jennifer nodded “This will be good for you, first to get out, and second there are enough of us to ensure that you are covered and have support you’ll need.”

“As long as you’re positive,” the man mumbled feeling the Soldier rumble his approval of their assurance.

“Are we sure we will be returning home to a fully functional tower tonight?” Betty asked in reference of leaving the plethora of kids behind along with the addition of Ned and Mj.

“FRIDAY, CARTER, and Karen are on it tonight, so I’m not too worried. Kamala also promised to be the responsible one for the night and make sure Nate was taken care of.” Tony explained patting Laura’s knee as it bounced anxiously.

“Alright everyone, Show time” Matt said gruffly, fixing his glasses and gripping his white cane.

Jessica groaned and plopped down at the bar. She’d been there enough times now that the bartender knew what to slid to her when she appeared.

Matt rubbed her lower back in comfort as she threw her head back, taking the double shot in one swallow.

The glass made a loud sound as it hit the bar.

“Jess you okay?” Tony asked walking up behind her.

The dark haired woman grunted grumpily and snatched Matt’s drink from him and threw that one back too.

“Jess please just talk to me” A blonde haired woman bounded over to where Jessica was.

The PI was faster though; grabbing Matt’s hand she disappeared into the crowd leaving Tony behind looking a bit stunned at Jessica’s reaction to the woman.

She moved to rush past Tony but he gently took her wrist in his hand. Whirling around she looked like she was about to hit him.
“Oh Mr. Stark. I’m sorry- I” Trisha Walker was flustered

“Give her space, don’t chase her down. You hurt her let, her come to you when she’s ready.” Tony said quietly enough for only her to hear “She has people, she’s not alone.” He concluded and turned to walk away from the stunned ex talk show host.

~~~

“Mr. Stark, I’m here representing Jeryn Hogarth and Associates” a longer haired blonde man walked up to Tony who was currently taking a break from the mingling.

He had been looking around for Stephen because he hadn’t seen the sorcerer for a while; though he had seen most of his team lingered around the ballroom he still hasn’t seen his boyfriend.

Looking over the man he nodded “Foggy Nelson, I was wondering when you’d approach me, there was a reason you were the only associate of Jeri’s I let in.” Tony said taking a sip from his champagne.

“My Boss isn’t too happy with you for taking Mr. Rand away.” Foggy tried to joke.

“Well with his inclusion into the Avengers the contract he had with Ms. Hogarth would not have been in his best of interest. Do send my apologies to her will you?” Tony smiled pleasantly at the lawyer, and turned to resume his search for his boyfriend.

The billionaire felt that the lawyer hadn’t left yet but he continued with what he was doing ignoring him.

“How’s-? Um- how is Matt? He hasn’t reached out since he resurfaced and I’m not sure where we stand” Foggy confided to the billionaire, who rolled his eyes slightly exasperated.

“You have legs and a mouth why don’t you go ask him yourself, I don’t speak for him Mr. Nelson” Tony snapped slightly. Suddenly he spotted the doctor he had been searching for. “Now if you’ll excuse me I finally found my elusive date so have a good night Mr. Nelson, and please pass the message on to Ms. Page that she too should grow up and ask Mr. Murdock himself how he is doing instead of sending you over to ask for the both of you.” And with that Tony walked away.

The blonde haired woman walked up to Foggy, questions in her eyes “So?”

The man simply shook his head and bowed it as a bit of a blush appeared on his face in embarrassment.

~~~

Tony slipped up quietly next to Stephen.

After a few more minutes of schmoozing the men that Stephen had been talking with left.

“I’ve barely seen you all night,” Tony pouted playfully.

“Sorry about that, there were some old colleagues of mine that I kind of got lost in a conversation with.” The sorcerer explained.

“Well nevertheless, now you owe me a few dances.”

“As you wish princess” Stephen bowed and extended his hand to Tony. “May I have this dance?”
“You may.” Tony responded his nose lifted in the air to give himself a bit of playful snobbiness.

They easily glided onto the dance floor catching the attention of most everyone. Cameras started flashing.

Thankfully the team decided that it was their turn to dance as well. Rhodes and Carol were the next couple on the floor, followed by Reed and Sue, Claire and Luke, Danny and Colleen. Matt was able to drag Jessica out onto the floor, Hope dragged a sort of willing James, Darcy nearly pulled Johnny’s arm off in her excitement. Jennifer and Betty appeared on the dance floor together. Laura and Jane both were looking on slightly awkward until the lawyer and scientist pulled the 2 of them out as well.

Onlookers and partygoers stared in awe at the show of unity in front of them.

Flashes from cameras were seen but easily ignored.

Stephen and Tony were both lost in each other, enjoying each other’s company with really no care in the world about the others around them.

~~~~

“My feet are killing me,” Jennifer groaned kicking her shoes off.

“Same” came the response from a few of the others by her.

“When’s an appropriate time to leave?” Claire asked looking to Hope and Tony who were quietly talking business about a few possible sponsors they had met.

“Honestly the majority of you could bow out, though Tony, Danny and I should hang around. As we are head shareholders of our own company’s we will be needed here until the end of the event.” Hope explained.

Tony nodded his agreement at Hope’s statement.

“Thank fuck” Jessica nearly shouted and sprang up “Come on Murdock let’s get outta here”

Matt chuckled, rolled his eyes and looked to Tony “You good?”

The genius nodded “Yeah you guys get out of here.” He looked to Stephen “You can head out with them if you want”

The sorcerer bent down and placed a kiss on Tony’s head “I go where you go Love”

A few of the women awed at Stephen.

About a half hour later found Tony, Stephen, Carol, Rhodes, Danny, Hope, And James being the only ones from left.

James opted to stay behind to support Hope, and show his loyalty to the Avengers.

Carol and Rhodes stayed as leaders of the Avengers initiative.

~~~~

“All in all the night has gone pretty well” Carol commented looking around the ballroom as it was emptying.
“Knock on wood” Tony mumbled tiredly his head propped against Stephen’s shoulders.

“Thank you all for coming and staying” Pepper said walking up to the small group.

Tony lifted his head in excitement at hearing his CEO’s voice.

“Pep! Darling! I haven’t seen you all night. How is everything?” The billionaire inquired.

“Well approval has gone up significantly from last years Christmas event and we’re trending on most social media sites. Pictures of you and the team on the dance floor are causing a pretty large flux in public opinion of the New Avengers.” Pepper tapped at the Starkpad she held and then turned it for Tony and the others to see.

A video of the group of them dancing appears and the amount of views on it caused James to stare stunned.

“That’s great.” Tony said, his exhaustion showing itself as he moves to rest back against Stephen.

“I’ll wrap up here. You all are free to go. Thank you for sticking around” the redhead smiled and strutted off to continue her duties.

“You heard the lady let’s all bail. Hey Merlin mind making us a quick exit?” Tony asked looking up at the sorcerer.

“As you wish princess”

Chapter End Notes

Ok next chapter will be a check in of Wakanda. And then after will be Christmas and New Years
Not sure when the next update will be but I’m hoping to have another one out here soon.
I hope you enjoyed some of the wholesomeness
Until the next chapter!
A Mess and Snow Fun

Chapter Summary

Christmas Eve
~A look into Wakanda
~Stephen uncovers some scary information
~The Kids drag Tony to play with them in the snow

Chapter Notes

Soooo... y’all want another chapter? Well I had free time and was able to get more writing done!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday December 24

Christmas Eve

Shuri sat; bouncing excitedly in her chair she had everything ready to head out. She just had to do a few last minute things and then she was free to go.

She may or may not be planning a dump of information onto the nuisances that had been occupying her home country before she left though.

With the UNs push to show the world that James Barnes, Prisoner of War, was doing well and was in good hands he was permitted to go to the Avengers charity ball sponsored by Stark Industries. And after the Internet freaking out about Tony on Wednesday everything, or should she say one specific person was raw with emotion and frustration.

——

On Thursday a bored Shuri did what she normally did and perused the Internet for anything new and or exciting. That’s when she came across a video of Tony playing piano and singing in a smooth calming voice.

She swooned slightly at the imagine of Tony serenading Stephen. They were super cute together.

Since she’d gotten back a few weeks ago from America she was increasingly having more fun torturing the Rogues when they would meet up with her for meetings and updates and such.

She honestly couldn’t have planned what had happened any better. Because as she was discovering the new video and the new couple names that the male duo were getting Steve Rogers strutted into her lab as though he owned the place.
Now Shuri would have been mad on a normal day but when she turned and saw the look on the man’s face as Stephen leaned in and kissed Tony, she nearly burst out laughing.

Leaving the clip running she turned around completely and asked the Ex Captain what it was that he needed.

But he clearly didn’t hear her as he stared at the screen longingly.

Shuri later gushed about it to Kamala

———

She sat at the conference table waiting for the Rogues to join her. As she waited though she was watching highlights from the previous nights charity event.

She had to fight a smile as she heard people behind her enter the room. Her eyes stayed transfixed of the projected screens in front of her as she was reviewing some reports, data and such as well as watching the New Avengers walk down the Red Carpet.

“Is appears that basically the entirety of the New Avengers has graced us with their presence. It’s exceptional to see that they and their loved ones are showing up to this event. Oh!” The reporter suddenly gasped “Here comes Tony Stark and Stephen Strange now. They have been the talk of the week after a leaked video from one of their fellow teammates was released earlier this week. Who’s that behind them?” The reporter asked Steve and the group behind them all gasped when they caught sight of Sergeant Barnes “Hope Van Dyne of Pym Tech and it appears the rumors of James Barnes attending were in fact not lies. They are a handsome couple. Very little has been released since Sergeant Barnes returned stateside for treatment but it appears that the New Avengers have taken the Prisoner of War under their protection.” The reporter followed up announcing the rest of the team as they moved down the red carpet.

A strangled sound came from behind her; she schooled her feature to hide the amusement she felt. She turned around pretending to be surprised seeing them standing there

“You promised” Steve hissed at Shuri, though his eyes locked on the now muted video. She bit her lip in pretend nervousness though she was still suppressing a smile.

“I promised nothing to you.” Shuri said locking eyes with the super soldier.

His blue eyes held hurt and anger.

The others behind him were looking on stunned at the footage playing in front of them.

The muted videos switched over to a clip of what appeared to be a large group on a dance floor, upon closer examination it was quickly realized who the dancers were.

Clint made a choking sound and collapsed to his knees as he witnessed his wife being led onto the dance floor by strangers to him, though they were very clearly friends at the way Laura was laughing.

The other Rogues didn’t seem to grasp what it was that they were watching. Though Shuri made note on fact that red tendrils were flowing around Wanda’s hands, and her eyes continued to dart over to Steve as though she was waiting for something.

“Why is Bucky with the Avengers?” Sam asked quietly for the benefit of the entire group as Steve’s eyes were once again locked on the projection.
“Sergeant Barnes has accepted their assistance in his transition back” Shuri said slowly her eyes assessing the mood in front of her. “The UN And Accords Council both made it a requirement in his pardons as well.”

Steve coughed in surprise “What? So the entire time has been with Sta-“ the soldier cleared his voice “Tony? So my concerns were completely ignored? I said-“

“Mr. Rogers-“ Shuri began

“It’s Captain” Steve spat

Anger flashed in Shuri, it shook her entire being. She stood with purpose, anger clearly presented to the group of Rogues

“No! It is Mister” Regardless of the teens amusement she wasn’t about to let this man walk all over her and undo so much of the work that had been put in. “You lost your honorary title. Get over it. Now regarding Sergeant Barnes. He was the only one that needed to be informed of Dr. Stark’s involvement. Not you. You have no authority to get angry here. You were left out of the loop for this reason exactly. Your happiness and approval was not what was needed. You are blinded by your untrue prejudices. All of you are. It is because of Dr. Stark that Sergeant Barnes was allowed back into the states, and the only reason why that man is healing and very nearly trigger free.” Shuri felt out of breath as her chest heaved with her frustration. She stared intently at Steve “We all knew you would act like a spoiled child that got their toy taken from him so we, all parties included that know you kept a close eye on Barnes, decided to keep where he was getting treatment and help from on the down low. But since his therapy is nearing completion the New Avengers are preparing to add him to their roster it was time you knew. So please tell me how this-“ she puts a picture of James and Hope dancing. Their eyes locked and a gentle smile on each of their face “looks like a man being held against his will, or being abused or any other wild accusations running in that idiotic head of yours”

Scott, who was silently in the background, lost his breath looking at the picture of Hope in the arms of another man. He really did screw up.

“Tony has ways to manipulate-“

“Do you even hear yourself when you talk?” Shuri threw her hands up in exasperation.

“We need to go get him.” Steve said looking back to his team

Though where he thought he would be met with agreeance he was instead looking into the faces of a broken team who looked unsure of everything they had been told. Though Wanda was the only one that appeared to somewhat agree though her motives were clearly focused on someone else entirely.

Sam, Scott And Clint all had hurt swimming in their eyes as they watched the New Avengers looking truly happy.

“You will do no such thing” Shuri responded, “If you leave you will immediately be apprehended and turned into the proper authorities”

“But T’Challa-?”

“Has stupidly offered you sanctuary within the borders of Wakanda. The moment you leave you break off any deal and I get to handle you in a way that I see fit” Shuri smiles sadistically at the thoughts flowing through her head. She very nearly sighed dreamily.
Steve sputtered looking around. Trying to figure out where he could get some traction, but quickly realized that he was backed into a corner. He bowed his head in defeat. His fists clenched in frustration.

“Now if you please sit down so we can get to the actual reason why you were summoned here for a meeting.” Shuri spoke cheerfully. She was having a great time messing with these grown adults. “Which funnily enough was gonna be about Sergeant Barnes and his inclusion into the Accords and the Avengers. Oh and a few new changes to the Accords. So please have a seat.”

~~~~

A piece of the hut flew off as Steve punched it.

“Why did Bucky lie to me?” The super soldier asked to himself “If he knew he was going to Tony why did he hide it from me” another piece of wood and clay chipped off.

“Probably because he, and everyone else knows as well, that you would react like a toddler and throw a fit.” Clint spat from the common area of the structure that Steve was abusing.

“If he had been honest I could have taken it”

“Says the man damaging our living structure” Sam spat causing Steve to stop and survey the damage he had cause to the hut.

“Stark did something” Wanda spoke quietly from her place against the wall. She was hugging her knees. “And where was Vision? He wasn’t in any of the footage. Where was he? Stark is up to something” red swam around her as she got more agitated.

Scott scooted away from the witch.

“Wanda calm down” Steve commanded, red disappeared. At least there was one person that still listened to him.

“We should make a plan.” Steve suggested.

The three other males in the room scoffed and looked at the super soldier incredulously.

“I’m done” Clint spat and stood, leaving the group to go lay on his mattress.

“Don’t do anything stupid Steve. There is clearly more at play here then even you realize” Sam stresses and leaves as well.

Scott says nothing as per usual, as of late, and simply leaves.

“Wanda?” Steve asks clearly unsure of where they stand.

The woman scoffs “What?”

Steve stutters unsure of what to say to her now that he has her attention.

“I- uh- Are you-?” Steve really doesn’t know what to say.

“I’m not okay.” She spits answering his unasked question “Not like you really care though you’re more worried about your precious Bucky” her eyes flash red. It’s clear that her emotions are ruling basically everything at the moment.
“You know that’s not-“

“True? Of course it’s true. I can’t completely blame you though. I would be the same way of it were my brother in this situation.”

“Wanda, I-“ Steve really wasn’t sure how he should proceed.

The redhead huffs a sarcastic laugh and gets up and leaves without another word.

Steve scrubs his face with his hands.

“Everything is a mess,” he mutters to himself, holding his head

He needed to do something. Sure Bucky had made his wishes clear, but he obviously wasn’t in the right mindset.

——

**Back at the Palace- in Shuri’s Lab**

“Do you really think that was wise sister? You must be more careful.” T’Challa scolded Shuri as she had updated him on the status of the infestation, as that’s what she called the Rogues.

“I was careful brother. Rogers is literally a bumbling idiot. And besides it was time he knew since the Accords Council and the UN are getting antsy and are about to ask the New Avengers to find them.”

“I was unaware-“

“Just because I am your sister doesn’t mean I confide all of my business with you. And as King you should have already know this information. It’s not my fault you are concerning yourself and distracting with other unimportant business.” Shuri snapped her frustration getting the best of her.

Suddenly a whooshing sound is heard the sibling’s turn to see Stephen walk out of a portal.

“What’s up Doctor Wizard?” Shuri grinned using Peter’s name for him.

The sorcerer simply rolled his eyes.

T’Challa but his lip nervously.

“Now if you excuse me brother I have plans. I guess if you think you can handle the infestation better be my guest” Shuri shrugged grabbing her bag and moving to walk through the portal. Though she stopped, turned around and moved in to hug him. “Good luck” she said and then turned back to leave.

Stephen bobbed his head to the King and followed after the Princess.

——

Shuri sighed and collapsed onto a couch in the living room that she had entered through the portal.

“Perfect timing,” she muttered relieved to Stephen.

The sorcerer looks on worriedly at the teen.
“Rough morning?”

“More like rough couple of weeks. I get some entertainment when dealing with the group of idiots but lately I’ve been getting really bad headaches and I just am feeling so drained”

Stephen sits and puts a hand on her knee. “Well then let make sure you enjoy your time away from them. All your friends are waiting for you on the recreational level. Go have some fun, let off some steam.” He encourages her. She brightens at the thought and thanks the Doctor and rushes off.

“Friday? Where’s Tony?” Stephen’s mask of calm fell away as his brows came together in concern.

“He’s in his lab Doctor working on last minute Christmas things. Should I inform him that you wish to see him?”

The sorcerer nodded tensely.

A few minutes later found Stephen entering the lab concern etched on his face.

“Hey Merlin what’s up?” Tony turned around after covering his workbench with a large cloth.

The billionaire felt his heart speed up at the look on Stephen’s face.

“I think Maximoff is creating a toxic environment in Wakanda with her abilities” The sorcerer got straight to the point.

“How-?”

“Her negative emotions are causing any semblance of control to slip away and it appears that her ‘magic’ is lashing out and latching on to hosts. I felt the oppressiveness of it when I went to pick up Shuri. And as soon as she got here she collapsed in near relief. Upon investigation I feel a bit of the negativity lingering in her, though I repelled it and she seemed to bounce back immediately. This is definitely something that we need to look into and figure out what to do and where to go from here. Maximoff is a danger to the Wakandan’s.”

“Shit” Tony hissed “Are we talking immediate danger or do we have enough time to make a plan with the team and get the Accords in the loop?”

Stephen steps forward and caressed Tony’s face. “Let’s enjoy Christmas and then Monday we will do a quick impromptu team meeting and get a plan started.”

Tony bit his lip nervously in thought. “Can you open a small portal so I can send a small drone in? That way I can bug the Rogues and FRIDAY can keep an eye on things and inform us if something changes.”

Stephen bit back a smirk “That’s not an awful idea. Though won’t the Wakandan’s notice it?”

Tony turn and pick up a small box off his desk; opening it he showed the immensely small size of the drone “Not if it has Shuri’s electronic fingerprints on it.”

——-

Stephen decided to bow out for a bit to go consult with Wong about the matter at hand.

Tony was finishing up the last to his gifts to his new family when a stampede of children and teens came barreling into his Lab.
“Hey Mech, FRIDAY told us that the snow up at the compound is perfectly sticky for playing in, we were all hoping you would join us in the fun.” Harley bounced on the balls of his feet, excitement radiating off all 10 of them.

That’s exactly how Tony soon found himself being dragged through the enchanted doorway to the empty compound.

Everyone was bundled in snow pants, jackets, gloves, hats, and scarfs. Well everyone but Tony who opted out of the snow pants since he already had heavy duty under armor on under his clothes, and besides with extremis he was able to regulate his heat fairly well.

“Snowball fight!” Several voices shouted out in excitement when they reached outside. Everyone scattered.

It wasn’t until Tony started getting pelted with snowballs that he realized that he was the larger and seemingly easiest target to hit.

He’d show them.

Making beeline for a shrub Tony dodged some oncoming projectiles. He works his way down the line of pine shrubs to conceal where he actually was.

Getting settled he prepared some snowballs, as the kids were distracted with each other.

Apparently no one had actually seen where Tony had dashed off too.

The billionaire had to hold back a snicker of amusement when they started asking where Tony was.

“Olly olly oxen free!” Becca called out.

Tony popped up and threw a quick snowball to the back of Cooper’s head as his back was turned and apparently no one was looking in his direction.

“Hey!” The preteen shouted, “Where did that come from?” He muttered looking around. Apparently not even thinking about looking behind the bush.

Tony continued like this as kids were running past him calling out for him. He would move back and forth down the line of bushes to avoid discovery.

Though after a few more minutes it got too quiet. Getting suspicious he was preparing to move stealthy to a new spot.

He suddenly was tackled into the ground by a couple of smaller bodies ramming into him. He looked up to see Peter hanging from a tree above him laughing, “Found you” he chuckled.

They soon switched to making snowmen and snow angels and even attempting to make a snow fort. Tony, Shuri, Peter, Mj and Ned were trying to science it, everyone else eventually got bored and started throwing snowballs again causing the fort building to cease.

It wasn’t long after that that the younger of the group were complaining about being too wet and cold.

Tony called it and everyone stomped into the Compound. Snow getting everywhere, though it wasn’t like Tony cared.
Before heading back to the Tower the 11 of them sat in front of the large fireplace sipping at hot chocolate that Tony had just made.

“Thank you Mr. Stark for letting us join” Ned gushed, as he always did, motioning to Mj as well, who nodded behind her mug. Kamala bounced in her seat as she started gushing about something that Tony wasn’t paying attention to.

The billionaire looked around at the kids, his eyes lingering on Shuri.

A wry smile on his face.

Even a year ago he truly would have never believed that he’d be here, with a gaggle of youth, drinking hot chocolate after playing in the snow.

Hell as a kid himself he never played in the snow.

Regardless of any impending doom, right there at that moment he was truly happy.

And no one could take that from him.

Chapter End Notes

Ok so some serious and some fluff! Rogers’ world is just crumbling around him. Wanda is just a volatile being. And Tony is a sucker for the kids (There was this clip I watched this Avengers Vine compilation and, I can’t find the clip now, but it was a couple of kids dragging an adult. The kids where labeled as Peter, Kamala, Harley and I think Riri and the adult was Tony and that what I keep imagining when I say that he is being dragged) I forgot to rage about Daredevil being cancelled in my last chapter. If they touch Jessica Jones I’m gonna riot! Even though I know it’s gonna happen..... Who’s with me? And Captain Marvel trailer? Can I just say my favorite part was Fury loving on the cat! I plan to use that to my advantage! Next chapter Christmas! Thank you for reading my story! Until next chapter!
Merry Christmas

Chapter Summary

It’s Christmas!

Chapter Notes

Hey all!
I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas!
So I wanted to surprise everyone and have this up yesterday but I got busy with family and such...
I’m sure you all understand!
So for this chapter since there are gifts so I put together picture boards and will have them up on the ponr-ao3 tumblr if anyone wants to see the shirts and gifts and stuff.
(I’ve been meaning to put stuff from chapters up and just keep forgetting but I definitely wanted to have the gifts up)
I also wanted to get this chapter up before AO3’s maintenance.
Anyway I hope you enjoy and I’ll see you in the end notes!

Sunday December 25

Christmas Day

12 Am

“You really didn’t have to come with me Tony” Matt said looking over slightly towards the genius who sat on the creaking wood after genreflecting.

“Eh, I haven’t been to a Midnight Mass since before my mother died. I feel like after everything that has happened this year I should maybe show some sort of acknowledgement of the greater power she believed in.” The genius shrugged.

“Well then, thank you for joining me.” Matt whispered as the organist started playing the opening hymn.

Tony blush slightly and bowed his head at the show of gratitude he received. Looking down to focus on the paper he held, it showed the order of mass, prayers, and the songs with their lyrics.

With his little knowledge of remembering some of the prayers he was surprised to see some had changed.

Mass passed by slowly and Tony remembered exactly why he had hated going to church with his
mom as a kid.

When Father Landon was preparing communion Tony felt a sudden wave of awkwardness he hadn’t been to church in so long and sure he had been baptized, been through his first communion and basically dragged to his confirmation but since then he hadn’t really been an active catholic.

“If you don’t feel comfortable receiving communion you can simply sit here or if you want to go up and just cross your arms over your chest” Matt leaned over and spoke quietly.

“It’s just been awhile so I’m feeling kinda awkward,” the billionaire admits under his breath.

Matt smiles and pats his back gently.

After deciding to just follow Matt in his actions the billionaire sat back in the pew and followed Matt as he knelt

“There’re a few people that recognized you and are taking pictures. They can’t seem to believe that Tony Stark is here” Matt said quietly as the organist changed songs, amusement laced his voice.

“I’m not surprised, I expected it. Sorry if you get any unwelcome attention” Tony once again spoke under his breath knowing full well that Matt could hear him.

As the music ended and Father Landon waited for the Eucharistic ministers to put the host away Tony heard the shutter sounds of a camera phone, and others hushed whispers.

Saint Patrick’s Cathedral wasn’t packed but there were a fair few amount of people in the Hell’s Kitchen church.

Tony shook his head a bit in exasperation.

Father Landon ended the mass with well wishes to all, and Joy to the World rang out loudly through the Cathedral.

After most of the congregation left, Paul Landon approached the pew that Matt and Tony still sat in, though the two were talking quietly, Paul picked up that the conversation was about some plans Tony had for restoring Hell’s Kitchen.

“Mr. Stark, it’s a pleasure to have you in our humble church.” He greeted “Merry Christmas Matthew it’s good to see you back.”

“Merry Christmas Father, that was a wonderful Homily.” Matt’s offered a bit tensely.

“Sister Maggie was hoping to see you if you have the time to talk” Paul pushed innocently.

Matt simply sighed and clenched his hands.

Tony knew most of the story about what had happened. He knew how Matt had found out that his mother had him out of wedlock after abandoning the convent and then had suffer postpartum depression. How Jack Murdock had called the convent to take her so she would be safe from herself.

Matt has found all this out after healing from a building falling on top of him.

The billionaire rested a hand on the blind man’s back.

“You can welcome her to Christmas dinner tonight if you want Matt” Tony said very quietly under
his breath to the point where not even Father Landon could hear the words. “It’s obviously your choice, but you know everyone has your back.”

Tony felt Matt’s muscles twitch at his words.

“Well I have some business to attend to, so I’ll leave you to it. I’ll see you back at the tower in a few hours Matt. I expect the kids to be up and banging down doors by 7” Tony stood and brushed his pants, he held a hand out to Father Landon “It was nice to meet you Father, Merry Christmas”

“You too Mr. Stark and Merry Christmas” Paul smiles gently at the billionaire, his brows came together when Tony’s clasped his hands pulled away leaving a paper behind in the priest’s hand.

Tony turned and walked away after that.

It took Paul a moment to process what he held after he unfolding the paper to find that it was actually a check.

A very large check.

His heart stuttered at the numbers on the small piece of paper, he felt Matt’s hand rest on his shoulder.

“Don’t pass out now,” the blind man sounded extremely amused.

Father Landon just stared unbelieving

“This is too much, I can’t accept-“ he started but Matt held up a hand.

“I have nothing to do with whatever it is you are talking about. I just simply told him if he wished to make a donation that he should not drop it in the donation basket and give it to you instead” Matt smirked.

“Matthew” a woman’s voice whispered from the doorway, emotion filled the voice that spoke his name.

He sighed and bid Father Landon, who was still gaping shocked, goodbye and made his way over to his mother trying to get exactly what he wanted to say together in his head.

——-

Tony yawns as the suit retracts into its hive.

It was 5 AM and he had about 2 hours until he was expecting the kids to be up and knocking doors down.

It was known among the older ones that Santa wasn’t real. But Shuri, Peter, Kamala, Harley and Cooper all promised to let the younger ones believe it without giving anything away.

He had just spent the last 4 hours flying up and down the east coast visiting several houses that he had marked as high priority.

FRIDAY had been in charge of the Iron legion and getting presents delivered everywhere else.

Now it was time to get the tower ready for everyone.

——-
Around 7 AM

Tony had slipped into bed about a half hour ago knowing full well he wasn’t going to get any sleep but laying beside Stephen calmed his mind.

The sorcerer had even turned to pull Tony’s body closer.

The billionaire simply nuzzled into the taller man’s chest and laid there breathing in his lover’s scent. His mind doing what it always did and ran through plans and ideas.

Shadow even appeared and curled up with the duo.

The cats purring was lulling Tony into an even more of a state of calm.

Moments later he said heard a literal stampede of feet running down the hall towards his and Stephen’s room. The black cat took that as his cue to vacate the bed and scurried of who knows where.

Looking at the clock he chuckled.

“Right on cue” he muttered to himself.

Stephen jolted awake as the door swung open and in bounced Harley, Peter, Kamala, and Becca.

Becca jumped onto the bed and started bouncing.

“Presents! Presents!” She started chanting.

Stephen turned away, groaned and covered his head with a pillow. Tony shot up and grabbed the girl’s legs making it so she plopped down on her butt.

“Where are the others?” He asked

“Shuri was making sure the coffee would be ready for all the adults, Cassie is getting Maggie and Li is getting Laura. While Coop is get Nate up and dressed. Everyone took your 7'o clock get up very literally. And by our running around the tower we can only assume everyone else is walking up.” Peter explained

Becca pouted and crossed her arms “FRIDAY wouldn’t let us go to the living room to scope out everything.”

Kamala was watching the young girl with curiosity, as this was a holiday she never celebrated; the closest thing to Christmas that she celebrated was Eid.

She remembered the excitement as a younger child getting new clothes and shoes, having her hair done and henna on her hands, and then going out with her family.

She smiled at the memories.

As she grew it really did lose some of its excitement.

At ten she started fasting with her family, only doing half days.

Then when she went through terrigenesis a few years later and it became near impossible to complete a entire day of fasting.
With a higher metabolism and all.

Let alone going through a month of fasting while also being a hero was extremely taxing.

That was one thing she felt guilty about in all of this was the lying to her mother.

Seeing that childlike wonder in Becca’s eye made Kamala’s chest clench a bit.

“Kam you okay?” Harley asked the teen bumping her shoulder with his, as they were nearly the same size, though 2 years apart in age.

Kamala cleared her throat to make sure her voice didn’t crack with emotion, “Yeah, Fine” she smiled big, hoping to hide the feelings that she didn’t even understand at the time.

Tony gave her a skeptical look with raised brows, as though to portray that he knew she was hiding something and he would speak to her later about it.

Becca started chanting again bouncing on her butt now, causing the bed to jolt and Stephen to groan in frustration.

“Come on Doctor Wizard we got presents to open!” Peter bounced on the balls of his feet.

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It wasn’t too much longer that found all the current residents of the Tower collected in the living room.

Even Shadow was lurking around, though the craziness of everything was keeping him away from the heart of chaos.

Against the wall of windows were separate piles with each of the kids stockings laying on top of them, having been moved from the mantle of the fireplace to help label who’s pile of presents were who’s. Under the tree was packed with presents as the adults had added their gifts the previous night for one another.

With the amount of people and presents the room was feeling quite crowded.

Peter, Shuri, Kamala, Harley, Cooper, Becca, Cassie, and Lila sat in front of their piles of gifts from Santa.

Both Kamala and Shuri had been surprised to find that they too were recipients of gifts from Santa. Though they had both been expecting to receive gift from the adults, but to be included in the American tradition, seeing that they were being included with the gifts from ‘Santa’ made both of them tear up in appreciation.

Shuri had immediately shot a look to Tony, her eyes sparkling with emotion; he simply smiled and subtly tilted his head at her acknowledgment.

“You must have been really good” Lila said looking to the two girls when they had first seen their piles.

Laura was sitting in front of Nate’s pile with him in her lap.

Taking a sip from his coffee Tony smiled and looked around. “Alright Kiddos go at it, once you’re done with those we can take a break eat some breakfast and open the rest of the gifts under the tree” the billionaire instructed and looked around as the rest of the still waking adults seemed to
concur with his idea.

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It was a hurricane of wrapping paper as the younger ones of the group tore through their first batch of gifts.

Peter, Harley and Cooper received snowboards, while Shuri, and Kamala got skis.

“I guess Santa knew we were planning a trip to go to a Ski lodge this week” Tony said offhandedly. When everyone had also received snow gear.

Peter had squealed when he noticed that his board had a Spider-Man logo and design on it. Then when he noticed that the snow gear that he had received was personalized and had a Spider-Man design on it as well he nearly burst into tears. Though it was true for all the older ones who looked in awe at the snow gear that were personalized to the colors that suited them.

Though the younger ones were none the wiser as they continued to tear through their presents in excitement.

Burst of squeals here and there were heard along with showing the adults what they got.

Most of the gifts from ‘Santa’ were things that they needed for their rooms or basic toy, games and entertainment there were even some clothes and makeup mixed in.

All the high tech stuff was going to be the gifts they received from Tony himself.

——-

Hope and Jennifer excused themselves as the kids started cleaning up their mess and running their new belongings to their rooms to make room for round two.

“I got tired just watching them” Hope jokes with the Lawyer as she checks the oven that had the egg bake and cinnamon rolls in it.

“Are you sure you aren’t tired from staying up with James all night?” Jennifer quips back playfully while she takes the fruit salad and a few other things out of the fridge.

Hope sputters, embarrassment flooding her face. “We didn’t- I didn’t- we um- it’s not-“

Jen starts laughing at the fellow brunettes flustered. “I know you guys were just talking, I wasn’t accusing you of anything, chill woman.”

“Well what about you and Vision?” Hope shoots back wanting some traction over the situation.

Jennifer gets an odd look and her head bows “What about him and I?”

“Don’t think I haven’t noticed the way you hover by him when he’s around.” Hope says playfully, though the look on Jennifer’s face causes her to pause, and feel sympathy for her friend.

“I don’t know. He’s still trying to figure himself out. Tony has really encouraged him to attend some classes and learn more about the world. Which is why he hasn’t been around as often. But when he is here I get this feeling that I don’t even understand, but it’s like I get drawn into him. I don’t know what to do Hope. He’s really great but I know he’s still trying to figure himself out. And given that my Hulk persona isn’t as intense as my cousins, I still feel like she complicates things.” Jennifer sighs in clear frustration.
Shouts are heard from the other room and Hope finishes preparing the breakfast spread with Jennifer, in silence.

Hope tries to think of a way to help, as Jennifer just sulks.

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With breakfast done, everyone cleans up and moves to get comfortable in the living room. Tony was sitting on Stephens lap, who had moved to lounge on a large plush chair by the tree. Everyone was scattered around and working on finding a comfortable place to settle. Carol and Rhody occupied the other plush chair on the other side of the tree, with the female Colonel lounging sideways, legs over the armrest. Hope sat next to James, who had his arm lounged behind her shoulders. A 4-month pregnant Sue was spread out with her legs over Reeds, her hands resting over her very small bump. Darcy bounced excitedly on Johnny’s lap causing the man to grimace a bit at the movement. Ben awkwardly sat to the side on the chair that had been dubbed his for the fact that it could hold his weight. Jennifer sat on the couch beside Vision talking with him quietly about his latest classes. The Android had come during breakfast and Jen had immediately drifted over to him, they had started discussing different topics. Betty and Jane was on the couch with the android and lawyer, giving the two some space, but at the same time were inputting some thoughts into their conversation. Jessica and Matt were sitting close together, the blind man had his head bowed and hands were twisting nervously as he spoke quietly to the PI. Claire and Colleen were sitting by Luke and Danny, but were completely engrossed in their own conversation, as were the boys. Maggie and Jim were quietly to the side, observing everyone around them. Sure they had been occupants of the tower but they tended to stay to themselves though that didn’t deter Cassie at all. Laura was sitting on the floor, with her back to Tony and Stephen’s chair, Nate on her lap babbling at the commotion around them. Kamala, Shuri, Lila, Cassie, Becca, Peter, Harley, and Cooper were sitting right in front of the tree waiting to pass out gifts and receive them as well. The younger children were barely able to contain their excitement and were bouncing in place.

“Okay” Tony said loudly to gather everyone’s attention “I think this is everyone for now, I know there a few missing faces but I don’t think we should keep the kids waiting much longer” the billionaire paused looking to the younger ones who looked ready to burst.

Sharon has been very busy lately, and currently she and Natasha were in Europe attending court for
their mistakes earlier that year.

When Tony had offered to hold the UN off the two spies both said they had to face the music and didn’t want to ruin anyone’s Christmas especially since Tony had been put through enough, or that was Sharon’s explanation. Natasha just stood back knowing that even if she were to stay she wouldn’t actually be welcomed, not by Tony’s new team.

The X-men really stuck to themselves except when it came to meetings and some trainings.

And Deadpool was somewhere.

Pepper was busy back west with Happy, though Tony made sure to send their gift to them.

With everyone in agreement Tony continues “But before we begin I wanted to tell everyone here that so far this has been one of the best years of my life. It’s started a bit rocky but ending it with all of you here spending Thanksgiving and now Christmas the way we have. It has made me exceptionally grateful for everyone here right now. And I’ll probably make a similar speech later this week at the New Years Eve party, but regardless thank you all for being here and being apart of, well all of this” Tony gestured around with a large smile on his face.

Rhodey loudly shouted, “Hear, hear!” And everyone else around the room followed suit.

“There are so many of us, but what I was thinking is we can take turns opening up a few gifts so we can all be part of it and when that becomes too tedious we can just go at it and relish in the chaos.” Tony suggested and the kids seemed a bit disappointed but agreed when the adults did.

The kids started passing gifts around from under the tree and after everyone had a gift or two in their lap everyone sat back down. Except it appeared Tony got much more than others did.

Tony discreetly instructed FRIDAY to take some pictures through the uplink.

“I say Tony goes first” Carol suggested, again with some grumbling from the kids everyone agreed that he should go first.

Cassie, Lila, and Becca started bouncing.

“Open ours first!” They nearly screamed.

So he did, it was a scrapbook, or a start of one.

It had pictures from throughout their time together the game nights, karaoke, especially of the last week.

“It’s from FRIDAY too,” Becca says quietly as the billionaire looked through the filled pages.

There were even pictures mixed in of the trips he had made down to Tennessee.

He moved off of Stephen and collected the girls in a hug thanking them for such a thoughtful gift.

He hadn’t ever been a sentimental person, but since Pepper had given him the ‘Proof that Tony Stark has a Heart’ display he had learned that being sentimental wasn’t the weakness his father had told him it was.

Tony was urged by everyone to open the remaining gifts that were piled in front of him after returning to Stephen.
So he did.

Peter, Cooper, Harley, and by extension Nate’s gift to Tony was a Iron Man winter gear for their planned trip to the slopes later that week. There were a few other Iron Man themed clothes and funny shirts mixed in there too.

Tony gushed excitedly for the fact that he hadn’t been able to find any adult Iron Man winter gear, and then quickly realized that FRIDAY may or may not have been interfering with his search for it.

From Shuri and Kamala came a watch, a red and gold watch that had some very interesting upgrades and changes done to it. The girls promised to fill him in on all the details of it later.

The Fantastic Four gifted him with a large supply of his favorite Coffee.

From Luke, Danny, and Colleen he received a free vacation away to one of Danny’s islands and the promise that he gets to go completely off the grid and enjoy some peace and quiet away from the world while they and the others handle everything.

Jessica and Matt gave him a really nice red leather jacket and a Iron Man shot glass

Claire, Betty, and Jane gave him a discreet brace for his left wrist. It had the ability to essentially become invisible to others and had built in heating and cooling technology for whatever he desired at the time. It even had vibranium sewn into it, thanks to Shuri, to help keep his wrist from taking more damage. The three women smiled at him knowingly and that was that.

Darcy gave him a collectors Iron Man figure.

Rhodey and Carol gave the billionaire a ‘get out of work free’ stamp card. Rhodey explained how it was separate from Danny’s gift and that if he needed a break he had ten free available slots to tell either of the Colonels that he was cashing in and they would take over, no questions asked, after they were used up the duo would have the availability to ask questions but made sure to inform the billionaire that the gift was all in good fun, and that they would still take over if he needed an out.

They followed up with giving Tony a prepaid date night with Stephen. Though he didn’t need it, the thought into it meant a lot.

Vision gave Tony a Iron Man Coffee maker meant for a single cup.

“I made it with the help of Dum-E, U and Butterfingers. It’s meant for your lab and it’s foul proof against Dum-E so he shouldn’t have a problem with your coffee anymore.” The android explained. Tony felt tears pick at his eyes at the explanation.

Jennifer gave the billionaire a coffee mug that she was exceptionally proud of. It was an ‘iron’ man mug. It was red with yellow writing and had the periodic table of elements label for iron and under it said man.

Hopes gift also had James’s name on it and the billionaire smiled softly at the two, happy to see that the two of them seemed to be working well together.

With James completing phase one of his rehabilitation having someone like Hope to talk to was definitely a good thing.

Their gift was an Iron Man apron and a Iron Man Helmet coffee mug.
Tony got a kick of all the Iron Man gear he had received and could honestly say that they were some of the best gifts he had ever received.

Last but clearly not least was the gift from Stephen.

Tony’s hands shook slightly as he held the large velvet box.

The men’s eyes met and the billionaire saw worry and uncertainty swimming in the sorcerer’s eyes. But no words were spoken.

Slowly, and in an almost torturous manner Tony opened the box.

Inside held a 2mm gold chain, and hanging from it was a Mexican fire opal, it danced in the light with bright red, orange and yellow.

Tony felt the light pulse of Stephen’s magic coming off of it. Looking at it seemed to put him at ease, tension in his shoulders that he hadn’t even been aware of melted away as he gazed at the beautiful necklace laying on the velvet.

“It’s meant to protect you from any malicious magic, anything meant to cause you harm will be repealed away. Any magic that isn’t mine will also be reflected away, but if somehow, someone gains control of me and my magic it will protect you from that as well” Stephen explains softly into the billionaire’s ear. “If you hold it in your hand or to your chest you’ll feel a pulse, it’s my heart beat, hopefully that can help you with your attacks if I’m not there, I know you respond well to that when we’re together.” The sorcerer said even quieter so no one else, well except for Matt, could hear and continued. “The hidden meaning there includes the fact that you do in fact hold my heart.”

Tony had been on the verge of crying through the entire time he had been opening gifts from everyone else, but this pushed him over the edge.

Tears freely flowed from his eyes.

No words came out though.

Nothing could express how much this gift meant to him.

This gift gave him a whole new sense of security and safety.

It gave him peace of mind.

The only thing Tony could do was kiss the sorcerer as though his life depended on it.

Tears wetting his cheeks and a smile that could blind a person was the expression on the billionaire as he leaned in did just that.

Stephen responded in earnest and wolf whistles were heard throughout the room. Along with a few camera shutter sounds.

——

The billionaire and sorcerer finally broke apart after the kids started to sound their complaints of waiting. Everyone seemed to agree that that had only wanted to watch Tony open his gift now they just wanted to open gifts and not have to wait anymore.

Tony ducked his head a bit in uncharacteristic embarrassment, but smiled nonetheless.
So the whirlwind of wrapping paper and bows started up.

From Tony, everyone received a new phone, one that had access to CARTER and some other high-end features, including holographic projections.

Matt’s was a lot more advanced though with built in features including a surprisingly impressive braille pad.

Peter, Kamala, Shuri, Cooper, Harley, Becca, Lila, and Cassie, on top of new phones also received a brand new Stark laptop. All of them came with each of their own learning AI’s, ones that they could name themselves, though Karen was on Peters, which suited the teen just fine.

Nate received a soft, and plush Iron Man colored teddy bear, though it wasn’t just any normal teddy bear it was a robotic one, that also held an AI.

Though this AI was one that was prepared to teach the toddler and also grow with him. The soft fabric had vibranium sewn into it so it was also prepared to take a beating from the child along with protect him if need be. Nate babbled a string of sounds and hugged the bear closely when it was handed to him.

Tony explained over the chaos about some of the features to Laura, how it would respond to her and Nate differently, and promised to tell her more about it later when everything settled down.

At Stephen’s gift from Tony everyone froze and watched fascinated as nanites formed gloves around the sorcerer’s hands, disappearing from the human eyes when they fully formed, matching Stephen’s flesh color exactly.

Stephen gaped as he watched his hands steady completely. A comfortable warmth emitted from the small unseeable bots, warming his hands to a normal temperature.

Wide and questioning eyes met Tony’s.

“So I had this nanite ball awhile ago that did just that, though not as cool as this one, and I thought if I could prefect the design and make it so the nanites absorb your tremors and regulate the temperature in your hands it would make your life a little easier and a bit more comfortable. And I figured while we were at it make it so it would match your skin color so no one has to know.” Tony babbled nervously unsure what the sorcerer thought. Would he be offended? Upset? Or did he actually like them?

“So I had this nanite ball awhile ago that did just that, though not as cool as this one, and I thought if I could prefect the design and make it so the nanites absorb your tremors and regulate the temperature in your hands it would make your life a little easier and a bit more comfortable. And I figured while we were at it make it so it would match your skin color so no one has to know.” Tony babbled nervously unsure what the sorcerer thought. Would he be offended? Upset? Or did he actually like them?

“Tony- I- there are no words” Stephen said his voice cracking. Hands that didn’t shake caressed the billionaires face and tears now swam in both of their eyes, emotions running high between the two of them.

Sounds around the room resumed gradually as the others continued to open gifts, the two man continued to just stared at each other. Unspoken confessions were static between them.

———-

“Ho, Ho, Ho!” The familiar voice of Deadpool boomed. The room was filled scattered paper and gifts as everyone was talking, thanking, and playing with their new stuff.

Stephen had helped Tony clasp the necklace on effortlessly with the assist of the nanite gloves.

The Merc with a mouth plopped down a garbage bag that appeared to be holding poorly wrapped gifts in it.
“Sorry I’m late last minute gifts and what not.”

“Glad you could join us Wade” Peter smiled at the mutant clad in red “Here I have something for you” the teen handed a wrapped gift over to him.

Deadpool screamed, literally screamed, when opened the box that he was handed. Inside it was several funny shirts about tacos. There was ‘I’m into fitness, Fit’ ness taco into my mouth’, ‘You had me at Tacos’, ‘Tacocidal Maniac’, ‘I wonder if Tacos think about me too…’ and ‘Do it for the Tacos’. Then Deadpool saw the Otto’s Tacos gifts card for 500 dollars. Promptly he fell back in a very real looking faint, and quickly proceeded to shoot up and started to jump up and down screaming, Nate quickly followed the Mercs volume and started to squeal loudly.

Gift opening continued after that with the last bit of gifts including the ones Deadpool brought. Which were just a ton of funny shirts. Everyone got one and we’re fairly impressed with how well the Merc had done with picking out appropriate and funny things for each of them.

A few more things turned up for Tony from under the tree he got a few other funny and accurate shirts, and a few small odds and ends. One of his new favorite things was the whiskey stone’s he received.

As Tony sat back against Stephen taking in the warmth from him and all those around him he subconsciously moved to grasp at the pendent hanging around his neck and felt the pulsing of a heartbeat the second his hand closed.

Eyes shutting Tony breathed slowly. Listening to the laugher and happiness around him.

This was exactly what Christmas was about.

Tony felt a breath against his ear, the pulsing in his hand sped up a bit as response to Stephen’s heart indeed picking up its pace.

“I love you Tony.” The sorcerer whispered the three words for the first time.

Tony froze unsure about how to respond to the confession. Could he say it back?

The steady pulse in his hand kept him grounded. Keeping him from any sort of panic.

Stephen simply kissed the billionaire behind the ear and sat back clearly not expecting a response.

Tony’s smile widened, this man truly was perfect for him.

This truly was the best Christmas ever.

____

Wakanda

“This has to be the worst Christmas ever,” Wanda grumbled picking at the food in front of her. “And I’ve only celebrated one in my lifetime”

“Suck it up princess” Clint spat bitterly; the nickname was clearly an insult.

Steve shot the archer a look and addressed Wanda gently “By next Christmas we should be back stateside. I promise it will be a much better Christmas.”
“I wonder what Cassie is doing” Scott wondered out loud thoughtfully

Clint nodded at the fellow fathers sentiment.

He had seen and heard about Laura a few time on the couple of news stories that T’Challa and Shuri had shared with them. But had heard nothing about his children.

It appeared that Tony was housing his wife so that meant his kids must be there too. Right?

Clint has been trying to figure out the best way to reach out to the billionaire and talk to him about his mistakes, and how to move forward. But whenever he went to go act on his ideas he would hit with a extreme migraine, he had been even been getting nosebleeds lately.

The same had been happening when he thought about talking with Scott who had become very distant with Steve and Wanda.

The archer wasn’t sure who he could turn to, since every time he got a inkling of an urge to discuss something with another person pain would occur and deter him from whatever he had just been about to do.

It was driving him insane, literally.

“...Clint?” Scott whispers, nudging the man.

Clint looks over and the other father motions to under his nose.

Wiping, Clint found blood.

What was wrong with him?

How could he fix it?

The thing he knew for certain was that he needed to get home and to his family.

But how?

“Merry Christmas” the archer muttered, frustration evident in his voice.

———

**Starktower**

Tony plopped down onto the bed a groan escaping as his back cracked at the sudden jolt.

It was well past midnight and everyone had finally turned in.

Most of the kids had been to bed well beforehand though.

“May is an animal at Texas hold ‘em. I can’t get over that” Tony’s muffled voice rang out.

“I’m happy she and Matt’s mom showed up. It was nice to meet and spend time with some new faces” Stephen inputted while preparing for bed, though his eyes kept drifting back to his unshaking hands.

He had been dealing with the tremors for so long everything felt weird and different without their
constant reminder of how he had lost everything.

But then again as the hotshot neurosurgeon he had thrown away the one man that ever showed interest in him as a person.

But seeing that his hands were stilled by that same man caused butterflies in his stomach.

“Stephen?” The billionaire said obviously trying to get his attention.

“How? I’m sorry. I was lost in thought. What did you say?” The sorcerer stopped staring at his hands and moved to sit on the bed by where Tony had already sat up.

Tony moves to face the doctor and took his hands in his.

“Are they ok?” The genius asked uncertainty, examining Stephen’s hands.

Moving a hand to caress Tony’s cheek Stephen whispered, “They’re perfect. I love them. And I love you.”

This was the forth time that night Stephen had said those word to the billionaire and thankfully he had figured out exactly what he wanted to say the next time the sorcerer said those words.

Tony moves his free hand to cover the one on his cheek his eyes half lidded for a moment.

“Tony. I know you're not ready to say it back-“ Stephen began but the billionaire quickly interrupts him

“When I was young I thought love wasn't for me. After my parents died-“ the billionaire choked a bit on his word “When my mother died, I was sure no one would ever love me because I wasn't good enough. After Afghanistan, I convince myself I didn't deserve love. After Ultron, I stopped trying to make someone love me. After Siberia, I didn't know if I'd be able to love again.”

“Tony…” Stephen whispered

Tony took a deep breath and continued “But there was Harley and Becca and then Peter, and now Kam. And I didn't know I wanted children until I got to know all of them. I'm so proud of them and I truly love them so much. They are my children in all sense of the word except for blood, Stephen.”

The sorcerer sat speechless the hand that hand been on the billionaires cheek now sat between the men as they held hands

The genius continued on “And then, there was you. We had history but we have grown and changed. And you not only believed in me, but you also trusted me. I needed someone by my side most of all and you showed me I am more than my fears and failures. You, Stephen, made me feel loved again. You make me truly believe I deserve love. I love you too, Merlin. Never doubt that.”

Tony finished his confession tears swam in both men’s eyes.

No more words were spoken as Stephen moves forward and captured Tony’s mouth against his.

This really was a perfect Christmas, Tony thought, as the two quickly got lost into each other.
Hey again so I’m fairly happy with that chapter.
Though this story is making it so I’ll probably be releasing some one shots and
outtakes in the future cause I really wanna push forward and get the Rouges rolling in.
I feel bad for Clint...
About Kamala and the reference to Eid (I used my personal knowledge from working
and a the daycare I’ve been at for 5 years. It’s run by close friends of mine and tends
to cater more to Muslim families. So I apologize if I offended anyone by it)
The ‘I Love you too’ confession was inspired by sineadhdz post on tumblr and was
used with their permission
As always I do apologize for grammatical issues if someone is interested in going to
previous chapters for me and sending me the edits let me know.
Otherwise I hope everyone enjoyed this chapter!
And honestly I’m not sure if I should do a New Years chapter or push forward to the
drama and just make the New Years chapter an outtake.
Let me know what you think.
Thanks for reading my story!
Chapter Summary

Sunday January 1st 2017
Things happen, the team comes up with a plan.

Chapter Notes

Heeeeeeyyyy...
Long time no see! So I apparently I went on a hiatus...
I'm sorry.
I've had a lot of ups and downs and honestly I don't need to go into too many detail,
but i was also feeling discouraged and unsure about my story. There are grammar and
spelling issues and I'm not entirely happy about them. Especially when others
constantly point them out to me, but that on me. I also have been going back and
adding little things. (Like redoing Captain Marvel's roster entry, and mentioning
Maria, Monica and other things)
I'm still editing things and going through chapters and such.
But I had this puppy sitting here and after going over it a few extra times I feel I
should put it up.
Alright... I got more to say but I'll wait for the end note.
With out further ado here is the next chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“This just in, videos have just surfaced on the Internet and they are astonishingly frightening.
Information that we have had no previous knowledge of has been released anonymously to the public.”

“Though we have obtained some information about the leak itself. It appears that the anonymous
leak was assisted by an ex Hydra agent who had apparently worked at Stark Industries under
Obadiah Stane at some point. Who we have now learned was not the man many thought him to be”

“Not only was Stane selling weapons under the table to terrorists it appears that he also attempted
to murder Mr. Stark and is behind the cover up of the late Mr. and Mrs. Stark accident and their
murder.”

“Yes you heard that correctly. The accident of Howard and Maria Stark was a murder and it was
effortlessly covered up by Hydra.”

“Apparently former Captain Steven Rogers knew this information and failed to tell Tony Stark
himself. How long he knew this information is unknown to us as of right now, but we can safely
assume that he found out around the fall of Shield, if anything. But as it stands currently the
footage released earlier this morning has proceeded to break the Internet.”

“I just wonder how Tony Stark is taking everything that is happening right now."
“This is a disaster! How did this happen?” Tony hissed, fingers flying across his keyboard. “Shit, it’s bounced around so much it’s hard to find the source.” The genius mutters to himself. It was kind of early and everyone was sleeping off a hangover or just resting from staying up so late, but as Tony had been enjoying his bed, and lover, FRIDAY, in a very panicked way, alerted the billionaire to the situation that was transpiring on the Internet.

“Tony!” A feminine voice rang out, heel clicking at a rapid pace.

Pepper rushes in Tony’s lab, her hair not in its normal pristine condition. “What happened?” She had clearly rushed here, from where Tony had no clue and honestly couldn't care less at the moment.

“I expected the possibility of the tape of my parents murder being released, Natasha warned me of the possibility. Though everything else has been completely unexpected. From what I’ve gathered, there was an ex-employee, who had a heavy hand with Stane and Hydra, who had been collecting data on me and my many disputes with the Avengers among other things throughout the last couple of years. And apparently Zemo came across this information in his search for James’ book. He then proceeded to have a program scheduled to release all the information they had on me on the first of this year. Though how he got the footage from Siberia after he was arrested is baffling me a bit. And I should have known that the Hydra base had a full security set up, they have the entire fight.” Tony rambled nerves causing his entire body to quake, his voice breaking.

“What are you trying to do right now?” Pepper asked gently resting her hands on her shoulders in silent support.

“I’m trying to figure out who exactly released them and from where. Who helped Zemo? And are they after my blood? ‘Cause all the footage isn’t that awful, it actually paints Rogers in a bad light if anything. But hell I don’t need the video proof of the betrayals I’ve suffered on the Internet for everyone to see. Though by now everyone has already seen them.”

The clip of Tony being held in Afghanistan pops on the screen.

“You did not tell us that the target you paid us to kill was the great Tony Stark. As you can see, Obadiah Stane your deception and lies will cost you dearly. The price to kill Tony Stark has just gone up.” Subtitles had been provided on the video.

Tony shook his head and continued his work.

“It’s like the data dump all over again but this time trying to dump all my dirty laundry for the world to see. Oh shit. I missed this. What the hell is this?”

Wanda's voice rang out, the screen black “Talk. And if you are wasting our time…”

“Did you know this church is in the exact center of the city? The elders decreed it so that everyone could be equally close to God. I like that. The geometry of belief.” That was Ultron's voice but how? When was this? Who got a hold of this archived file and how had he and FRIDAY missed it?

The screen flickers and shows a beaten up wall.

“You’re wondering why you can't look inside my head.”

As the video played Tony was rapidly typing, focused on his work and what was happening on screen.
“Sometimes it's hard. But sooner or later, every man shows himself.” Tony forgot how strong her Sokovian accent had been.

Ultron obviously stands, and turns to face the Maximoff twins. Wanda has a brief look of shocked

“Oh, I'm sure they do. But you needed something more than a man. That's why you let Stark take the scepter.”

“Oh shit.” Pepper cusses from behind him. Tony froze at the possible admission coming from the woman on screen.


Pepper squeaks in surprise “How many others have seen this video?”

Tony ignored her though, now completely transfixed on the footage playing in front of him, obviously taken and archived by Ultron.

“Everyone creates the thing they dread. Men of peace create engines of war, invaders create avengers, people create...smaller people? Uh...children! I lost the word there. Children. Designed to supplant them, to help them...end.” Ultron rambles, it was slightly frightening to hear the being sound so much like Tony himself.

“Is that why you've come? To end the Avengers?” The Sokovian woman asks.

Ultron answer is simple. “I've come to save the world. But also, yeah.”

The location changes as the footage flickers and Tony recognizes the underground area of the Hydra base where he had found the scepter.

“We'll move out right away. This is a start, but there's something we need to begin the real work.”

The footage is showing everything in front of Ultron.

Wanda asks a question about all the bots around the area. “All of these are... All of these are…”

“Me. I have what the Avengers never will. Harmony. They're discordant, disconnected.” Ultron explains, Tony nodded slightly actually agreeing with him on that fact. “Stark's already got them turning on each other. And when you get inside the rest of their heads…” the billionaire frowns at that.

“Everyone's plan is not to kill them.” Pietro speaks up.

“And make them martyrs? You need patience. Need to see the big picture.”

“I don't see the big picture, I have a little picture. I take it out and look at it every day.” The man's voice is quiet and reserved.
“You lost your parents in the bombings. I've seen the records.” Ultron supplies.

“The records are not the pictures.” The Sokovian man snaps

“Pietro.” Wanda says gently

“No, please.” Ultron was clearly working to appease the twins.

Pietro continues. Tony is frozen as he listens. “We were ten years old, having dinner, the four of us. When the first shell hits, two floors below, it makes a hole in the floor. It's big. Our parents go in, and the whole building starts coming apart. I grab her, roll under the bed and the second shell hits. But, it doesn't go off. It just...sits there in the rubble, three feet from our faces. And on the side of the shell is painted one word…”

“Stark.” Wanda spat the name. That seemed to kick start something in Tony and he moved back to rapidly typing.

Pietro continues on screen “We were trapped two days.”

“Every effort to save us, every shift in the bricks, I think, "This will set it off." We wait for two days for Tony Stark to kill us.” The redhead spoke scathingly

“I wondered why only you two survived Strucker's experiments. Now I don't. We'll make it right. You and I can hurt them.” Ultron speaks fondly to the two Sokovians, turning to Wanda he finished with mirth in his voice, “But you will tear them apart, from the inside.”

Shivers ran through Tony as memories suddenly ripped through him.

The footage was over but the panic of hearing these plans even years later hit him like a bulldozer. He knew he never trusted Wanda but hearing what he just had solidified his paranoia against her. Regardless of her ‘change of heart’ it was clear that the contempt that she and her brother had held against him would never go away even when he could prove that the bombs that had killed their parents hadn’t actually been his.

Anger flowed through him at the hypocrisy of the entire situation.

Tony’s brain was flooded with so many thoughts and emotions he was unaware of his current frozen, and catatonic state.

He was unaware of Pepper’s panic and her calling out to FRIDAY to get Stephen there immediately.

As frustrated as he was at everything he was also extremely hurt.

Wanda and Pietro has been out for revenge and Rogers had done nothing but give them a slap on the back of the hand and welcomed the redhead to the Avenger without so much of a glance towards Tony.

And then there was T’Challa who had been out for revenge against Barnes and now Rogers was cozied up hiding in his country.

But Tony hadn’t been given the decency of the truth, he’d been reprimanded and talked down to about keeping secrets as Steve kept one of the biggest secrets from the genius and then nearly killed him when Tony had rightfully lashed out.
That self-righteous bastard.

Tony could feel panic set into his chest, too many emotions.

Too much.

He was unaware that he had started clawing at his chest, or of the fact that a keening sound had started to escape him, his breathing had become uneven and erratic.

He wasn’t aware of any of this because his brain had gone into a full-blown reboot as he was attempting to process everything.

But it was all too much.

Though it was as though ice water was dumped on him suddenly as he became aware of hands caressing his face.

These hands trembled and were slightly cold.

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Stephen had been blissfully asleep until a loud chime woke him and FRIDAY in a panic told him that Tony needed him immediately.

The AI gave the doctor a small briefing on what had happened and explained how Tony was currently having the biggest panic attack to date.

“Why didn’t he wake me up?” Stephen muttered worriedly to no one in particular, bare feet padded hurriedly against cold concrete as he entered the lab. Levi billowing behind the Doctor in its usual dramatic flare.

Stephen took in what was in front of him, causing his heart clench and break at the same time.

Tony was clawing at his chest as Pepper tried to stop him, shouting his name and shaking him, attempting to get the billionaires attention.

Erratic breathing echoed through the lab, as a high pitch keen escaped the distraught man.

“Oh Tony” Stephen whispered heartbrokenly. The Cloak removed himself from the sorcerer and flitted over to the billionaire.

Pepper wordlessly moved aside as Stephen approached them.

The doctor moved to kneel in front of the genius.

His gloveless hands moved to cup Tony’s face.

“I’m here. Come back to me. I’m right here” Stephen started his mantra of calming words. Thumbs wiped tears that were streaming down Tony’s face.

Awareness started to swim in the amber irises.

“Steph-“ Tony choked through his hyperventilating.

“Tony, love, I’m here. Follow my breathing” Stephen took one of Tony’s hands and held it to his chest “I know there is a lot happening right now, but we can work through this. Things will be ok, I
know it looks bleak right now but please breathe with me, I’m right here.” Stephen soothes.

“That bastard-“ Tony hisses through his attempts to regain his bearings and breathing.

Stephen chuckled at the genius’s words knowing exactly whom he was referring to.

“Hey, hey, just breath,” he hushed him “Let’s talk details in a bit. How about right now we go get some food and coffee and maybe get everyone else together and we can work through everything, together?” Stephen suggests standing up and holding his hand out.

Tony shakily grabs the outreached hand.

“Stephen I-“ the genius chokes on a sob

Stephen pulled the smaller man close and embraces him. Levi, who was resting on Tony’s shoulders lightly, was giving Tony enough weight to keep him grounded and present.

The embrace lasted longer than either man anticipated and was concluded when Stephen’s lips rested on Tony’s head.

“Friday can you wake up Rhodes and Carol? And brief them on what’s happening?” Pepper asked gently taking in the scene in front of her. Her heart ached for the man she loved. He had been through so much. And still the punches just kept on coming. When would it end? When could he truly rest?

When she and Tony had broken up there had been a brief period of uncertainty of their future together.

Though it had quickly became a moot point as they both realized they worked better as friends then lovers.

Though the love was still there, it was a platonic love.

Watching Tony move on and find happiness was everything Pepper ever wanted for him and more.

As the Trio made their way upstairs Pepper’s fist clenched in rage, her nails dug into her palms.

This dump of videos on Tony was such a huge mess and she herself had no idea where to even start with damage control.

Statements, investigations, a press conference. And they were only like 7 hours into the New Year.

She was ready to rain hell on anyone that crossed her path at this point.

“We need to figure out a plan of action” Tony’s raspy; tear stained voice echoed quietly from beside her.

“Don’t worry about that right now Tony lets just get some breakfast and we can work through stuff slowly and with the others.” Pepper moved to rub the billionaires back in comfort. With the man tucked under Stephen’s arm and Levi on him he looked smaller then he normally did.

“Friday initiate Do Not Disturb protocols level 10” Pepper instructed.

“Already done” the AI answered sounding solemn and reserved.
The trip to the upper floor of the tower was quiet and the air hung thickly. Though Tony’s breathing was still uneven and the two others could basically hear is brain working overtime.

From the corner of her eye Pepper watched Stephen squeeze Tony’s shoulders in an obvious show of comfort and support, causing a slight swell in her chest of warmth towards the sorcerer that clearly cared for her best friend.

Upon entering the floor designated for the team the trio was surprised to see everyone, minus the kids and X-men there.

Deadpool was lounging on the couch tacos piled on his lap, eating without much care in the world. Even Jessica was there, though she was clearly suffering from her kind of hangover, her head was resting on Matt’s shoulder. Everyone else was milling around, sounds and smells of food being made we’re coming from the kitchen.

Laura approached Tony with her arms slightly open, hesitating for only a moment before Tony soon found himself being embraced by the mother of 3.

“I’m going to bring the kids breakfast, then I’ll be back for the conversation. Just go eat breakfast and relax, we’ll all talk about how tackle what’s happening together. You have people in your corner Tony. Don’t forget that.” The woman spoke softly into his ear as she held him close.

Tony was only able to nod as tears pricked at his eyes and his throat felt tight.

No words could explain the emotions he was feeling, seeing everyone up and willing to be there to support him was unreal. There was the added fact that they weren’t all crowding him and asking questions, instead they were going about business as usual, as though they weren’t all tired or suffering from some sort of hangover.

“Come on Tones I got your coffee and smoothie waiting for you” Rhodey calls from the kitchen entrance.

Laura released the billionaire and patted his arm gently as she moves to collect the food tray she had for the kids, which with 6 kids to feed, it had a lot of food.

An hour later found everyone fed and relatively relaxed. Banter and jokes were being thrown around between the living and dining room.

Stephen and Levi has yet to cease their hovering and surprisingly Tony was okay with that.

Though it didn’t take long for the air to become heavy as everyone in the room knew the discussion that was about to occur was inevitable and unpleasant.

Pepper and Rhodey had been whispering among themselves for a bit and both cleared their throats to get everyone’s attention.

“I know this is the last thing we all want to talk about but we should probably get this out of the way so we can tackle this while everything is fresh.” Pepper spoke hesitantly and softly, which was out of character for her but right now everything was thrown into the air.

Tony swallowed thickly, the air he breathed becoming heavy again as his chest tightened.

“I have finished what you started earlier Boss,” FRIDAY cut in giving the humans in the room
something to start with. “With the algorithm you entered I was able to track down the source of the leak along with the person that was working with Zemo. Authorities have already detained him and there are several charges against him” the AI informs the room, and continues, “I regret to inform you that I am unable to completely remove all traces of the various videos off the Internet. The UN has pulled Zemo out of prison for questioning; there is also a possibility of more charges being added to his current sentence. Also the warrant for Steve Rogers arrest is being adjusted, the crimes of Aiding and Abetting the Winter Soldier and Failure to report a murder has been added and has since then been signed by a judge.” James flinched at that, guilt swimming in his eyes. Steve did a lot of stupid stuff but James definitely felt some responsibility for the events that had happened, even though he constantly was reminded that this was not actually the truth. FRIDAY continued “As has the warrant for Wanda Maximoff. Aggravated assault, Criminal Conspiracy, Harassment, and attempt of murder are currently charges being added to her currently standing warrant. Sokovians are not responding well to the knowledge that they have received via the videos that they have seen.” FRIDAY sounded nearly gleeful about Wanda’s sentencing, Vision flinched at the words, and he was still hurt and upset by what had happened between the two of them.

“I don’t get it” Tony mumbles

“What don’t you get?” Hope asks

“Zemo’s game. He made it his mission to break us from the inside out, which he succeeded. What his play now? Why turn the world around on Rogers? Why paint me as a victim? What does he have to gain by that? I just don’t get it.”

“Maybe there’s nothing to get, maybe the idiot just likes drama and wanted to stir more shit up.” Jessica spat from her place next to Matt.

“I’d be inclined to agree with you Jess but honestly he planned the framing of James so meticulously I have a tough time believing that’s the only reason.” Tony explained his thoughts and the PI nodded in slight agreement.

“The charges added will make it nearly impossible to get any sort of pardons for Rogers or Maximoff” Matt interjected.

“Sam Wilson will most likely be dragged in as an accomplice to Rogers’ madness, along with Romanoff.” Jennifer added.

“So where do we go from here?” Danny asked the question on everyone’s mind.

Glances were made around the room waiting for someone to say what they were thinking. Matt was the first.

“I think an official statement would be a good start. Let’s give the facts and explain what we know. From there, there should probably be a press conference though the reporters should be prescreened and the questions pre approved. And then maybe a one on one interview with a reliable reporter. I know Karen would love the opportunity. Though I’m sure you would want to stick with your go to with Miss Everheart, or there is Trish Walker” at the suggestion of her sister Jessica made a disapproving noise.

As Matt spoke most everyone around the room seemed to nod in approval to his words.

Pepper even voicing how it seemed a good of a plan as any and set forth talking on her phone about
a statement release from Stark Industries and scheduling a Press Conference.

“I think it would be imperative that both Stark Industries and the Avengers make two separate statements about the events occurring” Jennifer voiced over the silence in the room and a mummers of agreement rumbled through the room.

“Also another thing we should discuss is that Tony shouldn’t be left alone for the next few weeks, at least until everything settles there are too many eyes on him right now and leaving him alone is probably the worst possible thing, besides it would show a unified front too.” Hope said, leaning forward and patted the billionaire’s leg.

“Also Tony is in the room and is able to speak for himself, thank you very much” the man in question snarked in slight irritation.

“No, she right Tones you have support now, not saying you’re going to go self destruct but you’re playing a completely different field this time around, and having someone with you for added protection or support sounds perfect. Besides, we all know who’s going to take up most of ‘watch Tony duty’” Rhodey finished his statement with a glance at Stephen.

Everyone else doing the same.

“I believe this is the best course of action Sir” Vision said softly, concern lacing his tone.

Tony sighed dejectedly realizing he would be fighting a losing battle if he fought any of them on this subject.

“How many of you watched all the released videos?” he asked suddenly, surprising everyone, they definitely weren’t expecting him to ask this. “I just- if you’re all willing to take time away and make sure this madness all get settled I feel you deserve-“

“Let me stop you right there” Carol interrupted Tony “it doesn’t matter if we’ve seen them or not, none of them change anything. There’s nothing on those videos that will change how we feel about you, or what we think about you.” The blonde spoke confidently.

Jessica made a sound “Please don’t insult me” she scoffs simply.

Everyone in the room took their turns pledging their loyalty to the genius.

All he could do was sit there with a lump in his throat unable to respond.

“If we’re all done with all the mushy shit lets get whatever statement you want completed and then do something less productive for the day. This is too much bullshit for the first day of the year” Jessica muttered her eyes closed and forehead pinched in pain.

The day proceeded as such.

The team, minus the minors, worked together to put a statement together. Pepper diligently worked on Stark Industries statement at the same time, getting some pointers from Matt and Jennifer on wording and such.

After they were finished with the statements they decided to release them immediately and schedule a press conference for Tuesday.

“What a perfect way to start 2017” Hope muttered glancing through her phone at the responses the statements released were accumulating.
“It’s a mess” Carol sighed leaning into Rhodes.

“Okay so can we actually do something fun and not actually productive with the rest of our time today? It’s Sunday. It’s supposed to be the day of rest or something like that,” Colleen asked from her place beside Danny.

“You guys go ahead and figure something out. Merlin and I need to get the Keeners and the Princess home and then I’m thinking of just spending some time alone with him actually, that is if he is willing” Tony inquired looking at the sorcerer in question.

Stephen simply quirked his mouth upwards and nodded in agreement.

“Jim and I will take Spiderling back to Queens and brief May on what’s happening” Carol offered gently with a tilt of her head.

After some brief goodbyes and plans made to meet on Tuesday morning, before the conference, everyone went their separate ways.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you everyone for your patience and encouraging words, even the constructive criticism ones.
I love it all.
So regarding this story I am going to follow the MCU to the best of my ability as I already have. But I promise that I'm not going to touch Endgame, not even with a 100 foot pole.
Nope
No way
Not happening
ANYWAY!
Thank you for reading my story hopefully I'll have the next chapter up here soon.

Next time:
How the news is affecting people
Another press conference
Possible look in on Rogues

Coming soon:
Dormammu and Dark Dimension Anniversary (Stephen Angst)
Guardians of the Galaxy come with a warning
Fingers Crossed

Chapter Summary

The aftermath of the leak.
And Rogues are no longer welcome in Wakanda.

Chapter Notes

Hey! So because of time differences I guesstimated kinda how the date would work, hopefully it makes sense how I have it if it doesn’t let me know and I can work to rearrange the chapter. I think it flows pretty well but I’m biased.
Enjoy the chapter

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Midtown High

January 2nd

Peter bowed his head in an attempt to stay blended into his surroundings. Everyone around him was talking about Tony Stark and the videos that had been released the previous day.

His new phone buzzed loudly in his pocket.

Harley: The Mechanic is the talk of the town. My association with him is causing me some issues this morning. How are you holding up?

Peter sighed thinking back to his bus ride. He had been recognized as a Stark intern and had to use some of his super speed to outrun a curious mob of reporters. Happy was now posted somewhere around the school as a backup in case Peter needed him.

Peter: Almost got trampled by mob this morning.

He typed simply while avoiding other teens that were milling through the halls.
Harley: Well at least you have the ability to evade them.

Peter chuckled.

Peter: You sound salty. Want me to find you a radioactive bug?

Harley: Nah. I got me a pretty amazing Mechanic. He’s got me covered on gear to avoid mobs.

Peter rolled his eyes and nearly ran into Ned. A surprised gasp coming from both of them.

“Dude, what the hell is going on?” Ned hissed loudly, moving to pull Peter closer to him.

Peter sputtered a bit shushing his best friend, as passing teens looked their way.

“Let’s not talk about this here or now,” Peter whispered turning away from the prying eyes of his peers.

“Are all the videos that got leaked completely legit? Like that’s insane-!” Ned started, ignoring Peters request.

Peter moved to hush his friend again but it was unnecessary, as MJ had beat him to it by placing her own hand over Ned’s mouth.

“Shut up idiot. Can’t you tell this isn’t the time or place to discuss this?” she hissed at Ned a glare leveling him.

‘Thanks’ Peter mouthed to MJ and used her distraction to slip away before someone noticed further what was happening.

****

The sound of Spider-Man swinging was a sound easily recognizable to everyone.

Jane and Betty were down in a lab doing science stuff and Darcy was bored. After all the craziness of Christmas and New Years the tower being calm and quiet was jolting.

So when Darcy heard Peters webs and the noticeable sound of him swinging she perked up.

“‘Sup Spider-Kid?” The young woman asked as the teen landed and moved his way into the living room plopping down on the sofa face first.

The cushions muffled his answer.

“Didn’t catch that.” She said poking the boy.

Peter turned his head to the side.

“I’m hiding. Everyone in my school knows I’m a Stark intern and won’t leave me alone so I am hiding where they can’t reach me. Because even as Spider-Man they know I’m associated with Mr.
“Yeah? Everyone seems to be having issues today going out. Hopefully after the press conference tomorrow everything will settle down.” Darcy tried to comfort the boy, crossing her fingers at her words hoping she was right.

——

**Wakanda**

**January 4th**

“Steve wake up” Sam’s voice sounds like he’s under water. “Steve!”

The soldier groans and shifts himself, though he quickly notices that he was somewhere unfamiliar.

“What-?” He sat up and started to inquire what was happening and was met with Shuri’s smirking face behind glass. “Princess?”

“Ah, Mr. Rogers glad you could join us.” She nearly giggles.

Steve takes in his surroundings. It appears that he and his team were in some sort of holding cells. How had they gotten here? He couldn’t remember or put together a proper timeline of events in his head.

Rubbing his temples he winced at the headache he was now aware of.

“What’s the meaning of this?” Steve demands standing up, making himself tall and authoritative.

“Oh this is just so you won’t run away.” Shuri basically giggles. “I’ve been waiting for this for awhile now and it appears that something good might come out of this entire mess” the teen mutters gleefully and reflectively.

“What the hell are you prattling on about?” Clint snaps from his spot on the floor of his cell.

“Oh! That’s right I restricted your Internet access so you wouldn’t know. How silly of me.” The Princess giggles again clearly enjoying this too much.

“Your highness I’m not sure why we are being held in cells but this isn’t something you can just do. You can’t wrongfully imprison us and joke about it. This isn’t a game.” Steve felt itchy and the walls around him seemed to make it worse. There was something going on that he wasn’t aware of and it made him nervous.

“What makes you believe this is wrongful imprisonment? Because I assure you this is all justified and I’ve been waiting a while for this opportunity.” The smile on her face sent chills down his spine.

“Sister, perhaps you should stop toying with them and actually get to your point before their tempers are tested.” T’Challa spoke from the door of the holding room.

“Your Majesty. What? I don’t-“ Steve started speaking to the King before being cut off.

“You were caught Rogers” Shuri spat, anger lacing her voice. “The only reason you were able to stay within our borders was because of some stupid ideal my brother held, but with the recent
revelation and look into who you really are it has come to our attention that you and Maximoff here are highly dangerous and need to be detained.” The teen spoke with authority as she gestured to Wanda who had a suppression collar around her neck.

Steve snarled after noticing it.

“I don’t understand what changed. You can’t just do this you offered sanctuary and we trusted you. Why do you have that restraint on her? She’s just a kid, that’s not fair to her. What about the others? You mentioned me and Wanda but everyone here is in a cell.” Steve couldn’t keep up with his own thoughts.

How had everything gone so wrong?

“Your immunity in Wakanda has been revoked and as a member of the Accords Council and the Avengers I have a duty to take necessary measures to apprehend criminals that threaten world security.” Shuri looked positively gleeful as she spoke.

“Mr. Rogers what my sister is trying to explain and failing to do so, spectacularly might I add, is that evidence has been released to the public of your involvement of aiding and abetting a criminal and your failure to report a murder along with several other events. The warrant for your arrest has been adjusted and processed by a judge. It was imperative that we seize control before you became aware of the charges against you and tried to flee. Because it is time for you to face the consequences for your actions. Regarding your ‘team’, well Miss Maximoff has had several charges added to her warrant and has been added to the Most Wanted list in most, if not every country. And Mr. Wilson, Mr. Lang, and Mr. Barton are all being changed in assisting you.”

“But why?”

——

January 3rd

“Coming to you live from the Avengers Compound in upstate New York I am Sarah Daniels. The last 48 hours have been met with much speculation and concern for Tony Stark as two days ago video evidence of several traumatic events in the billionaire's life was leaked for the world to see.”

Flashes of footage from the leaked videos show on screen

“Following the incident, written statements were released by Stark Industries and the Avengers. Both stating that this leak was of malice intent and a follow up to the Civil War. It was an attempt to cause unease and uncertainty to the viewers of these videos. The main topic clearly being Tony Stark but also featuring the rest of the original Avengers.”

A clip of Thor grabbing Tony is shown, next the fight over Vision, and then a clip of Steve fighting Tony in Siberia.

“It’s shocking to see what we have and the uncertainty and discord is tangible in the air. The hope today at this press conference is that we will get some answers and hopefully can be reassured that our safety is a top priority in the hands of the New Avengers, and how they plan to move forward. Though we have not seen or heard from the Rogue Avengers in quite sometime there is fear that this news will reach them and they will wish to retaliate.”
Footage of international police escorting two women was shown on screen.

“Testimonies have already been received by Natasha Romanoff and Sharon Carter as they both had a part in the Civil War and at this time we do not have news on their whereabouts or the outcome of their hearings.”

“It looks like things are about to begin”

_____

Tony took a deep breath and adjusted his tie, for the millionth time.

Laying his hand against his chest in an attempt to smooth things out he felt the pendant from Stephen under his shirt, a pulsing coming from it while his hand rested over its place.

His own heart was racing but his breathing evened out at the rhythm he felt.

The door opened and the sorcerer on Tony’s mind entered the room.

“Tony” he breathed the billionaires name like it was a prayer. Stephen moved to help the clearly flustered man, adjusting his tie and suit. “You look fabulous” he smiled and leaned in to kiss the smaller man.

Tony scoffed “I always look fabulous” hesitating slightly he moved to embrace Stephen and intake the smell and warmth of the man. Without hesitation the sorcerer wrapped his arms around Tony.

“You know you don’t have to do this. Carol, Rhodes, Jennifer and I can do this without you up in front. There’s no point in overexerting yourself emotionally even if you don’t show it” Stephen sounded almost smug calling Tony out.

“Shut up Stephanie. I’m going to be there, in the front with the rest of you. I have to show that I’m stronger than my past. I am a Stark after all. Starks are made of iron, or so my dad always said.”

Tony attempted to inflate a bit in self-confidence but eventually slumped into Stephen at the end of his statement. Sighing he spoke “I really don’t know what to do right now Stephen. This anxiety is eating at me. All the unknown factors that I can’t control is making all of this extremely taxing and I’m not sure how to properly address any of it. I want to say I’m fine. Because I’m always fine. But that’s a lie and I can’t keep up the facade right now. I just-“ Stephen effectively cut off Tony’s rambling by locking him into a gentle kiss.

A few moments passed and Tony found himself curled into the sorcerer trying to disappear from the world.

“It okay not to be okay Tony. You don’t always have to be fine. I understand needing to keep face for the public but please never put on a mask for me. I’m here with you. Through thick and thin.”

“Geez, it almost sounds like you’re proposing to me” Tony sniffs and buries his head into Stephens’s chest messing up his hair but not caring in the slightest.

“And if I was? What would you say?” Stephen inquired curiously.

Swallowing thickly Tony looked up “I would say I’d love to-“ he stopped himself and looked down

Taking Tony’s chin Stephen lifted it upward, a gentle smile on his lips “But?”
"-but I don’t think I’m in a good place mentally and there is a lot still happening and-"

Tony cut himself off from his rambling at Stephen chuckling.

"It’s okay Tony I wasn’t asking just yet. I was simply curious if that’s something that is in our future."

"Says the holder of the time stone” Tony muttered almost dejectedly, but perked up at the implications of the sorcerer’s words. “Our future?”

“Well yeah. Like I said through thick and thin. And I love you. I’m not just going to let that go. I did that once. It was the worst decision in my life.”

“Worse than the distracted driving that caused your accident?”

“Much worse, though my accident lead me back to you so I really have nothing to complain about”

“Hey boys, is it safe to enter?” A knock on the door was heard followed by Carols question.

“Come on in Captain” Tony said not moving from his spot.

Opening the door Carol surveyed the room suspiciously a slight smirk on her lips. “Glad to see you could keep you clothes on.” She quipped jokingly and then got serious. “It’s time. You guys ready?”

****

The stage was set up and the only people missing from it were Carol, Rhodes, Tony, and Stephen.

A panel was set up similarly to how it had been before but this time the table was much smaller and the majority of the team sat to the side, in a clear show of support.

At the table sat Jennifer and Vision with 4 empty chairs. Darcy, Jane, and Betty sat in the front row in the reserved section along with Karen, Trish, and Christine as pre approved reporters.

The crowd grew silent when Tony ascended the stairs of the platform, his arm linked with Stephens. Carol and Rhodes followed with their own arms interlocked.

All four of them sat, quiet words were exchanged briefly as the rest of the people around quieted down.

Carol stood gathering everyone’s attention.

“Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us here today. Clearly we aren’t doing this meeting on the best of terms and for that I apologize. Everyone in attendance has been pre approved and given an appropriate list of questions to ask. If you deter from the given list your questions might not be answered. Please keep in mind no matter how transparent the Avengers are it does not mean that you have rights to a team member’s private life, regardless of their social standings. Dr. Stark is willing to answer questions but please keep his personal life out of your questions at this time. But before we get to questions I am going to read a statement here to recap what we know at this time so we are all on the same page.” Carol cleared her throat and held a paper up to read from.

“On January 1st 2017 at 4:00 AM eastern time, several videos were released to the general public through the internet. These videos contained graphic violence, terrorist threats, and other details of
Tony Stark’s hardships the last few years. This breach in security was due to a disgruntled Hydra agent that had worked at Stark Industries under Obadiah Stane’s supervision and Baron Zemo the man behind the UN bombing and murder of King T’Chaka. It was done to further the distrust between the world and the Avengers.” Carol continued, speaking the facts of the investigation that had occurred and how there was now evidence prepared for when the Rogue Avengers were apprehended.

It was after that Tony started taking questions, as it was mainly him being asked them.

It wasn’t until near the end when Christine spoke up with her questions.

“Tony” She has long since started calling the man by his first name “Why did you keep funding the Avengers after everything with Ultron ended? It’s clear now that you avoided the team with Maximoff on it. And you were already doing so much with the relief efforts and such. Why fund them though?”

“I see you don’t want to stick to script” Tony quipped

“I was never one to read from one, you knew that when you invited me here, now please can you answer my question?”

“The idea of the Avengers is simple, a group of remarkable beings that can do things others can’t and protect those who need it. That was what the idea was born from. She-“ Tony gestures to Carol “is the birth of the idea. No matter how hurt I was the world still needed, no still needs Avengers. There will be a time something or someone comes knocking and we need to be able to stop any threat against our planet. We’ve learned we aren’t alone and I had the right idea with Ultron just the wrong means and in the process I accidentally released an intelligence I had no way of controlling. So if you get anything from my rambling Christine the reason I hadn’t pulled funding is because the Avengers were and are still needed. Anymore questions from you?”

“You know me so well”

Tony hummed at her, his lips twitched in amusement.

“I’m actually curious about your Binary Augmented Retro-Framing. You didn’t make it just because of Afghanistan did you? It also was because of everything else following that, wasn’t it?”

“You figured that out, huh?”

“It wasn’t that hard”

“Yeah I made it with the intent of clearing traumatic memories, hoping that it would help me rest easy. And figured if I could get it to work it would help so many others.” Tony said while glancing towards James to give Christine the hint. She simply smiled in response.

“With your talk about the Avengers being needed, if that time comes, what are your feelings about the Rogue members? Will you welcome them back if they are needed?”

Tony gave her a look, he knew what she was doing, and he had planned for it but still.

“That’s a tough question to answer. If I’m being honest I want to say no. But this isn’t about me; contrary to popular belief I do care for more than just myself. If the time comes and the Rogue members are needed I won’t stand in their way to help however they can. But keep in mind that I’m not the one that makes the actual decision. That’s the UN and Accords council’s call if they get pardoned along with the US Government and other countries as well. But personally if they do
come back I don’t see myself working with any of them, so I’ll just put that out there now. Hopefully that answered your question. Is there any more questions?”

“Miss Walters is there a possibility that the Rogue Avengers will actually get pardons with the charges against them, especially Steve Rogers and Wanda Maximoff?”

“The likelihood of that varies situationally. I would like to say that will never happen, but looking back at the Battle of New York against the Chitauri, well if something like that were to come around again I feel like we’d need all hands on deck. It’s a tough situation here and we as a team have already had discussions of such events and how we would move forward to continue to protect our planet. As of right now we don’t need to worry about such things but I promise if the time comes, Earth will be our first priority. Regarding the two individuals you named, well I cannot speak for the judges and council members but I can assume that there will be actions against them and punishments to follow through when the time comes.”

——

Wakanda

January 4th

The five rogues watch in utter dismay as questions were asked, and they themselves were being spoken of.

Though Scott actually had been oddly calm in his cell the entire time, as though he wasn’t worried or knew something the others didn’t.

Clint looks frustrated, yet there was an odd sense of relief he was feeling. Does this mean he could get away from this mess and try and fix what he screwed up?

Sam kept glancing at Steve worry etched on his face, not just for the man but for the entire situation.

Wanda was livid she had started snarling at one point when someone spoke of her and her brother and the evidence against her. She was yanking at the suppression collar around her neck and shouting in her native language.

Steve, well he just stared at the screen in disbelief. He knew there were choices he could have done differently but he did the best with what he had. He had never meant to hurt anyone especially not Howard’s son but as reporters started talking about the mental abuse that Tony must have received, he started questioning everything he had ever done.

He was trying to protect Tony right?

Wrong, he had been protecting Bucky.

He was protecting his friend

‘So was I’

Tony’s voice echoes in the soldier’s head.

Tony had been his friend too, yet Steve nearly murdered him, at least that what all the evidence was pointing towards.
“I don’t understand” Steve said quietly not even sure who he was talking to or what he didn’t understand.

“What’s there not to understand Rogers” Shuri basically spat. T’Challa hushed her and spoke “You see this press conference was aired a day ago and since then the UN has made an active effort in the push to find you all of you. Also with the recent release of information our people, the ones who know that you’re here, are no longer comfortable having you here. So we’ve made a deal with the UN and you will soon be in their custody.” T’Challa sounded almost smug as he broke the news to Steve and the others.

—-

**Stark Tower**

**January 5th**

“Boss, Shuri is requesting a video call” Friday spoke gently through the uplink

Tony looked up from his workbench realizing he had been there for a while, and was surprised no one had come to pull him away

“Put her on” he said under his breath.

The Wakandan Princess’ smiling face lit up the screen in front of the genius, it faltered slightly at the disheveled look of the man. But it was still there nonetheless.

“I had far too much fun with knocking them out and throwing them in a cell.” Shuri bounced in her seat. “Ross is planning on coming to get them soon. Other than that everything else will be out of our hands, I’ll be sure to keep you updated when the council gets any information.”

“Thank you your Highness for everything.” Tony says sincerely.

Shuri looked away in a rare moment of bashfulness at the sincerity Tony was showing.

“Let’s hope we don’t have to worry about them after this for awhile.” the Princess offered after a beat of silence.

“Here’s to hoping” Tony said with a cross of his fingers, “Here's to hoping,” he repeats quietly under his breath.

---

**Chapter End Notes**

Welp! The Rogues are in custody! Now what?  
We shall see!!!
I hope the flow of the chapter worked for everyone! I need to get through these plot points so I can get back to more fluff!  
Feedback is always appreciated!  
Until the next chapter!
Nightmares and Incoming

Chapter Summary

Wed January 18th- Tony needs a break
Thurs January 19th- Stephen’s Dark Dimension anniversary.
Sat. January 21st Matt Mourns his father
Monday January 23rd- Back to work, Incoming...

Chapter Notes

So this has kinda turned into a filler chapter...
I apologize if anyone is disappointed...
On May 14th I was rear ended by a very unapologetic, unsympathetic entitled white woman who admitted to me that she was distracted, and didn’t look up before she accelerated right into me. And then proceeded to make me feel like I unconvined her... anyway long story short the last couple weeks have been me dealing with insurance totaling my car, needing to find a new car and going to physical therapy since my back and hip are fuck up (my foot was on the brake since it was a red light) and work and other things life is throwing at me... so this chapter is kinda not my best work but I wanted to get something to you guys.
Anyways
I hope you enjoy the chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The following two weeks there had been a lot of phone calls.
A lot of interviews.
A lot of everything.

Tony was ready to mentally check out.

Thankfully he had been able to keep his distance for the UN’s proceedings against the Rouge Avengers. Carol and Rhodes had stepped in as the voice of the Avengers, and taken charge of handling the majority of its all.

But that didn’t stop his work from piling up.

The billionaire was up to his eyeballs in R&D paperwork, requested and such for Stark Industries and had a ton of legal stuff to work through for the Avengers.

Tony’s head thudded against his desk.
When was the last time he had slept an entire night?

Sure he went to bed but normally his insomnia kept him up or woke him up early so he hadn’t really gotten a full nights worth of REM sleep and he was feeling the effects.

As though on queue the sound of a portal echoed through the room.

“Carter engage black out protocol override code Sierra seven one nine” Stephen ordered quirking a brow at Tony daring him to fight.

“Black out protocol engaged Doctor. Is there a preferable time to disengage it?” came Carter’s response.

Stephen thought momentarily before nodding “Please do so on Monday at 6 AM”

“Sure thing Doctor” Carter chirped happily.

Tony made an outraged sound of defiance. “5 days Stephen? That’s too much! Pepper is going to kill me if I leave all this till next week” he gestured to the mountain of work on top of his desk

“She will be fine, I’ve already talked with her. Besides Doctors orders” Stephen looked smug as he said the words that would shut Tony up.

Tony grumbled but indeed stayed quiet at that.

——

It wasn’t long until Tony found his back hitting the wall of Stephen and his room in the Sanctum.

Head thrown back a guttural moan escaped the billionaire. Stephen’s mouth was against the exposed throat in no time sucking and biting.

“Shit” Tony cussed breathlessly.

Hard erections rubbed each other as Stephen hoisted Tony up further against the wall. Hips bucked at the friction.

No words were said as clothes were shed and thrown to the side and Tony found himself being basically tossed onto their bed.

A surprised sound escaped him, one that sounded almost like a squeak. Stephen grinned and climbed onto the bed.

The two men got comfortable. In the beginning they had clearly been in the heat of passion but as soon as they were there in the bed together everything slowed and the two men caressed and softly touched each other. Quiet words of love were whispered between them and they made love into the night.

——

Tony woke up to Stephen’s sounds of pain.

Glancing to the clock it read 5:00 AM January 19th.

Tony couldn’t remember going to sleep but he definitely had gotten at least 6 good hours of sleep in which he considered a win.
Tony jumped as Stephen let out a yelp and sat up. Perspiration glistened on the sorcerer's face; his eyes were wide, panicked and unseeing to reality around him.

Tony knew that look, he had sported it many times himself.

“Stephen” Tony said tentatively while reaching out to touch Stephen’s cheek in an attempt to draw the sorcerer's attention. To bring him back to the present.

Stephen’s eyes darted to Tony and the tension quickly left the man's shoulders as he realized he was safe.

“I’m sorry, did I wake you?” Stephen had a weird undertone in his voice, a defeated sort of sound.

“Steph- What-?” Tony was shaken; he had never seen Stephen like this.

“It’s nothing I’m-“

“Stephen don’t start. That’s my line” Tony attempted to joke “Talk to me love” his hands caressed Stephen’s face “Please” the billionaire was not above begging.

“I lost count-” Stephen started quietly his voice cracking as he crumpled into Tony. The billionaire stayed quiet waiting for Stephen to continue. “A year ago- remember those weird readings you asked me about and I told you about the dark dimension and a being named Dormammu?”

Tony paled remembering, “Steph, I’m so sorry I’ve been so wrapped up in everything else I completely didn’t realize what day it was.”

A small smile graced Stephen’s face “Don’t worry I won’t hold it against you, honestly I didn’t remember it either not until I woke up from a nightmare of the entire ordeal.” Stephen sounded bitter.

“Hey how about we make some tea and take a bath. Since I’m on a doctor ordered leave we can just spend the day relaxing and ignoring the world. How does that sound?” Tony suggested

“That sounds fantastic. What did I do to deserve you?”

“I ask the same question everyday” Tony smirked at the double meaning of his words and Stephen just snorted in amusement.

——

The day had been spent intimately and quietly together.

No fanfare.

Nothing fancy.

Just two men in love spending a quiet day together ignoring the noise of the world around them.

Tony had suggested a trip to one of his islands, through portal of course but Stephen thought it best just to stay in town together. Though they had made it to the penthouse of the Tower because Wong had basically chased them out of the kitchen of the Sanctum, due to seeing things he definitely didn’t want to see.

Tony was curled into Stephen’s side as they watched Sherlock. They hadn’t had much time to watch their shows but moments like this gave them some time to do so.
Tony was surprised though when he heard the distinct sounds of Stephen sleeping. He smiled gently and nuzzled a bit into the sorcerer. Moments like this were hard to come by for the men, since they were so busy, so Tony was going to enjoy what he could, while he could.

——

It was dark, but there were colors all around. Tony had never seen anything like it before.

“Dormammu, I’ve come to bargain” Stephens voice echoes slightly, in wherever they were.

Tony’s gaze snaps to where the voice came from, and gasps as he watches Stephen get impaled. And then it resets.

This jarred Tony.

What was-?

Oh.

No.

“Dormammu, I’ve come to bargain”

And he attacked again and again and Tony’s shouts and hollers meant nothing. The billionaire was suspended there watching as the sorcerer was killed again and again and-

“You will never win” the dark entity rumbles

“No, but I can lose again and again and again and again forever. And that makes you my prisoner” and Stephen is killed again.

——

Tony shoots up shouting an exclamatory. Sweat soaked his entire body and he shakes from the adrenaline in his system.

Stephen is still asleep, but clearly distressed. Tony doesn’t hesitate to wake the man up, shaking him and nearly yelling his name.

Stephen’s eyes open but they look around wildly not truly seeing what is actually there but seeing what his nightmare was showing him, Tony can tell.

The billionaire moves to straddle the sorcerer and put himself directly in his line of sight.

“Steph, come on. Wake up. Look at me. I am here with you. You’re not in the Dark Dimension. You’re not there. You’re at Starktower. You are safe” Tony starts chanting short comforting phrases. As Stephen slowly comes to. His eyes showing a level of awareness that wasn’t there a bit ago.

Tony sighed and moved to lean in, resting his forehead against Stephen’s. Nose to nose Tony continued to whisper words of comfort. His entire body numb from the shock of everything that had happened in the last… however long he’d slept for and now been awake for.

“Tony?” Stephen croaked our questionably “What-?”

“Shh, don’t worry about it right now just breathe and lay with me” Tony hushed his lover and
moved to the side, pulling Stephen so they were laying on their sides staring at each other.

——

“Oh god” Stephen said for the umpteenth time “Tony I am so sorry I-“

“Stephen shut up. You didn’t do it on purpose hell you don’t even know how you did it so stop apologizing. I’m okay. Sure watching you die over and over again is definitely something I never want to see again but that’s nothing compared to the fact that you actually lived through it. I can’t even begin to imagine how you felt after that entire ordeal. Don’t apologize.”

“Maybe we should spend a couple of nights-“

“Don’t you dare finish that sentence. First and foremost you know I can’t sleep without you anymore, if I sleep at all and secondly as you said a few weeks ago through thick and thin, right? I’m not leaving your side especially not over a nightmare I somehow got pulled into so don’t you even start with me.”

——

From then on the weekend had been relaxing for the two men. Other than that first night the rest of them had been very low key.

Though Saturday Tony had joined Matt at church and around Hell’s Kitchen as the blind man mourned for his father. When Jessica showed up Tony bid the duo a good night and left the two of them to lean on each other.

Monday had been a relatively relaxed day back in the office.

Tony was sitting at his desk examining some paperwork.

There were testimonies from the Rogues scattered about with R&D requests, and a few incident reports from the weekend.

Sighing he scrubbed his face. “Carter please be a dear and look through all digital copies and see if anything demands my attention.”

“Of course chief. I’m on it” came her dutiful reply.

The two of them talked through a couple of incident reports that involved Spider-Man and Miss Marvel. A copy was sent to May as per request.

It was about an hour later when his peace was disrupted by a loud alert sound blaring.

“Boss something has entered the atmosphere. I’m picking up 7 life forms and it appears that they’re reaching out trying to make contact, they appear non-hostile, I’m picking up the phrase Man of Iron in the message as well.” Ice flooded Tony’s veins at Friday’s words.

Chapter End Notes
Sorry for my rambling at the beginning.
Anyways hopefully I can get the time and focus to get the next chapter written in and up for you guys since we’re actually getting to the drama here soon!
Again I’m sorry for the smaller chapter and that I took a long time to get this up...
Determination

Chapter Summary

The Guardians have arrived.

Chapter Notes

Well it appears I’m on some sort of writing spree!  
It doesn’t help that I can’t get comfortable, or sleep for very long. Which is definitely frustrating...  
Anyway here’s another chapter!  
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Monday 23rd

Mid-afternoon

“Boss something has entered the atmosphere. I’m picking up 7 life forms and it appears that they’re reaching out trying to make contact, they appear non-hostile, I’m picking up the phrase Man of Iron in the message as well.” Ice flooded Tony’s veins at Friday’s words.

The next half hour was filled with a flurry of activity. Stephen had portaled in immediately, and had effectively calmed the panicked billionaire down while getting Carol and Rhodes portaled back to the compound to greet the incoming spacecraft. Everyone else was on standby in various places. Carol had flown up after arriving and confronted the incoming craft, moments later she came back, a light relaxed smile on her face as she relayed the information that they were allies and she knew of them.

The Guardians of the Galaxy.

Tony had simply nodded at her words; his shoulders still tense as reasons why aliens were showing up again ran through his head.

And why were they looking for Iron Man?

Stephen was standing silently beside the genius as his head worked through what was happening.

“I think the four of us should be the only ones to meet with them at the moment we can debrief everyone else once we get the reason why their team is here.” Carol suggested looking to Stephen to include him, she knew Tony wasn’t in the most stable of places at the moment and having Stephen definitely kept the billionaire grounded.

Levi had moved from Stephen to Tony, and was currently using a technique that they had perfected to help calm Tony down. Since physical touch was such a sensitive thing with him and he wasn’t
big on public embracing they were surprised to find that a tight hug from someone trustworthy gave Tony something to grasp to, during a high anxiety situation. But being in public caused issues with vulnerability. Enter Levi with its ability to not make Tony look vulnerable while having and anxiety crisis; it was the best possible course of action.

Tony cleared his throat, rolled his shoulders, and took a deep breath his hand laid against his chest where Stephen’s pendent rested.

“I can do this”

Peter Quill, Gamora, Nebula, Rocket, Groot, Drax and Mantis were sitting on one side of the large conference room while Carol, Rhodes, Tony, and Stephen were on the other side.

“Thank you for you hospitality. We were unsure where to approach from. We figured that coming in the area where the initial invasion occurred would give us the best possible outcome to find you before we instilled any panic. And the only information we have about that is that the army had been blown up by a Man of Iron…” the Green skinned women trailed off looking over the four faces in front of her. A flinch from Tony captured her attention. “Can I presume that, that is you?” She asked curiously.

Tony nodded tensely. “Though before we talk about me can we get to the reason you are here?”

“Of course, I’ll start from the beginning” Gamora spoke in a soft placating manner.

She told the four Earth hero’s about Thanos and his battle against the Galaxy for balance, how he took her and Nebula and raised them to believe his beliefs. She touched on the torture that Loki endured and how Thanos had used the Mind Stone on Loki and then sent the Demigod to do his bidding on earth. How she had met the other Guardians. The Power stone. Her change of heart. She brushed over an incident with Quill’s father and how they had met Mantis and how she reconciled with her sister. Now the 7 of them were going around making sure the stones were secure and safe, as Thanos had been relatively quiet since his adopted daughters had left.

“Ok let me get this straight. Loki was brainwashed, essentially, and sent here to obtain the Space stone that was in the Tesseract while using the Mind stone but also being controlled by it?” Tony was stuck on that fact.

He had known something was up with that entire situation and even had a file on everything regarding Loki so if the time came that they saw each other again they could try to clear the air.

“Yes that is correct” Gamora was perplexed as to why Tony was focused on that particular point of her story, but she shrugged it off and observed the man who had clearly been through a lot.

“Friday you got all that right?” Tony asked without thinking.

“I’ve recorded all of it and Carter has made a transcript of the conversation as well. I’ve also taken the liberty to inform Vision since he will most likely be needed.”

“Thanks Fri” Tony muttered pulling up a hologram in front of him, again without thinking.


“That was one of my AI’s.” Tony said distracted by files he was pulling up.
The Guardians just watched the billionaire in a state of awe, as he seemed to get lost in projection in front of him. Stephen cleared his throat and nudged Tony to gather his attention back to the company that was there.

“Wait! You understood Groot?” Rocket asked, speaking for the first time since they got there.

“Hm?” Tony inquired looking up; red tinted his cheeks a bit at his haste to get all the information he’d received documented.

“I am Groot! I am Groot, I am Groot. I am Groot?” The teen sized being was extremely excited and had become quite animated after Tony had responded to his question.

“Yes?” Tony was confused slightly until he realized what was really being said versus what he was hearing.

“Boss I believe that the current anomaly happening has something to do with your ability to understand rudimentary sounds that the bots make, along with the added bonus’ of the new reactor and the abilities that came with the upgrade.” FRIDAY supplied an explanation out loud for the others to hear while she simultaneously showed him some of the math and equations through the uplink.

Tony simply nodded as his eyes glazed over slightly.

“Huh?” Quill made a confused sound.

“Why is the ceiling talking? It doesn’t sound like a robot. Is there a lady in the walls?” Mantis looked around in awe as she too spoke for the first time.

“It’s a long story” Carol supplied, suppressing a laugh that the intergalactic hero’s seemed awestruck by the tech they were seeing as though they hadn’t seen more advanced things other places.

“Is all of Terra this advanced? I thought they were still fairly unadvanced.” Nebula had curiosity shining through her eyes even with the slight sneer Tony could see the humanoids curiosity.

Interest had peaked within him when they initially met and he had yet to inquire about her race and why she seemed to have so many mechanical parts to her. He hoped later that he could, looking past her outward demeanor she appeared to be a fairly intriguing woman.

“Nah, everything here is a bit higher of tech then most humans can afford” Rhodes explained “He runs a tech company that actually used to be a weapon manufacturer that was passed to him from his father. So he grew up with an advantage that others don’t normally get.” The Colonel said without any malice, as he was just trying to explain the differences that earth offered to different people.

“I’m so confused” Quill leaned forward rubbing his temples.

Upon speaking Tony looked at the human man, FRIDAY had already run a check on him and had provided information about the boy who disappeared in Missouri after his mother died. Which lined up with the story of his father and explained the weird anomaly that happened the previous year in that area.

“I mean you left Earth 29 years ago obviously there are gonna be bigger and better things” Tony said leaning back a bit, feeling more relaxed as time progressed. “Anyways back to the initial point of why you and your team have come to earth”
"We thought it imperative to inform you of the incoming threat of Thanos. That the original invasion was his doing and hopefully we can assist you in preparing for his next coming.” Gamora started, and Tony got a chill down his spine as she spoke the words that had been echoing in his head since 2011.

“That and to touch base on the stones currently on Terra. We know the Mind stone is here” Nebula spoke up.

“And we were informed by Krugarr, a Lem sorcerer and Ravager Captain that the Sorcerer Supreme of Earths Masters of the Mystic Arts held responsibility over protecting the Time stone” Quill finished looking to Stephen. Levi fluttered a bit around Tony’s neck in a nervous fashion as though it suddenly wanted to rest on Stephen’s shoulders.

“Indeed” Stephen spoke curtly unsure how much to give away.

“We mean no ill will and don’t intend to take it if that’s what you’re worried about” Gamora soothed the Sorcerers worries. “We just want to make sure you’re aware of the threat and be sure that it was indeed protected.” Stephen nodded at her and left it at that.

Suddenly the door opened and Vision floated in.

“FRIDAY summoned me, said I was needed.” The android looked and sounded bemused.

“Guardians this is Vision, he is the current holder of the Mind stone.” Carol introduces him, as she did he gracefully moved to stand behind Tony’s chair looking a bit more cautious as the Mind stone was mentioned.

Rocket sputtered a bit at the being in front of him. “Geez Quill why did we get stuck with you clearly there are better Terrans to pick from here.” He gestured to Tony in an exasperated manner.

“Shut up Trash Panda” Quill snarked, a burst of laughter from Tony surprised everyone.

“I’m sorry, but that was funny. I’m normally the one throwing around nicknames, it’s nice to see others do it as well” the billionaire explained.

“Can we get back to the task at hands please” Nebula growled slightly rolling her shoulders and wincing in discomfort. Tony heard a crackle of electricity and he suddenly had an idea.

“We still have a lot to talk about, but I’m sure your team is tired and in a bit of need of R&R. How about we take a break and I’ll get food ordered and we can reconvene in a more comfortable setting.” Tony looked around, with no objections Tony stood with a slight nod. “Carol if you want to brief everyone on what’s going on so they don’t come barging in that would be great. Let’s meet up in an hourish in the private wing living room. FRIDAY put in an order for food for everyone here and send some to the Tower so the others have something to eat too since they’re waiting.” As Tony stood there briefly giving instructions Stephen felt his chest swell at the strength his lover was showing. “Hey Blue Meanie how about you and I chat for a bit. I think I can help you with that wiring issue you seem to be having with your arm” the genius spoke as he turned to walk away, Levi fluttering in its usual dramatics as they left

Everyone in the room seemed surprised at the sudden plan, dismissal, and departure, but no one commented.

Nebula stood without hesitating and moved to follow Tony a slight quirk on her lips at the sudden nickname.
“Well he warmed up faster than I anticipated” Rhodey muttered handing over a 20-dollar bill to Carol after Tony had completely disappeared.

“Never forget this Jim. I am always right” Carol smirked and snatched the money away from her boyfriend, tucking it away in her bra.

“He’s my best friend I think I know him better than you.” Rhodes seemed put out that he had lost a bet against Carol regarding Tony.

“Yes well I also have more information about the Guardians of the Galaxy and knew exactly who Tony would take a liking to, so there” the duo were arguing without concern over who was listening.

“Would you two shut up? We’re not really in company to argue over such petty things” Stephen interjected “Besides if anyone can claim to know Tony the best that would be me” the cocky doctor smirked at his double meaning.

“Ew, shut up!” Rhodes covers his ears with a grimace.

Suddenly a loud booming laughter filled the air.

“This reminds me of arguments that happen frequently” Drax laughs

“The energy is just as positive as well,” Mantis giggles leaning on Drax as she soaked in his amusement, her antennae glowing.

“I am Groot, I am Groot?”

“It seems like he was offering to help her” Rocket answered whatever question Groot had just asked.

“She just left with him like that?” Quill asked out loud very clearly confused.

“She must trust him, which is not an easy thing for my sister. Anyway I believe your leader had the right idea I think a bit of time to wash up and unwind before eating would be a wise idea.” Gamora concluded.

“Your welcome to use the in house facilities. If you ask CARTER she can instruct you to where you can go. CARTER they have clearance into the private wing with authorization from Stephen Vincent Strange”

“Authorization approved Doctor. Peter Jason Quill, Gamora, Rocket, Drax, Mantis, Groot, And Nebula have all been added to level 9 clearance. Is there anything else I can do for you?” The young AI asked

“That's all for now, thank you dear” Stephen smiled tenderly at the AI’s need to be useful and her clear want to live up to her predecessors.

“So there are 2 AI’s” Quill asked confused.

“FRIDAY is Tony’s personal one, CARTER in the compounds AI, she runs the place. She’s also fairly new so she’s still learning.” Carol explained gathering her own stuff.

“These AI’s learn?” Rocket asked curious.

“Yes, they are like children essentially. Mr. Stark made them and raised them. They have
personalities. They are able to express themselves to an extent and can gather their own outlook on the world. FRIDAY has sass like Mr. Stark versus CARTER is a bit more mellow. JARVIS, a previous AI was used to help bring me into existence. His memories and experiences with Mr. Stark are integrated into my memory, I am not JARVIS though I have his voice and memories so it can be slightly disorienting at times” Vision explained.

A few more questions were spent asking about the identities of the Carol, Rhodes, Stephen and Tony themselves, Carol and Rhodes gave their quick spiel, though Carol took a bit longer taking about the Kree and her part in the war that had been quieted since she had stepped in as an informed ally of the Skrull who just wanted peace.

Upon the mention of Goose the Flerken Rocket got twitchy and appeared nervous.
Laughing Carol attempted to soothe the enhanced being. “She’s not here she spends most of her time elsewhere. No need to worry”

After that they dispersed for the time being.

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“So daddy issues, aren’t they great?” Tony asked nonchalantly breaking the silence as he examined the intricate wiring that looked like an amateur did it. “Geez Smurfette, when’s the last time you’ve had someone fix any of this?”

“These are all used parts I’ve picked up that are suitable for my needs” she ignores the father issue comment and answers the billionaire.

Tony made an offended sound and shook his head. “Well looks like I have a new project to work on” though the comment might be taken as a complaint Nebula saw the spark of wonder and excitement in the mans eyes. It was the kind of look Rocket got when new technology was put in front of him, or if a new gun was given to Gamora, or even if Quill got new music. Nebula shook her head. When had she become so sentimental?

“How long are you guys staying here?” Tony asked while gently touching exposed wires.

“They were planning of briefing you all and then leaving to continue warning others. As for me I wanted to accompany them to Terra to check in on the Stones here and then I was going to attempt to take Thanos out myself. Before he could get any further.” Nebula explained the plan.

“Give me at least 7 days and I can have several upgrades for you. That is if you want. I’m fairly certain I can fix these parts but I feel like if you’re gonna go up against the big bad you should have something better than used parts. I would like to help.”

“Why?”

Tony shrugged “Because I like a challenge”

“Alright Man of Iron I’ll wait for your upgrades though do you mind helping with this annoying miswiring?”

“Sure, sure. And just call me Tony. You sound like Thor when you call me Man of Iron.” Tony chuckled and got to work

Nebula scoffed “The Asgardian? He’s who speaks of you. That’s how you are known. There were references of a man blowing up the Chitauri army sent to take control over Terra. It wasn’t until
the oaf known as Thor started going around looking for Infinity stones that you were named as Terra's Mightiest Defender. Though so you know Thanos does know of you and your name so don’t be surprised if you come across him and he singles you out. You are one of the biggest threats in his way. He will stop at nothing to enact his view of balance on the Galaxy. Which is why I must stop him. He has put me and my sister through too much. Justice must be enacted.”

“Just be careful Nebula” Tony said gently saying her name with such softness that she took a double take.

“I just told you of a threat against you and you’re telling me to be careful? You are a strange man Tony Stark.”

“I’ve been called worse” Tony chuckles and continued his work in comfortable silence.

——-

About two hours later Nebula and Tony appeared in the private wing living room. Neither was looking the least bit ashamed of being late.

“Glad you guys didn’t wait. We took a bit longer talking shop than I anticipated” Tony said while he went to dish himself up some food and plopped down next to Stephen. “Smurfette help yourself” Tony aimed at Nebula who suddenly looked awkward standing there alone.

Gamora looked over her sister, as she went to dish herself up some Terran food, which was surprisingly really good in her opinion, and was surprised to see some slight changes to the metal on Nebula’s body. She wondered how deep the changes went and how much the human mechanic had messed with.

The sister’s eyes met and Nebula gave Gamora a slight nod of her head at the unasked question between them, as though to say ‘I’m okay’

“Allright so we have a homicidal maniac bent on eliminating half of the entire universe to create his view of balance because his planet got destroyed by overpopulation? Did I get that right?” Tony asked with his mouth full.

“That basically sums it up.” Gamora admitted.

Tony sighed and took another bite.

After taking a few minutes to eat he sighed and leaned forward, setting his plate down.

“Shit” he cussed quietly, running his hands through his salt and pepper hair. “This is it,” he whispers

A few more beats of silence and he sits up straight looking at the Guardians. “Do we have a timeline? He asks.

“Honestly there is no telling with him. He currently has no stones but the minute he has one we’d at a disadvantage.” Gamora admits

“After this we’re on our way back to collect the Power stone and see what we can do about it. We have a feeling that it won’t be safe on Xandar for much longer. We don’t know where the reality stone is at the moment last we heard the Asguardian's did something with it, I believe they have the space stone too.” Quill continues.
“The soul stones location is unknown” Nebula said tensely, Tony caught Gamora’s flinch from the corner of his eyes

“And you guys have the Mind and Time stone” Quill finished.

Vision touched his head at the mention of the stone. Concern flitted across his features.

“I believe it might be imperative to remove it from my head and destroy it” the android thought out loud.

Tony’s eyes shot to the man, concern flooding him. “What makes you think that’s the best option?”

“It this stone is destroyed then he would be unable to finish his collection of them all. We don’t know the effects that destroying the others stones would bring, the only effect with this stone would be my life.” Vision reasoned

“We’re not risking that,” Tony snapped

“Also if he somehow got his hands on the time stone he would just be able to bring it back into existence by essentially rewinding time” Stephen supplied solemnly feeling frustrated that yet another threat was looming over them.

“Well it looks like we really got some talking and planning to do. Though I think more discussions should be done with the rest of our team. We also need to inform the UN and Accords council. Shit this is just going to be a cluster fuck of a mess.” Tony said while looking to Carol.

“Do you guys mind staying for a week, maybe two just so we can get everything in order before you leave?” Carol asked looking over them

“I can supply you guys with any tech or material you need to patch up you ship. This would also give me and the blue meanie over there time to finish her upgrades too” Tony offered. Glancing towards Rocket as he clearly was the mechanic of the Guardians.

“Depends what you got to offer. I’d love to check that out,” Rocket pointed to the slightly visible reactor in Tony's chest.

“I can show you a different version of this and we can see if it would help your ship performance” Tony bargained.

“Alright Terran let’s see what you got then.” Rocket challenged standing up.

“Cool it Ratchet we can meet up tomorrow after we get everyone else up to speed. It’s getting late and I need my beauty rest”

“Oh please as if you need more of that” the enhanced animal joked

——

The Guardians were settled into their own rooms and the Avenger leaders had separated for the night. After a brief rundown with the occupants in the Tower Tony and Stephen turned in for the night.

Tony was laying on the bed his eyes looking up unseeing, as Stephen walked out of the bathroom, the sorcerer took in Tony and quickly came to the assumption that as he was currently either deep
in thought or conversing with FRIDAY over the uplink, or both.

Dressed in boxers and a comfortable shirt her moved to enter the bed. Adjusting himself and Tony under the covers.

“Fri dim the lights please,” Stephen asked as he pulled Tony against him, the lights going down was the only response he received. The genius didn’t fight the movement and simply tucked himself into Stephen’s hold. Deep breathing could be heard echoing in the quiet room.

“This is it.” Tony whispers the words he had spoken earlier. “The threat that I kept going on about. It’s Thanos. I’m not completely insane” Tony chuckles lightly at the last sentence, Stephen simply squeezed him closer in show of comfort and support.

“We’ll get through this. No matter what we will all get through this alive.” Stephen promised without thinking.

“You can’t promise such thing Stephanie. Don’t set either of us up for failure. I can’t lose you in this. I know you have a duty to protect the Time stone at all costs so don’t promise me anything because I won’t be able to live in a world without you and I’m fairly certain you can reciprocate the same feelings reversed” Tony felt tears well up in his eyes as his throat constricted.

“I don’t know what to do. How do we prepare for something like this? We don’t know how much time we have, we could have a month or we could have a year everything is up in the air and I hate the unknown. The unknown is a wild card that I can’t mentally prepare myself for. I’m the futurist. How do I prepare for unknown variables?” Tony’s breathing was picking up as he started to work himself up into a panic.

Stephen hastily moved himself so the men were nose-to-nose and forehead to forehead, a hand caressed Tony’s cheek. “Tony, breath with me.” He simply said and started to exaggerate his own breathing.

After a minute or so of deep breathing Stephen lean slightly in for a light kiss. “We will get through this Tony” Stephens warm breath washed over Tony’s face.

Closing his eyes Tony took in all of the sensory stuff around him.

The feeling of Stephen’s body against his.

The sound of Stephen’s words of comfort and his breathing.

The smell of Stephen’s entire being.

Leaning in for a kiss he took in the taste of the sorcerer’s mouth, recently brushed.

Opening his eyes he took in the look of admiration that Stephen was staring at him with.

His heart twinged.

“We will get through this” Tony echoed the look of determination strengthening in his eyes.
Tony has been filled with deTEMination! Lol!
(Who get the reference?)
Any who I’m working on this next chapter and oh boy! If you’re following the PoNR tumblr you know I am literally writing down the characters names so I can keep track of them!
It’s insane!
So many characters!
But as I said on tumblr...
But by god I’m doing it!!!
Until the next chapter which will hope done by the end of this week! Depending on how I feel and such.
New Avengers meet Guardians of the Galaxy

Chapter Summary

Tuesday January 24th
New Avengers meeting with Guardians

Chapter Notes

Oh boy!
Writing so many characters is A LOT of work!
I literally had to continuously write them down and even then I almost missed
James(Bucky)!!!
Anyway enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tuesday January 24th

“I clearly haven’t had enough to drink this morning,” Jessica said as she entered the conference room. She looked over the occupants there, and moved to retrieve the flask from her shoulder bag. She took a swig and unceremoniously fell into a chair beside Matt who was there in his street clothes.

“This is so cool” Peter said bouncing on the balls of his feet as he and the other two teens entered. “Can you believe we actually got out of school to talk to aliens?”

“Dude come one don’t embarrass yourself in front of them” Harley hissed from beside the excitable teen.

“You’re one to talk.” Kamala snickered “Didn’t you basically scream when Tony called you out of school?”

“Shut up Kam”

“I’m just happy that Dr. Strange was will to portal us all here I would hate to miss this” Shuri piped up from a spot at the table where she had saved seats for the other three.

Kamala squealed loudly in excitement at seeing her best friend and basically tackled the Wakandan out of the chair.

Tony and Stephen chuckled at the reunion between the two girls. The girls quickly became immersed in their own world as they started speaking to each other in quick hushed tones.

Peter and Harley simply rolled their eyes and sat in the empty seats that had been saved for them.

The next few minutes consisted of the large conference room filling up.
Carol, Rhodes, Tony, and Stephen sat at one end as Quill, Gamora, Nebula and Rocket sat at the other end.

Groot sat by Rocket and Mantis and Drax sat on the other side by each other, whispering loudly about their observations of Terra and the Humans, much to Quills disapproval.

Groot, who was normally on whatever gaming system he could get a hold of was fascinated in watching the four teams interact with each other and when Ben and the rest of the Fantastic Four entered his eyes widened at the rock like man, who sat in a reinforced chair right next to him.

Wade pouted about not sitting next to Peter but let it be after it was clear that Harley and Peter were in a deep conversation with Tony. On the other side sat the Defenders, Jennifer, Hope and Vision.

Vision and Drax were by each other and the Android was intently listening to the two aliens speak.

The last to arrive were Laura, Claire, Darcy, Jane, and Betty. They sat to the side in comfortable chairs along the wall to observe and be somewhat part of the meeting.

Maggie and Jim were back at Starktower watching the kids.

Xavier had requested to be briefeded at a later time due to the X-men’s busy schedule.

Sharon was currently being detained by UN officials during the current meetings about the Rogues, and same with Natasha.

With James’s therapy going so well he was asked to be brought in as a witness and observer of what had occurred the previous year.

So in total there were 33 people in the conference room.

——-

“Alright everyone I think we should start this impromptu meeting. We have a lot to go over.” Carol said standing up

“What you think you’re going to start the party without me here?” A deep voice asks as the door opens revealing Nick Fury.

Tony froze “Son of a Bitch” he hissed in his surprise. “Who invited the old man here?” Tony saw Carol flinch at his time tone “Don’t you have better things to do, like I don’t know continue playing dead? Or watch as people try to kill each other?”

“Stark-“ Fury made a motion to placate the agitated genius.

“No!” Tony shouted and stood up, the chair knocking back. “Fuck that, you knew. You knew everything and you played me, you used me. Same as them. I was a means to the end for you. You aren’t part of this. You can be briefed when everyone else does, until then get the hell off of this property, and if you don’t leave I sure as hell will.” Tony took a few steps back, avoiding the knocked over chair.

“I’m sorry Tony I thought having him here might be-“ Carol started but cut herself off “I didn’t think- I’m sorry” she quickly walked towards Fury and escorted the spy out of the room without any more words, other than a quiet ‘I’ll be right back’
“This is great! There’s more drama here then on the ship, I might actually enjoy this place” Rocket said breaking the silence.

“Fuck off Raccoon” Jessica snapped

Quill moved to silence the enhanced animal as he started to sneer at the dark haired woman “Shut up Rocket”

Stephen, ignoring the others, stood to face Tony who simply held his hand up and whispered, “Just give me a moment”

The sorcerer tapped Levi, and it promptly moved off of Stephen and straight onto Tony. Anyone who was watching could see Tony relax slightly.

Looking towards the Guardians, “Sorry about that. We can have a history lesson tomorrow, but for today let’s focus on why you guys are here and start putting together a plan so we have something to give to the UN tomorrow.” Tony suggested and moved back towards the table.

Stephen righted the chair and Tony sat.

Carol bustled back into the room “I’m so sorry Tony I didn’t even think. I should have asked you. Everything has just been happening so fast that I thought getting him-“

“It’s fine” Tony snapped shutting her down before he looked at her. His tense shoulders and hard eyes portraying to her that he was not fine. “We can talk about this later”

“Ohhh, Mom and Dad are fighting” Darcy sang in a loud whisper from the side, the 4 teens present snickered. Jane elbowed the younger woman while shushing her. “What? It’s true and I will bet you money that Flash Gordon and Poison Ivy over there fight all the time”

Tony laughed at the nicknames that Darcy labeled two of the Guardians with and raised his hand in the air.

Dashing out of her chair Darcy wound up and smacked Tony’s hand in a loud high five.

“Got ‘em” Peter said raising his own hand up for a high five.

Jennifer’s head hit the table. “This is gonna be a long morning isn’t it?”

“Don’t worry I have Coffee and donuts on the way” Tony soothed the already distraught lawyer.

“Thank god”

After the initial hiccup of Fury showing up, the meeting went fairly well.

After introducing everyone to each other the Guardians proceeded forward in explaining why they were on earth.

Gamora and Nebula went over their history with Thanos and what they had been subjected to and exposed to while working for him. They explained Thanos’ history and goals. What he hoped to achieve by collecting all infinity stones. They even went into explaining what each stone did.

Jane interjected with her side of the story regarding the reality stone. Fear tingling her voice as she spoke of it.
“I believe they talked about giving it to the collector to hold on to” Jane said in a questioning manner at the end of her story. Which Nebula and Gamora looked at each other nervously at that information.

Periodically Betty or Reed would ask a question as well but over all everyone was silently listening to the horror of what was coming their way.

Deadpool was even quieter than normal. Some muttering to the boxes here or there along with some obscure references that only he understood but he too was shocked.

“So this is what you were talking about” Matt broke the heavy silence that had been lingering in the room after Gamora seemed to be done talking. He aimed his words at Tony and everyone else looked to him too.

“Evidently” Tony said simply.

Exclamatory, cuss words, and sighs of different feelings were heard through the room.

“What does this all mean going forward? What do we need to do?” Hope asked. Her hand ran through her hair in a nervous manner.

“This is going to affect the Rogues trials, the officials are going to get twitchy and are going to want to and more man power.” Jennifer muttered as she rested her chin in her hands.

Several other questions and comments were fired off in quick succession.

Tony and Carol exchanged glances before Carol sighed and stood up.

“We’ll train. The Guardians of the Galaxy have offered to stay for a bit to help with some basic preparations and training. Gamora And Nebula has valuable intel and insight, let’s take the advantage we have here to prepare for when he does come.”

Tony stood next “It’s already come to my attention that there will most likely be a push to pardon some of the Rogues for the sake of manpower,” Tony looked to Jennifer “we need to stand together.” he looked around the table and lastly at Carol “Discordances among us will show weakness. And that the last thing we want others to see. You know I trust you all implicitly. And going forward I hope the same is still felt towards me. Things need to be done to prepare but I implore everyone here to remember, we are a team first and foremost. This is why the Avengers are a thing. This is why I ask you all go help.” Tony finished his speech with a small smile aimed towards everyone.

“The Guardians, Tony and I will be meeting with the UN tomorrow and from then forward we’ll be playing this by ear. Until you are given instructions let’s just go about business as usual. By next week we will start extra training.” Carols voice didn’t waver in strength as she instructed the team.

“No if there are any other questions that you may have for the Guardians now is the time to ask them.”

Several voices started talking at once.

Stephen’s hand slipped into Tony’s at the billionaire sighed and sat; squeezing it gently they exchanged a small smile.

Things would be okay. They had to be.
There was no way Tony was going to lose any of this.

He thought as he looked around at his family.

Carol’s gaze catching his own, guilt swam in her eyes.

Nodding once Tony said a quiet “We’re okay” to her, which seemed to relax her slightly.

“We will be” she responded back just as quietly.

——-

The rest of the day was spent getting to know each other.

Upon showing curiosity in the small group of teens Groot was openly welcomed. He became very excited to find that Harley and Peter could understand him just as their father figure had.

This shocked the Guardians. And caused endless teasing from Rocket towards Quill as it had taken him a lot longer to understand the Flora Colossus.

As the teens ran off to who knows where Tony shouted after them about not blowing anything up, which the only response was a couple of laughs and giggles.

At that Rocket looked on longingly as though he wished to follow them.

Stephen rolled his eyes and chuckled.

“Ugh I need a drink” Jessica grumbled and stood making her way out of the room, ‘assisting’ Matt as she did.

“Girl, please. You always need a drink,” Darcy teased following the dark haired PI and Lawyer.

Random conversations were held as everyone unceremoniously moved out of the conference room, most going to the large living room.

Except Laura who said she wanted to get back to the kids, the Fantastic 4 who had prior engagements to attend to for the day, and Deadpool who rambled on about the Author having too many people to write in so he was just going to go enjoy his date with chimichangas and tacos.

Jennifer, Jane and Betty were talking admittedly with Gamora and Nebula

Claire, Colleen, Danny And Luke we’re talking amongst themselves.

Hope and Rocket had started up a conversation about technology, which quickly got Tony’s attention, and he too jumped into the conversation.

Quill was in the middle of trying to explain something to Mantis and Drax with the help of Vision.

It seemed that Drax and Vision’s inability to understand sarcasm and that fact that they speak literally was coming in handy. Since Vision has had the opportunity to learn, explaining something to someone of a similar caliber of speech was a nice challenge for the Android.

Bringing up the entire group was Rhodes, Carol and Stephen.

“Stephen I didn’t think, I am so sorry!” Carol apologizes to the sorcerer
“Yes it’s clear that you didn’t think” Stephen snapped

“Hey! That’s uncalled for, she’s sorry. Tony forgave her just let it go” Rhodes came to his girlfriends defense.

“Rhodes you of all people should know that Tony forgives too easily.” Stephen was having none of it “I understand Fury is an old friend of yours but he made some poor choices and Tony has had to pick up after him for years. Not to mention all the lies and deceit from a man that claimed to care for him.” Stephen aimed at Carol who had the decency to look abashed. “Rhodes I know you’re his best friend, but truly you can be a real idiot sometimes. Did you know Tony still blames himself over your spinal injury? You should ask FRIDAY about that someday. You have the security clearance for information regarding the Rogues too. Maybe take a look before you try side with anyone who has or will take any of Rogues’ side. Because Tony doesn’t need anyone trying to justify their need around here, like we all know Fury is and will try to do.” Stephen spoke cryptically for reasons and briskly walked away from the two Colonel’s.

“What is he-?”

“I don’t know. But I did screw up so don’t try and defend me, I’m a big girl Jim I can handle myself just fine.”

Chapter End Notes

Okay Fury was a last minute decision, he just kinda snuck in there and I just went with the flow...
Anyways I hope you like it!
And I’ll see y’all in the next chapter!
“So the Pirate yesterday started the original Avengers but had the idea from miss glowing fists? And he and the others basically screwed you over?” Rocket asked for clarification after Tony had gone over most if not all of the Avengers history. Including the Civil War so everyone would be on the same page.

“To put it simply yes” Tony nodded and took a bite of his breakfast.

“And Captain America almost killed you for flipping out when you found out you parents were murdered? And he knew about it and didn’t tell you because it was his brainwashed best friend? Not only that but he was also using your money to try find him?” Quill followed, which was responded by another head nod from Tony “God damn that’s fucked up. I killed my dad for giving my Mom brain cancer, though I also had to stop him for taking over the entire universe but he killed my mom so I had a personal vendetta to take care of first.”

Tony said nothing, only observing as the Guardians wrapped their heads around the story he had just told.

Tony had joined the Guardians at the Compound for breakfast and had decided to explain the history of the Avengers and what was happening currently before they went to talk with the UN panel that was convening today upon request.

It had been decided that Carol, Rhodey, Stephen, Tony, Gamora, Quill, Nebula, and Rocket were all going to portal over and explain who Thanos was and alert the government to the upcoming threat.

Originally it was going to be Carol and Tony with all the Guardians but upon talking the night before they figured out a better game plan. It was mainly to keep Drax, Mantis and Groot out of the spotlight since they needed everything to go off without a hitch.

“Tones can I talk with you for a moment?” Rhodes voice called from the doorway of the kitchen.
Tony looked up at the tense tone he heard from his best friend.

“Sure?” Tony said cautiously setting his fork down he moved to leaves the table. “Be right back”

In the hall Rhodes stood quietly brooding slightly.

“What’s up, Buttercup?” Tony teased lightly.

“Why didn’t you tell me what Barton said to you?”

Tony froze at the question.

“What-? How-?”

“Does it matter? I know now and I want to know why you didn’t tell me.” Rhodes asked quietly

“I didn’t tell you because what good would it do? He was angry and lashed out. You were in the middle of being treated” Tony justifies, and Rhodes scoffs, realization hitting him.

Stephen was right. He was an idiot.

“It matters because you’re still blaming yourself and I’m an idiot for not noticing sooner”

“Stephen told you.”

“He didn’t tell me about Barton, FRIDAY did” Rhodes said honestly.

“Fri, you’re in trouble missy”

“He has a security clearance for the information Boss I simply showed him what he asked for” FRIDAY sounded way too innocent.

“Tony you know it wasn’t your fault. I made my choice and you’ve done an amazing job getting me back on my feet. Please stop beating yourself up. Also please forgive me for being such an awful friend. I kinda have dropped the ball lately.”

“I’ve had Stephen so I haven’t been alone”

“Yes but I made you promise me that you we would stay open and honest with each other and because of my idiocy I was pushing you away.”

“Don’t worry so much Platypus, your age is showing.”

“I’ll always worry about you, you’re my brother and best friend.”

“And you’re mine”

“You know if Ma heard how I’ve been treating you lately she’d whoop me.” Rhodes jokes

“Well it’s a good thing I didn’t tell her when we talked the other day” Tony jokes back smirking

“You talk to my mom more than I do.”

“Well someone has to tell her you’re still alive and kicking”

Tony and Rhodes laughed as the Colonel moved to wrap an arm around the smaller man’s shoulders, both of them making their way back to the kitchen.
“Wow they’re combining General Assembly with the Security Council. I wonder if they’re just going to add the Accords Council in for shits and giggles” Tony observed out loud and commented at the hecticness of the large room full of UN and Government officials.

Quill seemed overwhelmed as he looked around.

“Dr. Stark I’m glad to see you” Eleanor approached the small group of heroes. “This is really serious” she commented as she glanced at Gamora, Nebula and then down at Rocket “Isn’t?” her voice wavering as she looked back to Tony.

“Remember when I told you awhile back about my paranoia. The fear that lead to Ultron? This is it.” Tony said solemnly.

“Oh boy.” The Councilwoman sighed. “How are you holding up in all of this?” She asked showing concern for the billionaire.

Glancing towards Stephen a light smile graced his face “I am holding up okay for now it’ll be better once we get a plan put in place”

“Well hopefully we can get one going after this meeting. I should go get ready as it seems everyone is finding their seats.” At that she departed.

Moments later Tony and Carol stood next to Quill and Gamora in front of the large assembly of people. The other four stood back.

Tony introduced the attending Guardians to the mass of officials and handed the microphone to Gamora, as she was decided as the best to speak for the Guardians, much to Quills displeasure.

Gamora went on to explain the same thing she had the previous day.

“...Thanos has gone around to dozens of planets and wiped out half of the population of each one of them. He feels that the only way to avoid ruin is to enforce balance. He wants to be a god essentially” Gamora explains solemnly “He has followers, others that obey his every command, and many strong allies that have no qualms with his goals. Me and my sister,” Gamora gestured to Nebula “were used from a young age to assist him that was until we both came to the true realization of what his goal meant.” The plan was to be honest but don’t go into an extreme amount of details. “Many throughout the universe know that Ter-” Gamora cleared her throat “that Earth is protected by the Man of Iron as he was the one that thwarted the Chitauri Army sent by Thanos himself.”

“Excuse me, but are you trying to tell us that the Asgardian know and Loki isn’t the one responsible for the attack on New York?”

“Loki was simply a pawn used in the Mad Titan’s game. The Asgardian had very little control of what he was allowed to do, but from the information I’ve gathered he fought the hold the Mind stone had on him very well and was able to limit casualties on Earth.” Her words caused a slight uproar in the room.

Stepping forward Tony took control of the situation “Council men and women, please let’s stay on the subject of Thanos this morning. I have already started building a case with proof and such regarding Loki. We can discuss this matter at a later time, we must focus on the immediate threat that we have been alerted to.” At his words the discussions around room silenced.
“We apologize for the unprofessional behavior that you just witnessed. You have to understand this is a lot to take in.” Someone in the mass of officials said talking to Gamora.

“It’s fine I understand completely, but as I was saying Tony Stark is known as Earth's strongest defender. Witnesses to the defeat of the Chitauri and Thor himself have spoken of his power. There is the added bonus that Captain Marvel has come forward as an ally with him and as a resident of Earth. So currently Earth is safe from minor attacks, but Thanos is someone you must not underestimate,” Gamora stressed her words. “Yesterday my team and I had the pleasure to meet and spend time with the entire Avengers team and we have faith that they can handle what is to come so long as they have time to prepare. We’ve offered to stay and help train for a couple weeks and plan on coming by to check in with the team. I would like to offer Earth’s leaders any assistance that I or my team may give outside of the Avengers. As you have no real knowledge of what is out there aside from what Carol Danvers has told you of her experience, I wanted to extend the offer to you as well, while we are here that is.”

“Miss Gamora, we appreciate the offer and I’m certain we will wish to discuss this further—“ someone started to speak before Tony spoke up again, his need to make a plan made him anxious.

“All of you here have heard the news, now you all must talk through what you’ve learned. I have put together all the information that I’ve gathered from the Guardians and what is known on the situation at hand. It’s all been emailed to you. I have started putting together some plans with Coronel Danvers and Colonel Rhodes as a preliminary precautions and we are set to start training with the Guardians next week.” Tony sighed and looked around from his place at the podium. “Esteemed members, we’re coming together as a singular race of beings, to fight the whims of another. We must work together in this.”

“Tony is right. We also have an advantage here.” Carol stood next to Tony and Gamora took a step back, Quill followed. “We can prepare and ready ourselves. This is a blessing that not many races get against the Mad Titan. He is ruthless and from my limited knowledge of him he is near impossible to stand up to.” A sight raise in panic started and Carol spoke over it “I said near impossible. I believe that our team can handle this. And I hope you all feel and believe the same.”

“That was exhausting just watching” Rocket griped as they stepped through the portal back to the compound. “I’m going to go work on the ship” Tony looked to the alien with interest. “You coming Stark?” Rocket asked while walking away.

“Sure why not” Tony said nonchalantly, though excitement sparked in his eyes causing Stephen to smile gently.

The two mechanics disappeared and Quill turned to Stephen. Gamora, Nebula and Carol were speaking in hushed voices ahead of them, as Rhodes had made himself scarce upon arrival with a comment on work he needed to finish.

“How sure do you think it will be that the Rogue members will be pardoned?” Quill asked, a concerned look echoed in his eyes as he stared at where Tony and Rocket had disappeared. “He told us everything and I can’t help but feel empathy for him. I know how he feels and it effing sucks. And from the looks that the officials had on I think what your team said yesterday might come to pass.” Quill asked thoughtfully, sitting down on a bench that they were passing.

Stephen raised a brow in an inquiring manner. This way of talking seemed slightly out of character for the Missouri born man. Though he sighed, sat down and answered.
“We already know that Scott Lang, a newer guy is going to be pardoned, with consequences of course, Sam Wilson and Clint Barton will probably receive the same treatment.”

“Though they’re last couple of weeks in confinement has brought forth evidence of mental instability in Barton and it appears to be the result of being subjected to Wanda Maximoff’s abilities.” Stephen sighed in an exhausted way “She will for sure not be allowed back to the United States. I’ve already evaluated her, and given the Council my opinion on her. She’s is too unpredictable and too dangerous to be pardoned. She also can’t be released to anyone else because of her crimes, and too many humans want justice against her. Taking her ‘magic’” Stephen used air quotes “would cause too much of a mental and magical strain on me and my associates, so she’s bound right now by an artifact that we have put together just for her. But it seems that even with her abilities bound she’s still angry and aggressive so we don’t believe that the Mind Stone made her this way, it just added to her already aggressive attitude.” Stephen shook his head at the mess that was Wanda Maximoff. “And Rogers” Stephen spat the name, “Well he’s been stripped of his Captain tile, though he’s still known as ‘Captain America’” Stephen used air quotes again “Sadly that still mean something to some people, regardless of how much evidence of abuse and negligence is shown or talked about there are still Americans supporting him in his actions. Most foreigners want nothing to do with him. If anything they just want him to stay out of their country, which the UN has acknowledged. Currently I believe there was talk of offering Rogers a pardon, with a house arrest and counseling as part of the deal, but I know the US government officials that don’t want him here were still fighting against it. But who knows what they’ll say after the news hits of Thanos.” Stephen ran hands through his hair, his hands not shaking due to the nanites assistance.

“This is all sorts of fucked up. The guy, the Winter soldier, how he doing? Stark touch a bit on him…” Quill trailed off

“James is doing well enough. He’s progressing well with therapy and I know he feels like he finally belongs somewhere. Hopefully you will get to meet him before shit hits the fan. The Soldier actually is a separate personality and he and Tony get along way too well” Stephen’s lips quirked at the thought of the two men tinkering in the lab and the pranks they like to enact against inhabitants of the Tower.

“Tony did tell us about the split personality that’s kind of cool but also freaky as hell.” Quill sighed, “Anyways all of my questions were for a reason. Um, well, after talking with the team I think we might actually hang out a bit longer than a week or two, especially if those Rogue members return. Gamora And Nebula actually brought it up before we left the UN building and Drax, Mantis and Groot were already asking about staying longer before we left this morning.” Quill looked nervous at telling the sorcerer this.

“Oh?” Stephen asked inquisitively

“There’s something about being here. And if I’m being honest something that has drawn my team and I to feel protective of Tony. Which can I tell you is kind of freaking me out a bit. The fact that even Nebula is willing to stay and spend time with him is a sign of some sort. He understands Groot and I don’t know…” Quill trailed off again.

Stephen chuckled and rested a hand on the mans shoulder. “He has that ability. To suck others in. To make them feel welcomed and appreciated. And even after everything he’s been through he still finds it in him to open up to others. He has already accepted all of you. The fact that you’re allowed in the private wing of the compound shows that. You’re more than welcome to stay and I know it will be appreciated.” Stephen responded, “though you know you don’t need to come to me for approval right?”
Quill laughed lightly “Oh I know, I just thought it best to clear it with you especially for how protective you are over Tony. Figured it was best to make sure there was no miscommunication between us, and that we were all on the same page.”

“So long as you don’t do anything dumb we’re good.”

“You definitely don’t know me and my team then, though I suppose I should exclude Gamora and Nebula in that aspect” Quill joked wryly.

Stephen shook his head and stood up. “I think you’ll fit in just fine here”

Chapter End Notes

So this kinda sets the pace for what to expect in the following chapters. We’ll have some meetings, press conferences, GotG bonding, Rogues returning, and tons of people keeping Steve away from Tony and my salty butt will get the scene s it’s been dying to write since I started this Fic!
There is still a lot to come! Chronologically Thanos doesn’t show up until April 2018 and we’re in End of January 2017 and Thor and company don’t show up until fall 2017 so I hope you’re all still along for the ride!
Anyway thanks for reading and I’ll see ya in the next chapter!
“Doctor Stark, Colonel Rhodes, Colonel Danvers. It’s a pleasure to see you all here this morning. We know the time difference is hard on all of you, so thank you for accommodating us.” Eleanor spoke up over the talking of her peers, which caused silence to befall the room. “We’ve reviewed everything you’ve sent us Dr. Stark and we appreciate the level of detail you’ve put into everything.”

“Thank you Madame Counselor” Tony bows his head respectfully.

“So let’s discuss the next steps that the Avengers will be taking and how we plan on processing forward from the knowledge that we’ve been given.”

And they did.

The next several hours were spent discussing, defensive measures that would be worked on and implemented, trainings that would occur. They discussed the possibility of Thor and Loki showing up and touched base on how they would proceed if they do. They discussed finding Bruce Banner much to many others disappointment they realized not even Tony knew where he was. And finally that talked about the Rogues.

“Maximoff is non negotiable. Much to the disappointment of Mr. Rogers. With the evaluation for Dr. Strange and a behavioral specialist; she’s not fit to be in any situation to be honest” one of the councilmen said from his seat.

“We wouldn’t have allowed her on the property anyway” Carol replies coolly “Not only is she a danger to everyone she’s around she also has a personal vendetta against Dr. Stark and that sort of mindset isn’t allowed or welcomed.”

“Which brings up a concern we have for the other Rogues as it appears that you are about to tell us what we don’t really want to hear” Rhodes spoke up.

Solemn nods around the room made it evident that Rhodes was right.

“Sharon Carter, Natasha Romanoff, and James Barnes will stay in your custody as they have been already. James has been granted more freedom in the form of being released from house arrest and is no longer required to wear a tracker. Scott Lang’s pardon has been approved and processed. He
has made a deal with us and the US Attorney General along with Pym Tech, as I’m sure you’re aware, and he will be put under your teams supervision.” A man beside Eleanor rattled off. “Sam Wilson appears to be cooperating without issues and it does appear that he will be granted a pardon. Now we must discuss Clint Barton and Steve Rogers.”

Exasperated sighed around the room caused Tony’s lip to twitch in amusement. Clearly they had been having problems with Rogers and Barton.

“Neither are cleared for the field. And honestly neither of them should get a pardon if I’m speaking my honest opinion” Eleanor sighed.

A woman who sat to the side stood up and walked to stand where she could be heard and waited her turn to speak, as Eleanor wasn’t done.

“Both of these men have been aware of their actions regardless of outside sources and have made choices I feel they should be held accountable for, but sadly with push from others have made it so we can’t just lock them up and throw away the key.” She jokes wryly looking over to the other women she regretfully motioned her to talk.

“I’m Doctor Evans. I specialize in psychology and have been assigned to these cases.” She sighed and stepped forward with two large files. Carol moved forward to retrieve them before the Doctor tried to give them to Tony. Putting them down on the table she slid them over towards the genius smoothly and nonchalantly.

They were Rogers and Barton’s evaluations.

“It appears that Shield did a very poor job making sure their agents were good to go back into the field. Mr. Rogers received the bare minimum of help after being thawed and then post Alien attack. And Mr. Barton is in no better shape post Alien attack, and then he had a high level exposure to Ms. Maximoff and her unstable abilities. Honestly these two need more help than I can give them. Which is why I asked the UN to allow their release to you and your team. You have more resources to help them properly that anyone else” the Doctor was speaking directly to Tony at the end.

The genius could see exactly where this was going, he felt his anger flare.

“We haven’t been informed of any of this” Carol commented angrily looking over the files lay in front of them.

“Truth be told we were trying to see what could be done without your team or Dr. Starks assistance. With everything out in the open about the treatment you received while teamed up with them we thought it best to not divulge too much and see what we could handle ourselves” angry sounds were heard from the three leaders.

“Dr. Stark we know this is an impossible request of us to ask you. But I’m sure you have already been anticipating this to some extent.”

Tony nodded in affirmation in an attempt to execute calm but his anger continued to grow as he read the Doctors report.

Silence fell over the room as he continued to shuffle through paperwork in front of him.

“Your notes here-“ Tony started in a faux calm voice “Do you really think it’s wise to have him in a place where I am?” Tony asked, referring to the paper detailing Rogers’s clear obsession with Tony and his need to defend and justify his actions against him.
“Currently there is no malice intent-“

“Say that to my previously cracked ribs and missing sternum” Tony spat spitefully

“Doctor please understand I don’t suggest this lightly. If I could I would handle it myself and would say Barton and Rogers could stay here and get treatment here-“

“No! You need to understand that this is bigger than your mind can even comprehend. Yet again I’m being asked to put myself aside to accommodate others, as though I don’t do that on a daily basis. You can’t handle this; and since my team and I have resources available to handle enhanced humans you’re just going to pass them off like a troubled animals.” Tony felt himself bristling. He should have done more digging about the Rogues treatment plans after they had been apprehended but he had, had enough on his plate so he let it be. Which clearly turned out to be a mistake.

“Dr. Williams-“ Dr. Evens began.

“Is my employee.” Tony snapped, “She is protected by me and my company. You don’t get to decide which patients are too hard for you to handle and pass it off to an enhanced human just because you think she can handle them better. To an extent that discrimination and there are laws against that.” Tony wasn’t even sure where this conversation was going anymore.

Carol places a hand on Tony’s back silencing him from going further. She ignored the Doctor and looked over the council.

“What is it exactly that you wish to request? We’ll accept responsibility over Mr. Lang and Mr. Wilson for the time being. They will be put on probation and evaluated by our team. But what is it you wish for us to do about Mr. Rogers and Mr. Barton?”

Most of the council looked nervous and apologetic.

Eleanor spoke up with a sigh, “Both men need help. More help than Dr. Evens or any of us here can give. We were hoping to negotiate with you and your team about having the two men carry out their sentences under your supervision. As we already know Mr. Rogers is a flight risk, he has already tried to escape multiple times, injuring many in his attempts. We feel like it might be safer for Mr. Rogers and Mr. Barton to be where they can be monitored 24/7 and around people that can handle their abilities.” As she spoke she made eye contact with Tony. Silently apologizing for her words.

Without another word Tony got up and walked out.

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“Where is he?” Rhodes asked walking through the portal back to the Tower.

Looking around everyone was convened in the large living room.

“He’s off grid” FRIDAY responded solemnly.

Looking over to Stephen, Rhodes approached him.

“Strange, you know where he is. I need to talk to him.” Rhodes demands

“Give him some time Jim. This is a lot for him to process. He has is own mental health and well
being to care for along with caring for everyone in this room. And now we’re all being requested to care about the well being of people that betrayed him and hurt him. While on top of that we need to prepare for another Alien invasion.” Stephen ranted, feeling himself get worked up at his words. He sighed and took a deep breath “Just give him some time, don’t worry he’s safe and he’ll be here when he’s ready.”

What no one other that the AI’s and Stephen knew was that Tony called Stephen in a panicked rage with the need to let off steam without witnesses. So the sorcerer had portaled Tony home and had talked with him briefly and then proceeded to bring Tony into the mirror dimension explaining to the billionaire that he could do anything there and no one would see or hear him.

Tony proceeded to ask for some time alone and Stephen reluctantly decided that some space might do the genius some good. Giving him an artifact that would let him out of the dimension and leaving Levi there Stephen portaled back to the compound to get everyone convened at that Tower and caught them up with what Tony had told him.

“This is bullshit,” Jessica hissed

“It was one thing when we were going to have to deal with pardoned pieces of shit” Jennifer snapped her skin was tinged green, and eyes glowing

“I never noticed.” Laura whispered to the side “How long has he been suffering?” She asked to no one in particular

“If I may Laura,” Vision interjected “His actions have always been his own he was never controlled by Ms. Maximoff. The only person that ever had control was Thanos through Loki. But then Shield never gave him the proper counseling for his trauma and then Ultron happened. His previous connection with the Mind Stone was still embedded, and Ms. Maximoff used it, consciously or unconsciously I am unsure of, but she used it nonetheless to create a bond with him so when the time came and she needed someone on her side she wouldn’t be abandoned. Otherwise he was always your husband he just needed to get help that was never offered to him. That’s not on you”

Laura sobbed and curled into herself, Jane wrapped an arm around her.

Carol sighed and ran her hands through her hair. “Jen, Matt I’d like to talk with you about all this.”

“Danvers you’re not actually considering this are you?”

“I don’t know to be honest. They made a valid point. Regarding Rogers that is. He is a danger to everyone around him. He has tried to escape numerous times already and injured many in the process. Wouldn’t it be better is he was brought somewhere that he can be treated and confined safely?” Carol knew by the looks she was getting that no one shared her sentiment.

“Fuck that”

“Steve” James whispers, holding his head, as Winter pulsed in annoyance.

“This entire situation is fucked up” Quill interjected “I agree it was one thing when it was pardoning them and training them or whatever but now you’re being told that there are mental stability issues? I feel like with the threat of Thanos coming there would be more pressing matters to concern yourselves about.

“You would think that wouldn’t you” came Tony’s voice from the doorway. “But humans tend not to be the smartest of beings especially when there’s a threat looming over us”
The billionaire looked disheveled and exhausted as he entered but also relatively relaxed.

Laura’s breath caught as she hiccupped on a sob and dashed over to Tony, who wrapped her up in his arms.

“This isn’t your fault Laura,” the genius whispered to her.

As Tony entered others around the room gave him hand squeezes and hugs, awkward ones since Laura had essentially attached herself to Tony as a life line.

“Sorry about leaving you two there” Tony apologies to Carol and Rhodes as he sits down Laura following him down and curling up against his side, sobs still wracking at her.

Stephen and Tony’s eyes meet briefly and the men gently smiled at each other.

“You didn’t miss much other then Dr. ‘Can’t do her job’ basically begging us to take Rogers away so she wouldn’t have to keep dealing with him.” Carol explains

“I don’t get it. Why though?” Jane asked from her spot on the couch

“Because they can’t handle him the same way they did with James. James was willingly staying in their custody and they learned that after his first escape that he could easily break out. Rogers doesn’t feel he did anything wrong he thinks he’s justified no matter what realizations hit him in the face he reverts to his original thought process of he’s Captain America and he shouldn’t be held captive.” James’s head snapped up as he heard Nicci’s voice. His headache calming slightly at her presence.

“Nicci, I’m glad you could make it. I'm sorry about bugging you in your day off.” Tony apologized

“Oh please I was just sitting at home rewatching Friends. Besides it feels like most of you need my presence at the moment” she observed the room and a calm wave washed over everyone as she used her gift.

Mantis sighed in relief from the corner she had been hiding in.

Jessica growled in irritation “Fuck off with your emotional manipulation bitch”

“I am sorry Miss Jones” Nicole apologizes sincerely and pulled the artificial calm away from the PI.

Jessica only responded with a huff and a swig from her flask.

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“So If I’m hearing all of this correctly, the UN withheld information about Rogers in an attempt to counsel him themselves, realized that are way in over their head and came crawling to your team to assist them?”

“Yes, that and Barton needs help too. Their doctor referred to you directly,” Tony added. “I told them you aren’t obligated to do anything for them since you’re my employee. But logically I agree with them and Carol, it is the smartest plan. You know with Thanos coming, having Rogers where we know he can’t screw us over isn’t the worst thing in the world”

“Except for the fact that he’s obsessed with you” Stephen hissed angrily others nodded in agreement.
“I think obsessed is a bit too strong of a word” Tony tried to argue

“No he definitely has some obsessive tendencies” Nicci interrupted as she looked through the file in front of her. “And a lot of it seems to revolve around you Tony”

“How on earth are we even discussing this as a possibility?” She asked rubbing her stomach as she felt the baby kick.

“Because there are bigger battles to fight. Thanos is coming and I would rather focus on that to be honest” Tony defended; Carol nodded solemnly in agreement.

“Says the guy who threw the Pirate out of the room the other day” Rocket sniped, rippling laughter echoed in the living room.

“That was different. There were other factors involved and besides I wasn't prepared to see him.” Tony bristled in defense

“The fact still stands. We’ve already agreed that we’ll take care of Barton, as he definitely needs assistance. But Rogers? I don’t know why we are even discussing this” Rhodes asked, frustration clear in his voice.

“Because if we don’t take him in and he get out who’s going to have to go after him anyways?” Carol argued

“They can’t handle him.” Jennifer looked down seemly resigned at this point

“And we can?” Darcy spat

“We’re better equipped than the UN” Jane observes and some nods of agreement were seen throughout the room.

“As yes this conversation does involve getting all of you to be on the same page we should really be asking the people affected by this their thoughts exactly. As any press conferences you all have on this you will probably be asked that exact question” Nicci reasoned

Everyone turned to look at Tony first.

Sighing Tony leaned back, stroking the black fur of Shadow, as the cat had appeared out of nowhere and planted himself on the billionaire’s lap.

“I hate this. There are so many reasons why I feel we should just turn him away. But I’m also one that likes to have some semblance of control and if Rogers is here then we can actually focus on Thanos.”

“I doubt that” Reed mutters

“Rogers is a wild card” Deadpool argues “and that me saying that.” He exclaims

“After thinking about it. I think keeping him confined at the compound with CARTER monitoring him and if Nicci is willing to take on his case. Maybe we can actually get somewhere.” Tony suggests

Scoffs were heard around the room.

“He’s going to constantly try and reach out to you Tony. Talk to you, see you. So when you say confined you better mean a really strong holding cell because he doesn’t deserve any freedoms,”
Pepper says from the doorway where apparently she had been listening in on the conversation that had been occurring.

“I’m willing to take him as a patient if that will help, but Tony you need to keep true to yourself. Don’t throw yourself away. Also I think it’s imperative that we make sure Rogers is kept in confinement until I say otherwise.” Nicci spoke up with her offer. She looked over to James feeling his and Winters distress “James how are you and Winter feeling about all of this?” She asks giving him the floor.

The question surprised James as he had been sitting quietly to the side attempting to stay unnoticed.

“I don’t want to be near him and Winter is making it very clear that he wants nothing to do with any of this.” James leaned forward as his head throbbed, eyes growing hard as James ‘lost the wheel’.

“I don’t want him here” Winter growled, his gaze swept over the room looking for threats, “Rogers has made it clear how he feels and nothing is going to change that. I don’t want him anywhere near me or any of you” the soldiers voice sounded feral.

Hope stood from her seat and moved to sit on James and Winters lap. “Hey tough guy, we’re all together in this. No need to sound like you’re ready to shed blood” she rested her forehead against the side of his head and talked calmly into his ear. “You are welcome to say your opinion and state your terms but don’t go getting violent on us.”

Winter did another sweep of the room, anticipating people to look fearful or apprehensive of him, only to be surprised when he saw almost everyone with slight smiles of concern on their faces.

Taking a deep breath he took a step back allowing James to take the reins back but staying present.

“Thank you Winter for your insight” Nicci smiled at the man. He responded with a slight nod as James sighed. “If this is how things are going to be I’m not sure how well we’re going to handle it. Winter and I will be fighting for control versus working together as we have been.”

“This is good information to have though James” Nicci encouraged “He has also labeled everyone here as his family, which we’ve kind of known but still good information nonetheless.”

James made a sound of disbelief and leaned into Hope as she runs her hands through his hair.

“So this is really it?” Peter asked quietly from the beanbag he’d been sitting quietly on since Stephen had pulled him out of school. Kamala was on a neighboring beanbag, hugging her knees to her chest.

“The Rogues are coming back and we really have no say?” She asked

“Fuck the government” Harley spat, glad that his sister and the kids weren’t here. Even with the glances from the adults about his language no one corrected him.

“We just have to stand together and work together. Look out for each other and work on preparations.” Colleen tried to suggest calmly

“On a good note I have approval to launch some upgraded and defense systemized satellites into orbit” Tony said while perking up slightly and turned to Rocket “I was hoping you could help me a bit on that too”

“Yeah sure” the Alien agreed
“Okay so on another good note we get to fuck around with Captain Jackass” Harley perked up, as did a few of the others that had made such comments several months prior.

“Just make sure that you aren’t caught” Carol said smirking

“Ohhh. I can’t wait to kick his ass in training.” Kamala bounced slightly.

Nicci gave them a look and shook her head “He won’t be training until I say so”

Jessica cracked her knuckles and smiled ruefully “I can wait”

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“There’s no time for that now Matt” Tony sighed. “I know you and Jen were hoping to convince me but there are greater issues at the moment”

“He’s dangerous and you need to protect yourself, I feel this is something you should follow through on.” Matt argued.

“And a flimsy piece of paper isn’t going to stop him.” Tony quipped “Matt I know you’re worried but setting up a suit against Steve Rogers and placing a restraining order on him for me isn’t the kind of drama that I want to deal with at the moment.”

“I had Jess read me the case notes and his obsession isn’t healthy.” Matt tried to argue more

“Our every interaction wasn’t healthy.” Tony chuckled humorlessly.

“Then you better be prepared for everyone keeping him away from you.” Matt said while shaking his head

“I wouldn’t have it any other way” Tony patted Matt’s back, smiling widely, genuinely relieved at the support he’d received during the day.

——

Shadow was draped over his shoulders as he walked to the elevator. It was late. He couldn’t sleep and Stephen hadn’t returned from an emergent call from Kamar-Taj.

The genius was quickly stopped in his tracks as the apparent sound of a portal was heard.

“Where do you think you’re going?” Stephen asked gently approaching Tony. The black cat stood from his perch and leapt off of Tony making himself scarce.

“Couldn’t sleep. Was going to get some work done.” He explained lamely as Stephen lifted the geniuses chin upward and the men kissed.

“Well the crisis at Kamar-Taj was averted and I’m here now, so if you can’t sleep, how about we make use of this free time,” the Doctor asked caressing Tony’s cheek.

“What do you have in mind Doctor?”

“I have a few ideas”
Yet Another Press Conference

Chapter Summary

Friday January 27th
Press conference

Chapter Notes

So this is kinda a small chapter... I usually aim for 2,000 words or more but at the moment with me working on some self care and such this is what I feel good giving to you guys. Some of you might notice your thoughts or questions were addressed in dialogue and I thought that would be a neat way to get your questions about the story answered. Let me know what you think.
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Friday January 27th

“Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us on the beautiful Friday afternoon.”

Carol, Rhodes and Tony stood behind the podium set on a stage in front of a large gathering of press members.

Tony stood tall and began his speech. “On Monday I received an alert of something entering our atmosphere” gasps echoed through the crowd as reporters with tape recorders pushed to move closer. “I was worried until I met the team that calls themselves The Guardians of the Galaxy. You see they have come with the purpose to assist us. It appears that the Battle of New York was not actually orchestrated by Loki of Asgard but in fact was actually another being controlling Loki. A being that wishes to create his own version of balance through the Galaxy.” Muttering was getting louder as Tony spoke. So he paused and waited for people to silence themselves. When they did he continued.

“This being’s name is Thanos. He was behind the Chitauri invasion. We have informed all government officials and have been working with the UN to begin preparing for an inevitable attack.” There was no silencing the outburst that occurred after those words were uttered. Questions were thrown out but Tony simply waited patiently.

I took at least 5 minutes for everyone to silence themselves and calm down slightly.

“We have time” Tony said simply when he began speaking again. “The Guardians coming here now has made it so we have plenty of time to prepare. Evidently when I pushed the nuke through the wormhole I caused enough of a dent to Thanos’ army so we do have time. He doesn’t have the means to come after us just yet. For those wondering, I believe this is what I was preparing for.” He ended cryptically for those who had theorized about Tony’s words in the video during the Ultron fiasco.
The press conference continued on from there. Tony and Carol explained the plans that would be put into motion while Rhodes discussed some of the training that would be occurring. Periodically they would pause to wait for the shock to sink in and the crowd to silence.

The Guardians of the Galaxy were introduced and many oohed and awed, though some gasped or shrieked in surprise.

And then the subject of the Rogue’s was brought up.

“Currently there are Pardons for Natasha Romanoff, Sharon Carter, and James Barnes. Scott Lang has negotiated terms of his Pardon and is currently waiting for the process to complete and Sam Wilson appears to be receiving one as well. Now there is a limbo regarding Clint Barton and Steve Rogers and as most of it is confidential I can’t divulge too much to you. What I can tell through no matter the outcome my team and me are committed to protecting Earth and all its inhabitants. Wanda Maximoff is also a subject I am unable to discuss with you as of this moment but I promise you that when I have all of the information you will all know it, but just know she will not be allowed on American soil.”

That caused a trickle of commotion “So you’re saying Mr. Barton and Mr. Rogers will be coming back?” Christine caught on to his words immediately and Tony smirked at her question.

“I didn’t say that” Tony's feigned innocence, his eyes twinkled a bit in amusement.

“You implied it by say Miss. Maximoff wouldn’t be returning but didn't say anything like that regarding your two ex-teammates. Are you saying that the UN and the US government is actually considering giving those two, who have multiple charges against them, pardons?”

“I can neither confirm nor deny that,” Tony said almost playfully knowing full well what he was doing. “Miss Everhart as you know I always love telling you my deepest darkest secrets but truly at that moment I suggest you just take my words as they are at the moment. Though if you wish to dig further that's on you, just keep me out of it. I have enough going on” Tony finished, Carol had elbowed Tony gently in the side but the damage was already done. Christine nodded and sat down in her chair a small smirk resting on her face, as Tony looked overly pleased with himself. Other reporters had the look of confusion on their faces as they had been watching the two talk as though they were at a tennis match.

Carol took charge and wrapped up the press conference.

—

Why aren’t we asking Professor X to take the crazy men? Y’all already have me.” Deadpool asked plopping himself down beside Peter who was conversing quietly with Harley, who had been popping in and out with the help of Stephen. The teen rolled his eyes at Wade but kept his own conversation as the Merc talked with the adults.

“He isn’t able to take Rogers or Barton on fully due to the current contract that’s protecting him and his students. But he is assisting Nicci with preparations for Rogers both with his treatment and the holding cell he’ll be residing in. They’re also discussing Barton’s case too.” Carol answered the Merc.

After the press conference everyone had moved back to the Tower and now we’re in various places of relaxing the younger ones were on the gaming floor and most of the adults were in the common area, though Peter and Harley were hanging out with the adults, as they were wanting to stay in the loop whereas Kamala was actually over in Wakanda spending some time with Shuri.
“I still can’t get over that they’re doing this. How can the UN be like ‘We can’t handle them you take em’?” Darcy asked annoyed mocking the UN in a high-pitched voice.

Tony was laying on his back with his head in Stephen’s lap and Shadow resting on his chest purring.

The cat had become oddly clingy to Tony as of late, who wasn’t complaining. The cat was normally a silent shadow and would wander around but now he was always on or by the genius, granting comfort or support when Tony didn’t even know he needed it.

Stephen’s hands combed gently through Tony’s hair and the billionaire had his eyes closed while he answered. “It’s in the agreement I made with them back before the Civil War regarding Rogers. Given its null and void at this point but they’re asking at this point because of good faith. I promised back when I thought we were a team that I’d support Rogers and Barton especially if they couldn’t help themselves. Actually I think it started in an agreement that Fury originally wrote up to trap me when I was still angry that the Avengers were using me as a funding bank and an armory.”

“That’s all sorts of fuck up,” Quill muttered

“Yup” Tony said popping the ‘P’

“Can’t we just like sedate them, throw Rogers in a cryochamber or some shit like that? At least until we’re finished with one crisis.” Johnny asked while he and Darcy were playing some game on her phone.

James cringed at the suggestion and grimaced at Winter's purr of pleasure at the idea.

“That’s completely unethical and we’re held to a certain standard.” Jane answered.

“No what’s unethical is asking a victim of abuse to take in their abuser and give them shelter and provide care for them regardless of mental wellness.” Jennifer spat.

“Yeah, about that. Clearly he’s not going to be welcomed here and not in the Compounds Private Wing. Where is this holding cell that’s being made for him being placed? And what about the others?” Betty spoke up.

“Wilson and Lang will be joining Romanoff in the supervised secure wing. James and Winter will be moving their belongings here to the tower and staying here. The doorway that Stephen enchanted will be adjusted so those not approved can’t enter. Rogers and Barton will be held securely elsewhere closer to Nicci’s office.” Tony listed off the plans, eyes not opening.

“These upgrades aren’t being funded by you right Tones?” Rhodes asked, his arm draped over Carol’s shoulder

Tony scoffs and peaks out of one eye at Rhodes, an incredulous look seeping out. No words spoken.

Rhodey rolls his eyes “Yeah, yeah. My question is valid. It is something you would do you Philanthropist you.”

Nothing more was said on that subject.

Random conversations were scattered throughout the room, as Tony was lulled into sleep by Stephen’s calming actions.
A slight snore soon was heard over Shadows purrs.

“Shit man, he just passed right out, didn’t he?” Quill observed

Everyone made various sounds of agreement but continued in their own conversations quietly.

Stephen summoned a book and was holding it with one hand while his other still combed through the now sleeping man’s hair.

“Stephen” a soft call out of his name garnered his attention.

Rhodes was leaning forward a guilt-ridden look on his face.

“I’m an idiot and I’m sorry. Thank you for looking after him” was all the Colonel said before turning back to the conversation Carol was having with Sue and Jane.

Stephen sighed and looked down at the man he loved. “Don’t worry. Nothing is going to happen to you,” he said at a volume no one heard. “Not if I have anything to say about it.”

Stephen was slightly startled when he caught Shadow looking up at his softly spoken words but shook it off as the cat chattered quietly and moved to groomed Tony’s goatee a bit, before curling back up to join Tony in his nap.

Chapter End Notes

I'm unsure about when the next Chapter will drop. though I'm working on some one on one with Tony and Nebula and Tony and Rocket. Let me know the kind of things you like them to talk about. I'd love to hear your ideas!

Until the next chapter!
“Hey Seven of Nine we got some fittings to try out” Tony called out to her from outside.

The woman rolled her eyes as she exited The Benatar, the ever growing list of names he called her was exasperating to her, but they were never in malice intent so she let it slide.

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“So about that guy Rogers? How are things going figuring that stuff out?” She asks nonchalantly as they settle in the lab. Artificial limbs were scattered about.

“Honestly at this point I’m letting Jennifer and Matt handle it with Carol and Rhodes. I’ve had my fair share of dealing with all of that and I’d much rather work with you and Rodney Raccoon on the things I actually enjoy. I figure I gotta take advantage of the opportunity while you’re all still here”

Nebula hummed in acknowledgement.

Most of the time spent in the lab between the two was spent in a comfortable silence, well apart for Tony’s normal music and Shadow’s chattering at the bots.
“Stark, are you afraid?” she asked while there was a lull in music FRIDAY took the cue and quieted the music down further.

Her question took him off guard, as she asked this in an almost quiet and vulnerable voice.

“I’m afraid of a lot of things. You have to be a bit more specific” Tony spoke honestly around the screwdriver in his mouth.

Nebula watch fascinated as the genius worked effortlessly on her artificial parts, attaching them to her without issues and not causing her any additional pain in the process.

“Thanos” she spat her adoptive fathers name with so much hate and fury that Tony nearly flinched.

“Have been terrified of him since 2012” he replied simply in a serious tone.

Nothing more was said and the music was turned back up.

Nebula briefly watched the black cat that had been showing more of presence lately. She narrowed her eyes as she felt like it was watching her; there was definitely something about him that even set Rocket off a bit. She jumped in slight surprise when the black creature hopped up on to Tony’s shoulders and made a sound at the genius, who simply hummed in acknowledgement and continued his work.

It was a little over an hour later when he stretched and asked her to move about to see how she felt.

As she did she made a sound of surprise.

She felt powerful.

“This is new,” she muttered in awe as she rotated her shoulders.

“The material is some of the strongest stuff known to humans, but it’s light and versatile. After examining most of your original parts I was able to improve on some of the wiring that I feel was slowing you down. Your reflexes should definitely have improvements along with your overall strength. I had to set up a few more parts for you than I had with James and there had to be a bit more wiring and interfaces mixed in. But essentially it was the same thing. Let me know how you’re feeling. Should I change anything?” Tony rambled

She couldn’t answer as she stared in awe at herself. As she flexed and moved she didn’t feel pain or any of the electrical surges. Everything felt effortless and easy.

She was a whole new person, one that was ready to take on Thanos.

“This is- I have no words Stark. It honestly some of the best work I’ve ever seen” the Luphomoid sang her praises to Tony.

She fought back a shout of excitement when she took some steps and still didn’t feel the electrical sparks that she normally did, that she had simply gotten used to.

“Good I’m glad it feels good. I do have a few fun surprises and such integrated into the limbs I’ve constructed we can go over those later but first I wanna show you something I started working on and I’m going to have Rachet help me finish it.” Tony spoke as he moved toward a lump if something hidden by a large sheet.

Unveiling it Nebula came face to face with a small one-person craft that looked to be pretty high
tech for something on Terra.

“It’s is only a shell and a lot has to be added but I know you’re planning on splitting off from your sister and the Guardians to go after Thanos and I figured why not give you as much help as I can so you can take him down. You’ll be able to wirelessly control it with your new upgrades and it’ll be completely yours.” Tony once again went back to a nervous babble, going on about features and stuff but Nebula just stared in awe.

A knot of sorts formed in her throat and she only ever remembered feeling emotions like this for her sister.

It caught both of them by surprise when Nebula lunged forward and hugged the Genius.

He made a surprised sort of squeak but then relaxed and wrapped an arm around the woman and patted her shoulder.

“Thank you Stark,” She said with great difficulty as the lump in her throat was hindering her ability to speak.

“Holy shit? What did you do? How’d you get Baldy to hug you?” Quill’s voice filled the silence as he and Gamora entered the lab.

“Sister-?” Gamora sounded more confused if anything

Nebula moves away from Tony and cleared her throat attempting to dislodge the lump “I was simply showing my gratitude in a manner the Terran would understand” she said as nonchalantly as she could.

Gamora’s eyes swept over the entire situation and upon noticing the upgrade changes and the start of the ship that Tony was working on she quickly deducted what her sister had to be grateful for. Her own smile lit her face and she too surprised Tony as she pulled him into a hug.

With a quiet comment into his ear “Thank you Tony for showing my sister such kindness” she said appreciatively.

“Okay, But seriously should I be worried here? Two of the Galaxies toughest assassins were and are hugging someone. I feel like this is something worth freaking out about” Quill sounded slightly panicked.

“Nah no need to worry Pete” Tony brushes him off as Gamora releases him and he moves back to his workbench. “So what can I do for you two?”

“We actually came to talk. You have a moment?” Gamora asked softly, while still looking over Nebula who was actually still checking herself out.

“Sure. What’s up?” Tony asked kicking back in his chair.

“How would you feel about taking a trip with us to check on the Power Stone? You could meet with the Galaxy’s law enforcement, they’re called the Nova Corps.” Quill asked hopefully

Tony shifted nervously. “I appreciate the offer but I don’t really think now is a good time for me to skip planet and go gallivanting through space. I have people who need me here”

Gamora looked slightly relieved, “I was hoping you’d say that. The Nova Corps has requested we bring you to meet them as they wish to speak with Terra’s best defender, but I told them how you
were needed here and they insisted that we at least ask. Though now with that knowledge they might come here.” The woman explained looking a bit uncertain again.

“What?” Tony asked ever so eloquently

Nebula cleared her throat and looked up from her examination of her hand “The Galaxy’s law enforcers wish to meet you” she said simply her lips twitching in attempt to hide a smile

“Yeah, I caught that, thank you Seven of Nine” Tony muttered. “And how long until they come knocking? Because we’re kinda in a high alert situation with Thanos in the horizon.”

“Honestly we could probably just have a halo conference with them and they’d be happy,” Quill muttered.

“That’s actually not a bad idea,” Gamora sounded shocked

“Wow, thanks for the vote of confidence in my ability to plan” Quill deadpanned

“I really don’t have time for this right now.” Tony ran a hand through his hair and the three aliens jumped in surprise when a black blur shoot out of nowhere, wove through the geniuses chair legs and jumped onto him placing itself on Tony’s chest.

Shadow chattered, and Tony took a breath as the cat began to purr.

Nebula and Gamora looked at each other and then the cat. Their suspicion of the animal had been raised as of late but they did want to word it to Tony himself.

Gamora decided then and there that she would need to talk to Rocket and Carol.

Shaking her head she pushed that thought aside and stepped forward calmly and rested a hand on his knee.

“Don’t stress about it Stark. We’ll handle it, and keep you informed I think Carol and I need to talk a bit too but I know she’s busy for the rest of the day.” Gamora trailed off.

“CARTER? Make a chunk of time for Carol to meet up with Gamora tomorrow.” Tony instructed

“Sure thing Chief” CARTER’s accented voice rang out dutifully

“Boss, you have a meeting with SI board in an hour. Miss Potts and Dr. Strange have both sent a reminder to you” FRIDAY spoke up after a moment of silence.

“Shit!” Tony cursed and shot up. Causing Shadow to fall to the ground, though he landed on his feet the annoyed twitch of his tail and low rumble of displeasure was noticeable. “Sorry bud. Sorry guys I gotta run. This meeting is about satellites and such.” And just like that the genius dashed out of the lab, with Shadow chasing after him.

The three left behind stood there for a heartbeat before Gamora turned to Nebula

“Sister, you look great” Gamora gushed in an uncommon tone for herself.

“Nothing is hurting” Nebula said, her voice full of awe again. “I feel so-“ She paused thinking for the word.

“Powerful?” Quill provided
Nebula nodded slightly.

“Want to fight?” Gamora asked, a grin lighting up her face

“You’re on” Nebula grinned back.

Knowing exactly where to go the two dashed out of the lab in excitement leaving Quill behind.

One of the bots beeped at him, the beeps sounded almost like a laugh.

Grumbling Quill started to follow after them, but paused when he noticed to shell of the spacecraft Tony was working on. With a whistle of appreciation Quill left the lab.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed this bit of interaction.
I tried to be as in character as possible I know some of it might be OOC, but I mean the feel train kinda got me...
So anyway!
Next is Rocket...
Yet again I ask is there anything specific you want them (Rocket and Tony) to talk about?
I'm kinda hinting at stuff with Shadow now... We'll see what happens.
Anyways CONGRATS to all other Fanfic writers! We did the thing! We won an award!
NO ONE CAN TAKE THAT FROM US!
I'M SO PROUD OF US!
Until the next chapter!


Sunday January 29th

“You know you could actually install one of my reactors here and it would definitely help with the performance of the craft.” Tony suggested from his position in the engine room of The Benatar.

Rocket eased into the tight spot and examined what Tony was pointing at, and hummed in appreciation.

“I started putting one together for you, ideally it will help keep this bad boy running longer for less money and resources.” Tony said as he maneuvers himself and stands up from the floor. He pats the ship in emphasis.

“What’s in it for you?” Rocket asked, eyes narrowed slightly.

“Is it too cheesy to say that getting to mess around with your ship, tinkering, and learning about space tech is enough to keep me happy? Besides you’re also helping me out with the thing I’m working on for Nebula”

“Whatever” Rocket shrugged and stood a slight smirk on his face showed his amusement. “I guess you’re kinda an okay Terran to have around. If you wanna hang around here when Capsicle Asshat shows up I guess I can make you a space to work”

As Rocket spoke he went back to tinkering with whatever he had been doing before. Tony glances at the enhanced animal with a mixed look of amusement and admiration.

“Rocket why is the main power off?” Gamorooa asked loudly from somewhere above. After the two engineers has resumed their work.
“Stark and I are doing some work down here. It’s going to be off for a bit sweetheart. Whatcha need?” Rocket shouted sounding annoyed from his place under a console.

She groans and mutters something under her breath

“I just had some work to look through regarding the stones and I was also talking with Carol about Nova Corps and wanted to show her some intel we got too” the woman sounded frustrated.

“Don’t know what to tell you princess we’re in the middle of something-“

“FRIDAY pulled some of your files from your server before we started all this. Nebula gave her the access. She might have what you need.” Tony said from his spot on the ground his voice muffled by the tool in his mouth.

Rocket did a double take and Gamora simply nodded, though the boys hadn’t seen, and left the two.

“Okay rude. You don’t see me snooping through your files.” Rocket growled a bit in what appeared to be anger.

“Actually you did and I let you.” Tony said smugly, a smirk lighting up his face.

Rocket sneered, But looked a bit embarrassed at the same time “Sure ya did”

Tony proceeded to list off all the files that Rocket indeed had obtained from Tony’s servers.

“Though you have nothing from my personal server. Though if you’d like to try to be my guest. Though I do warn you there might be a few traps laid out if you attempt to.” Tony challenged the Alien and continued on with his work to add a reactor.

“Ya know I kinda like you Stark you have something That’s I’ve never really seen before. Quill should definitely learn from you he’d be better for it.” Rocket said

“Don’t be a douche to them you’ll find out that you need them”

“Please save me the lecture I’ve already had that lesson.”

Tony laughed and shook his head, Rocket followed with a chuckle and they both continued on in silence.

—

“Ya know the entire ordeal happening here is bullshit. Honestly government assholes are stupid. Even space ones. Hell they have let Nebula and Gamora walk free even after everything they have done, I mean me Quill and Drax have a pretty epic reputation, but Thanos’ daughters- well you know. But don’t get me wrong your situation, which is clearly different, is bullshit” Rocket said out of the blue.

Tony scoffs slightly and shrugs “I’m used to it. Life’s unfair.” Tony shrugs

“Ugh, tell me about it.” Rocket groaned and they left it at that.

—

“Whoa. So this is what the inside of a spaceship looks like.” The sound of Peter’s voice reverberated off the walls of the ship.
“It’s not that impressive, I’ve seen cooler tech. A lot of this looks to be from the 80’s” Kamala inputted.

“All the old looking shit is Quill’s” Rocket belted out and scurried up ladder to where he heard voices “And what are you kids doing on my ship” Rocket came face to face with Nebula who simply cleared her throat. “I do believe it isn’t just your ship rodent” she said with a brow raise

“Details” Rocket waved off her words. “That doesn’t answer my question baldy”

“The Terran youth showed interest in examining the inside of the craft and Quill and Gamora along with the Colonels deemed it appropriate for the older ones to be aloud to look, and not touch” she finished shooting a look towards Kamala who was about to lay her hand on a panel, on the wall. Her hand shot away and moved to rub the back of her neck sheepishly.

“Woah” Harley marveled looking around. For once the boy was quiet and observing everything around him.

“Har, think you can give me a hand here” Tony called out from below and Rocket rolled his eyes.

“Whatever, just don’t let them touch anything. Main powers off but still-“ the small enhanced genius grumbled and let the normally boisterous teen pass as Peter looked on a bit jealous that Harley got called instead of him.

Kamala bumped his shoulder with her own “You know if you wanna join all you gotta do is go. Tony only calls for Harley because they’ve spent so much time together. You know Tony cares about you, but you know how he is with his selective memory. You know how many times I’ve heard Doctor Wizard complain during training?”

“I don’t wanna be a nuisance” Peter muttered head down cast.

“Kid stop pouting and just freaking join them” Rocket groaned in exasperation.

Peters face turned red in embarrassment as he realized they were still in the company of Nebula and Rocket.

He glanced to Kamala who simply smiled and jerked here head towards where Harley had disappeared. “Just go doofus, I’ll just hang out with Neb here and make sure I don’t screw anything up” the teen girl smirked as Peter dashed off.

Oh hey Pete why don’t you squeeze down here and hold this” Tony said upon Peters arrival.

Harley looked up from his position and smirked at the other boy, happy that Kamala had urged him to follow. Harley knew like many others that Peter was awkward and had a bit of a problem figuring out where he stood with Tony. And maybe Harley could put more of an effort into helping the socially awkward boy, but that involved work.

“It’s getting a bit crowded down here” Rocket grumbled descending the ladder.

I just needed Harley’s eyes for a moment, he and Pete gotta go get their homework done anyway.” Tony spoke clearly distracted.
“Actually Spiderhead got his work done already, me on the other hand have not, so maybe he can stay here and help you while I go do that” Harley inputted without much forethought.

Peter looked up surprised at Harley’s clear move of stepping aside, so that he could try to spend time with his role model.

“Sure, Pete you know how I normally set up for the reactor integration process. How about you take over for Har?” Tony suggests offhandedly

Peter stutters incoherently and Harley rolls his eyes, as does Rocket.

——

Peter basically skipped off of the Benatar and back to the Compound, a wide smile glowing on his face.

“You know that kid really looks up to you” Rocket speaks up after the teen left.

“I know” Tony replies simply.

“You know he feels like he’s competing against the other annoying boy”

“Yeah I’ve caught on to that”

“And you’re just what? Sitting back and enjoying the show?” Rocket sounding slightly perturbed at that thought.

“Not necessarily. Kids need to figure out certain things on their own with experience to back it up. I’m not shunning them or pinning them against each other, but Harley and Peter are very similar and for some fucked up reason I have become the main male figure in their lives. When I myself had shit head father who pushed me away. So I’m not doing what my father did but I’m not coddling them either, because that’s not what they need. Hell I started doing that with Peter in certain aspects at the beginning of our relationship and it kinda backfired and caused a whole thing so I’m finding balance and letting the boys figure themselves out. Harley knows if he needs something to talk to me. Peter is still figuring that out. But Peter also has had it a bit easier then Harley has so my hope is that Harley would step up and try give Pete a bit more of an insight on how to deal with his thoughts and conveying what he wants. Today proved that Harley is capable of this.” Tony rambled on to Rocket and the Alien just stared in awe.

“Well aren’t you just a manipulative bastard?”

“It’s not like that” Tony grumbled defensively

Rocket simply chuckled at that and shook his head dropping the subject at that

——

“So how was it?” Harley asked Peter from his spot at the table where some AP textbooks laid out.

“It was great! He asked me to help him…” Peter went into a long winded explanation of everything he had helped Tony do, and as he did Harley listened patiently.

Though Peter might be older in age most of his actions proved otherwise. He had a childlike quality to his personality and outlook on most things. At least out of the mask. Harley understood why it was like this though and chose not to dwell on it.
Roughly a half hour later Becca ran in with Lila and Cassie close behind her, interpreting Peter’s rambling with their screeching and giggles. Shadow dashed through with them.

Harley watched his sister fondly as she appeared to be truly happy and carefree, at least she had opportunities that he never really got. But he really wouldn’t change anything. She was happy and healthy and having an actual childhood that she could fondly look back on.

After the girls and cat left, Cooper strolled in looking annoyed, but his face quickly lit up at the sight of the two older boys

The three of them started a discussion about random stuff, that was until the topic came to the Rogue Avengers.

“I don’t know…” Peter hummed thoughtfully after hearing Harley’s proposal.

“You don’t have to be apart of it I already know Kam and Ri will be on board though” Harley huffed a bit annoyed at Peters reluctance.

“What will we be apart of?” Shuri asks entering the common area, an arm slung over Kamala’s shoulders.

“Messing with the criminals that will be living here” Harley explains

“I’m game” Cooper piped up.

“Are you sure? This is regarding your father too.”

Cooper huffed a humorless laugh “I’m in it for some revenge against Rogers. He is the one that ruined everything”

“Him and Fury really did fuck over your dad. Oh! What if we plan something for the dear old director too!” Harley bounced a bit in his chair.

“Okay woah, hold up. First of all are you all being serious here? We’re kids, making plans to mess with some really powerful people” Peter piped up.

“Harley was right we’re in” Kamala spoke up looking to Shuri who nodded in agreement.

“Are we bringing Cassie, Lila, and Becca into this? Because all of them could be beneficial but they could also potentially ruin any plans.” Cooper inputs

“I can vouch for Becca, she can handle anything we do and will definitely be an asset” Harley says

“Aw, that’s so sweet’ Becca coos basically melting out of the shadows with the other two girls.

“Wow Pete thanks for the heads up there! What happened to your tingle?”

“There was no threat so I didn’t know and they were too quiet. I didn’t hear them! Anyways you're also forgetting that we’re technically always under surveillance with FRIDAY and CARTER around” Peter points to the cameras set for security measures ignoring the younger girls giggles.

“If I may interject I believe you will find that CARTER and I could prove to be a valuable part of your plans. It is under my impression that you wish to keep your meddling under wraps.” FRIDAY spoke up

And at that smirks were spreading across the faces of the youth in the room.
“You were saying Peter?” Kamala giggles lightly

“May is gonna kill me if she finds out any of this.”

“Keyword there my friend is ‘IF’ she finds out. We have two most sophisticated AI’s known to man on our side along with some of the smartest brains of our generation here. I think it’s time we plan for some fun and revenge.”

“I’d like it known that I tried to be the voice of reason here”

Laughter filled the room.

Chapter End Notes

I’m currently at my friends kitty sitting so I’m posting this on my phone because I feel the need to post another chapter since it’s been so long, so there are probably errors! (When I get the chance later I’ll pull it up on my computer and fix it)
I just really wanted to get a chapter out to you guys!
I hope you enjoyed!
Hopefully I won’t take so long getting the next chapter out!
Hopefully life will chill the fuck out...
Thanks for reading!
Until the next chapter!
Monday January 30th 2017
Defense Squad Chat Opens

Friday February 3rd 2017
Pardons pass

Chapter Notes

Hey...
Sup?
Um long time no see...
So I’m sorry about the hiatus... life you know? But like I don’t wanna give up on this story I have so much still to do with it!
So I found myself a Beta and am having them go over all my old chapters and we’re editing and fixing those and I’m getting back into it. As of 1/5/20 this chapter is unbetaed but that’s cause I’m impatient and wanna get a chapter out really bad! Cause I know how I feel waiting on authors to update and get sad when I think the story is abandoned. So here’s my raw chapter cause yeah... uh Happy new year and hopefully I can keep this new momentum going!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Monday January 30th

Monday came and much to the disappointment of all the children as did school.

The group of them had talked the adults into letting them stay up late, but the few that had to go back home had been shuffled out earlier then they had wanted to be. Though Stephens abilities definitely made getting together easier Tony had adamantly put his foot down on using the Wizard as a taxi service which the sorcerer definitely didn’t argue.

So that’s how the group chat started.

That morning all at once phones pinged and Kamala, Peter, Harley, Becca, Cooper, Lila, and Cassie’s phone lit up.

Shuri has added you to The Young Avengers group

Read the notification.
Peter; dead tired, while trying to focus on class scrambled for his phone in alarm at the realization that it wasn’t on silent.

“Sorry” He mutters to his teacher and ducked his head a bit in mock shame and to glance at his phone, and then nearly choked on his tongue. Did Shuri ever sleep?

Across the city Kamala had a similar experience as her phone pinged.

Harley’s eyes widened as he examined the new application on his phone and came to the conclusion that Shuri and Friday teamed up to make a secret secure program for them to communicate that hopefully even Tony wouldn’t know of. Though he doubted it would be that way forever.

Cooper smiled and tucked his phone away deciding to check it out later.

The younger girls phones were tucked away in their backpacks while they were at school so they wouldn’t see anything until later.

Harley : Sweet! How’d you pull this off? This couldn’t have been easy to sneak past ‘You Know Who’
I also don’t wanna say his name because I feel like he’d appear if I did. You know, speak the name and they shall appear type thing

Shuri : it’s simple when you have his AI on your side. And I may have a few new ins and outs now, with his approval of course.

Harley : you all hated my texting you before!

Kamala: This is not a place to dump memes and other jokes Harley! This is a way for up to converse without the adults knowing. Well at least until You Know Who figures it out.

Shuri: Kam’s right, please don’t use this way of communication to joke around. I have Friday helping me keep this a secret so strictly use this app for discussions about the Rogue’s you can use the normal group message for your stupid jokes and memes.

*Harley changed his nickname to Iron Lad*
*Iron Lad changed Peter’s nickname to Spider-Man*
*Iron Lad changed Kamala’s nickname to Ms. Marvel*
*Iron Lad changed Shuri’s nickname to Princess*
Princess: Really that’s all I get is my title? Is that all I am to you.

Ms. Marvel: don’t worry I got you girl

*Ms. Marvel changed Princess’ nickname to Aja-Adanna*

Ms. Marvel: this is what you had said you wanted your alter ego to be right? did I spell it right? I hope I spelled it right! I thought it was a cool name so I tried to make sure I remembered it.

Iron Lad: kam your inability to hide your crush is showing

Ms. Marvel: Shut the hell up jerk

Ignore him please Ri

Aja-Adanna: Your inability to be an empathetic human being is showing idiot

Spider-Man: Ha! Got ‘Em!

Iron Lad: Hey Webhead

Ms. Marvel: I gotta focus back on class, test about to start! Thanks Ri for setting this up. Bye guys!

Spider-Man : Good luck on your test!

Aja-Adanna : Talk to you later

Iron Lad: bye
Spider-Man: So do we have any idea when the Pardons are going through?

Iron Lad: im guessing end of week

Aja-Adanna: End of week for sure

Spider-Man : if so let’s plan to talk when the adults go out Friday night. Carol told me there’s plans being made

Aja-Adanna: I was informed too.. so until then

Iron Lad: okay then later losers

Later after school

*Cooper changed his nickname to The Favorite Nephew*

The Favorite Nephew : well this is neat thanks Shuri

*The Favorite Nephew changed Cassie’s nickname to Ant-Girl*

*The Favorite Nephew changed Lila’s nickname to Hawkgal*

Ant-Girl : you remember! thanks coop!

Hawkgal ; i guess…

but...

*Hawkgal changed The Favorite Nephew’s nickname to Hawk-Man*
Hawk-Man: why r u like this?!?!

Ms. Marvel: awe Coop that so cute!

Aja-Adanna: It really is!

Iron Lad: Coop don’t get too embarrassed I came up with this name ages ago!

Hawk-Man: ......

*Iron Lad changed Becca’s nickname to Miss Unique*

Iron Lad: there ya go lil sis!

Miss Unique: AWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW

    GUYS! He remembers!

Iron Lad: how could I forget? you used to run away from me in only a towel after bath time screaming that name

Aja-Adanna: Please tell me you have pictures!

Miss Unique: Don’t even

Iron Lad: I don’t but my mom does

Miss Unique: I swear Harley if you wish to live

    I will go tell the Mechanic what you did at school during the civil war
Spider-Man: Wait what? What did he do?

Iron Lad: BECCA! SHUT UP!

Ant-Girl: No Miss Unique please spill

Aja-Adanna: What did Harley do?

Miss Unique: He got in a fight with a pro Rogers person and then tagged the kids locker with an Iron-Man mask with spray paint.

Spider-Man: Oh I like that!

Hawk-Man: Did you win the fight?

Iron Lad: Um… yeah?

Hawk-Man: Sweet

Miss Unique: Don’t encourage him! If Mech finds out Harley will be in soooooo much trouble

Iron Lad: So don’t tell him

Miss Unique: Well don’t show any embarrassing pictures

Hawk-Man: Do we argue like this sis?

Hawkgal: All the time
Miss Unique: Yup

Ant-Girl: Most definitely

Iron Lad: Ok well then is the plan still to talk together on Friday.

Hawk-Man: Mom told me that she was planning on going out with everyone and wants to make sure I’ll keep an eye on Nate though she said Kam and Ri would be in charge

Hawkgal: Then let’s plan on that

Spider-Man: I gotta go do homework

Ms. Marvel: Yeah me too

Aja-Adanna: See everyone on Friday

Friday February 3rd

Pardons go through

“This just in, a week since the press conference that Tony Stark informed the world of the extraterrestrial threat known as Thanos and almost a month of negotiations and meetings it appears that the US President has signed the Pardons for the remaining Ex-Avengers.”

“Protestors have gone to the streets in an attempt to get their thoughts heard on the matter.”

“We come to you live from the Avengers Compound in Upstate New York”

“Yes as you can see even here protestors have made their thoughts known on the subject. Police have been called on to mediate the line between supporters and protesters.”

“There are people supporting the President and his ability to overlook certain circumstances and are willingly welcoming Rogers, and his team back.”

“Though many are appalled that such actions are occurring”

But the question on everyone’s mind is what does Tony Stark think?”
“We’re all truly wondering how Tony Stark is holding up with yet another hurdle being thrown at him.”

“Have you looked outside?”

“It’s as though you don’t even know me.”

“At least tell me you’ve looked at the news.”

“Why would I? I already know the news is out and you know I don’t care—“

Rhodes turned on the TV wordlessly and Tony was silenced by chanting coming from the new station that was on, broadcast of the protesters outside of Starktower with signs showing support of Tony and the New Avengers, it flashed to a feed of protesters in front of the gates of the compound, and then to Washington D.C in from of the UN embassy and the White House.

There were police trying to intervene between civilians fighting.

“Shit” Tony muttered while observing the chaos. He stood up and went to the nearest window. Indeed there were police keeping protesters that were right outside the gate at bay. There was a line splitting the groups, A few people had Captain America’s colors but many more had Iron Man’s. “Well fuck. This is exactly what I’ve been trying to avoid. We don’t need more problems and discord among us. I’m already going to have to deal with Rogers. I don’t need this shit too. It’s flattering and whatever but why do people think this is what needs to happen.”

“There was a time you loved this type of stuff”

“Yeah well that was before an extraterrestrial was trying to eliminate half of all living beings”

Tony snapped, irritation causing him to throw the tablet that was in his hands across the room.

It hit the wall and clattered to the ground leaving a dent in the wall but no damage to the electronic itself as it had been made by Tony himself.

Tony could feel his blood pressure rising and his heart hammered while his lungs knocked into high gear.

“Fuck” Tony rasped lowering himself down the wall and banging his head against the wall. His hand pressed against his chest looking for solace in Stephen’s charm. The feeling of his other half’s heartbeat tingled under his hand.

Rhodey was trying to talk to him but all the engineer could hear was the rushing of blood.

Focusing on his breathing and Stephen’s rhythm the mechanic calmed himself down.

Coming back to his senses Tony felt the weight of Shadow on his shoulders the rumble from his purring soothing Tony further.

“Fucker” Tony spat at Rhodes throwing the oil soaked cloth that was laying on the floor beside him at the Colonel “You just had to go and spazz me out”

Rhodes looked sheepishly at his friend as he got off the ground. “Sorry Tones, I thought you would find amusement in this…” he trailed off

Tony scoffs but doesn’t say anything as he goes to scratch Shadow behind the ear in appreciation.
Moving over he retrieved his tablet.

“Tony, are we okay?” Rhodes asked tensely

“We’re fine platypus, me on the other hand am not doing so hot but I’m working so that helps.” The genius spoke honestly.

“I guess I should go so you can get back to it and so I don’t set you off again” Rhodes said suddenly feeling like he was walking on eggshells

“You can hang around” Tony shrugs “Just do me a favor and don’t bring up things that will further overwhelm me and we’re golden”

Rhodes nods and sits down the two ramble on about nothing in particular while Tony resumes his work.

When Carol walks in conversation ceases.

“Hey Cap” Tony greets feeling relief that he can use that nickname for her without working himself up. He had started calling her that a few weeks back and sent himself into a spiral but giving someone else that relaxed nickname was actually therapeutic for him and now it was just second nature.

“Hey boy’s” Carol examined the scene in front of her. “It’s almost dinner time and we’re setting up for our night activities. You gonna join us?” Carol aimed the question at Tony. “Everyone wants to let loose a bit tonight since last week was really tense and with the news out I think it would be a good idea to have a bit of fun” Carol continues

Rhodes looks to his best friend and can literally see the wheels turning. “Come in Tones let’s go show the Guardians what it’s like to have fun here”

“I don’t really wanna go out anywhere I” Tony mutters

“You trust me right?” Carol prompts, Rhodes looks on curiosity at his girlfriends words showing

“Is that really a question right now” Tony snarks.

“Then go get washed up and ready.” Carol smiles sweetly and turns to walk out. “Also you have 30 minutes if you’re still in here I’ll send in reinforcements to retrieve you” she throws the threat over her shoulder as the dour opens and the promptly shuts.

“Damn is she this bossy in bed cause god damn she must be a fun lay” Tony quips at Rhodes.

The Colonel shoots his friend a scathing look.

“Honestly never really took you as a submissive type but with her arou-“ Tony continued but was cut off by a flying object coming straight for his face, he quickly ducked causing Shadow to topple of his shoulders with a hiss and a glare at the men he scampered off

“Fuck off” Rhodes glared, a mischievous glint in his eyes. “How about you and Stephen?” He asked trying to catch the genius off guard.

“Oh please Steph definitely wears the pant in our relationship. And god damn he wears them fucking gloriously.” Tiny gets a dreamy look in his eyes that nearly causes Rhodes to gag

“I shoulda known that question wouldn’t have phased you, and I regret asking” the man grumbled
Tony simply chuckled “Okay but seriously my girlfriend wasn’t kidding, wrap this up and let’s go.”

“You’re not the boss of me” Tony says definitely but starts to tidy a up a bit

“How Strange puts up with your ass I’ll never get”

“I have a pretty amazing ass”

——

“Fri, I don’t suppose you know where the team is going tonight do you?” Tony asked his AI as he stared at his wardrobe

“I in fact do, as I have set up a secure perimeter and have security on site for the evening activity” the female voice dutifully answers

“Care to enlighten me?”

“I don’t think I will but I do suggest you wear something casual and comfortable but something that still looks nice” the AI quips back giving no hints.

The distinctive sounds of a portal is heard in the other room.

Stephen strides in Levi flaring out in its dramatic fashion. Shadow chatters at the sorcerer in welcome and curls back up.

“Tony?” The man calls out.

“In the closet trying to get FRIDAY to give me something actually to go on as to what I should wear.” Tony grumbles

Stephen chuckles and enters their large closet without a second thought he grabs a pair of black skinny jeans an under tank top and a comfortable looking button up dress shirt. Reaching down he grabbed black tennis shoes that were designed for looking business like but were comfortable.

Tony proceeded to dress in the clothes given to him without complaint. Stephen ducks into the bathroom and the shower starts up.

Tony rolls the sleeves up past his elbows and buttons then he fixes the watch on his wrist smiling gently down at it.

He goes back into the bathroom and fixes his hair and grooms his goatee, he then sprays his cologne on and leaves the bathroom but not without a quick glance at his naked boyfriend, and a whistle of appreciation.

Moving to sit on his lounger Shadow moves to the geniuses lap.

Uplinking to FRIDAY he starts going through some paperwork. She alerts him that Carol was inquiring on his whereabouts and he informs her that he was going to wait on Stephen.

What felt like a few moments later Tony became aware of Stephen’s presence in the room.
“Hey Stranger” Tony whispers through the kiss the doctor had just leaned down to give.

“Hey to you too, I felt you have an attack today, you okay?”

“Mmh” he hums an affirmative sound “Rhodes thought I’d enjoy the attention today that’s outside, needless to say I did not”

“Ass” Stephen mutters darkly

“He meant well Stephanie. It’s all good, the charm definitely helped though”

“I’m glad” Stephen said kissing Tony one more time before standing straight “You ready?”

“No cause I don’t know where we’re going.” Tony pouts playfully but frustrated tension shines in his eyes.

“I’ll make it worth the surprise I promise” the doctor promises holding his hand out

“I’m holding you to that”

“I’d expect nothing less”

——

A portal opens to a darkened room with flashing lights and loud bass heavy music blaring.

The kids were bid goodbye as all the adults present stepped through the opening.

“A club really” Tony asked sceptically, but upon looking around the only ones present other then his friends and family were the staff managing the club.

“FRIDAY has a Perimeter with security set around the area so we won’t be harassed and everyone here has signed disclosures that Matt and Jen threw together” Carol told Tony over the music.

Any tension Tony had melted away and he felt himself get excited for the night.

Looking over he saw Quill looking around fascinated the other Guardians didn’t seem to phased. And Groot had stayed behind with the other teens.

Everyone fanned out most going to the bar to start with a drink Darcy had gone and dragged Johnny out to the dance floor and was already grinding against the flustered hero.

Sue had moved over to one of the comfortable looking booths being almost 6 months pregnant made dancing a little less appealing, Reed dutifully followed his wife.

Stephen stepped up beside Tony with two drinks in his unshaking hands, handing one to fellow genius.

“This is okay right?” Stephen asks motioning to Tony hand which was Idly tapping his reactor, not enough to activate it, though it was a nervous twitch that most knew about by now.

“Yeah, its fine. I just need to loosen up a bit. Its been a rollercoaster lately and my nerves are shot
“to hell” Tony explains and quickly downs his drink. Stephen promptly takes the empty glass and gives Tony the other one whilst magically filling up the empty one.

“Don’t let Jess see your trick or you might never see the light of day again” Tony jokes taking the new drink a bit slower.

Stephen chuckles at that.

Tony watched Hope drag a slightly hesitant James onto the dance floor and smiled gently at the two. Though James’s shoulders were tense, a relaxed smile was on his face showing that he was amused.

Finishing his second drink he looked over to Stephen who was taking a swig of his drink.

“Wanna dance?” Tony asks quirking his brow

“I’m not really one to dance in a club” Stephen answered his voice heard easier as the song changes

Not giving Stephen anymore excuses the billionaire takes both glasses, sets them down and pulls Stephen out to the dance floor.

It doesn’t take long for Tony to loosen Stephen up while dancing around him, calm seductive whispers of instructions are barely heard.

Around them others joined the dance floor but no notice was taken.

——

Slightly out of breath Tony ducks off of the dance floor with Stephen following. Approaching the bar he sighs at the small reprieve from the loud bass coming from the speakers.

“Hey Matt how you holding up with the noise level?” Tony asks sympathetically with extremis enhancing his senses he can’t imagine what Matt was experiencing.

“My ears are going to be ringing for the next week” the lawyer answered ruefully Jessica simply smirked and patted the mans back.

“You know you don’t have to stay” Stephen offered gently.

Matt simply shrugged “What can I say, I’m a masochist”

“Tony get your ass back over here we are about to start a dance off” Hope shouted at the billionaire.

“If you excuse me my ego need a bit of a boost” Tony stood haughty, bushed himself off and sauntered back to the dance floor shooting Stephen a look as the sorcerer just looked on amused.

——
Once the adults had left the group of minors circled up, with Nate tucked away in his playpen with his Teddy, Groot looked on in confusion but was quickly filled in on the issue at hand and promptly promised that he wouldn’t tell anyone. This translation happened through Peter and Harley’s slight ability to understand him and FRIDAY lending a hand.

“Monday they are being transported to the compound” Shuri said solemnly “Maximoff’s location of drop off is unknown, Dr Strange has taken point on her case and not much has been released on her since then.”

“I still can’t believe this is happening and Tony isn’t trying to fight it” Harley griped

“He made valid points Har and he has so many other things to worry about. Are you really going to get on his case about this?” Peter defended

“Statistically this is the most logical course of action” FRIDAY piped in.

“With the data I’ve received on all parties included it does make sense in a statistical manner but in my observations of human emotions and behaviors this course will be detrimental to Chief” CARTER speaks up, clearly FRIDAY made sure to linked her to the tower for this conversation.

“Okay we aren’t here to talk numbers and statistics!” Becca exclaimed throwing her hands up “we’re here for good old fashion revenge. Sure we can’t do a lot but we have resources to make Rogers’ stay at the compound even more miserable”

“Are we going to worry about the other 3, or what about Natasha?” Kamala asked

“To be honest my dad would probably get a kick out of any pranks we pull on him” Cassie smiles gently. “I know my dad was an idiot to join Rogers but I hope you all know he does mean well and I’m sure he has realized his mistake.” The girl finishes softly.

Lila looks to Cooper “Daddy is hurting I feel as though we should let him heal and only antagonize Rogers and maybe even Fury” the young girl offered,

Cooper nodded in agreement. “But Lila if he dares try to attack Uncle Tony after everything he has done for us I’m not going to sit by idly” Cooper's eyes hardened. Kamala placed a protective arm around Lila “Back off Coop” the older girl warned as the younger one pouted her lip trembling.

“Cool it hot shot” Harley clapped Cooper's shoulder, “we have time to make sure everyone gets their fair share. Let’s let your dad get some help, with the toxic environment he’s been in around Maximoff he’s definitely not going to be himself”

Cooper glared at the wall in clear frustration.

“FRIDAY and CARTER are imperative to our plan are you ladies sure you wanna get into this mess?” Shuri asked the AI’s

“My primary interest is to make sure Boss is protected. I’ve idly observed since my activation it's time for some retribution” FRIDAY answers

“Damn I’m worried we might have a skynet scenario happening here” Peter whispered to Harley

“Please don’t take my words to seriously, I have perimeters and I follow them but nothing I have been doing and will be doing breaks them.” FRIDAY said defensively
“It’s okay Fri he was kidding, we know you won’t turn on us. Same with you CARTER. You’re both straight from Tony himself. We need you and aren’t worried” Becca soothed.

“Okay so primary targets Steven Grant Rogers and Nicholas Joseph Fury” Kamala stated with a serious head nod.

“Targets noted” both AI’s spoke together

“I say we brainstorm some ideas, lay everything out and then play it by ear. If we plan to much ahead we can make mistakes or trip up in nervousness” Cassie suggests

“That sounds as good of a plan as any” Becca nods at her friend her frustration over her brother’s words momentarily forgotten

“So Monday?” Peter mutters head bowed

“We’re not gonna be here” Harley ground out frustration evident.

“This is why we have CARTER and FRIDAY on our side” Shuri reasoned “and why we have all of us here cause I’ll be on site, I’ll relay everything to you guys and you’ll be able to come after school”

“Not me, Doctor Wizard already made it clear he would be focusing on Tony to me so I’m stuck in Tennessee” Harley complains.

“It sucks sure but we still have access to the compound Har so we can still be in the loop” Becca soothes but her eyes glinted in frustration.

“I am Groot?” The teen sized flora Colossus inquired

“No I have school and my mom needs us there she’s been really tired lately and has needed extra help around the house”

“I am Groot”

“Oh?” Harley perked up “that would be awesome!” Harley smiles wickedly

“What’d he say?”

“He has some interglacial tricks we can use that he does to his team to annoy them” Peter translates

A cat’s chatter was heard from above. Looking up the teens saw glowing green eyes glistening from the shadows above the entertainment center cabinets.

“I can only assume Shadow will be causing his own brand of havoc around the compound too” Shuri smirks.

Harley puts his fist into the center of their circle “Tony Stark Defense Squad is a go”

Everyone follows and fist meet.
Once again until I get the revised chapter back this is the raw one that I just was itching to release. Please be easy on me and let me know what you think! Is this still a story you all want to read? Cause I still wanna write it!
Until next time and hopefully it won’t take as long!
They’re back...

Chapter Summary

Sunday February 5th
Last briefing before the return

Monday February 6th
The return of the Rogues

Chapter Notes

I’ve been working hard on the story lately and after a couple of flukes I think I found a really awesome Beta! She’s going to start going through the story but she’s also helping me with what I’ve already got and what I’m posting now so thank you Coloured_Rainbow!
Anyway here we are! The moment many have been waiting for!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sunday February 5th

“I can’t believe this is actually happening.”

“This is bullshit.”

“I was really hoping that everything would fall through in the end and we could toss him in a cell and throw away the key.”

“Okay listen up!” Carol shouts over the sounds of everyone in the room, but they all continued to speak regardless of her attempt to quiet them down--every single one of them. Nicci steps up beside her, looking solemn and reserved.

“CARTER, would you please do me the honors?” Tony asks, sliding up next to his co-leader as a loud blaring sound emanates from the speakers around the room. “Shut up,” he spits, the hard edge of his tone causing any lingering voices to silence themselves.
“I know everyone is angry and on edge, but this needs to be a team effort,” Carol started. There were a couple soft murmurs across the room, but they were promptly silenced by both leaders glaring.

“We have to focus on retrieval and settlement. If none of you feel that you can set your feelings aside for what needs to be done, then please leave now, because Tony, nor I, have the patience to deal with any unruly behavior. We are already going to have to deal with it from an outside source. Am I making myself clear?” She waited a beat before speaking louder. “I said am I making myself clear!”

“Crystal” and “Yes ma’am” echoed throughout the crowd.

“This will be your only chance to leave,” Tony spoke up, a double meaning behind his words. “We have incoming. I need everyone here to be sure that they are prepared. Not just for the Rogues being brought back, but also for the looming threat. There is no timeline here and there might not be a warning, so I want everyone here on the same page. I also want to keep my family safe, but to do that I also need my family's help.” Tony smirked as misty eyes and wry smiles stared back at him.

Cheers and affirmations exploded across the small crowd, and Tony nodded before looking over to Carol and Nicci. “Alright. Let's get on laying out tomorrow’s plan.”

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“It doesn't matter what they do, Stephen.” Tony tossed his shirt across the room in exasperation. “A goddamn flimsy piece of paper isn’t going to deter him, and a slap on the wrist will just challenge him.” Tony snapped while climbing into the bed. “I appreciate Matt and Jen’s effort, I do--but Steph, I don’t have the energy to fight some paper war against a man who the UN can’t even handle. And I just--I can’t--” Tony bashed his head against the headboard in frustration, taking in a few deep breaths to calm himself down.

Stephen’s eyes hardened for a moment, but just as quickly softened as he moved closer to his lover.

“Tony, it’s okay. I understand. I just want you protected by any and all means necessary. I’m sorry for causing you distress.” The sorcerer whispers, gently running a firm hand down Tony’s arm. “Look at me.” Tony’s eyes were clouded in stress when he looked up at Stephen, his brows knitted together. “Promise me you won’t be alone around him--” Tony cut him off with a look. “No, I’m serious.”
“Fine. I didn’t plan on being around him anyways, not unless I have to. But… I feel like there’ll be a fairly large barrier between us if we are in the same room,” Tony’s voiced wryly.

“I love you, and I don’t want you to be put under more stress. If I could, I would make you take the week off. But I fear doctors orders won’t work in this case.”

“Maybe not, but I can definitely take half-days off.” Tony smiles and leans into Stephen. A meow comes from a black blur that settles itself into the genius’s covered lap.

“I’ll hold you to that” Stephen declared as he adjusted himself in bed.

Leaning over, Tony kisses his head. “Love you too, Stephen”

**Monday February 6th**

“Everything ready?”

“James and Winter have left the premises.”

“Barton and Lang’s families are at the tower, save for the ones attending school.”

“The holding cells are ready.”

“Rooms are ready.”

“Strange has confirmed his retrieval of Maximoff.”

“Stark’s location?”
“Onsite, but in lockdown in the lab.”

Chatter on the comms rang in everyone’s ears as the New Avengers prepared for incoming.

Not too long later, a jet landed on the compound’s tarmac, and Carol and Rhodes stood unflinching. A few other members that were present shielded themselves from the wind and dust.

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Steve twisted a bit in the chains that restrained him. He was surprised to find that he couldn’t bend them.

“Stop it,” Sharon hissed at him for the hundredth time. He flinched at her harsh tone, his eyes flickering over to where she sat in her chair.

The hatch opened, Natasha and Sharon hastily making their retreat. Shuri stayed sitting and watched from her chair.

“Well, fuck you too,” Clint muttered at Natasha’s quick disappearance.

“Hello, boys,” Carol smiled brightly at the four men in their seats. “We’re gonna have a good time, today.” She sounded cheerful enough, though you could tell there was a bit of lingering sarcasm in her tone. Shuri chuckled at that, but quickly silenced herself when Hope entered the jet.

“Hey Scott, you’re with me.” He startled when she snapped her fingers towards him and moved to walk off the jet. Scott followed after her like a lost puppy, just glad that he could wander around unrestrained.

“Sam, you’re with me,” Rhodes ordered, stepping forward. The ex-para-rescue nodded curtly and stood as told, chains on his cuff jingling as he did.

“Are these really necessary?” Steve held up his wrists in annoyance to emphasize that he was referring to the chains and cuffs, but his question was ignored.
Steve watched Jennifer maneuver her way onto the jet. Her skin was tinged a faint green, causing him slight unease as she stepped over towards Clint.

“Mr. Barton, you’re with me. There’s some legal paperwork to go over before we can get you settled.” She spoke softly, but had a hard look in her eyes that came across almost as a dare.

He nodded submissively and stood to follow her.

Steve was stunned that he was suddenly alone with Carol Danvers, though the question of where Tony was lingered in the back of his mind.

“Miss Danvers--”

“Major Danvers, actually. I earned the title, but I guess Colonel will do as well, if you so choose.”

Steve grinds his teeth, but pushes down the growing frustration.

“I had--” Steve bit his tongue, fighting back the retort of irritation that he almost spoke. “Of course. I apologize” Steve ended sweetly trying to keep his mood pleasant.

Carol simply quirked a brow and made a humming sound. “Let’s go, private,” the Colonel said with a smirk. “We have a long day ahead of us.”

Carol and Steve entered the conference room, passing Matt, who was sitting in a relaxed manner right by Nicole.

“Mr. Rogers, this is Matt Murdock and Doctor Nicole Williams,” Carol introduces. “Mr. Murdock is one of the lawyers who has been working on point with the UN. Dr. Williams is our resident therapist; she will be who you will work with, come your mandated therapy sessions.”
“Mr. Rogers,” Nicci greeted, her voice pleasant. “I’m glad you could join us. Please, have a seat.” Matt stared ahead with a slight smile on his face as she spoke.

Steve looked around, confusion clearly showing on his face. “Is it only me?”

“You’ll find everyone’s cases are different. We figured it would be best to settle them all separately to avoid confusion,” Matt calmly explains. “We have quite a few things to go over, so get comfortable.”

Steve was left standing as the other three in the room got comfortable, sighing quietly the super soldier followed.

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“Hope--”

“Shut up, Scott.”

Scott nodded at that, not trying to push further any conversation as they made their way down the hallway.

Looking around, he observed outside through the large windows that made up one of the walls. The grounds were massive and you could see protesters outside the gates in the distance.

Looking away, he examined the opposite wall that held the occasional ornate or decorated door. Scott read the names that adorned each of the ones they passed, recognizing only a handful of them--one being Tony Stark. Fittingly, his door was gold and red, an Iron Man symbol sitting neatly in the middle of it.

Coming up, they approach a door decorated in black, yellow, and some silver tones. Hopes name sat in the middle, and her company’s logo and the Wasp symbol just beneath it.

Unlocking the door, Hope ushered Scott in and followed suit before locking it back up.
Scott looked around the massive office: it was very cozy, a sensible amount of tech scattered around. Light filled in from the large window taking up a fourth of the wall space, lighting up another locked door.

“CARTER, blackout the office, please.” At her words, compartments in the ceiling opened to drop down a pair of blinds.

“Of course, Miss Van Dyne,” came the response of a young sounding British woman, causing Scott to look around.

“CARTER is the AI that runs the compound,” Hope explains with a roll of her eyes. “Tony named it after his godmother.”

“Oh,” he says simply.

Hope stepped up to Scott, staring him dead in the eyes as she held out her hand. “Give it.”

Scott reaches into his pocket to retrieve a thick metal case, handing it over. “I figured it would be better if I held on to them. I wasn’t sure who would be seizing control of the suit, and if it fell into the wrong hands…” Scott let his sentence slowly die out, looking down at the ground.

Hope opened the box and examined the contents. She sighed, her shoulders loosening a bit.

Closing the case, she moves to hold it to her chest with a small smile on her face. “Glad to know you aren’t a complete idiot.”

Scott rubbed the back of his neck, peering back up at her. “I’m sorry, Hope. Cap called and I got excited. I didn’t think of the consequences that it would have on you or your father. I know I’ve made a lot of mistakes, but I just couldn’t lose the Pym Particles.”

“Thank you, Scott.” Hope’s tone was soft and genuine, her eyes not as harsh as they had been. “Now we should talk about what you should expect while you’re here, and finalize some paperwork.”
“I’m all ears. Though... I wonder--is it possible for me to see Cassie after we’re done?” Scott requested quietly. “If not, that’s fine--of course--I can wait until it’s allowed. I just really… miss her.”

“She’s at school right now, but Tony already talked with Maggie about you being able to see her. She wants to talk with you before anything.”

“She’s here? On the East Coast?” Scott asked hopefully, never actually having gotten a confirmation on his daughter’s whereabouts.

“Tony took her, Maggie and Jim in shortly after your escape from the Raft to protect them,” she elaborated.

Blowing out a relieved breath, he peeked up again. “Wait, I don’t understand--you and Tony? What about--you know, never mind. You answered that during the press conference. Sorry, continue.”

Silently, Hope thanked her lucky stars that she didn’t have to deal with Rogers or Clint. She was also grateful that Scott actually seemed remorseful and willing to move forward.

She shot Tony a quick message to update him and let him know when Maggie could come by her office to talk with Scott.

“Okay. Let’s get started”

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“Mr. Barton, I know this is hard to grasp right now, but you are a danger to yourself and others. You need help, and this paper outlines everything that you need to know.”

“I want to see my wife and kids” Clint pleads, his head pounding as his irritation grew.
“I regret to inform you that until you are cleared by our psychologist that you won’t be allowed to.”

“Why the hell not? They’re my family.” He demands through his teeth.

“Your wife wishes--“

“Bullshit! I can smell Tony’s dirty hands on this from a mile away!” He shouts without much thought put into the words.

“Actually, Laura was about to serve you with divorce papers. Those are what you would have had in front of you right now if Dr. Stark hadn’t talked her down. We believe that though your actions have been your own, your time under the Mind stone’s effect and exposure to a product of its creation have you compromised. Irrational, irritable, short tempered, throwing senseless blame; these are clearly signs that you need help, Mr. Barton.”

“Divorce?” Clint chokes, panic setting in.

“Laura is frustrated, but she wants you to get help. Then you two can talk. So please, just sign the papers so we can move forward.”

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“Sit,” Rhodes demands, sitting down himself.

“Colonel Rhodes, I just want to apologize in person about what happened. And I want to thank you and your team for giving me a chance to join,” Sam spoke honestly while he moved to sit, the chains and cuffs having already been removed.

Rhodey nods at the first part and but then scoffs. “It’s not me you have to thank. You do realize that Tony is the one who did most of the work? Even after almost being killed.” He muttered the last part quietly, but Sam heard it.

“I promise I’ll do everything that is asked of me. There won’t be any more issues.” Sam vows without hesitation.
“It’s not you we’re worried about.” Rhodes states ominously.

Sam bows his head in understanding.

“Steve.” He breathes the name almost like a curse.

“Yeah,” The Colonel agrees. “So let’s get through this paperwork and get you settled.”

Steve glared at the artificial wave of calm that shot through the room.

“Mr. Rogers, this is not complicated. It is simple and straightforward.” Carol ground out through a clenched jaw.

“It doesn’t make sense. None of this makes any sense, and to top it off you are all blinded by a system that is using you,” Steve spat. “I want to talk with Tony. That’s simple enough, isn’t it? And I’d like to see Bucky--I know he’s here. I also want Wanda here to keep her calm. She’s in more control with me, because she trusts me. Why can’t we negotiate? Why is it your way or the highway, which apparently there is no highway!” He ended with an exasperated shout.

Carol stands and slams her hands against the table, sending a crack branching through the wood. “How does this not make sense! You seem to understand what I’m saying. You have no room to negotiate here, Rogers! You have nothing to stand on except a flimsy pardon and some court orders. You are at my mercy. Not Tony’s. Mine. You don’t get whatever you want because you want it--that’s not how the system works! If you’re going to act like a bumbling buffoon, you will be treated like one. So sign the goddamn paper, and let’s move on!”

“Carol, how about you take a couple minutes to cool off.” Matt said, motioning discreetly to her glowing fists. “I’ll see if I can go over the next bit with him without any hiccups,” he said, keeping his voice purposefully calm.

“That’s a good idea,” Nicole said with a slight smile aimed at Carol.
Grumbling to herself, Carol stomped out of the conference room. She soon found herself in front of Tony’s lab. Taking a deep breath, she asked for permission to enter.

She was surprised to find both James and Tony there when CARTER opened. She passed an agitated looking Shadow as she walked in.

“James, I thought you were at the tower,” she greeted softly.

“I couldn’t stay there without anyone around, and Winter was getting too agitated. Hanging with Tony seems to be the trick right now to keep myself in check.” The super soldier glanced over to the man in question, who was distracted currently by an array of wires and metal in front of him.

“‘Sup, Cap number two?” He asked, acknowledging the woman’s presence, “Need a break from Cap number one so soon?” He paused his work, holding an open hand out to James.

Carol moved to the well-worn couch and fell back dramatically. “I don’t know how you did it. I actually lost it in there.” She looked up and watched an exchange of money between James and Tony. The soldier handed the genius a 20 dollar bill, his face showing a grim, forlorn look. Tony smirked at him, but then proceeded to shoot Carol a sympathetic look.

“It’s actually like bashing your head against a concrete wall. He won’t shut up about you two and Maximoff. It’s like a fucking circle.” She continues, rolling her eyes. “He doesn’t understand that he has no sway. He can’t wrap his head around that he is on probation and is limited and restricted.” Carol felt her heart racing as she ranted, pulling a pillow over her face to scream into it.

“Damn, I’ve never seen you like this. Usually you’re the calm one,” Tony attempts to say playfully. He gently moves her legs, sitting down beside her, he settles her legs in his lap, removing her shoes he began to rub her feet.

“Tony, you told me it was bad--you’ve shown me it was bad. I just wasn’t prepared for how bad it really was,” she whined through the pillow.

“Damn, you were right. He broke her.” James comments from his spot.
“Carol, I know you hate being told this, but you have to keep yourself in check around him. Don’t get too emotional. It shows him your weaknesses. It shows him how to get under your skin. You need to establish that you are the superior one here and that you have the control. Only reason he wants me is he knows how to get what he wants from me, or he thinks he does. Things have changed, but regardless, remember your plan to put him through boot camp? That means you are his commanding officer. Right? Treat him like your subordinate. Hell, gag him if you have to. We have control here, you have the control. No one else wants to deal with him. They begged us for help, so we do it our way, because that’s what the contract they signed says.” Tony’s speech held such a harsh tone that it caused Carol to move the pillow and look up.

She froze. “You know what?”

“Hm?” He hummed as she stood up.

“You’re absolutely right!” She exclaimed, throwing the pillow down on the couch and slipping her shoes back on.

“I mean, aren’t I always?” He jested. “But thanks for the ego boost. You know I always need those.”

“No. You don’t,” James grumbled.

Carol practically ran out of the room, her eyes harsh and determined. “I’ll be back so you can finish that massage,” she calls over her shoulder before the door closes.

“Good luck,” Tony whispers and turns back to James. “Alright where were we?”

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“Hey losers,” Shuri greeted upon entering the lab. “It’s a freaking soap opera out there! You got apologies, and angst, some actual happiness. Like, it’s insane. Of course, you know that Carol had a breakdown. Harley is gonna be so mad he wasn’t here for this.”

“There’ll definitely be plenty of drama to go around for awhile,” Tony mutters. “So, why are you still here? What are you up to?”
“You’re just trying to get rid of me. But I’m here for the show. Besides, I’m the insider on all this. I’m relaying everything to everyone not here.” The teen smirks, clearly pleased with herself.

“Of course you are. Well, if you want, you can tell Cassie that her mom is coming to see her dad and she might be able to come see him.”

“Already done, and I’m pretty sure I heard her excited scream from here. I don’t really know what to say to Cooper and Lila though. Lila is asking, Cooper has been pretty full of angst about it all and been kinda short with Lila in the process. Though, Kam, I and the boys have kept him relatively calm.”

“I’ve noticed.”

“What’s your plan of attack this week?”

“Is it bad to say I don’t know? I’m here for the trainings, meetings, and to get work done in the lab. That’s it. With the guardians staying here a bit longer, I have a bit more time to train with them and suck all the extraterrestrial knowledge I can, while I’m able.”

“I sure as hell ain’t sure what I’m going to do, especially since I have to be here for various trainings and my sessions,” James grumbled.

“I have too much to worry about to walk on eggshells. Besides if it comes to it and I somehow find myself in an unpleasant scenario, Shadow will get ‘em for me. Right bud?” Tony asked the cat, who answered with a flick of his tail.

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“With all due respect--”

“Who are you trying to kid you have any sense of respect for anyone or anything--”
The sparking sounds of a portal emanate from an area by the door of the room.

Matt smirks and sits back, Nicole sighs and leans into the table, and Carol sighs in relief as she sits back with a small smile playing on her face.

Stephen steps through from Kamar-Taj, Levi being it’s usual dramatic self.

“Oh, hello. Am I intruding on something?” He asks innocently.

“Strange,” Steve mutters in recognition.

“There is a Doctor somewhere in there,” the sorcerer snarks.

“What a pleasant surprise, Dr. Strange,” Carol said, although Stephen heard the unspoken Thank god you’re here in her words. “I hope everything went well on your end.”

“As well as could be expected. I’ll debrief you later. I was hoping to have a few words with our new occupant here,” Stephen urges, looking at Nicole and Matt with a quirked brow.

“I could use some coffee.” Nicole stood casually and stretched.

“I’ll join you,” Matt speaks up, grabbing his cane and following the therapist out.

Carol and Stephen both knew they would be staying in the hall.

“I’m good. Had a bit of a breather downstairs earlier,” Carol says, her tone telling Stephen that she’d seen Tony.

“Mr. Rogers, I have to talk with you about something.” There was no request, not question. Stephen was making a statement.
“I hope you’re comfortable saying whatever it is you are feeling straight to my face,” Steve says. There was a slight edge to his voice, but he otherwise attempted to exude innocence.

“I don’t like you,” the doctor spits venomously, his face contorting in anger.

Stephen stepped forward as he spoke was now towering over the sitting soldier, who quickly responded by standing, chains clinking.

Levi slipped around Stephen’s body and moved to sit Steve back down along, with restraining the soldier against the chair.

“Stephen.” Carol spoke in a quiet, but firm voice.

“It’s fine Carol I just need to say a few things. Nothing more.”

The colonel nods and sits back to enjoy the show.

“Listen here, as this will be your one and only warning. Stay away from Tony. You are not to approach him.”

“What if he comes to me?”

“That is his choice then. You are not to seek him out.”

“And if I do?” Steve challenges with a tight smirk.

Stephens features further darkened, if that was even possible. “Then you will find yourself falling in a void of nothingness for hours, if not the rest of your life.”

“You can’t do that.”
“Try me.”

“The UN won’t allow it.”

“You’ll find that you are mistaken. You are under the jurisdiction of the Avengers, Mr. Rogers. You yourself have signed the preliminary papers agreeing to follow all rules and regulations that the Avengers see fit.”

“What happened to getting approval for the council?”

“As I’ve been trying to explain, Rogers,” Carol grits smugly through her teeth, "your case is much different. The UN has given us full control of what is needed to keep the people safe from you. So, if Dr. Strange needs to intervene, it would not be met with an argument.”

“That unethical.” Steve argued, attempting to keep the panic out of is voice.

“As is doing most of what you have since you woke up. So, either you listen to Carol--“

“Isn’t Tony a leader as well?”

“Yes, but I am your commanding officer now, so you won’t have to worry about Dr. Stark--who, mind you, has requested that you do not engage with him.” Carol interjects

“Does he have a restraining order or something?”

“Sadly, no. But that's mainly due to the fact that there are other, more important concerns we have to worry about; but that doesn’t mean you can’t be a decent human being and respect his wishes.”

“This is absurd!”

“What’s absurd is that you are more focused on harassing a man instead of trying to get your act together so we can be ready for Thanos.”
“That’s another thing, how can you trust these Guardians? How do you know they aren’t leading us into a trap?”

Carol and Stephen shot each other a look.

“Right?” Carol answers Stephen incredulous look out loud.

Levi tightens around Steve and he feels breathless.

“Train with Carol. Talk with Nicole. And stay the fuck away from Tony.” Stephen says his face right in Steve’s.

At that, Levi releases the soldier and returns to Stephen who was already in the process of walking through a portal, after a quick finger salute at Carol.

“I want to talk Everett Ross” Steve pants out trying to refill his lung back to full.

“How about we finish this paperwork and then I’ll put the request in for you.” Though it sounded as if it could be taken as a question it clearly was not.

Steve bowed his head in fake submission. He’d show them that they couldn’t bully him. He’d show them.

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“Natasha please.” Clint pleads as he passes her as he was being escorted to his room.

“Clint, I can’t right now, just accept the help.”

Jennifer scans her badge and deposits Clint into his room, which doesn’t hold much. There were cameras, a bed, and a bathroom; it was a small room. It was where he would be for the foreseeable future.
“Natasha, you don’t have to stay in this section anymore you could join Sam, Scott and Sharon.” Jennifer offers. “With Rogers being here too you won’t get much sleep even with the sound proofing.”

Natasha sighs and listens to the banging on the door from where Clint was.

“I guess,” she concedes.

“Here let me help you move your stuff.”

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“You don’t need to restrain me anymore, I won’t do anything,” Steve tried to reason with Carol small steps are all he can do with the chain attached to him.

“Even after everything, you don’t seem to understand the severity of your position. Do you?”

“When can I speak to Everett?”

“Oh, I’m sorry,” a fake apologetic voice seeped out. “I didn’t tell you. Did I? He denied your request for a meeting. I apologize, I thought I told you.”

“Why would he deny my request?”

Carol furrowed her brows in a show of thought. “Something to do with when offered help you told him you could handle it yourself. Or something like that”

Carol smiles sweetly, unlocks the chains and pushes him no so gently into his room. This was gonna be a long week.

Chapter End Notes
So whatcha think?
I little bit of everything was thrown in there!
I feel like I flowed the scenes together well! So I’m still working on it don’t worry but the next chapter will take a bit to get up since I wanna allow my new Beta to catch up and everything and we all know how life is.
Also a quick note for everyone asking
Shadow IS NOT LOKI! Lol! Loki is still doing his thing in Asgard!
Anyways I hope you like this and look forward to more! Hope to have another chapter out in the next month or so!

End Notes

Feedback honestly keeps me going!
Hope you enjoyed it!

Go check out my Tumblr Brickgirl1993
Point of No Return Tumblr: ponr-a03

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