Crushed Expectations

by Crazysnakelover

Summary

Peter Parker does not have the easiest life. With an Aunt who constantly reminds him what a useless burden he is, and her boyfriend being the biggest jerk in the world. And that’s just when he’s at home. School is a whole other nightmare, and trying to juggle being Spiderman on top of it all. He thought that when Tony Stark came into his life, things would get better. He was wrong though.

Spiderman MCU alternate universe.

Not the best summary. Tags describe the story better in my opinion.

Notes
Hello everyone! Here is a fresh new story for you all. This idea had been kind of bouncing around in my head while I was writing “A Little Hiccup” but I refused to start writing it until that one was finished. I think this is going to turn into a series of connected short stories. This plot is a little more dark, and it’s an MCU Spiderman AU.

Other warnings you should note is that this is an abusive Aunt May story. Yes I know another unoriginal plot idea, but like my other story I’m hoping to add my own twists and make the plot a little more original. It’s going to focus more on verbal and emotional abuse rather then physical abuse,

I’m happy to say that I have no personal experience with verbal abuse. This does make it more difficult for me to describe it realistically however, and I want to be respectful to those who have experienced it in their life. My deepest sympathies go out to anyone who’s grown up with an adult verbally abusing them. I am aware of the effects it has. So if the verbal abuse shown in the story is not too detailed, this is why.

See the end of the work for more notes
Chapter 1

New York City was a bustle of busyness. 24 hours a day, seven days a week it was like that. There was never a moment of silence in the city. During the day everyone was rushing around to wherever they needed to go, and during the night crime usually happened. You could think that nighttime was when it was quietest in New York, but despite there being less people running around, nighttime was when sirens were blaring, and alarms going off constantly. Those that live in the big city have to condition themselves to sleep through the noise, or have good sound proof insulation in the walls.

Since it was only 9:00 in the evening, the streets were still fairly busy with people heading home and doing last minutes errands. Unseen by all who were milling about the city that evening, was a lone figure that sat perched on top of one of New York's many tall buildings. Fourteen year old Peter Parker stared down at the busy street below him, eyes scanning for any type of trouble he could help with. Clad in only a cheap costume that he made himself, so he could keep a secret identity while out fighting crime. The costume pretty much consisted of a matching blue pajama pants and a shirt, with a sleeveless red hoodie that had a black spider and web on the front of it. His face was covered by a full facial covering red beanie, and goggles.

He referred to himself as Spiderman, but unfortunately that name wasn’t really catching on in the public. It was rare for him to be seen long enough to get a decent picture or video of him, but the few lucky people that managed it and posted online, always referred to him as, the spider dude, spider guy, freaky wall crawler, or web slinger. The teen had made some half hearted attempts to get the name Spiderman going by commenting on Youtube videos and pictures posted and using the name Spiderman but so far it still hasn’t caught on.

One could ask why he would be given names like that? Well it’s quite a long story, but he short of it is that just a few months ago he was bit by a spider. There must have been something special about the spider because after a single night of being sick as dog he suddenly had strange powers that included sticking to walls, an ESP for danger that he started calling ‘Spider Sense’, and dialled up senses. After realizing what he could do with the powers, he ran with the spider thing and created his own web fluid, that gave him the ability to swing around Queens and be a Superhero like Ironman. Not that he could ever compare himself to such a man, but he always did the best that he could.

Peter glanced down at the watch he wore on his wrist, to check what time it was. It was about ten minutes after 9pm; his aunt was most likely already aware of his late absents and probably pissed at him. The later he stayed out at this point, the more mad she was going to get, so the boy figured that it was about time to head back home. The teen stood up from his crouched position feeling a bit disappointed. He wouldn’t exactly call it a wasted evening, as he had been somewhat helpful to the community. He had saved a cat that had gotten stuck up on a telephone pole, and a couple of kids from getting hit by a truck after they ran into the road without looking. But most times he went out to be Spiderman, he would at least stop a convenience store holdup, or stop a car from rolling during an accident. He tried to give himself some slack as it was a school night he couldn’t stay out as late as he did on weekends.

On weekends he could get away with staying out until 2am, and sometimes later. Weekends were when his aunt took evening shifts at her job, and wasn’t aware of how late he stayed out. On weeknights however he had to try and make it home by 7pm to be on time for dinner. He was sometimes able to go back out again after his aunt went to bed, but with school the next day he couldn’t stay out too late or he’d fall asleep in class and end up getting in even more trouble. There was plenty of times like tonight though, where he lost track of time and never even made it home for
With a sigh Peter pressed the button on his right hand web shooter he invented during his shop class. A long thick strand of web fluid shot through the air and attached to the building next to him. Without the slightest hesitance the boy jumped from the building while holding tightly to the strand of web, and quickly swung towards the building, the end of the web was attached to. When he was just feet away from splattering head first into the bricks he reached out and fired another web at another nearby building which redirected him away from the looming pain he surely would have felt if he had actually hit the building. The teen continued this system until he made it back to the apartment building he lived in with his Aunt May. He hid behind the apartments dumpsters to change out of his Spiderman suit, and into normal clothes again. One of the perks of doing this so late at night was the darkness that concealed him from nosy eyes.

After he was back in the clothes that he went to school in, he walked into the building and made his way up to the seventh floor. He kind of went back and forth on when he took the elevator and when he took the stairs. For a normal teen it was most logical to take the elevator up, as seven floors of staircases would leave the most active athlete a little bit winded. Before the spider bite he was a fairly weak and sickly kid that made taking the stairs almost impossible. There was a time when the elevator was broken and he had to take breaks in between floors, which doubled the time it took one normally would take to climb up seven flights of steps. After the bite however; much of that went away. He could now run up all those flights and barely break a sweat. So he usually took the elevator when he was feeling particularly lazy or tired, or there were just too many witnesses that would wonder why he was choosing to climb up seven flights of steps.

The teen mentally braced himself as he approached the door to his apartment. Not only was he surly in for a scolding, but with his heightened senses, the odor that fumed through the apartment was almost a slap in the face every time he walked in. He knew that his aunt would be furious with him, and the moment he stepped inside she would pounce on him like a preying lion. Guess it’s better to just get it over with, Peter thought to himself as he unlocked the deadbolt and opened the door.

His nose was immediately assaulted with the normal stench of the apartment. A mixture of cheap cigarettes, stale alcohol, and the must of uncleanliness. Before the spider bite he had managed to condition himself enough towards the smell so that he barely noticed it. But when the dial up happened, there was little he could do to escape the stench that instantly watered his eyes and gave him a headache if left in it too long. Peter barely heard the click of the door latching before the sound of his Aunts voice shrieked in his ear. “Peter Parker! Get in here!”

The sound was coming from the kitchen, and the teen could not stop a sigh from escaping his lips as he made his way over to the kitchen. May’s boyfriend Henry cast a glance in Peters direction when the teen passed by the front room. He was a well built man who drank way too much. He was pretty much the reason why their placed always smelled like stale alcohol. The boy did not return his glace, but continued on into the kitchen. When he first stepped into the kitchen May’s back was turned to him. She must have heard him approach because she immediately turned around to face him, reaching her index and middle finger up to take the cigarette out of her mouth. “Where the f- have you been?” she spat out with a puff of smoke. The glare she was giving him was one of deepest anger.

Of course he couldn’t tell her the truth. She probably wouldn’t believe him anyways. So he said the first excuse that came to his mind. He had a list of about ten different excuses that he gave to people when he needed to explain why he wasn’t where he was supposed to be because of Spiderman. “Sorry May… I was at Ned’s house and lost track of time.”

“You and I both know that’s bullshit!” the woman yelled before taking another inhale of her cancer...
Peter did not know how to respond to the accusation because he already knew from past experience that there really wasn’t any use in trying to convince her of anything else. So he remained silent. As usual May took his silence as confirmation of her accusation and preceded in giving him a disgusted look. “Listen Peter,” she began with a fuming sigh. “I do not bust my ass as work everyday, just to have you dick around getting high. I work very hard to get food on the table, and clothes on your ungrateful back, and this is the thanks I get? I would have thought that you would want to get better then your no good parents, but I guess the apple really doesn’t fall far from the tree.”

The teen struggled to keep his face a stony blank slate as she started making verbal jabs at the parents he couldn’t remember. There was a lot of mystery surrounding his parents, of what they did for living and even their deaths. The official story was that they died in a plane crash. However there weren’t even any records of them being passengers on the plane let alone why they were on it in the first place. Peter was very young when it happened and didn’t remember anything. His Aunt May always assumed that they were nothing but unemployed drug addicts, but his Uncle Ben always told him that his parents had always been secretive, and he never found out why. May continue to give him a verbal dress down, insulting his parents, his intelligence, and basically making him feel like his only real usefulness in life was to fill a prison cell. That is unless he didn’t end up in juvenile hall first. “Your Uncle Ben would be so disappointed if he saw you now. What do you think he would say if he knew what you’ve been out doing this evening. I have have a mind to- Where do you think your going?” At the mention of his uncle, Peter had heard enough. So he turned around and began walking towards his room. “Get back here young man I’m not through talking to you!”

“Well I’m through listening to you,” the boy rudely called back not stopping his stride.

“Don’t you cock an attitude with me!” Peter could hear his aunt beginning to follow him. He was already at his bedroom door, and quickly stepped inside. Just as he shut the door with a loud slam he heard a thunk against the wood indicating that May must have thrown something at his direction. She tended to do that a lot, throw an object at him when she knew that there was not a chance in hitting him. When she first started doing that, it scared Peter a lot. I made him wonder how long before she actually hit her target. But as the incidents continued, it became clear that never did intend to actually hit him with anything. Probably because if she ever actually left a mark on him it would lead to awkward questions, so the goal was always to scare him.

With a click he locked his door, and breathed a sigh of relief. He could hear Henry mumble something from where he sat in the front room. Peter couldn’t make out what it was he said but May’s response to it was loud and clear. “Shut the f- up! I didn’t ask for your input!”

Peter blinked away more approaching tears as he stood with his back leaning against the door. He breathed in the clean air of his bedroom; it was a constant battle to keep the rest of the apartment smell out of his room. He always kept his bedroom door shut, which did the most help, and almost always kept the window opened or at least cracked. The only times it was ever fully shut was during bad weather. There were some winter nights he suffered under a mound of blankets because the cold was always better than having your room smell like a hell hole. The rest of his defense was the constant burning of candles and incense when he was in the room. So when the teen finally got control of his emotions, he went over to light the candle that sat on his bedside table.

Next to the candle stood a single frame that contained a fading photograph. It was a picture of a young boy about five or six years old with an older man squatting next to him. Both were smiling and you could see the hints of a playground in the background of the photo. From the picture it was
obvious that the boy was a much younger Peter. A stranger looking at the photo would have thought
that the man was Peter’s father, and in his mind; it was his father. Not his biological father but the
only father figure he could remember… his Uncle Ben.

Once the flame of the candle ignited, Peter picked the frame up and held it close to his chest. The
threat of incoming tears prickled at his eyes; Aunt May had not always been this way. When his
Uncle was still alive she had been a loving, doting mother figure as much as Ben had been a father
figure. But when he passed away, everything changed. May lost herself in the grief. She would lock
herself in her bedroom for days, not bothering to make sure that Peter got to school or even ate. After
a couple weeks, one of Peter’s concerned teachers called CPS on them. They could have taken him
away from his aunt at that point, and maybe he would have been better off if they had. But they were
understanding of the loss we had suffered and the grief we were both going through, so they gave his
aunt the chance to pull herself together. Which she did.

She went out and got a job, and started taking care of him again. In the eyes of the world, she was
back to being a loving aunt trying to raise her nephew in the harsh reality that is the world they live
in. But only Peter knew that things were still different. Yes May did everything she was required of,
but there was a lot more griping from May about how much he ate, and how fast he outgrew clothes
or got holes in his jeans. It's almost as if raising him had suddenly become a chore and she was no
longer hesitant to point this out. Maybe she had always felt that way, it’s not like she was even blood
related to him. Ben and his father had been brothers, so maybe his aunt only went along with taking
him in because his uncle had felt an obligation to his brother.

Whatever the case was, it was very clear by then that he had become a burden to his aunt. He
couldn’t really blame her for being upset. Here she was suddenly stuck with singley raising an eight
year old boy that she was only related to by law. So he did his best to make things easy for his aunt,
and life was bearable. Then Henry came into the picture.

It took a few years for his aunt to start dating again, and Peter was generally happy for her. In his
mind, the more she was happy the better off he would be. It's like that old saying that goes
something along the lines of ‘when moms not happy then everyone is not happy.’ It started out with
the occasional date from someone she met in a bar or at work, but things never got that serious until
she brought Henry home to meet him one evening. He seemed like a nice enough man. Peter did not
become aware of how serious their relationship was until the day she said that he was moving in with
them. Maybe she did it to help pay bills, Peter never was quite sure. What he was sure of, was that
the man’s true colors came out after he moved in. He was nothing but a drunken jerk that was very
good at subtly belittling May down into thinking that she couldn’t live without him. It wasn’t until
Henry moved in that his aunt suddenly started blaming Peter for everything that was wrong in her
life.

“Just shut the f- up ok!” May’s voice had risen to a level where Peter no longer needed his enhanced
hearing to hear what they were saying. In fact he wouldn’t be surprised if half the block could hear
what they were yelling about. “I don’t want to talk to you anymore!” she screamed again and this
was followed by a door slamming.

Peter could not longer stop the tears from falling from his brown eyes. I didn’t really matter how
many years you’ve been listening to the constant yelling and screaming; it was impossible to fully get
used to it. Being Spiderman made it all the worse, because he felt like he should be stopping it. Like
he was not doing his civic duty. But there wasn’t really anything that he could do, not without
risking his aunt finding out. That could be a disaster, and Peter really didn’t want to find out what
would happen if May found what he actually did in his spare time. She would either be ecstatic that
he wasn’t going out doing drugs every night, and his life would become perfect, which was the best
case scenario. Or one of the multiple worst case scenarios he’s come up with in his mind. These
included having her force him to use his powers for the wrong reasons, or becoming so frightened of him that she’s send him away to some asylum. Whatever the case was, he was too afraid to find out so it was best to just keep it a secret. The tears continued to fall from the teens eyes, as he laid on the bed still hugging the picture frame in a tight embrace.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Tony Stark meet's Peter Parker and his family. He is surprised at the kid's homelife.

Chapter Notes

Here's the next chapter. Hope you all enjoy.

When Tony Stark told his long time friend Happy Hogan, that he needed to be driven to Queens. He didn’t blame the guy for looking less than thrilled about going. After all it was about a two hour drive to get there from the compound, and they were already pressed for time. He only had forty-eight hours to try and get Cap to come to his senses, and four hours of that time had already been lost. He was desperate for extra help though, and sure hoped that it was worth the extra time going out of their way like this.

He had been keeping on eye on a certain web slinging vigilante that had been fighting crime around Queens the past few months. Some video’s had been posted on Youtube of him doing some amazing stunts. The billionaire new right away that whoever this guy was, was a shoo in to join the Avengers. So with a little bit of digging he managed to find the name associated with the web slinger. The wind was taken out of his sails however, as finding out that the kid still attended high school. But he still kept a casual eye on the kid, with the intention of offering him a spot on the Avengers Team when he was a little older. Then the accords happened… and well it didn’t matter how old the kid was. Desperate times called for desperate measures. And it’s not like he was going out to fight villains so the likeliness of the kid getting seriously injured were pretty low. These were all the excuses he came up with to justify bringing in a kid on this whole mess. He just needed to convince the kid to come help, not that he was all that worried about that part.

Happy parked the car in front of a large apartment complex, where the kid supposedly lived. It certainly wasn’t the most glamorous of places, but it seemed like a fairly livable building. Tony checked his phone, where he stored the address he found so he could double check the apartment number. Number 713, which meant that he was all the way up on the seventh floor. Hopefully they had an elevator. “All right Happy, you can wait for me here. Not sure how long I’ll be- but the clocks against us so make sure you ready to go when I return.”

With that he slipped out of the limousine. Maybe he was being a little bit (insensitive) towards his friend, but the billionaire really wasn’t in a very good mood. So right now he didn’t really care what anyone thought about him, expect maybe the kid. He needed to save all the charm he could muster into making sure this Peter Parker thought of him as a brave hero, that would do anything he asked and convince the boy’s parents to take him out of the country for a few days. Luckily there was an elevator just inside the front doors of the building, and though it clanked a bit alarmingly Tony was able to safely make it up to the seventh floor. The apartment door wasn’t too far away from the elevators, so it wasn’t long before the man was knocking on the door.
There was a short silence before a woman’s voice shrieked from somewhere in the apartment. “You expecting someone!”

“No…” a man’s voice also from the other side of the door replied in a voice equally as loud.

“It better not be one of them Jehovah's Witnesses…” the woman’s voice, much lower now, was heard grumbling before there was a click of the lock being turned and the door swung up.

The first thing that Tony noted was the intense smell of cigarettes that wafted from inside the apartment. Though he smoked the occasional cigar from time to time, he really didn’t think much of those who smoked so much that they were brushing heads with lung cancer. Once Tony recovered from the sudden assault on his nostrils, he took a look at the woman who answered the door.

She was quite young despite the aging look of her skin. Her face displayed ghostly hints of once beautiful facial features that now looked gaunt and wrinkled from years of smoking. She must have recognized him at once because her hallowed eyes widened slightly and she slapped a hand over her mouth in shock. She squeaked out a, “Oh my God!” before quickly shutting the door in his face. Tony blinked at the chipped paint of the door in confusion and raised a fist to knock again, but before his knuckles made contact with the wood the door, it opened to reveal the woman again. This time she had a winning smile on her face. “I-I apologize Mr. Stark. I wasn’t expecting you- um- how may I help you?” she spoke in a very friendly voice stuttering ever so slightly.

“That’s quite all right,” Tony told her with an understanding smile. He was a celebrity after all and most people would get caught off guard if one suddenly showed up on their doorstep. “Is this the residence of a Mr. Peter Parker?”

As if a light switch was turned off, the smile fell from her face, and a dark look crossed her facial features and all her charm was gone. “Oh my God…” her hand came up to slap against her forehead and she mumbled almost to herself. “He’s got the Avengers looking for him… what the f- did he do?” the woman stepped aside non-verbally giving the man permission to enter the apartment.

“Peter’s not here right now, but you’re welcome to wait.”

The smell of cigarettes intensified when Tony stepped inside, and it was now associated with the familiar smell of alcohol. The man did not comment on the smell, but visually scanned the apartment. It looked like it was a really nice place at one point. Now it just looked dirty and unkempt. There were certainly corners and table tops that looked like they had not been cleaned since they moved in. A man was standing in the kitchen, with a bottle of beer in one hand, eyeing the billionaire with uneasiness. The woman went over to the couch and began clearing it off so Tony could have a place to sit, “Look Mr. Stark,” she began while tossing aside a pile of papers and a jacket. “I don’t know what Peter’s done to cause you to come after him. But you need to understand that the boy’s a teenager. I do my best- really I try my hardest to keep him in line. But I can only do so much–”

“Ma’am calm down,” Tony interrupted her rant gently. “Your son hasn’t done anything wrong.”

The billionaire knew immediately that he had said the wrong thing, going by the look she gave him. She was quick to tell him what was wrong. “Oh no…” she shook her head with a slight laugh. “He’s not my son, he’s my nephew.”

“Oh?” this surprised the man slightly. She sat down on the now clear couch giving her a questioning look.

“Yes, his parents both died when he was a baby, and his uncle and I were the only living relatives left to take him in.”
Tony nodded in understanding, casting a glance over at the man who was still standing in the kitchen assuming that must be the kid’s uncle. “I’m sorry- I never did catch your name?” Tony turned his head back to the woman,

She smiled at him, the charm back on her face looking almost flirtatious. “Oh…” she giggled softly and held out her hand to shake. “Sorry, I’m May Parker.”

“Very nice to meet you…” it was a complete lie. He could live a thousand lifetimes and never actually want to meet and get to know this woman. What sort of normal person would ever want to be around someone who constantly reeks of cigarette smoke. But he had to put on his own charm if he was going to get anywhere near the kid who was supposedly spiderman. If Tony was honest with himself, he’s very surprised by all of this. He would have thought the spider vigilante would have a better home life then this. Maybe the kid wasn’t anything like his aunt and uncle. Tony of all people would know all about how you don’t get to choose your family.

May Parker stood up from the couch, “Can I get you something to drink?” she offered walking into kitchen. “We have water, and soda, some beer and a tequila?”

“Water sound good,” Tony replied not totally sure if he should trust anything that is offered to him. Not that he thought she might poison him, but going by the looks of the apartment, he wouldn’t put it past their ‘clean’ cups still being dirty, maybe even the water also. But he needed to stay on her good side, so allowed something out of courtesy.

“Henry make yourself useful and offer our guest some of the walnut date loafs!” The prickly attitude Tony had heard before the door opened earlier was back as May’s voice rose to almost a pitching scream for a moment. By the time she returned to the sitting room with a glass of water in her hands the charming smile was back on her face. She sat down on the couch with Tony and handed him the glass which the billionaire accepted with a false grateful smile. May’s husband who must have been Henry came in behind her with a plate of walnut date loafs, that looked like they’d been sitting out for the past three days. The man set the plate down on the coffee table without asking if Tony wanted any of them. “So Mr. Stark… if you’re not here because Peter did anything wrong then what are you here for?”

The way May asked that question didn’t quite sit right with the billionaire. It almost sounded like she thought there was no good reason for Tony to be inquiring about her nephew, expect to maybe arrest him. He covered these feelings up easily, and played it cool. Luckily he already had a pre-prepared cover story about why he came to visit the kid. “Are you familiar with the September Foundation?”

“No,” the woman replied flatly. Tony took this as a blessing as now he could explain to her what the grant was all about, and present it anyway he wanted. It would have been more difficult diffusing questions that she may ask because of what he already knew about the program. He goes into explaining about the grant that he offers schools and bright students to help in their education, and then begins his lies about how Peter had signed up for the grant which he approved and now wanted to offer the kid an internship spot at Stark Industries. By the time he finished explaining, May looked completely stunned. “You’re telling me that you actually approved his application?” the woman sounded like she thought he might be pulling her leg.

“Well yeah… he’s a smart kid.”

May’s eyebrows rose up behind her bangs, continuing to look at him with disbelief. “Really?” The billionaire was starting to get a bit taken aback by her reaction. Did she really not know how smart her nephew was? If he was going to Midtown High School, he had to be pretty smart. Tony just nodded his head in confirmation, reaching over and taking one of the date loafs off of the plate. “So Peter got approved for a grant, and that means he should getting some money right?” A greediness
suddenly entered May’s eyes, and Tony was pretty sure he knew exactly what she was thinking right now.

“Um… yeah for any projects he needs to have funded for his schooling. We’ll get all that worked out when the kid gets here.” Tony took a bite of the date loaf and quickly realized that they tested like they looked. He swallowed his bite trying not to grimace at the taste. “So when’s he getting back?”

The question caused May to sigh a bit in frustration, a disapproving look crossing her face. “Well his schools already out for the day, and he’s supposed to come home right after… but does he? That’s another story. He likes to stay out late doing teenager stuff, you might have to come back later.”

Come back later? Tony didn’t have time for that, the clock was ticking as it is. Just when the billionaire was thinking that he might have to try and hunt the kid down on the streets, the front doors lock began to jiggle. “Oh… you’re in luck. That’s got to be him.”

She shifted her body on the couch to look behind her. They heard the door open a moment later, followed by footsteps walking inside. “Peter!” May called out.

It wasn’t until the sound of the door shutting, when a very young voice responded, “Yeah…”

“Get in here! There’s someone here to see you!” A moment later, the kid walked through the hallway that faced the back of the couch. God the kid was a lot younger than Tony expected. Going by his looks, if Tony didn’t already know that he was in High School, he would have thought the kid was twelve or thirteen. But the kid was in high school, so he had to at least be fourteen.

Peter had his backpack slung across one shoulder, and an old DVD player under one arm. The other hand that was reaching up to take the headphones out of his ears froze in a tight fist wrapped around the wires as he halted in his tracks when he saw who was sitting on the couch with his aunt. “Hello Mr. Parker,” Tony greeted looking directly at the kid. With a single jerk of his fist, the ear buds fell to his sides. The boys brown eyes were as wide as saucers, and his mouth was hanging open slightly.

“Don’t be rude Peter, say something,” May firmly reprimand him.

The boy gawked for another moment before stepping closer and stammering. “W-What are you- Hi, I’m- I’m- I’m- Peter.”

“Tony,” the billionaire responded, needed to speed things along some. It had probably been a good twenty minutes now since he left Happy in the car and he only just met the kid.

“What are you- what are you doing here?” the kid continued to stammer like a broken record, obviously trying to keep his cool in front of him. At least Tony no longer had to worry about the kid liking him or not. Going by the awestruck mannerism Peter was displaying, the boy must idolize him.

“It’s about time we met,” Tony continued smoothly. He sure hoped that the kid went along with this. If he denied knowing anything about the September Foundation Grant then things could get awkward real quickly. “You’ve been getting my emails right?” the billionaire gave a couple of winks to the kid as indication to just go along with it.

Luckily the kid seemed to catch on, because he responded with an uncertain, “Yeah…” then quickly changed his tone to sound more confident. “Yeah, regarding the…”

“What the hell Peter!” May interrupted sounding pretty annoyed. “Why didn’t you tell me about the grant?”
The kid immediately shrunk back some as his aunts tone. This made Tony wonder if maybe he should have come up with some other cover story, he certainly had no intentions of getting the kid in trouble which it seems was happening right now. “Y-Yeah the grant…” Peter replied with uncertainty in his voice.

“The September Foundation,” Tony added trying to help the kid out. Hopefully he could help smooth this over without having the boy get grounded. That might put a damper on bringing him to Germany. “Remember when you applied?”

“Y-Yeah.”

“Well I approved,” He brought his glass of water up to his lips to take a sip. “So now we’re in business.”

May still didn’t look very happy at her nephew. “So why didn’t you say anything?” she asked glaring intensely at the boy.

“W-Well I did, didn’t know how you’d react, and I wasn’t even sure if I’d get approved so- anyways what did I apply for-”

“That’s why I’m here- to hash it all out,” Tony interrupted. It was really getting to point where he needed the kid alone to explain everything. Then if the kid agreed he could smooth things over with him aunt that continued to give her nephew a dirty look that Peter was trying very hard not to show how much the glare was bothering him. The boy nodded meekly, looking down at his feet. “Can I get five minutes with the kid?” the billionaire turned back to May, attempting to smooth the sudden tension of the room with a smile.

All the charm from before was gone however, and she just continued her glare. “Yeah. Sure,” she deadpanned in almost a snappish way. “Peter you can take Mr. Stark to your room, hopefully it’s not a pigsty…”

With his head looking downcast, Peter began walking further down the hallway, without bothering to tell Tony to follow him. Assuming that he was supposed to follow the kid, Tony got up from the couch and left the sitting room. “I apologize for his rudeness,” May called over to him, her voice was raised high enough that Tony thought her real intention was for Peter to overhear. “I wouldn’t blame you if you reconsidered accepting his application.” Tony just waved a hand at her, and followed the boy. He made a mental note to remember that the kid did not have a good relationship with his aunt.
Sorry about this chapter taking so long. I’ve been spending time with my first love again, Kingdom Hearts. Since the third game came out a few months ago I’ve been spending more time playing rather than writing. Don’t anybody worry though, with Endgame and the new Spiderman coming out soon, I’m sure I’m going to get the Ironman and Spiderman inspiration back. Leaving comments will definitely help my inspiration, (hint-hint) :)
assumption. “Um n-no…” The boy still tired denying it though. “What do you- what do you mean-”

“Yeah,” Tony changed the position of the phone and another video started playing. “Look at you go.” This one showed the wallcrawler stopping a car from crashing into a bus by stopping it with his own body. “Wow nice catch, three thousand pound forty miles an hour. It’s not easy,” Tony turned the projector off and pocketed the phone. “You got mad skills.”

The billionaire started walking towards the kid who was still attempting to deny it all. “That’s all-that’s all on Youtube though, right? I mean that’s where you found it, because you know that’s all fake, it’s all done on the computer.” Peter sidestepped around the man to walk over to the desk where he set the DVD player he had come home with. Tony however wasn’t really listening, he noticed a small door on the ceiling that led to some type of loft. The man made an distracted mmhmm sound to the kid’s ramblings. ”It’s like that video.”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah,” Tony interrupted and picked up a wooden baseball bat that was leaning up against the bedroom wall. “You mean like those UFO’s over Phoenix.”

“Exactly!” the boy replied just as pushed on the loft door with the end of the bat.

A rope fell from the loft, and attached to the end of the rope was a familiar looking red and blue suit, rolled up into a ball. “Well what have we here,” Tony idly said. A flustered Peter quickly jumped at the suit, snagging it from off the end of the rope and hiding it in the midst of his shirts that hung in the closet. He had to give it to the kid, he was so quick that Tony barely got a chance to see the colors before he had it hid again.

Peter turned to face the man again, face looking very flustered. “A… that’s a…” he let a breath, and refused to look Tony in the face knowing that gig was up.

Tony took a few steps closer to the kid, who continued to look at his feet. He was almost acting like he was just caught doing drugs; like he was ashamed of being a crime fighter. “So… your this Spider…” the man paused a moment trying to decide what he was supposed to call his vigilante side. “Ling…” that didn’t quite sound right. “Crime Fighting Spider,” nope that didn’t sound right either. “You’re Spiderboy?”

The kid shifted uncomfortably, crossing his arms over his chest and mumbled very softly. “S-Spiderman…” Boy the kid was sure pushing the ‘man’ part of it. But it did have a nice ring to it, and it made sense that the world would taking someone called spiderman more seriously than spiderboy.

But how was anyone going to take him seriously if he’s jumping around in pajamas. “Not in that onesie you’re not,” the billionaire responded bluntly.

“It’s not a onesie,” the teen shot at him with a bit of heat obviously a bit offended by the remark, and walked past the man. Now that the kid was no longer blocking the closet, Tony took the opportunity to reach in and pull out the homemade suit to get a better look at it. “Don’t believe this, I was actually having a really good day- you know Mr. Stark,” Peter continued talking all flustered. Tony was only half listening as he glanced at the thin clothing. It really was just a set of thin pajamas, with a sleeveless sweatshirt, and the kid went around fighting crime in this. “Didn’t miss my train, this perfectly good DVD player was just sitting there- and algebra test.” The boy tapped the top of his desk with a pencil, “Nailed it.”

“Who else knows?” Tony’s was looking at the boy again. “Anybody?”

Peter shook his head slightly, and looked away mumbling softly. “Nobody…”
That was sure a weight to be carrying when your so young. He really kept this secret from everyone? Tony had a hard time believing that. “Not even your aunt and uncle?”

“N-No- wait,” Peter looked confused for a moment then a look of disgust crossed his facial features. “You think that asshole is my uncle! No that’s my aunt boyfriend.” Ok so the kid didn’t have a good relationship with Aunts boyfriend either. This information caused Tony to briefly wonder if the kid had any good relationships with adults. “And no, neither of them know…” Peter was back to looking down with shame.

Figuring it was time to change the subject, Tony pulled the web fluid cartridge from the wrist shooter that had been wrapped up with the suit. That now solved the mystery of where the kid’s webs came from you. “You know what I think if really cool, this webbing,” he threw the cartridge at the kid who caught it with one hand despite not even looking at the man. He must have more powers than Tony was originally thinking. “The tensile strength is off the charts. Who manufactured that?”

“I did,” the boy responded still sounding a bit defensive, and tossed the cartridge back into the closet. The kid really made that webbing all by himself. Either he had really smart friends or he’s a genius. The man decided not to comment on this more interested in figuring out how the teen could do the things he’s seen in the video’s. He began searching through the bundle of clothes again, “Climbing walls- how you doing that? Adhesive gloves?” as the man searched for the said gloves he came across some goggles that were so tinted that that when he put them up to his eyes it was almost pitch black. The billionaire barely even heard the kid respond with “It’s a long story,” before he was commented on the goggles.

“Lordie! Can you even see in these?”

“Yes, yes I can!” the kid sighed heavily, snatching the suit out of the man’s hands and stashing it back in the closet. “I can see in those, okay. It’s just that when whatever happened, happened it’s like my senses have been dialed to eleven. There’s- there’s way too much input so- they kind of help me focus.”

“You’re in dire need of an upgrade,” Tony bluntly responded, his overactive brain already forming a plan of what the new suit would entail. Peter walked over to where his bed stood while Tony explained what was going on in his head. “Systemic top to bottom, hundred point restoration, that’s why I’m here.” The kid sat down on the edge of the bad, and looked at the man. A peculiar look was displayed on his face that made the billionaire want to know what exactly was going through the kid’s head. “Why you doing this?” The teen looked away once again giving that look of shame. “I gotta know, what’s your M.O. what gets you out of that twin bed in the morning?”

There was silence for a short moment. Tony noted that the kid stole a glance at his bedside table. Next to the burning candle was a photograph of a young Peter with some man, maybe the kid’s father. After a sigh, Peter began to speak, “Because… because I’ve been me my whole life, and I’ve had these powers for six months.” Tony gave a soft ‘mmhmm’ sound as the boy tried to explain his jumbled thoughts “I read books, I build computers… and yeah I’d love to play football. But I couldn’t then so I shouldn’t now.”

“Sure because you’re different,” Tony thought he was following the point Peter was trying to make.

“Exactly, but I can’t tell anybody that, so I’m not...” there was several moments of silence before Peter continued. “When you can do the things that I can, but you don’t.” “Sensing that the kid was trying to get an important point across, Tony leaned forward looking directly into the kid’s brown eyes. “And then the bad things happen… they happen because of you.”
That was some deep thoughts and a big load to for some very young shoulders. But Tony pretty much got what the kid was getting at. “So you want to help out the little guy, you want to do you part, making the world a better place, all that right?”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah just looking out- for the little guy…” for the first time since they started this conversation Peter looked relieved. Maybe he was just worried that Tony might misunderstand his intentions.

It was time to really cut to the chase and get to the point on why Tony was there. The man stood up from the chair he was sitting on, there was an awkwardness in the air. The man still wasn’t sure the best way to start this. He took a few steps closer to the boy’s bed, the kid just stared at him unmoving as if was pondering what Tony was going to do. The billionaire stopped in front of the bed. The way Peter was sitting on the bed made it very difficult for the man to sit next to him, as the kid was taking up most of the sitting room with his legs. After a moment of awkward silence Tony spoke motioning to the spot next to where Peter was sitting, “I’m going to sit here, so you move the leg.”

Peter quickly moved his legs so there was room for the billionaire to sit down, looking a bit sheepish. Tony sat down with a soft sigh escaping his lips. Peter shifted his body uncomfortably next to him, the awkwardness in air was thick. Figuring it was best not to beat around the bush and just get right to the point. After slapping a hand on the kid’s shoulder he asked, “You got a passport?” Ok that was a bit abrupt but he couldn't actually think of how to start this off.

“N-No, I a- I don’t even have a driver's license-”

“Ever been to Germany?”

The pitch of the kid’s voice rose slightly as he began to realize what Tony was getting at. “N-No.”

“Oh you’ll love it.”

“I can’t go to Germany!”

The hand that rested on Peter’s shoulder slipped off as slight disappointment washed over the man, along with disbelief. Was the kid really turning him down right now? “Why?”

Peter’s mouth opened and closed a couple of times trying to form his excuse. When the kid finally spit out his excuse Tony had to resist the urge to roll his eyes. “I-I got… homework…”

“All right, I’m going to pretend you didn’t say that,” the billionaire stood up. If that really was the kid’s only reason for not coming, that it wasn’t good enough. He wasn’t going to take no for an answer no matter the boy said.

“I’m being serious! I can’t just drop out of school.”

“Please kid… what I’m asking you to do does not require you to drop out of school,” Tony could not longer resist the urge to roll his eyes at the kid’s poor excuses. He started heading towards the bedroom door. Seriously with the amount of time Ross gave him, he’d probably only need the kid for the weekend, and he could get his homework done during the flight. “This could get dangerous… so we better go tell your aunt-” Tony’s fingers had barely touched the doorknob when his whole hand was suddenly surrounded by artificial spiderwebs, effectively glueing his hand to the doorknob.

The billionaire glanced over at the teen to see that he had one arm outstretched, and a terrified look in his eyes. “Y-You- you can’t tell Aunt May…” Peter stammered.
The two eyed each other with mutual respect. Yeah the kid was young, but he he had enough guts to web up thee Tony Stark. Which meant that he would have enough guts to take on Captain America. “Ok Spiderman…” the use of that name calmed the boy somewhat, as Tony saw the tenseness ease out of his body. “Now... get me out of this?”

Getting the webs off of him, took a lot more effort than Tony originally thought. Apparently it dissolves after a few hours, by itself. If you wanted it off before then, some special chemical paste had to be used, and even with that, Peter had to use his pocket knife to cut it away. While this was going on, Tony took the time to fill the kid in on what he needed him to do, only giving need to know details. It was almost laughable how easy it was to get the boy to agree to come, he was very young and eager to impress the billionaire. Telling his aunt that Peter needed to leave with him for the weekend was a bit more complicated. They eventually settled on telling her that along with the grant Peter won, he was also joining a Stark Industries Internship that he would do after school everyday, and he needed to get some training by going on a retreat over the weekend.

Though she believed the story, she seemed a bit too surprised at the news of her nephew getting accepted at all. There were subtle comments from her like, “Well I guess you finally did something right for once,” and warnings like, “don’t blow it like you normally do.” Not only were these comments demeaning to the kid, and only showed Tony that she really didn’t think very highly of her nephew. No wonder they weren’t close. The billionaire saw Peter until he was packed and in the limo where he introduced him to Happy. Once short pleasantries were exchanged, Tony directed Happy to drive Peter to the airport and fly to Germany ASAP. The other man looked less than thrilled about suddenly having to cart around some over excited teenager by himself. But it was necessary, because he really needed to get back to the Tower and start working on the kid’s new suit. They were short on time as it was.

Chapter End Notes

I’m not too happy with this chapter. It’s pretty much a novelization what happened in the movie, so sorry if it’s a little boring. Next chapter will probably have a big time skip because things aren’t really going to start changing until after the events of Civil War and I’m not planning on novelizing what else happens in Civil War.
Peter stood on the street in front of his apartment building, still awestruck with everything that had happened this weekend. He had quite literally fought with his childhood heroes, and for some of them he had fought against them. Which was still awesome! He had stolen Captain America’s shield, and webbed up Falcon. He’d fought side by side with Ironman and War Machine (tectonically he was the Iron Patriot) but who was nit picking. Peter felt like he was on top of the world right now, I mean seriously, he was basically an Avenger.

A mental image popped into the boy’s head, of him standing on a stage waving at a crowd of people all shouting, “Spiderman! Spiderman!” Ok maybe he was getting a little ahead of himself, he’d only gone on one mission. But it seemed to be enough to think that he was good enough; even Tony Stark said that he would call him about the next mission. Peter grinned to himself, barely able to contain his excitement. “They’re gonna call me,” he murmured to himself, his body shaking a bit with his exhilaration. Finally, he had gotten some confirmation that he’d done something right, that he made a difference. Maybe Aunt May would finally be proud of him. Sure she didn’t actually know what he’d been out doing, but she did think that he now had a Stark Internship, and having an internship with thee Tony Stark, had to be something right?

Peter practically ran up the stairs to the apartment, his super strength coming into effect as he was carrying two very heavy bags. One of them contained the Spiderman Suit that Tony had made for him. The man was actually letting him keep the suit! This was the most awesome weekend of his life! He set one of the suitcases down on the ground so he could use the free hand to unlock the door.

Upon stepping inside, Peter was greeted with the same musty odor he was always greeted with. He actually didn’t see anyone around when he first walked in. “Hello?” Peter called out, wondering if anyone was even there. Henry was usually seen lounging on the couch at this time, but he was nowhere in sight which was a little weird.

“Is that you Peter?” May’s voice responded from the direction of her bedroom.

The teen’s face broke out into a smile. He was all ready to answer any of her questions, about the weekend. She was sure to have some, “Yeah!” he called back setting the suitcases down and shutting the door behind him.

May came walking down the hallway towards him, carrying an armful of liquor bottles and cans. “I’m so glad your back,” she responded sounding relieved. Peter almost felt touched, that she was worried about him. He had reassurances that he was fine on the tip of his tongue that were quickly silenced with her next words. “The recycling is getting out of hand, since you’ve been gone. So you need to sort, and take it out before going to bed tonight.” The woman dropped her armload onto the counter that was overflowing with glass and plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. The recycling was one of Peter’s designated chores he had to do every day, and it seemed that no one bothered to do it for him while he was gone.
With that being said, his aunt went back into her bedroom and closed the door. Peter couldn’t help but feel a bit disheartened by the welcome he got. Sure he wasn’t expecting a big welcome back party, but he at least thought he’d get more than just a ‘good your back, get to the chores because your behind on them.’ So with a heavy sigh, the teen went to work on rinsing out and sorting the different recyclables. It only took a couple of moments before he was grinning to himself again. Maybe it was little premature to expect so much from his Aunt, but tomorrow at school was sure to be different. When he told everyone that he met thee Ironman and had an internship with him. He could finally become popular!

Peter went to sleep that night, imagining what school would be like the next day. He fantasized Liz Allan, hanging off his shoulder with wide admiration in her eyes, asking Peter was it was like to be in the presence of Tony Stark, and begging for details about his new internship. When he woke up the next morning, Peter eagerly stuffed his new suit that Tony had made him, at the bottom of his backpack. His ‘internship’ that he was supposedly doing after school everyday, was more or less going out patrolling as Spiderman. At the end of the day he was supposed to call Happy and give a summarized report of the afternoon. Sure he wouldn't be actually fighting side by side with any of the Avengers like he had done that weekend, but knowing that he could be called in on another mission as any time caused his heart to soar. So he had to make sure he stayed in shape and all, so he was ready when that call came. Maybe it would come today even!

Mornings were always Peter’s favorite time of day, because no matter what day it was he was always guaranteed to be alone. Between the hours of 6am, and 10am, both his aunt May and Henry were working their jobs. He referred to this four hour time slot as his sanctuary time. Yes on weekday mornings he didn’t get that much time before heading off to school, but it was nice always being able to eat breakfast in peace everyday. And he took full advantage of this time on weekends and during school holidays.

This morning however, Peter was itching to get to school. He couldn’t wait to go tell his best friend Ned about the weekend. Obviously he couldn’t say the majority of what he did while in Germany, because that would compromise his Spiderman identity, and probably get Tony Stark in some trouble. But he could still tell his friend about how he met Ironman, and the pretend Stark Internship he was now in. Ned would probably piss himself with excitement. So because of this, he woke up a half hour earlier than his alarm clock, and ended up leaving the apartment early also. It didn’t really help in getting him to school any earlier because by the time he got to the subway station his early train had already left and he had to wait for the next one to come around.

Just like when he arrived home the night before, walking into school that morning proved to be exactly like it normally was. Everyone completely ignored him, expect for Flash Thompson who shouted his regular insults. He was less surprised by this, then he was last night. It’s not like any of his classmates were aware that he was whisked away by Tony Stark last Friday. “Where were you this weekend, I tried calling you like a hundred times!” Ned’s somewhat annoyed voice spoke over his shoulder, just as Peter was pulling his first period books out.

A wide smile broke out on Peter’s face, and he turned around to face his friend. He opened his mouth, an excited explanation on the tip of his tongue when the bell rang. Disappointment plunged into his stomach, making him almost feel silly for feeling it. Seriously, there was no reason for him to feel so disappointment about not getting to lie to his friend yet. Because that was exactly what he was going to do, tell a big lie about what he did this weekend and how cool it was. “I’ll tell you later,” Peter replied, shutting his locker door and the two headed towards their classroom.

Figuring it was best to wait until lunch time to talk to Ned about his weekend. Peter had no intention of saying anything when they walked out of their first period class. Ned would surely have a million
questions for him, and that could take awhile. He really didn’t need his friend to be whispering questions to him during class. But the moment the bell rang, and the two exited the classroom, the other teen was on him. “All right, so what were you doing over the weekend?”

Peter opened his mouth, planning to tell Ned that he would tell him at lunch time because there just wasn’t enough time to hash it all out in the ten minutes they had between classes. But his excitement got the better of him, “I was hanging out with Tony Stark!” he whispered barely able to conceal the excitement that wanted to burst from him.

Ned was not as good as hiding his emotions as Peter was. After halting in his tracks, he screamed out, “WHAT!” causing almost every head in the hallways to look towards them.

“Shh!” Peter quickly shushed his friend, suddenly uncomfortable with everyone’s attention on them. Maybe he wasn’t ready to reveal that he was on speaking terms with Tony Stark. “Not so loud.”

“Sorry!” Ned’s voice went down to a whisper, it was a loud whisper full of excitement. It wouldn’t be hard if anyone wanted to continue listening in. “But are you serious! Tony Stark!”

Peter began telling his friend about coming home from school last Friday to find Mr. Stark in the apartment talking to his aunt. He told the complete truth up until the part where Tony figured out that he was Spiderman. After that it was the same made up story that he had told Aunt May, about the billionaire recruiting him to join an internship at Stark Industries, and being on a ‘retreat’ all weekend for training. Ned just goggled at him, at a complete loss of words even when Peter finished his story. It was almost a full two minutes before the other teen found his voice to start asking questions. Unfortunately by the time this happened class was just starting which caused Peter give him friend a sharp shush when he began speaking. Ned looked a little put down at being unable to ask Peter anything, but remained quiet as their teacher began speaking.

Unsurprisingly Ned wasn’t able to stay silent for long. About fifteen minutes into the lecture the other boy leaned over and whispered, “So what are you going to be doing during at Stark Industries?”

Peter let out a puff of breath. Really he should have known better then telling his eager best friend who fanboy’s over Ironman as much as Peter did, all this information right before class. He should have just waited for lunch time. “Shh- Not now Ned,” he hissed over desperately hoping that the teacher wouldn’t hear them whispering. The last thing he needed on his first day officially doing Spiderman under the guidance of Tony Stark, was to get detention that would make him late. What would Mr. Stark think?

“Do you think you’ll get to work on any of his iron suits?” Apparently Ned didn’t seem to understand the sensitivity of the circumstances. For the next three classes, he did nothing but whisper different questions and assumptions to Peter about what Tony Stark was like, and what working for Stark industries would be like.

By the time lunch came along, Ned had exhausted most questions, and was back into a stunned envious silence. The silence continued all through waiting in the lunch line, and it didn’t break until they had sat down at their normal lunch table. “Do you think you could introduce me to Mr. Stark?”

Peter had to think about that question for a moment. He figured with all the missions he’d being going on in the near future, he’d be spending plenty of quality time with Mr. Stark. There would probably come a time when he could ask the man to meet his friend. “Yeah probably.”

There conversation was suddenly cut short by someone coming over to their table and slamming a hand down in front of their food trays. “Hey Penis,” Flash Thompson, the school bully who had
been after Peter since the second grade, greeted them. He wasn’t much of a physical bully, that beat Peter up everyday. Thought it had happened a couple of times. Usually the bullying didn’t get any more physical than being shoved into a locker. No Flash was more into the verbal bullying, that included name calling, mud slinging, and gaslighting. All of which reminded Peter too much of how his aunt treated him. It made most day’s almost unbearable, because if he wasn’t at home then he was constantly getting verbally put down by Flash and his friends, and if he wasn’t at school then he was verbally getting put down by May. It made that four hour sanctuary time, the only thing he could live for. That and being Spiderman. Neither of them responded to the bully so Flash continued, “So listen, I need you and your girlfriend hear to find a new table to sit at.”

The jab at Ned was what got Peter to make eye contact, by means of a fierce glare. “Why? This is where we’ve always sat, and you’ve never had a problem before?”

“Yes… but me and my groupies here have decided to switch tables.” Flash pointed at the table next to them, where every eye at the table was watching the exchange. “So you two sitting here is a direct violation of code 4900, that all pathetic scumbags like you are to sit at least three tables from where we’re sitting.”

Peter could have rolled eyes. That was the dumbest thing he’s ever heard. He knew for a fact that there was no code 4900, and more then half the school would vouch on that. But he and Ned were completely outnumbered, and he wasn’t in the mood to get into something as silly as the lunch table they were sitting at. Ned did not seem to agree though. Just as Peter was about stand up and leave the table his friend shouted out. “You better leave us alone now Flash! Peter’s got friends in high places.”

Oh God Ned no! Please don’t bring this up to Flash. A smirk crossed over the bully’s face, one that made it clear Flash did not believe Ned. He played along however, “Really now… high places you say…” Flash’s gaze turned from Ned onto Peter, who had blushed a deep crimson once again aware of how many other kid’s who were listening in were not looking at him.

“No-No- No not really,” God why did he have to always stammer so badly when he was being put on the spot. It made him look far too weak. Peter stood up from the table with his food tray in hand, “It’s ok Ned… we’ll just find a new table.”

Ned reached out and grabbed Peter’s arm to stop him from leaving the table. “Peter no! After what you’ve done this weekend, you shouldn’t have to put up with this shit anymore.” If Peter didn’t know any better he would have thought that Ned was talking about what he did in Germany with all the Avengers

“Really Ned it’s fine…” Peter spoke in a firm voice, trying to give his friend the look that said he needed to drop it.

“Now wait a second Penis…” Flash placed a hand on Peter’s chest to stop him from moving away from the table. “Now I’m curious… what did you do, get sworn in by the Mafia? Your little brotherhood buddies are going to come and solve all your pathetic problems.” The bully’s voice dripped with sarcasm, and the people nearby that was listening began chuckle to themselves causing Peter’s cheeks to flush.

“Even more terrifying than that,” Ned short back, now on his feet as well. Peter silently pleaded for his friend to stop, and not mention the name that he feared he was going to mention. “Tony Stark!”

The name of the well known billionaire being called out caused everyone in the general vicinity to fall silent so they could listen in on what was being said. “Really now?” Flash raised his voice level up to an even higher pitch, causing anyone in the cafeteria that wasn’t already listening to turn their
attention onto them. “Tony Stark?”

“Y-Yeah- Yeah,” Peter’s cheeks flushed an even deeper shade of red, as he began telling Flash about the Stark Internship. This was certainly not how he wanted the whole school to find out about the internship that really wasn’t an internship at all.

“So your saying that Tony Stark is your buddy now. Gonna come to your rescue like some damsel bitch that can’t handle their problems. Well Penis Parker, why don’t you prove it! Have your precious Tony Stark come to your rescue when I do this-” Flash unexpectedly punched the underside of Peter’s lunch tray, causing it and everything on the tray to fly up into his face. The next thing that Peter realized was his entire face, head, shoulders and chest covered in his lunch which consisted of Jell-O pudding, potatoes, gravy, mystery meat, and corn. The entire cafeteria erupted in laughter, and Peter could only stand stone still, watching the food drip from his face down his shirt. “So where’s Tony Stark now Penis?” Flash continued to taunt loudly over the hoots and laughter. Peter did the only logical thing he could think of. He ran.

Chapter End Notes

Poor Peter... Sadly it's only going to get worse for our spiderbaby.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The incident in the cafeteria showed Peter how stupid it was to think that his life would suddenly get better just because he secretly went to Germany to fight with the Avengers. It’s not like anyone in his life actually knew what he had done, and he couldn’t tell anyone what he really did. And apparently having a fake internship with Stark Industries didn’t make you any more cool, or any more important as far as May was concerned. After fleeing from the cafeteria, Peter was now in one of the schools many bathrooms, hiding in a stall trying in vain to stop the tears of embarrassment, shame, and humiliation. Yes there was a difference between the three of them.

After about ten minutes, the teen heard the bathroom door open and his friends voice a moment later. “Peter are you in there?” Peter sucked in his hitching breath as silently as he could, trying to make Ned think that there was no one in the bathroom. He brought one arm up to wipe away the trails of tears that currently mixed with the gravy still clinging to his face. He wasn’t ready to face his friend yet. Not that Ned had never seen him cry before, but there was something shameful that every high-schooler felt at being caught in a weak moment. Unfortunately Ned seemed to suspect that Peter might by hiding in there, because instead of leaving when no one answered his call, his heavy footsteps were heard walking into the bathroom and looking around. After another moment Ned spoke again, “Peter I can see your feet under there?”

Darn it… Peter had almost decided to climb up on the toilet stall, and stick there so it looked like the stall was empty. But he thought it would make too much noise, and really he had hoped that Ned would have just left when Peter didn’t say anything. Maybe he would still walk away, if Peter remained silent. The spider teen did not make a move or sound to indicate that he had heard Ned, but silently willed for the other teen to just walk away and leave him in his misery. Ned didn’t leave however. After a full minute the lock of the bathroom stall jiggled slightly, and then the door was swinging open.

Ned and him had once spent almost two hours, hiding out in one of the school bathrooms after school, when one of the school bullies were after them. When they had gotten bored of playing tic tac toe, they ended up teaching themselves how to unlock the stalls from the outside. A pretty useless skill, since when would anyone ever want to open a locked stall when someone was in there taking a dump, and Peter never would have thought that Ned would use this skill against him. He sent a light glare at his friend’s worried face. Peter knew that the other teen had meant well, but that didn’t stop him from feeling a little bit violated, “Don’t be dick Ned… what if I had my pants down?”

“I think I would have noticed them piled around your feet,” Ned responded and held out an apple. “I saved you an apple.”

“I’m not hungry…” Peter looked away feeling even more embarrassed that his best friend was now seeing him hiding out in a bathroom stall, crying like a baby and covered in food. He was thankful though that Ned chose to comment on the tears.

He did finally acknowledge the food however. “Well then at least let me help you clean yourself up? I’m pretty sure going to class covered in your lunch will make things worse.”

Peter didn’t want to go to class though. He wanted to run away, hide, go underground for ten years and not come back up until everyone forgot what had just happened. It was an impossible dream though, he’d get in trouble if he skipped the rest of his classes, the school would call his aunt and
things at home would get even worse then they would if he did go off to class wearing his lunch. So with a soft sigh, Peter exited the stall, and walked over to the sink. Ned was already pulling out some paper towels, and getting them wet under the faucet. Peter pulled off his ruined shirt, knowing that he kept a spare in his locker to put on.

The two friends spent the remainder of their lunch period getting food off of Peter’s face and out of hair. Even though Peter still felt a little annoyed by the way Ned forced himself into his space when he only wanted to be left alone, he couldn’t help but feel a new gratefulness towards his friend. Mostly because, how many friends would spend their lunch time helping you clean food out of your hair. Only a true friend would do that, and this realization made Peter wonder why he deserved a friend like Ned.

It seemed like every other person in Peter’s life spent the last seven years, reminding Peter how much of a useless, annoying burden he was to the world. Everyone except Ned who should have been the person most likely to remind him of this. Except for Spiderman, Ned knew about every one of his dark secrets and every skeleton in the closet. Yet he still chose to stick by Peter’s side through everything. “Why are you my friend Ned?” Peter asked suddenly as he finished wiping the last of the gravy from under eyelid.

The question wasn’t asked with any sarcasm or room for it to be taken the wrong way. It was a general wonderment question and Ned seemed to know that. “Because you’ve been my buddy since first grade, and the only one who stood up for me when everyone else was making fun of my weight,” the other teen replied with such sincerity that it made Peter’s eyes water. “Sure you got beat up in the process but… from that moment on I knew that we would always be there for each other.”

Peter grinned at the other teen, recalling that memory from so many years ago. It was true that ever since that one day on the playground the two had been inseparable. “Thanks man…” and this ended with the two doing their secret hand shake.

By the time he was finally no longer smelling like leftover lunch, Peter was only a few minutes late to class. Luckily it was his physics class, and he happened to be a teacher favorite in that class so his teacher waved off his apologies and continued lecturing like there was no interruption.

Unfortunately that small blessing wasn’t enough to block out the misery that came with the rest of that school day. Word had gotten around quickly, and now Peter had to endure the whole school going at him one way or another. He was being purposely tripped, having whatever was in his arms suddenly knocked out of his hands, being shoved and pushed around. All the while, everyone asked when his new buddy Tony Stark was going to come and rescue him followed by hoots and laughter. Peter could have easily beaten them all up, or defended himself in some way. With the new found strength from the spider bite, it would be easy. But like he told Mr. Stark, he couldn’t then so he shouldn’t now. Not to mention that he could seriously injure someone. Not that they don’t deserve it.

Ned could not stop apologizing. The other teen seemed to think that his bringing up Tony Stark to Flash at lunch time was the cause of all this backlash. And if Peter was honest with himself, he sort of agreed. If Ned hadn’t said anything at all, life would be just as miserable as it was last week, instead of it being ten times more miserable. But he didn’t let Ned know that, and continued to brush off all his apologies, tell his friend that it was fine and it wasn’t his fault.

The relief that Peter felt when that final bell rang, was overwhelming. He bid Ned goodbye, muttering something about needing to get to the Stark Internship before rushing off campus. Since taking on his vigilante mantle as Spiderman, Peter had fallen into an after school routine. He always went out the front doors, and after making sure that no one was watching he’d jump the tall fence that surrounded the high school. This was the most efficient way to leave his school because it had a
direct route to his favorite sandwich shop Delmar’s Deli-Grocery. After buying himself a sandwich and a bag of gummy worms to munch on he’d make his way toward a low traffic back alley to change into his spiderman suit. Today was his first day changing into the new suit that Mr. Stark had made for him.

Peter looked over his shoulder one more time to make sure that no one was around to see him change, then quickly kicked his shoes off, and stripped down to his boxer shorts. Luckily it was in the warmer months of New York, so it wasn’t that uncomfortable taking almost all his clothes off. He then pulled the spiderman suit out of his back and slipped into it, it hung very loosely over his body until he pressed the spider emblem in the center of his chest that caused the suit to shrink to form fitting. After shoving all his clothes and shoes into his backpack and webbing it to the side of the dumpster, Peter pulled the mask over his face.

Another sigh of relief fell from the boy’s lips as he stared out at the alley through the mask eye holes. Even before the whole business went down with Mr. Stark in Germany, Peter always felt more comfortable and confident hidden behind the mask. The world no longer saw the puny unimportant Peter Parker that was useless to the world. Instead that saw a small time vigilante hero, who was making Queens a safer place one day at a time. Peter was certain that with his new collateral with the Avengers, he would soon be making the world a safer place. Peter felt so much more comfortable being Spiderman then Peter Parker. In fact the feeling was so strong that more than once Peter had considered faking his own death and becoming Spiderman full time. It’s not like anyone would really miss Peter Parker that much. The only person Peter would feel bad leaving behind was Ned, he knew that his friend would be devastated at the thought of Peter dying. This was an easy fix however, Ned could just be in on the secret that Peter actually is still alive.

But that would mean that Peter would have to tell him about his identity as Spiderman, and Ned’s always been notorious as the person that couldn’t keep a secret. This and a few other things were the reason Peter hadn’t tried faking his own death yet. But in a secret box he had hidden in the overhead loft in his bedroom, were some half hearted plans on how he could fake the death of Peter Parker. Maybe one day he’d get enough courage to go through with it.

Peter pressed the button on the new web shooters that Mr. Stark had given him, to turn them on and shot a web up to the high building in front of him and swung to the top. From there he was able to look out at New York; excitement filling him. This was his first official Spiderman Patrol working for Tony Stark, and he wanted to make it a good one. To prove to the billionaire that he could be an Avenger with them. It did turn out to be a very productive afternoon. He stopped a few muggings, a couple of convenience store hold ups, saved three children and an elderly lady from a building that was burning down. He even managed to stop these two guys that were trying to rob a bank. The teen felt almost invincible in this new suit. Sure he had already been pretty trough thanks to the powers he got from the spider bite, but the punches he received on occasion hurt much less while in the new suit then it did when he was wearing the old suit.

When it was getting close to the time for him to head back home for dinner, Peter called up Happy’s number to give a report on his patrol. He was certain that even though the man seemed annoyed with him most of the time, he would at least get a ‘great job’ when he heard all that he had done that afternoon. The boy was a bit disappointed when the phone went to voicemail after about four rings. That’s too many rings to indicate that the phone was turned off, but not enough rings for it be a full call. Which probably meant that the man had chosen to ignore his call.

Peter tried not to take it too personally, as he knew that the man must be pretty busy. Maybe he was in a meeting or something. So he just left a message of the report and said to call back if he had any questions. After ending the call, Peter made his way back to the alley where his backpack was waiting, trying really hard not to feel disheartened. It didn’t take long for him to get back to the alley
and retrieve his backpack. He didn’t change back into his street clothes yet, because he was still an hour train ride back to his apartment, and it was so much faster to just swing home and get changed in the alley behind the apartment building. So instead he just slung the backpack over his shoulder and shot another web to swing his way home.

It only took him twenty minutes to get home. Now hidden in the shadows of the apartment building; the first thing that Peter noted when he pulled the mask off his face, was the shrieking voice of his Aunt May, picked up by his enhanced hearing. This was followed by a shout from Henry. Peter couldn’t really make out what they were saying, but it was obvious that the two were having their usual spat of the day. A heavy sigh fell from the teen’s lips. He had hoped they would have been done with it by the time he got home, either they started late or it was going extra long this evening. After a brief debate on whether he should wait a bit before going up, Peter decided against it. If he waited much longer then he’d be considered late, and he’d rather not have his aunt go off on him when she was already in a bad mood. He’d just have to go in and hide in his room until they were done.

When he exited out of the elevator, Peter no longer needed his enhanced hearing. They could easily be heard rattling the walls from all the way down the hallway. “Maybe if you weren’t always such a hoe you might actually be worth something in this world!” Henry shouted at the top of his lungs. Peter couldn’t help but roll his eyes. Now that sounded familiar. He didn’t really pay attention to May’s response. Now he could clearly hear what they were saying, but he couldn’t actually figure out what they were arguing about. It seemed like they were at the point of throwing personal attacks at each other, which means that they’ve been going at it for awhile. When Peter approached the door, he reached into his pocket, pulled out his keys and unlocked the deadbolt. The moment he opened the door, his spider sense flared; telling him to duck! He did so, just in time before a ceramic plate sailed past his head and smashed against the wall. “I told you to get the f- out of my house!” May’s face was beat red with anger. She stood in the hallway about ten feet from the door, another plate was in her hand ready to throw.

Henry was standing opposite of her, about three feet past door. His face also looked thunderous with anger, and his eyes had a glazed over look showing that he was just on the edge of being drunk. “You can’t afford to kick me out bitch! I know way too much about your f-ed up life, and I can tell the world all about your dirty little secrets. I’ll make it so you’ll never want to show your face in this town again! Maybe that’ll be a good thing!”

“You dare even try it, and I’ll call the f-ing police on you!”

Peter knew that this was all a bunch of empty threats from both of them. He’d heard various versions of it all before. Other than him being spiderman, May and Peter didn’t really have any skeletons in the closet that the world would be interested in. Unless Henry knew something about May that he didn’t know about. And May would never willingly involve the police in their lives. She’d only do it if she had to. The two adults continued having a shouting match at each other; Peter wanted to go hide in his room but he didn’t want to risk it when May was still holding something that could be thrown. “All right! I’m leaving, I’m leaving!” Henry yelled after May threw the other plate she was holding at him. This time she hit her mark and it hit the man right in the center of his chest, probably leaving at least a bruise, before falling to the ground in pieces.

The man walked past Peter, through the door, and out the hallway; not even bothering to close the door. Peter’s aunt ran towards the open door and shouted down the hallway. “And don’t you even think about coming back here for any of your stuff asshole!” with that she slammed the door shut so hard that the walls shook.
Peter took one step back when his aunt swung around to face him. If was rare for their fights to get to the point where May became violent, but they had happened a few times; and this was the first time Peter had witnessed any of it. Normally he’d listen to behind the closed door of his bedroom or came home to the aftermath of it. At seeing the alarmed look on her nephew’s face, May’s livid facial features crumbled and she began to sob. Peter could only stand there in shock, he had heard his aunt cry on many occasions, especially after his uncle died. But he had never seen her cry before, and seeing it was so much worse then hearing it. He didn’t have to stand in the awkwardness for long. She only let out a few sobs before rushing off to her bedroom and shutting the door.

Chapter End Notes

Two guys are allowed by be friends without being gay for each other. They’re even allowed to love each other without it being romantic. It’s tragic that the majority of world doesn’t understand this. That being said Ned and Peter and are only friends.
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

I’m so sorry it took so long to get this chapter up. I’ve been busy traveling a lot this past month, and things have been crazy at work. Next chapter is already half way done so it shouldn’t be too long before the next chapter is up.

Peter stood shell shocked next to the front door for a few more minutes. A wave of pity fell over Peter as he listened to his aunt’s sobs from the bedroom. Having Henry come into their lives had ruined May. A few years back, Peter would have never thought that one person could change someone so drastically. But his aunt was a prime example of just that. Sure her issues did start when Ben passed away, but they grew ten times worse under the clumsy handling of that man. The teen had never known May to become so violent, even when angry before she started dating Henry.

With a soft sigh Peter shook himself from his stupor and glanced around the apartment. It was a mess. The floor was covered with the shattered remains of plates, pots, pans, candles and whatever else his aunt had thought to throw at her boyfriend during their fight. Going by the looks of the kitchen, May had not started dinner before the fight began. So Peter decided to start a box of Mac-n-Cheese, before grabbing a broom to start cleaning up the apartment while waiting for the water to boil. He had managed to get everything cleaned up off the floor by the time the food was ready. Aunt May was still shut away in her room, but he couldn’t hear her crying anymore, even with his enhanced hearing. So Peter figured it was safe to bring her a bowl of food. Knocking on the door resulted in a sharp, “What the f- do you want!” from the woman.

“I made you some food…” Peter timidly responded loud enough for her to hear through the door. He did not get a response from her, so Peter gently tried the doorknob to see if it was locked and found that it wasn’t. Figuring that if she really didn’t want to be bothered she would have locked the door, and cautiously opened it up. The woman was sitting hunched over on the bed with her back facing the door. “Aunt May…? The boy spoke softly, ready to make a hasty retreat if she was unhappy with him walking in.

She turned around to face him, showing off her splotchy red face. The trials of eyeliner and mascara ran down her cheeks from the tears that she shed. She no longer looked angry, just… defeated. Peter gave her a soft smile and took few steps forward to hand her the bowl of food. “Thank you Peter,” she said with sincerity and accepted the food. Peter sat down on the bed next to her, and she leaned over to give him a kiss on the cheek. This was one of the rare times that the aunt from before the tragedy happened, before Ben passed away, came out. A lump swelled in Peter’s throat as he was overcome by sudden emotion. How he longed for that person to come back into his life. How long had it been since he felt the soft caress of a mother, the surge of protection felt by a father’s embrace. Or just any type of affectionate touch from a parental figure. It had been years since he had felt anything like that, and being so starved of affection Peter leached onto any hint of it.

The boy unconsciously leaned into his aunts touch. Her lips had left his cheek too soon, he was half tempted to pull her into a hug in the hopes that she would hug back. Before he gave into the temptation, May was speaking again. “I don’t know how we’re going to get by, now that Henry’s not gonna be living here anymore.” Peter didn’t have a response to this, he actually had to fight to stop from rolling his eyes. This isn’t the first time May had kicked him out. He always came back
eventually. The longest he ever left since he first came into their lives were two weeks, and that was when Henry chose to leave and by the end of it May was begging for him to return. Despite how twisted their romance was, May couldn’t live without the guy. “But we’ll figure something out… Might just have to use some of your September Foundation grant.” May added this as an afterthought and it caused Peter’s breath to catch in his throat. He technically didn’t get that grant, so there was no money for them to take from. “You had your first day doing your internship thing today right?” May asked him, with an expectant look on her face.

“Yeah…” Peter mumbled not sure how he was going to get out of this.

“How is the grant going to work? Is Mr. Stark sending you a check or debit card?”

“I…” Peter’s mind began racing and he said the first thing that came to his mind. “I think it kind works like a rebate. We buy the stuff I need for my school projects and stuff and he refunds us…”

“Oh…” May’s expression became stony. “I guess you’re really not all that helpful…” And just like that, in the blink of an eye the tender loving Aunt was replaced by the cold shouldered woman that Peter had known since Uncle Ben passed away all those years ago. “I supposed the internship you’ll be doing after school every day isn’t paid?”

Peter just shook his head with his eyes downcast. In a final attempt to justify himself Peter spoke in a small voice, “But doing it could eventually lead to a real job.” He was assuming that being an official Avenger came with some sort of paycheck. He didn’t actually know for sure though.

“How does that help us now Peter…”

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Peter felt a bit disheartened when he woke the next morning, and found that he did not have a single text, call, or even voicemail from Happy about his patrol last night. He even wondered if the man even got his message, and debated on trying to call again before school. He ended up settling on shooting the man a text, since it was still early in the morning and he didn’t want to accidentally wake him up.

Me: Hey Happy, it’s Peter Parker. Call me if you need anything! I get out of school at 2:45 today, and I’ve been keeping the suit with my at all times.

With that he pressed the send button, and continued getting ready for school. Happy was probably just too busy to respond to him yesterday. He did have a very important job being the head of security for Tony Stark, and Peter couldn’t expect him to drop everything just to respond to Peter’s message. Peter left the apartment that morning, with slightly higher spirits, and an eagerness for the school day to end so he could go back out as Spiderman again to protect the city. Unfortunately his day at school didn’t go much better than it did the day before. There were no instances of public humiliation, but the jabs about his new ‘Internship’ and supposed friendship with Tony Stark continued throughout the day. Ned had also been bugging him all day with details about how his first day in the internship went.

After what happened yesterday with Ned, Peter had decided he needed to bring the hype down about the internship. It wasn’t even a real one, and pretending that it was the most awesome thing in the world could eventually get him into some trouble, in more ways than what happened yesterday. So he ended up telling his friend that it was a little boring, because all he did was bring people their coffee, do some filing, and he did not see Tony Stark the entire time he was there. Ned understandably was a bit disappointed in the news, but it stopped him from getting too hyped up about the internship, which was what Peter was aiming for.
Peter was not able to leave school as soon as it was over today, because he had his robotics lab at three, and then band practice at four. So he ended up only able to go out as Spiderman for two hours before he needed to head back home. Peter wouldn’t go as far as to say that he was shocked to see Henry in the apartment when he got home. But he was a bit surprised that he and his aunt worked it out so fast.

It seemed that there was some work on Henry’s end, as to why they were suddenly back together after just a night. Peter spotted a large bouquet of flowers sitting on the kitchen counter, obviously given to May by the man. He must have come by with the flowers earlier and buttered up May with smooth apologies, and a bunch of promises that she’s forgotten that he already made and broken before. They were both standing in the kitchen when Peter walked in the front door. The teen could hear Henry whispering seductively in Italian into his aunt’s ear causing her to giggle like a schoolgirl. “Oh Henry… you turn me on every time you speak to me like that…” the man laughed along with her and the the two leaned in and kissed.

The scene caused Peter to roll his eyes with a disgusted look on his face. Seriously… he cut his patrol short just to come home to this? He probably could have stayed out an extra hour or two and neither would have noticed him coming back late. They were too wrapped up in their silly messed up romance that they didn’t even notice that he’d walked through the door. So resisting the temptation to just turn around and walk out the door, Peter walked past them and went into his room without announcing his presence.

After a week of radio silence from Happy, Peter began to wonder if maybe he wasn’t putting enough time into his Spiderman career. It would make sense, in a weekday week he only got about 12ish hours in as Spiderman, and adding that to what he got in on the weekends. He probably only get about 30 hours in a whole week. That’s not even a full time job. So of course it wouldn’t be that impressive compared to the time the Avengers get in. So with that thought settled, Peter promptly quit the school band which gave him a few extra hours to add to his patrol. It’s not like band was something he actively enjoyed doing. He just joined it his freshman year so he had an excuse to spend less time at home. He didn’t really need the excuse anymore. Excited to let Happy know how serious he was taking things, Peter quickly send the man a text after he told his band teacher that he was done.

Me: Happy, it’s Peter again! I decided to quit the school band so I’ll be starting my Spiderman Patrol at 4 today! But if anything comes up that you need my help with, I still get out of school at 2:45!

Another two days passed with no response from Happy, so Peter decided to quit Robotics lab also. The boy was a bit more sad to see that extra curricular activity go, but it was for the best. Now he had no after school obligations, except for the school Decathlon Team. Peter wasn’t ready to let that go, it was an excuse to spend time with Liz. They mostly met to practice during school hours, and only every once in a while had to meet after school, or do a weekend trip for nationals. None of his effort seemed to help. After a few more weeks passed with no word from either Happy or Mr. Stark, Peter had come to a conclusion that maybe May had been right this whole time. He was nothing but a useless burden to her, to Tony Stark, to the world... Even being spiderman didn’t make him worth the time of Tony Stark and the other Avengers.

Slowly the texts to Happy became less frequent. He stopped staring expectantly at his phone, waiting for a call or text that would never come. He accepted the fact that no one in the school except for Ned thought he actually had an internship with Tony Stark. Aunt May wouldn’t stop reminding him about how much they were hurting for money, along with a large amount of not so subtle hints that Peter was the main reason they didn’t have enough money. There was one particularly terrible argument that happened one evening when he came home after patrol. The
minute he walked through the door, May was screeching at him. This wasn’t really unusual, as his Aunt usually made him the fallout guy when things went wrong. In one way or another, every problem that came across May’s path was somehow Peter’s fault. This was no different.

What was different about this incident was that she wasn’t calling from the kitchen, or the front room, or her bedroom like she normally did. No it sounded like it was coming from his bedroom. But no way, would she go in there. That place was his sanctuary, it was almost an unwritten rule that no one was allowed to enter that room without Peter’s permission. Sure enough though, when Peter started making his way down the hallway towards his bedroom; May was indeed standing in the room. Given she was just barely in the room, her back was leaning against his door frame. Her arms were crossed over her chest, with a fierce glare stricken on her face. “Why the hell was your window open?” she asked with a hint of a growl in her voice.

Peter was able to glance past her into the room, and saw the window that he knew he left open when he went to school that morning, was closed. This meant that she had gone into his room, causing anger to surge through him. “Because you cause this whole place to smell like shit! And that’s the only way to keep the smell down in my room!” the teen snapped angrily.

“Don’t you raise your voice at me!” the woman yelled at the top of her voice. She had pushed away from the doorframe she had been leaning against and glared at him threateningly.

“How should I!” Peter screamed back just as loudly. Normally he tired keep his anger in check when he spoke to his aunt, and at least make an attempt to be respectful. But he felt like his privacy had been violated when she dared step into the room. It had probably been at least a year since she had gone inside and even when that happened she had asked him first. “You’re shouting at me, it only makes sense that I shout back!”

Anger flashed through May’s eyes and she pushed over a side table that leaned against the wall in front of him. This caused a deafening crash, as everything that was sitting on the table fell to the floor in heap, and the table smashing on top of it all. Some years ago, Peter would have been intimidated by this action, but not anymore. He stood his ground, glaring at the woman in front of him. May did not seem to like his reaction, and kicked the wall next as if hoping that would be enough to scare him out of his defiance. “I’m the adult here! I can do whatever the f- I want! You are the child! You don’t get to yell at adults!”

“Hey, hey, hey.” A voice suddenly spoke up from down the hallway. Henry had arrived. He must have just gotten home, and had gone to investigate the yelling.

May turned around to see who had spoken, but only gave him a moment’s glance before she rounded back on Peter. “I went into Peter’s room and found that his window was left wide open!” she explained angrily.

Henry started down the hallway closer to them, and stopped when he was standing a couple feet from where Peter stood. He stood with his arms crossed over his chest, a disapproving look on his face. With both standing on either end of the hallway with May blocking the entrance to his room and Henry blocking the other end of the hallway, he was effectively trapped, and unable to escape. Even though he knew that neither May or Henry would hurt him, the trapping feeling he got caused his spider sense to give off danger signals. “And what the hell were you doing going into my bedroom!” Peter yelled, voice full of defiance.

“You better lower your voice their boy,” the man spoke in a low warning voice. “I don’t see you helping with the rent, and you have no right to claim any part of this apartment. Your aunt and I can go into that room whenever the f- we want, and you have no right to tell us otherwise.”
Peter’s anger fumed at the very thought of Henry going in his bedroom and rifling through all his stuff. He bit back his angry retort though, knowing that it wouldn’t help the situation. “Why does it even matter if my window was open or not?” the boy managed to keep his voice level so he wasn’t shouting, but the defiance was still prominent.

“The heater is on, and I’m not paying to heat the outdoors!” May shouted. “We’re having enough problems with paying bills, without having you rack up the electric bill when your not even here!”

Seriously? This was probably the dumbest thing they’ve ever fought about. He kept the door shut for heaven’s sake. It’s not like they were losing heat in the rest of the apartment. “I still don’t see why this is a problem! I keep the door shut all the time, we’re only losing heat in the room you don’t even spend time in!”

“You better drop the attitude young man!” Henry’s patients seemed to have run out, and his voice was now raised. “You’re aunts been good to you, taking you in all these years. And she deserves more respect.”

“Some talk from someone who treats her like shit!” Peter snapped at him in his rage.

Peter saw the man’s eyes darken with anger, his fist clenching tightly. He took a move towards Peter, no doubt with the intention of doing Peter some sort of bodily harm. Aunt May’s arm stretching out in front of his chest to stop him. “Get in your room Peter! You’re grounded!” she shouted, and Peter was only happy to shove his way past where his aunt stood and shut himself in the bedroom. He stalked into the room, and slammed the door so hard the wall’s shook.
Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

Warning: minor death of a child in this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Peter sat on his bed breathing deeply, in an attempt to calm the rage he was feeling. It had been a long time since he had gotten that angry at his aunt. He usually tried to keep his cool and be respectful to her, even when she was yelling at him. But he felt like his privacy had been invaded, and that alone brought a whole lot of angry emotions. It took him a full ten minutes to get his anger under control, and with that followed the feelings of regret and shame.

Now May would hold this moment against him for the next few months, reminding him of how disrespectfully he treated her. She would often make comments about how disappointed his Uncle Ben would be if he saw how Peter was now, and the teen was always able to brush away those comments with the knowledge that his aunt didn’t know about his Spiderman life. Peter really believed that if Ben was watching him from up in Heaven, that he’s proud of what Peter had become. All the lives he saves while out as the vigilante, and everyone he’s helped. He was sure that his uncle was proud of him.

But then when he thought about how he had just shouted at May, the anger he felt towards her. Surely Uncle Ben wasn’t too happy with how he had treated his wife. The feelings of guilt intensified as he dwelled on this thought, and tears began to leak from his brown eyes. He was so much better then the way he acted this evening. He even debated going out of the room and apologizing. But hearing the shouting match going on between her and Henry, Peter decided against it.

Feeling utterly disgusted with himself, and needed desperately to prove that he was a worthy hero, Peter grabbed his backpacked and pulled the Spiderman suit out of it. He debated locking his door before leaving, but May had a key to it, so if she really wanted to get in then she could. Meaning she would eventually find out that he left, and this made him pause briefly. It certainly wouldn’t help his situation; his aunt would be disappointed in him, knowing that he left when he was supposed to be grounded. He needed to prove that he was still a good nephew to Uncle Ben, if he was even watching. Maybe the man that had been his only father figure was so utterly disgusted with the teen that he was no longer watching.

Peter stood in the middle of his bedroom, clutching the balled up spiderman suit to his chest. His small frame trembled slightly in the unsureness of what he should do. Staying put felt like it would be hell, but leaving would do the same for different reasons. The tears that had been leaking from his eyes began to flow faster. Maybe he should try contacting Happy again. Maybe there was a mission he was needed on, that would at least be a good reason for disobeying his aunt. The teen quickly snatched his phone from off his bedside table and scrolled through his contacts until he found Happy’s number. He clicked on his message conversation, and was about to start typing out a message before stopping short. With the pad of his thumb, Peter scrolled through the conversation, seeing all the messages he had sent the man, but not one was returned. Why should tonight be any different?
Anger crept its way into the boy’s chest. With narrowed eyes, he tossed the phone on his bed and quickly slipped into the spiderman suit. The anger he felt was quickly lined with rebellion. There wasn’t a single person living on this hear that cared about Peter Parker. Surely his Uncle Ben must understand that. He used this line of thought as an excuse for disobeying. There was nothing wrong with desiring to feel loved. He’d never get that by staying in his bedroom. He would get that by going out as Spiderman. Queen’s loved Spiderman. It was easy enough to see just by looking online at what people were saying about him. Once the suit had tightened around his body, Peter pulled the mask over his face, grabbed his phone where it landed on the bed, and jumped out the window without a second thought.

A breath of relief fell from the boy’s lips as he swung from building to building. There was something about the thrill of flying through the air, that caused all his stress and problems to fly away from his chest. He never felt more free and at ease than he did when he was out being Spiderman. Yes even when he was in high stakes situations, it was nothing compared to the stress he feels when he is at home with his Aunt. Peter landed catlike on top of the roof of one of the high buildings in Queens. He stared out across the city, enhanced ears straining to pick up the sound of a nearby siren, and it didn’t take long before he picked one up. “Finally…” he muttered to himself. Excited to be helpful for something.

Peter reached a hand out, pressed the button of his web shooters and took off towards the direction of the sirens. Soon enough, he was following a blaring fire truck that was zooming along a street, towards an apartment building that was on fire. He stuck himself to the top of a telephone pole that stood next to the building, and took a moment to assess the situation. Going by the looks of it, it seemed like the building would be going down within minutes. His enhanced hearing picked up on enough of the firefighters conversation to know that there were three children still inside the building. The spiderling gave himself ten more seconds to listen for the sounds of child cries within the building. He picked up two on the fourth floor and with no hesitancy, the teen jumped from the pole crashed through one of the windows on that forth floor. It was hot. Even shrouded in the highly expensive suit that Mr. Stark had given him, sweat was pouring off his body just seconds after entering the building. It wouldn’t be long before his body got so hot the sweat would just evaporate off his body. He couldn’t dwell on that though, there were children that needed his help. He could hear one of the kid’s voices coming from the next room crying, “Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!”

Upon investigating the room, Peter found it was a young girl probably 7 years old, hiding under the bed. One of the worst things that could be done during a fire is hide, but now really wasn’t the time to be scolding her for that. So he lifted up into his arms and continued towards where he could hear the next child that was crying for help.

This one he found in what was probably the apartment next door. It was a four year old boy, that looked to have gotten stuck inside his bedroom. He was lying on the floor against a wall, completely surrounded by flames. There was no access to his bedroom door or the window, in fact Peter had to shoot at the wall, and swing himself and the girl he was holding over the flames just to get to him. “Don’t be afraid, I’m here to help,” he spoke after the boy gave him a frightened look.

A desire to get out, must have overtook his feelings of fear, because the younger child immediately clung to him. Peter had the girl, climb up onto his back, and he held the boy in one arm to swing back over the flames. There was still a third child in the building. The teen’s enhanced hearing could hear them. It sounded like it was coming from the room right below them. Peter took a very brief moment to debate on if he should go after the third child. The child was still alive, and the teen was confident that he would be able to get to him or her. But he also had his hands quite full with the two other children who were crying against his body, and going after the third child would jeopardize their safety.
He eventually settled on taking the two kids he already had, out and into safety and go back for the third child. “All right, hold on tight,” he told the two children and quickly swung out of the already broken bedroom window. Peter quickly shot his web at the telephone pole that stood right above them, so he could safely lower himself and the kids to the ground. The moment his feet touched the ground, the girl jumped off his back and immediately ran back to where her parents were. “Mommy! Daddy!” she called out as he ran into their embrace.

The young boy however was still clinging and crying against his chest, not yet aware that they were in safety. The teen hero, approached the large crowd of onlookers and firefighters nearby. “Who does this one belong too?” he asked indicating the small child in his arms.

Not even thirty seconds passed before a young woman ran up to him. “Right here! Right here!” she snatched the boy from Peter’s arms who were only grateful to pass him along to his mother. The teen really needed to get back inside for the third kid before it was too late.

That proved easier said than done, as both families of the children he saved were insistent of giving their thanks. The girl’s father actually pulled Peter into a hug, and wouldn’t let go despite any protest he gave for what felt like a full minute. “Your welcome! Your welcome!” Peter returned their words quickly, trying not to sound annoyed. “But there’s another kid inside and I need to go and get them.”

Peter turned back towards the burning building, and was about run back inside when one of the firefighters stopped him. “Don’t bother Spiderman. Carlton’s already got her.” As the firefighter spoke, another firefighter emerged from the front doors of the building carrying a small child in his arms. A feeling of relief came over Peter as he saw this. It wasn’t a mistake getting the other two to safety first. The third child, got out safely. Or did she? A small jolt went through the teen soon after as he realized how still the child was in the arms of the firefighter who quickly ran over to where the medical team was stationed. “She lost consciousness about a minute ago.”

Despite everything his mind yelled at him to do, Peter could not tear his eyes away from the scene. The fireman did everything they possible could to revive the small girl that looked to be no older than three years old. The girl’s parents had run over, trying to get to their child but other fireman was holding them back. After what felt like an eternity the most horrible words Peter would have ever thought to hear were uttered. “Time of death, 11:07pm.” As horrible as those words were, they were nothing compared to the gut wrenching sobs that where now coming from the child’s parents. Peter dared a glance over in their direction. The girl’s mother was sobbing broken heartedly into the chest of her husband. The man was looking right at Peter, and the glare that he was casting at the teen spoke volumes. “Why didn’t you save my daughter?”

Remorse and guilt flooded into Peter’s chest, as he took several steps back. She was alive when he was in the building, he could have gotten to her in time. He was sure of that. If he hadn’t left, she would still be alive. He made the wrong choice. He almost went over to apologize to the couple, but did not because he felt like he had no right to share in their grief. He was basically the one who killed their child. Sure he didn’t deliberately throw her into a burning building and leave her to die. But the fact that he had the chance to save her and didn’t take it, that was just as bad, at least in his mind.

Suddenly aware of all the stares everyone was giving him, and feeling like every single one of them had an accusing air about it. Peter shot a web, and quickly fled the scene. He could already see the News Headlines for tomorrow. “Spiderman Allows Child to Die in Burning Building.” It didn’t even matter that he had saved those other two children, the fact that he had let that third one die in the building canceled out all other good deeds. The teen swung from building to building, barely aware of where he was going. He didn’t stop until he ended up sticking the landing wrong on a particularly high building, and fell flat on his face on the rooftop. He felt his lip start to bleed, as he bit into it
from the impact, and he was pretty sure had this happened before the spiderbite he’d had broken his nose. Peter laid face down on that rooftop for an undetermined amount of time, trying to get his bearings again.

Finally, he managed to drag himself to the edge of the building and look down at the almost empty road below. There was a siren off the distance somewhere, and his normally instincts tugged at him to go follow it. He could still be helpful tonight. Would it even matter though? He still allowed that child to die in the fire. Nothing he ever did from this moment on would redeem him of that. He could have saved her, he really could have, and he chose not to.

Peter pulled himself up, and swung his legs over the edge of the roof to sit. Just as he was debating whether he would survive if he just jumped off the building how, a text message pinged on his phone. He almost didn’t look, because it was probably just his aunt telling him how much trouble he was in for leaving his room. But in the end, took a glance and was surprised to see that it was Ned. Of course it was. The other teen seemed to always know when Peter was in this state of mind, even when he didn’t actually know. There had been plenty of times in the past Ned had called him or sent him a message about something random when he had been contemplating suicide, and it always managed to pull Peter out of it so he could go on another day. This was the case again, but as Peter silently ready the text that his friend sent, it somehow made him want to jump even more.

12:00am

Ned: Happy Birthday Bro!

He actually looked at the date on his phone just to make sure that Ned wasn’t mistaken. It was true, it really was his birthday. With everything that had happened the past few weeks, Peter had completely spaced the fact that his birthday was coming up. Leave it to Ned to be the one person that stopped him from forgetting his own birthday. The other teen always had a thing about making sure that he was the first person to wish him a Happy Birthday, and always sent a text at exactly midnight so he really would be the first.

Most people would be excited and happy on their birthday, after all it was the one day a year everyone that you new took a moment to appreciate you and show that you love them. It was different for Peter Parker though. He could count the people who would actually acknowledge his birthday on one hand, and it still wouldn’t add up to five. Ned was one of them. His aunt would at least tell him Happy Birthday if she remembered and toss him a 20 dollar bill, and not mention it again until the following year where she may or may not remember again. Henry would only acknowledge it if he was in the same room when May did, and that had only happened once. The only other person who ever cared about his Birthday the way one was supposed to, was his Uncle Ben. But he’s been dead for almost 7 years now. Peter doubted that his Aunt May remembered this year. She didn’t remember last year, and didn’t bother reminding her and didn’t plan on doing this same this year either. A Birthday greeting doesn’t seem intentional when you have to remind them about it.

For several moments Peter stared down at the street below him. Debating on if it was worth it to live out another year of his life, Peter decided that he would at least give his friend the chance to talk him out of it. So he unlocked the phone, tapped the message button, and typed out a response.

12:07am

Me: Is living another year on this shithole we call home even worth it?

Peter turned the screen off when he sent the message, and waited a moment for Ned’s response. He figured it would be pretty quick. Ned probably hadn’t fallen back asleep yet. But when five minutes
passed and still no response, Peter wondered if maybe he was already asleep. It was either that or the other teen really didn’t care if he killed himself. It was another five minutes before his phone pinged a response. But when Peter looked at his phone he was surprised to see that he had gotten a message not from Ned but from Happy.

12:19am

Happy: What the hell is that supposed to mean?

A horrified jolt ran through the teen as he realized what must have happened. He looked back at the last message he sent to check, and sure enough he had sent that message to the wrong conversation. He hadn’t looked closely enough to see that he was actually sending that message to Happy instead of Ned. For a brief moment he fretted, wondering how he was going to explain himself. But these feelings only lasted a moment before they were replaced by anger. After all this time, it took a suicidal question to get a response from Happy. Peter glared at his phone for a good minute before promptly chucking it off the side of the building and watching it charge down towards the street where it shattered when it hit the ground.

Chapter End Notes

It’s finally time for Tony to start doing what he’s supposed to be doing as a mentor.
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

Thanks for everyone's comments on last chapter. I was hoping to get this chapter up sooner but that didn't happen.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Tony Stark was a hot mess at the moment. To the public he looked as calm and cool as he normally did, but anyone who watched him behind closed doors would see that he was actually a barely functioning adult. The way things went down on the disagreement with the Accords had broken the man somewhat. He was now in a worse condition then he was after the Battle of New York. More than half of the team was now on the run, his best friend was permanently paralyzed from the waist down, and he had an extremely hard fall out with Steve. Tony doubted that he'd even come to forgive that man.

When all the dust had finally settled, Tony remained at the Avengers Compound. Mostly to help aid in Rhodey’s recovery, not that he’ll actually make a full recovery. But he’d at least be there to help his felt with the process, and it was better then moping around his mansion by himself. He took a few hours to event a device that would help the man be able to walk again. When there was nothing left to do to help his his friend, he took to holding himself up down in one of the compounds many labs. There he would spend days tinkering with whatever projects he found interesting, refusing meals and Friday’s advice on taking care of himself. He only slept when so many hours had passed that his eyes wouldn’t stay open and he’d fall asleep at his lab table.

After a couple weeks of this, someone ratted him out. It had to have been either Rhodey or Happy, because Friday wouldn’t have been allowed to ask for help with him without permission which he never gave her. After 45 hours without sleep, Tony had thought he was hallucinating when his beloved Pepper Potts walked into the lab looking furious but also sympathetic and worried. Only she could pull that off in one look. God he could live a million lifetimes and never deserve that woman. All it took was a single sentence from her mouth, and an hour later he was sleeping soundly in his own bed with a meal in his stomach and a shower he had lacked since returning from Siberia. He was still a mess, that was for sure. But with the love of his life now back, he was once again a functioning human being.

Almost as soon as Tony was somewhat functioning again, Happy had started ranting and complaining about a certain overexcited spider teen that had been driving him crazy. It started with a three hour audio that had been sent to his personal computer, and the audio consisted of every message that the kid Tony had dragged from Germany, had sent to Happy since there return. It seemed that Peter felt the need to relay a fully detailed recap of his Spiderman Patrols that he went on every single night. Really the only reason he sat and listened to the whole thing is because imagining Happy listening to all this every night greatly amused him. And God knew that he needed a few laughs after everything that’s happened. After the initial three hour audio, Happy then forwarded the messages that Peter sent everyday, and at least once a day Tony would get a separate call or message from Happy complaining about something along the lines of how babysitting had not been in his job description.

As annoyed as the man was with the situation, Tony knew that Happy would not stop the task of
watching over the web slinging vigilante, unless Tony said that he could. The two had that kind of
relationship. Happy would do anything for Tony, even if it made him want to pull his hair out. The
billionaire had noticed though, that he was no longer receiving Peter’s voice messages the passed
few days. He initially didn’t think much of it, figuring that Happy had finally decided that he didn’t
need to relay every message the kid sent, and only the important ones.

This proved to be wrong thinking when he received a frantic call from Happy late one night. He had
been in his lab working on a new prototype, and trying to keep Pepper’s grating concerns out of his
head. It was just a little past midnight, last night he was asleep before midnight and he really didn’t
need to go to bed at 10pm every night. Trying to tell Pepper that, however was like trying to explain
the theory of relativity to a room of English Language Learners. It just didn’t work. So she was
already in bed, and had been for a couple of hours, but not before giving him a few choice sentences
that hinted as his destructive carelessness and the obviousness of needing to listening to her advice
more often. Tony did feel bad for making her worry and stress about him, she really was the only
reason he was alive right now. If it wasn’t for her, he’d probably be sick as dog right now,
mindlessly drinking his life away, locked in a room until he walked into death’s calling arms.

He almost didn’t answer Happy’s phone call, when the billionaire first looked at the caller ID. Most
of the time anything his head of security called about could wait till morning. But calling twenty
minutes after midnight, the other man must have had a good reason. So in the end he did accept the
call. “Tony- it’s the kid,” Happy voice shrilly spoke before Tony even had a chance to greet him.

Tony was unable to stop the sigh from escaping his lips. He was really starting to get tired of hearing
Happy’s constant complaints about the Spiderman kid. “Look Hap, I’m really not going to get into
this with you. Why don’t you just tell the kid that-”

“Tony!” The laced hint of fear in the other man's voice caused the billionaire to pause in his rebuke.
Something must be really wrong, and this was confirmed with Happy’s next words. “I think the
kid’s in trouble.”

Different thoughts went through Tony’s head after hearing this, and his mind began to race. Did
something happen when the kid was out doing his vidulanteing? Or maybe he was just in trouble
from whatever trouble teenagers get into these days. If it was because of Spiderman, then he was at
least partially responsible for not keeping a better eye on him. “What happened?” the billionaire
quickly asked and before Happy even had a chance to respond, Tony was calling for Friday to pull
of any recent news on Spiderman.

“He sent me text a few minute ago, talking about nothing left worth living for. I tried calling him,
but he must have turned his phone off because it’s going straight to his voicemail.”

A deep sigh fell from Tony’s lips. Teenage suicidal thoughts didn’t really fall into either category
he’d been thinking, so he wasn’t sure if it would be his fault if they found out tomorrow about the
kid killing himself. He guessed that it depended on his reasons for thinking that life wasn’t worth
living anymore. If it involved his home life or school there wasn’t much he could do about it, but if it
had something to do with Spiderman then he was certainly responsible. But nothing on the news
said anything negative about the web slinging vigilante. In fact the news was saying that just under
an hour ago, the kid had saved two children from a burning building. So it must have been
something outside of Spiderman. Though considering how he was involved now, doing nothing
about it would certainly deem the kid’s suicide partially his fault. “What exactly did the kid say?”
Tony figured that she should probably make sure that Happy didn’t misunderstand the teen’s text.

“Hold on a minute,” Happy spoke and then there was a moments silence while he most likely pulled
up the text conversation on his phone. “Is living another year on this shithole we call home even
worth it?” Ok so it wasn’t an outright confession of about ‘I’m about to commit suicide’ but certainly a concerning message, and Tony did not feel it was the right decision to ignore it.

“Friday, pull up the Spiderman Suit location?” the billionaire spoke to his A.I. without giving a response to his head of security. It took about ten seconds before Friday was able to find the location of the suit. It was currently on the rooftop of a very tall business building in Queens. This was both good and bad news in Tony’s opinion. It was good because being on the rooftop meant that the kid hadn’t jumped yet, unless he took the suit off before doing so, but the man refused to consider that option. It was also bad, because anyone in that state of mind shouldn’t be anywhere near high places where jumping could be very easy. “Thanks for letting me know Happy. I got the kid’s location, I’ll take if from here.” With that Tony ended the call.

In a matter of minutes since ending the call with Happy, Tony was in one of his suits and flying towards Queen’s. He had set the co-ordination to where the spiderman suit was currently stationed, It had yet to move from the spot, since been located back in his lab. This caused the man to think more and more, that maybe it really was just the suit laying on the rooftop by itself. He dearly hoped that this wasn’t the case; that he wasn’t too late. He really didn’t know what he would do if he found out that the kid actually had jumped.

A huge wave of relief washed over the man when he saw the building off in the distance, and was able to make out a lone figure sitting on the edge of the rooftop. It really could only be the kid. He landed gracefully on the rooftop, several feet from where the teen sat. He didn’t want to get too close, and cause the boy to panic and jump without thinking.

The kid was sitting on the edge of the rooftop, with his legs dangling over the edge, eyes downcast towards the street below them. The spiderman mask was clenched in his hands, being squeezed so tightly in his grip that Tony thought the wiring in the mask might need some repair work. The child took a moment to glance over at the billionaire when he landed on the room, but was back at looking down at street a moment later. Tony took two hesitant steps towards the kid, and opened his facemask in order to talk to him normally. He figured that the kid would rather talk to him rather than the ironman suit.

It wasn’t until Tony opened his mouth to speak, when he realized that he had no idea what to say to the kid. He was never very good at this pep talk stuff. He should have tried to prepare some kind of speech on his way over, but he had been too busy worrying that he might be too late to stop the kid from making the biggest mistake of his life. The man opened and closed his mouth for several moments before he finally decided that if he couldn’t think of anything comforting to say, he might as well start off with why he was there in the first place. “All right kid… want to explain that message you sent to Happy?”

“It wasn’t supposed to be sent to him…”

“Well it did go to him, and maybe that makes the mistake a blessing in disguise. It’s better to let people know when your feeling like this, then just keeping it to yourself.” That was a pretty good sounding speech, if Tony didn’t say so himself.

The response that the child gave, threw him off however. “Like you even care…”

“What the hell is that supposed to mean?” the billionaire asked slightly taken aback. “I wouldn’t be here right now, if I didn’t care kid. Doesn’t having me here right now, show you anything?”

There was a moment’s pause before the kid responded. “Yeah… it shows that neither you or Happy care enough to even message me until I’m a suicidal case. So what? Would my death by too hard on
Guilt filled the man’s chest as he realized that what the boy said, was exactly right. He hadn’t known that Happy was ignoring the kid just as much as he was. He had kind of assumed that Happy was at least calling to check up on the kid every so often, as it’s what he would have expected with the task of watching over the young vigilante. But Tony didn’t feel right passing the blame around when he really didn’t do any better. The man now realized how stupid it was of him to ever bring a teenage boy in on all this mess. He could barely take care of himself let alone mentor a kid who’s at such a tender age that goes through so many emotions it’s real easy to mess them up behind repair. Releasing a deep sigh, Tony spoke. Thinking more about his words this time. “Listen kid… not trying to say it excuses anything. But I’ve been a f-ing mess that past few weeks. So bad that someone had to come up and make sure that I ate, drank, and went to bed on time like some toddler.”

The boy grunted softly as if indicating that he agreed it was a poor excuse. Tony just sighed to himself; feeling completely out of his element. What was he supposed to say to the kid that you and him both knew you royally screwed up with. Now he knew what it must have felt like to be a parent. After a moments debate, the man exited out of his armor. “I’m going to come sit by you ok?” he figured that giving the kid’s state of mind it was probably best to let him know what he was going to do.

Tony took boy’s lack of response as at least partial permission to move forward. He took a few hesitant steps towards the kid, watching for any sign of more destress from the kid that may cause him to suddenly jump from the building. Tony really wished that he could get the teen away from the edge, but that seemed very unlikely. The billionaire groaned softly at his aging joints protesting his movements to sit down next to the kid. He almost thought he was going to lose his balance for a moment, but managed to eventually settle himself down next to the boy. They both silently stared out at the city of Queen’s for several moments. It really was a breathtaking view; Tony understood why the boy had chosen this building to sit on top of. When the silence got so long that it was starting to feel uncomfortable, Tony knew that it was time for him to break the silence. “So why are you so upset kid?”

Peter continued to give him no response or even a single thread to pull on and try to make sense of all this. The man dared to probe ever so lightly. “I heard that Spiderman saved a couple of kids from getting killed in a fire earlier this evening. That should warrant some kind of commendence.” At the mention of the fire, the teen’s shoulders suddenly tensed, and his hears picked up on a hitch of breath. Tony knew that he had said the wrong thing, or maybe the right thing depending on how you looked at it.

The billionaire had mentioned the fire in hopes of taking the kid’s mind off of what was bothering him, by reminding him of something good that he did. But this had the opposite effect. Something must have happened at that fire, something so bad it caused the kid to think life wasn’t worth living anymore. Before Tony even had the chance to question any further, the boy’s emotions began spiraling out of control. The teen began sniffing loudly, breath hitching in a vain attempt not to burst into tears. His shoulders began to tremble under Tony’s hand, and the man could only stare in horror at what was folding out in front of him. He had no clue as to what to do when a kid starts crying, let alone when the kid is sitting right next to you. He was really blowing this. Great pep talk Stark! Now you’ve made the kid cry. “Hey, wow there. What’s wrong? Did something happen?”

Once again… the absolute wrong thing to say. Seconds after the words left his mouth, the teen let the waterworks lose and burst into tears. Tony’s hand flew away from the boy’s shoulder so fast, one would have thought fire had just be set to it. He had just broken the kid, probably touched him for too long. Not that Tony was all that surprised, he always managed to break every good thing that came into his life. But what was he going to tell the kid’s aunt? Sorry, Ma’am but I kind of broke
your nephew. I didn’t realize how fragile he was. Even in his head it was a pretty lame excuse. He needed to at least try and fix this.

The billionaire’s mind reeled, trying to think back to what your supposed to do when someone cries. He wasn’t usually around crying people. In fact the only person that actually mattered to him, he could think of that he had seen cry in the past decade, was Pepper. Even when that happened Tony had tended to steer clear of her until she was feeling less emotional. There was no way in any good conscious that he could walk away from this kid when he was so distraught. The child sat there, on the edge of the roof sobbing harshly into his hands. The man started thinking back to when he was younger, and what people did when he had cried. It didn’t count the stray trickle of tears that leaks from your eyes in an emotional moment, he hadn’t actually cried in front of someone since he was about ten. His father had always yelled at him anytime he teared up, stating that Stark men were made of iron and didn’t cry. Tony knew that he must have cried in front of his mother before, but he couldn't think of a time where he recalled what she had done to comfort him.

Jarvis on the other hand. There were definitely memories creeping back into his mind, of the man wrapping gentle but strong arms around his trembling form as he cried into his shoulder. Yes that was the answer, a hug.

It was shown in movies all the time. You hug someone when they cry. Tony had never been a very touchy person, and usually avoided physical contact with anyone, expect maybe Pepper. But considering that the alternative was continuing to sit awkwardly next to a crying teenager, Tony barely thought twice before wrapping an arm around the kid’s shoulders and gently pulled his body closer to his. “Hey- Hey… c’mere it’s all right.” The billionaire had half expected the kid to tense up at the affection, as that’s what he would have done. The boy did the opposite however, and threw his lanky arms around Tony and clung to his body like a leech and began to violently sob into the man’s chest.

Tony couldn’t help but think about how his expensively tailored suit was now being soiled. It wasn’t too hard to push that thought from his mind, as he rubbed a gentle hand over the teens back, whispering soothing words in an attempt to calm him. It took a few minutes but the teen was eventually able to calm down enough for Tony to ask, “Want to talk about what happened?”

The boy only responded with a soft hiccup and remained silent except for the occasional sniff. The silenced stretched on for so long that Tony began to wonder if maybe he had crossed some line with that question, and he was just about to make some type of apology when the kid began to speak in a very small voice. “I messed up…”

This confession was followed by another small stretch of silence. Tony wanted to give the teen a chance to elaborate. When he didn’t, the man hesitantly probed. “What did you mess up?”

Another sob fell from the child’s lips, and he clung more tightly to the billionaire. Tony found himself instinctively pulling the boy closer to his chest. It was another few moments before any comprehensible words came out of the kid. Very slowly between his sobs the teen began telling a truly tragic tale about being in the midst of a burning building. His arms were already filled with two young children, and he could hear the screams of a third child just below his feet. He chose to get the other two children to safety before going back for the third one, and that choice ended up making him too late to save the child. By the end of the story, the teen was a sobbing mess, totally distraught. “I should have just gone to save her!” The boy wailed into Tony’s chest. “She was still alive, I heard her. I could have gotten to her in time!”

A deep sigh fell from Tony’s lips as he continued to hold the kid’s trembling frame. This was one of the hardest lessons that every hero has to learn at some point. You can’t save everyone. Sometimes
you have to make a hard decision and choose the lesser of two evils, or choose the option that saves more lives. Tony did not think for a moment that the kid made the wrong choice. If he had tried to take those two kids with him to save the third one, it’s very possible that it would have been too much or him and the result could have been them all perishing in the fire. “Listen kid… I know don’t want to believe this. But you made the right choice.”

With a deep shuddering breath, the teen looked up at him with tear filled wounded eyes. This was the first time the billionaire really looked into the kid’s eyes, and he could really see the deep hurt embedded into him. This isn’t just a result of what happened with the fire. Something, or someone else had hurt him. “B-But-”

“No but’s,” Tony interrupted, his voice becoming firm. This caused the boy to close his mouth and silence any other protests. It was hard to be firm when the kid looked so beaten, but there no way Tony was going to allow him to blame himself for what happened. “If you had stayed in that building any longer you would have endangered the two kids you had saved, and you may not have gotten them out in time. Or something worse could have happened, like you could have been killed and none of them would have been saved.” The young man continued to hang his head, looking defeated. “All right, I’m going to lay it out for you. You may have super powers kid, but your still human. And we still live in this shitty world, where it’s impossible to save everyone. If you can’t come to terms with that fact, then you need to hang up the suit and find a different career.”

The boy flinched at his blunt words, causing Tony to wonder if he was being too harsh. Maybe he should have waited to teach this lesson when the kid was in better spirits. It was too late to go backwards. The best he could do now was to just patch up the damage he’s already done. “The point I’m trying to make here kid,” Tony began, speaking in a more gentle voice now. “Is that you can’t go blaming yourself for deaths that you were unable to prevent. It’s terrible what happened to that little girl, and I’m sure that her family is devastated and wish that you could have saved her. But you can’t let that fact overshadow the fact that you had saved the other two kids.”

By this time the teen had stopped crying and was silently listening to the older man’s words. Tony noted that the kid had relaxed into the embrace, and he could almost feel the kid drinking in the affection. One may have thought that the boy had never been hugged in his whole life. The billionaire was once again overwhelmed with the sensation of how much of a mistake it was to get involved with this kid. It was starting to become clear that the boy was much more broken then he ever realized when he first met the kid. He probably would have never gotten involved if he had known. A broken mentor can do nothing to help a broken mentee. But cutting ties with the spiderling now, would certainly have devastating effects. “I’m sorry if it felt like I abandoned you kid. It really wasn’t my intention.” Tony began to confess. “I know I can’t change what happened, but I want you to know that I do care about you.”

The child shifted his head around to make contact with the man. He gave Tony a look that clearly said he thought the billionaire was patronizing him. “I mean it kid. I wouldn’t have given you that suit if I didn’t.” The only other response the kid made was shifting his eyes downward, and giving another sniffle. “I promise that I’m going to make more of an effort to show you. And you promise me that when we part ways tonight you won’t go do anything drastic. Deal?”

Another silence stretched as the boy thought this over. Tony really hoped that the kid agreed because if he didn’t, then he’d probably have to put him on suicide watch or something. Thankfully after a couple of minutes the teen gave a very soft, “Ok…”

Tony was not able to stop the sigh of relief that fell from his lips. Both man and child remained in their embrace on the edge of the building for several more minutes. The billionaire had a feeling like the kid really needed this, and even though he was very uncomfortable with how long he’s been
touching the boy, he didn’t feel right being the one to break the hold. Just when he was beginning to think that he might have to give in, he felt the kid release his grip and gently push him away. More then happy to have his bubble space back, Tony also released his hold on the kid and ruffled his hair in a playful gesture. He was rewarded with a smile from the kid. When they finally parted ways about fifteen minutes later, Tony felt like things were going to be ok. He flew back to the compound, determined to make it up to that kid. It wouldn’t be easy, and he would certainly have to go out of his comfort zone. But he had already messed it up so badly it almost ended in tragedy. He would never make that mistake again.

Chapter End Notes

I think this is where I’m going to end this story. Sorry for those of you that were waiting for Tony to rescue Peter from Aunt May and her boyfriend. That was never going to happen in this story. I’m actually not sure if it’s even going to happen at all. I currently don’t have any “Tony adopts Peter” plans. This is an exploration series that will focus on the life of a child that lives with verbal and emotional abuse everyday, and what we can do to help children in this situation, since in most cases the law cannot do anything about it.

I have started working on part 2 in this serious. I think it’s going to be a oneshot. Not sure when it will be posted. I’m going to be moving so things are going to get crazy in my life.

End Notes

In this story, Peter’s uncle dies when he’s eight years old.

Take note that when I first wrote this, Henry's name was Enrique. I changed it last minute. I think I switched all the names, but if you happen to see the name Enrique it's referring to Henry.

This chapter takes place shortly before Peter first meets Tony Stark. As I said in the note above that this will probably turn into a series. So I’m thinking that this story will take place mostly between Civil War and Spiderman Homecoming. Other stories I have planned for this series will go into the events of Spider Man Homecoming. I’m expecting to trail far away from what actually happens in the movies so I’m not sure if anything will lead into the events of Infinity War. I might just pretend the movie never happened :)

My chapters are going to be shorter in this story, and updates will probably take longer because I want to take my time with the story and make sure I’m portraying the character’s the way I want them to be portrayed.

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