### Just gonna let em hate

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**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences  
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**Category:** F/M, Gen  
**Fandom:** Spider-Man - All Media Types, Marvel Cinematic Universe, The Avengers (Marvel Movies), Spider-Man: Homecoming (2017)  
**Relationship:** Peter Parker & Natasha Romonov & James "Bucky" Barnes, Peter Parker & Natasha Romanov, James "Bucky" Barnes & Peter Parker, James "Bucky" Barnes/Natasha Romanov, Peter Parker & Avengers Team, Peter Parker & Tony Stark, Harley Keener & Peter Parker, Wanda Maximoff & Peter Parker, Peter Parker & Wade Wilson, Matt Murdock & Peter Parker & Wade Wilson, Matt Murdock & Peter Parker, Michelle Jones & Ned Leeds & Peter Parker  
**Character:** Peter Parker, Natasha Romanov (Marvel), Nick Fury, James "Bucky" Barnes, Tony Stark, Harley Keener, Wanda Maximoff, Wade Wilson, Matt Murdock, Bruce Banner, Steve Rogers, Clint Barton, Thor (Marvel), Michelle Jones, Ned Leeds, Sam Wilson (Marvel)  
**Additional Tags:** Slow Burn, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Heavy Angst, like a buttload of angst, but you know me, Implied/Referenced Rape/Non-con, Peter Parker is a Little Shit, Peter Parker does what he wants, Genius Peter, The avengers are jerks at first, Hurt Wanda Maximoff, Tony Stark is acting as Harley Keener's Parental Figure, Finding Family, inaccurate usage of political system, inaccurate usage of Science, Team Red, cuz i can't help myself, Tony Is a Good Bro, he tries his best, Tony Stark is kinda good with kids, BAMF Peter Parker, I killed aunt May again oops, Implied/Referenced Drug Addiction, Starvation, Child Abuse, inaccurate usage of military system, Child Soldiers, Human Experimentation, Anxiety, Panic Attacks, Sensory Overload, Child Abandonment, cursing, Like aloooooot of cursing, gen z humor, Hydra Peter Parker, Dark Peter Parker, Controversial Topics, Not Canon Compliant, Infinity war??, Endgame?? In this economy???, I think not, Peter is Russian, Mama Spider, Parent Tony Stark, Parent Natasha Romanov, Parent Bucky Barnes, I gots me a beta I may or may not make you hate the Avengers oops, vlogs, videos, Kid Peter Parker, Teen Peter Parker  
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**Summary**

It’s not like anything changed much.

Peter is usually great brushing off all the shit everyone gives him for being himself. It usually doesn’t matter what they think; what anyone thinks really.
So why is it getting so hard for him to do that recently?

Notes

So I started another story....oops.

Endgame is coming in literally 9 days but I'm watching it in 10 and overtime I go on my feed on Instagram I scream cause I'm gonna miss the original 6!! Like Marvel has been everything to me since I was six, and it's the only thing I can agree on with my dad anymore. That and other really nerdy movies like Jurassic Park and Star Wars.

Okay, but enough about that, I'm gonna tell you more about this story. It's a lot more dark than any of my other stories. This one goes a bit heavy too, so please do read the tags. I might put more up, but if any of those things trigger you, please don't read this. I go into very descriptive details about that stuff, and their affects on Peter's life. Peter is going to be put through ringer on this one, that's for sure. I actually wanted to get this out before Endgame because it was sitting in my files just waiting to be uploaded, or at least the skeletons of the first few chapters were. I have the whole thing planned out, and when I mean whole thing I mean not only all 16 chapters and whats gonna happen in each of them but the prequels to those to. I just think the prequels will make more sense if you read the main story, which does have backround depictions in them. It's just a matter of writing them.

Actually I really was encouraged by some friends of mine, whom I've shared my stories with even if she isn't a marvel fan and help her with her original playwright she is doing. Also some writers here who have encouraged me to do my works and post them. So I feel confident in the first chapter.

This Update schedule, however, will not be consistent. I will try my best to be predictable when it comes to posts, but no promises. This has been sitting in my mind and on my computer for so long and I have tried to take every precaution to make it perfect. As for Net Force, I feel like I've let you all down with making all these stories and not updating that one. I'm drawing blanks on the ending though, so bare with me while I find something suitable to end it with. Anyways...

Enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1 - I’m a Webslinger

We don’t own a gun.

His Aunt was dead. A bullet hole in her head and a gun in her limp hand. Peter was smart, it only took two seconds to figure out what happened. He should be scared, terrified, or traumatized. But the only thing his frozen form can process is that:

Ben owned a gun...but May buried it with him...right?

...

Right?

The gun in May’s hand looked awfully like the one that Ben had kept in their dresser in the top drawer along with his cards and keys. The steely black that now had bloody limp fingers curled around it, couldn’t hide the curve of the trigger. The scent of gunpowder and the tendril of smoke from the exit point of the gun.

Peter wasn’t surprised. He wasn’t scared that he wasn’t surprised. This happened all the time. Everyone goes away eventually. Everyone leaves him at some point. Get tired of him. This happened all the time.

It still didn’t stop the ache that he refused to acknowledge.

After a good hour of just staring into a void, trying to figure out how this changed his life and what he was going to do but kept drawing a blank when he looked at the body again, he called someone. Not the police, or his ex friends. No, he called the director of SHIELD himself.

The teenager never called SHIELD, he was too busy and never had a right reason to call, he couldn’t imagine what it was like for a director of a secret society that manages the Avengers. He probably didn’t want to here about a common mugger or a math test or a guy in a wingsuit that was
carrying alien weapons ohmygodhesgonnakillyou!

And besides he didn’t like depending on Fury. On anybody really. It made it harder for him to let them go when they left.

He’s never had anyone to depend on in the past. Not really.

The phone picked up on the fifth ring and answered with a tired and irritated “You little shit.” Yeah that was about right. Fury sounded like this was such an annoyance, which it probably was. But to be fair Peter hadn’t picked up Fury’s calls in months. It was always something or another and Peter never wanted to get Fury or SHIELD involved, even if they could help. Nor did he want any part in his sneaky sneaky spying thing.

“I need you to pick me up.” he said and it was so deadpanned and even he didn’t know how he did it himself. How emotionless his voice was, when his head was so full of feelings and plans and just everything. It was giving him a headache.

“Why?” the older man asked, his tone didn’t change.

“My aunt committed suicide.” Peter said in the same tone and he could hear the tenseness from the other person and sighed.

“What am I supposed to do about it?” Fury growled out only missing a beat. Despite the situation Peter’s mouth quirked up for a second but went back down at the sight of the dead body of his aunt. It was just so rewarding when he got a rise out of the man. But there were people dead...but then again that was kinda normal so...

“And also the scent of the blood is making me sick and the sight is just… I feel weird… c-can you just-” Peter plowed on like Fury hadn’t spoken was growing quieter and quieter. So maybe feelings decided to visit his voice after all, he tried to choke it back. Fury wouldn’t do anything about that part, Peter had to figure out his own physiological mess of a mind he had. Fury wouldn’t give a shit if he was crying or not.

“Whatever.” And Peter nodded like it solved everything. But SHIELD would handle the body, Peter never like handling bodies. He wished that they could sweep this under the rug, they probably would officially.
He wished it did the same for mentally.

They didn’t own a gun.

OoOoO

1 year later...

“That’s it. It’s official. I hate explosions.”

Peter gritted through the comms, as he got out of the burning building with the last two kids he managed to get out, but not without burns to his sides. A flaming beam had fell on him on the way in and he’d managed to avoid such incidents on the way out with the kids.

“Comes with the job.” Clint’s blunt gruff voice mentioned. There was no room for argument and Peter wanted to sigh. There was an unspoken ‘If you can’t handle it, then leave.’ And Peter wanted to scream like a kid, because he couldn’t just leave people to suffer. Not anymore. Especially now, That much was obvious, if the continuous explosions in the city were anything to go by. At least, They were wrapping up by the looks of it. He felt more dread sink into his stomach.

He was fighting with the Avengers against some more aliens, who apparently liked explosions. Very destructive explosions.

Well he wasn’t so much fighting with them then cleaning up after them right now. He was on ‘crowd control’ as he so called it- and Steve, sorry Captain Rogers, didn’t take likings to his names that he dubbed certain things, like Spidey sense (Wade said it sounded sexual and laughed, but to be fair Wade’s default mindset was to find the most sexual way to use every combination of words in the English Dictionary).

He was assigned to keep the citizens safe and get them out of buildings that were dangerous and into safer zones of the city. When ever Spiderman ‘fought’ with the Avengers, he was always assigned this position. But he didn’t mind. He always slept better not wondering: Hope that guy got out safe because the crazy octopus is going to blow up the building across the city and I didn’t have time to check!

He couldn’t say the same about the other Avengers, but he rather liked his job of crowd control. Put more ease on his anxiety- because being a paranoid person even before the super anxiety (spidey sense=precognition=no surprise birthdays) was probably the worst part of it. Even if the only reason why they made him do it was because they probably didn’t want that kid to get in the
way, you know, avenging.

Even if he did have the least number of casualties and was the least destructive and went on patrol almost every night, and beat up bad guys on most of said nights. The Avengers didn’t do their job unless it was city-wide, world ending, hydra invading, aliens, etc., and that put Peter at ease a little, because despite all the good they do their collateral damage is...well not the best.

He could hardly imagine the Hulk out on patrol. It would be hell for the cities construction crew and Damage Control, but at least it would keep criminals away. Or it might encourage them to make more dangerous weapons, it could go either way really.

If Peter were to really have it his way, he wouldn’t even be fighting with the Avengers period. Don’t get him wrong they’re awesome and amazing heros that save the city - the world - a million times, but the only reason he was even taking orders from them was because of SHIELD(which he really didn’t follow but whatever).

Besides he could never be like them.

Last year after the Goblin attack, Peter had been on his patrol when he was stopped by an agent from SHIELD - wasn’t he supposed to be dead or something, oh well weirder things have happened. He gave a proposition to be an agent, not the same as shipping him off to the army- but that time neither had control of the situation, ‘water under the bridge Phil’- but Peter had declined because he had an identity to keep, plus he gave him the choice to say no - 'see? we’re growing Phillip.’

Turns out they knew nothing about him either, not anymore at least,he’s changed...a lot. He underestimated at what lengths they’d go to get information they didn’t have. The real reason they were there, Peter knew, was because they saw Spiderman as a threat; and Peter Parker was a threat long before that too, just a different kind. So Peter made his own proposition(because he’s nothing if not fair and genuinely nice person): He’d allow SHIELD to monitor and check on his patrols with no interference, he’d even help them if they needed it - because Spiderman always helps - but in anything regards to Peter’s identity or his personal life is under wraps, and he does this on his terms - he’s allowed to say no. Under no circumstances - unless he says so - my his personal information be researched or revealed.

It was the first and last time he would ever formally and seriously -like seriously seriously-recommend something. At least for a while.

When May died, Fury and he had agreed that it wouldn’t do well for either of them for Spidey to
go into the system- besides he had already graduated high school-, and in turn assigned him a ‘babysitter’ of sorts. Except that ‘babysitter’ happened to be a plural and the Avengers.

So it turns out he was a sort of member of the Avengers now. Which was cool, but all they knew was his name and age and that’s it. They didn’t know why he was on mission with them and they didn’t know anything about his past. That’s really all he gave Fury, and he was surprised that’s how much he actually wanted. Or at least, he was surprised he stopped there.

Peter never let his guard down once around him.

He didn’t hear from anyone til’ about a month later, a couple weeks after he’d officially graduated high school. He ended up fighting with the Avengers in Philly. He didn’t really follow orders all that well so he wasn’t assigned to the team as much as he would’ve been, if it had gone well.

After the first few times, he stopped giving reports altogether because they just sounded silly even to him coming out of his own mouth. He couldn’t tell Fury about the “big” stuff he did on patrols and when he wasn’t with SHIELD, cause he’d just send some agents, or worse the Avengers, to go interfere and that would make the situation worse. But to compensate, he always gave information if asked or if relevant.

Turns out they didn’t really care either, about his reports or him. They all had various reactions to him being assigned to the team - none he’d write home about. You know, if he had a home. Or someone to write to. Wade was right, that wasn’t a great analogy. They were all invalid, that’s the point.

He didn’t take well to orders. But not because he was a defiant teenager going against all adults- even if that’s his excuse or that’s what they thought, and he just let them believe that- it’s because he just didn’t agree with the methods used. He got the job done, in probably the most annoying wreckless way possible, but if it was less collateral or an extra child was saved, then it was worth the bad press. And hey, everything always worked out.

It’s probably what annoyed the Avengers the most.

Steve’s reaction was surprised at first. He was assuming it was because of how young he looked. But in the end, he just put on a professional face and accepted the assignment - not kidding that’s what they called him an assignment. He hasn’t been called anything like that since he was six. He ended up yelling at him after the first mission about fighting a monster or something without permission, which okay Captain America I’ll just let this ugly ass insect beat me into the ground while I await further orders. He didn’t actually say that but still.
He decided Cap’s opinion was invalid due to ineffeciancy.

And none of the other Avengers reactions were any better.

Tony took one look at him and scoffed saying something about the itsy bitsy spider is a bit too itsy bitsy for the job. He then proceeded to come up with the most insulting nicknames for him, made cracks about his age and body - I’m small because I’m a kid not health issues short stack- and Peter thought that was just rude. He did his job fine, even if he was a kid. It’s not like a robot cared if he was 15 or 50, it would beat him up just the same.

So Iron Man’s opinion was invalid due to logic.

Natasha had just looked at him and turned back to whatever she was doing. He almost caught this hurt in her eyes, but then realized this was Black Widow, she would never let her emotions slip around a rookie- especially one like him. He could never figure her out, but he could tell she was frustrated that she had to deal with him. She’d also lay into him whenever they did talk, But she really didn’t have to often because Cap seemed to be doing that just fine.

So Black Widow’s opinion was invalid due to ‘I don’t know what she’s really saying and she’s scary. Bye

Clint had a scowl and calculating look in his eye. It was almost haunted or horrified, and it put Peter on the edge most of out of all of them. But then he said that he would be good for stealth ops if he wasn’t so loud. But like he talked over the comms all the freaking time. So that was hypocritical. Plus he had kids so he was biased not to let him fight.

Hawkeye’s opinion was invalid due to bias.

Thor seemed quiet but distraught that he was there. A clear sign of distrust and disgust- or something similar. He had said that a child wouldn’t take their battles seriously, which okay Mr. Thor, but Peter didn’t take anything seriously. And considering most of his personal villains liked to dress up as mechanical animals and throw pumpkin bombs everywhere… well he just had a weird ass spectrum.

Thor’s opinion was invalid due Peter’s fucked up system.

Bruce immediately left the room.

So Bruce’s opinion was disqualified. Hulk was pending.

He really tried not be hurt by it, he honestly did. He got it, he wasn’t thrilled about this either. He’d rather see his childhood heros as something he could never achieve instead of trying to play on the
same level. But he was thrown into this prematurely, like he was thrown into a bunch of other things that messed him up. This would’ve been no different, something to screw him over even more. But this time, the Avengers all had to deal with it, just like him.

They fix things, not screw things up.

Peter was promptly proven wrong.

He was a solo act after all - thank god he kept some of that in his contract deal thingy, he never actually signed anything so he wasn’t sure how this worked. Oral agreement? - he wasn’t good at being a team player, no matter how much he tried he couldn’t think of himself as one.

All he really had to do was listen to them on the field and that’s it, they wouldn’t be a big part of his life and they would dictate too much. Peter wasn’t stupid enough to believe he’d keep all his freedom- he never did- , but if he wanted to avoid conflict it was best to keep his head down and nod. After all they were on the same side, fighting for the same things. Why fight them when the real fight is out there.

How hard could it be?

If you keep fighting the people pulling the triggers, you’ll never get the guy aiming the gun.

And then he heard the orders, and saw a million different ways it could go wrong. And it did, but he didn’t follow the follow-up orders, because he already had a freaking plan in his head, that had too many moving parts for him to explain quickly, and people were dying now. So his goal changed to keeping his head down, to fixing the mistakes and making sure almost everyone comes out alive? Prettypleasedontdiemisterpersonsiritwouldbeappreciatedthankyou!

It annoyed the hell out of them, but he didn’t mean for it to.

He didn’t have to be best friends with them anyways, just cooperate. How hard could it be to be professional?

Apparently very hard when you’re a 15 year-old kid who graduated high school and can’t afford college and have no friends cause they’re either in jail or died...or you just abandoned them cause you didn’t want to see them hurt or dead or gone. But now their gone cause you left them and...Peter didn’t like thinking about it much because, ugh feelings suck! And it elicited too many feelings. So goodbye emotions he should probably deal with but isn’t going to~!
Peter didn’t even know he was looking for a friend or someone to trust, because May still didn’t know about Spiderman- and would never know ohgodshewasdead - and it was all so stressful right now and ugh emotions suck!

He had no one to talk to about it, and no one to report his injuries to or just be there- he used to have May but now he doesn’t causeshekilledherself. He still had those feelings bottled up because May only knew he lost his uncle - that he didn’t care much about anyway, but okay May you love him so I’ll try for you - and his lab partner and the Avengers don’t know - or care - who Gwen Stacy is and the media just knows Spiderman couldn’t save her. He doesn’t have his outlet in which he can vent to and it makes doing the things he does so hard sometimes.

He acknowledged that he needed someone to talk to, and hey, maybe the Avengers were up to it. He wouldn’t go all at once, he had to make sure he could trust them. So he cracked a few jokes over the comm, and got nothing but ‘stay focused’ and ‘stop acting like a kid’ or just groans and sighs. That was a major shut down, because Peter had mainly said jokes to his friends and they always said they were bad but it was never so harsh and it would make them happy anyways.

So since plan A-Y were shot, he just decided to give up and bottle things up like a real protagonist should- ...he missed Ned. No STOP! Feelings are not good! Not now! Wait til’ you’re alone to cry about it, people are dying and buildings are falling. No time for fucking feelings.

He grabbed a kid just as a beam was about to fall on him and landed him near his mother, who hugged the poor child viciously, and check him over and kissed his head repeatingly. Don’t look people are still dying! He thwipped away.

FRIDAY was a good friend to him, which was honestly sad considering she was a computer, AI thingy in Tony Stark’s walls. And he only got to talk to her when he was at the tower and that was only for debriefed.

When he’d first came back to the tower after getting stabbed and stuff on patrol - like more than usual - she’d ask him to inform Tony. He obviously declined immediately. The last thing he needed was for Tony or any of the other Avengers to have a real reason to think he couldn’t handle it cause then they’ll take it away, and at this point Spiderman was literally all he had left to do. It was just a light stabbing; nothing important and he wasn’t really an Avenger so... She then said it was protocall to inform Tony or Bruce if any of the Avengers were hurt, Peter told her to just lie because they didn’t need to know-and he could still walk so that was worth something, right?- but FRIDAY said it’d go against all her programing and that she couldn’t lie to Tony. So Peter decided to overwrite that and basically compromised - and somewhat outsmarted the AI: If any of the Avengers asked if he was hurt she’d tell them the truth, but if and only if they asked. This wasn’t only a way to avoid getting babied but also a way of testing the Avengers to see if they cared.
After all he wasn’t really an Avenger.

He tried not to be disappointed when FRIDAY never said to go to medical about his injuries again. But she did give advice, which was boarderline saying go to medical before you bleed out!

It was all good in the hood.

He intended to avoid the Avengers for personal things outside of missions, and they’d avoid him and for the better part of the year. Not That Peter minded, it worked out for all parties; Avengers aren’t annoyed and Peter gets more freedom than he originally thought. It got to the point where they only saw him after missions. He didn’t even report to Tony or Steve anymore because they slashed that BS immediately - Fury wasn’t surprised.

Nonetheless, when Fury found out- in a terrible act of anti heroism committed on Peters part (he let some bombs go off in a port yard on patrol) - he had yelled at Tony and Steve, as well as mentioning the other Avengers that they were doing a horrible job in keeping the kid in check. Which would’ve been fine, if Fury hadn’t mention all the reasons they were even keeping him in check. Because he was dangerous and a potential threat. He was too naive and childish, but he knew what was out there. Blood and death and abuse and suicide and molestation and rape and death and families being torn apart and human experimentation and death and death and death.

It all ended in death.

And Peter had taken offense to that, after all what did he ever do to them? You know beside be a pain in the ass. He didn’t think that he did anything to warrant that kind of treatment. Well, besides the bomb that killed close to a hundred people- but that was his fault! Or was it? It was his job to make sure they were safe and ohmygoditsyourfaultPeter!

But when he opened his mouth to voice such a complaint, Tony growled ‘Zip it. The adults are talking.’ and that shut his mouth and any ideas of the Avengers being his friends slashed into the ground.

It was all professional.

He went on missions and did as he was told - to an extent, the Avengers and Fury were not the boss of him and he wanted that to be very clear. Because for once in his life he actually got to choose
what happened to him, even if the choices were shit. He didn’t have to answer to anyone. It didn’t dictate his life, but god damn if those condescending looks from his teammates didn’t make him insecure - more so than he already was - then he’d let Tony test his new repulser on him.

‘Okay. Good job team. Let’s go back to the tower.’ he heard Tony say and shot a web at the side of the building and swung back to the tower. He had to debrief and he’d go to Saint Margaret's to sleep on Weasel’s couch before opening hours.

That sounded amazing right now.

OoOoO

Mission debriefing was one of the most insufferable things he’s ever gone through.

And he’s been through a not war in Sudan with a raging knife half wolf mutant and his team of freaky powered people for 4 months. But to be fair the X-men were much more chill with Spidey than the Avengers were.

Sit up Parker

You can’t be that tired

Don’t fall asleep

This wasn’t even concerning him or anything he had to do, he was just here out of courtesy. He didn’t need to be here and frankly he didn’t want to either. It was just Fury droning on about the mission success to the council -which he didn’t even get cause it was straight forward- and they certainly didn’t approve of Peter’s methods of doing things. He’d rather not be glared at by giant disapproving adult heads thankyouverymuch. Sorry if it wasn’t his favorite pastime.

“So what of Parker’s behavior?” here they go again. Peter rolled his eyes, and got a condescending look from Rogers. Well he can just fuck off, because they will say the same thing again. So yeah...fuck off Captain.
“Pard-” Fury didn’t even have time to finish.

“Denied. You’ve made every excuse imaginable, I highly doubt you could find something feasible.” What did I even do? Much to his annoyance the Avengers perked up at this, like come on guys help a Spider out. Adults were just kids with more years on them, ugh.

“Why do you give so much slack. He did not follow any of the protocols SHIELD put in place. Why do you deny him any form of punishment?” Oh...this was new… he looked at Fury who starred one eye back exasperated. Was he not following some sort of important rules? Is he getting if in trouble? If they were important shouldn’t he know about it? Fury read my mind and answer me!

“That goes against the agreement and you know it.” Fury said in a monodrone like he’s been over this a million times before. He has, Peter could testify to that. But not in a way that exposed him like this to Peter. “It’s personal.”

“In discussion of this...agreement… is he not a teenager? Surly his abilities don’t scare you so much you should feel the need to constrain yourself and let him off with free passes.” What the hell. That was new. Were they finally tired of his same old bullshit? Probably.

Well, better step it up then.

“The order is-”


“Stark-”

“Those guys are bitches looking for a weapon they can scapegoat.” Tony’s eyes flickered over to Peter for a second and his breathe caught. Did he just call me a- oh HELL no! ” Nah, Fury I would like you to tell us why you spoil the kid without them breathing down your neck. What makes him so special?”

Years of mutation, human experimentation, enhancements, cross breeding, broken DNA and
trauma. But you can take your pick Stark. Peter thought bitterly. But his origin story checks out to be that of either a superhero or supervillain, plus he’s got the protagonist emotional disorder, so he’s basically a comic book god. His plot armor was too thick for him to not die in one of the most dramatic heroic plot twisting ways possible.

Or he just would keep getting rebooted.

That would suck though.

(come on Marvel give me a break for like a good decade here, see if your franchise can thrive without me) (answer it can’t)

But he wasn’t gonna tell Fury- or anybody for that matter - that. The abridged version, ‘I got bit by a spider and now I’m strong, sticky and can heal.’ and therefore, his plot armor was stripped away...or was that just the protagonist emotional disorder? He’d have to ask Deadpool.

They had no idea about...everything else.

“He’s an asset...my personal asset-” Fury was cut off by Peter’s slow tired words.

“‘M nobody’s asset, n’ you know it Director.” Peter said formally respectful while having that hint of rash disregard.

“Then what are you?” Natasha said in a cold tone, narrowing her eyes.

“I’m not a weapon.”Peter answered with a nod but didn’t look at her directly. Instead looking at Stark with a glare. He returned it with a nonchalant look. I’m a kid! You said so assholes.

“You’re certainly not a soldier though.” Steve pointed out with a slight glare directed at Peter that screamed authority. “You don’t follow orders and don’t bother to show up to half the missions.” Peter shrunk in on himself self consciously, before shrugging again.

“Then what are you?” Natasha said in a cold tone, narrowing her eyes.

“I’m busy.” Just like you’ don’t bother to show up any of the time to half of the other ground breaking problems in this city. Like I don’t know, Taking care of giant rhinos and lizards and octopervs and checking Fury’s sources. Like dude, I can’t be on Avenger standby 24/7.‘I have a life you know.” Ha! No you don’t. Not any more. You gave that up for plot armor. Oh yeah… oh well.
“Getting cats out of trees?” Sam remarked slyly with a smirk, Peter gave a bright smile back. They don’t expect such happy reactions to degrading comments, he loved it when they stumbled over their responses.

“Sure, let’s go with that.” he said and turned to leave. Smirking to himself with their fumbling words, in response to his form of defiance.

“Wait! What’s that supposed to mean?!?” Sam finally asked indigently.

“It means this is the end of our conversation.” Peter said a little more gidy than he anticipated. He threw back a half smile and left.

Well this is gonna be interesting.

OoOoO

It was a sound, screwed up system.

Nick ordered missions and Peter took them.

If he wanted to.

And usually that wouldn’t fit well with the esteemed Director of SHIELD. But Parker was different from other heroes, hell he was different from other people.

He only listened when he wanted to. It really depended on his mood. Fury was getting annoyed with the kid’s behavior about it though.

He got cats out of trees and helped old ladies cross the street. He also kicked a lizard’s ass, a rhino’s ass, a mechanical octopus’s ass and a bunch of random space alien asses and fought shit that came out of the sky. Yet he wouldn’t do reconoscence unless he was bored. But he’d bust his ass making sure a kid didn’t get hit by a passing car. He wouldn’t do data, hacking missions to get information, unless he had a free weekend. Yet he’d be out til’ 3 in the morning in the soaking rain trying to keep a box of kittens dry.
He avoided the Avengers’ missions and when he couldn’t he was a little shit to them just cause he could be. Fury couldn’t blame him for that one though, on some level he was actually amused by it. But then he’d turn around and be painfully polite to the lady at the counter in the coffee shop. Like genuinely polite.

His MO was all over the place and it was frustrating.

What annoyed Fury more is that the kid was damn good at what he did - when he actually did it. Better than any agent he’s ever had. The agents who trained would get their asses kicked by him and Parker knew it too.

He was smart and powerful and strong and way more cunning than he showed. He didn’t show off, he did what needed to be done with the least damage possible in the most efficient time. But he’d laugh and go along with all the insults that were saying he was basically a talentless stupid entitled shithead. Yeah he was all of one of those things; a shithead who could keep so many things about his personal life from the best super spy in the galaxy.

It was fucking terrifying.

Because he did a better job than most of the useless fucks he hired, Fury kept Parker out of trouble with his superiors and had him first on instant dial - he’d never tell the kid that though, because he’d never had anyone on instant dial since the Chitari attack. He’d evaded the CPS so long, and Fury hardly needed to do anything, the kid was damn good at not being found when he didn’t want to be - which was fucking annoying if you were trying to find him.

Fury stood up for his small ass, and said it was because he was a kid. But Fury would be honest when he said that he owed Parker more than the other way around. The kid never mentioned it though. Which put Fury on edge, because you could never tell with that kid. He didn’t like being called ‘asset’ or ‘weapon’, and Fury had no intention of even hinting that he was a soldier - he was the furthest thing from it actually.

Fury couldn’t care less if he was a kid though, that little fucker was just fine on his own. Fury knew it. Peter knew it. But he didn’t act like it. Because everyone else didn’t think that a teenager could take care of themselves in this fucked up world. Fury would rather keep someone as smart, powerful, lethal and cunning as Peter Parker in his reach at all times rather than let him potentially become on the opposite side.
That. That right there. Would not be good...it would be like world ending bad. The child could probably take over the world if he had a free Sunday. Or enough incentive.

He’d also rather keep Peter mass intellect and power and just overall deadliness to himself too. Peter didn’t even need to be told to do it, so Fury thought he had similar thoughts. It would be less of a pain in the ass if no one knew he was a kid and was potentially the most dangerous being in the world. Well maybe not most powerful, but defiantly up there.

But goddamn, the kid was so ominous.

“You can’t walk out like that.” Fury said in the driver's seat.

“It projected power.” Peter said sarcastically from the passenger seat next to him and gestured outward over exaggeratedly. It was at times like these that Fury wondered why he recruited the kid.

“It was immature and childish.” Fury responded, like he would an adult. Peter deserves enough respect from Fury at this point, even if no one shares the same thoughts. “Look kid, I can’t keep covering for your dumbass. So follow orders, or suffer the council next time.” How many times has he said that, only to completely not follow through? Oh yeah:every time.

“They are a bunch of holographic cowards. They can’t even beat up a butterfly, and yet they are a pain in the ass.” Peter grumbled and Fury knew he was just venting a bit, but it seemed more closed off. Peter never insulted anyone in person, but usually he never got angry with anyone either. Not really. Just meaningless banter and empty insults he didn’t mean. He was more of a passive aggressive type of person. Emphasis on the passive.

Shit like that would get literally anyone else in his position killed in an instant.

“So are you.” Fury shot back.

“I know how to fight.” Peter assured with a snort.

“God knows how.” Peter just scoffed at that, but didn’t answer the unasked question. Fury sighed, worth the effort.
“What did I even do this time?” Peter asked in a whine. He looked at Fury with innocent eyes, he knew made Fury’s teeth grind. Fury didn’t know what the kid was trying to play at here but it wouldn’t work. Or was it working for him? Fury could never tell with this kid.

“You didn’t follow orders.” he said simply. Peter groaned and slouched in his chair. If Fury has any sympathy, he’d most defiantly had wasted it in this kid long ago.

“I couldn’t.” Peter muttered, he was annoyed. But he wasn’t trying to hide it, so Fury guessed he was okay with showing him. He sometimes envies Peters ability to switch on and off his emotions as he so chooses.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Fury asked, not looking over at Parker and the kid groaned like a real teenager. He is a real teenager.

“It’s supposed to mean: tell me who their actually pissed at?” Fuck, he forgot this kid actually had more than two brain cells. Parker actually did a better job than anyone could have hoped or gave him credit for. He made all the right calls, but it was at the cost of not answering to the given ones, and he didn’t give a shit as he made them anyway. Still he saved a hell of a lot more people than he would have if he actually followed orders.

“They’re just arrogant, hotheaded entitled bastards, who think their right all the time.” Fury said “And you proved them wrong and embarrassed them.” the boy nodded his head wisely, as if he had enough experience to give wisdom out. He probably did despite being only 15.

“So they value their egos over 15 innocent people’s lives and 3 dogs?” Peter asked and Fury nodded. “Well they can stick their goddamn lectures up their asses then. I don’t give a shit about their damn reputation, or mine for that matter. It can burn in hell for all I care. If I’m can save 18 lives, you know I’m gonna do it. Fuck their egos.”

“You count the dogs?” Fury raised another brow. Not sure weather to reprimand the boy or be amused.

“Fuck yeah!” Peter responded without hesitation. Fury barked a hard laugh.

“Seriously? They can mess you up in ways you never thought possible.” Fury reminded, and god if talking to Peter didn’t remind him of talking to Carol. Everyone was so professional around him,
but never those two. God forbid they ever meet and reek havoc on Fury’s life.

“I’m already messed up in ways that should be impossible.” Peter said and Fury raised an eyebrow. “Look I fight the guy aiming the gun, not shooting it. Less messy and a hell of a lot more easy, plus no trail of red. So yay, extra credit. If I need to kick their ass…” Peter shrugged. Ominous. God Fury didn’t even know what he meant half the time, but at the same time he did. And god fuck, only Peter Parker could do that.

“Just next time don’t do your own shit. Or at least try to follow orders.” this kid was gonna be the death of him and many others, and sometimes Fury thought that was his plan. He seemed all innocent, but then kicks all kinds of ass. He seemed harmless, worthless, loser, but then he saves over 100 people's lives and the body count is less and Manhattan is actually intact, if not a little sticky. He was a fucking genius and no one even knows it, and Fury think he likes to keep it that way, so he had an edge for when people gave up and turned on him.

And god damn was it a killer edge.

“Hey, do you think our stomachs think all potatoes are mashed potatoes?”

The kid was a fucking mastermind.

OoOoO

Thor did not like the spider child.

That’s not to say he did not like children, he in fact quite enjoyed their innocent company. Their eyes were filled with naive wonder and they were excited by the littlest of things. Impressionable and obedient to adolescent orders and requests. Though they scream and cry sometimes, they were cute and a ray of sunshine in the otherwise bleak face of reality. They hadn’t had life break them down, and were blissfully ignorant of the problems and harsh way of the worlds they lived in.

But Parker was not like other children.

He was a child, and though he had the age and characteristics of one, he was joining them on the battlefield. He was facing the harsh world in the face without being prepared enough to do so. He had not seen the real world yet and was not prepared to fight in battles that involved the Avengers because of his naiveness. He’d hold them back with his childish antics, that had no place on the battlefield. Either that, or he’d run when his comrades most relied on him.

He also didn’t light up in wonder like normal children would at certain things, like the presence of the Avengers- he in fact tried to runaway from them. He was snarky and sarcastic. Didn’t follow
authority, or orders, and though it has worked out for him so far and no one got hurt, it still angered
the god, because Parker was getting away with things that he shouldn’t have. The good Captain has
made an effort to set him straight but it has fallen upon deaf ears of the arrogant boy.

He was not at all like young Keener, whom, although sarcastic and snarky, was nearly a year older
and didn’t get into battles directly. Then again young Keener was not enhanced or mutated or had
any form of training outside of the self defense he and his fellow comrades taught. But that was the
issue, young Parker thought he had to use the powers given to him and didn’t know they could be a
burden. He thought this was all fun and games, and it would soon get someone hurt.

Harley was a perfect example of the reason he loved children. He could joke with the Avengers
and listen when they told him to hide. Thor, much like the rest of his fellow Avengers, adored him.
He was smart and helpful when repairing damaged or destroyed gear. He helped and didn’t get
into fights, unlike Parker who only used violence and destruction of enemies as his answer. He had
not lost his innocence as well.

There was something dark though, that frankly scared Thor, inside of Parker. It was the thing that
made him avoid and ignore the young boy instead of reprints him like the captain. He didn’t think
the captain saw it though, because he was sure that Rogers would be afraid of it too, if he did. It
was terrifying to see, especially in a child.

The only reason Thor noticed was because he had seen it in his own brother. The darkness of
seeing something you weren’t supposed to, of being stripped of innocence so young in age. Having
been treated like an outcast and knowing nothing more than that. Watching a scene of happiness
knowing that you will never get the same feelings. That haunted look mirroring from green to
brown eyes was identical to that of his brothers.

His brothers defense mechanism was to act out and try to take over Asgard. Violence was his
answer. Parker’s answer seemed to be humor, which was leagues better than Loki’s but it still
scared him. And annoyed him.

Though different tactics on dealing with it, it was the same problem. The longing look that his
behind that mischievous sparkle. Wanting to be treated as something better.

And maybe that’s the real reason Thor avoided Parker. He reminded him of Loki. Reminded him
of how he failed his brother, and if he tried to console Parker, he’d surely fail the same way. There
were so many things knew he could do differently with his brother, but that is only because he’s
known his brother all his life. He only had just met Parker, and could not change any mistakes that
he may have made. Loki and Peter were only similar in that one sense, not in any other. He
wouldn’t know how to fix young Parker, even if he could.

But instead of feeling remorse to that fact, he felt anger. And he took it out on the young child.

“Uhm, sorry to bother you and all, but we’re landing in like five minutes.” Parker said and his hand
was hovering over Thor’s arm, as if afraid to touch it. Thor’s brow furrowed as he ripped the hand,
maybe a little too harshly, away and Parker stepped back immediately. He did not look deterred or
scared, just looking at him with unreadable eyes.

“You do understand the challenges we will face out there, correct?” He said more than a little
coldly and Parker looked up at him confused. Cocked his head like a small dog, and reminding
Thor of all that stripped innocence. Taunting him with his mistakes. “It’s better to leave before you
get in over your head, especially when comrades of mine are counting on you.” Thor said, stepping
up to Parker, who did move. He wanted to make it clear that a child didn’t belong here. That if anything happened to the people he loved because of the boy’s childish antics, it would be met with harsh and serious consequence, preferably administered by Thor or even Natasha herself. The Black Widow was indeed intimidating, far more than any warrior of Asgard. Peter paused before grinning lopsidedly.

“You count on me? Aw that’s sweet.” The child said lightly and Thor felt his anger flare at the child’s take away.

“This is not a game.” Thor said tightly, trying not to yell. Not to let his anger show, just as Peter was, rather successfully, not letting his fear of this mission show. Parker may be a kid, but surely he at least knew that if he messed up enough, innocent people would be killed.

“Yeah, but like still.” Peter shrugged nonchalantly and Thor picked him up by the back of his collar to have him look at the god directly in his furious eyes. The nonchalance was intolerable at this point. Inappropriate really, because people’s lives were at stake. People that they were trying to protect.

“You must follow orders. You cannot avoid consequence with me. This is not a joyride for your awarded powers.” Thor said lowly Peter looked him directly in the eye. “Although, I don’t even know why you were given such great ability at such a young age. It is unfit for an inexperienced child to have such power and waste it as you do.” Thor continued into his harsh tirade.

“Could you have said that maybe like, 10 years ago? Give the speech and everything?” Peter muttered after a moment, letting something other than his irritating humor come into his voice. It pissed Thor off that he couldn’t distinguish it.

“You don’t understand-”

“Can that lecture. I’ve already heard it.” Peter sighed, letting boredom take over his tone. He was holding something back, because his voice sounded a little too strained to not actually care. “And I wasn’t, how did you put it ‘awarded’? These powers. Things happen. Accidents happen. Where were the Avengers for?” Peter shook his head as he went on to make another point. “I don’t avoid consequences, no one dishes them out. Besides,” Peter then smiled “everything seems to work out in the end.” Thor slammed him down and Parker was caught off balance due to the odd angle and fell to the ground.

“We shall see about that.”

OoOoO

Parker reminded him of his kids.

Clint didn’t want his kids to end up like him. Being a killer, spy and/or agent of SHIELD, for
SHIELD, or even associated with SHIELD. At all. He wanted his kids to be able to trust other people like normal people, and not be paranoid about their family, current and future. He didn’t want them to look over their shoulder and expect danger. He wanted them to be carefree and have fun and live their lives in the daylight and not in the shadows.

Parker was a perfect example of what he never wanted his kids to be. But also everything he wanted his kids to be. That was at the top of things that pissed him off about Peter Parker. In fact, that pissed a lot of people off and he didn’t seem to give a shit that they did, in fact, have shit list specifically for them. He seemed to encourage it, actually.

He was rash, reckless and disobedient. Never followed orders. Went off on his own. Disappeared for days to only come back casually with a smoothie. He was unreliable to the Avengers, and unreliable to probably everyone else in his life. Hell he was probably skipping school for this ‘superhero’ shit, if he even bothered to go at all anymore. He acts like he knows everything, and acts like he too good for somethings, like a teenager- which he fucking is. He doesn’t listen to anyone, and had no regard for safety.

But again, SHIELD couldn’t hold him down. No professional organization could honestly say they controlled Spiderman. He was too hard to even be monitor. That was the only part of Peter that he wanted to be handed down to his kids. The fact that he could come and go as he pleased into SHIELD. Unlike the Avengers, SHIELD couldn’t tell him what to do, just asked if he could do it. Peter could say no to SHIELD. He could piss off just about anyone in that organization and get away with it. And Fury seemed to support that. He seemed fine letting Peter come and go with no warning or permission. And Fury didn’t waste any resources on tracking him down. They never needed to, because they couldn’t give less of a shit about him. Unlike the rest of the world, Parker, and he could not stress this enough, could not be monitored.

It was impossible.

And that probably pissed Clint off more than anything. Clint has never asked questions like Peter did, he never said no to SHIELD. He thought that was a given coming in, no questions asked. And he kicked himself for it later, because this kid came in and had done just that. Said no, disobeyed orders, stood up for himself. He was everything Clint didn’t do because he thought it wasn’t possible.

And Peter Parker is anything but possible.

He was confusing and managed to put almost everyone working with him at risk. He couldn’t even imagine how much trouble Parker’s family - of whom he never talked about, strange - would be in. His loved ones must be in hell trying to reel in this fucking kid who’s ego was so big that it decided to screw everyone in New York over, just because he could.

He’d never tell Peter about his kids...Ever... even if held at gunpoint. Just keep harassing the kid until he left his life for good. Left his team and family alone.

And that’s the thing, he’s still a kid. He acts like he knows what going on, but he doesn’t. Just like every other kid in the world. He doesn’t understand the dangers and he doesn’t get that this world is a harsh cruel place. Spider-Man doesn’t kill, at least that’s what he’s heard from people, not the kid himself. He doesn’t get that death and destruction don’t stop because he decided to become a
It doesn’t just stop when one person that you love dies. It keeps going and it never ends until it kills you too.

“Hey, like four minutes to landing.” Peter grumbled, like a teen who’s just been grounded for staying up past curfew. He’d heard Thor had given him a lecture. Good, that kid needs one.

“Yeah?” Or maybe he needed a few. “So what’s your plan hotshot? Gonna go in there and listen or like guns blazing?” Clint said in a dull tone. And Peter shifted a bit and rolled his eyes.

“Don’t call me hotshot.” he mumbled before saying “And it depends if your plan’s any good.” he shrugged and was about to walk off before Clint grabbed his arm, rather harshly and spun him around. He would not have anyone, especially a spoiled brat, talk to him like that. He needed to be set straight and be actually punished for his attitude. He had to treat adults with respect and not like they aren’t trying to help him. He needed this.

“Like Thor said, this isn’t a game.” Clint said, even as Peter lightly tugged on the grip, he made it tighter and watched a flash of panic go through Peter’s eyes, before determination and another unreadable look flooded it, before continuing. “So you better stop treating it like one. Stop acting like you know everything.”

“I don’t know everything.” Peter admitted, but it didn’t sound like a confession. Clint growled, gripped harder and Peter had a flash of fear in his eyes this time, Clint barley caught it.

“Not listening to orders? Going off to do your own thing? If that’s not true, then tell me kid, why do you act like you’re better than everyone?” Clint’s voice rose in his angry whisper. Venom dripping from every word. The kid didn’t flinch at that as he ripped his arm away, and Clint was sure he used more strength than he meant to, as the older man stumbled back.

“I’m not, asshole.”

OoOoO

The kid wasn’t afraid of him.

That was weird because the only one who wasn’t afraid of him immediately was Tony. He poked him and even mentioned the hulk. But Tony Stark was Tony Stark, he could hardly settle as a good example for young upcoming heroes such as Peter, who also happened to be his own entity the
more Bruce spent time around him. He hardly knew how Harley ended up so responsible, much more responsible than his adoptive father. It was also worrying because he was a goddamn kid who didn’t know what kind of dangers he was in when around Bruce or the Hulk. Or maybe he did, as Bruce said, Peter was turning out to be an unpredictable anomaly.

Every other Avenger was careful around Bruce for the first few months of being a team. Eventually they were just as carefree with him as Tony was. But Peter? He was not afraid of him. Sure he didn’t talk much to the kid personally, but when he did the boy seemed pretty happy to talk to him. The only reason that they didn’t talk much was because Bruce was afraid that he was going to hurt Peter. Physically, that is. He wasn’t so attached to him that he could actually do any mental or psychological harm, and even if he could, this was for the best Bruce stayed away anyway. Parker had a way of pushing people’s buttons, and unlike Harley, Peter didn’t have a parental figure that dons a protective suit of armor. Even if Peter did have superpowers, Hulk could crush him in one swing of a fist.

The kid seemed like a good kid at first, He was shy for the first half of their first mission. Kept to himself and they thought he was listening. They were the Avengers afterall, and what kind of kid doesn’t listen to the Avengers. Peter Parker, apparently. Turns out he wasn’t listening, he was just too bored to voice it, then he ended up pissing everyone off. It was more than a little irritating that he never followed orders, and though Bruce didn’t like it, it was nothing the Hulk would come out for. Well that’s probably because he did follow orders, on his own terms.

Pissing people off never seemed like a problem for Peter before. Why would it be, he just stopped car thieves and got cats out of trees. But pissing Bruce or the Hulk off? That was a big danger, to not only Parker but everyone around him as well. But Peter didn’t seem to understand, because he was too naive to. Hulk could kill that child with one finger in no time, and all the kid seemed to be able to do was taunt and tease and again piss Bruce the fuck off!

But there was this weird feeling whenever he talked to Peter. Like the anger he was forcing down to keep down the Hulk vanished. The Hulk wanted to come out whenever he was around, but not out of anger. Which was weird, because the Hulk hated people. Bruce knew he couldn’t afford for the Hulk to come out under any circumstance that didn’t require a code green.

The kid just didn’t see how he was putting everyone in danger by being so careless. Forget just himself, he was being too reckless for the repercussions not to have already been sounded. He was a kid, who thought that everything would work out because he was a minor, that everyone was safe just because he was swinging about in spandex. And yes, while that is part of the job, the other much more important part was to actually help and listen and do what needed to be done so everyone was safe. He needed to know that this was not just a game, and could not be reset if he screwed up.

That this wasn’t training. This wasn’t a drill. There was no redos, retakes, or reset. When people die, they die. They aren’t coming back. And when they died because of him. Because of his mistake. Because of a choice he made- and yes he would have to make those choices eventually. That would eat him up inside, and it would never stop hurting. And it didn’t just affect him. It affected those other people’s families, maybe even more so. Because they didn’t know the names of everyone they saved, and they didn’t know the names of everyone they had let down. That they
had let die. This wasn’t a game, the kid needed to know that.

“Touchdown in 3.” Peter gritted as he stomped in from the other room, in anger, or what seemed to be anger. He was about to stomped away, when Bruce gently grabbed his shoulder and Peter tensed before he whirled at him. “Don’t you dare say anything about following orders I get it.”

So the others talked to him too? That was good. But that only served to piss Peter off more. Which wasn’t good.

“I don’t quite think you do.” Bruce said gently and Peter ripped his arm back and breathed a bit. That was good, that Peter knew how to calm himself down. Bruce knew he wasn’t completely clueless, he had been doing the Spiderman thing long before he was with the Avengers. He just needed to go about it differently, because his old way of quips and thwips wouldn’t work for him forever.

“What do you even care?” Peter mumbled and didn’t look him in the eye. God, that really did make him look like a kid. Like Harley looked whenever he was being a moody teenager, not wanting to leave the lab to do his homework.

“Because things are dangerous out there and the orders are there to keep you safe.” Bruce reminded. Not coming closer, Peter didn’t seem to want to be touched. Which Bruce got, he didn’t figure Parker had an easy life if he ended up where he was standing now. Hopefully he wouldn’t be in the end end.

“That’s not why we’re going on the mission.” he mumbled as a reminder and Bruce sighed. They were going to save other people, true, but...

“Yeah, but you’re a kid.” Bruce said “Just listen, and it will be okay. Try not to piss people off so much.” Peter looked at him with a slightly wounded look before turning and going into the other room. Bruce just barley caught what he mumbled.

“I do try.”

OoOoO

He reminded him of a soldier.

When Steve was young, he wanted to be in the army. He was young and foolish and skinny and
small. He had asthma and couldn’t even walk to school sometimes because he was so sick all the
time. All he ever wanted to do was help people, and prove himself. When he’d finally joined the
army and all that, Steve finally had a chance to actually do that. They didn’t let up in the army
training for him, and gave him the same rough treatment as everyone else. They reprimanded him
more, in fact, and that only pushed him to go harder, even though he was pretty sure they wanted
him to quit. Then he had the opportunity of the serum and could help people even more. And even
more so, when he joined the Avengers.

When he first saw the kid come in, he thought they were one in the same- he actually got a bit
giddy. He thought that the kid had wanted to grow. Though the kid wanted to fight for the greater
good. Thought the kid would listen and push harder to impress. He thought that he was a kid just
trying to help and prove himself.

He was wrong.

The kid didn’t seem to have anything to prove to anyone. He didn’t follow orders, he didn’t push
harder to impress. He seemed to get a kick out of annoying everyone with the fact that he could get
away with anything.

He didn’t want to be a soldier. But all the same, Steve couldn’t help but feel he was witnessing
some sort of shell of the soldier that he could be.

Or the one that he was.

Steve could tell though, without a doubt, he wanted to help people. And oddly, he was. In his own
weird twisted way, he managed to save a bunch of lives. But still, his methods was highly
unorthodox, and inappropriate, so much so that if there was a chart he would be so far off it that
he’d probably end up on Asgard...metaphorically that is (he didn’t think that Thor would even let
him have the options of transporting through the Bifrost). He had all the characteristics of a child
too young to be in a battlefield. Just like Steve had been, but Steve didn’t actually get to fight until
post serum anyway. Probably like Peter, if you substitute a consented monitored experiment with
an unplanned radioactive mishap.

Nonetheless, Steve treated him like a soldier. Because weather he was one or not-and Steve was
almost positive that he was, somehow, and that thought terrified Steve even more- he was fighting
with the Avengers. Under Steve or Tony’s command. He had to listen. He had to follow orders. No
matter what. No matter the stakes. He had to stay in line.

Except he didn’t.
Peter—no matter how many times Steve lectured or Natasha reprimanded or Tony sniped or hell, even Bruce at one point yelled at him—would never, ever follow orders if he didn’t agree with them. That was the most accurate statement, because sometimes he did follow orders, and Steve figured it was going with the plans he never cared to share with anyone but himself, or he was too tired to actually rebel. It didn’t matter the harsh treatment they gave him, because that’s what needed to be done in order to save more lives in his mind. This wasn’t daycare. If the kid wanted to fight, he had to understand he was a small—very small—piece in something much bigger than himself and his own whaky agenda of—what seemed to be—shitting on the Avengers, well, Avenging. He didn’t understand that he was fighting for something bigger.

Because he was just a damn kid. Smaller and younger than Steve ever was.

Then he didn’t show up for a while. And Steve thought that it was okay, he was just on leave. But then Fury was giving them a mission and muttered—or bitched, as Tony so eloquently put it—about how they could’ve used Parker for this mission. Steve had wondered why Fury hadn’t just called him. It took Steve a second to realize that, Parker had actually turned down Fury when he asked for help. To potentially save the world.

That. That right there. Was not okay.

When Parker did eventually come back, bruised to hell and back he might add, Steve had gone off on him. He didn’t let up, because the kid had made a commitment, and he helpfully reminded him of that. The kid was submissive for a while, until he wasn’t and bit back that no, in fact, he was just doing SHIELD a fucking favor. Steve had been confused, and he still was, but the harshness in Parker’s voice when he said, and Steve quotes “Stay in your fucking lane Rogers.”, had Steve never ask him about it again. “If Fury hasn’t already told you, then you don’t need to know. Be a good soldier and march off or whatever.” Was the logical appeal, and Steve left him alone about it. But he didn’t march and made that very known in a grumble as he walked away, eliciting a laugh from Parker that made Steve’s head swirl.

Didn’t stop him from lecturing Parker about the other shit, for lack of better word, he did.

“Two minutes.” Parker said from the doorway, crossing his arms. He shifted from one side to the other, as he waited for Steve to look over. Steve steeled himself staring at the face of a highly uncomfortable looking boy. That was odd, Parker was usually so well trained in his facial expressions.

“Who told you that?” Steve asked. For lack of a better segway into the conversation he was about to have. Peter looked like he knew what was going to happen, but didn’t want it too. He bit the line
anyway.

“Mister Stark.” It was weird how Parker did in fact have enough courtesy to address them by formal names such as Mister and Miss and Captain and Agent, but he never added a sir or ma’am. He never said those things unironically. Only if he was teasing.

Steve didn’t want to do this, it felt wrong on so many levels - because this kind of thing was common sense among the army. Parker wasn’t like other soldiers though. But he was nonetheless, and he shouldn’t act or be treated any differently.

“Sir.” Steve reminded stoically and Peter looked confused for a second. Cocked his head and blinked at him, almost like a confused puppy.

“Pardon me?” he asked. As if he hadn’t believed what he heard, either that or he was just confused at the random word just spoken, or he didn’t expect the conversation to go this way. Honestly neither did Steve.

“Mister Stark, sir’” Steve said for him and stood up to his full length as the look of understanding crossed across Peter’s face. Then a look of anger mixed with something else. He watched the anger slowly seep out of his face and into his eyes, which was terrifying, but Steve could pin the emotion he kept spread throughout his body. And what the ever loving holy fuck, a kid shouldn’t be able to do that!

“I’m not calling you ‘sir’, Captain.” he said snidely, and Steve had to hand it to the boy. He managed to keep most of the anger out of his voice. But the attitude had to drop.

“You will, because you may not be an Avenger yet, but you are fighting with them, and you-” Steve was cut off.

“I’m sorry, what?” Peter said, in a voice that made it sound like he was more disbelieving than mad now. Steve raised a brow for him to explain his interruption. “Whoever said I’m gonna be and Avenger?” Steve sighed. This Kid.

“That’s why Fury had you shadow us-” Steve was getting annoyed with these cut offs. But it was hard to prove Peter Parker wrong, especially when the kid didn’t really prove himself right verbally most of the time. He’s never had to. He was always so irritatingly right all the time. But one day- Steve hoped, and it was a terrible hope- that Parker’s luck would run out.
He didn’t know how ironic that was.

“Ha, that’s not why he had me ‘shadow’ you guys. Cute term by the way.” Peter scoffed and shook his head. Steve flared a little at his arrogance and what he implied.

“Then tell me why you think you’re here?” Steve, in all his wisdom and glory, could not fathom how the child before him could just shrug and throw away all the anger that Steve had seen pooling his eyes before. How could a child have that much control over his emotions? It was scary and worrying and insulting and just not fair. Steve barley had even an ounce of that kind of self control, and Parker, from the looks of it now, seemed to have an endless supply of it.

“Dunno, but it’s not to be an Avenger.” Peter said and Steve opened his mouth as he glared at him. “You don’t get to decide that.” Steve held up his hands in slight surrender.

“You’re right about that, but Fury put you on the team for a reason.” Steve reasoned and Peter nodded.

“You’re right, and if you needed to know, he’d tell you.” Peter said casually and shrugged, and Steve felt his anger flare a bit again, but not at Parker- at least not directly.

“And he told you?” Steve growled at him, in a mocking way. Parker didn’t bite on it though.

“Maybe if you asked him….” Peter said and finally looked at him with a confused almost smug look. “Have you?” he said in a way too sweet to be innocent way. “Ask him, that is.”

Steve shook his head. “You can’t just ask the Director of SHIELD that.” Steve said. “That isn’t what good soldiers do. They don’t ask those kinds of questions.”

“Then I think you’ve answered your own question, Captain.” Peter said stepping in, like he was going to claim Steve’s territory. “What makes you and I different, is that I am not a puppet soldier that puts my head down when I have to.” Peter said snidely and Steve couldn’t help but let his anger stir inside him. He knew Parker was just trying to get under his skin. He knew that the kid was just trying to make him say or do something he’d soon regret. But the way he knew exactly which buttons to push. The way he didn’t hesitate in pushing them. The way Parker was. It was so damn frustrating.
“And what makes you think that you aren’t meant to be treated like a soldier in training?” Steve said suddenly. It was unexpected but didn’t seem to catch Peter off guard. Not in the least, even as he never hesitated to answer.

“Because I’m not.” Peter said and pushed off to step forward to Steve. “And I would rather not be.” he said in the same voice he used to taunt bad guys in. Steve snarled and strided all the way so he was towering over Parker, who only made it two steps in the room and wasn’t moving to claim anymore ground. Staying near the door so he could run out at any given moment. While probably one of the most effective and best strategies for any given situation, Steve only saw a coward and not a scared little kid facing his fears all alone. Because Parker was never scared...right?

“And what’s so bad about it? What goes through your head to make you hate the fact that you’re not just fighting for yourself? What makes you so afraid to be a soldier?” Steve asked, those were all rhetorical, but Parker didn’t answer them like he would have as he kept on glaring up at Steve, seemingly undaunted. “Why do you refuse to be what you are?” Steve had meant that Peter was a soldier weather he liked it or not. And there was so many things that he could have interpreted that one statement as, but weather if it was to make a point or the fact that he just didn’t care or just to genuinely get Steve to shut up about it, he answered the unasked question: “Why don’t you like being a soldier?”

Steve was too angry with the kid to actually process what he had just said, in the moment- the small window of time where his opinion actually counted. But Peter’s answer would later forever haunt Steve:

“Because it sucked the first time.”

OoOoO

‘Follow my lead soldier!’

He was trying.

‘Do exactly as I tell you!’

He was trying.
‘Come here!’

_He was trying!_

Of course in the middle of battle he usually does his own thing. It usually didn’t matter so long as he got the job done. Usually he didn’t care. Usually he wasn’t so scared and mad and confused. Usually he didn’t feel this betrayed and alone. Usually he never felt like he had to prove anything, even to the Avengers,

But now he needed to follow orders. He’d promised Fury he’d at least try not to be a little shit about this. He thought he could do it- he wanted to do it- because the Avengers gave up ordering to do things when it wasn’t absolutely necessary. And if he couldn’t, then you know, no sweat. They usually didn’t care anyway.

Except today apparently.

Today, they wanted to let him know that he was a screw up. Today they wanted to yell and reprimid him about following orders. Today- of all fucking days- they wanted to let him know just how much they didn’t believe in him.

Now he had this weird feeling, a feeling he hadn’t felt since he was 11, that he needed to fucking prove himself to these entitled assholes. He wasn’t a coward. He didn’t think he was better. He knew the dangers. He wasn’t a soldier, not anymore.

_Not anymore!_

So why the fuck did he want to prove to these guys that he wasn’t what they thought he was. Today, the day he was actually trying to be nice and follow orders because Fury had gently - at least for Fury- and politely - at least for Fury- asked him to follow rules. To try. Just this once. And he was doing this because he wanted to, at first. But now it felt like he needed to. And didn’t need to do anything since he had graduated high school.

Cap had given him a specific set of instructions, and they were easy enough to follow. But then Tony decided to ask him to be at the other side of the battlefield and do a completely opposite set of tasks. Then Natasha decided now was a great time to order him around and he was needed elsewhere. It didn’t matter though because they all ended up coming to him. But he had different
things he needed to do, like the original orders, and he kinda just blanked out and skipped to the end.

Getting a little rusty there, huh?

Cap said he needed some monster goblin thingys webbed up, and Tony said he needed the alien goblin thingys beat up. Natasha said she needed the transports they were using, but in the end he only heard one thing.

Beat the bad guys.

And that’s exactly what he did.

Too many orders plus not enough time equaled a panicked spider. Here was his equation: 2O+Ti-1=PS. Logic, or actually no, that wasn’t an equation. But he had no time for balancing god dammit, but that did sound way more nice than this... he’d show his work later, for now he ended up beating them all up and webbing them after and then collecting their transports.

So there, everyone was supposed to be happy.

But they weren’t.

They just kept yelling at him. And his vision was already foggy and he had a bunch of cuts all over him, and everything was too loud…. Oh... oh no.

This was exactly not the right time to have a sensory overload. Absolutely not the right time. Can’t his anxiety suck it up for like 2 seconds here, at least, so he can fucking breathe. Pretty please? It would also help if you stopped yelling at me!

“You didn’t follow my lead! You should’ve webbed those guys up, not all of them.” Steve said in a stern tone looking down at Peter with a painfully hard glare. It reminded him of his old commander, what was his name again? Don’t think about it!

“He was not ready for this.” Something with an S. Stop thinking about it!
“Can’t he just follow, I don’t know one order?” Or a C? You’re going to throw up if you think about it!

“I swear, there are 3 year olds who listen better than you!” Cotn..is? Stop!

“We literally gave you the easiest orders to follow.” Cotn...it Don’t you dare think it!

“If you can’t even manage to follow those, what are you even doing here?” Cotner! That’s it-... oh god.

I told you.

“Are you even listening to us Parker?!” Oh sweety, do you think he can actually hear you over all this white noise? That’s fucking Hi-larious.

But seriously, he was gonna pass out or puke if they didn’t get him out of here like yesterday.

“Yeah, and you can’t just web em like that, if your webs were weaker then they would’ve gotten out.” Tony glared at him and it made him further shrink in on himself. He can’t breathe and it wasn’t the asthma.

Please help.

He’d work on the webbing when he got some fucking chemicals, pending for better chemicals, he had to use cheap high school shit so bare with him. But he worked so hard to make sure they were a strong binding instead of silly string. They carried a full person and all his weight and added force and all the physics stuff. Albeit he was skinny and didn’t weigh as much as he should...

You know what, no, he will not be self deprecating himself over his genius. Everything else about him could go down the garbage, and probably already has, but this? It was the best he could do with the materials he had, and you know what? Fuck you Stark, not everyone was a fucking billionaire, some of us are actually fucking broke, thankyouverymuch. Not everyone inherits their family’s multibillion dollar business. Not everyone can get a fucking job that supports your entire wellbeing, especially if you’re a minor. And not everyone can hold a job, especially when you’re a
fucking superhero. So back off dipshit.

I’m gonna see flashbacks

“I just asked for one transport. Was that so hard?” Natasha was probably the worst and Peter wanted to cry. He really wanted to cry or scream. But instead he just let out a sigh. Crying and screaming wouldn’t do anyone any good but waste time. Maybe it would help him feel better, but it wasn’t worth the hassle. But damn his head hurt and his vision was going blurry, he needed to get out of there cause everything was too loud. But the Avengers were still lecturing, yelling, and putting him down. At this point he could only catch pieces of what they were saying, and even that was working his ass off.

I don’t wanna see flashbacks.

“Can’t even follow simple orders…”

Not there.

“Children should not be on the field….”

I am not there.

“What was Fury thinking bringing an irresponsible little…”

I need to get out!

“I need to go.” Not even realizing that he was cutting Steve off mid sentence because he couldn’t hear him. He wasn’t sure if his voice gave anything away, and right now he didn’t care. He stood up on wobbly legs. He couldn’t hear anything except loud muffles and sirens and screams and cars beeping and skidding and crashes of rubble. It was all too much and he couldn’t be there because it hurt.

He barely managed to shoot a web and stumble in the right direction and swing away.
“Where’s Spider-man?”

Fury more demanded than asked the Avengers. Peter, no matter what he did, rarely skipped debriefing, even if he knew he was going to get yelled at. He only skipped it if he was injured - and in his language that meant any form of unconsciousness, no a stab wound isn’t severe, come on Fury stop asking stupid questions- or if he had other pressing matters to attend to- and that, that right there, is what scared Fury even more than any form of flesh wound the kid could ever acquire.

He sorely hoped it was the former.

“He ditched us after the battle.” Steve grumbled and Fury sighed, here they went again. The kid was going to literally be murdered by Steve Rogers on the accountability for pissing him off to much… that was probably too much to hope for, the kid was too stubborn to die.

“What did he do?” Fury asked already knowing the answer. It was a formality.

“Didn’t follow orders.” everyone said simultaneously and Fury gave a long suffering growl. This was getting tiresome. Why did they even bother trying anymore?

This. *Kid.*

They literally had a talk about this not even 10 hours ago, how the fuck did he manage to screw up this bad?... or maybe he wasn’t the one to screw up...

“Why’d you even want to recruit a snot nosed kid?” Clint said his feet on the table looking like he didn’t care but he did want an explanation. Fury knew Barton enough by this point to know that. Barton never asked questions so when he did it made them worth something, unlike Parker who asked stupid seemingly meaningless questions and got stupidly terrifying answers to almost anything based off that.
“He’s dangerous.” Fury said simply, not answering the question fully. The kid was a hell of a lot more than dangerous. He was lethal, which is a better word for dangerous that describes Peter Parker nearly perfectly.

“You know Fury, that’s the answer we always get.” Tony said and most of the rest of the Avengers looked as if they almost agreed with him for once. Only Parker could make people who were never meant to even meet, agree with each other. “Yeah, sure he’s got some freaky powers, big deal? He’s not trained and he’s a kid.”

“Yeah the kid needs to be monitored, but why not do him like the Defenders. They’re under monitoring but not apart of Avengers Initiative. Why does the kid have to be?” Natasha asked in her own monotone. She cared a lot more about this situation than she let on, but if she could just see Parker’s potential beyond him being a kid, she would jump on him for help with her little… problem.

She just had a thing about child soldiers, but Fury did too. Parker wasn’t a soldier or an asset though. He was free to do as he pleased and sometimes that meant a little treat for Fury to get to monitor him up close, when he agreed to go on Avenger missions.

Fury furrowed his brows and scanned the room for Peter even if he knew he was not there. Something wasn’t adding up. Peter never followed orders before- hell, it was expected- but followed them back for briefing every time, without fail. He always faced the music. He never skipped it and never let anyone else take blame for mistakes he made no matter how severe.

So where was he?

When some of the others looked a bit confused. Fury didn’t answer the questions they were asking. He never did. “Why did he leave? Was he hurt?” that made them all pause. They actually didn’t know if Spider-man was hurt they just yelled at him and Fury wiped a hand over his face. “Find him.” he said in an irritable voice. The Avengers looked as equally annoyed but Tony started typing on his Stark pad anyway. “Wait.” Fury back tacked, how could he think these guys could find him. He obviously ran away from them. So the last people on earth to find him were all standing in this room. “I’ll fucking do it, you can’t.” Stark made an indigent noise.

“What’s that supposed to mean?!” he asked loudly. It means the kid doesn’t want to talk to you guys.

“It means you fucked up.” Fury said honestly and dialed Peter’s phone number to hear it ring 4 times before the kid answered.
“What?” his voice was scratchy and hoarse. Like he’d been strangled. He probably was. It sounded like he was choking down something, like a sob or lump or another emotion, no wait it was probably bile or saliva. Fury didn’t care right now.

“Where. The fuck. Are. you.” Fury sounded irritable as he grounded that out through gritted teeth, as if it would be some filter for his anger.

“Not there.” Peter shot back, like the little shit he was. And then groaned in misery, and no he wasn’t being melodramatic, it actually sounded like the kid was dying a slow and painful death.

Fury plowed on with no empathy to the other voice on the phone.

“Why.” these were statements, not orders. Demands not commands. Peter knew the difference, the Avengers didn’t. It was the only way to get Peter to not completely be an insufferable shit and somewhat corporate...sometimes…if your orders weren’t stupid.

“What do you care?!” He heard one of the Avengers scoff as if that proved a point. He rolled his eyes, just as he heard muffled retching. “Shit.” He looked to the Avengers who were looking at him intently.

“Are you sick?” At that the Avengers all bristled and he heard Peter spit something before groaning again.

“Fuck off.” He muttered but didn’t hang up. It sounded like he had dropped the phone and probably put it on speaker. How did that kid have anything to toss, he barely ate? He couldn’t help but wonder.

“What the hell? Why didn’t you say you were sick you should’ve-“ Fury was cut off by Peters loud moaning. Oh he didn’t want a lecture. He sharply glared at the Avengers who all look mostly annoyed if not a bit guilty.

“I said fuck off, ‘m not sick.” Wow, was the kid really trying to play this game? He just threw up on the phone with the director of SHIELD. Albeit Peter was always unprofessional, titles meant jack shit to him anyway. You could rule the world and he’d still call you out and kick your ass if he needed to. Or wanted to for that matter.
“Kid, I just heard you toss your cookies into wherever you did.” Fury was hoping it was a toilet or sink and not a trash can in a Queens alleyway. Cause no matter what the kid had put him through, he didn’t deserve that.

“Yeah, but I ain’t sick.” Peter insisted. He sounded tired now, not so irritable. Unlike Fury. Who was about to explode with impending anger.

“If you aren’t sick then-“ Fury’s eye twitched in irritation as the kid casually cut him off again. As he seemed to do so many times, and not give any shits in the world about it.

“Fury, I said it twice and I’ll say it one more time, Fuck off.” Peter said pointedly. And it must have been bad, whatever it was that was going on with him, to call him Fury. You know without the sarcasm. Fury dropped it because he didn’t know how to voice any question that related to the topic now. He hated how Parker could do that.

“Words are powerful. The right ones can make or break a person.”

“Where’d you here that?”

“...A friend.”

“Fine” Fury sighed, deciding to move on “Then wanna explain why you ran off instead of telling the Avengers you were gonna puke?” It was met with irritable grumbling At the snipe. Fury heard someone’s muffled voice in the background but it wasn’t Parker’s. He couldn’t make out anything else than there was another person wherever he was. Parker decided to answer him quickly, but not out of fear, more out of wanting to get the hell away from this conversation as possible.

“I tried what you said. It was the worst experience I’ve ever had the pleasure of participating in. So thanks for that, you delusional bastard. I feel like shit. Fuck off into the hellhole you come from and leave me alone. Have a terrific day!” The call ended before he could ask any questions and Fury slid a hand down his face. The Avengers hadn’t heard the conversation and frankly he wished they had. Just so he could see what he had to deal with, when they were making it difficult for the kid.

At this point, he honestly couldn’t blame the kid. His words exaggerate a lot, but his actions always tell the truth. They fucked up this time, Peter did the thing that would save the most people and got
yelled at for it. No wonder he was always trying to get out of group missions and not following orders. He’d always take the best course of action even if it meant doing it the hard way and alone.

“What happened?” Steve asked like the good Captain of a team of superheroes and super assholes he was. Or at least, that was what he was supposed to be.

“He was sick.” Fury sighed and Steve immediately straightened “and it takes a lot to make him sick.” He said pointedly. Steve then deflated.

“Enhanced metabolism?” Bruce asked under his breath, Fury ignored the question that the scientist surly had by now and was turning around in his brain. Figuring tons of equations Fury hadn’t even known existed nor did he care existed.

“We didn’t notice he was sick, he seemed fine on the plane ride over.” Tony mumbled, his forehead pinched in confusion.

“Maybe he was faking it?” Clint suggested “We were lecturing him, maybe he just used it as excuse to leave and not pay the consequences.” Clint shrugged and Thor bristled in what seemed to be anger. Fury better shut down that train of thought because it probably wasn’t true. And he didn’t need the Avengers going on an all out war with a teenage spider kid. It would be embarrassing when they lost.

“Tell that to the kid who was throwing up on the phone and insisting he wasn’t sick.” Fury said in a deadpan and Clint looked disappointed while Thor visibly calmed down. Those little-

“If he doesn’t think he’s sick, then why did he leave?” Natasha growled. It didn’t add up, she was right. Maybe he just needed space? You know to feel better and then come back. But it didn’t sound like he was coming back anytime soon. Definitely not for debrief.

“Do you all wanna be watched as you toss your cookies?” Fury asked with a raised brow and nobody answered so he continued “What were the orders he didn’t follow?” Fury asked the group, he was gonna get to the fucking bottom of this.

“He webbed all the baddies up with just his webs. We said to incapacitate them, not shoot them with silly string.” Clint answered and Fury had to do a double take. Did he just hear that right? The kid followed orders and they yelled at him.
“You’re all idiots.” he laughed but not with humor. “Those webs have the tensile strength to lift 10 planes and then some. Their not breaking anytime soon.” Fury slid his hand down his face again and stopped at his mouth. “God, he’s never following orders again. If he’s gonna just get yelled at for doing it and yelled at for not doing it. Oh my god, you’ve officially found a way to make this worse. He’s never gonna listen again.” He mumbled to himself hysterically. It was silent for a moment.

“Shit!”
Okay wow! All your comments are soooo super nice, it inspired me to edit on my trip on my phone. When I got home at two I spent 5 hours finishing this chapter up and now it's coming to y'all day earlier than I anticipated!!

I didn't think the was my best work, per say, the next few chapters are a bit hard to write, so they'll come out slower. Chapter 3 is going to be quite the doozy to edit, so I'll get that one out much slower, and I'm having trouble with the last bit of chapter 4, but after that Chapters 5 and 6 are mostly written and bits of the following chapters are also written except for the end stuff, so it should be pretty smooth sailing from there.

ALSO TRIGGER WARNINGS: I did mention like the actual US civil war and slavery that happened in that time, so don't mean to offend anyone! (but don't worry they apologize)

Also warning, the swearing really picks up in this chapter, but mostly in thoughts.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Chapter 2-This is My Arena**

Peter found the devil in his trash.

The guy was trying to get out of a fucking dumpster and head three bullet holes in his shoulder. Now Peter had seen a lot of weird shit when doing this particular chore of throwing away previous used, and currently unusable items, but this is like 6th place. Peter wasn’t gonna leave him like an asshole, no matter how many people accused him to be.

He met Wade Wilson long before Deadpool was even a concept- actually deadpool was never a concept, it kinda just happened. They’d always gotten into fights and those were the most irritating, yet amusing fights he’s ever been in. Every fight with Wade or Deadpool was like that.

Deadpool met Daredevil eventually, but Peter never knew how and they weren’t telling. Wade and Peter were literally banned from teaming up by the fucking government, but no one ever said SPidey and DP couldn’t have a friendly...unaliveing session. And obviously the more the merrier and these guys were scumbags so hell yeah you can bash their heads in Double D. No one could stop them when they didn’t know who they were. They all teamed up once … at least that was how it was supposed to go.
Obviously, like most shit in Peter’s life, it didn’t go according to how it was supposed to be.

They formed Team Red, a group of mentally unstable assholes who don’t give a single shit about society or their laws. Or anything really. Not even personal problems- in fact they just laughed at their own depression, and refused any sort of therapy. They generally annoyed the shit out of anyone and everyone who came into cross paths with them because of their past that they couldn’t let go of. The past that tied itself to them and wouldn’t let go no matter how hard they ran from it, but they wouldn’t know because they’ve never tried to outrun the darkness that slowly swallows them up and pushes everyone they love away from them. It was a toxic unhealthy environment that they created for themselves, and Peter should probably get the fuck out of it.

It was the best thing to happen to him.

Matt was blind lawyer and Wade was scarred mercenary, or “bounty hunter” when cops or any legal people were around and he was in his street clothes- but those were very particular cases, cause honestly no one wanted to fuck with him or talk to him just by his face alone (and Peter has blatantly mentioned to Matt that he looked like an old avocado after it got shitted out, but only when Wade was in earshot). That’s what he knew. He didn’t associate their names with their faces. He associated their names with their real life shit and problems. And they probably did so with him too.

Peter preferred Team Red over the Avengers.

They bitched about their problems without giving or getting any meaningful solutions that would end in all parties happy permanently. In fact their solutions encouraged grudge holding and drinking it away until they forgot about it and then in the morning didn’t care about it because they got hangovers (Peter never participated in the alcholism, but he did enjoy it when Matt and Wade got drunk and allowed himself to forget about his problems by watching their misery).

They didn’t give him orders, they just threw sticks- and bullets and webs and knives and sometimes sledgehammers very occasionally a beam, maybe a bomb or two, but like small bombs, but mostly glitter and sticks of every material they weren’t picky- at the bad guys and watched the aftermath. Usually it ended in the guys hitting back which lead to one of them punching back and then they were knocked out, but sometimes Wade punched with his katanas- they are fucking swords Wade, but whatever floats your boat man- and they kinda...died? Unalive? Stopped breathing permanently? But it was okay, because Peter did that sometimes too, and he always dropped their bodies in the Hudson in five different places all of which were not where they actually killed the guy- he had a fucking reputation man, unlike Wade who could just leave the body there, lucky bastard (but sometimes when Peter was too tired, he’d just blame it on Wade and he didn’t care that Wilson got the street cred as long as Parker got to sleep).
They fought with little to no communication about battle strategy, and a hell of a lot of talking about literally anything else. They were always way more violent than they needed to be, Peter noticed he was more aggressive with them around. But it’s almost like they monitored each other. That they wouldn’t get too aggressive that they would kill someone by beating them to death - they weren’t fans of prolonged death unless completely necessary- but also they wouldn’t judge each other and they could let loose, way more than when they were alone or around other people. It was a place for Peter to get all his aggression out- and he never told anyone that because it would ruin it. There was always blood- waaaay too much blood for Peter’s usual taste- and Peter minded it a lot less with them around. He thought it was because they talked too much to notice it. Almost like sweeping all their problems under a rug.

Matt always said he wore red so that people wouldn’t know he was bleeding. Wade said it was because he didn’t wanna deal with the stains. Peter saw the logic in each of those probably messed up, but nonetheless accurate- because stains were a pain you had to buy like ten tide pods to get them out, and Wade thought that was a waste of a perfectly good snack- perspectives and told them he wore red because it was the cheapest thing on the rack. They nodded wisely and understandingly to that.

Team Red had only one plan of action:

Just beat them up.

That’s all.

No orders or being told how to do things in a specifically specific and tedious and boring as fuck way, so long as they got the job done they were all good. No plans or protocols, cause plans usually went to shit within the first twenty seconds, and protocols not working were the reason they were doing this shit in the first place. They were totally off the books. Handled things not even the cops could dirty their hands with because of said plans and protocols going to shit, as previously mentioned.

They didn’t have this untouchable hierarchy that Peter had to meet the standards for. They weren’t arrogant bastards who took the law into their own hands either. They were just people who saw messed up shit in their past and wanted to beat up people like that because they were A.) mad and wanted to take some sort of revenge B.)had a burst of angelic happening and suddenly want to do what was right(But those were like adrenaline shots and soon wore out after one job that happened out of pure kindness- suffice to say Peter got those the most) or C.) they were just fucking bored and they all - well two thirds of them, Matt had a fucking day job (ugh, successful people, am I right?)- had nothing to do all day.
Team Red was the only time he was really himself around people. He felt most relaxed fighting with them because he could use the technique he grew up on - the ones with guns and fighting dirty and hacking so he could make kittens replace their files. Even though sometimes it got fucking weird. Like the time DP made him hack into the speakers in a bad guy base just for him to play a Lady Gaga Essentials playlist, and sing along to really off key even if it blew their cover. Or the time Red threw two sticks at him and told him to ‘hit me as hard as you fucking can.’ even though he knew he had super strength and could probably kill him, because even though Red was fucking awesome, he wasn’t enhanced like he or Wade were.

Suicidal bastards.

He fucking loved it.

He got good at reading them.

If Matt was punching bad guys ten times harder and literally nearly killing them, then he was having a mediocre day. If he was slamming them against the wall and kicking them in the balls over and over and over and then proceeding to almost kill them, then he was having a good day.

Matt on a bad day was scary. Even for Peter.

If Wade was joking around constantly while shooting people in the head and slicing their bodies in half it was a good day. If he was talking to the voices in his head and the bad guys at the same time before turning them inside out, it was a mediocre day.

Wade on a bad day was scary. Even for Peter.

Peter was proud of himself because he could figure them out, and they literally were the hardest people in the world to be figured out. But he also kind of hated Team Red, cause they could read him too, and Matt was a fucking lie detector and Wade just somehow knew. He didn’t like that, but they never talked to him if he was having a bad day, if he was having a bad day and didn’t want to talk about it, they would just stay the hell away from him.

They were shit at dealing with emotions, but very aware of them. It fucking sucked. Because some emotions hurt and others were just too big and they took up too much space and sometimes it made it hard to breathe.
“Who shoved a stick up your fine ass?” DP said from behind him where he was waiting for them to all gather on a rooftop. It was always a rooftop. Wade had said they should be called the rooftop pals, Matt said it sounded like a Magic Tree House rip off. Peter responded by reciting the entire first book by memory to punish Wade who had never read the Magic Tree House because he lived in fucking Canada. Wade had responded that Peter was a fucking audio book and Matt agreed that audio books were the best kind of books. Peter had said that Matt’s opinion was invalid due to the fact that he was blind and told them that audiobooks weren’t actual books but go off, I guess.

“The Avengers suck.” Peter said in a huff. That was obvious. He shouldn’t have been so broad cause he actually wanted to talk about this with them, if only to hear them roast the Avengers because it would make him feel better.

“Foggy wouldn’t shut up about how you did a good job.” Red said and Peter groaned. That’s not what he wanted. He didn’t know how to deal with compliments and Matt knew it too, hell Matt had the same problem. And when Peter didn’t know how to deal with something he either threw it or ran away from it. Unless it was a math problem, but he always knew how to deal with those.

“Yet they yell at me! I don’t do what they tell them and they call me a brat, and when I do they yell at me! I just want to be able to do what I need to, it’s not like I’ve fucked up so drastically that it was irreversible.” Peter vented and crossed his arms, taking them back on track. Wade fucking laughed, that asshole.

Team Red was the only place he could act like the kid he was. No judgement, no scolding, no serious babying (they’d always make fun of his age, but they never actually meant any of the stuff they said), no lectures. Because Wade, and Matt on some level, acted just as childishly. It was a fucking sanctuary.

“So he does have teenage rebellion in him. Atta boy, I knew you could do it!” DP called out and Peter huffed again. Damn right he did, they just didn’t know said teenage rebellion wasn’t just to spite the Avengers but to save this damn city from their ignorance. Yeah, he thought it. Sue him. He didn’t see the Avengers: Earth’s mightiest heroes out here breaking up debt crippling drug and sex trafficking. It might not be immediate world ending, but it sure was destroying these people’s lives...wait that was serious, backtrack backtrack!

“It’s our fault for not restricting him, and now he’s a true brat who thinks he gets everything he wants.” Red said sarcastically and Peter nodded. Now they were getting it, this is exactly why he came to Wade and Matt. They got him.

“Damn straight it’s your faults. I don’t like being told how to do my job, thank you very much.” Peter said as a matter of factly. He felt a little better.
“Good always remember you’re manners.” DP said coming up next to him to sit down, Red on his other side. There was silence for a while, and then Peter heard police sirens and sighed.

“I wanna quit so bad.” Peter mumbled and Red barked out a harsh laugh.

“Same.”

“Mood!”

…

“We’re all fucking idiots.”

“Wanna go kick some ass?”

“Hell yeah!”

OoOoO

16 years earlier…

The Red Room was cold.

Both physically and emotionally. Washed Out white walls that were in desperate need of a repaint, but no one said anything about that part, because aside from the meaningless peeling paint, there wasn’t a speck of dirt. Not one single blemish in the routine. There was no time to even look at the wall, much less care about it. It was a soul sucking place if you even had a soul, though usually you didn’t coming in. You usually didn’t have a choice in that part either though. And there was only one way to come out.

At least, that’s what they told her.
It was no place for love. The kids who grew up there knew nothing of it and the adults who did scoffed at the concept. Discipline. Work. Death. There was no room for trivial things such as love and affection. But that was a given, you were never taught that. It was supposed to be common sense, because in a place like this, how could one maintain love of all things.

Natasha was indifferent to the concept. She didn’t bother with it or try to understand it. It was something that just existed and she’d never be able to obtain it, that was all she knew. She didn’t care though, it seemed useless to her anyway. She genuinely thought it was just a trivial meaningless fluke and gave it no other thoughts.

Until she experienced it.

She then knew how horrible it was. It was terrible, nothing to scoff at but to be warned about. It was dangerous, more dangerous than any weapon even feasible to man. It was soothing and lulled you into a false sense of security. Ripped out your heart in a million different ways and stitched it back together wrong, it was excruciating. Yet it was addicting. The pain was like a drug she couldn’t get enough of. And like all drugs, she was sure it was slowly killing her inside.

Yet she still didn’t seem to care.

The first time Natasha experienced love is what one would call a phase. At least that’s what the director had called it when she found out. That was what she dubbed it for a whole 3 weeks after she was banned from seeing her lover ever again. After Madame B, her director and tormentor as she’d soon realize, had been pissed and tortured Natasha 10 ways to hell.

She was supposed to be the Black Widow. This was supposed to be her mission, her first in fact with her having such a title. A title she’d been working to all her life. A title she screwed people over in 15 different way. A title she had poured her blood, sweat and tears (when she was younger, the Black Widow doesn’t cry) for. Something she knew she’d never screw up. Something she couldn’t screw up.

Yet she did. All because of that useless, excruciatingly painful emotion.

Love had been her downfall, because she underestimated its power.

It was no excuse, Natasha was weak against it. She hadn’t been prepared, and that wasn’t on the Director or the trainers she’d killed. It was solely on herself, she owned up to it. But she would
never be more powerful than love, it just didn’t seem possible.

It started on a joint mission between the Red Room and Hydra. She didn’t remember the mission, only her partner. That probably was a problem, but she never was too worried about it. Her Partner was caught under the same deadly trance she was, so she could barely blame him for not being as strong as the haze.

Before then she was the top student in the red room, if there had been any respect to students she would most certainly have it before that mission. Her partner was an enhanced American soldier who she knew nothing else more than what she was told. Turns out they weren’t lying when they said that he knew just as much as her. He didn’t even know his own name.

They both only knew his mission. Their mission.

It lasted months. Months of staying in close proximity to one another. Months of training in secret in deep dark forests under the moonlight and starless skies. Months of sharing one small dirty room with only one bed. Months of fighting, eating and living together. They were never apart for more than 3 hours. By week 3 they were nearly inseparable, whereas the weeks before they’d want their own space.

At first they didn’t talk much, just clarification on the mission given. You never knew who could be listening. Slowly throughout their training sessions under the moonlight in the forests they started talking in short bursts. Commenting on a punch, scoffing at a missed kick. Never was so much emotion displayed, and it surprised them both. Neither of them were talkers, and even if they were they didn’t have much to talk about. Their lives were pretty straight forward, at least her’s was. They had no dreams, their superiors made sure to crush any of those early on in their trainings. They had no preferences, as they were soldiers and soldiers don’t complain about trivial things that do not compromise the mission. Their focus was only their missions. But somehow they managed to do find something to scrounge up, hidden deep within the recess of their minds. A real genuine preference, and not a persona created to lure enemies into a false trap.

They took comfort in each others words and presence. Natasha has never been this close to another human being and she found the times when he was away to be so lonely. It was stupid. But that feeling of emptiness was almost too much for her to bare alone.

She hated the feeling. Even if she was used to it, it was never like this. Never amplified to this magnitude. She had been trained to be independent on other people, especially men. She could take care of herself and her feminine woes were just a ruse to trick enemies into a false sense of security.
Then again she never felt the way she did now around anyone else, including the dull men that flashed briefly in her life.

And apparently he reciprocated the feelings.

It was only once and no one was supposed to find out. How could they? It was just a taste of what love felt like, how could it have been so wrong if it felt so right at the time. If there was no evidence, how could they be blamed?

At least, there was supposed to be no evidence.

The mission ended and he had to go. She hated seeing him leave but said nothing of it as he gave her one last indifferent look when he was escorted out. He had no choice. She was a soldier. She had no attachments.

At least, that was how it was supposed to be.

The feeling of loneliness ate her more than anything. It was more painful than the worst torture. She was sure it was a form of torture. Torture that ripped her heart and gnawed on her insides. Torture that made it feel like she couldn’t breathe sometimes. She begged her emotions to stop killing her. She vowed never to love again, but it didn’t go away. It just dulled overtime, and even when dulled it was more painful to think about. She never wanted to love another being so long as she lived.

Then she started to get sick.

OoOoO

Present…

They didn’t apologize the next time Peter was with them.

Peter just got a text on his beat up, cracked, untraceable burner phone (ha, in your face Nick, he’s Gen Z the superior in every way in technology generation, who used the greatest creation of all mankind for memes) from Fury saying that they needed help downtown.
He rolled his eyes and patched in his comm. Even if he really shouldn’t do this. Even if he wasn’t ready to see the Avengers, much less think of them with getting a wave of nausea and panic. But… people needed help, and Peter would be damned if he let the fucking *Avengers* break down his self esteem so much he couldn’t help.

So fuck it.

But did Fury always have to tell him so fucking late? He knew he probably would’ve shown up anyways, he probably would have if he weren’t swinging on the other side of New York with his earbuds in, looking specifically away from the giant squid monster attacking Manhattan. He just had to finish this one mugger off with a little note and gift wrapped in webs for the cops. He made a bow and everything, he even went to get new sharpies, so he was going to take his time breaking this one out. It was fluorescent purple, can you believe it? They had that! And Wade had already called dibs on the pink that came with it, but Peter didn’t know why Wade would need it. Whenever Deadpool left a note, usually to Peter and Matt if he wasn’t home to feed his cat, he left it in bright red crayon, and not the stupid cheap Craze-Art shit, no deadpool was a hardened serious man, he was ex special forces and he had been through the worst kind of hell to get his powers, he used fucking Crayola dammit.

But if Peter were here to talk about the proper purchasing of children’s school supplies he’d be here all day with this mugger dude who was about to knife this poor woman. One life saving emergency at a time please. Aliens will just have to get in line, thank you for shopping *Le Beat Down De Spidey*, have a nice day.

He didn’t say anything to them as he joined the fray and they didn’t notice he was there until he kicked a mini squid (whom was created out of the mommy squids suction thingy, like talk about independent labor but gross) from nearly killing Falcon by laser shooting him (seriously? When can squids laser shoot with their fucking tentacles?) and said “Welcome to Chiles!”. Sam’s surprised face was priceless and he laughed at it. That’s why he wore the mask, because they couldn’t see his facial expressions and look like a fucking idiot. - he says as he trapezes in with his bright red and blue spandex.

*Pretend like nothing ever happened.*

“*Spiderman?”*

*Pretend like you’re okay.*
“Hey kid.”

Like you always do.

“What’s up?”

“Yeah sorry I’m late. Fury didn’t send the e-vite in time.” He said, a bit too quickly but he didn’t care. They seemed weird too, much more gentle than last time. Maybe Fury told them about your tender tummy. He growled at the voice snickering, but not enough so that the Avengers could pick it up on the comm. “I think I was on an auxiliary guest list.” He and that voice are going to have words. Then he might have words with Fury too, he wasn’t some whiny kid who got bent out of shape cause of a bad day.

It had just been... a lot that day.

“About time.” Natasha said. Ahhh, there was the judgy voice of grown up lecture, yeah missed you there for a second. Welcome back to reality bitch. He honestly didn’t want a lecture, he just wanted to mute the comms and continue with his day. But at least they weren’t pitying him. Or at least Black Widow wasn’t. He could always count on her for a consistent message of ‘I hate you’.

“Flank left.” There were more mini squidy that-is-not-proper-squid-birth-procedure-but-go-off-i-guess thingies on the right. Goddammit, they couldn’t see from down there, and there were still people in the way. They were gonna get hurt, but Peter was gonna get yelled at. Peter went right, obviously. His logic was flawless: fuck it. He was gonna get yelled at anyway, if last time was anything to go by. He shouldn’t change his whole dynamic that he had going on with the Avengers. That was like a one night stand kind of thing, not that Peter knew what a one night stand really was, not intimately. But he didn’t know what sex was like romantically and you know consensually. Okay, he was way too pumped on adrenaline for this conversation to be happening with himself, the point was: listening to the Avengers against his better judgement was a one time thing. One and done. That’s all those ungrateful bastards got.

That’s what Fury wants you to think rationally not out of spite, go left. Listen to them.

…

Yeah, so...go right, right?
Heh, homonyms.

“What the hell!”

“Not again.”

“Stupid kid, the fight’s this way.”

No it’s not. Peter rolled his eyes, as he connected his foot with a squishy sploching-he believes the proper term is ‘squelch’- sound so it made a loud noise for emphasis- even if icky black ink went everywhere, gross! He heard muffles and growls and groans and smiled to himself at the chaos he had caused.

“Mmmmm watcha saaayy~”

“Tell us next time!”

Peter couldn’t really find it in himself to give a single shit about the Avenger’s preferences.

All felt right with the world once more.

OoOoO

Fury didn’t go easy on him, like the Avengers.

Fucking bastard didn’t have enough of a soul to feel guilty. He was perpetually pissed and irritated. Those were his only two emotions, Peter would bet all his money (no he wouldn’t he was much more responsible than that, he’d bet all his monopoly money) that those were the only two emotions Fury had ever experienced. Ever. It was a cycle. Peter sometimes wonders how fucked up your life had to be to get that way. Peter had asked and Fury had stormed away irritably. It was truly inspiring.

But as much as he looked up to the old grump and aspired to be as get-off-my-lawn-y as Nicholas J
Fury, he would never, in the history of *ever* give him his secrets.

“Saw your work with Deadpool and Daredevil yesterday.” Fury started off and Peter just kept a blank face. A face that said ‘we are really doing this’, come on Nick, at least *try* to be subtle about it. Peter was actually surprised he had the balls to even touch this subject, especially after all that shit that happened not even three days ago. He wasn’t gonna out his team, or at least the closest thing he’s got to one. The preferred term was ‘band/bunch/gang/cult/what-have-you of assholes’ but that was just a recommendation. They also were considered ‘bastards’.

“They are unstable assholes.” he gave a grin and balanced on the balls of his feet. “And as long as they don’t wanna see you, you ain’t seein’ them.” he laughed at their confused faces, but Peter didn’t know why they were confused. He may have jumbled the words up, but he thinks he was pretty straight forward. He was never good on delivery.

“Yet...you fight with them?” Clint asked with a quirked a suspiciously suspicious brow. What did they care who he hung out with in his free time anyway, it wasn’t like they were his goddamn guardians.

“Deadpool kills.” Natasha started with a bit of venom in her tone. *Bold of you to assume we all don’t kill.*

“And isn’t Daredevil a bit violent?” Tony asked, but Peter could tell by the tone of his voice he was in fact stating as well.

*Well shit.*

Whomst the fuck did they think they were to judge? It’s not like this is a peaceful line of work, in fact the Avengers were only known for hitting their problems into the ground so hard they’d never see the light of day and *not* being good at negotiating any other way, shape or form. They had a freaking Hulk for crying out loud and they weren’t afraid to use him to destroy the city at a pin drop –even if Peter thought he was one of the most valid of all the Avengers, and yes that included Bruce *separately*– and he didn’t think that was an orthodox or civil debating method, but it sure as hell worked. So what if a few people died, yeah sure it’s not ideal but if they were bad guys it should at least soften the blow. Plus at least they wouldn’t hurt anyone else. And it's not like Peter didn’t feel a shot ton of guilt on his shoulders afterward.

“Yeah.” Peter shrugged. Fury sighed like it was the millionth time. He knew prying information out of Peter was impossible, or at least he *should* know that. Peter may not have been known for his interrogation techniques, but he did make his tormentor’s lives hell when he was interrogated.
It was cute how Nick tried though.

“Why?” he asked very demandingly and tiredly. Peter didn’t like the tone, but smiled regardless. Knowing he wouldn’t give anything away.

“Gonna have to be more specific on that one.” Peter said lightly and Friy groaned and rubbed his temples in annoyance.

“For the love of all things holy-“ Fury muttered to himself as Peter’s smile grew “Why do you fight with them?” He said in a voice that was very specific, Peter would’ve complimented him on it, but he choose not to and give Fury this one. He just hoped that Fury knows he could’ve been a hell of a lot more annoying and this was an offering of god send and pity - and mostly because he was way too tired to actually keep this conversation going on for a while.

“They don’t tell me what to do.” he stated like it was obvious, in his ,what he liked to call, ‘teenager voice’. It elicited the typical kind of response he’d expect from responsible people like the Avengers and the thing Peter thrived off of. Exasperation and annoyance.

You know the good stuff.

“I bet you love that.” Cap grumbled and Peter barked out an unexpected but not unwarranted laugh, cause he actually got Captain America annoyed with him. This was fucking amazing. MJ would be so proud of him-...

If she was here. Shut up.

“Yeah, I do.” he laughed, ignoring his voices and gross emotions. Steve growled and Peter tried to stifle his giggles and focus on the fact that he was in the present and forget about his past. Pretending works. “I got you mad. Holy shit, like I haven’t done that to you yet. Everyone else? Yeah, sure they’re easy. But you? This is amazing.”

“Parker!” Fury barked and Peter choked on his laugh and stood on alert snapping his head to Fury. Way to suck the fun out of it, Nick. He deflated.

“Yeah, erm...sorry... but like... there was this guy and he stole something.” Peter mumbled and rubbed the back of his neck nervously. Evading was one of his specialties, but when that wouldn’t
work (ie when a bunch of scary Avengers were getting pissed off at him and he didn’t feel like fighting them) he could always be elusive. Fury was actually really good at taking a hint and dropping the subject, letting him figure it out on his own. Trusting him. Which was stupid, he’d let Nick down eventually. It was just a matter of time. But Peter always managed to get out of situations far more dangerous or worse than whatever Nick thought of before. He always got the job done, no matter who or what he was working with, even if it was all by himself. Especially when by himself.

Not this time apparently.

*It was a matter of time.*

“What?” Fury grounded out, prying everything out of him was a pain, he knew. It’s why Fury didn’t do it often. And Peter gave kudos that he’d stuck it or this long without murdering him. But Peter wondered why he was doing it now. It’s very hard to be *this* annoying, Nick, please appreciate the effort. Condolences include, *dropping the fucking conversation.*

“Kids...from Afghanistan…” Peter said in a quick mumble, he didn’t know why he was self conscious about it. Or maybe he did, it was because he’d handled these kind of things a million and twenty two times before and Fury never said anything before, and there was literally no reason he should now.

*Except for puking when you were on the phone with him.*

“Kids?” Fury asked like he was saying ‘really?’ And okay, maybe ‘stealing kids’ is a bit of a big problem and *maybe* that was just a weird way to say kidnapping, but he wasn’t entirely wrong. And he wasn’t lying. He didn’t look at any of the Avengers reaction, instead Peter looked Fury dead in the eye as everyone stood up straighter.

“And their puppies…” Fury looked down right murderous at the addition. He wasn’t sure if it was because of the situation or how Peter made it sound like it wasn’t a big deal.

“Again with the fucking dogs?!-” Fury said like he couldn’t believe how blatant Peter was with this. But the novelty of child trafficking (which Peter did *not* tell them about) had worn off Peter long ago. Probably when he himself was basically trafficked because he wasn’t found in America but in Russia.
“They were puppies! Small children dogs and they were mutts and they were soooo cute! Rottweiler and German Shepherd, I’m like 95% sure! A kid even let me pet one, and then guess what? I got to pet it! It was the best thing I’ve done in my entire life!” Peter said emphasizing his point by waving his arms up and down and ending in a satisfied cross and nodded his head approvingly. Like he just stated the most amazing reason to live.

To him, it probably was.

No, it was. Most definitely 100 percent was.

“Oh so your superhero criteria was met?” Fury said in an heavily sarcastic voice, now that he knew everyone got out okay (Peter was honestly insulted that Fury ever doubted he would let those kids and dogs down) that was not meant to be answered back to. Parker answered anyway.

“Yes!”

God this kid!

OoOoO

15 years earlier…

Love worked her way into life again.

But instead of a ruthless man with no clue about his past, it came in the form of a mini version of said man. Needless to say, the director was furious upon seeing her child.

Even as Her honor and respect was stripped. Even as she was looked on in disgust. Even as her child (she had a fucking kid, oh my god she was a mother). She couldn’t find it in herself to care.

She never had a choice before, to have a child or not. In fact upon imitation as a Black Widow- as the black widow- she was opposed to be sterilized. She was going to be, after her vital mission. Nd when they found out she was pregnant she was supposed to get an abortion. But she argued - stupidly set herself up, and fucking argued with her superior about a dumb mistake she made- that she never had disobey anything she was told to do before. Anything to keep her child- she had no idea why she wanted to keep the kid, she didn’t even know what a mother does. The director looked
affronted and just as astonished as she was when she spoke out, the disgusted looks turned to shock then turned to sneers.

She couldn’t care less about what they thought, in light of what her lover and her child thought - oh my god what would her child think of her. Not when she was looking at her baby. A baby made by love. Her love. A child made by warm love and not by cold necessity. Something that she thought was impossible. For her at least.

Pytor Romonov

The director wanted to get rid of it, of him. She had glared and held the child close to her chest and refused to give him up, even as her boss made to grab him right from her hands. She would not let him go, not as she did with her partner. She would beg this time if she had to, and Natasha has never begged a second in her life. Not even thought about it. But she was willing to cast all her beliefs for this tiny human being that she had created.

Her son.

That was when the doctor dared - stupidly, probably just a little more stupid than her - to speak out. Telling the director that he could be used, be trained and used for the red room. It was after all, the biological child of two enhanced individuals. That hasn’t been tested before that any of them know of. He could be the first child that grew up on all pillars in the red room, no outside connections. No other purpose except be loyal to the red room.

The doctor didn’t do out of the kindness of his heart. His yellow teeth smiled when the director approved albeit reluctantly. He did it because he was sick and wanted to run tests. Wanted to strap him to a cold metal table and experiment on him. Wanted to cut open her child and dissect him like a frog.

She thanked that doctor once.

They trained her like a dog after that. Tedious and demeaning things that were meant for the children, but cranked up to a level where it would be taxing. Not stopping and relentless. She barely had time to breathe, and sweat was her constant companion. They beat her and worked her and tortured her body over and over.

But at the end of the night, when dawn was just peeking over and she was sent to sleep for a few
hours. That was when she finally go to see him, her precious baby Petya, she’d do it again. It was worth it.

He was worth it.

The next three years of watching him grow and walk and speak in the three different languages she taught him. He watched her train but did Not fight, not yet. Her child was smart, smarter than most children, and quiet. And even if he was still a toddler he’d already developed a personality, one that wasn’t cold or heartless, but warm and compassionate.

She knew that the first night she came in and he was awake and reaching for her, at first she thought he wanted something, but his diaper was clean and all he wanted was for her to lay down with him and cuddle.

It melted her heart and made her love him more, and she didn’t think that was possible.

He progressed much faster and adapted much quicker to his lessons than any of them thought he would. For that she was grateful. The director was somewhat pleased.

She loved her little Petya. With everything she had.

He made it easy to love.

And then that love was ripped away by cold heartless hands. The same heartless hands that ripped his father away. In a cruel twist of fate and a decision just as sudden as Natasha’s love for her son.

The worst part wasn’t that she could fight back, because she had tried. The worst part was how she couldn’t fight. How She could do nothing but watch as she was strapped to the chair and watched them knock Pytor out and carry him to she not know where.

She was again experience of the worst feeling in the world as for the second time in her life, Natasha cried for the first time since she could remember. She hadn’t done enough to keep her love and let it slip through her fingers again.
She hated love. She hated it so much.

OoOoO

Present…

Natasha didn’t not like the kid.

He wasn’t a bad kid at all. Snarky and a little sassy, but not a bad kid- those were probably the funniest traits about him, and she has always had a thing about deceiving looks. In fact he seemed more sweet than anything, the Avengers just happen to be on his bad side all the time, or at least when he was incredibly tired - seriously kid should get some sleep. But if you help old ladies cross the street with your super abilities, and go out of your way to get a cat out of a tree, how bad can you possibly be?

She knew she was off putting to him. She snapped at him, though not as much as Steve did, whenever he got too close. She was keeping him at arms distance, because he was 15 and had no business being around this kind of shit. Though he got that a lot, but only because it was true. Even so she could tell he was sick of it, no matter how much he tried to ignore it or roll with it or make it seem like it didn’t get to it. A good defense mechanism that she wished she had when she was younger too, but it didn’t make it any less annoying. It must have been especially so when he was reprimanded for doing a good job. She was getting annoyed with it a little too.

But…he reminded her of Petya a little. Even their names were similar.

Petya would’ve been 15 too…

She thought that she had to keep him at arm’s length, because as she said before, the kid had more than two brain cells. He was perceptive, way more than he let on. It’s not like he tried to hide it, but he didn’t necessarily advertise it. It also wasn’t obvious with him. So she reprimanded him more than he deserved, because she was playing the same game as him:

Pretending nothing is wrong.

Sometimes she wondered if Petya was Peter would he be using his powers for good? Or would he be using them for HYDRA? Would he kill people like she did, or would he try to save as many people as Peter? Would he do the right thing, even if it meant he disobeyed orders? Would he be free to choose what he wanted to do?
The more Natasha thought about it, the more like Peter she wanted Petya to be. She wanted her child to be exactly like Peter, but that wasn’t fair. What if Petya was lost, or different. She would love Petya anyway, but when she imagined him, she imagined Peter.

Maybe it was the name. Or maybe it was the superpowers or mysterious background. She didn’t know, because she didn’t feel like this when she had met Harley. But she knew things about Harley. She never dig into Peter’s past, even if she could find anything out she wouldn’t want to. Because the less she knew about Peter the more she could pretend he was Petya.

Then she got so mad, because Peter wasn’t Petya, but some maternal thing inside of her didn’t want Peter to get hurt either. Because Peter was perfect, she didn’t know how Petya would be yet, but she knew he’d be perfect too. That Petya would expose Peter’s flaws and free her from the cage that was Peter Parker. She could go on and find out about his entire life and pick it apart just like she was supposed to.

For now, she’d get mad at herself for not letting herself get attached to the boy. It also meant she had to prove it too, by being mean and cold. Not helping him when he seemed like a kicked puppy, and if she found an opportunity, kicking him even more. It was messed up logic, twisted so it made sense but the longer she thought about it, the more her head would hurt. The more regret and remorse she would feel because Peter was just a kid. He wasn’t supposed to know where child traffickers did the most business or murderers laid low or super villains evil layers were. But he did, and somehow it seemed like too much for him to put Natasha’s weird emotions about her probably dead son on top of all of that. He already seemed to hate his own emotions, why would she want to deal with hers?

She didn’t like it. She knew what she was about to do. Peter has had a lot of things piled on top of him lately and Natasha can see it, he doesn’t sleep and he is getting skinnier and slouching more. His quips are a smidge too dry and his timing is all off. He’s tired and doesn’t need anymore stress. But she had to do it.

“You should have reported it. Human trafficking is way too dangerous for you.” Natasha sneered. He reminded her of what she lost, somewhere inside of her she knew it was unfair and unnecessarily cruel to Parker. She’s glad Peter is as strong as he is. He didn’t deserve the hate that was boiling inside of her. Somehow it was easier to take it out on him, maybe because she knew he can take it and won’t be offended. Somehow he never got so offended. Or maybe he was offended, but he was very understanding. She had seen him take Steve’s heat about fucking seatbelts because the Captain was having a bad day. But she didn’t think the same method applied to favors. She really didn’t want to owe him, not when she already owed him so much, but she would do it anyway.
Fury had sent her to the docks to deal with a situation, but when she got there, the police were there and Social Services too. The guns were scattered everywhere and the dealers were... webbed. Anger boiled up inside of her, for the kid to be so reckless when she needed him. He was going to ruin everything. He couldn’t die. Not with Petya still missing.

She found Spider-Man on a rooftop exactly 1000 meters away, on top of a roof where the police couldn’t see him but he could see them. His suit was a bit scrunched and dirty, but he looked otherwise unharmed. Just a little tired. He was probably more tired and banged up than he let on. Natasha had to force herself not to care. Peter had to take care of himself if he was going to live in the world he wanted to.

But what if he doesn’t want to.

He noticed her as soon as she stepped on the roof though. Snapping his head toward her, mask still in place. Her hands were on her hips. He looked confused as to why she was here. She looked like she wanted an explanation. And to get rid of that stupid mask, it was harder to read him with it on.

“Can I help you?” he asked as he looked up, not bothering standing up. His voice was a bit out of breath and wheezy. But otherwise gave nothing away. She didn’t mean to get so frustrated with him.

“Why are you so-” she groaned into her hand and he laughed and took off the mask. His face was pale and eyes tired, but they held a childish amusement in them. He contrasted himself with his actions and words and Natasha didn’t know which one was genuine most of the time. It always alternated.

“Insufferable?” he asked with mirth as he turned to face her. She glared at his sly smile, he analyzed her for a minute, mischievous sparkle never leaving his eyes. Any other person would’ve missed the tense in his shoulders, as if he already knew what she was going to ask “I have a theory about you.” He said instead of following through with his hunch. Natasha could tell he was letting this play out.

Way more than two brain cells. Smart kid.

“I don’t want to hear it.” she said not amusedly. She was trying to ask a professional favor here, but at the same time, she needed this conversation to play out his way. Remind herself that he was a
kid and he needed *some* control if he wasn’t going to half ass this.

“I think you do.” he said, his tone dropping the lightness in it. It wasn’t that much of a contrast as she had thought it would be. “I think you don’t hate me, like you try to.” Peter said and cocked his head at her “and for the life of me, I can’t figure out why you do that.”

“I don’t try to hate you.” Natasha said astounded but at the same time not that surprised. She let herself feel a little bad at the kicked puppy look he flashed across his face before it settled into a neutral look.

“Yes you do.” he said like it wasn’t a big deal, but a little sadness and disappointment leaked into his voice. It made something in her chest constrict painfully. “I remind you of someone, don’t I?” he asked more in a mumble. She felt like she’d been punched in the stomach.

“No yo-”

“Yes I do. It took me a while to figure it out, but I know I do.” he said jumping up and walking over the the ledge. Her eyes followed his back. She let herself analyze him, it didn’t take her long to figure out he had this conversation before. He had lost someone like this before. He understood that he would never understand what her pain was like, and it was honestly more comforting than if he *did* know what she felt like. At the same time it was the most heartbreaking thing she’s ever seen. He just seemed so...tired of it. “And isn’t it weird that you remind me of someone too?” he asked. That caught her a bit off guard.

“You’re crossing a line, asshole.” she growled out, she hadn’t meant to be so mean to him, but she doesn’t know how to feel about what he said. He looked back with large brown eyes, widening in something only a child could muster.

“So I am right!” he said with a little laugh, it made her mad because this was supposed to be serious. “If I wasn’t there would be no line to cross!” There was silence on the rooftop for a while. This conversation was progressing too fast, but she didn’t know the proper way to bring up *help me find my lost son that you remind me of even though I’ve never met him*.

Natasha shifted and he gestured for her to sit next to him. She approached slowly but confidently and sat next him but didn’t look at his face. More silence as the sun went down and the sky was a burnt orange. Until he spoke again. “Did you not like the person I remind you of?” He said it softly, gently. Not carefully, but comfortingly. Reminding her that he wasn’t the same person she wanted him to be. She didn’t answer for a while. She didn’t think she would, until she did.
“No, I loved him with everything I had.” she answered honestly. He nodded, but didn’t face her. “How about you?” it was only fair that he answer her honestly, after she did.

“I don’t know. I don’t think I hated her.” Peter said, and seemed like he was contemplating how to explain it. Or he just didn’t know how to explain it. It was okay if he didn’t, because she didn’t know how to explain hers either. She didn’t expect him to continue, but he did. “No, I’m sure I didn’t. I can’t remember her all the way, but I think… I was too young to remember her face, but I think it was my mom.” Peter whispered. Natasha snapped her head toward him, Peter shrunk in on himself almost self consciously, something he never let himself do. He looked guilty like he shouldn’t have said that, he probably shouldn’t have, but he did look lighter somehow. Then he started to stutter with fire red blush painted across his cheeks. “Oh my god, Ms. Romanov. I’m sorry. That was—that was weird. I—I know your not my mom, but like—”

“You remind me of my son.” she said, and didn’t know why she didn’t hide the small smile as his mouth clamped shut and he looked at her with that confused puppy look again. She didn’t know why she said it. She wasn’t supposed to say it. Not like that anyway. She made sure her face gave nothing away, but she couldn’t find it in herself to regret it.

“You—You’re son?” he whispered in a hoarse voice more to himself, almost as if it was painful to say. He was calculating whether or not that had been in something he read or heard or something. He was working something out in his head but kept coming up blank because he seemed confused. She expected questions. He didn’t ask them though. She was oddly grateful for that. “I won’t tell anyone.” he said instead. If she could be anymore grateful to the kid, she would be. She didn’t even have to threaten him to keep his mouth shut. He knew exactly the right thing to say. He didn’t owe her a damn thing and yet he was keeping this, something if their roles were reversed in a weird way she wouldn’t hesitate to expose him for.

He also seemed to understand her request, though he didn’t nod or make any indication that he knew what she was going to ask. Somehow he knew what she wanted and somehow she knew he was fully invested in this.

If anyone could find Petya, it was Peter Parker.

OoOoO

Harley Keener was Tony Stark’s adopted son.
Peter knew that. Everyone knew that. You’d have to live in Antarctica not to know that. Peter didn’t like keeping up with superhero news anymore, it was kinda useless now that he worked with them - he wasn’t actually one of them - because he could always get it faster with hacking- because no way in hell they would tell a ‘stupid kid’ all their deep dark and dirty secrets. Plus tabloids never had anything good to say about him when he did come up. He didn’t need the extra negativity. If he needed to know something, he’d know it soon enough. Simple as that. Peter never went digging for information that he didn’t know he needed.

But that doesn’t mean that Peter doesn’t have a mental file of Harley Keener. No way in hell would he ever write this shit down. And the only reason he made a mental file for him, was because he wasn’t a superhero but a kid and a big target.

The things he knew about Harley Keener before meeting Harley Keener states as:

- Harley Keener had saved Ironman with the Mandarin thing.
- Harley Keener had a sister, who had went with his mother god knows where, leaving him behind in his little shack in Rose Hill Tennessee (this is why you don’t live in the fucking country).
- Harley Keener was noted as a kid genius.
- Harley Keener was 8 months older than him.
- Harley Keener started going to Midtown Science and Technology the year after Peter graduated from the same high school.
- Harley Keener’s best friends were Ned Leeds and Michelle Jones, who were interns at Stark industries (Michelle for Pepper Potts and Ned for R&D, they were smart he was so fucking proud of them).
- Harley Keener did not like Pineapple on Pizza( don’t even ask him how he knew that one, it just happened)

Despite knowing all these things, he’d never actually met Harley Keener. Tony was too paranoid or something to bring the kid around the Avengers -or at least him, because the Avengers seemed to adore Harley. But apparently wasn’t too paranoid to talk about him all the time ( was that what a good father sounded like? That seems fucking annoying.). He got that he was a wildcard, and he didn’t really do ‘personal’, especially with the Avengers( Even though it’s been a fucking year, seriously they just need to be adults and suck it the fuck up. Peter has gotten over it ages ago). It made sense that he’d never met Harley, and it would make sense to expect never to meet him because Peter didn’t want to get ‘personal’ with the Avengers.

Until today, apparently.

Fury said he needed something and didn’t trust Peter alone( at least in Avengers Tower, which...okay that’s fair). Then they bumped into Pepper Potts and she fucking beamed at Peter and started talking to him. Like, a normal human. Like with no screaming or yelling. Which was a
surprise, because people usually just ignored him if they didn’t yell at him.

She was nice, and not a lot of people were nice to Peter these days. She asked if he wanted to join the Avengers for dinner, and he didn’t quite know how to respond. It all escalated rather quickly for his liking and he ended up being embarrassed somehow and slipping up that he wasn’t actually planning on eating dinner. He didn’t know how it ducking happened but Fury was having a fucking field day at his fiddling. That asshole.

He ended up going, because he was nice (no shut the fuck up Fury, he he was) despite everything anyone had ever said... ever. Plus he was a little hungry...

Okay, He May or may not have remembered the last time he’d eaten, and he may or may not know that he hadn’t made his shift at Saint Margrets in like forever. Weasel usually wasn’t too picky about good help, Peter would usually just show up work and get paid. There was no schedule, Weasel understood that he didn’t have time for this ‘stable life’ crap but still had to eat somehow. He doubted he could find a job that would pay for food and shit because he was fucking 15.

“Bye kid, have fun.” Peter has never seen Fury look so happy in his life. He was wiggling his fingers and acting like a smug school girl. Peter let his mind replace Fury in a blonde wig and acting like he was in Mean Girls (he and MJ used to love making fun and criticize and compare that movie) and he let that disturbing image entertain him all the way to the common room.

Asshole fucking deserved it.

Peter wasn’t uncomfortable about his body, he in fact knew he was very skinny. And even if he doesn’t prefer people hassling him about what kind of shit he put into his body and how much of said shit he consumed, he didn’t stop eating because those assholes can’t mind their own fucking business. Peter always avoided eating with the Avengers for a very, very good reason and it was not any of those:

They didn’t like him.

They always invited him out of courtesy before, but he never accepted cause he was sure they didn’t want him there. He kept declining and the stopped asking, rather quickly if he does say so himself.

They didn’t want to get close to a reckless vigilante and frankly he didn’t want them to. Although
no one has ever gotten that close. Not even May. He never let them get that close, because he never liked the baggage he had to unpack when they did. It was a hassle to talk about and a hassle to figure out his emotions after they left.

_They always leave._

Plus they’d probably insult and interrogate him. He didn’t like that. And he didn’t want to be yelled at longer than strictly necessary (even though he could just never go on Avengers missions, but he needed _someone_ to yell at him sometimes and May and Ben weren’t alive enough to do it anymore). Cause even if the Avengers didn’t care, they were nosy about unknown entities. Peter was, in fact, one of such unknown entity. He took pride in it _thankyouverymuch._

But Pepper was assertive but nice and no one was ever nice to him. There was no saying no to her. Not that Peter didn’t want to, he just _didn’t want to_. People were always just assertive and mean and told him that he was too young to talk back (how was ratifying your very solid argument ‘ _talking back_ ’ that was just a grown ups BS about being wrong). He also figured Pepper Potts wouldn’t take no for an answer, and he was too tired to deal with much right now.

He’d suck it up for Pepper. He always had exceptions.

_We freaking went over this, Parker._

He knows that but...

The elevator doors opened and he was assaulted with the greasy smell of pizza and cannolis and pasta and soda and wine and alcohol. He wanted to run away, it smelt so good, probably because he was _so hungry_. How did he not notice it was this bad?

Everyone was in sweats and comfortable clothes. Peter was in an oversized sweatshirt with faded letters and his grimy bloody suit was on underneath. His torn, tattered converse barley held together by silver peeling duck tape and his equally tattered bag didn’t stand a chance. Needless to say, he was very out of his element. It was like Pepper took in a stray cat just to feed and throw it back on the street. Actually, that was exactly what this was. He was a fucking spider dammit, not a kitten.

_Weard red to cover the blood._
It was different from how Team Red celebrated big successes. It usually consisted of bad liquor (not that Peter would know he didn’t drink) and bar hopping (he’d eat the fries and laugh at his drunk teammates). Singing bad karaoke when Matt and Wade got drunk enough and then dragging them back to Wade’s flat to crash and maybe watch a movie with too many blankets and pillows.

Suffice to say, it was way different. And Peter preferred it, honestly. It was more… low key and not giving him anxiety about…things (prices, amount of leftover, how much time to get to the port, escape routes, etc.)

“Hey honey.” Tony smiled and walked over with a glass of champagne in his hand. He stopped when he saw Peter hiding behind her a little looking at him with big eyes. The eyes he used when he didn’t know how to feel and wanted someone to tell him what to do, and that didn’t happen often. “What did you bring the bug in for?” Peter felt disappointment and another nasty emotion sink into his bones. He wanted to leave. He had to deal with this in the field, there was no way in hell he was gonna deal with it more than he had to.

*But Pepper is so nice to you…*

...

Fuck!

“Tony,” Pepper said in a way that made even Peter scared and afraid to disobey. “Peter,” he winced at the mention of his emphasized name. ‘it's actually pronounced... ‘ nope we’re not going there. Not now. *Not fucking here.* “is here because you should get to know him. He has been going on missions with you for a little more than a year now, and you know next to nothing about him.”

*Good*. He didn’t want them to. Please don’t ruin this.

Tony scoffed. “He’s like 7, how complicated could he be?” Peter looked slightly affronted, but hunched in on himself anyway. Did this man, this tiny man, just question his origin story? What the actual *fuck?* This was a fucking declaration of war.

*I think I’ve been through enough thank you very much.*
Matt always said he had great manners.

“I’m 15.” he mumbled on instinct and then felt dread run though him as he noticed the tangible silence and felt all eyes on him. God he hadn’t meant to draw attention to that. He hadn’t meant to speak. It was suffocating and he shifted a little, never looking up from in between his converse.

“Great!” Pepper said happily and clapped her hands happily, dispelling some tension. Peter fucking whirled at the topic change and tone. Boy, being nice to was so whack. He couldn’t admit that he liked it, want was a dangerous thing for him to have. “That’s nearly Harley’s age.” Tony actually did cough on his champagne and Pepper plucked it out of his hands and took a sip, like the fucking boss she was. Peter has a bad feeling in his gut.

She wasn’t… no that was her son. She was nice but she would never make him-... no. Would she? .... no...just....no

No!

“Ms.Potts, I don’t think-” Peter timid voice was cut off by Pepper addressing the ceiling. Of course, he didn’t get a say.

You never do.

Peter Parker? Opinions?? Being Valid?? Not in this economy. You know why? Because this economy hated mutants and hated kids and fucking sucked to live in when you are doing blue collar jobs on and off with an enhanced metabolism.

That’s why.

“FRIDAY can you bring Harley down for dinner.” she said sweetly, like venom dipped in honey, and sipped the champagne and looked at Peter with excited eyes. They were almost crazy. Oh god, she did hate him after all. Peter leaned back a little.“You’re gonna love him, although he’s a bit standoffish at first, but I’m sure out two will be good friends.” Peter felt like he was drenched in cold water.

Why even fucking warn him? Why not just throw him at MJ and Ned and reveal his identity? This had bad omens written all over it. This was bad, he had to get out. He already knew who Harley
Keener fucking was. He knows who he is. And if he’s good enough to tough out MJ’s standoffish nature, then he was already awesome. Case closed.

He hadn’t had friends since he’d graduated. He couldn’t. It’s not that he didn’t want them, he fucking had the best friends anyone could ask for. He just didn’t want them dragged into these messes he got himself into. These bloody, red messes with too much death and hurt and wounds and scars and death. So no matter how much they called and texted they’d stop eventually. And they had, well sort of. Ned still texted him sometimes. MJ texted once a month...sometimes.

He always read them, never answered.

He didn’t want a new friend. He couldn’t protect him/her. He didn’t know how. He didn’t have the means necessary to have friends that can’t heal from a gunshot wound in one day. No matter how awesome they are, they weren’t mutants (well Matt wasn’t a real mutant, but he was over 18 so he didn’t count). And even if he did, his enemies knew he was dirt poor, he went out in leggings for fucks sake. If they were using a hostage 9 times out of 10 they were probably gonna kill them anyways because they wanted to hurt him. Not just physically, they wanted to play with mind, wanted to break him in every way possible and then some. He could have all the money in the world and it probably wouldn’t matter.

He couldn’t save them. He knew. He tried. It always ended the same way.

He must have zoned out because he was tapped on the shoulder by none other than Harley Keener, who looked more amused at his sudden shock. He didn’t miss Tony whispering something in his ear as he passed. The boy grinned more. Peter felt himself shrink a little, bad feeling only increasing but his spider sense wasn’t going off.

“Come on Spider boy.” he gestured and Peter followed, hands fiddling with his sleeves and eyes looking anywhere but another human being namely one Harley Keener. Spiderman could do this, Peter Parker couldn’t.

Fuck.

They sat down at the counter and Peter tried to ignore the Avengers burning holes in his back through the corners of their eyes, listening into the conversation he was having instead of theirs. They should fuck off!
“Harley Keener.” the kid smiled. Peter gave a shy smile back as Keener grabbed a slice of pizza. Peter watched, but made no move for his own. “You hungry?” he asked with a quirked brow. Peter was starving. He had an enhanced metabolism so he was never getting enough food. He shook his head anyway. If he was eating then it’d be harder for him to escape. He knew he’d want more food, but he also knew he needed it and this opportunity would never come again for awhile.

Unless you actually make friends.

“I’ll eat when I get back.” Peter mumbled, putting his head in his crossed arms on the table. He just wanted to sleep. Maybe Harley could take a hint, unlike his parents, and actually fuck off.

“Back where?” Harley asked taking a bit of pizza. Peter made to answer, lifted his head and everything, but found he really didn’t have one. Peter thought about it. He didn’t have a set place to call ‘home’ right now. No one would allow a 15 year old to get an apartment by himself, and even so, he didn’t really have your standard paycheck. What he was currently referring to was Matt’s flat. Matt was always home late and up early. He and Wade let Peter crash on their couches sometimes, and let him pilfer food if he really needed to. But Matt barely had any food and all of Wade’s stuff was expired takeout. If he felt too guilty or neither of them were home, it was a storage box or the couch near the Billiards at Saint Margaret's.

“Good question.” Peter decided to say instead. Ominous. Good. Maybe too good. He knew he had to follow up on that sometime. He dropped his head back in his arms and turned his head to face the other boy.

“Where do you live then?” Harley asked. Okay, so apparently not taking a fucking hint was like inherited. It must be contagious, because the Avengers didn’t back off in the staring. Seriously they should mind their own business.

“Queens.” Peter automatically answered. Cause that’s where he grew up. Like really grew up, not white picket fence or anything, but it’s where he met his friends, went to school, had fun and all that childhood shit he should have been doing since he was born or something. He was proud of it. Queens that is. Not of his less than spectacular childhood of hell. Queens May be where he was raised, But it’s not where he’s from. It’s that white room.

It will always be apart of you.
“Rose Hill.” *Yeah, I know. But he doesn’t know that.* “So where do you go to school?” Harley asked. Peter eyes him suspiciously from over his arms.

“These are very standard ‘grown up’ questions.” Peter noted in a suspicious tone and felt the air tense up just like Harley’s shoulders. *Oh, this is their attempt? Wow they really sent in a kid to dig up this kind of stuff.* Peter smiles, okay he’d bite… just a little “kidding.” He said lightly and Harley hugged out a nervous laugh.

“You joke a lot, huh?” Harley almost accused and Peter gave him a dry stare.

“well you ask a lot of questions that I don’t like answering.” Peter shrugged and Harley looked baffled for a minute and Peter smiled into his arm.

“I just asked where you lived and go to school.” Harley huffed and crossed his arms. “It’s not a lot.” Peter smirked into his arm more, Harley was making this way too easy.

“That’s exactly what a child predator would say.” Peter smirk grew at Harley’s growing blush and he felt almost proud of his work. He thought Tony would come and take his kid out of the fray but he didn’t.

“I’m a kid too asshole.” Peter quirked a brow at the profanity. “What?” Peter shrugged.

“I didn’t think kids from a place called Rosefield knew that kind of language.” He said in a wistful tone “but I guess Tennessee was a slave state so I really shouldn’t be surprised.” There was a shocked moment before Harley growled at him.

“You know my friend would dunk your head in this pizza if she heard that.” *I’m not so sure she would. Who the fuck do you think I got it from?* “And you don’t have to be so fucking rude, I’m trying to be nice here!” Harley spat out with venom and Peter smiled a bit more.

“How is stating the fact that your states history in correlation to the country’s, has affected you culture in comparison to your dialect and namesake of your county, rude?” Peter said with a smirk as Harley gaped at him for a moment. Peter rolled his eyes “but sorry if I offended you. That was a very controversial way to bring it up.”

“N-no. It’s…it’s fine… it’s just that hoe she would probably say it too. Sorry for making a big deal
of it.” Harley said and Peter actually blinked at him, too stunned by an apology that was so stupid yet, the first he’s heard in a long time.

“I don’t.” Peter said and Harley cocked his head confused as Peter turned his head to look more seriously at him “I wasn’t really good at...school.” He may have graduated but they didn’t need to know he can’t afford to go to college. That’s how he wanted it to sound like. Plus, ever since the powers, people have made him more anxious and he was anxious to begin with. He didn’t want anymore. But he stayed cause it gave May more time to get college funds, even if he insisted he didn’t want to and could go to college when he saved enough. May wouldn’t take that shit.

He hightailed it as soon as May died.

Sorry.

Harley scoffed. Here it came.

“Well I guess it’s either or.” Harley shrugged and Peter wanted to act smug, but he knew he shouldn’t. He wanted to be mad, because they literally just had an academic debate and Peter defused it immediately. He wasn’t brainy but he wasn’t muscly. He wasn’t either or, not that he was both. He wasn’t neither either. He was everything and nothing. He’s exactly what he needs to be. His doesn’t need those mean girl titles.

“I guess.” he said instead. He ignored Tony’s entitled snort.”What about you?” he asked conversationally. He knew the answer though.” It’s that smart kids school in Manhattan, right?”

“Yeah, Midtown.” Harley said and he saw Tony puff out his chest a little in pride. He wished uncle Ben had done that when he got in on a full ride. May secretly bought him icecream that night, so he had nothing to complain about. And the best part was that she got high after he was supposed to go to sleep and not during the ice cream eating. He had been so proud of her that night.

“That’s a good school. Got any friends?” Yeah, your friends you dork.


“Watch out for Flash.” Peter mumbled absently as he lowered his head back down. Harley did a double take.
“What?” he asked surprised. Peter smiled. *Oops.* At least he said it low enough only for Harley to hear it and not anyone of the Avengers.

“Nothing, just it must be nice to be a school full of nerds, cause like there are no bullies for the nerdy kids.” Peter said and Harley scoffed. Yeah that’s about right. Flash had been tormenting Peter since grade school. Primary school? He thinks it’s called elementary school in America.

“Yeah but there are jerks.” he said back. Peter knew exactly who he was talking about. Flash must’ve moved on to the next kid to get better grades than everyone else. It kinda made him wanna go back and actually punch him like MJ said he would if Flash fucked with him too much.

God he missed them.

“Well there will always be jerks.” Harley scoffed back and looked at his plastic water bottle and Peter continued, never lifting his head and looking exhausted, but he must’ve looked bored. “But they’re just that, jerks, and sometimes they change, just ignore them if they don’t.”

“That what you do?” Harley asked dully and Peter looked up, surprised by the shift in his tone. “Ignore jerks. Like you ignore the Avengers?” *Wow, personal much? Calm down there buckaroo.*

Also, escalation? Where did that even come from?

“Nah, I just ignore everyone. It’s kinda my thing.” Peter waved off ending the topic, this conversation was getting too personal. And his phone buzzed in his pocket. He looked at it. A text from Wade.

*‘Let’s hit some fuckers balls.’* Peter grinned.

“Well, I listen when I feel like it.” he stood up and saluted Harley with a goofy grin. As Harley looked on incredulously. “Sometimes.”

And proceeded to flip out the window.
Wade preferred the term asswipes.

Matt thought it was putting it delicately. Peter couldn’t help but agree, and they promptly dashed the name in favor of *motherfucking* asswipes. And then they collectively agreed adjectives were the best form of grammar and proceeded to blow up a window.

Team Red had a certain expertise, if you will. Said experitise was made into an art form. That art was their profession. There was a lot of ways to say they had a certain set of skills, but the point should’ve gotten across by now. Said set of skills were dubbed reckless, dangerous, hazardous, suicidal, weird, explosive etc. by the general public. Those set of skills were also particularly useful when busting bad guys that the Avengers or police don’t bother with.

The Avengers and police don’t bother with certain things, like trafficking circles. The police were not cut out for it, but big league superheroes couldn’t be bothered with when saving the world. That’s the grey area where vigilantes like Team Red come in. They were the in between parts that nobody cared about but probably should.

They were currently busting a drug trafficking circle, but the only reason they had even got on it’s trail was because a fucking idiot decided to play with some kids in the wrong way to pass the time in between jobs. That poor, sick son of a bitch. He must’ve been from out of town.

When Spidey decided to swoop in ‘all heroically’ - he was *not* a hero, thankyouverymuch, look in the mirror Wade ‘I’m going to save orphans from a burning building’ Wilson- and the guy ran, all the way back to his little hideout, where he was obviously tracked to. Wow he was like a really bad bad guy. Matt actually laughed when Peter told him he didn’t think anyone followed him. Like come on bro, at least *try* to make this challenging.

Peter wouldn’t say it was suspicious though, if there hadn’t been an increase in trafficking, in general and not just drugs that were being trafficked. But the past six months have leaned away from mobsters and now were more into circles like these. He found some ex-mob members joining so quick it was like mobs were out of style now. Wade said they were out like 10 years ago.

Oh well, he couldn’t find any real connections, except for their increase in popularity and honestly Peter’s been going through an existential crisis for the past week and a half. Matt said he should join the club, Wade said that this was his 14th one since he had joined the Avengers. Peter had replied that this one was actually *because* of the Avengers.
By the end of the night, there were TIME and Science Magazines and Newspaper clippings hung up on a wall that were either burned, punctured, soaking, or drawn on by honestly creative colouring; and Peter was so full of ice cream he felt like he had gained 10 pounds (he did regret it in the morning with an awful stomachache). Who said Team Red couldn’t be petty? They were literally the definition of the word.

“And then he just pushed a damn pizza my way and began to insult me. As if I would take it in stride? As if I was entertained by people unironically roasting me? I mean, I can take a good roast, but like a lecture? From a kid barley 8 months older than me? What the actual fuck! ” Peter vented to the criminal he kept punching into the ground. As if he would have any answers. The guy looked up at him dumbly and he looked so stupid Peter actually laughed. “Do you think that this counts as peer advice or just some entitled spoiled kid being stuck up like his dad? No seriously I need an honest opinion, what do you think?” Peter said seriously and half tooth stammered out an answer.

“I-I th-think he is j-just a k-kid try-trying t-to def-defend his fa-fa-father?” he ended the answer on a high note making it sound like a question, and Peter stopped punching him. He blinked behind his mask and his mask reciprocated the action. He then cocked his head. His brain malfunctioned for a second and he needed a jump start.

“Explain…” Peter slammed his perp into the wall, probably harder than he needed to. Why did his chest constrict when he said those words? Those awful, bad breath laced words (like seriously buddy would it kill you to pop a mint or two between shots of heroine)? Was it sourcery? No these guys weren’t that stupid to mess with dark magic. Nor were they smart enough to read English, much less an ancient alphabet that was written in a language from another world/galaxy/universe/dimension (take your pick).

“We-well, did-didn’t St-Stark take him o-off the st-streets? Li-like it w-w-would ma-ma-make se-sen-sense that he w-would w-wanna def-defend h-hi-him.” And that, right there. That was a good point. This scumbag, this disgusting, woman...touching-without-consent scumbag, had a fucking point. Peter didn’t get it from a personal experience standpoint, but he got it from a logical- even though emotions aren’t logical, they are just stupid and they hurt- perspective.

From all those fairytales.

“You’ll never get a family.’

“Huh, never thought of that.” he mumbled in awe. “I mean those weren’t the options, but like option C I guess. I never did make the rules. Thank you. Thy opinion hath been heard.” Peter said
as he knocked the guy out. He then yelled to the other two adults. “Guys! Half tooth here helped me figure it out! I think my existential crisis is over!” *No it’s not.*

Matt scoffed, like the rude shit he was, and then spoke the mother fucking truth “Your life is an existential crisis.”

Then Wade, as the equally rude shit he was as well, spoke another motherfucking truth. “Honey you’ve got a big storm coming.”

Jokes on them though, because Peter already knew that.

OoOoO

“Why would she tell me though?”

“I thought you were smart.” Fury said in a deadpanned tone and Peter groaned and laughed at the same time. It was more of a laugh, if you asked Fury. Like he couldn’t believe what had just came out of Fury’s mouth, or he didn’t agree with it. Disbelieving and not at all fit for the situation.

Honestly this entire conversation was unfit for the situation. They were supposed to be on a stake out for a HYDRA base, they were supposed to be stealthy. Honestly, Fury would’ve preferred Romanov or Coulson, hell even Barton, as a stake out partner. But the Avengers has left on a mission, and Coulson was with his team somewhere. Speaking of which, he had an inhuman, Fury said he’d look more into her and some reliable sources to give tips and advice and maybe even training. So maybe this wouldn’t be as much of a bust as he thought it was going to be.

Parker was reliable(sometimes...okay none of the time, but a reliable *source* is one very good definition for him), and he was a mutant himself. He specializes in picking up clues and going off on a trail with basically a speck of dirt and coming up at the end with a supervillain that had been hiding in the sewers. Plus he had contacts with other unregistered mutants(he wouldn’t give up their names, because despite being loyal, Parker isn’t a snitch and is incredibly loyal). He’d surely know some good sources to help them out.

“That’s your mistake.” Peter said and Fury rolled his eyes. Maybe… he wasn’t such a good idea. I mean he just was the closest mutant to being an Avenger and rejecting them so hard they got pissed off at him. And really, tracking a lizard through New York’s sewer system isn’t *that* hard...right?

...
“You know why Romanov told you.” Fury stated, not looking at Parker “She’s been chasing whispers to find that kid. And you, Parker, are unnaturally good at that.” Peter hummed in confirmation. At least he acknowledged it.

It was true, after all. Peter was good at chasing literal words and finding out about things that were never meant to be found, and weren’t supposed to be found, especially by a teenage punk in tights. Impossible leads, he figured out in mere seconds. His brain worked even faster than Stark or Banner’s head, but instead of using that for just science, he used it practically. Like Fury wished Stark and Banner used their heads. Romanov was right to recruit him to help her find her kid. Parker was an invaluable asset in that department.

“So she wants me to find her son? I don’t mind helping, but she does know I work alone.” Fury grunted. Of course. How could he forget. Parker wasn’t a good team player. He never shared anything he figured out until after the battle had already been won. For someone who talks so much when he does anything and everything, he never spills any information that was actually useful. But Fury knew his talking was most just for distraction. To distract his opponent and throw them off. Not a lot of people could do that while they were fighting, but it seemed to help the kid focus more.

“She just wants you to follow a lead when she finds one.” Fury said in the same tone he has been using all night, still not looking at the kid “And keep to an eye out. You’re more perceptive than most and constantly taking down international gangs.” Fury said casually. “You hear things people normally wouldn’t.” And that was what made Peter was an invaluable source when chasing a lead. He didn’t just know HYDRA stuff, but also stuff from all sorts of organizations and gangs. He had a complete different set of informants that not even Fury could figure out yet. And those informants had a completely different set of information. Romanov was trying to find a different angle, and Peter was a complete 180 from the leads she was currently going off of.

“That’s good. I like a good puzzle.” Peter said sadly, nodding his head in understanding. “So What do you want?” See perceptive. And fucking terrifying.

“What gave it away?” Fury smirked, not looking at Peter and trying to not let him know he was a bit thrown off. Peter hadn’t been looking at him either. Just straight ahead into the dirty polluted water of the Hudson and not at the base next to them of Fury’s side of the car.

“Everything.” Peter giggled (which, what the actual fuck? Like seriously, this kid was supposed to be Spiderman, and he fucking giggled) and turned to him with bright eyes. “Come on spill.” He said bouncing up a few times before propping his head in his hands. Elbows on the dashboard, and bright excited look in his eye, like a schoolgirl that’s talking about gossip (or ‘tea’ as Peter said, or was it ‘t’? He’d never get Peter’s generation sense of humor).

“Do you know any people that are good for mutants?” Fury asked rather bluntly. He knows how it sounds and Peter knew that it meant nothing like he said it. But Peter didn’t call him out on it, because Fury never asked these sort of questions. The kid cocked his head and thought about his answer before he said it.

“Hmm, depends what you want. Do you wanna hide them, protect them, control them...?” Peter asked and finished on a open end with a high note in his voice. When Fury didn’t answer, Peter took a moment longer before he spoke again. Cautiously, though as a serious look crossed his face; that look of realization. He set his hands down and sat up a bit straighter. “Is this about
Coulson’s team?” He didn’t sound at all joking anymore. He sounded dead serious, and that honestly terrified Fury more than the fact he knew about Coulson being alive, nevermind that he had a team and that said team had a mutant on it. Not even the Avengers know Coulson was still walking among them.

“How do you do that?” Fury said through gritted lips, letting frustration prick his tone. He got annoyed because Parker was one of the few people who could read him. And one of the only people who could read him this well. The kid shrugged and looked forward again, calm and casual look taking over his usually amused features.

“Cause you don’t care about that kind of shit. But you do care about Coulson, no matter what you say. Not judging B T dubs.” Peter said in a not snarky or sarcastic but not entirely serious voice. Fury let him talk the rest of the way to answer his question. “Let me guess. One of his crew discovered he/she powers? Having trouble controlling it?” Fury didn’t say anything when he paused and nodded as if he had gotten an answer before he continued “Normally, I would suggest going to Xavier, but he’s not very trusting especially to SHIELD. They’re probably an agent too and I don’t think Coulson wants to lose whomever it is, especially to a school with an extended curriculum. Are they inhuman or mutant?”

“Does it matter?” Peter made an affirmative sound, but didn’t take offense. He must be really serious about this, either that or he really wanted to help this agent. Probably the latter, the kid was like that. ” We believe inhuman.”

“Okay. So powers linked heavily to emotions and memories. My advice? Power dampeners and train with it. It’ll hurt and take a while to get used to. But that’s the safest way. Unless they wanna give her up or get her discovered, then I’d suggest Xavier, but I don’t think SHIELD wants to owe the X-men anything.” Peter said. He didn’t look at Fury, but the air of the conversation was over and Fury confirmed that he had taken his thoughts into consideration.

“Noted.” there was a second of silence and then Peter took off his seat belt.

“There’s our guy.” Peter mumbled as he leaped out of the car to go take this motherfucker down.

Fighting with Parker was always a joy ride on adrenaline. He always managed to get as close as possible without getting hurt. Kid had skills though. Though, those skills weren’t used in any way Fury had ever seen them used. He was flexible but strong. Agile and quick but firm and precise. He would flip like Black Widow and punch like Captain America. He was like those two plus Hawkeye, and Winter Soldier with Iron man’s intellect rolled into one tiny human being that could one day, be the strongest person in the world.

God forbid he ever become a supervillain.

They were intercepting a HYDRA informant. They had to capture and interrogate. Get information by any means necessary.

Fury wasn’t interrogating him.

It was honestly a privilege to watch Peter interrogate someone. It was like Romanov; he made it into an art. Peter never let anyone watch him, except for a select few while he did so. Fury was almost honored that he was one of the few who got to see him work.

Actually Peter was a lot like Romanov. His espionage and control of emotions, were more than a
little unorthodox, but on the same level as the Black Widow. He also fought like her, using flexibility and speed as a default instead of strength. He observed things, could read people like her. Could be stealthy and clever like her. He even spoke over 6 languages- which Fury didn’t know until he did it.

But What really reminded Peter of Natasha, was the interrogation and torture. They made it an art. Beautiful but dangerous. Graceful but vicious. Delicate but painful.

They didn’t start with pain. They gave the victim a chance. One chance. To avoid pain. To speak up. One chance.

Fury has never seen one victim ever take that chance.

Peter knew exactly every person's weak spot without ever having to guess. He knew where it was, and how to poke, slash, or gouge it. One second they were fine, the next in pain far beyond what they could handle. It didn’t escalate, it wasn’t gradual, it was instant.

Parker said it was because he was impatient. Romanov said that was only the beginning. They got the information in exactly 3 minutes and 26 seconds.

A new record.

Chapter End Notes

Yoyoyo, if y'all have any questions comments concerns please ask. My writing might be a bit hard to follow. I'll answer questions best I can.

Also ETA on the next update, will probably be in a week or two, defiantly after end game, so if I don't see y'all before then... well I might be dead or something (jk, I'll finish this story before I die) I'll probably vent then, but everytime I look at my calendar I scream because it's literally a week away.

See ya later, peeps! Happy Egg day!

(also, this one followed my formatting, yay!)
Hello everyone. I just watched Endgame, I've actually had this chapter written for a while. I just feel like I lost a piece of me even posting it, considering the events (no spoilers though). But I was right, my soul was handed back to me while another part of my soul I didn't even know I had was ripped out of me. But I'm not gonna spoil anything.

Anyway, here is a 20,000+ words early as fuck chapter. Ane the only reason I even have it this fast, is because whilst trying not to be spoiled of Endgame I just kept writing then screaming and writing again. I can't take this, and I wasn't even about to post this chapter (if you watched it then you know why I literally was dying copying all of this down). And I'm real sorry, I just feel so depressed and I really shouldn't because, you know what. I'm just gonna stop right there because I'm crying right now. I'm not even kidding, the screen is so fucking blurry.

Anyway, no one spoil endgame in the comments please, that's not nice and I will delete it. Let everyone have a fair chance, hell no one should even mention Endgame here because this story has, and will never have anything to do with Endgame. So please do not compare it to that or anything, thank you.

Also, I think I should have mentioned this in the first chapter, but in this chapter it's especially relevant. POVs are a real big deal in this story and I may not say them but I don't think I'm very subtle about it. The way things are written are written like that for a reason. Just to keep in mind ;)

Also, Also the translations I got from google translate (as all us authors who aren't bilingual do ;) ) SO have fun, the English translations follow directly after though, so it shouldn't break up the story.

Enjoy!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 3- I'm the Black Widow

16 years ago...

“один… два… три”

Shots rang out on the third count. The thick Russian accent bouncing off the bleak walls. A row of girls no older than 15 lined up against the wall, reflecting their perfect picture on the other side of the room, dark shadows casting over their stoic faces, watching as the freshly appointed Black Widow made her final shot to earn the honored title.
The woman watching over on the tall balcony who had been proctoring the test didn’t move one bit, just as she had been when she first came. Never made any motions to indicate the test was over, never writing down the tests progress. If the candidate messed up even a little, the test would be over and the participant would fail. There was no room for even the slightest error in the Red Room.

“Приемлемо, Вдова” (Acceptable, Widow.) she addressed never moving an inch, but her voice rang out as powerful as a tidal wave. The red haired 22 year old lowered her weapon, but didn’t look up nor did she acknowledge the praise.

Praise wasn’t meant to be acknowledged. It was a part of the test. Praise was just a distraction fueling your ego and making one arrogant and overconfident in one’s ability and competence. Praise was just a mean used to seduce an opponent into a false sense of respect and admiration. Praise was a tool to be used against enemies.

The man next to the director did not look pleased. He did not know any better because he was not from the Red Room. He was a potential alliance and if he was to actually, officially be allied with the Red Room, then he would have to know his place. But for now, they allowed the German HYDRA official speak his incompetence. He was allowed to furrowed his brow and speak his feeble concerns to the Director in German.

“Diese Mission ist in unserem Bündnis von entscheidender Bedeutung. Sind Sie sich sicher, dass dies Ihr Kandidat ist?” (This mission is crucial in our alliance, are you positive this is your candidate.) The Director did not humor him with an answer and turned to the large chipped wooden doors at the back of the balcony. The heavy doors opened and the Red haired woman walked straight. She followed the beige halls with flickering lights that grew more ark inbetween the next lighting fixture on the wall with no doors. Passing by the same old wooden normal sized doors to a point where you thought there was no Vega inning or end to them. But lead to a red door that stood out, breaking the dull pattern which continued on the other end of it. That is where she stopped and knocked exactly once before waiting. There was no indication that was visible or heard but after exactly 10 seconds of waiting with her hands behind her back, standing straight as a board, Natalia opened the red door.

The Director was sitting there at her plain desk, no emotion on her face as she stared straight at Natalia, directly in the eye. The man from earlier stood in to the side of the desk his body turned more toward the Director than to to her, he looked at her though threw a bit of a side eye and his expression was a little late to be schooled from his almost angered and irritated expression to a scowling neutral face, that only had a bit more emotion than the Director’s and Natalia’s stoic, solemn expression that have no emotions away. Almost as if they were robots. Then there was a man that hadn’t been in the training room, against the wall that casted shadows over his still figure in grey and black. He had long brown hair and a black mask that covered his mouth, his eyes were as lifeless as Natalia’s as he stood attention, back never touching the wall and his hands at his
Natasha dissected him quickly, as she was expected to do with any and all unknown entities that surrounded her. He was American. Around 24. Closed off, and attentive. He had a Hydra symbol on his clothes. So did the German man.

The Director was talking about alliances and this was a mission room- and not just any mission room; the room where all the higher ups got their missions they were to assign to the Red Rooms assassins and soldiers and the room where the Black Widow got her missions directly. Natasha felt dread pool in her gut, she didn’t like group missions. She was better solo. Other teammates held her back and she was very good at following the Red Room Number One rule:

*Companions are for the weak.*

It was the rule she based her entire life around. She cut off or killed all her connections outside the Red Room. She made herself the number one assassin-*the Black Widow*- in the Red Room. She had no emotional attachments or connections and it made it easier to be lifeless. Easier to make her obey, because all her morals were dashed. It made it easier to kill with no personal attachments.

But on group missions, she had to interact in ways that weren’t deceiving or seducing her target. She had to work *together* with other people. And 99 percent of the time they were more emotional than her. They had connections and wanted to make them with her. She made sure to distance herself as much as possible, stay on guard around them, and never talk to them unless it was to discuss the mission and only if it’s *imperative*. No nonsense, no side conversations, no unnecessary interactions. If they didn’t get the plans on the first time they discussed it, then they would die and Natasha could improvise. She never *ever* depend on anyone else during a mission. *Especially* a team mission. She always assumed they would fail or be incompetent or die. She made auxiliary plans for every scenario she could think of.

“Natalia, you are the newly appointed Black Widow of this Red Room. A sort of congratulations are in order.” the Director said in nearly perfect English accent tonight only slightly with a Russian one (English is a boarder language that was spoken fluently among HYDRA and the Red Room, so she is already supposed to know that she is to speak mostly English on the mission and speak in English when she answered the questions verbally in the briefing room) and she slightly tilted her head in reply, but just to acknowledge the fact, face never showing emotion. The director’s lips formed an amused smile, in display of her control.

The Director was the only person who could show such emotion, she rarely did it. When she did it was to emphasize her anger or displeasement. She nearly *never* showed that she was pleased.
The HYDRA official, on the other hand, was not. And spoke such insolence that defied her director’s decision. Especially for a second time. Natalia was genuinely curious how this man was still alive.

“She is new. She will not be sufficient for this mission. She does not have enough experience in her job well for this—” the German man went on a tirade. His German accent that laced his tone was ugly and thick, she never liked that language. It left a bad taste in her mouth. The Director cut off his venomous flow of words with a harsh slap of a paper to her oak desk. The sound resonated and her smile had completely vanished, a hint of irritation pinching her face in a way that a normal person wouldn’t even notice.

“She is the most obedient and strongest of all our candidates, and was the only one combatant enough to pass the exam on her first try. Natalia is the most acceptable for this mission, for she has never failed a mission assigned by the Red Room before. She will suffice the needs of this mission perfectly.” The director informed the German man never losing her composer, but allowing the heat and authority in her voice assert dominance over him. She then turned back to Natasha. The German man shut up. She looked the fresh Widow in the eyes and held her gaze in a deadly stare as she informed in a voice that threatened that anything less than perfection was unacceptable on a level that would get her severely punished. “You will not fail.” Natalia nodded once and stood straighter as she said:

“Yes, Madam.” In a firm voice that did not show weakness or defiance. It showed promise for what she would do. The Director nodded in approval once before continuing the debrief.

“This mission is a extended mission in Italy through Germany. You will be assassinating delegates that might have future influences on the country, but have none as of now. Your target list will be given to you upon departure.” she said formerly, never breaking her eyes away from the Widow.

Black Widow.

“This mission is also important because beyond assassination and influence, there is alliance that will be maintained if all goes accordingly. You will be partnering with Hydra’s main asset.” the Director said barley gesturing to the soldier with the metal arm. Natasha didn’t take her eyes off the director, she didn’t turn to even glance at the man. She only heard as the man stood to attention by turning toward the Director and stepping away from the shadows and stood a few paces behind her. Locking his hands behind him to show compliance. “It is a partnership that we have been working on for decades. This mission’s success will be the deciding factor. Hydra’s new asset and the Red Room New Black Widow. Don’t mess up.” She warned, her tone suggested this would be something greater than she informed Natalia of. But it was not Natalia’s place to question her director.
She left with the soldier following her. Her next orders did not have to be said. She was to get ready and leave immediately. She got to her quarters quickly but never in a rush and closed the door packing a small beige backpack she acquired from Iraq. She does not have design preferences, the accessory was to only be used as functional and a tool on a mission.

When she walked out of her room, the soldier was standing by her door looking confused as if not knowing what to do, but in a way that he didn’t have any emotions on his face as he stared at the opposite wall blankly. She wanted to scoff, but she kept a neutral face as she made her way to the transports they would be using. Passing him by without a second glance.

He followed compliantly.

OoO

They didn’t talk to each other while traveling.

They didn’t talk on the ride to the airport, in which she drove and he took the front seat. They didn’t talk to each other at checkout, she only talked to the check-in lady at the airport. They didn’t talk on the flight, they sat together while listening to the usual noise of coach seating area. They didn’t talk on the way to the hotel, they walked because it was only a short distance and kept to the shadows and mapped out the surrounding areas for their mission. They didn’t talk at the hotel, as they silently claimed their spots and unpacked.

As soon as they got to the one bed hotel room, she sat on one side of the bed and placed her pack on the floor, claiming the side as her own. They only got one room with one bed to avoid suspicion. It was unsaid that they’d be posing as a couple, not on a honeymoon or anything, just taking a simple vacation. There was no need for couples to request separate rooms or two beds and saying they were coworkers on a business trip was too complicated. No one asked questions this way.

Digging out a pad to show their first assignment of 25. The missions were given on a location based system. There were 25 assignments that unlocked as soon as they were in each city and locked again once they left the designated city. Currently they all were under the incomplete tab, once the assignment was complete they would get a new source of information and the necessities to travel to the next location. She estimated it would take 1 week per kill. That was 25 weeks.

The mission details were very clear, but not giving too much information. Just a name, location,
and time. The way that they had to kill the first target was open ended and there were no building plans so that meant they had to scope it out before they went in.

The Soldier was quiet as he sat on the other side of the bed. Back toward her, sitting straight up. Waiting for orders. It was clear that she would be leading this mission. She didn’t find herself wondering about the mysterious man. She believe the expression went ‘curiosity killed the cat’. It was one of her flaws however, to be maybe too curious about things she believes she has no right to understand. It took a lot of her teenage years to suppress that instinct and still took a lot of self control to keep those thoughts away.

The Asset didn’t try to make an emotional connection to her. It was a bit off putting, but it did make her job not to get attached easier. So she shrugged it off.

They had a mission.

*Week 1.*

He didn’t talk.

She didn’t talk.

The lights Just turned out and they went to sleep on the first night. Both of them slipping into a light, restless sleep. Only inches apart and not touching. They made no noise as they slumbered, and did not move or wake up, as there was no threat.

The next morning they both woke up exactly at 6.

They got ready quickly and went out the door to scope their targets location of his imminent death. They only talked when they needed as to not look suspicious, and it was in codes about the mission. They spoke in Italian.

Natalia was pleasantly surprised when the Asset wasn’t as mindless as she first thought. He gave important input on the plan, that they were apparently expected to make on their own. The more technical things that is. He never said much and she talked only slightly more than him. Only to show him plans and her routes and if he had adjustments he would make them. Then they’d burn the paper to erase all evidence once the plan was solidified.
The target was killed by the end of the week.

**Week 2**

They were in Sicily.

Not far from where their first mission was, just across a straight. They took a boat there and the ride was only two hours. Neither one of them talked.

They didn’t really need a plan, they only need not to be caught. Unlike the last mission, they weren’t to make it as quiet as possible, but this time there was a note under the name, location and time. The note had said that they were to make a specifically of it.

Make it noticeable but not to be noticed.

Asset took the reins on this one by building a time bomb out of some scrap metal he found and taking gunpowder he had packed. She had to admit out of the little resources they had, it was a pretty decent bomb. She never verbally acknowledged it, but it did cross her mind.

They blew up the delegation center where their target was.

**Week 3**

She was bringing toast up to their room in Barcelona.

It was far away from the second kill, which was plastered all over the news. The delegation buildings bombing killing twenty people and injuring 103. Out of those twenty, only one was a target, but she couldn’t find it in herself to mourn the 19 others who had fallen. She hadn’t had those kind of thoughts in so many years she can barely remember.

“You have crumbs on your shirt.” he said in American. It threw her slightly off because That was the first time he’s ever spoken to her and gave her information that was not about the mission. It
wasn’t an invitation of companionship, just a fact that she acknowledged by brushing it off and not offering a thanks.

But she couldn’t help but notice that behind the gruffness and an accent only a Native American (she believe it sounded most like a Brooklyn accent, but that part of the accent was barely noticeable) in his voice was a tint of gentleness and the same barely noticeable confusion that always laced his voice whenever he talked. It wasn’t like the German Officer, in fact he rather liked his voice.

She shot a woman in the head the next day.

**Week 4**

“I am going out.”

She had said one night and he got up and followed her into the woods that was near their hotel in a small town in Scotland.

She was going out to train and to not lose her edge. She didn’t expect him to come but she didn’t deny him and his silent invitation to spar. Their default fighting styles were completely opposite. She used speed and her agility and flexibility. He mostly blocked and used his strength and precise hits that would do a lot of damage.

They didn’t go easy on each other and that was the way she liked it. No one would go easy on them in the real world and it’s best to train with no handicaps.

They spared in silence for hours until they were both drenched in sweat. Sneaking back into the hotel near 3am, sneaking past the half asleep receptionist. Not letting anyone notice as they slipped back into their room and took turns to shower and get ready.

Two days later they hung a man in the early morning under a monorail track.

**Week 5**
“I am Natalia.”

She told him and he looked up, and they stared at each other in silence for a long time. His expression flashed a bit of surprise, before settling back into the blank stare, that the longer she looked at it, noticed it wasn’t so blank. It held a swirl of emotions and memories that he, now that she really looked at him, visibly suppressed.

She never told him her name in the month that they had worked together, she felt it was appropriate considering the next 20 weeks were going to be spent together. They were going to be undercover at least once in that time.

“I don’t have a name.” he informed in a clipped tone. She did not feel sorry for that. She respected him too much to pity him. Natasha pitied no one. “They call me Soldier.”

“You need a name for this mission.” she said, but she didn’t offer him a suggestion. He hummed in affirmation. Agreeing with her. And took some time to think of one.

“How about Aktivs.” she raised her brow. She didn’t like it. Latvian for Asset. That wouldn’t work, as they were in Latvia. That was basically like going to America and saying that he was named Asset.

“No.” she responded. He gave her a cocky smirk, one he probably would never dare to do where his handlers could see. One that showed more emotion than Natalia had been shown her entire life. It was so sudden and shocking and overwhelming that Natasha could not stop a quiet gasp from her mouth. He falter just a bit before continuing.

“Krasnaya.” Interesting. Her shock was gone and replaced with that curiosity she suppressed. If he could be cocky then she could be curious.

“Russian?” she asked. Letting amusement and interest cautiously enter her tone. He looked a little shocked but for less time than she had and he nodded.

She liked it.

It didn’t matter that they had shown more emotion in the past 30 seconds than they had in their entire lives. Their bosses weren’t here to call them out or punish them. And it wasn’t like they
were going to tell them, because if Natalia was honest, it was kind of nice.

He strangled someone to death the next day.

Week 6

“Natalia.”

He said her name for the first time in the dead of night, as they were laying on their hotel bed in Munich. They were sharing a bed, as they always did, inches apart and not touching.

She liked how he said her name. His Russian accent being nicely fused with his gentle English.

“Krasnaya.” she responded in her own tone tinted with slight affection. If he noticed then he didn’t say so.

“Do you ever think there is something else out there. Besides this.” He said in almost a child like tone. Innocent and unassuming. This was dangerous territory he was defending into. Even questioning their existence and what it meant for them to live was deadly and would warrant immediate punishment. She stared at the ceiling for a second, and couldn’t help but contemplate her answer. It should’ve been simple.

“Not for us.” she responded. That was the simplest way to put it. They had no life other than being their organizations tools. Being a small part of a bigger picture that they could not know.

When she was younger and more naive, she thought it was like a jail. She was a prisoner being made into something that wasn’t human.

She wasn’t wrong.

They drowned a 19 year old the next morning,
“I can’t remember.”

He mumbled to himself in a frustrated tone, having more emotion than it should. Natalia looked up from her book that she was reading on a chair. He was sitting on the bed, back facing her. His hands gripped his knees so hard that she saw his flesh hand turn white.

She shouldn’t say anything. But she does.

“What?” She asked simply, quietly. Letting gentleness creep into it as to be non threatening. For the first time, he seemed upset.

“Before I woke up in HYDRA.” He said and turned slightly to her as she put down her book but didn’t get up. He looked down to his arm. “The only thing I can remember, is that I didn’t have this.” He the movement in his arm minuscule to indicate what he was talking about.

She didn’t have a response for it, so she didn’t say anything at all. But she did attempt to send some sort of silent support, not offering any apology.

This wasn’t her fault.

But she did feel a flash of anger blaze within her. Anger that she hadn’t felt since she was 16. Anger at this system, this organization for not treating them better. She hadn’t had these foolish thoughts of think she deserved better since she was a kid.

But she felt Krasnaya deserved better than how HYDRA had been treating him.

They drowned two women in the cold water of the Mediterranean sea.

*Week 8*

“I like the way you fight.”
It was the first time they talked during a sparring session. Which was sort of strange because the only noises that were heard was the nocturnal creatures and dull sounds of the city. The only noise they made were flesh on flesh or metal and their slightly heavy panting.

It was nearly 2, and they were just about to end up their sparring session with one last round before heading back to the hotel in Zermatt. She took him off guard and went for the legs, smirking as he went down and then jumping on top of his fallen figure, straddling him with a freshly sharpened knife to his throat.

“Oh yeah?” She asked, with a hint of amusement at his chagrined face. It took a second for the miffed look to disappear and replaced with something else.

“Yes.” he confirmed after a while with a nod and she smiled a bit more, never leaving her position as she leaned closer toward him.

“And what exactly is it about my style that you like?” she asked in an almost seductive way (but it wasn’t seductive, because she wasn’t trying to flirt just tease), letting her curiosity get the best of her and took over her words.

“It’s almost like a dancer.” Krasnaya replied, Natalia scoffed. The Red Room entire theme was a ballet studio. The dancers were as physically fit as one could be. Ballet took a lot of self control and hardwork. Physical prowess was everything when it came to training. Being called a dancer was supposed to be an insult, for Natalia it left a bad taste in her mouth. It reminded her of the Red Room and the torture she had to go through to get to where she was now. She couldn’t focus on the past because the mission didn’t require that.

But somehow, when Krasnaya complimented her, when he said that she looked like a dancer. She knew it was his American way of saying she was graceful and elegant. In American eyes, Russian Ballet was an untouchable art form. She couldn’t help her smile.

They killed the tenant in the room just above theirs when they got back.

Week 9

“Natasha.”

He said and she looked up from the plans she was making for their next target in Berlin. He had
been looking at her for a while, just staring. It wasn’t unnatural for Krasnaya to stare at her, or at the wall or anywhere really, so she had ignored it. Had she looked up she would see that he had a look of concentration on his face. Like he was trying to figure something out.

“It’s easier to say in English.” He explained and she gave a look of understanding and exasperation, but hid her small smile by ducking down to continue making their plan.

She liked it.

She sliced a 42 year old woman’s throat 2 hours later.

*Week 10*

“I like cats.”

It was the most random and weird thing to say. Completely inappropriate for a woman of her status and a situation this dire. Yet she couldn’t find it in herself to be regretful of the words, especially as Krasnaya gave her a baffled expression. That showed he was completely lost on how to reply.

They were currently in the vents (they were really big vents) in a convention center in Edinburgh. Their target was two rooms away and the vents were big enough for both of them to fit so they could get a clear shot of their target as he walked by.

“I think I like dogs.” he finally responded and Natasha let out a small quiet laugh. Of course that’s how he’d respond. He looked at her again and smiled.

“You seem like a dog type.” she observed and she in a million years would never expect him to respond with:

“I like the way you laugh.”

That took Natasha by surprise. She didn’t know why her heart stopped and she froze. She didn’t know the feeling that was crawling up on her insides, it was warm and fuzzy. That was probably a red flag, a warning sign that she was *emoting* but she couldn’t help but like the feeling that came
upon her.

She didn’t even notice their target was dead until she saw red.

Week 11

“You remind me of someone.”

He said to her as they were eating breakfast in a little cafe in Nerja. They were trying to listen in on their target, but he had gone to the bathroom and they made no move to follow. Best to keep suspicion off of themselves. They already had all the information they needed, but couldn’t find it in themselves to go. She looked up from her biscuit with a raised eyebrow as he hurried to add.

“I mean I think you remind me of someone. A woman.” he said hurriedly and Natasha nodded in understanding. She didn’t give any indication for him to continue, but didn’t speak as she munched on her breakfast. “Someone before…” he moved his metal arm only slightly.

They’d talked about this on and off for a while. Krasnaya not remembering anything, not even his own name. HYDRA not telling a thing about his past to him or anyone else. They used his metal arm as an indicator of timestamps.

“What do you remember about her?” she asked, having an almost foreboding feeling in his gut. She shifted and didn’t like the way that the thought of talking about her made Natasha feel. And she didn’t know why she was feeling the way she felt right now, she just knew that it was probably stupid. So she schooled her expression into a neutral one, Krasnaya didn’t seem to notice.

“I remember that she has brown hair. I also remember her being a strong individual. I usually remember her with a blonde boy, I think. I don’t know, everytime I look at you I get reminded of her.” Krasnaya said and shifted a little. “Like, you two have the same...air about you. You two seem very different otherwise. But strong and independent is what I’d call her, and you remind me of that.” he shrugged.

“Do you like those characteristics?” she found herself asking without think about it. He looked at her oddly before shrugging.

“I do, but I don’t feel the same way when I think of her as I do with you.” he sounded confused.
And Natasha found herself in the middle of relaxing and tensing up even more. She didn’t know why; he was just telling her what he remembered.

Like he always did.

She strangled their target in an ally on his way to lunch.

*Week 12*

She kissed him.

She didn’t know why she did that of all things, but her target was looking directly at them. They were in a corner of a shopping mall in Mons. They sat on the bench waiting for their target to finish purchasing a very expensive watch, and they must have looked suspicious because he looked over and narrowed his eyes a bit. Now he averted his eyes and was hurriedly walking away.

Krasnaya seemed just as surprised as their target, if his eyes widening to the size of dinner plates were anything to go by it. She waited until the target was out of sight to part lips, looking distinctly away from Krasnaya’s shocked murky blue eyes.

Her heart shouldn’t be pounding this hard; she had to do what she had to do to avoid suspicion. But was kissing Krasnaya the best way to go about it? It was an instinct, an in the moment decision which was weird. She never not kissed someone to maintain her cover before, but somehow this was different. Shouldn’t have helped but feel that this wasn’t just to maintain their cover. She actually quite enjoyed it, which wasn’t good because she shouldn’t have enjoyed anything.

“Why did you…” he whispered, body only tensing after she broke them up. He looked at her and she only looked where her target had left. Trying not to pay any mind at his intense stare baring into her. He didn’t seem upset or mad. But she felt that he was confused, she was too.

“He saw us.” She explained herself and glanced, only for a second, at his still tense and unmoving form. “Physical displays of affection make people uncomfortable.” She couldn’t help but smirk as a light red dusted his cheeks, barely noticeable.

She got up to finish their job.
The target never even noticed he was dead.

Week 13

“This tastes like shit.”

He scrunched up his nose at the breakfast she had made him. There was a kitchen in their hotel in Lyon. They didn’t feel like eating out today and had a more complex mission to plan. They needed more intercise plan and they only had two days to make it. She had made a drink with kale and Chia seeds she had found in the market. She just boiled that combination in water to give to him as he continued with the plan. She huffed and turned away.

“It’s good for you.” She insisted and he pushed the cup away from him. It looked like sewer water in the dark. He wrinkled his nose again at the cup as if offended him.

“I think you’re trying to poison me.” He mumbled and she snorted. He had a pouty look on his face, and it was kind of cute…. Wait...what?!

No no, that was the exact wrong thing to think! She couldn’t do this. She couldn’t have feelings or affection if any kind for Krasnaya. That would get her killed. That would get him killed.

“Stop being dramatic and drink it.” She found herself saying in almost a scolding tone, even if she was going to an existential crisis inside her brain and heart -How was her heart fucking apart of this now?!

They poisoned a lady, with real poison that evening.

Week 14

“I would never forget you Natasha.”

Krasnaya looked at her seriously as they were staking out a woman with red heels in the car on the
edge of a small town 50 miles outside of Berlin. It came out of nowhere and Natasha looked at
Krasnaya a bit shocked, just like he did when she sometimes did something odd, it must’ve shown
because his face softened from the serious expression it was.

She didn’t know why the hell she felt lighter. She felt a flutter in her chest and it made her feel
nervous and relaxed at the same time. But most of all she felt warm and comforted. She found that
she didn’t mind the feeling nearly as much as she was trained to. But she couldn’t find it in herself
to care.

With Krasnaya, all her training and self control over her emotions flew out of the window. She
could breathe and relax and let herself feel because Krasnaya doesn’t judge her or yell at her when
she does. It was okay because He doesn’t care about self control nearly as much as he should
either.

“I count on it.” she smirked at him. He smiled back. That smile that made her feel a sense of
happiness. She didn’t fight it this time. She found that letting herself feel emotions wasn’t as bad as
she thought.

Not with Krasnaya.

They killed the woman with a noose.

Week 15

“He was blonde.”

They were about to go to sleep when Krasnaya had a major flashback. He had fallen off the bed
and his eyes went wide. His breathing picked up to the point he was hyperventilating. Natasha went
on autopilot and did what she thought was the natural way to deal with this. She instantly took him
to back the bed sitting across from him in a cross cross as he mirrored her breathing.

Then He tentatively requested to talk it out, as if she would say no. She scoffed at that insecurity
and told him to spill, because that was what she was going to tell him to do anyway.

He smiled up at her with a small painful, but genuine smile. She had her own easy small genuine
smile just for him too.
They had talked for hours about a small boy that was always sick and could barely breathe. Natasha guesses he had asthma and he had another series of flashes and told her that the boy put newspapers in his shoes to be taller.

Most of the memories were painful, some he laughed painfully at. Almost all of them had that small blonde boy with newspaper in his shoes. But no matter how hard he tried he couldn’t put a name to the face.

Krasnaya said that the memories were painful because it seemed like he had a good life before the metal arm. It didn’t seem at all like he was working for HYDRA.

Natasha has never felt more hate to the organization as she did just then.

They strapped a man to the bottom of the boat instead of sleeping.

Week 16

“Do you ever wonder if we could have a normal life.”

She asked in the dead of night, staring at the ceiling of their motel room in Unquera. He hadn’t said anything to her, but she could tell that he wasn’t asleep. They both couldn’t sleep. But she guessed it was just one of those nights.

Those night where their thoughts were too loud to go to sleep. Where they screamed that what they were doing was wrong and that they could have a life outside of this. The nights where they imagined what life would be like if they never were apart of their respected organizations.

She couldn’t help but notice that being with Krasnaya increased those thoughts. She also did notice how he snuck his way into her fantasies.

“I do.” He whispered into the darkness. He inches closer to her and she did the same to him, breaking their streak of not moving while in the bed. She could help but think it was nice and wondered what she would feel like if they closed the contact all together.
But for now, two inches closer was enough for her.

“What do you think it’d be like?” She asked in the same quiet tone, barley even making any noise. If he was anyone else, it would’ve been like the question wasn’t even asked.

“Better than this.” He predicted not changing the volume. She couldn’t help but agree with that assessment.

Because if they had a normal life then she could be happy and feel emotions with no repercussions. If they had a normal life they could see more smiles from each other. If they had a normal life she could touch Krasnaya with no reservations.

She snapped a man’s neck 12 hours later.

Week 17

“Hey Nat, did you get the report?”

She paused at the name. She had never been addressed so informally before. ‘Natasha’ was already pushing it a little. But shortening that name even further seems unprofessional.

That was something friends do.

Normally she would panic. Worry that her training had fled her or that she had to close herself off even more. But Krasnaya seemed to be the exception to nearly all her rules. She didn’t mind the thought of being companions with Krasnaya.

And she didn’t care at all by now.

“What did you just call me?” She asked, hoping she heard him correctly. Hoping that he too dashed all his morals to be affectionate with her. She smirked as she saw that he blushed a bit. But he didn’t repeat himself nor did he deny that he had given her a pet name.
She wished he could give one to him, but she didn’t know his name. She found herself thinking that he’d find out. She’d get that information, if not him than for herself.

So she too could call him a ridiculous pet name.

They decapitated their target near a lake.

Week 18

“You’re an idiot.”

“It’s not my fault, it just froze, Nat!” He said as he adjusted his arm on the wrong way again. He had landed on it wrong when sorting and in the morning they had found that some gears had shifted out of place.

“God dammit.” He cursed under his breath adjusting the gears again and she laughed at his misery. “Don’t laugh, this fucking hurts.” He groaned, and she just knew he was being dramatic. This had happened before, it wasn’t that big a deal if he put everything in its proper place before he shifted them again. That only made her laugh more.

“Don’t do stupid things, like try to beat me.” She shout back with a teasing smile and he looked at her exasperated then went back to poking a screwdriver in his arm, rolling his eyes.

He hit the kill spot of a 35 year old man at dawn.

Week 19

“I’ve always wanted a family.”

He said in the front seat as they drove through country roads to get to their next destination. She wasn’t taken by surprise by his random notes that he made. If Krasnaya remembered something then he’d tell her and she’d respond, hoping to encourage more of the memory to come out.
But this one took her a bit by surprise. She didn’t take her eyes off the road but her left hand gripped the steering wheel as her right settled on his left arm comfortingly.

She couldn’t help but feel remorse for that one little fact. She’d never thought about having a family, it just never seemed to be in the cards for her. She was indifferent to it before she met Krasnaya.

Now the thought was a pleasant but far away one. She could never have a family and neither could he, not anymore.

It seemed to communicate over to him as he slumped. He knew it too. But whoever he was before would’ve had that, and that probably made it more painful for him.

Her heart constricted, because as much as she wanted Krasnaya to be truly happy and have his old life back, that life would’ve taken him away from her. She found that she was willing to sacrifice whatever these feelings were for that.

As long as he was happy.

He rammed a pole into a woman’s head near the afternoon.

**Week 20**

“I never knew my parents.”

She finally told him as he looked at her with a raised brow and she shifted from side to side. They were standing in a line to the metro so they could get to the place where the kill would take place.

She never really cared about her parents before. She never gave them much thought, even when she was younger. But being with Krasnaya brought out a lot of things she never thought twice about.
Even killing people seemed to lose its luster.

He smiled at her a little, easing her nerves and grabbed her hand gently with his metal one. A silent form of support that they hadn’t spoken about but was still a reoccurring thing now. She didn’t mind it in the least.

“Well I don’t either.” He said snarking her and she rolled her eyes but couldn’t help but smile as she jabbed him in his ribs.

She never did let go of his hand until they were in the front of the line.

She strangled a man with twine at 8.

_Week 21_

“I don’t think I agree with the Red Room.”

He looked up with her, panicked look flashing though his eyes as he nearly dropped his muffin. They were in another cafe, this time in London, eating breakfast, because apparently her cooking was shit and Krasnaya’s was way better but they didn’t have ingredients.

His face settled into a more serious expression before he answered with “I don’t agree with HYDRA’s either.” He admitted and she had a feeling he’d say that. Especially after all they’ve done to him.

“This is dangerous to think.” She replied in a solemn tone and he rolled his eyes but didn’t look confused.

“Then Why’d you bring it up?” He asked in almost an exasperated tone. She shrugged.

“Because it’s an important things to _know._” He didn’t respond to that, nibbling away at his muffin again. But the air around them was speaking volumes when they didn’t. It was tense but relaxed.
It felt right.

They strapped a man on a subway track in between terminals.

**Week 22**

“What if we didn’t go back?”

That was even more dangerous than even thinking about defying the Red Room expectations. It was a fantasy though, she couldn’t help but want that after all these weeks. Want was a dangerous thing for both of them. Hey didn’t have that luxury and leaving was not an option. They were trapped in the messed up system that broke them. The system that said that they would *fix* them when they didn’t know that were ever broken. When they were too young or confused to understand.

“Krasnaya-” She warned gently. They had talked about this before, just not so blatantly. She didn’t panic anymore when they did, and neither did he. But they did keep a closer look on the area around them, just in case anyone was listening in. Anyone that would rat them out.

“No, I’m serious, Natalia.” She stiffened because he never called her Natalia. Only when he was really serious or mad. They had played with this idea, and she thought it was a mutual *fantasy*. She never let it be anything more than that. If she did then she’d have *hope* and hope was something that she *absolutely could not* allow herself to feel. Hope was deception and she was firm in that opinion and not even Krasnaya could change that. Hope was a downfall, and was the ultimate thing that would tear her apart if she felt it; she knew that.

“They’d find us.” he didn’t argue with her, but she did feel his sadness in the rejection. He understood the logic but couldn’t hold back the want. She sympathized with it, but she could let Krasnaya have false hope. It would break his already broken mind.

They watched the drowned man’s kids find their father.

**Week 23**

“I think I love you.”
It was said with such sureness and confidence as she stood in front of the man she proclaimed it to. She knew had never had these feelings before, never had any feelings of affection for anyone really, so she could not be 100 percent sure.

But she knew what she felt was intense. She knew what she felt was more than just friendship. Over the past months she had grown a bond with Krasnaya, a bond she did not want to break. A bond that she wanted to hold onto forever.

“I think I love you too.” He responded, taking her hand gently in his. He said it in a quieter tone but with just as much conviction. Both of them did not know what love was, but to them it didn’t matter.

She wanted to love Krasnaya, and it didn’t matter of the Red Room or HYDRA. It didn’t matter if she was an assassin or not. It didn’t matter if Krasnaya couldn’t even remember his own name.

They would love each other in their own way and she doubted anyone could stop them. Even if they were a million miles apart. Even if he forgot her, he’d always remember her love.

You never forget love.

When they kissed this time, it wasn’t because they had been spotted.

They slit the throat of their target quickly that night.

Week 24

It was a quick thing.

Something they didn’t even think about. It really just happened. Almost like an instinct. They didn’t discuss it before hand or anything, just went at it.

It was unplanned, but it felt right.
They didn’t trust. Never learned how. But if there was some semblance of trust in them, this was the closest thing they had. Their relationship was based off of trust and blood. Silent comfort and aggressive sparring. Their mutual lack of knowledge of their organizations desires and the confusing thoughts of their mutual wants.

“This isn’t a good idea.” She isn’t sure who said it, but she couldn’t help but agree. She also disagreed, apparently, because her body was showing otherwise. He seemed to feel the same way, but like her, they just didn’t care.

“No one will find out.” The other responded. How could they? There were no tests, nor were there any way to find out or evidence that indicated they did this. Not in anyway their organizations could find out. And they certainly weren’t confessing about this.

But they only had a week to do this. She didn’t know much, her mind went blank when she tried to remember what initiated this. She wasn’t sure who said what but she acknowledged it; she wasn’t sure if anyone would find out but she doubted it. She only knew how she felt, and she felt her love for him and his for her collide together in intense passion.

And as she laid there with Krasnaya on top of him, she couldn’t help but think that this felt natural. She couldn’t find herself to be worried about it; about her director’s opinions or the punishment that would occur for both of them if this was ever found out. He didn’t seem to care. She found that she didn’t care either, because this felt right.

More right than anything in her entire life.

They hung a 23 year old man the next night.

Week 25

It was that week that he was ripped away.

Out of her sight forever.

She was never to see him again, and she couldn’t say anything. She couldn’t do anything. In the
knowledge that they’d both be punished if they defied their bosses decisions. In the knowledge that it would arouse suspicion and mistrust among their separate peers.

She just watched him go, standing board still upright with her hands behind her back. He walked the same walk he did when he first came in. The following soldier walk. She relieved only now that she hated that walk. Her Face never gave her away to any emotion. Neither did his.

She couldn’t help but feel that she wouldn’t see him again for a long time. She had known that before, but only now was it sinking in. Tearing her to pieces inside.

His going was the most painful torture she had ever experienced. She would give into all forms of punishment to just hold him one more time, one more second. But even if she admitted that she’d get punished with no compensation. The compensation was her speaking out.

Their relationship was cut by people who used them like puppets. Their hearts ripped out and put back all wrong.

She felt no regret for their relationship, she only felt regret for not fighting harder for it. That feeling of regret was only sinking in now. Regret that she could never see him again. Regret she didn’t notice the feeling soon enough so they had more time. Regret for not trying to run away from the empires that chained them. Now as she let him go and watched him leave with a straight face, she felt that.

Leaving him was wrong. Letting him go felt wrong. It hurt. Hurt so much. And even though she showed no emotion anymore and nor did he, she knew he felt the same and he knew how she felt.

It killed her more than she thought anything ever would.

OoOoO

I year later…

She thought she had erased all the evidence of that night.

That night that they promised each other they’d tell nothing about. The night they promised that they’d never even whisper about. That night they promised each other no one would find out what
they had done.

She obviously hadn’t held up her end of the deal, as there was now a small child in her arms. At first, when she found out after being sick for multiple weeks, she regretted not using protection, or being aware enough to even think of it. But now, she only felt a love for the tiny human in her arms, bundled in a tan bleak blanket. Soft quiet mewls, even if only being just brought into the world. The child did not cry and if she wasn’t so grateful for it, she’d be worried.

A boy, not but a few minutes old. He had brown hair like his father, and brown eyes that were so big she thought if they were any bigger he’d become a cyclops. He had her button nose and thin mouth. His cheeks bulged a little less than they should, and his tiny body was smaller than a normal child. He only weigh but a few pounds and she couldn’t help but laugh internally because during the prime of her pregnancy she had gained 30. He was beautiful.

*Pytor Romonov*.

Her mind instantly supplied and she smiled but only to him. She let the few moments of bliss with her child. Being close and radiating her love. She’d make sure he was loved. Krasnaya crosses her mind and she couldn’t help but imagine him kneeling next to her and touching the child’s, *their* son’s, delicate face. Smiling his soft general smile as the tiny baby gripped his finger just as he did hers when she held it out for him to grab.

The fantasy was broken when The Director came storming into the room ruined the moment. She was furious. And to the child’s credit he never raised his voice as she clattered in, But he did continue mewling more intensely, expressing his discomfort.

“*избавиться от этого*” (Get rid of it.) she demanded curtly, expecting her to obey immediately. She looked up with defiant eyes, and brought the child closer to her chest. They had already discussed this and she had refused to take abortion medication. It wouldn’t have worked anyway, with her slightly enhanced body. They all mutually agreed that they’d let her have this child, but they trained her very hard and she was not excused from punishment. Still, despite her poor condition her body was in, the child that was growing within her was too stubborn to die. She felt proud of it, even if it had been unborn and left her weak.

She’d never felt so *weak*.

“*Я не буду*” (I will not.)she said simply. The Director flared in anger. She must have thought she would kill *her child*. But if these nine months of defiance was anything to go by Natalia- no *Natasha*- behavior, then she was a fool to believe she wouldn’t protect this baby with her life.
Вы не можете заботиться о ребенке и продолжать обучение в качестве Черной Вдовы. Я не позволю этому позору всех наших стандартов бродить среди нас. Убей это.”(You cannot take care of a child and continue your training as Black Widow. I will not let this disgrace of all our standards roam among us. Kill it.)she said quickly and frantically. Anger seeping into her voice and she’d never known the Director to use so much emotion in her life. She glared and that only caused the anger in the room to increase.

“нет.”(no) Natasha said quietly as she looked down at her child. He had started to cry even more intensely at the negative atmosphere clouding the room, and she couldn’t help but feel anger toward the Director for discomforting her child.

“Госпожа.” (Madam) The doctor spoke up meekly. The Director turned her vicious gaze to his hunched over form, which only served to hunch over more. She had to admit, he had balls. And even though it was because he wanted to dissect the unborn baby, but he was supportive of her pregnancy. She had tried to avoid him, but he had become her personally OB. Now She looked pleadingly up at the disgusting doctor, but he didn’t look at her. Only at his notes, trying to avoid the deathly gaze of their director.”«Это первый ребенок двух усиленных людей. Это может сделать удивительного солдата, если его правильно воспитать. Также мы можем обусловить его при рождении, это никогда не было сделано раньше, так как нам никогда не приходилось сталкиваться с этой ... проблемой.” (This is the first child of two enhanced individuals. It could make an amazing soldier if nurtured properly. Also we can condition him at birth, this has never been done before as we have never had to deal with this...issue.) he argued in her place. she looked to the director who was seemingly and reluctantly mulling over it.

“ отлично” (Fine.) she allowed, angrily and reluctantly. No doubt planning an intense training procedure in her mind. Planning on ways of breaking her child before he had a chance to be built into something else. Something defiant. She hated how grateful she felt, this was horrible, but at least her child was still alive. The doctor’s smile was sickening. “ Но вы должны натренировать его, Наталья. Он не несет ответственности ни за кого. Я хочу обновления каждые две недели. Ваше обучение увеличится, это также жесткость. Если я недоволен его темпом, он будет уволен. Вам разрешается один месяц материнства, и тогда это начнется.’’(But you are to train him Natalia. He is no one else’s responsibility. I want updates every two weeks. Your training will increase is rigidness as well. If I am dissatisfied with his pace, he shall be terminated. You are allowed one month maternity and then it will begin.) she left swiftly. This time composing herself in a second as she left the dank examination room.

Natasha breathed a sigh of relief.

ОоО

3 years later…
Pytor was smarter than most kids his age.

Natasha couldn’t be more proud of him. She didn’t hide her sense of pride for him either, always whispering praises when other people were around - because praise to the young child wasn’t a tool, but an encouragement- and she’d speak to him softly when in the privacy of their room.

He had effectively learned Russian, French and German at once. They spoke in English when he was in her room with her though, just for a sense of Krasnaya. She knew if he was here, if he knew of their son, he’d support them. He’d be happy and proud of their family. It made her heart ache sometimes and Natasha wondered if Pytor would ever want to meet his father one day.

Pytor loves to read. He was on a first grade level in most of the maths and sciences, which was incredible me for a child of his age to be so literate. He wasn’t even supposed to be reading, he was supposed to be learning the alphabet. He could crawl when he was two and was getting on his sea legs with walking. The doctors were pleased with the quick progression, and the Director was indifferent to it.

Natasha loved to tell him stories. All sorts of stories. Stories he didn’t understand but still enjoyed them. She told him stories about his father and how he loved him in the dark of the night in their room. She told stories of all the dumb things he did and it would make him giggle, which was small and soft and his smile was so bright. She loved to make him smile, just like how she loved to make Krasnaya smile. She couldn’t help her own smile whenever Pytor did it though.

*Her little Petya.*

“Mama?” he said to her one day after training. Pytor always watched her train. His eyes followed her graceful movements as he observed. He always watched her so that he knew what he’d be doing when he was older. It was teaching him how to fight without actually fighting. She told the Director that he’d start actually fighting when he was five - the age kids usually have mastered walking and running and are able to walk or run without stumbling. Natasha hates the fact that Petya had to watch her fight, even if he didn’t know the meaning of violence, she didn’t want it influencing his life at such young an age.

“Yes Petya?” she asked back a small smile forming on her face. They were in her room so it was okay. He asked questions a lot, but mostly to her in the room. He learned that he was scorned and never asked many things to the doctors or trainers, but Natasha encouraged him to ask questions. Seems as though he’d inherited her curiosity and she did not want to snuff out that intelligent light for as long as she could maintain it.
“Why am I not allowed to talk when you are dancing?” he asked in a childish and sweet voice. She looked at him sadly. He thought she was dancing?

“You’re almost like a dancer.”

She couldn’t help but smile. He really was his fathers child. It made her love him even more when he said and did things along the lines of his father. Made her love him and hurt her just a little, but it was okay. It was almost like a piece of Krasnaya was with her when she was with Petya.

“Because I need to concentrate. I can’t concentrate when I have a cute little spider to distract me.” she tickled him in a way that made him laugh. She smiled. She called him little spider because when he had read a book about Spiders, he had found the Black Widow spider classification page, he seemed more invested in that page than any other one. He knew Natasha was called the Black Widow and it melted her heart and made her laugh when he asked if she was part spider.

“But you are graceful like one, Mama.”

“Then I guess that would make you my little spider.”

It was okay now. She was always okay when with Petya. Just like when she was with Krasnaya.

“I love you, Petya.” She said softly.

“I love you too, Mama.” Petya replies instantly by snuggling near where she had been sitting. She pulled him in closer to her chest and kissed the top of his head.

Everything was okay now.

A week later it wasn’t

The director banged into their room, she didn’t even notice herself standing up from her sitting position and Petya looked over from where he was reading next to her at the foot of the bed on the
floor. He looked scared, not yet learning how to suppress his emotions and she wished that he’d never have to learn. She wished that he could express and act freely. Like normal kids.

The Director glared at him, but then a sly, foreboding smile crossed her face. Natasha couldn’t help but feel a dreading sense of deja vu and by the time she knew what was going to happen it was too late. The Director herself strides across the room in a few paces and snatch Petya off the floor before she could say or do anything. Before she could lung and try to take back her child, trainers had their hands holding her back as the Director walked out the door. She punched and kicked and ran, but she could not fight off all the trainers in time, and could only watch through her restrainers as Petya got further and further away.

Petya didn’t make a noise. He didn’t speak or yell or cry. She was proud of him for being so brave and when - not if - she got him back she’d praise him for it. She’d love him for it. Love him for being himself. But her heart broke as she picked up the slightest voice.

“Мама?” It was soft and terrified and echoed longer in her heart than it did the hallway. He was scared. She had to protect him.

“мы переезжаем его” (We are relocating him.)They told Natasha simply. Fighting her to stay down and that only made her increase her efforts to get to her son.

“I am his mother.” she said fiercely in English. Defending her child that was no longer by her side. She needed him by her side. She wouldn’t let him go. Not like she did with Krasnaya. She’d fight for this love, because she understood now. Understood that she had to fight for love. And she wasn’t going to watch her child be taken away from her without putting up a damn good one.

“That doesn’t matter.” They responded in English as well. She felt a glare of anger in her heart. Theirs was so heavily accented and she punched one of them when Petya was out of sight. She didn’t stop punching when he was gone.

Her vow became a promise.

OoOoO

Petya didn’t like it in the new place they had brought him to.
It was darker and dirtier than where he and Mama was. And this place didn’t have his Mama. It was scary without her because people that weren’t her were really mean. They didn’t smile at him even when he smiled at them. And the people who weren’t Mama that did smile at him only smiled when they hurt him with knives and scalpels and when he was strapped to a metal table with irritating light filling only his part of the room in the middle. He didn’t like those smiles, they weren’t safe like his Mama’s.

He wanted his Mama.

Somehow he knew he’d never see her again. Or at least for a really long time. Somehow he knew that made him sad. Sad was an emotion and Mama said emotions were okay only when in their room with her. But they weren’t in their room and Peter didn’t like being sad. It made him not feel good and Mama always made it better when he was sad.

But Peter’s sad was really big this time and they weren’t in their room. He didn’t know if he could wait til’ he was in the room with Mama alone again. The new mean people were just as mean with him as the old mean people, but he felt lonely because Mama wasn’t with him with these new mean people. When he was lonely he was still sad, but it was much much worse. When Mama was with him, he never ever felt lonely, even when she couldn’t talk to him or he couldn’t talk to her. She still made him happy.

Somehow he knew he shouldn’t cry.

The old mean people didn’t like it when he made noise or showed emotion. Crying and laughing were doing both and they’d get really mad at him when he did those things, so he tried not to cry or laugh. These new people probably didn’t like it when he made noise or showed emotions either. It stung his eyes but he didn’t cry. Not even sniffle. Maybe if he was good he could see Mama sooner.

He’d make sure to be extra good then. For Mama.

They brought him to a room with white walls and a white floor. It wasn’t like Mama and his room because there was no bolted window and the walls were grey in their room and had books. There was nearly nothing in this room. There was a mat and a metal beat up bedside table with no drawers. The door wasn’t wooden like Mama’s, but metal and looked heavy. Like a door to a cell. There also toilet in a closet. But There was a cot too, and someone was on the cot.

That someone was not his Mama.
A man with a metal arm and long brown hair and brown eyes looked up from where he was laying as Petya was tossed in by the new mean people. The man looked haggard and his face was blank, but it didn’t look mean like everyone else did. It also didn’t look nice like Mama’s was. It looked… indifferent, uninterested. It was better than snarls and sneers so Petya counted it as a blessing. They stared at each other for a while. Never breaking eye contact. His wide eyed stare reflecting back to him as a blank uninterested one.

They didn’t say anything. The man didn’t speak to him as he turned over and Petya didn’t say anything to him because Mama told Peter not to say anything to strangers. Petya crept cautiously into the room, making sure not to make loud movements because sometimes the mean people didn’t like it when he was loud or moving. He went to the opposite end of the room in a corner from the man. Never took his eyes off of him. Mama always told Petya to be on guard and watch out for any dangers when she wasn’t with him. She told him to always keep his eyes on any threat or unknown especially in a new environment. To never ever take his eyes off of them.

The man was not a threat right now but he was unknown. And he was in a new environment. So Peter didn’t take his eyes off of him for a second.

They sat like this for hours until the light turned off with a loud echoing click. Like there was a lot of lights turning off at once. The sound echoed in Petya’s ears longer than it echoed. and the man just turned around and went to sleep.

Petya didn’t.

He wanted Mama.

He let himself cry in the dark, lack of light covering his tears. He didn’t sniffle or make noise. He made sure the tears soaked up in his shirt rather than fall to the floor.

He really missed his Mama.

When the lights came back on, a long time later, so did the man. He sat up on the bed and looked at Petya again, this time a flash of surprise on his face.

Petya was tired. And he felt heavy and laggy. He thinks he went to sleep when he blinked for too long, but he didn’t want to go to sleep without Mama. Mama meant that he was safe and he wasn’t
safe here. He didn’t move from his spot all the time the lights were off. But by this time, the tears had erased all their evidence off his face. Or at least he hoped so.

The mean people came back and the man with the metal arm stood up and followed even though he wasn’t told to. One mean man stayed back and picked him up by his right arm roughly, it twisted weird and it kind of hurt, but Petya didn’t dare complain. They brought him to a window that was a bit dirty and looked into a room that was nearly black and still had no windows. There was a bunch of cage like fences making a circle and a flimsy door made of the same thing with a chain lock on it. Petya was told to watch as the man with the metal arm fought 20 people at once.

It was like Mama’s dancing...except with more blood.

OoOoO

1 year later...

Natasha was on a mission.

It wasn’t the one the red room gave her. Everytime they sent her out now they never let her do it with anyone. That was okay cause that’s how she liked it. That was how it was supposed to be from the beginning, but it wasn’t like that one time and she had her heart ripped out not once now but twice. Now solo missions were good It made it easier for her to find her child. She had no teammates pester her about her whereabouts.

And her mission wasn’t to the Red Room. Her loyalty to that place has become as flimsy as a piece of paper. Her mission was to keep her promise to find her son. Maybe even his father, but the first priority was her son. If Krasnaya were here, he’d drop everything and sacrifice anything to help, she knew.

The director said that wherever he went, they had killed him for not being good enough. It made her furious because Petya was better than enough. He was everything. She didn’t believe that shit for a second. Petya was too fucking stubborn to die. She knew first hand how he presumed even when everyone scorned him, only focusing on her positive energy. It was like he could do anything with the smallest bit of constant encouragement and praise. And she was proud and relieved at that because she couldn’t show how much pride she really had for her son.

He was all she needed and Natasha would be damned if she failed him now. When he needed her most in his four years of living - he’d be four years old.
The Director didn’t tell Natasha where they shipped her son off to either, and Natasha didn’t let that deter her. This was a big world and she wouldn’t stop until every inch of it was covered to find her son.

The red room was built on lies and death.

Sometimes, throughout the year Petya was gone, she wondered if she did the right thing, keeping the baby instead of getting an abortion. She didn’t regret having Petya when he was with her, but at the same time she did. Especially when she was him smile. She brought an innocent child into the world under horrifying circumstances and conditions. Conditions that would break him more than anything in this world, conditions more terrible than death. But Petya wouldn’t know that. He would know that people were actually nice and that they helped people and had families of their own. Petya probably thought the quiet and mean sneers were just how things were, and that Natasha was the odd one out. It was heartbreaking.

She wondered if he missed her, or even remembered her by this point. God she missed him so much. Like she had missed Krasnaya. She wanted to cuddle him and hold him tight and never let him go again. Focus all her love for him in their tiny world that had no room for such emotions under all the blood that drowned them. Shield him from the bad things even though they were surrounded by them every turn. Cover his eyes when people died even though she was the one pulling the triggers.

Would he become a killer? Natasha didn’t like that thought one bit. Petya was too pure to kill. Too curious to do it without any hesitation. Or did he just think killing was normal too. That cause other people pain was just apart of life.

She was in Venezuela when she was hacking through different organization record of Hydra and other smaller underground groups that may have her child. The Director must have given him to one of her allies, or maybe just threw him out on the street somewhere far away.

She found absolutely nothing.

Again.

She wasn’t giving up.

She would never give up. This was all just part of the fight.
She shut the laptop and walked out of the private office that once had one man in it and now had a dead corpse, to go to the elevator.

“Hold the elevator!” said another man, she didn’t move as he squeezed in a little out of breath.”Thanks.” he mumbled sarcastically as they started to move down. The only noise was the horrid elevator music that was starting to irritate her. She was already in a bad mood for having a busy in this source. When the elevator reached the 20th floor, he spoke again.

“So what’s a pretty assassin like you doing in a place like this?” he asked in a low funny tone. It was almost annoying, if not for the hint of seriousness in it. Natasha glanced at him, but wasn’t surprised. He was Hawkeye, a SHIELD agent. She would be dumb to not know who he was. She wasn’t surprised about SHIELD being here, they’ve been after her for years.

“You here to kill me?” she asked just a lowly. No mocking nests in her own voice. Just quiet promises and threats. Even if Hawkeye was infamous in the underground spy world for his sniping skills, Natasha was fairly sure the Black Widow could beat him in hand to hand. And could beat him if he tried to run. Sniper usually weren’t as fast as her.

“No.” huh, that was new. She let the slight surprise stay inside her head as a note. They usually go for the throat by now. If he wasn’t, she would in the next 30 seconds. So he’d better make his case fast because she really didn’t want to have to go to the stairs because a corpse was in the elevator.

“You’d save a lot more people.” she shrugged, it was on him if he didn’t kill her now, she could kill countless more in missions that didn’t even exist. And the mission that she was perpetually on until she found her son.

Anything for Petya.

“That’s what my boss said. I agreed, but I think I’ll make a different call if you tell me what’s in that drive in your pocket.” he said and she shifted a little, but didn’t speak. He side eyed her. Like she’d actually let this man kill her with such important things at stake. And this drive wasn’t for Red Room purposes. “Something tells me it isn’t what you were supposed to go after.” He was good, this would possibly interesting. they were silent for the rest of the ride down.

The elevator dinged and let them out of the bottom floor and he said one last thing.
“Whatever you’re looking for, I’d be down to help.” he said and slipped a piece of paper into her pocket discreetly. She was stunned for a second but didn’t let it show. What was he playing at. Probably something to trap her. Either that or he was typed. What ever one it was she would be an idiot for taking up the offer.

She threw it away after memorizing it.

OoOoO

The Soldier and the child didn’t talk for weeks.

Even as the Soldier was dragged out to be put in assignments. Even as the child was dragged out to be tested on. Even as they trained together. Even as they ate in the same room. Even as the lights went out and they both didn’t sleep.

Dr.Parker. That was the name of Petya’s Doctor. He told him his name on the day after he watched the man with the metal arm dance - they called it fighting though. No one ever told Petya their names before.

He wasn’t a nice man.

He opened Pytor up and stuck needles in him. He hurt him and electrocuted him. Pytor didn’t like when he had to go see him. The lab table was cold, colder than the one in the place where his Mama was, and the needles made him sick with headaches and nausea. They never did that before.

But what Pytor didn’t like the most was that he said his name wrong. In an American accent that was supposed to sound like German. It was terrible and left a bad taste in his mouth.

But he’d never liked the German language, so maybe he was biased.

He liked Mary though. Mary Parker was Dr.Parker’s wife and she said his name like Mama did.

Petya.
He liked it when Mary was testing him because she brought him books and let him talk to her if he had questions about Math. She didn’t strap him to a table and she didn’t yell at him for making noise. She smiled like Mama did, but a little different, so Petya didn’t ask about the no emotions rule, which seemed to be common sense here, but Mary never got mad when he was a little happy, because sometimes she got a little happy too (but sometimes she’d get sad and Petya would hold her hand gently like Mama did when he was sad, and she’d be happy again on her face, but Petya could tell she was sad on the inside. But that’s okay, cause Petya is sad on the inside too). She said he was smart and he was happy because not a lot of people were nice to him ever.

She spoke to him in English like Mama did.

He liked Mary Parker.

OoO

There was a little bit of a routine now.

Petya could expect certain things to happen like at least a little bit of training with Soldier and a little bit of testing with Mary. Sometimes testing with Mary would be replaced with testing with Dr. Parker in the dark lab, and his training would be shorter so he could spend more time with Dr. Parker. But he didn’t really like Dr. Parker.

In between training and testing he’d get food and after the second part of the day he’d get food again but this time in the room with Soldier and then they had a little bit of a long time before the lights went out.

When he got back to the room with the soldier after training, just like everyday, they were instructed to eat. There was stale bread, mush and water- just like every meal. Sometimes Peter couldn’t eat because of the needles, and today had been a time when Dr. Parker replaces Mary. But today was a little worse than all the others (and sometimes this happened, but it was happening a lot more now) and left Peter so sick, that he didn’t want to eat. But when he didn’t eat fast or at all they took away his food and didn’t give it back until the next meal time- and then it would be gross and slimy because it was the same food. He would go hungry when the sick was over and the hunger pains weren’t something he liked very much. They hurt a lot even though no one punched him or hit him, and sometimes he couldn’t do anything but lay down and hear his tummy ask for food- and when it did that it hurt even more.
The fifth time he didn’t eat his food the man with the metal arm got up from the cot. Whenever they were in the room, the man never got up from the cot. Only when they had to leave or come in or to get the food that they threw down near the door- but sometimes when Oetya wasn’t too tired, he’d bring it because it was the nice thing to do. He took his plate and went back to the cot to eat. Petya didn’t make a move because his stomach hurt to much to even flinch. The man stared at him, Petya’s eyes were closed but he could still feel the gaze. He heard some shuffling and Petya’s eyes shot open. Petya watched the man with wide eyes as he grabbed Petya’s food and instead of going to the cot, sat down in front of him and started to eat Petya’s food. Good at least it wasn’t going to waste and he wouldn’t get slimy mush and really hard bread. But the man just finished the mush and left the water and bread. He split the bread in half and handed it back to Petya with blank eyes, and Petya noticed a flash of expectation.

Pytor looked at the food and shook his head. The man pushed the water toward him and Pytor shut his eyes. The stale bread was normally order less, but the scent seemed really strong now and it made Petya’s stomach even angerier.

“Open your eyes kid.” he said in English. It was gruff and almost demanding, but there was a large hint of gentleness that only came into Mary and Mama’s English. Pytor could understand him and was so shocked. Not a lot of people spoke English in this place. He opened his eyes and the offending bread was still in front of him.

“I…d-don’t…” he stuttered his words in English and the man sighed and closed his eyes for a minute, as if trying to collect himself. Which was also weird because everyone else just let themselves be mad with Petya- except Mary and Mama, but they never ever got mad with Petya.

“Yeah, but you need to.” he said and kept holding out his hand with the consumable and after a bit of time Peter took it and nibbled at it. He then sipped the water(which kinda made him feel better when he drank it slow), but he was too slow. When the mean men came back in, The bread and half finished glass of water was taken from him. The man went back to his cot and Petya went back to his mat to wait for the lights to go out.

When the lights did finally go out, the man tossed the other half of the bread toward Petya and it landed on the mat beside Petya’s head.

Petya finished it by morning.

OoO

1 year later…
Over the year, Petya and the man had gotten closer.

He also figured a few things out. As Mary had said, he was smart. This place (the one he was in now) was Hydra. The man with the metal arm that slept with him and helped him a little when he got sick, was known as the Winter Soldier. And according to whispers, they called Pytor “his kid” or “his son”, behind their backs. Pytor heard, The Winter Soldier didn’t seem to. He didn’t understand that part though.

But another thing he learned (even though no one said it, Petya just figured it out): The Winter Soldier did not like being called ‘The Winter Soldier’.

When Peter asked what he should call him, the Soldier just stared at him confused for a minute. As if no one asked him that question before.

“You can call me Pytor.” he whispered in the dark one night.”But you don’t like being called Winter Soldier.” He knew the Soldier heard him by how he tensed.

The Soldier never answered or called him by his name for a long time, so Petya never called him by his name (because he didn’t like it either). They never addressed each other properly, but somehow that was okay with them.

He was finally allowed to have books in their room now. Mary fought for that for him and he was really happy. He was only allowed one book in the room and he could read in the room with Soldier after they finished food or with Mary when she was grading his tests, but Petya sometimes had to read the books in the dark after lights out and sometimes if he was staying up too late Soldier would have to take the book away and tell him to go to sleep.

Pytor read them constantly and as much as he could whenever he could.

Sometimes the Soldier would look over sort of curiously, trying to be sneaky. Pytor caught him every time though. When that happened he’d get up and sit next to the Soldier and read the book in a whisper beside the cot, translating it into English, no matter what language it was. He seemed more relaxed when people talked in English. But that was only with Petya, no one beside Mary and Dr.Parker knew English and Dr.Parker didn’t like speaking English and he doesn’t think Soldier knows Mary, or else maybe he’d have his own book too.

The Soldier would go out more than Petya did, like outside outside( the outside Petya was never
allowed to see but always read about). They said he went for missions. But everytime he came back, he’d be confused and not recognize him for a few hours - that was a long time apparently - before he did and then he still didn’t talk to Petya, even after that.

“Peter.” the Soldier said one day and Petya looked up. He said it in an American accent, although he could say the name Pytor perfectly in Russian. He rather liked his American accent, it was calm and gentle. “It’s easier to say in English.” It took a second to realize that it was his own name. Just said in English. Which was kinda cool.

Peter.

He liked it.

It was a nice thing they had. Soldier didn’t smile that much, and when he did it was only in the room. It was small and almost not there but it was genuine and happy and Peter noticed it every time he did it. It was something that he liked. But not how he liked books and asking questions. He liked it like how he liked Mary and Mama.

Peter decided he liked Soldier too.

OoO

1 year later…

Soldier started acting weird when he came back from a mission.

It was like any other mission, except this time he wasn’t prepped. Usually Soldier had to be prepped before a mission, but recently he hadn’t been. To get prepped they drag him out to a room and he’d come back for only a minute to get something, but Petya could tell, Soldier wasn’t well...

Soldier.

But they hadn’t been doing it as often lately. Peter suffered the backlash of this choice.

When Soldier would get back, he wouldn’t go to the cot or pat Peter’s head as he passed while Peter was reading a book to get his attention. Soldier would pace around the room muttering in all
kinds of languages Peter did and didn’t know, walking right past Peter as if he didn’t even exist.

When he wasn’t pacing he was screaming at the door, which was after lights out. Sometimes he even hit the door. He wouldn’t stay in his cot ever, and he wouldn’t eat, even if they brought food and Peter was being good and eating too. He would sleep either, Even when the lights went off and Peter was trying to sleep.

It became a pattern that was messing all the good little moments in Peter’s life in between training and testing with Dr.Parker, which was becoming more consistent now. Peter didn’t like it at all. He didn’t get to see Mary often and Soldier was acting... scary.

When Soldier muttered, Peter couldn’t concentrate on his book. When Soldier paced, Peter’s appetite left. When Soldier yelled, Peter couldn’t sleep. When Soldier stayed awake, Peter had to train extra hard the next day(even though he was even more tired than Soldier sometimes).

Soldier stayed more, because he got less missions, because he was screaming so much. Peter hates that he wants Soldier to go on a mission, but just a little one (one that wouldn’t make this worse). Just so he could get some sleep.

Just for a little bit.

Peter wanted to help Soldier, but everytime he started to pace or hit the door or yell, Peter was frozen. All his thoughts left him, and all his emotions started to fill his body, which was bad enough as is but all the emotions that started to flood were bad and scary and made him mad and sad at the same time, and he really didn’t like those feelings cause they didn’t make him feel good. He couldn’t move. It was like he was paralyzed, like the stuff Dr.Parker used when Peter moves too much on the cold table so he can make him stop moving. Except there was no liquid or needles, and he didn’t get hurt, just scared. Peter hated it more than when Dr.Parker made him freeze.

They never removed Soldier’s weapons.

When he finally did realize this, He started shooting at the door with his big guns. The door was bullet proof. The gunfire sounds hurt Peter’s ears because they were so loud and close and the smoke made his eyes full of tears he wasn’t allowed to shed and made him cough a lot when there was no more bullets.

“Please stop.” Peter whimpered once, the Soldier whirled at him, with crazy eyes and walked over
to him in a way that made Peter scared. Foreboding was the correct word. He had never felt so terrified to see another emotion besides indifference in Soldier’s eyes. This one was wild and panicked and almost insane. Soldier grabbed him by the shoulders and lifted him.

“You can’t trust them. You can’t trust any of them. You can’t even trust yourself.” He hissed and Peter whimpered again, he didn’t know weather it was because the grip was too tight or the voice was so scary but as he was thrown back, he felt himself shake with uncontrollable fear.

What did he mean?

He never spoke when Soldier was yelling or shooting the door again. He never talked in front of Soldier anymore period. Not in training, or when he was eating. Especially not when he was quiet. Peter didn’t want to ruin it. He just needed the peace and silence to last as long as it could.

Peter told himself it was the smoke from the gunfire that made him cry. And only when it was dark did he let the tears fall and pretended they didn’t exist.

He knew it was a lie.

“Let me out you son of a bitch! Let me out and take me away from this hellhole! There ain’t anything here that’s worth a damn dime! You fucking hear me?! Just fucking put a bullet in my brain!” the Soldier screamed and Peter started to cry even though there was no smoke and it was not dark and it was really bad today.

“Please no.” Peter said quietly and the Soldier turned on him. Eyes wild and Peter was scared. The Soldier looked even more scared and pulled out his gun and pointed it at Peter.

Everything stopped.

They stared at each other. Like they did the first day they met. Peter being scared and sad because his Mama was gone, and now he was scared and sad because Soldier was gone too. He hiccuped and Soldier didn’t take his gun away from Peter’s temple.

Even as the guards poured in. Only did he take away his gun when he was dragged out, but even so, Peter didn’t move. He just kept crying, Soldier’s terrified eyes looking at him like he was trying to grasp something but just couldn’t hold on to it.
Peter never saw Soldier again.

OoOoO

:3

This was a bad, stupidly crazy idea

It was probably the worst decision of her entire life. And She didn’t really give a shit about it. Usually she wasn’t so flippant about impulsive decisions, but it’s been two years since she seen Petya, and that felt like an eternity.

No one in the Red Room was going to help her, because they fucking thought Petya was a disgrace. The Director wouldn’t help her, she took him away in the first place, and pulled bullshit of telling her he was dead. She didn’t have any outside connections, and she wasn’t sure where Krasnaya even was. SHIELD might actually help. If not them, than Clint Barton actually had offered to help her.

Anything for Petya.

She told herself that and steeled her expression as she walked into the cafe and sat next to Clint at the end of the bar. She was just going to talk to him, see if this wasn’t a trap or ploy. See if he was actually genuine about his offer to help her, no questions asked (which was fishy but she was running out of options here). He smirked and put down his menu.

“I’m not telling you what we are trying to find.” she said immediately. He didn’t seem surprised, she was a bit relieved that this could be casual and quick.

“Wow, you were quick!” he said, commenting on the fact that it had only been three days. She was desperate. “I thought you’d be more loyal to your ‘cause’ or whatever.” he teased and she looked at him and shrugged nonchalantly.

“Never had any other option.” she said honestly and ended that conversation swiftly. “But I know people don’t just give out handouts for free.” she narrowed her eyes at him suspiciously, trying to throw him off his game. His turn to shrug nonchalantly.
“Call it a hunch, but I think you are a nice person.” he laughed, and she was a little stunned at the accusation “Crazy right?” uh, yeah it was. Who in their right mind would call The Black Widow, a highly trained assassin who has no problem killing anybody, nice? “But you’re right, I’ll help you and keep your little search under the radar, if you switch sides.” There it was. The catch but...

Join SHIELD? Was he crazy?

There were so many reasons she should say no. Saying yes shouldn’t have even been a consideration. Not for a second. But… she was more loyal to Petya than to whatever bullshit the Red Room had planned for her.

And then she thought about Petya when she finally found him. How he’d have a Mama that didn’t kill good guys. A place that wasn’t terrible and horrifying to live in. A Mama that helped people and showed him the kindness of the world, even through the black dark nasty things out there.

Natasha decided it was her time to press Fuck it.

*Anything for Petya.*

OoOoO

*I year later…*

Mary wasn’t Hydra.

Peter found this out as she was running toward an almost futuristic looking plane. Like the one from his fantasy books. Like that one book, Divergent, but like the ones in the last book. He didn’t really like that last book, it was a bit anticlimactic.

He was dropped in the plane with her carrying him out of the compound like he was a sack of potatoes, and a man with thinning hair lead him inside, barking orders to everyone but him, and placing a gentle hand on his back as he lead him inside the plane. He looked back, to ask where Mary was but like magic Mary was gone too.

He never saw her again, and somehow, he’d developed a feeling for it. Every time he was going to lose someone, he just... *knew*. He hated that feeling a lot more than he hated anything else.
He wanted to ignore it, tell it that it was wrong and she would come back and so would Mama and Soldier. Even in that moment, where he was denying everything, as Mary Parker left the plane, he knew he’d never see her again.

Mama. Soldier. Now Mary.

3 out of 3. That was 100%.

Peter wasn’t stupid.

He knew that was everyone... everything he had.

He lost it all.

He felt more alone now than ever before. Even when the organization called ‘SHIELD’ took him, as he found out two hours in the flight (through eavesdropping and oh, yeah their bird logo. Was that an eagle?). It was another hour before a man with thinning hair, they had called Coulson, came to him in his room/cell thing (not like HYDRA’s cell/room thing, this one only had a metal table and him cuffed to the table). He wasn’t allowed to leave it, and he’d never had his own room before, so, by deduction, it was a cell.

Coulson opened the door and looked at him as he gestured to follow him to another cell, but this was darker, with hexagon patterns on the wall and a metal table but this time with two chairs. They sat down at either end of the table.

Coulson looked a little too excited for an interrogation(that’s what this was, right? Because he was HYDRA), and had a weird smile on his face. Not like Mama’s, Soldier’s, or Mary’s, but not like the doctors either. His smile said that he knew was hiding something, but wasn’t as creepy as the ones in the HYDRA base. It was barely acceptable for a smile, Peter validated.

“Hello, I’m Phil.” Coulson said a bit giddily. Like he was nervous, which was weird too, because Peter was usually the nervous one when having a conversation with an adult of unknown origin. “I’m excited. I’ve never talked to a child soldier before.” Peter didn’t answer, just nodded his head. Was a ‘child soldier’ supposed to be like, important at SHIELD? Peter had never been anything important to anyone ever. At least not that he knew of. Phil then seemed to pause at his lack of answer. “Do you speak english?” Phil asked, cocked his head to the side, like Peter did
sometimes when asking a question to Mary. He decided not to say that and, nodded “Great. Are you ready?” No one’s ever asked you that. He nodded once, in fear of the wrong answers. Because sometimes if he said the wrong answers, he’d get punished. “Okay, I’m going to ask you some questions.” Peter nodded again, curtly and shortly.

They begun.

“Let’s start with your name.” Phil said moving into a comfortable position that made it seem like he let his guard down, but the tenseness in his hand and shoulders gave him away (Was this a test?), shuffling papers around and holding up a pen to a pad of yellow paper with lines across them.

“I’m…” it’s easier to say in english. “Peter.” he said slowly. Sounding out the word he’d only said once before. Since Phil seemed to speak English to all his subordinates and naturally speak it to Peter, he guessed Phil would be more comfortable when Peter spoke his name in English too. Just so it was easier for him.

“Any last name?” Peter shook his head instantly. Phil nodded and wrote that down. (Should he be lying? But these people seemed like the type to see through his lies.) “Age?” Phil asked hopefully, Peter had to think on that for a second.

“6.” he mumbled. He sounded unsure. Mostly because that’s what Mary had said to him 2 months ago, he doesn’t know how he remembered, but Peter remembers a lot of things he shouldn’t. The number changed though, sometime in August, but it still changed every year.

“You sure?” Peter shrugged.

“That’s what Mary said 2 months ago…” he informed him slowly, and he must have been taken back by his voice, because at a higher volume it sounded raspy. He didn’t use it much after Soldier left and Mary started to replace Dr.Parker instead of the other way around.

“You’re being awfully compliant.” Phil said skeptically looking up at him as he wrote that down too. Peter nodded, but didn’t answer. Mary had handed him off to Phil, so obviously Mary trusted him. Peter wouldn’t trust Phil, but he owed it to Mary to answer the questions honestly.

“Were you raised in HYDRA?” Peter nodded after a second, he could barely remember being raised by his Mama. “To be a soldier?” another nod. “Do you know how to fight?” a shrug. He’d
been training with Soldier, when Soldier left he still trained but with meaner people who didn’t pull their punches like Soldier did sometimes. They just knocked him on his ass.

“Afraid I’m going to need an answer.” Phil said, almost apologetically. It took Peter by surprise. No one that had just met him was ever this nice to him. Why was Phil being so nice? Did he want something? But if he wanted something, why not beat it out of Peter? Why ask him all these questions nicely rather than demanding them?

Despite all the questions, he rather liked that he didn’t have to get hurt to answer them. It felt...nice.

“A little.” He answered, a stunned but relaxed tone in his voice. He didn’t want to let his guard down, because he was in a new environment and Phil was an unknown.

“Okay, so … it’s okay if you don’t know this, but why did HYDRA take you?” Phil said and he just kept getting nicer. That was really weird, but he could tell that this was an awkward topic for Phil. Peter answered as best he could, because Phil had been so nice.

“I’m not sure...but I think I know what they...were going to do with me.” Phil leaned forward in a nonverbal gesture to encourage him to go on. “They have been experimenting on me, giving me...or at least trying to give me powers. I don’t think it worked though.” Coulson leaned back, contemplating look on his face. Peter was shifting in his seat nervously. There was a long stretch of silence, where Phil didn’t write anything on his paper or said anything, and Peter was not given permission to speak. Until Phil finally spoke.

“Okay, I think I know who to get then.”

OoOoO

1 year later…

Natasha was an Avenger.

She had first become an agent of SHIELD, giving as many as the Red Room secrets as she could. In reward for that she became Clint’s partner for most missions. Due to her skill set and ability she quickly became one of Fury’s most reliable agent.
She immediately thought what Petya would think about it as soon as she joined the table of heroes. Would he be happy? Would he be mad? Would she have to fight him if he was still in an enemy organization? Would she even know if it was him?

He would be seven now, she’d never forget the day he was born. He had to look different. Natasha would have to work harder. But… would he still want to hear her stories, even if he was older? She would have so many more interesting ones to tell him, not just about Krasnaya, who was still MIA, but her missions with Clint and interactions with Fury. And eventually her adventures with the Avengers.

Maybe even the Avengers could help her. Clint had mentioned it to her in private after Loki’s attack and she said she’d think about it. Clint never gave away anything though. Not until she was ready. He never told anyone, even as they moved into the tower together with Stark and Rogers and Banner. Never even hinted at it. But she saw where he was coming from, Stark could hack into literally anything within seconds, and had so many backdoors, Natasha couldn’t even keep count. Banner was smart and could run DNA scans. Steve, well he’s always been a soldier, he’d surely help, so would Thor, she knew.

But…She just couldn’t bring herself to tell them. Stark and Banner would ask too many questions and Thor and Steve would give her a kicked puppy look if she didn’t tell them. Clint understood because he too was a spy, who had to protect some form of his past, whatever that may be. For the past two years he covered for her. He gave nothing away, and went on nearly every mission with her, just to help her.

And not with just her mission but other things too.

He’d make jokes, she’d never laugh. He’d try to compliment her, she’d hit him every time. He’d try to get her to open up, she’d never even crack.

He had every right not to help her. Not to trust her. And then he goes and brings her to meet his secret family that only Fury knew about. He surprised her in every way possible, and she may not love him like Krasnaya, but she loves him like family nonetheless. He was like an annoying sensitive brother, and Natasha fiercely hoped that Petya got to meet him one day. He would be such a good uncle and role model, and he knew that Clint would love her son too.

That’s when she started to do little things. Like make too much cocoa when she stayed awake at night, or accidentally tip some glitter in the vents so it blew all over Fury’s office, or just roll her eyes when he made a joke instead of reprimand him.
In her defence they were really bad jokes, and she refused to laugh at dad jokes.

“Why’d you tell me about your family.” she asked in a hushed tone in Stark’s living room. There was no one there, but it was an air of privacy and show of respect. He looked up from his comic book (which what the fuck dude, you have kids)

“I trust you Nat.” he said simply and that was a punch to the gut. And okay, yeah, somewhere deep down inside her she trusted him too. But she hadn’t even told him about Krasnaya or Petya. And he’d given her so much. She felt like she owed him, and he knew it was stupid, and that he expected nothing of her, but that’s just how these feelings go.

“Petya.” she said and he looked confused, but sensed that this was serious, so put the comic book down. He was always good at reading her, just like she was at reading him. “I’m looking for Petya Romonov. He’s my...my son.” She said in a near whisper, she almost thought she hadn’t spoken at all but when she looked up to see Clint staring at her, she didn’t look him in the eye and averted them to the side. She hadn’t spoken about Petya out loud in years and it felt like it was relieving her of some weight on her shoulders and also repeatedly punching her in the gut with sadness and remorse. “He...he was taken when he was three...they said that he was dead but...” Clint dropped his book, in two strides he was by her side and hugging her. She allowed it even hugged back slightly, but didn’t let tears fall. The next thing was said in an even softer whisper and gripped him a bit more firmer.

“They lie.”

OoOoO

:3

Peter hated his General.

Phil was really nice, but the man he handed Peter of to wasn’t. Phil said that they were different from HYDRA, but they did the same things. They were exactly the same as HYDRA. And Peter hated it.

Phil said that General Cotnet would help him get a better home. He said he’d take him to Mary’s sister May and they’d take him in. But Phil lied to him, his nice was deceiving nice. Cotnet did not have his best interests at heart and he certainly did not want to take him to May Parker.

As soon as Phil left, the air in the room with General Cotnet became one of predatory seeking, and
Peter didn’t like it one bit.

“So, Peter.” he said in a sickly sweet tone. A tone that wasn’t at all sweet. “Do you understand the term, immigration.” Peter only nodded, backing a few paces and head down. “Use your words, Soldier!” Cotnet’s voice did not have the fake sweet tang to is anymore. It was aggressive and made Peter snap to attention, hands behind his back, straight spine, head up, just as he did in HYDRA. Cotnet had a pearly white smile, not like the gross yellow green one that the HYDRA instructors had. But it was just as creepy as theirs was.

“When people not born in the country that are not citizens come in.” he summarized in a monotone, and Cotnet looked down right giddy. Not like Phil though, he looked the creepy kind of giddy.

“Yes, and your aunt lives in America, from which you are not a citizen. Do you know what that makes you?” he asked and walked forward to lean in his ear, as he froze with Cotnet’s hot breath making his neck tingle. “It makes you an immigrant.” he said in a voice that sounded like it was disgusting. Peter didn’t see anything wrong with it. Cotnet stood up. “Usually you have to get a VISA, but since you are a minor and don’t have any validation, like a birth certificate, you are going to have to do this another way.” Cotnet said and Peter didn’t dare speak in fear of angering a superior. “Now, usually the government would give you an acception, being a war prisoner and all, but you are also a mutant-”

“I am not a mutant, sir. I was-” Peter’s timid correction was cut off with a intense harsh glare.

“You will not speak out. You are a child soldier. And you are a mutant. A disgusting one at that. You will serve in the United States special forces, compensated with a temporary VISA each year so you can go to school for nine months of the year.” General Cotnet whispered bitterly. “This will be off the books, I don’t need SHIELD breathing down my back, but this opportunity is too great to pass up.” he mumbled almost to himself, but it was too loud. Peter was cowering a bit.

General Cotnet looked him dead in the eyes. And said in a voice that Peter dare not defy. “Do you understand?”

Peter only nodded.

OoOoO
Wade had seen a lot of messed up shit in his life.

Coming from an abusive household, he’d been pretty messed up himself. What with his mother hitting him and locking him in the closet when she wasn’t on her drugs, and his uncle molesting him whenever his mother didn’t give a shit, which was all the time. School wasn’t a sanctuary. Everyone knew that Wade was abused, the teachers, the students, hell even Stick Jo, the guy at the gas station 6 miles out of town knew what went down at the Wilson household nearly every night. No one gave a shit, and Wade went right on not giving a shit about them either.

That mind set carried with him when he left school for the army. He wasn’t gonna get no degree, he wasn’t smart enough to and he still didn’t give a shit about that either. He developed a sense of humor, messed up and twisted, but in any situation no matter how dire, he could find a joke (no matter how controversial). It had no place in the army in Canada and still had no place when he was transferred to the US army’s special forces.

Somehow he got to this position. He didn’t know how the fuck he did, and he also didn’t know who the fuck thought this was a good idea, but here he was.

Yes, Wade has seen and been in a lot of messed up shit. But none of them were as messy and twisted as Peter Parker.

Yes, Peter Parker as a whole human soul thing. His entire existence was made to be utter shit. This poor child would get nowhere in life, because some motherfucker decided to fuck in the wrong place with no protection and then proceeded to put him in a tiny cell to be tortured by the people who were in charge of him.

Now he was in charge of him.

A skinny, small stick with brown hair and too big eyes. He was seven and looked like a four year old and had the sense of at least a 17 year old to shut up at all times (good survival skills kid, you might actually live through this). Wade didn’t want to remember his age or name, he never did with anyone on every squad he went on (and he transferred a lot), but Peter Parker, seven year old sunshine child, was printed in his mind. He stared dumbly at the kid and the kid stared widely back.

He was a fucking kid. What the fuck was he doing here? With Wade, who was holding guns and swords, and let he just say, they were never on safety (he had no time to mess with that shit). Wade who swore way to much to be legal. Wade who didn’t know what a fucking childhood was supposed to be like. No, he did know actually. It was supposed to be white picket fence two siblings and a golden retriever. Parker’s life was more like iron bars, dead bodies and mean attack dogs. Although the kid somehow made any attack dog into the perfect domesticated pet with one glance. Magic puppy child. Why the fuck was he Around people who have killed so many people. Literal murderers and pedophiles. The kid looked like he couldn’t harm a fly.

Wades eyes traveled to the boys wrists where there were whip marks and purpling handprints and he didn’t stop staring until the boy hid them under his too long sleeves, cause you know he was a stick, and Wade gave him a snarky smile. The kid looked at the smile for a second, almost like he was analyzing it and gave his own shy smile. Wade blinked at that. What in the fucknuggets...

They wanted Wade to train him. They told him he’d stay for the summer before going to school in the fall in New York. And frankly that was just cold. Having the kid make friends and have a life and then deal with this shit only to go back and act like he’s completely not scarred. Just going to
uncle Wade. Which you know shouldn’t be a traumatic experience, but a fun time with you know chess and shit (he didn’t know how to play sudoku, muchless chess. Checkers maybe?).

They basically made him a babysitter, which again, whomst thought this was a fucking good idea? He’d kill the bastard who did, cause this sweet innocent child did not belong here mutant or not. Apparently not, Parker didn’t have any powers except for that adorable Bambi eyes and that smartass brain of his, like stupidly smart. Like he could probably solve a medium level sudoku smart.

But whatever. Let’s fucking do this. Corrupting the children? Well, never done that, but let’s give it a go.

The kid didn’t talk the first week. They only gave Wade three extra ration bars for the whole seven days. Which what the fuck, the kid needed more. Especially if he was a mutant. Which was weird cause he never showed any signs of being a mutant.

Wade gave him the three and said have at it. If the kid needed more, he’d give him some of his share. But the kid never asked and he seemed okay. Later he found out that The kid separated it for two whole weeks. Like a lil’ mouse. Adorable but also, what the fuck?! (see survival skills, the kid should really teach a class)

“I’m not a mutant.” He was the first thing he said and Wade looked at him. He was looking down and his voice was small and raspy. It suited him, but also, totally didn’t “I don’t have powers.” He rubbed his hands around his wrists.

“Oh.” Wade said. He believed the kid. Way more than he believed General asshat.

The kid laughed. So he must have said that out loud. Like cool dude, thanks for not judging me.

“No problem.”

Wade took him on missions. No matter how messy. Peter didn’t flinch when he killed. Peter didn’t react. He just looked at the bloody bodies and shot them in the head. He was like fucking Hawkeye. He never took a second shot on a target...ever.

It was disturbing.

His hand didn’t even reach the trigger on its own. He had to use both because they were so small. Like a kitten, was this kid just all adorable animals rolled into a human being.

“I don’t like killing.” He mumbled one night in the floor. He never even questioned why he didn’t get a shitty cot, just a fucking blanket and a mat. He seemed comfortable down there though. Wade never offered, if the kid wanted something he had to ask, which wasn’t so bad, little brats did it all the time. Thing is, Peter isn’t a little brat. Not even an ounce of bratty ness or complaining. He never asked for anything...ever.

“Then don’t.” Wade answered. The kid seemed to like blatant replies and jokes, which is what Wade was good at. He never needed to sugarcoat anything, because this is a shit world anyway and the kid knew that. SO despite not liking kids, he liked this one.
“They get mad when I don’t.” Peter said sadly.

“I’ll kill them. You just knock em down.” Wade offered. He didn’t know why, the kid should learn to do his own dirty work, but then again, he was a kid.

“How do you not kill though?” Peter asked and sat up with his hand propped up on his elbows supporting his head. Wade blew out a breath. That wasn’t right. Peter shouldn’t know not to kill.

“I’ll show you.” He picked the kid up like the kitten child he was (ie by the scruff of his way to big hoodie) and took him to the range. He didn’t care if it was two in the fucking morning, they both weren’t gonna sleep anyway.

Kid was fucking smart. He got things in an instant. Wade never had to repeat himself. And whenever Wade praised him he smiled up at him with the big sunshine smile he could pull off. It was like UV lights and staring into them. Blinding, the kid was trying to make him blind.

So he’ll say this again, and he cannot stress this enough:

**What the fuck!**

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Chapter End Notes

I'm getting such positive feedback from all of you, I hope I did the POVs correctly, I feel Peter would have a more simplistic POV since he's you know a kid. And I tried not to make Nat's POV shift too fast, because of her over analytical mind changing.

Again, DON'T SPOIL ENGAME!!

You're all the best, but I actually think the next chapter is gonna take a while because of finals and shit going on in real life. Also depression.

Thank you soooo much!!See ya next time!!
Hey y'all!! OH MY GOD!! I got sooo much positive feedback!! I love you all, you're literally amazing beings who I cherish most in this sucky world!! It motivated me to edit this all (in history class, I edited the last part on my phone and most of it on my phone so it's a bit dicey). I wrote so much in these first four chapters that I had to split up all my chapters into four separate docs, which works out because there are four separate sections, but as I progressed I noticed that I had wrote less and less for each of the parts lol, but still some of it is done, it will just take a little longer between chapters but I'll try to crank them out as quick as I can.

I feel like I could have added more to some of these parts, but I'm happy about how the overall concept came together. SOOOOO

Enjoy!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 4-I'll Make you Scream

Present…

“So, I’m sure you’re wondering how I got in this position.”

“Among other things.” Fury responded dully to the boy covered in silly string, spray paint and glitter. Honestly it didn’t even surprise him at this point. But after a year of knowing Peter Parker, he just knew that there were things that would happen to him that would definitely surprise him; far more than this.

“Well Nicholas, as my good friend says, ‘when you hit rock bottom you can trace it back to one big bad decision that fucked it all up.’ ” Peter said almost sagely, slender finger pointed in the air as he recited the stupid but nonetheless true quote, and it looked ridiculous in that mask with glitter on it.

“Is this rock bottom?” Fury raised an uninterested brow. He’d expect a little more...blood. No actually he expected a lot more blood. Yeah, like a boatload or two. Maybe some fingers or dead bodies. Oh and a shit load of fire.

“Physically, not really. Socially, eh?” he could hear the smile in his voice as he waved his hand in a so-so motion. He seemed to be gesturing bigger with his hands today. “You needed me?” ignoring
the way Fury stared at him like he was demanding answers by changing the topic. If he had questions, which he did, he didn’t voice them though. Like verbally. Even though Parker knew the questions he wanted to ask. He was a little shit like that.

“Get in and try not to get glitter everywhere.” Fury said not even gesturing to his car as he got in the driver's seat. He hesitated before climbing into the front seat next to him, fidgeting a bit in his place, despite Fury’s request not to mess up the sleek black BMW.

“We have a mission?” he squeaked, a little too high for it to be intentional, and Fury raised another brow. The kid was never usually had reservations about missions with Avengers. No matter what, even if they treated him like shit or he had just been run over by a train. When he was available he came.

“What’s up kid, you’re usually never embarrassed.” Fury sent a smirk his way. Peter only faltered for a second, which should have been a red flag because the kid had no filter between his brain and mouth.

“I usually don’t have anything to be embarrassed about.” He said honestly, as if observing that fact of himself. That made Fury snort at how casually he said it as he pushed the kid in the front seat. Despite him not wanting to get glitter everywhere. That gained a surprised but nonetheless delighted laugh out of him. Fury only had a small smile on his face, and he’s sure Parker noticed, but he didn’t comment on it. Peter was weird like that, commenting on every little thing that doesn’t matter, and that was annoying. But it was nice that he knew some small things were rare, and enjoyed them in peace.

Parker needed more good small things in his life, but Fury would never admit that he thought that.

“Yeah cause a bright red and blue spandex is nothing to be embarrassed about.” Fury said back with no heat, just an amused tinge in his tone. Peter made a mock offended sound.

“Wow, I’m taking offense. You know what? No, I’m fucking proud of my glitter.” Peter declared and then the bone dead tiredness of the past four days sunk in. He hadn’t slept, and he hadn’t eaten in 2 days. He was tired and he could feel it. He could also feel the gnawing at his stomach, but he sucked in the growling until he could get to a place where the noise could be drowned out, he’d know Fury would notice in the nearly silent and almost soundproof car. Peter scuffed his feet on the rubber flooring of the car, smearing glitter and tinsel. “Do you really need me today?” something in the kid’s whiney voice was tired. It almost made Fury stop, but only because that it had enter his tone, and let the kid off the hook for the voice.

“Depends on what happened.” Fury said casually and shrugging. Referring to his obvious new
paint job he had with his suit. Peter huffed quietly as he leaned his elbow on the window and rested his head on his hand, not looking at Fury but out his window.

“You fall asleep for 15 minutes…” Peter grumbled indingently, Fury wasn’t sure if he was supposed to hear that or not but That actually made him bark out a quick amused laugh. Peter looked owlishly over at the sound before realizing what he said was gonna let him off the hook, but only make him look stupider. Then went back to sulking in his previous position with a louder huff.

“Yeah, kid you ain’t getting out of this one.” he said with a playful smirk, even if he didn’t really have to say it, he just wanted to rub it in. Peter responded by letting out a whine and squirming in his chair. Looking like a kid, but also trying to find a comfortable position for the rest of his body. He wouldn’t complain anymore, he was too old to complain.

You’re too old to cry.

Eventually they got to the Tower, Peter dragged his glitter coated feet and silly string trailed after him, and Fury was 89 percent sure that he was doing it on purpose. As soon as he walked into the briefing, Fury started to almost regret not saying that the kid could be let off the hook this time. But the team needed him for this mission (for all of these missions), even if they didn’t know it. Even if Peter didn’t know it either, and was only here to be a little shit. Fury wasn’t gonna let a little sparkles get in the way of saving the damn world (again). Even as Sam and Clint fell down laughing and crying and the kid hunched a little before pulling back up to his slouched height.

“I don’t even know what to say!” Sam said laughing so hysterically he was nearly crying. The kid still wouldn’t take off his mask, but he hunched in a again little before straightening himself out. “There are too many things to say!” He blurted and Fury notices that everyone who wasn’t stifling their laughter was giving him an evil eye (ie, Romanov and Rogers)

“That’s because I can actually pull this off.” Peter said back snarkily, crossing his arms over his chest as if he was satisfied with himself. Fury had to hand it to the kid, he was cowboying this like a champ. But he wasn’t out of the water yet, in fact it was only just the begininning.

“Do you think this is some kind of joke?” Romanov said a bit venomously and Fury could tell that Peter rolled his eyes under the mask. Like everything he did was reprimanded by the older spider themed superhero. She probably did, because Romanov held Parker at a higher standard, especially now that he knew about her kid.

“Yeah, a bunch of punks played a practical joke on me. I bet I look hilarious.” Peter said back (as
if he wasn’t a punk himself), not defiantly though (as it should have been), just a curious statement along with a twinge of sarcasm, that only he seemed to be young enough to pull off (honestly he probably was the only kid who could even pull off that). Hell, he was never going to be old enough to not pull it off with the way his lifestyle was. He was like a mixture between a kid and a very mature 19 year old. There was no in between and Fury had a feeling it would stay this way until he was 70.

“How did a bunch of kids play a prank on you?” Steve asked confusedly, striding over to Peter to stand a few feet in front of him like a the kid was a soldier and he was a disappointed commander. And it didn’t matter how much Rogers wanted that, it wouldn’t happen as long as the kid had his shit list/ people I have to fuck with agenda in existence . “Didn’t you notice?” he crossed his arms, Peter mimicked the motion but hunched in a little more than Rogers, slouching. That was a very good question though, Parker’s senses were way above even the super soldiers, he must have noticed them.

“I fell asleep.” he sighed. Which he did, he passed out from exhaustion cause he hadn’t found a good place to sleep in three days and Matt was out of town and Wade was being Wade but in like Canada. He couldn’t ask Weasel to crash on his couch in the bar without arousing suspicion because he spent all of last week there. Cause Weasel was a fucking rat and would out Peter to Wade if he found out he didn’t have a home because he missed the lease on his storage box. And Weasel was also a glorified coward, don’t get him wrong he owed the guy for a job, but as soon as you even snarled in his remote direction he’d give everything he knew in a heartbeat.

“On the job?” Tony snorted mockingly and Peter huffed a little. It wasn’t entirely his fault. His ‘job’ didn’t really stop, or had a time frame, it kinda just happened (as Peter so eloquently puts it). Not like the Avengers’. You try protecting a city, maintaining a paycheck, and being hounded by literally everyone in the goddamn world 24/7, Stark. You have the fucking ability to go to sleep, it’s a choice for you not to take care of yourself. Peter didn’t have the damn time to fucking take care of himself (which should be a problem but he was fine). It was simply a luxury he couldn’t afford, both mentally and financially.

But who needs health when you have energy drinks and painkillers.

Health...so stupid.

“I don’t think that part of it has anything to do with you.” Peter shot back defensively, maybe a little more snappish than he wanted it to be. That should have also been a warning sign Fury so graciously ignored. “And if you think that glitter and tinsel aren’t gender appropriate or whatever then you are a bunch of conservative assholes who really need to suck it up and get woke.” Poor Cap must be confused beyond all hell right now. But honestly, that outburst (which was uncalled for on many accountabilities) should really have made their heads turn to something was wrong with Peter.
But here they were, kept on ignoring the fact that somethings was fucking wrong with the kid.

“It’s more of an age thing, but take your pick I guess.” Tony replied with a shrug not at all affected by the comment like most of the other Avengers. Natasha wasn’t either, but she was not amused by it. “But hey, if you like glitter then you do you.” Peter gave an affirmative nod. Like he was satisfied with that answer.

“Thank you.” he said wanting it to be the end of the conversation. Rogers apparently had other plans though. It made the kid even more exasperated and snappish when he went on to tell Peter off. *Again.*

“Soldiers really should wear appropriate attire for the terrain they are fighting on. It matters and shows how well you actually take your job seriously.” Rogers was digging his own grave now. Welp, it was nice to know him. He really should have let Stark end it, he seemed to know how to take a hint.

“Okay let me just stop you right there,” Peter said cutting off the good captain off in the most unnecessarily blunt way. While again, gesturing with each statement. “One: I’m not a soldier. I don’t like being told what to do cause I’m a teenager and all that rebellion shit. B: no I don’t care that I said shit it’s just a word, it ain’t gonna kill your kittens. Lastly: I take it as a personal offense if you think I’ve taken *this*” he gestured to the Avengers “seriously, at all. That’s not my thing, and frankly I’m appalled you’d even suggest such a thing.” Peter finished off and walked past Rogers right to the window to sit on it. Romanov stiffened a bit, probably rethinking her decision to recruit him, but it was too late. Despite all that he said, and maybe some of it was even true, Parker *did* take his job seriously sometimes. This wasn’t a walk in the park for him either. “So without any further interruptions, can we get this over with cause my cloths have a hot date with a dry cleaner. Glitter is really really itchy.”

Fury wasn’t sure how to respond to that.

OoOoO

For a kid covered in glitter and tinsel, he did a fucking good job.

He cleaned up the trash like he normally did. Maybe even better because even robots seemed to underestimate a 5 foot 5 person in spandex and sparkles. Defiantly faster than normal, if he was being honest. Parker must really want to take a shower or something, and Fury couldn’t blame him.
He could still kick their asses though. It was at the end of the fight that Fury really finally noticed though.

Through the swinging and the kicking and punching and lasers and bullets, the kid was getting sluggish, much quicker than he normally did (and Spidey was the last to get sluggish in a battle because he seemed to have an inhuman energy supply). Lazily changing webs with heavy limbs and swinging higher to avoid fighting unease art targets to save civilians only. He didn’t really bother with robots that were doing nothing this time, sometimes even completely skipping over pods of them if an Avenger was near enough to deal with it. Aiming to kick the robots off their feet when they bothered civilians instead of actually engaging and fighting them hand to hand in ways that would put them out of commission for good instead of just throwing them off their games. It worked and he did his job, it just wasn’t normal for him to pick them off like this. Usually he’d corral them and fight them all almost at once.

By the time they got back to Avengers Tower, the glitter had mostly shaken off him—leaving a very sparkly battlefield wherever he had fought or swung over— and were stuck in crevices and indents that he had left in the robots. The kid was almost looked out of breath, managing to still stay straight and his breathing was almost sounding normal, but his chest was moving too fast and his movement was jerky and slow. It took Fury a minute to realize he was witnessing Spiderman being tired. When he did it nearly knocked him off his feet with shock, because even though it was a perfectly normal thing for someone to be tired after a battle, the kid usually wasn’t easily worn out, much less show it when he was. He usually had a seemingly infinite reserve for just that (along with the endless supply of facts about advanced STEM methods and achievements that he was sure not even Stark knew, and mindless questions that somehow made their way into the forefront of his mind on the most inappropriate times. Ie when he was trying to focus or sleep.)

“Mission successful but…” the stern voice had been somehow ignoring the child who was slouching in his seat for the whole meeting, but finally the big holographic heads turned to address Spiderman directly, and the kid was too out of it to notice that all heads turned to him. Probably thinking that he was off the hook when they didn’t immediately bash him for it. Allowing his guard to loosen (which also never happened and now Fury was kinda getting worried, but he’d never admit to that) just enough to make him startle at his code name.

“We reviewed the footage and your attire…” They really didn’t need to say it. Everyone knew he looked like a goddamn fairy princess had thrown up on him and threw him into a pit of glitter. Fury winced at the noticeable bits of glitter still stuck on the boy, seeming to amplify the sparkle under the lighting of the conference room. “It is less than exemplary. While We can reluctantly tolerate you’re inconsequence to your rash disregard to rules for the sake of our respect for your Director, but this is a clear disrespect to our entire standing.” He said harshly, letting his voice spit out the poorly disguised insult. Fury thought he saw Peter flinch a little as the voice rose a bit.

“You should be grateful we don’t arrest you and send you to the raft or even the icebox. You’re getting more out of hand than Fury’s authority applies, with no explanation, and your kind is always noted to be on the opposite side of the law.” Said another council member, as if Parker
wasn’t even human enough to be considered a person (Though fairy wasn’t entirely sure himself). That made Peter bristle and the others wince. Peter did have a thing about mutants rights (although he never defended himself, he always defended others) but Fury didn’t think the Avengers knew that. At least they were empathetic enough to know the council members had crossed a line.

“Then why haven’t you? If I’m so much trouble, why not send me?” He growled out with so much poison it even took Romanov off guard. It was deadly and scary and said that they had defiantly crossed a line. The Council wisely decided not to answer and Stark quickly found his autopilot and ended the call- but that’s all he seemed to be able to do until Peter lifted his spell. “That’s what I thought.” He crossed his arms with a huff and all the tension and malice that was building around him and expanding into the rest of the room seemed to vanish in an instant. Fury silently breathed as did the rest of the Avengers. Sure, the council members stepped out of line, even the Avengers could see that. But what in the everloving fuck was that? Peter didn’t seem to notice the unasked question or didn’t humor them with an answer as he slumped further in his chair, with no doubt a pout under the mask.

“What’s the icebox?” Sam asked after a bit, that poor soul. Peter didn’t answer him though, just managed to look childishly upset with the mask on.

“It’s a place where they send mutants and inhumans if they do illegal things.” Natasha managed to answer. It was an understatement, that place was a literal hellhole with the worst kinds of psychopaths- definitely no place for a kid. But that about summed it up as far as a person who wasn’t either a mutant or already in the loop needed to know.

“I’m surprised they threatened a kid with it. It’s brutal there.” Tony states with thoughtful honesty, but Fury could detect a bit of concern (Fury was his fair share concerned too. why the fuck were they threatening Parker with prison now?) . Natasha studies the kid for a second, contemplating his mood and motives. Trying to figure out just what was going on in that brain. Well good luck to her, cause not even Fury could figure that mystery.

“Why didn’t they just say the Raft. That’s what they use for us.” Sam asked confused, clearly not getting the hint to shut up about it. Yes while there were mutants in the Avengers, the Raft was made under US government jurisdictions, the Ice Box was a UN thing that was a lot shittier and way more of a threat than the Raft ever could be.

“They didn’t threaten me with the raft because they don’t have…” Peter trailed off, not really speaking loud enough for him want be heard by everyone, but everyone heard anyway. Natasha managed to look surprised now, she must’ve figured out something that Fury wasn’t looking for. Peter straightened a bit when all eyes were on him. “They don’t have power dampeners there. Enhancements don’t count as a mutation because that’s… muscle reconstruction… in my case I was…” Peter paused like he didn’t want to answer the rest of the question but he’d already dug himself in this hole too deep, everyone was expecting him to finish now. “My DNA was mutated
as well giving me powers. If your enhanced your DNA doesn’t change.” He said gesturing to Steve and then shrugging. It wasn’t what he was going to say before, it was probably censored and what he would’ve said before could’ve gave a lot away.

Damn his vigilance.

“They take your powers?” Clint asked a little surprised. But Fury knew that Clint wasn’t surprised at the fact they took the powers away; he was surprised that they threatened to take a child’s powers. Barton might not be a mutant, but he knows that a mutants health is based on their powers too. Especially a child.

“’S not that bad. Just feel a little sick, cause I wasn’t…. it’s really okay.” Peter cutting himself off not ready to share the good stuff. Even after the year they’ve been together (although it wasn’t a very productive year in the terms of personal exchange between the Avengers and Parker). Fury sighed.

“Take the mask off kid.” Fury ordered, sick of trying to read the kid with the mask on and spitballing his feelings. Peter sighed and took it off, not arguing but Fury could tell he didn’t want to do it. He regretted asking the kid to do it immediately.

Now Fury, looking at Parker’s mask free face, regretted letting him come on this mission at all. He looked like shit- to put it lightly. His face hollowed like he hadn’t had a good meal in a while. His dark nearly black bags under his eyes, like he hadn’t gotten sleep in the last month. He was trying to wet his cracked drying lips to pass the awkward showcasing of his exhaustion. What was holding this kid together?

“Well, this has been nice. I’ve gotta go.” Peter said with a mock friendly voice and made a beeline for the elevator, trying not to look at the Avengers in fear their temporary stunned state would evaporate before he could go.

Unfortunately, for him, it did. Steve stepped in front of him before he could get the last 5 strides. Everyone was kind of relieved in a way that he managed to get Peter to stop and not go around or dodge like he would’ve if he was too tired. Peter sighed like he’d expected it. but he still looked a bit surprised when Rogersmoved his arm when Peter tilted his head to look at his goal. “That kinda means I’ve, you know, gotta go. As in leave.” Peter explained, trying to get the man to move, prepared to only go around him once.

“Yeah, and this means I’m not letting you. As in stay.” Steve shot back and if Peter wasn’t surprised before, he sure was now. Captain America sassing him into staying. It worked enough to
make him freeze his every limb and look up at the older man with wide raccoon eyes.

“Why?” He asked in a curious childish way, tilting his head only slightly. Like a toddler asking why the sky was blue or how birds fly. That voice shouldn’t be coupled with those tired eyes.

“How long have you been awake?” Steve asked instead, in his commander voice, and to his credit not being visibly shocked at the contrast in appearances Parker had been giving off since he came in. It was like he thought it was the only thing Peter would respond to, which uhh, rude. And no, he would probably respond to that voice last if anything.

“I just told you I was pranked because I was sleeping.” Peter furrowed his eyebrows, like he didn’t understand why Steve was asking the question. Steve mimicked the look, taking a second long to answer.

“Cause you passed out.” Bruce stepped in suddenly. His deadpanned voice being a relief to the order and professionalism of the conversation that Peter couldn’t seem to wipe out. Peter whipped his head over to the doctor.

“I did not ‘pass out’. I just wanted to sleep.” Peter retorted “it was intentional. Completely and totally on purpose.” he huffed and crossed his arms like a child would.

“Yeah sure kid.” Tony snorted in disbelief. “You seriously need sleep, and that’s coming from me.” he looked at the kid and scrunched up his nose. And if Stark was saying that the kid needed sleep, then he probably needed a weeks worth of it. “And a bath.” He added, and Fury couldn’t help but agree. Peter glared at him, but the look had no heat.

“And some food.” Bruce put in helpfully. Or not so helpful because Peters eyes grew a bit panicked, for some reason. Banner didn’t seem to catch it as he went on. “Really just rest, why don’t you-”

“Bye.” Peter said backing up near the window and opening it and jumped out. As he probably would have before, had he not been too tired to notice it.

The Avengers sighed.
5 years earlier…

James “Bucky” Barnes was fucking Krasnaya.

The man she’d loved, and had been in the searching for was Steve Roger’s best friend. and now Steve was asking her to try and find him. Because he had gotten a tip about the Winter Soldier, that Natasha had been presuming and she had originally asked him for help, but then they found out the identity of The soldier and now Steve was asking her to make a different call and not to kill him. Like she was ever going to kill him in the first place.

So she agreed, because she wasn’t sure if she was ready to confess what she was feeling just yet. She wasn’t ready to tell Steve about the Red Room and HYDRA. She wasn’t ready to tell Steve about their child. Hell she didn’t even know if she was ready to tell Kras- Bucky.

She was mad. Mad at Steve for making her do this- even if she wanted to do it anyway. Mad at Clint for not being here for her to vent. Mad at Kras-no Barnes, for leaving her with her son alone- even if they had no choice and he didn’t know.

Their son.

Even on that bunker she looked him directly in the eye, and he’s stared at her like he’d seen a ghost. Trying to remember her as they were Pointing a guns to each other’s head. He wouldn’t remember- even if he promised and Natasha feels angry that he forgot that promise too. Steve was not too far from her, trying to coax him to put the gun down, to tell him that she was a friend as if they hadn’t already known each other, but it wouldn’t work.

His eyes were fixated on her, and only her. A painful memory trying to escape and come into light to remember who she is. She could tell he was trying to have a memory of her. She knew she looked familiar to him. That haunted look in his eye, it was clouded by confusion. Like he needed confirmation.

She rolled her eyes, put her gun away and walked up to him, Steve stopped talking to him as she strutted up quickly, soon it turned into almost running. The feelings and emotions and pain made her go faster and she wasn’t sure if she was crying but right now she didn’t care. She was Running to her love, her family. The family she built in hell. The family she wouldn’t stop trying to find. The family she loved and lost. Slowly it would come together again. This was just proof of the hope she had wasn’t all for nothing.
He didn’t shoot her. He wouldn’t shoot. He couldn’t shoot. He pull the trigger as she walked up, but he had the panicked look in his eye, like he wasn’t prepared for whatever she was going to do. He didn’t know what to do. He froze. He didn’t shot when she kissed him long and hard.

“Natalia.” he said. It was confirmed when she didn’t answer. “Natasha.” he said and she smirked against his lips. Sealing the confirmation as he kissed back, albeit far more gently.

“Finally remembered?” she asked when they broke apart. “I thought I was unforgettable.” She said snarkily. He smiled in a way that made her heart melt. She missed that smile.

“You are.” he said, and looked at her before the smile turned down into a frown. She raised an eyebrow. “I have to go.” he said going to pull away and she grabbed his arms tighter. She couldn’t loose him again. Not to this cruel world.

“No...you can’t” she said almost frantically, she didn’t know how she was going to tell him. She thought he was dead and then found out he wasn’t and then went on a submission to find him now. But now that she was here, and he was looking at her. Begging her to give him a reason to stay. She did. “We have a son.”

She heard Steve gasp (because he must have been quietly confused the entire time at the interaction between the two assassins). Barnes didn’t know how to respond, stayed stony and silent. She could tell that he was immediately in.

She still had a lot of explaining to do.

OoOoO

Present...

Fury dragged the kid more often than not.

It wasn’t a worrying fact, but it was a queer observation. The kid allowed himself to be dragged, as if he didn’t want to go but he also didn’t really care; and it really didn’t seem like much of a chore since he was so small. It was normal for them by this point, albeit the first time he did it, the Avengers were stunned into silence for a minute. I mean who wouldn’t be surprised by the esteemed Director of SHIELD dragging in a teenage punk in spandex to an Avengers mission?
There were a million questions when Peter first ‘joined’ the team, nearly none of them were asked verbally, even fewer were answered by neither Peter nor Fury. He didn’t really join, more like helped and then disappeared for a week or two. It was ‘just take the kid, Stark.’ Peter hadn’t protested to it, although he did side eye the window, and Tony was pretty sure he wanted to make a break for it (out the fucking window). Tony didn’t know back then that the kid could jump out of a 70 story building and still be fine, so the thought that he was suicidal crossed his mind for a brief second. And then the second thought was: why the fuck does Fury have a kid? The third thought was: why is Fury giving me a kid? In hindsight, he probably should have wondered who the kid was, but he was so caught up in the fact that he was a kid, he didn’t really have time to dwell on it. But Fury wouldn’t answer his questions, so he took the presumably suicidal kid to the mission room.

He wasn’t exactly wrong.

The first mission they had together, he didn’t even try to listen to Steve. He just threw his small body at a freaking alien robot centipede that was shooting lasers directly at him. Somehow he got out of that situation visibly unscathed, but after the mission he was yanked to the side by Steve in the jet and lectured on ‘turn your goddamn comm on!’ Peter looked at him confused, but didn’t say anything for the first 30 minutes, as Steve’s yelling got louder, and the kid’s face got more confused. Tony couldn’t help but notice, he wasn’t scared of the yelling, in fact it seemed like he was used to it. When Tony looked closer he noticed something else, the kid genuinely didn’t understand why he was being yelled at, and Tony had to give props to him for not asking or snapping at Steve sooner. Because when you were being yelled at by Captain America or any adult for that matter (at least when you’re a kid), you didn’t think about what you did, you just kind of assumed you did something wrong.

Not this kid.

“What comm?” he interrupted, finally giving up on trying to figure it out through context clues. Steve went silent and stunned and didn’t seem to be moving anytime soon. That must’ve been a new record and had Toony finally thinking: Who is this kid? (Although not under the appropriate circumstances, still plausible within first meeting) He was then quietly taken to the side by Clint (Because Steve was currently a mix between illiterate and guilt ridden to explain himself for yelling at a teenager for 30 minutes straight for his own mistakes) who explained the communication system they had in battle. The kid didn’t cry though, not even close. He didn’t seem sad at all, just neutral. Or maybe bored. Cap’s speech hadn’t affected him in the least.

The kid was a mystery.

Tony then made a mental file for Peter Parker:

1.) He seemed to pick on things really easily. (it was literally impossible to sneak up on him) He
notices things even Natasha doesn’t notice sometimes.

2.) He also seemed to be more on the rebellious side of independent. But he also follows orders when he wants to. Sometimes it wasn’t even out of rebellion, actually it was mostly not out of rebellion. Okay, he was independent.

3.) He throws himself in front of anything and everything that harms even a stray cat (especially a stray cat actually), but he usually goes for the stuff that does the most damage first.

Tony’s been on over 30 missions with him, and that’s the only thing that is consistent: He follows orders when he feels like it, but it was hard to tell when he would. He didn’t have a particular mood for following orders, he kind of just did it or didn’t, so it was a toss up whether or not he’d actually listen. Either way, he got his job done exceedingly well despite what everyone says to him that he screwed up (which no, he only screwed up orders, so Tony never told him of, because there was less casualties when Spidey did his own thing. So he wouldn’t reprimand the kid for doing his job well, but he also wouldn’t stop the others from lecturing him about orders).

Sometimes Tony thinks the kid is just playing them all for fools, because even though he’s a kid and supposedly has dropped out of school for this superhero/vigilante gig he’s got going on, Parker wasn’t stupid. The opposite, in fact. He was clever and quick-thinking, seeming to formulate ten contingency plans for when he thought the original plan would go balls up. And he always expected every plan to go balls up (which was smart, but also infuriating because he never had any faith even in his own plans. He just never had any faith in plans, period). He’s never really shown anything, intelligence wise, but his in-battle smarts; Tony figures it must take some sort of calculation to get the web to hit where he wants it to every single time. There is no way he’s so lucky as to have 100 percent accuracy without some form of basic math or physics (but none of the basics checks out for web slinging).

Peter talked too much, but he never gave anything away. It was frustrating when you were trying to read him or dig up something personal, and the mask certainly didn’t help especially when trying to know his emotions. If the conversation got too personal (Tony hasn’t really found the line, but he knows he’s close) Peter would just change the subject or jump out of a window - or off a roof, it really depended on his mood, location and the weather.

He seemed to know exactly what everyone was gonna say, and exactly how to read everybody in the room (like Natasha, but like a kid that was male and could speak 70 miles an hour to a criminal while webbing them up). The only way Tony found this out was by observing the kid for literally 5 seconds instead of yelling at him immediately upon his arrival. He knew what to say, when to say it and how to say what he wanted without any regard to consequences. But he still knew what the consequences were, and didn’t give a shit.

It was terrifying.
The kid never really stopped talking, not even when nobody was listening. He seemed content with talking to himself or whatever voices that were in his head (Tony was 56 percent sure there were voices in his head, but Tony wasn’t judging, they all had voices in their heads too, quiet voices that never really talked but never really left you alone, or maybe that was just him? He doubt Steve had a voice in his head telling him to work and build and shit). Tony’s caught him through the comms once, yelling at something that wasn’t there, and that was probably the maddest he’s ever seen the kid. He was happiest when he was talking to someone that didn’t actually yell back, mainly that came in the form of a dog, cat or other domesticated animal- hell they didn’t even have to be domesticated, Tony had found the kid holding a decent conversation with a raccoon once, when they were waiting for evac to arrive. Tony never mentioned it.

The first time Tony was scared of him was when he came stumbling in behind Fury after a mission in a baggy, ripped up hoodie and icy stare at the floor. He was quiet, calculative and angry. It was the most terrifying thing he’d ever experience. As soon as Parker walked into the room, all conversation had stopped, the air got too thick, and everyone could tell there was something seriously wrong. It was chilling and daunting, but the scariest part was when he noticed the Avengers(who hadn’t been looking at him, except for Tony) and the tension and ice in the room just vanished into thin air, and the room seemed to become bright again as the kid slapped on the smile that Tony thought was his actual smile.

It seemed so real.

He was bubbly and happy and talkative, but Tony watched him as he didn’t seem to notice that he was talking to himself three hundred miles per hour. It was like an autopilot thing. A thing he did to distract himself, or maybe comfort himself. They all had their quirks and coping mechanisms, so Tony wasn’t going to judge.

So in conclusion, Peter Parker was a child. Case closed. Right?

He knew he couldn’t be more wrong.

He had to be dragged to things (not necessarily screaming but definitely unwilling) that he didn’t wanna deal with. He didn’t like following rules, if not because he thinks he’s right then to piss someone off (whether it be Avengers, government officials, criminals, agents etc.) He was talkative and rambled too much about… anything really (especially about dog breeds).

Sure he was powerful, and cunning, and could slap together a decent plan, but those combined with his childish antics, made for embarrassing and amusingly strange first impressions. Like awkward teenager, but to the max.
He wasn’t even sure why the hell Fury would want to introduce him to the King of Wakanda (it was a bad fucking idea, and this kid was so controversial with strangers, he could start a war. Although he was never rude, he actually was probably the most open minded and accepting guy Tony has ever met. But that wasn’t what he was worried about). Probably because he was going on the next mission with them which was in a week, and his sister Shuri would stay here with Harley (they seemed to have kicked off some sort of science nerd thing together, he loved his kid).

T’challa was already here talking with Steve (probably about Barnes’ return, which was in a few days if he was not mistaken), and Shuri was doing the same with Harley (but like on a more excited level), they were just waiting on Fury, who was probably dragging along the kid. Who last time they saw him, was a week ago when he was tired and covered in glitter and the dictionary definition misery.

This time he looked more rested, although still sleepy, but not exhausted. He was in a NASA hoodie and hello kitty pajama pants, it was the first time he’d seen him without the spiderman suit or any variation of a costume/professional gear one could go vigilante-ing in.

He looked too much like a kid to be a person who fought alien robots.

He looked like a freaking teenager, and yeah he always looked like a teenager, but usually the costume and the webs and the tech dampened it’s affect (like he wasn’t really a real kid, just a kid). But the hoodie he was wearing was way too big for him and the sleeves went over his hands, faded letters that he could barely make out as ‘NASA’. The Hello Kitty Pants were soft pink and also two sizes too big, but the kid pulled the drawstring as tight as it could go cause two hot pink strings were dangling dangerously between his legs. And his shoes were literally a dirty torn up pair was grey converse and the soles and other areas were duck taped. He had a ratty black jansport backpack on his back, and one strap was broken, and there was also duck tape holding that together. Over all he looked like a normal teen with a lower class status. (And that’s what he really was, wasn’t he? A kid, from Queens who skateboarded with his friends and went to school. That’s what he should’ve been at least.)

He looked irritated and tired, but not as tired or miserable as last time. The tired like someone just woke him up from his nap kind of tired, and that was severely better than about to collapse from exhaustion and starvation tired. At least this time he was somewhat clean and not tracking glitter everywhere. Although, he still looked like he could use a meal or two.

“You know there’s a literal King in the room?” Clint said addressing the kid, as no one seemed to notice their entrance (besides Tony and definitely Natasha), the rest of the Avengers, including the king and princess and Harley, turned to them and Peter huffed a little, weather it was in defense or defiance he wasn’t quite sure, and crossed his sweater pawed arms (oh my god his looked adorable) across his chest. He wasn’t sure if he was trying to be intimidating, but if he was he failed. Like Catastrophically. He looked like a goddamn puppy.
“Now I know.” Peter said a little red tinting his cheeks. “I didn’t think you were serious.” he mumbled to himself, probably referring to Fury. T’challa raised a brow at his appearance, but decided not to comment. If he was confused as to why the Avengers didn’t harp on him for the less than appropriate attire, Tony would not be surprised.

“Okay, last time you were in pink it was an accident. Why do I get the feeling this is on purpose?” Tony phrased like a question. His attempt to be subtle about the fact that Peter has often gotten himself into many a fashion disasters. And this, was not one of them. T’challa seemed grateful for it, and smiled at him with a gentle calm smile. That smile should be used for therapy.

“I was sleeping and this asshole,” he gestured wildly to Fury behind him. “Fucking woke me up. Like I blocked you for a reason bastard. Take a hint.” he crossed his arms, Fury didn’t seem phased in the least. Did the kid often block the director of SHIELD? Like what other things does a dropout do? He was 15 so he couldn’t get a job. And all he did was rescue cats and help old ladies all day, with the occasional criminal and odd supervillain… Right?

“You were asleep for three days.” he said in a monotone and Parker shot a mean glare at him with no real heat. Tony could testify to being cranky after taking a nap, but a nap did not last three whole days. That was a fucking coma. The king seemed amused by this and was laughing a quiet deep chuckle, Parker didn’t notice or didn’t really care as he continued.

“Just cause you sleep with one eye open doesn’t mean the rest of us have don’t have to sleep. We all don’t come from the depths of hell where relaxation and warmth doesn’t exist, you know.” Peter replied in what Tony could only describe as a ‘teenager tone’. Nice kid, Preach.

“You didn’t change because…?” Steve asked, probably pissed off at the attire too, but not commenting because last time they did, it was clearly and definitely not his fault (though it did seem like his fault this time, but you never know with Peter Parker, and Tony believes they were fully starting to understand that… after a full year). Peter looked like he was about to drop some mad wisdom. Oh this should be fun.

“I gave up and decided to hit fuck it for the sixth time this week.” Peter nodded seemingly satisfied with that answer. Steve sighed and quietly apologize to a very amused king about their not so resident spiderling, while Tony barked out a laugh.

“Wow, mood.” it was Princess Shuri herself who was smiling mischievously, Peter looked over to the voice and he looked at the other teenager curiously.
“It really is no problem. You are just a child, after all.” T’challa seemed patronizing, consoling mostly Steve that it was okay, But Peter did not like that voice... at all. Still he slapped on a sickly sweet smile that screamed ‘try me bitch’, but at the same time was so damn innocent.

Shuri rolled her eyes and made her way over to Peter, Harley loosely following her, and examined his shirt. “You like NASA?” her eyes lit up, Peter looked more genuinely bashful now. But there was a unquestionable light that flared in his own. A light that Tony hasn’t ever seen on Peter Parker ever. Huh, interesting.

“Uhh, I-” he didn’t seem to know how to finish, or to begin really. Harley did for him.

“You didn’t mention that last time.” he said not unkindly, pointing at the sweatshirt and Peter looked quickly down then up again. Atta boy kiddo.

“I guess it never came up?” Peter said and Fury rolled his eyes and pushed the kids to the side to have their ‘playtime’ while Fury went over to Cap and T’challa to talk to them privately (probably about Barnes). Everyone went back to their own conversations, Tony listened into the kids’ though, sipping his coffee as he did so.

“So are you more of an aerophysics type of guy, or do you like astrophysics?” Shuri asked, trying to maintain conversation with a person that apparently was really shit at making decent conversation, despite how much he talked. Peter blinked at the question.

“I-I work mos-mostly with a-aero-” Peter said quiet in a stutter. Like he didn’t know how to respond to the question, or that he would respond wrong. He probably didn’t know how, considering he dropped out of high school if he wasn’t mistaken. But something about his tone was different. Shy. It was way different then how he talked to the adults. Tony thinks he knows what to say, just not how to say it, which Tony has never known Peter to be capable of.

“Aerophysics is more earthly based, while astro is space stuff.” Harley dumbed down for him. Based on their past conversation he had no choice but to assume Peter did know about science, although he did seem to know history facts and debate topics. Peter face seemed to fall a little, like he knew that but he just didn’t have time to say it.

Poor kid. He was gonna get roasted.

“W-Well yeah, I-I use Aerophysics when- when I go-” Peter was cut off again, Tony was getting
irritated for Peter, cause he was obviously piecing something together. Peter on the other hand, seemed to be disappointed rather than mad or annoyed, every time he was cut off. It was as if he was finally being allowed to speak and say his opinion but then the rug would be pulled from under him every time.

“Harley, let him speak!” Shuri said crossing her arms. Harley huffed. Thank you Shuri. Listen to the spider child.

“Well he kinda dropped out of high school, but I don’t think they offer any sort of advanced classes at public school anyways.” Harley said in his defense. Peter didn’t deflate at the comment, rather smile a little. Just a quick quirk of the lips -like he knew something they didn’t. Shuri made and ‘o’ with her mouth and furrowed her brow in confusion.

“Then why does he have a NASA sweatshirt?” Shuri asked and pointed to the sweatshirt. Harley shrugged and she looked to Peter for an answer who just kicked an imaginary rock and shoved his hands into his pocket.

“It was the cheapest thing on the shelf…” he mumbled, Tony almost didn’t hear him. And oh damn, that’s a reality awakening. Shuri seemed to sympathize as she put a hand on his shoulder.

“Don’t worry, I didn’t even go to elementary school.” she said and Harley snickered, because Shuri was homeschooled, and by that, she meant that she literally taught herself everything. She was a super genius afterall. But Peter didn’t know that. That’s...kind of mean...

“Well, I liked Chemistry…” Peter offered tentatively, sounding like he didn’t want to be a total disappointment, not getting that they were being little shits right now. Something dawned on Tony.

Had Peter ever had friends before? A mutant and enhanced. Probably snarky and also closed off. Knows how to fight and piss people off. He didn’t really seem like the type to have-

Oh shit.

“Chemistry? I figured you liked Gym the most Parker.” Harley snickered and Shuri right along with him. Peter looked confused as he shook his head.

“N-Not really. I kinda sucked at Gym, but I was okay in Chemistry-” Peter looked a little shocked
when Harley and Shuri burst out laughing and Peter looked down at himself and look back up confused. Like he didn’t know what he did that was so funny.

“Did you get a what, C+?” Shuri said and Peter took all of a second to figure out what was happening. He blushed and ducked his head, Tony couldn’t see his eyes, but his body position looked absolutely devastated.

“I-um-I d-d-didn’t...I- w-w-was...-” Why was he stuttering? Come on kid, say something smart. Say something funny. Jump out a window. Do something, say something! Anything! Don’t just stand there.

But he did. He stood there and took it. It was worse than when he was taking Roger’s demeaning lectures or Nat’s harsh reprimands. This caught Peter off guard, and he didn’t know how to do anything but take it. Tony hated that a lot.

“Parker, get your ass over here!”

Thank god, Fury.

OoOoO

He was so stupid.

He’d been bullied before, he e’d been insulted and babied and condoned. He’d been yelled at before. But usually those were all to his face, or mask. If someone had a problem with him, they usually didn’t try to embarass him before or lead him on. And if they did, he always caught on.

Albeit some people used to do that, but recently? Nope. Everyone just yelled at him. There was no one his age to do that with. Not with the parts and people he hung around with now. They were all grown ups. Condescending, jerkass grownups..

It’s just...they were asking questions that he could answer. That he liked answering. That he’d been telling himself about aerodynamics and physics formulas that made him fly above buildings, but only to people who don’t listen or creatures who don’t understand. Things that were only theoretical to everyone else, but he could do them (but couldn’t tell them because he had an identity to keep). Every web that was shot for swing was timed and placed according to the precise
calculations he did in his head. Eventually they became a thing he did subconsciously, but he could still tell people the formulas - and he kinda thought they were cool. That’s why he never got anything less than 100 in physics class.

Because if he got anything less than 100 as Spiderman, he’d die.

He let them lead him on and didn’t even notice. He didn’t have a come back or snarky comment to make at the end. He didn’t have the last word to say or anything, it was like his mind had went blank. What happened? He was doing so well. He never let that happen anymore, unless he wanted it to (and he never wanted it to, but like undercover shit was all about the details).

But then kids that were his age showed up and he started to get nervous. Started to lose his words. He didn’t expect to see them here, he had no time to prepare. These kids were a little older than him, but not by the margin that the Avengers were. They liked science and they talked about it with passion. He could hop on that train any day, and he was going to without any second thoughts.

You’re getting desperate.

He was about to ruin everything.

He should be glad that they didn’t actually expect him to say anything intelligent. He shouldn’t have gotten so depressed though. Because he let them believe he wasn’t book smart, and he knew he was smart. It just hurt sometimes that he couldn’t be himself around people anymore. He should’ve just made a joke or said something Spiderman was expected to say.

Why did he freeze?

He must have gotten too excited. He hasn’t done that in a while. That wasn’t fucking good.

“Suit up.” Fury said and he went straight to the bathroom to do just that, and stop his racing heart and melting brain. Was this really the way to do this? No… he couldn’t think like that. It’s safer for everyone if he just stays away. He was glad he wouldn’t have to see those two in a while.

He felt a pang in his chest. Which was stupid, because that was just some light joking. It wasn’t even that bad. They were just having some fun. They didn’t know Peter hadn’t had anything nice said to him in a while. They didn’t know that people never asked questions to him in a form of not
yelling. They didn’t know that people never asked him about his interests outside of Spiderman. They didn’t know he missed MJ and Ned so much that it made his heart want to explode.

They didn’t know.

And it fucking hurt.

See this? This right here, is why he can’t have nice things. Not as long as he wears the suit. Not as long as he’s Peter Parker, or Petya or whoever he was.

And he can’t just give up the suit. Cause Spider-man was his constant now. He had nothing else. It was the thing that will never leave him (it can never leave him), whether he wants it to or not. He’s stuck with it.

...hehe... stuck.

There you go Parker.

“You good kid?” Tony asked as he was getting on the plane. What was his game? Peter narrowed his eyes suspiciously. Defenses rebuilt and now stronger than they were when he first walked in.

“I’m great.” That came out wrong. Peter ducked his head a bit, and moved forward faster, ignoring how Stark’s gaze lingered on his back a bit. He didn’t care. He shouldn’t care.

“Wheels up in 5.” Romanov said as she passed by him. So she saw his fallout too, because she didn’t sound that angry with him. Well they could suck it, cause he didn’t need sympathy...or friends. He gave that up knowing what it meant. He was losing the only people he had in life. The only people who would be willing to deal with his BS and everything that came with it. He wouldn’t let them, cause they were his friends.

Weird how that worked.

He went to sit on the ground in front of the third seat, under the window. It was unspoken, but his spot, no one touched it. He was there for a good 10 minutes after they took off before Stark came
and sat in the plush aisle seat, leaning back casually as if he owned it (and he did, it’s just...this was you know, Peter’s place). He was gearing up on the floor, his legs in a cross, and only spared him a glance before looking back down intently relocking his webshooters, like he had done something wrong, unable to look him in the eye.

What was wrong with him? Did this really bother him that much? He’s been through so much worse. He’s Spiderman! He could fight 15 guys at once, and punch robots out of the sky. Why was this bothering him?

They should have known!

Focus on the mission!

He wanted the voices to shut up. They weren’t helping. He closed his eyes for a second before Stark spoke, affectingly silencing them.

“Teenagers can be mean.” he said and it made Peter uncomfortable. He shifted oddly, and still didn’t look up, but did stop fiddling with his web shooters. Stark continued. “You have friends?” he asked. He was silent until Stark believed he wouldn’t answer and moved to leave.

He should have let him leave.

“I used to.” he said instead. Stark took it as an invitation to stay, it probably was.He shifted into a more comfortable position in the seat.

“Where are they now?” he seemed a little hesitant to ask. Peter knew why. He never talked about his own personal life. That’s probably because there wasn’t much of a personal life to talk about. At least not anymore.

“They aren’t dead...but... they- I left them.”Peter stuttered out. He should really shut up. This wasn’t something he wanted anybody, especially Tony Stark (a man who can probably look up his name and instantly find out his friends intern for him and then he’d ruin this streak of silence and put them in danger and-)

“Why?” Peter shifted again. He couldn’t find a good position. His skin was too hot, he needed a cold new surface, but they just kept getting warmed up by his body heat.
“They aren’t like me...they don’t know about,” he gestured upward, and Stark knew he was referring to his powers and Spiderman. “This job...I don’t have the resources to keep them safe...not like you do…”

“Why don’t you just ask SHIELD, they seem to back you no matter what you do.” Tony said crossing his arms and leaning back into a casual position. Peter knew that was a jab at his obvious irritation to getting away with seemingly everything. Peter shook his head.

“even if I did, there are some bad guys that don’t want money…” Tony seemed to understand that immediately, as there was a respectful silence for awhile. Peter thought it was the end of the conversation, but then Stark said something else.

“You seemed pretty into that conversation though. You like science?” Peter couldn’t bring himself to speak, there was a lump in his throat so he just nodded. “Why didn’t you just speak up?”

“I...I guess I forgot what it felt like… it reminded me of my talks with my... friends, I guess.” Peter shrugged. He couldn’t read Tony’s look, so he went on. “I shouldn’t have let myself- let it get that far.” Peter corrected, he could feel Stark’s gaze on him. Pitying. He hated it.

“Peter-”

“Stop.” Tony was shocked still at his tone. “Stop prying. And stop giving me that look. I don’t need it, and frankly I-” Peter took a breath, and calmed himself down, because now he was probably scaring Tony and if he screamed he knew he would sound childish. “I would appreciate you letting this go Mr.Stark. My interests and personal connections have nothing to do with what we are doing. I am not your teammate, nor an Avenger, so stay. out. of. It.” he warned.

He got up and took his bag with him to move to the other isle. This one wasn’t safe anymore.

Tony just looked at him as he passed the second aisle.

OoOoO

8 years earlier...
He didn’t like going home.

It had been 5 months since Peter had first came out of Special forces with Wade and was officially (by Wade’s terms)on reverse summer vacation- though he hadn’t understood what he meant at the time. Wade has dropped him off at the airport in Beijing and he got off at the airport in New York City to be found by a mild mannered lady named Margaret who took him in a silver car to a dingy apartment building in a place called Queens and giving him to May and Ben Parker.

He didn’t know what to think about it at first. It was very different from all the other places he’s lived and people whom he lived with. The first thing that had gone through his head was that the apartment smelt really bad. The second thing was that Ben Parker smelt almost as bad as the apartment, if not worse. And the third was that May Parker was not all...there. Like she had been drugged. Peter could sure as hell smell drugs and alcohol from the surrounding apartments.

Nonetheless, Margaret wrinkled her nose and told them his name and relevant information as fast as she could before getting out of there and left as soon as she could. Ben waved him off to go somewhere as May stumbled over to him and was about to fall, until she used him as support. Now that he could see her closer she only looked partially sedated. There but not really aware.

He wondered what kind of place this would be like. What kind of training he’d get here. What kind of missions Ben and May would make him go on. This wasn’t really meeting the standards of all the other places, and far more unprofessional to be anything official. Why would Cotnet send him here?

May had taken him to his room which was small and had a bed and desk and closet and the walls were painted forest green instead of grey, and there were cloths that weren’t black in the closet and they didn’t seem to have any armor. Was he going undercover? She had said that he started school in a week and to take anything that was in the kitchen if he was hungry before stumbling out to do whatever. Peter shut the door for her and explored the room. There were books on the desk and a schedule that said Queens Elementary School Course list- Peter Parker. He read the relevant documents then he opened his shitty phone and typed in what an elementary school was.

That had been their first interaction. Peter kind of avoided them after that. He wasn’t really sure what they were meant to do(because they didn’t ask him to train and they didn’t give him assignments. School did But you didn’t have to kill anybody in school, in fact it was a rule that you weren’t allowed to hurt people), but after observing a few months of other kids and the interactions with their families, he finally understood what they were supposed to do. And he could help but feel a little sad that they didn’t do their job properly. That they didn’t take care of him or watch out for him. Or harp on him about his grades even if they were really good anyway(praise? Maybe a little praise wouldn’t hurt).
He found himself wanting Wade to be here, because Wade had taken care of him really well even if he was a bit odd (he took better care of him than anyone else he could remember). But he wouldn’t see Wade until the summer again and he didn’t think Wade really knew how to deal with this School nonsense either. But it was okay, Peter kinda liked school (the teachers didn’t yell at him when he asked questions and he learned things he already knew but it was still nice because they let him read a lot of books too).

After 3 months with May and Ben Parker is when the insults started. From Ben anyway. When May was heavily sedated or out doing work (because May was kinda nice and sometimes brought back extra fries from the diner she worked at, just for Peter) and only Ben was home.

It had started when he was getting some dinner, because no one cooked for him he had learned (but all he figured out with the little money that wasn’t spent on drugs was only able to afford take out and cup noodles). Ben was in the kitchen getting a beer from the fridge and Peter was set on ignoring him, because he was never very nice when he talked to Peter. He took out a cup of Ramen because that was all their paycheck could afford right now. Ben has commented on the sodium- or grumbled really- and Peter perked up slightly because that was kind of a sciencey thing to say so he started to prattle off about the element sodium but then Ben wrinkled his nose and snapped at him to stop being so annoying, he was just telling Peter that he looked like he was getting really big. Peter had looked down at himself and blushed.

He had been putting on more weight with more consistent, bigger meals, and he hadn’t been really training to burn calories as much because of school (which really the only class that burned calories was PE and that wasn’t even hard). So Peter put the cup away and didn’t eat that night- losing his appetite for the next three days in fact (before MJ practically shove a handful of fries in his mouth and told him he looked like more of a depressed twig than usual). He really had to watch what he ate if Ben even noticed that he was gaining weight (and if Ben had noticed anything at all it must be pretty apparent. How had he not noticed though?), it would make getting missions done harder if he wasn’t fit. And Ben never noticed him, so it must have been a problem... Right?

It took Peter 2 years to realize that was the stupidest thing he’d ever done because of Ben. And he had done a lot of stupid things because of Ben, but not eating and developing a kind of disability for a bit because of it (he got out of that though, especially when Ned had subtly voiced his concern and MJ not so subtly told him he was being an idiot. But by that time, he was more used to not eating than not, but he did get better) was the stupidest thing he had done for the man (although food bills were never a problem with him).

He would regret a lot of things he had done.

OoOoO

Present…
Spidey is a good smasher.

He is small, so when Hulk first saw him he didn’t think he would be a good smasher, but Spidey was strong in his puny body-to Hulks absolute delight. When he first met Hulk, he was wearing red and the bad guys were grey, so he realized that Spidey was a friend. But if he was wearing grey like he did that one time, Hulk would’ve smashed him (but he didn’t because he already knew Spidey was a friend). Spidey has started to fight with them more, and every time Spidey wasn’t there, Hulk got sad.

Nobody liked fighting with Hulk, except for Spidey. They all stayed away because when he smashes, sometimes things go boom, and he likes his friends when they make things go boom, but he doesn’t like it when they go boom too. Their smashing was more, or-der-ly- at least that is the term Shield used. He also said that Hulk smashing was too dangerous for others to be around except for the bad guys. Because it was good when the bad guys were hurt but not other things.

But Spidey didn’t need to worry about things going boom. He always moved away before they did, and Hulk didn’t know how he did it, but it made him stay near Hulk during battle. Spidey just knew when things were going to go boom before they went boom. Hulk only understood that much, but nobody else did because they all yelled at him when he ‘got too close’ to something dangerous.

Spidey had a metal thingy in his ear that let him hear the Avengers even though he couldn’t see them. Everyone had one. Except for Hulk. Hulk would accidentally smash the metal thingy if he had one. It still made him sad that he couldn’t talk to anyone like they did to each other. But sometimes Spidey would press a button and couldn’t hear them anymore. He would then make a relieved noise and start talking to Hulk instead. Which made Hulk happy, and Spidey seemed to like to talk to Hulk more than the others (because, even if Hulk likes his friends, they always yelled at Spidey, even if Spidey was Hulks friend too).

Hulk didn’t understand why he did that, but he liked having Spidey talk- because Hulk didn’t talk a lot. And Spidey talked a lot. He was funny and made fun of the bad guys and not Hulk.

They had a lot of fun together. They’d play smashing games together and it was fun. He liked it when Spidey laughed and was happy, because Hulk was making Spidey happy. He never made anyone happy or laugh or smile (even if Spidey didn’t have a mouth to smile with).

Hulk liked Spidey, because Spidey wasn’t afraid of him.
But sometimes, and Hulk always noticed, Spidey wouldn’t talk. He’d turn off his metal thingy before the smashing even started. He stayed closer to Hulk, and they would do serious smashing. That was smashing with no games or fun or talking- but Hulk could tell a Spidey wasn’t talking because of not Hulk reasons. Hulk didn’t like when Spidey went quiet. It meant that he was sad.

When Spidey was quiet, it meant that he had a lot to say. But he didn’t know how to say it, he didn’t read minds like the Red Girl did. But Hulk didn’t know how to make Spidey better and not sad anymore, So Hulk helped Spidey smash and didn’t say anything. Support Smashing, which made Spidey a little happier.

Today though, Spidey was really sad. It was the kind of sad that Hulk felt before he met him or when Spidey wasn’t on a mission with him. Hulk really didn’t like this kind of sad. It was the lonely sad.

“Why Spidey sad?” he asked, because he shouldn’t feel lonely, he had Hulk. And Hulk was his friend and he thought Spidey knew that. Spidey looked up at him confused. Spidey always listened to Hulk because Hulk never spoke much. But even if Hulk did talk a lot like Spidey, he knew Spidey would listen to him - he was really good at hearing things too.

“Oh, it’s nothing big green. Ready to smash?” What kind of question was that? Hulk was always ready to smash, but Spidey was sad now. Even if Spidey pretended not to be sad. Spidey was walking away and Hulk picked him up by his collar. Like the little kittens Spidey handed him once and Hulk was absolutely terrified to smash them because they were so tiny.

“Spidey sad now.” Hulk insisted and Spidey just went floppy in his hand. He really was scrawny and puny. He weighed nothing to Hulk. Spidey need to eat more.

“I just...I dunno.” Spidey moved his shoulder up once and Hulk knew why Spidey was sad. Spidey was smart, so Spidey should know why he was sad too.

“Spidey don’t need to be sad, because Hulk is Spidey friend.” Hulk said, maybe he didn’t need to read minds like red girl, Spidey knew that but when Spidey didn’t answer for a while, Hulk thought he mind have been wrong. But then Spidey looked at him, and Hulk cannot see Spidey’s mouth(because he doesn’t have one), but he knows he made him happy. Good, Spidey deserve to be happy.

“Thanks, big green.” he said in a sin-cere way. “Now ready to smash?” Hulk smiled at him with his smashing grin.
This is why Hulk likes Spidey.

OoOoO

Harley was a good kid.

Tiny had known him since he was 11 and he had always been the one to be picked on, never the one to bully (even if he was a little shit sometimes, but that was just as endearing as it was irritating). Harley was a smart and observant kid, nearly spending two years in that she’d alone and going to school on his own. Making some cash to scrounge up for food, because she’d doesn’t have rent on it. That was before Tony had taken him in when he was 14 because his mom had inexplicably left him(even if she wasn’t there much from the beginning). Harley was a good smart kid, who helped Tony in his time of need by taking the hero in and Tony was returning the favor.

Parker was independent and smart enough to be consider not stupid (even if he supposedly dropped out of school for his vigilante thing). Parker could fend for himself and deal with his problems his own way. Emotional or otherwise, that’s the way it’s always been since Tony had first met him. As far as Tony knew, Parker never asked for help and didn’t really call in favors- if he had any. He didn’t make deals with the exception of SHIELD (which wasn’t a deal more like an exchange of favors and if that was so then Parker had a whole lot of leeway with Fury. Maybe that’s why he got everything he wants) nor did he make promises. Parker always dealt with things alone, which was another reason that Tony felt so wrong in stepping in this.

If he had to choose between Harley and Parker it would be Harley in an instant. No questions asked, he was his kid. He dealt with his endearing bullshit in a daily basis. Also Parker was nothing but a pain in his ass every since he first met the kid. Always disobeying and acting out. Parker had this coming to him for a while. It should be a good thing if he was knocked down a peg or two...theoretically at least.

So this conversation he was about to have felt wrong on all of Tony’s beliefs and on many other levels. Like he was betraying Harley by accusing him (more like pointing out) of bullying Parker. Tony felt a sinking feeling as he walked from the briefing room to Harley’s current location. Time seemed to not be able to go any slower as impending something came closer and closer. Anticipation? Dread? He wasn’t sure.

Harley was in the lab with Shuri, working on something in a holo-screen. They were probably building more prototypes for Avengers gear. Tony had long since allowed Harley to help (especially when Harley threatened to build an Iron Man suit and pull a Peter Parker to become Iron Lad or something). That’s when Tony stepped in (after almost having a heart attack) to say
that he could help the Avengers by building some shit (not a personal suit). Needless to say, Harley had jumped in that like a flea on a dog (was that how the expression went?). Shuri did the same thing for most of Wakandan and Black Panther’s tech, so when they were together they mostly bounced ideas and built things in the nearest labs while sharing some sort of inside jokes call vines (although Tony thinks it’s a Gen Z thing, considering he has heard Parker quote exact same phrases during a fight or briefing. Ugh, trends). That’s what they were doing when Tony and T’challa came in.

“Hey how was it?” Harley asked not looking up from the circuit board he was soldering. Shuri wasn’t even bothered to turn around from her analysis trials. They didn’t see T’challa and Tony glance at each other uncertainty flashing across the King’s features (he was probably in the same predicament he was in with Shuri. Kids right?).

“Shuri could you come with me for a moment.” T’challa wasn’t asking, showing he has had more experience in dealing with these sorts of things- lucky bastard. Tony was way more out of his element. Shuri groaned as she closed the stats she was toying with and dragged herself out of the room to later behind the King, not even waving goodbye because she was probably going to be back within 30 minutes.

Harley looked up at Tony, and noticed there was something off about his posture. Like he wanted to say something but didn’t know how. Harley raised a brow, because this was a bit unusual to just come in and stop Shuri and him from working on respective projects. So something must have happened.

“What’s up?” Harley asked cocking his head and furrowing his brow confused. Tony breathes in, steadying himself for the conversation to start, not having much of a Segway into the topic because it was so obscure.

“I’m sure you didn’t even mean to do it. Well you meant to do it, just probably not have that kind of reaction...” Tony mumbled more to himself than to him “you’re a good kid.” Like he was firm in that belief. Harley furrowed his brows further, confused and now a bit worried.

“What’s wrong? Did something happen on the mission?” Harley asked tilting his head. Things often went wrong on missions, causing Tony to have various reactions to them. Some of those reactions were self destructive and Harley or Pepper or Rhody or Bruce has to drag him out of it. Some of the reactions had him building non stop. Some of the reactions had made him clingy and needy –as Pepper put it. This was the first time he was trying this new method though.

“No well... yes something went wrong, but more like before the mission...” Tony said and looked to the side for a second, before looking Harley in the eyes again as he continued. “It wasn’t really... well it was more weird than anything? Off putting would be the better word. Words.”

“Can you stop dancing around it, what’s wrong?” Harley said a bit annoyed at Tony’s constant stuttering. If he had something to say, he should just say it. He never usually tried to find the right words to put into sentences, just always winged it. Especially with Harley, he didn’t have to hold back. So it was a bit irritating that he was doing so now. Harley crossed his hands over his chest, waiting for Tony to say what he needed to.
“Remember when you and Shuri had that little heart to heart with Parker?” Tony asked a bit rushed and Harley looked unimpressed. He nodded anyway in a Yeah-What-about-it kind of way.

“Yeah. You heard that?” Harley tilted his head. Not ashamed but more like confused and inquisitive. As if he didn’t understand why Tony was bringing up a seemingly random event. Which made it even more awkward for what Tony was going to point out - not accuse, Harley didn’t know he did anything wrong.

“Yeah...” Tony said a bit warily, making Harley’s face slightly contort In concern and still confusion. “it was a little harsh. Don’t you think?” Tiny said cutting straight through the chase. Harley blinked and stared for a moment, then scoffed amusedly.

“I mean yeah, but he puts up with way more insulting things everyday. Plus we didn’t even mean it.” Harley said furrowing his brow, like this was a stupid thing to talk about (it kind of was now that Tony was thinking about the conversation and not Parker’s reaction on the plane). “It was just some fun. And if you had a problem you could’ve told us then, we would’ve stopped. He could’ve told us too, I mean he isn’t a little kid. If he wants something, he should ask.” And that, Tony decided, was a good point. Parker is independent, he doesn’t need anyone holding his hand. Especially in this business.

“He didn’t know that.” Tony grumbled, in attempt to defend himself and his reasoning of talking to Harley. Sometimes when Harley made a really good point like that, Tony wondered who was the adult and who was the unreasonable teenager. But Tony was right about this one (even if it was hard and weird to explain). “I mean he knew, but I think it still like affected him.” Tony clarifies and Harley’s mouth made an ‘o’ in understanding.

“Did we hurt his feelings?” Harley asked, more amused than anything. And yeah, Tony got that it was amusing thought but...actually seeing it? Up close? It was a whole other ballpark. It was honestly scary . Parker showing emotions somehow made him seem younger and like he actually had a soul that didn’t just thrive on pissing people off but approval and acceptance of his peers. Tony might not be a mutant, but he knows that it was a big deal for one to be accepted by their colleagues because of how rarely it occurred.

“I think you did. And as entertaining as it sounds, I witnessed Spidey have like genuine emotions ...” Tony said a bit dramatically, but it really was a sight to see, especially from the seemingly rebellious and snarky teenager that didn’t care about what people thought of him. “and it was fucking scary. Like he actually felt something. Never wanna see that shit again kid.” Tony warned and Harley looked like he didn’t know what to think.

“Was it that bad?” Harley asked a little more quietly, Tony seemed scared and that made Harley in turn feel a bit frightened as well.

“I dunno, yeah. It caught me by surprise is all. It just seemed a little brutal, but literally to anyone else it wouldn’t be but that kid just-...” Tony stopped to think and rephrase his answer so he didn’t
further Parker’s embarrassment more. “He just needs someone in his corner. You know not trying to use him or fight with him. You guys seemed like the first people to act more like a friend than anything in a while to him, and it was just a joke. That seems a little messed up, don’t you think?”

“I didn’t-” Harley paled. Tony held up his hand. He wouldn’t let his kid feel bad over this because Harley had literally no way of knowing. He just had to be more careful next time.

“You didn’t know. You didn’t do anything wrong, I’m not gonna punish you for that. But like just for next time maybe.” Tony said kindly and smiled at him. Harley still looked distraught, as if that wasn’t the answer he was looking for. He wanted to make this right and Tony couldn’t be more proud of him for it. \textit{He is a good kid.} “And apologize, or don’t. He seems like the type to not bring up the past.” he advised helpfully. Harley looked a little grateful for it but mostly wary and guilty.

“If there will be a next time...” Harley mumbled, still feeling mostly awful. “I didn’t mean to...” he looked to the side on the floor. Tony stood up and came over to him to put a hand on his shoulder.

“And Spideys no dumbass. He’s smart, like ridiculously smart. Just not like the rest of us.” Tony said as he pulled his kid in to give him a hug. “He uses Aerophysics more but I think he prefers astrophysics.” Harley laughed at that and it made Tony smile more.

“Really?” He asked, a bit incredulous.

“No, but he just seems like the kind of guy to like Astro.” Tony smiled down at his kid, who laughed again.

“Maybe I’ll try and teach him something then.” God he loved his kid. He smiled down at him as Harley pulled a bit away to look up at the Mechanic.

“I think he’d like that.”

OoOoO

The kid was drinking fucking HI-C

When the Avengers walked into the conference room, they expected Fury there for a mission. Usually it was a toss up whether the kid would come or not, but it looked like he was coming this time. Sometimes the kid would come on missions that didn’t require the whole team, that was not as likely to happen though but it still wasn’t completely out of the ordinary. The thing that was different is that Fury wasn’t in the room for briefing. It was rare for the kid to be anywhere that wasn’t a mission without Fury -at least as far as the Avenger’s know, he does go off on his own a lot actually.

This mission only required Steve, Sam and Clint. Usually if they had the mission info and no briefing it wasn’t a big deal and the kid never \textit{ever} went on those missions. He only went on the really important serious missions as a sort of backup. So what was he doing here?
They could only assume that it included the kid too. He was sitting on the table, juice box in his mouth (the label read ‘poppin’ lemonade’ and although it was the superior flavor it also had the highest calorie count. Clint stores that information away just in case.) and he looked very determined to finish it -not even fiddling with his beat up outdated phone while he was doing so. He was in a hoodie and his Spiderman suit acted as pants and he was wearing his beat up converse. Equally beat up backpack next to him on the table. He didn’t seem to pay them any kind as they walked in.

Clint walked over and went to knock it up with his hand before the kid flipped backward to avoid it. Straw never leaving his mouth, but the corner of his lips quirked upwards. It was infuriating how he did that. Sam snorted at the kids antics and snack.

“Want some cookies with that?” He quipped and the kids eyes lit up as he looked at Sam. His small frame slightly bounced in excitement.

“You got some? I’m starving!” He said with shining eyes. Finally releasing the straw from his lips. Sam looked affronted and Clint laughed at his friends failed roast.

“What? No! I was making fun of you!” Sam said. The kid pouted, seemingly disappointed in the fact that he didn’t get the cookie that was offered.

“At the expense of getting my hopes up? And when I’m hungry? Wow that just cruel man.” He said shaking his head in disapproval. Sam squawked in response as Cap took up the mantle of lecturing the child- as he so often did.

“If you were hungry then you should’ve eaten a proper meal.” Steve said in a chastising tone that he mostly talked to the kid with. It was rare for him to talk in any other voice else with Parker.

“Like a nice warm meal that you spend an hour to cook and sit down at a dinner table?” Peter droned on with a unimpressed look. It took Clint a second to process the question and another second to see that Peter had this look behind his eyes, like a longing look. It was covered and noticeable if you weren’t looking for it. Cap looked a little affronted for a second, probably at the strange question.

“Well yeah, ideally.” He said in a confused manner. Peter gave him a smile that shouldn’t be on his young face, nor should it have directed to someone older than him. Like the smile parents give their kids when they say some cute but totally unrealistic . Like unicorns (even though Thor insisted Pegasi did exist) and Santa Claus Or the Tooth Fairy. Things that would never happen...

“I’ll remember that next time.” He said back, in a more calm tone. He was trying to be gentle now, treading lightly over this topic. He didn’t just want to hide him from whatever he was implying (which Clint for the life of him, couldn’t figure it out). The kid was trying to shelter him from something. He didn’t want to break some sort of unspoken belief.

“Okay, where’s Fury?” Clint asked, getting a headache from trying to figure it out. He wasn’t sure he even wanted to figure it out. He wanted to avoid the kids eye contact and ignore the feeling that he was a kid by looking around.
“Oh, he had to leave but told me to debrief you on your mission.” Peter said as if he was just remembering. He put down the box and picked up a sleek tablet with both hands (which made him look more like a little kid than a teenager) and stood up on the table to jump down in front of Cap. Clint raises an eyebrow.

“Your not coming?” He asked with his own raised eyebrow as the spider kid tapped away at something to pull up the mission, he shook his head.

“Oh, no. He gave me something else to do. He just asked me to tell you your mission before I leave.” Peter said and must have found what he was looking for because he made a delighted noise. “You gonna raid a HYDRA base! It’s in Philly on the port side. The exact coordinates are in the Quinjet.” He informed excitedly in a fast pace before anyone could interject.

“Is that all?” Steve asked professionally, steeling himself and standing straighter. Peter didn’t mimic him as he double backed to the table for his juice box. Peter sipped his juice box as he shook his head and handed Steve the tablet with his other hand.

“Well, that’s what your files gonna say at least. Really what Fury wants you to do is take it out, but off the books you gotta get some information on the servers.” Peter said with a casual tone. Clint’s gotta say, it was nice to know what the real mission was. No sugar coating it with big words that justified stealing. It was unprofessional but refreshing.

“What’s the information?” Sam asked as Peter poked his straw around not looking very interested. Clint noticed the action was the kind his kids did when they were angling for juice that was stuck in the corners. It made his lips quirk up a little.

“Some dirt about SHIELD that they have. It’s always that, but they didn’t send regular agents cause this is dirt on the Avengers.” Peter said and looked up at them confused. Steve looked a little alarmed, as he should be because that was alarming. “They don’t tell you what info your stealing?”

Cap grumbled that they weren’t stealing and Sam said “this would be the first time SHIELD had told us anything.” peter scoffed at that.

“How did they get stuff on the Avengers?” Clint asked. Peter cocked his head. Now a look of pure confusion totally taking over everything.

“HYDRA had infiltrated SHIELD.” He said and that made them all take a double take at the kid. “I mean it was before I came, that was partially the reason I’m here actually, not that they’d tell me that.” He grumbled the last part and looked back up at Steve “They didn’t tell you? I figured being Avengers you’d know.” Peter shrugged. They all just stared at him with slightly opened surprised mouths.

“How do you know?” Steve demanded and Peter sipped his juice box unbothered by the tone and shrugged.

“If Fury doesn’t want me to know something I’ll find out. It’s my thing. He stopped trying eventually and accepted his fate.” Peter said and then had a thinking look on his face. “Maybe I shouldn’t have told you that, but in my opinion I don’t do anything unless I know why I’m doing it. So if imma gonna brief you I’ll give you the real mission and not some half assed submission. Unless you want one, but I don’t got one for you.” He shrugged and continued on his juice box (which how was he not done with it yet?). “Any other questions?” He said with the straw in his
teeth. They didn’t answer and he walked out of the window.

That kid was fucking terrifying.

OoOoO

Parker was a pain in the ass.

Not to Harley Keener in any direct way though. He was a pin in the ass to the Avengers therefore being constantly whines and complained about in the tower and he had to hear the complaints and ails that the kid (even though they were probably the same age) gave the Avengers.

Irritating, disrespectful, annoying, arrogant, brat, and other nasty things were thrown around. Even before meeting him, Harley thought he’d be a arrogant spoiled brat that thought he was better than everyone. Kinda like Flash. He thought that Parker would brag about his superheroing and all that shit that he did. Showing off his powers.

The Avengers might have mislead him a little. Because when he actually did meet Peter Parker, he was nothing like Harley could ever imagine.

He had this almost shy vibe to him. He didn’t talk much, but that wasn’t because he thought he was better than anybody. It was because he was tired. And hungry, probably if his pressing of his stomach against the counter was anything to go by (Natasha had taught him to look for the little things). He could barely keep his head up, and Harley was confused as to how this kid could make the Avengers so aggravated.

Then he made the weirdest most accusing controversial set up Harley had ever heard. And when Harley got mad Parker handled it like a champ. Debated and reasoned not unlike MJ does when she brings up controversial topic. God forbid they ever meet.

Peter might be a superhero, but he doesn’t seem to think so either, no matter how people label him. He just doesn’t care about labels or people’s opinions of him in general. He didn’t seem very self conscious, so Harley figures he can take a light bashing.

It threw him for a loop when he found out that Peter could in fact get offended. And Harley was well aware how many ways Spiderman could make his life hell. Unpredictable Superhero from the Ghetto was not something Harley wanted to mess with.
He weirdly also felt bad. Parker could take a million people’s insults with no hindrance, so whatever he said to make Parker feel bad must have been really really terrible. Apparently though it wasn’t something he said more than did.

“Hey!”

Parker snapped his head up from the paper he was holding. He was currently stationed against the wall outside the conference room where the team was going over a few more mission things; apparently Parker was kicked out or uninterested or something because he didn’t seem to be doing anything important- but he shouldn’t assume that, because again unpredictable superhero from the ghetto. His backpack was next to him and he had put on an oversized hoodie, the NASA one. Harley looked to the space next to him and Parker slowly moved his bag, complying for the unasked request to sit down. He never broke his wide eyed confused eye contact. There was something innocently curious, but cautious about the look. It made him look years younger than he was (Tony says that happens sometimes).

Harley slid into the spot easily and looked at the paper, not trying to read it but draw attention to it. He knew better than to read something a superhero (or someone of that status) was holding. It could be dangerous or classified and get him in trouble. He couldn’t defend himself like the Avengers could. Hell, he couldn’t defend himself like Peter could, and they were the same age. Albeit, he Probably trained, but Harley doesn’t know by who. He was also a ...mutant? Enhanced? Huh, he didn’t know what Peter was. Either way he was all human, Which made him dangerous. Which means that he knew how to protect himself, even if he wasn’t formally trained. Harley had read somewhere that mutants have animalistic survival instincts that kicks in when they feel threatened, although he wasn’t sure that was entirely true for all mutants.

“Is that classified?” He asked looking at Peter quickly look down at it and snapping back to his face. He shook his head, not entirely looking him in the eye.

“So-sort of?” Peter stuttered looking down at the paper but not hiding it. He was nervous and weary. “It’s a solo op.” That got Harley’s attention. Solo op? He thought Spider-Man was just an asset for some Avengers missions. When he wasn’t doing that he was considered doing vigilante work (that no one bothered to stop anymore). If he was getting his own solo mission, then he must be an agent of SHIELD; which was news because Harley thought he was just a Vigilante.

“You’re an agent?” Harley asked, sounding surprised. Peter shook his head frantically and huffed a laugh.

“As if. I don’t even qualify for level 0. Just gives me something to do. Plus Fury needs to keep an eye on me, and I really don’t mind as long as he doesn’t out me.” Peter said casually, but Harley could detect a hint of cautiousness. Parker was good at covering it up, but he was watching his words and if Harley didn’t live with the Avengers including two super spies and an ex Assassin he wouldn’t have picked it up. There was more to the story. Harley didn’t press though, he was here to apologize not interrogate (although Parker would probably get more information off of the interrogation skills alone. Natasha said that people do that sometimes and it was a tactic she often used when being interrogated).

“What’s the mission?” Harley asked and Peter paused as if considering answering him honestly.
Harley was sure that Peter could be lying and he wouldn’t notice it unless he wanted Harley to. Natasha did that sometimes to teach him how to figure out if people are lying.

“Enhanced profiling, just gotta get some basic info on this one guy in Queens. It’s boring as fuck, but like I got nothing better to do.” Peter said with a shrug. He was lying, or at least not telling the whole truth. Harley wasn’t really sure, but he knew he wasn’t telling him something. No way Spiderman would do something he thought was boring, that just wasn’t his thing. He heard Fury complain on multiple occasions that Spidey turned him down because he had something better to do or just didn’t want to do it.

He didn’t exactly know how Peter and Fury’s relationship worked, but he did know if one of the Avengers did half the shit Parker pulled, they’d be in deep fucking trouble. How did Spidey get Fury to let him get away with so much shit? It kind of pissed him off, because Tony would come back to the lab bone tired and then get called on a mission not even five minutes later sometimes. He couldn’t take a break, what made Spiderman so special that he can duck out any time he wanted? Maybe because he was a kid but that didn’t really seem significant when the world was in danger.

“So who assigned the mission to you?” Harley asked conversationally. He was sure Parker knew what he was doing, and either didn’t care or played along.

“Fury, but it’s not for him.” Peter informed as he flicked through the page again, but not because he was reading it. He just seemed restless.

“Who’s it for?” Harley asked and Peter gave him a snarky grin. The grin that he was so often acclimated with. The grin that fooled him into thinking Parker wasn’t insecure. In light of the truth, it looked more like a defense mechanism than a personality quirk to Harley now.

“That’s what I can’t tell you.” He said coyly, not very apologetically. He knew Harley understood that he couldn’t know for his own safety (and if he was being honest he was glad Parker didn’t hate him enough to put him into danger). Then his demeanor changed. It was sudden and was like whiplash, caught Harley a little off guard. “Why are you so interested in it?” Harley sighed at Peters curious tone with a noticeable hint of suspicion, then he looked at the paper and it then had a tint of sadness mixed in it - which really caught Harley off guard. “Did Mr.Stark put you up to this?” He asked there was a beat of silence when Harley opened his mouth to answer Peter did for him. “He asked you to apologize, didn’t he.” It wasn’t a question. (See? This is what Harley meant when he said Parker would be getting more information than he was dishing. How was that even remotely fair? he was like at least a few months younger than Keener.)Harley didn’t know what to say, so he said:

“Yeah.” It was honest and the truth. Peter couldn’t analyze it for lies, but he found something anyway. How did he do that?

“You feel that bad about it? It was just some fun. Plus I get a lot worse daily.” He still didn’t look up.(that’s exactly his logic. So dish Parker, why did you have a mini panic attack in front of iron man. He’s all ears.) “But I get it. I could tell Mr.Stark was really freaked out when he talked to me. If I’m being honest, I was kinda freaked out too. I don’t like when things get to me. It’s stupid and annoying.” He said like it was a problem to have emotions. Like it wasn’t okay to be sad, at least around other people. Has he never sought out comfort before? That was kind of...depressing.
“Did it get to you? Make you, ya know, feel...something?” Harley wasn’t sure what to say. What would it make Peter feel. He’d be pretty pissed and sad, especially if he didn’t have friends and then that got thrown in his face. How do you say sorry to that? Cause no matter how much he apologizes, it won’t actually fix anything. He was luck that he did have friends, and sometimes he took that fact for granted. He had amazing, smart friends and a supportive kickass family. What did Peter have? No friends and a freak accident that made him a outsider from everyone else. Maybe that’s what made him special. Cause he could not get angry when people dumped their shit on him and took for granted the things he didn’t and probably will never have. Like a normal life, with normal problems. Harley didn’t know much about enhanced people, but he knew that when you get enhanced so do your problems. At least, that was the simplest way to put it.

“I guess it was just unexpected.” Peter said looking at the wall now, with dullness in his tone. “I guess it caught everyone off guard, huh?” He turned back to Harley with a smile, it looked real but it was fake. It was hiding just how sad and messed up this situation really was. But Harley couldn’t help but notice that Peter wasn’t asking for friendship and he’d already given forgiveness without much of a second thought. Did he even want friends? This kind of stuff seemed easier when you had them.

“I’m still sorry.” Harley admitted. Peter waves generally, indicating it doesn’t matter anymore and is in the past. But this did matter, no matter how Harley thought about it. This was a fucking problem.

“No harm, no foul.” Peter said easily. But was that really true? Was he just hiding the harm Harley had caused him, because he defiantly cared more than he showed. “We didn’t really have a good first impression, so third time's a charm I guess.” He sighed and turned over to Harley and stuck out his hand. Now Harley didn’t know what he was doing now, completely lost. “I’m Peter Parker.” He said with an easy, welcoming smile. Harley took his hand awkwardly and shook it.

“Harley Keener.” Peter laughed. Harley didn’t see what was particularly funny but found himself laughing too. “God, this is so corny.” He couldn’t help but point out between fits of giggles.

“I’m not saying that third time was particularly perfect. But it’s better than the first time.” Peter said smile in his voice. It was friendly and warm and Harley thinks this is the first time he’d actually ever seen Peter smile.

“Yes, definitely.” Harley said happily. He wasn’t completely sure what just happened, but he thinks he just made friends with Spiderman. Or maybe he just made friends with Peter Parker. Harley couldn’t find himself to think of this friendship with Spiderman more than his less infamous alter ego. He kinda liked the thought of being friends with Parker. Behind all that snark was actually a pretty chill dude. Who would have guessed?

“So...” Peter said, looking to the side after the laughter died down and a comfortable - if not a little awkward- silence fell between them. “What now?”

“Tony said you were smart.” Harley blurted, cause he had nothing else to say. He blushed a bit at the outburst and Peter Just looked amused.

“How did he get to that conclusion.” He asked in a teasing tone. Harley shrugged, trying to look
casual but probably failing under Parker’s vigilance. If it did, he didn’t say anything.

“Dunno. But he says it. He doesn’t say it often so...” Harley trailed off and looked at Peter who now had an amused smirk on his face.

“It has to be true.” He finished for him and Harley nodded in confirmation. Tony didn’t say that people were smart often, when he did it was usually the idea or opinion and not the person itself. When he said a person was smart, it meant they were fucking smart. He didn’t throw around that compliment lightly. So when Tony said that Peter was smart, he took it like it was a unchangeable fact.

“Is it?” Harley asked, even if his opinion on the matter couldn’t be wavered. Natasha says that an answer, even if they really did have no choice in the matter, could tell you a lot of a person. In this case, it was Peter’s humility and ego that was being tested. Peter looked thoughtful before answering, he then looked up wistfully.

“I mean, I guess. I grew up in a place where book smarts didn’t matter. Street smarts would help you survive.” Peter said and then shrugged. “It was a toss up whether I’d even have enough money for a graduation gown.” Peter said and then grimaced “turns out I didn’t need one though.” There was more to that answer than he knew. Or probably he did. It seemed like Peter did want to graduate high school at least, but something got in the way of that. Something that wasn’t Spiderman related. That changed the story that Harley had fabricated a lot. But he also felt like he was still missing something.

“What happened? You don’t seem like a stupid guy to flunk out of high school.” Harley said honestly. It was true, when he first saw Peter he didn’t seem like he would skip or anything. He seemed almost intelligent, but then Harley jumped to conclusions about him dropping school for Spiderman at that first (not really but still) insult. It justified his anger if the person who was insulting them was wrong in their logic.

“Life. Aunt wasn’t paying the rent because she was getting high more often after my uncle died. Even if he was around he was too drunk to support us for much longer.” Peter said, Harley couldn’t pick out the tone. But geez, that fucking sucked. Aunt getting high and drunk uncle went hand in hand with abuse (but if Harley learned anything, he knew not to assume. But still, as messed up as it was, it would make more sense if Peter had been abused. How else would he be able to casually take horrible things in stride?). That part didn’t need to be said out loud though. Harley was only like 70 percent sure of it. Again he couldn’t assume anything about Parker.

“Geez, Sorry man.” Harley said, there seemed nothing else to say (Peter was rendering him speechless much more than he thought this conversation would). Somehow he wasn’t surprised though. It was messed up and totally horrific, but somehow it was what he was expecting. It made sense.

The thing is, he could totally see Peter getting abused and picked on. He was small and unassuming (or at least he looked that way. Harley wasn’t so sure he was the athlete type before he got his powers) He took his bullying as Spiderman with such little thought. Like it didn’t even effect him. It didn’t chip away at him. But one well placed comment could tear him apart. That kind of attitude came with experience. Experience That no one has ever accepted him and acceptance that probably no one will accept all of him. It was messed up and Harley hated that he
couldn’t see it before or do anything before. He was also kind of mad at the Avengers for not doing anything about it. But Peter didn’t seem like the type to accept help easily. Again, he’d been fucked over too many times to not be suspicious of someone being nice to him.

“It’s whatever.” Peter shrugged, he looked like it really didn’t bother him, which was weird cause that kind of shit fucked kids up. Harley didn’t want to believe that Peter had been in worse, so he didn’t, not until Peter said so. “Doesn’t really matter anymore cause they’re dead. I can’t keep a public record if I’m not going into CPS. So either graduate or dropout.” Peter said. That explained it. It was a fucking good reason not to go to school. No one wanted to go into the system, especially if you had other options (which Peter did have as Spiderman) Tony said the reason he dropped out was probably because he wanted Spider-Man and then went to reprimand the kid because he shouldn’t be focusing on dying, just school. Get a real life and all that shit but...

Peters real life was absolute shit. And the was putting it lightly.

Fucked up would be a better term; and he could never have any chance of cleaning it cause it was the foundations of his life. No wonder he wanted to escape into the world of heroes and villains, with his enhanced abilities it’d only get worse for him where he came from. With him being a freak and outcast and an orphan with no one to go back to. When There was really no where for him to go, because being someone your not was way easier to do than to face your shitty reality. Harley wouldn’t want to face it either. Peter thought he was just gonna end up getting a blue collar job and that would be it for him. At least he wanted to help people somehow by being Spider-Man.

It made sense.

“Why didn’t you go into the system?” Now that he said it out loud it sounded like a stupid question. Of course he didn’t go into the system, especially to finish something as useless (to Parker at least) as school. Who would want to put themselves through a hell they couldn’t escape? Because once you were in, there was no going out, there was no do overs, no second chances, no dropping out. You were in it til you were 18 and 3 years didn’t seem like much but it was really an eternity. The unamused look he got had him holding his hands in surrender and Parker rolled his eyes in an almost good natured way. Peter talked anyway, even if that question didn’t need to be answered.

“My life was fucked as soon as I was six- actually, scratch that, it was fucked when I was three. No way I’d get anywhere worth getting to before. And then this shit happened.” He gestured to himself, and Harley knew it meant his powers. “Then some other shit. Then I had to fix some of my own shit that I messed up. Then I was like well it doesn’t really matter anymore so if I’m gonna die then why not help some people out before I get there. Then more shit. Then this shit.” Peter gestured around himself, making wide gestures to emphasize how much he couldn’t get out of this. It was almost as if he didn’t have a choice in being Spiderman. “and now I’m here.” Peter put his elbows on his knees and looked at Harley. Neutral look waiting for an answer of some sort. He was way too casual for this sort of conversation. Being way too laid back about this topic. But as Harley said, Parker was a chill dude, like really chill apparently.

“That’s a lot of shit.” Harley said, acknowledging it almost as if he would be acknowledging something a child said. “you dealt with all of it?”Peter shrugged.
“Eh most of it.” Peter said in a so so way, moving his hand in a corresponding motion.

“Anything they can help with?” Harley asked gesturing to the door which the Avengers were behind. Peter snorted immediately.

“Harley, no offense, but one of the reasons Fury brought me into this clusterfuck in the first place was because I would help deal with some of their problems. Trust me, I don’t need to add mine on top of it.” Peter said. Harley felt himself choke up for a second. The fuck? Does that mean the Avengers didn’t know about Peter’s real life. They didn’t know why he dropped out? They didn’t know he was supporting himself and barley getting by because he was a kid and didn’t want to raise suspicion and also because he was fucking Spiderman. The kind of shit he was dealing with required fucking a shit ton of therapy. Like noon to five, three days a week in a trauma center kind of therapy, at the least.

“Oh...anything I can help with then?” Harley asked more out of Curtiss. He knew he could help with exactly none of anything Peter was dealing with. Peter, bless his soul, looked at him in a thankful but unrealistic way for a second.

“Probably.” He shrugged. Harley, not expecting that answer, felt hope bubble in him. “But I’m not letting you anywhere near it.” Harley groaned, bubble officially burst. Peter laughed at that (and how could he laugh and smile like that when his life was utter crap).

“Come on Parker.” He whined. Peter smirked amused by Harley’s reaction.” Why not?” Even though he knew why.

“Because one: Stark would kill me. B: the Avengers would bring me back to life to kill me again-which if I die I do not want to be brought back to life, just let me fucking die. And lastly: my shit is not like the Avengers shit. It’s dangerous and not sponsored or supported. No doctors, no allies, don’t drag civilians in under any circumstances kind of thing. It’s not an alien invasion. Most of the time the media, much less the government don’t even know about it.” Peter ranted off and then said more seriously and quietly, not looking Harley in the eye but at the wall in front of him. “And it’s messed up, Harley, it gets really messy and it's so wrong that it’s not even funny. I can’t even find a way to joke about those things, and normal civilians aren’t dragged in unless they aren’t as normal as they thought they were. So unless your dragged in, no you cannot help.” He wasn’t sure if he was supposed to hear the quietly muttered “and I hope you’re never able to help me.” Peter said under his breath, but he did.

...Parker cared... a lot... and About him.

...Wow.

“How is it worse than HYDRA?” Harley asked almost breathlessly, not believing Peter but not entirely not believing him either. Peter huffed out an incredulous laugh, as if he couldn’t believe himself (but what he said was probably true. There is a lot of messed up shit in this world Harley doesn’t know about that Peter does. The papers in his hands is probably one of them).
“You don’t want to know. This is the kind of shit the government covers up when they finally find the bodies. It’s messed up.” Peter said quietly, as if talking about was a sin. There was a pause and he clapped him on the back with an off putting smile. “Hey it’s gonna be okay.” He said happily and Harley looked at his smile in disbelief. How can anything be okay? How he say that when his life was so messed up. When he knew just much the world was messed up. How could he smile and nod and pretend like everything in his life wasn’t trying to actively kill him? How could he still want to help people when they only betray, use or belittle him? He has the world set against him, and he’s telling Harley some bullshit about everything being okay?

*Hell no.*

“How was any of the shit you just told me remotely near okay?” Harley asked with his brow pinching and Peter sighed. Like he really wanted to end it there, but Harley wouldn’t let that happen. Not until he understood why Peter pretended his life wasn’t going straight to Hell.

“It’s okay because despite all the shit that happened, and the shit that will eventually happen, I don’t regret having my kind of childhood.” Peter said quietly with a sad smile on his face, he didn’t look Harley in the eye and stared at the ground in front of him as he let his hand drop from Harley’s shoulder.

“Your kind of childhood was over before it even began.” Harley said in a dead tone. Peter huffed a humorless laugh.

“Yeah, but I understand things better than I ever could with a normal one. I know where drug circles are and dealer’s patterns and I know Queens like the back of my hand because of it and...” Peter let himself smile a bit brighter. “And I’m proud of myself for getting this far on my own. I’m proud of myself everyday I don’t die or help someone. Cause I didn’t rely on anyone but myself. I did it on my own. I got here on my own. And I’m helping people. I have no one to impress. No strings attached.” Peter said with a nod and looked at the mission and paused before continuing. “Well not entirely my own... the guy who gave me this mission” Peter flicked the paper up quickly “he saved me once... I owe this to him.” Peter smiles at Harley. Harley didn’t know what to say to that. Before he shook his head and smiled himself.

“God, that’s- that’s fucking inspiring man. You should write Disney movies.” Harley said with a shake of his head. It was corny but made sense. Peter made sense, and he didn’t make sense at the same time. But that’s okay, because Peter was okay (or he would be once he got out of whatever loop he’s been in).

“Technically Marvel is Disney.” Peter said back and Harley looked confused. Peter laughed and shook his head “never mind. I forgot you can’t break the fourth wall. “ He snickered And Harley slapped his arm playfully.

“Marvel? That’s so stupid! Why would our universe be Marvel?” Harley said with a snort and Peter laughed.
“Ask the producers.” He said and Harley laughed at that.

“Your insane, man.” He said good naturedly and Peter gave him a knowing smirk but didn’t retort.

Maybe having Peter Parker as a friend wouldn’t be that bad.

OoOoO

It could never be easy, could it?

He couldn’t enjoy the little good things that happen in his life for a long time; he’s long since learned to charity things in the moment. Good things don’t last for him that long. But bad things always linger. In hindsight he should’ve seen this coming. He should have known Parker Luck wouldn’t just get rid of his past so easily. That’s on him, he’ll admit to that much. But this? He thinks he deserved a little warning before this kind of shit happened. Was that too much to ask universe?

Apparently it was.

“I don’t wanna. Last time didn’t go so well.” Peter whined tugging on Fury’s hand that was gripped around his wrist all the way up the elevator. He could tell all the complaining was getting on Fury’s nerves. But it wasn’t his fault, he was meeting someone new today apparently. Another auxiliary Avenger or whatever. He was still trying to adjust to a fucking king working with them, there was no way in hell that he could get used to...whoever this person was at the same time. It was all a little too much even for him.

“I don’t care Parker. We’ve got another mission. This time with a… rehabilitated asset.” Fury said again with a mumble. Peter made a whining noise again but didn’t say that that was the problem. Maybe if he annoyed Fury enough, he could get out of this due to Fury’s temper. What he didn’t account for was Fury’s Peter Parker BS tolerance (which went up significantly since they had met, and although Peter was immensely proud of Fury for growing, it was also a big dampener whenever he didn’t want to do something. It was harder to get out of things through annoyance alone.)

“Stop calling humans assets, it’s degrading.” Peter said back letting himself be dragged. Going limp and trying to add weight to himself instantly so Fury would slow down or trip up. Needless to
say the method was ineffective due to logic and science. “And why is it so important that I’m here. Fresh out of the barn Rehab people and snarky annoying assholes don’t mix well. Like at all. Don’t you think this little meeting should wait until..I dunno, never .” Peter said as he was pushed through the sleek doors into the conference room where debriefing was held. If Fury answered, he didn’t hear it.

He froze.

Next thing he knew, Peter was pushed into the wall roughly, being heldup by his neck. He didn’t have time to react. He didn’t have time to dodge. It just happened and his Spider sense was making his heart pump out of his chest and vision blurry, sending painful raps down his back. And yeah he knew he was in danger.

‘Thanks a lot Spidey Sense, you are forever my constant companion and savior .’

He was pushed into a wall by a person he didn’t really wanna remember and couldn’t really breathe, which was you know, an essential life function. Weather it was because of the choking or the panic attack, he wasn’t really sure. Maybe both? But yeah, again thanks for the heads up SS, you really are the MVP.

He’d been pinned down before, in much scarier situations (or maybe this was the most scary situation. Okay remedy that to theoretically scary situations). But this was different. Very and completely different. Usually the people who pin him down aren’t (ex?) HYDRA assets who had trained him from ages 3-6, who were supposed to be dead and who he really did not to remember. At all. He could hear muffled screaming and talking and noise, every thing but the face of his attacker was blurry. He was going to push back before a clear voice said.

“How did you find me?” The hoarse scratchy deep voice said. Gruff and only sometimes gentle. Coming as a horrific confirmation that this was very much real.

That voice. He’d heard it before, although it didn’t make itself known much. The things it said were important. The words it said was what Peter built his life on. Peter could never forget that voice. Low and gruff. As if it was only used to speaking in grunts.

No .

“How did--” Peter's voice was hoarse and dry, he’d lost all his breath as if he had been winded. The clothed metal arm against his throat slammed into him again making him gasp a little. Tears sprang in the corner his eyes as he made a small choking sound. (He never choked very loudly, that was just something he noticed about himself. He liked being strangled without yelling or loud noises, because he had to save that energy for, you know, breathing.)

No. Not soldier. Not HYDRA.

You can’t go back!
“Hello I am Peter Parker. How did I ruin your life?” Peter gasped out, hand never loosening. The irony was that Soldier tore his life apart, nearly 10 years ago. He didn’t think the soldier heard him regardless.

“Answer the question!” The voice shouted. Peter closed his eyes and tried to breathe, so it was definitely the panic attack. At least he figured it out. He was like 68.32 percent sure.

“Hey. Hey Buck. Put Parker down.” Nope. Not the right thing to say. Shut the fuck up. Don’t say that name as a single- The arm tightened, Peter made a slight gagging sound in response.

“He’s dangerous,Steve.” Wow. What a fucking honor. Being a danger to the Winter Soldier? Too bad that compliment worse out like a whole decade ago. Because he left him, not the other way around, Soldier.

‘You left me.’

“No. He’s not.” Go an’ degrade him like that? Thanks a lot Steve. You know he didn’t work this hard to not be respected...it’s not going real well, but that doesn’t mean Steve can’t appreciate his effort. “He’s a kid.” Yeah, technically. But he didn’t feel like one. Especially when he’s fucking dying at the hands of his old roomie.

‘You left me alone there.’

“Yeah, but... he’s not just a kid.” Okay, Soldier. Nope nope. No spilling uncomfortable secrets now. That’s not what HYDRA taught you. No sensitive information, that’s confidential for a reason. Cause he doesn’t want anyone to know, and if Soldier does spill Peter has a lot of dirt on him too. So he better shut the fuck up!

‘I trusted you!’

Remember your training!

“Reign in the evil buddy. I’m just a kid.” Peter choked out, remembering to speak English (because when he spoke in English, Soldier always seemed less stressed). The head snapped back to him from lingering over to Cap, and crushed his neck once more, as if to shut him up, like he didn’t get a say.

Yeah, but when have you ever got a say? ... god it made a point.
But he barely had room to breathe as tapped twice on the metal arm softly. He needed to get out. Just two taps. Just two.

“Let me go please.” Tap tap.

“I don’t want to fight you anymore.” Tap tap.

“I don’t want to fight you.” Tap tap.

“I don’t want to fight.” Tap tap.

“Please don’t make me fight.” Tap tap.

...

“It’s not up to me...” Tap.

The grip instantly loosened, releasing him from his oxygen lacking prison. Peter fell down on his knees. Coughing softly and rubbing feeling back into his throat. It still was hard to breath, so 100 percent certain of a panic attack. Okay, okay…

He had to go.

“Buck?” He heard Steve ask cautiously. He didn’t see Soldier stumble back or Steve catching him as Peter tried to catch a breath. He didn’t want to hear this conversation.

“Who is he?” Peter instantly felt panic at Soldier's soft question. The tone was soft but it was loud in his ears. Peter shut his eyes and tried to breath.

“It’s easier to say in English.”

“Spiderman.” He choked out quickly. Not letting anyone answer for him. “And you’re the freaking Winter Soldier. Wow. Barnes? Right?” The excitement was dampened by his strained hoarse voice. He didn’t look up and see the Avengers flinch and some even took a step forward to maybe help him then thought against it so he could breath (smart choice) at it but he felt The soldier stiffen.

“How do you know my name.” Peter tried to straighten up but glanced briefly at Bucky from where he sat. Breath almost coming back to him now that he had some control over this situation.

Who are you fooling? You don’t have any control over what happens in your life. Where’d you get that idiotic thought.

“I went to school sometimes.” Peter muttered and he looked pointy anywhere except an animated being and Cap looked at him confused. “We learn about y’all during the World War Two unit.” Peter rolled his eyes, gaining back his composer as he started to ignore Soldier’s presence.
“Why’d terminator go AWOL on the kid?” Tony asked casually, pointing the pen in his hand jerkily between the two with a raised brow and eyes showing over his sunglasses that tilted down with his head. Voicing The question everyone was wondering. Voicing the question Peter was dreading. He just wanted everyone to forget about him. Forget about this situation. But he never going to ever be that lucky, was he?

_Cause he remembers me after all._

“He reminds me of someone…” he said uncertainly, almost like he was scared. Peter couldn’t help but stare up at him in wonder. The soldier was only scared _once_ that Peter had seen… he didn’t notice as he went completely still, heart pounding at an erratic rate “I wasn’t sure if he was dead.” Bucky mumbled Peter rolled his eyes, trying to gain some sense of himself. He couldn’t allow himself to panic. It would look suspicious and he hadn’t done it since he was a kid. The Soldier looked at him with a haunted look of someone who they thought was a ghost. Same dude, oh my god let’s start a club!

“Right. Like I remind anyone of anyone. I probably pissed you off somehow.” Peter said under his breath in an incredulous drone. Bucky looked at him panicked and confused, and just...sad (which gross! Pity _sucked!_ Get it away. Ewwwww). _Oops_. He must have heard him.

“No you did-“ Peter had to stop this. He had to go. He had to leave and not come back until he’s screamed and cried out all these... _feelings_. He stood up so abruptly, the Soldier stumbles back a little in shock.

“Don’t worry. I piss everyone off. It’s kinda my thing.” Peter announced proudly, puffing out his chest. He was anything but proud of himself for that. It was because he didn’t mean to piss people off. He just needed to do the things that did sometimes (read: all the time). He didn’t want to _not_ be liked. It made it hard for him to have a good self esteem. It just made it hard for him to do anything involving other interacting people. It made it hard for him to form connections.

_That you can’t have idiot._

‘But it’s lonely’

_You should go._

He probably should before this got messy. Well at least visably so. It still threw him off that Barnes remembered him (sorta). When they were in the room, he didn’t even know Peter existed half the time (after a certain point). And they fucking lived together. Trained together, ate together, slept together. He was in only one other place if Soldier wasn’t there. _He was always there_ ! And then he left. Ripped Peters only semblance of stability into shreds and didn’t even bother to remember his own name. Now after all these years, he comes back having flashes of a time Peter wanted to so desperately forget. That he spent so much time trying to _not remember_ ! He couldn’t afford to remember it. He couldn’t afford to be that distracted and out of it. Not in the field and not before a mission or job. Defiantly _not in front of the Avengers_.

And Peter was getting better (in his own weird way). He was settling, finally settling. He was
giving into routine. His life wasn’t changing too much, he was be gaining the courage to finally feel comfortable. As far as he could see (literally only seconds ago) it wouldn’t be changing a lot, before now.

He had been lying to Fury when he had found him after he got glitter bombed. This was rock bottom. This was the big bad fucking decision/event that would spiral the rest of his next few moths to a year into a clusterfuck of feelings and emotions and all the things he had been trying to avoid for nearly a decade.

Now his life was set to take many different courses. Many different painful courses. Now he was on a twisty road and he couldn’t see the outcome. It’s going to take forever for it to be straight road again (if it was ever straight to began with, well maybe it was but Peter could close his eyes and not have to worry about anything as he drove before -on this metaphorical road. Now he had to actually look where he was driving because people were on his road again. This was a fucking metaphorical road that was giving him anxiety now! What the hell was his life anymore?). He was going through a freaking existential crisis here!

So basically the world wasn’t spinning off its axis.

What a load of Bull.

“You... I’m sorry...” Soldier offered, that threw Peter way off (but he was already off the metaphorical road he was on). This guy fucking decked him as a 5 year old. He sliced him up in combat training to the point where his skin was more scar than flesh. Threw him against jagged cages of the arena they spared in. Yelled and screamed profanities when he was trying to sleep. He pointed a gun to his head right before he left for years and didn’t say anything. Stripped him of all innocence and sanity. Made him an emotionless shell that he was left to fill by himself because no one cared anymore!

Now he was saying sorry. He never said sorry before. He never said sorry when it actually meant something. Now he’s throwing Peter against the wall and looking apologetic? Like that would change everything he’s taken away!

Peter didn’t buy that crap for a second.

“Been in worse.” He said easily waving him away. He felt breathless. He was trying to act like he wasn’t breaking down. It usually worked, but it wasn’t working. “Happens.” He said trying to sound casual, it wasn’t working that well with his hoarse voice. He blamed it on the choking session. Hopefully he soldier (And everyone else) did too. If he did, he didn’t care. He had to go.

Reminds me of old times.

“I sh-“

“No. I’m really sorry. I don’t think I’ve ever said it to him before...” well that means a lot now. thanks. “I think he’d be around your age.” His eyes flicked to Natasha briefly and Peter followed the gaze. Natasha looked sad and it was kinda the same look that she used when she told him about her- oh...
Oh shit.

They think that kid was her son... Probably for a good reason, they wouldn’t jump to that conclusion unless they had a good reason. It was really far fetched and totally implausible so they probably have a really good reason. Especially the Black Widow and Winter Soldier had that reason. It was like 97 percent set in stone and probably true because they’ve been looking into it for like... ever. But at least they had a bigger lead than they had let on.

Well he hoped they found him...

...

Wait.

Your the kid in the room.

Idiot.

You’re her son.

...

Oh...oh no.

Peter turned white. “I have to go.” His breathing was short now (like you know visibly) even if he just caught his breath. He couldn’t do this here. He had to get out. He looked at Natasha on more time and it only confirmed what he thought they thought their son was. It also confirmed something else. She glanced at Barnes.

No way! The soldier was his...

No no. This can’t be happening! This wasn’t true!

That’s my mom!

That’s my dad!

Those are my parents!

Peter was on the verge of a panic attack. He probably was already having one. Some one must have noticed because Fury had the sense to pull him out of there.

Thank god!
The relief was short lived. “What the hell was that?” Fury asked nearly screamed, his face enraged. Peter yanked his arm out of Fury’s hold harshly and stumbled. The world blurred for a minute. Didn’t focus all the way and Peter resigned that this was as good as his vision was going to be.

The Black Widow is my mom!

“I have to go.” He said quickly, mumbling trying to find a way out. Outside. His eyes zeroed in on the window. He made a beeline for it. Something grabbed him around the middle and lifted him a little.

The Winter Soldier is my dad!

He couldn’t fucking breathe.

“Oh no, Underoos.” Stark’s voice said and Peter tried to push away with a whine. He needed to get out of here! He didn’t want to do this here!


But who cares what you like? Who cares what you think? No one cares if you’re comfortable. They don’t care about. No one ever has. What makes you think anyone ever will.

That was the bad voice. That wasn’t good. That wasn’t fucking good!

“We gotta talk.” The outside voices were muffled with the inside ones.

They brought the Soldier back...

“Explain what just happened. ” Was that the inside voice?
He’s gonna take you to Hydra...

“He’s not responding.” He needed to think.

They’re gonna be angry you left...

“He’s not a fucking computer Fury!” He needed for it to be quiet.

They aren’t gonna kill you...

“Just answer us!” Shut up!

They’re gonna destroy you.

“No!” Peter screamed.

There was a snap and then silence.

Chapter End Notes

SO end of Part 1, AHHHH Peter knows (sorta) but the next part is going to introduce a new very controversial topic and I just wanna give y'all a forewarning.

I love you and cherish you and please don't be afraid to comment, I will always try to respond!! I dunno when the next update is coming though, my life is a bit weird rn. But I will try my best to get it up soon

See ya!!
Chapter Notes

Everything you wanna be

So this chapter is coming out sooner than I expected!! I've had a lot of time to edit in school (i.e. I'm not paying attention in history class lol) Any who...I was BLOWN AWAY by all your comments and motivation, although I made it my mission to try to respond to each one in the previous chapters, I really don't wanna keep writing thank you over and over again lol. SOOO I'm just gonna say it here THANK YOU MY LOVLY BABIES!! YOU ALL ARE AMAZING AND I LOVE YOU 3000!!!

In this chapter you will seeing more Team Red, I know I got comments telling me how they loved Team Red, so I hope you enjoy those bits. Also MJ and Ned will be sneaking an appearance here as well as omg I shouldn't spoil lol.

Trigger Warning though: a part in this chapter will be containing MENTIONS of sexual abuse. Again I don't know how to write that kind of stuff, but it will be heavily implying such. Tis the section that starts with "He hated coming back." and the actual stuff starts with "I told you I missed you" and ends with "he stumbled" or something like that. But thats the only part, it DOES NOT go into detail. Also there are some. gory and graphic depictions in the part that starts with "he had a job to do" but nothing is actually done in those parts. The rest is just my normal amount of mostly angst and terrible humor. But if you don't wanna touch that stuff, that's the only parts in the chapter that has it, and I think that's as deep as it gets in the story.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 5- Everything You Wanna Be

Spidey was a nutcase in a nutshell.

Red was a nutshell in a nutcase.

Deadpool was just a nut.

They worked well together.

They could kick anyone’s ass decently enough. And Spidey and Red didn’t get in his way when he needed to kill. They understood. They didn’t try to stop him and they didn’t mention it. They let him do what he needed to do. They had enough collective common sense (or maybe just a messed up kinda sense) to not get in his way. And he had enough sense and respect to not get in theirs (it
didn’t matter if he was unkillable, he was 67 percent sure that the kid had find some sciency or mathy way to kill him. But Petey knew how to combine those two subjects and that was just horrifying)

They must have grown to like each other, because they hung out when, as Wade called them, “two ugly sluts and a foster kid”. Matt agreed even though that was the time he was supposed to be blind (Wade was 43 percent sure he was lying) and Peter said he would touch the foster system with a 69 and a half foot pole (even if he didn’t even celebrate Christmas. But Wade didn’t even remember that song exactly so he wasn’t sure if it was really festive or not. But that sounded right)

Spidey doesn’t actually drink when he’s in the bar with them (like the good child he was). He doesn’t even take water which was actually really smart. He just buys and untainted coke or sprite or whatever soda or juice that was in sale (or if it was Wednesday, Wade would drag him to get a gas station slurpy from 7/11, and it was a toss up weather the kid would get sick and cuddly and they could watch my little pony or be perfectly fine and watch my little pony. Wade preferred the former because Pete was so cute when he was tolerably sick) from a nearby corner store and enjoys Matt and Wade getting drunk off their asses. But to be fair, the kid really does deserve to knock a few shots. It’s not like they would say anything.

The kid must’ve had so much Blackmail material. That wasn’t good for him (especially when the black file was in the hands of Peter Parker).

What also wasn’t good is how close the fucking kid had gotten over the past year (even closer than before and now it was more dangerous because what they were doing was technically ‘ illegal’ Or whatever now). He is smart, too smart. Smart enough to read Wade and tell when he’s lying (he’s always been good at reading people, and Wade had taught him to use those skills. Hone them if you will. but now he was like using it against him and that wasn’t good). Smart enough to dodge a bullet and fire back (or maybe that was skill? The kid used a thing called physics, Wade and Matt had agreed that was bullshit and continued on with their day). Smart enough to get the mid level Sudoku in the newspaper (he was pretty sure the kid signed up for like professional sudoku shit to get money for that stomach of his).

The kid was a freaking Genius.

He’d wiggled his way into his heart all those years ago, and somehow their relationship had changed from a weird ass mentor/mentee thing where the kid covered his own ass and Wade’s and now they had this weird ass relationship where either Spidey or Deadpool would suggest something stupid, the other would say it was probably the worst fucking idea they’ve ever had, and the proposer would agree, and they proceed to do it anyway, because why the fuck not? They were gonna die anyways.
So nothing’s *really* changed persay. Just the situation.

Spidey was young but it wasn’t until Wade found out that Spidey was 15 (Wade always forgot the kid was a *kid* sometimes. He just considered Parker a tiny human being because he can’t remember dates. But that’s okay because Parker doesn’t know how old he really is too) and fucking graduated highschool (he was so proud) to figure out how *young* he was. Which was weird because one would think that maybe seeing the kid with a gun twice the size of him going into battle, or maybe when the kid was crying in the rundown bathroom in Siberia because he was so stressed. He was a baby! Smart and fucking considerate child. He was a good kid who only wanted to help people and kittens, and what the hell was a kid like *that* doing in the middle of a human trafficking scam? Where literal kids -not even 2 years younger than him- were being sold as slaves, and being starved and raped, and there was *blood everywhere*!

Wade and Red tiptoed around him, trying not to get him involved with him in the big stuff until 2 weeks later they were found out, when the kid snatched a gun right out of Wade’s holster and shot him three times in the head and pointed the gun to Red’s and told them to *stop being fucking shithheads*.

Despite a few select moments, Spidey was actually really easygoing. He quipped and joked with the best of them in the worst situations. Always had a way out and could plan for every happening in a second. When the plan went to shit, Wade found himself relying on Spidey to get them out with minimal damage. The personality the kid had also helped when they were trying to calm panicking kids or hostages. Peter by no means was a people person, but when handling kids it was best to have a kid to calm them down. And unlike Wade and Matt (who were shit with kids) he gave off less of a cereal killer vibe, so bonus points.

Yeah, Spidey could handle himself. And usually he was chill and laid back.

Except for tonight. He didn’t open his coke he got from 7/11 down the street. He just stared into a void (*the void*) and goddammit the only time he’d seen Peter like this was when he came back from wherever the hell he was with Logan for 4 months. He would fucking kill Logan, because when the kid is staring into *the void*, it was fucking scary.

*The void* was the sucking of all the life and light in him and leaving behind all the broken sorrow and general confused and disappointed look as society seemed to fail him again. A harsh reminder that the kid had gone through hell and back several times and that no amount of joking and pretending would make him okay. He’d never be okay again. It was a reminder that people were mean and the world was a fucked up place and he had never gotten it gift wrapped like other kids. That Humans, no matter how much faith he has in them to be good, are still the worst fucking creatures on this planet.
Wade knew he shouldn’t continue letting the kid have that belief (or pretending to believe that the world was a great and interesting place and ignoring that it was really a shithole. The belief that he could help make it better and people can be kind to everyone. The belief that this planet was a fair and just place and good people get good opportunities and nothing bad will happen to them), but he was just a fucking kid. He didn’t need to be scarred and shown what the world truly was: A big piece of shit floating through space, inhabiting the most terrifying and cruel creatures in the universe: humans.

But Wade forgets sometimes that Peter had seen it. The blood, and death and tortured bodies all stacked on top of each other neatly or haphazardly. Lifeless corpses that were no less that 6 years younger than him. He forgets That the kid sometimes had to kill other kids. Had to put them out of their misery or followed an order. He forgets That the kid has tortured everyone between the ages 10-70 and then some. He forgets just how much red the kids hands are covered in. Seeping into his skin and soaking him to the bone.

Wade forgets that, because the kid actually acted like a puppy sunshine child and not some emo vampire teenager. No angst surrounding him and he didn’t let the red get to him. Before it was because he had to push down all the trauma because he had to pretend to be normal. Now he did it because he had no one to trust to be a mess with. He and Matt both forget, Peter has seen and done so many things that he shouldn’t have seen or been able to do.

But he did.

‘Because I can’t let them die, not again.’

He thinks Peter sometimes forgets he’s human, much less a fucking kid. But that wouldn’t be a surprise. For as long as Wade’s known him (nearly 10 years now, good god, how had the kid put up with him for that long?) he’s been treated like a freak. Like a monster. Called things that weren’t true back then. He was a normal kid who was super smart and could shoot a bullet right. That’s it. Back then he wasn’t a mutant, but he was treated like one. Even when they left Special Forces that air of insecurity followed him. It messed him up and made him think he wasn’t worth anything. He allowed himself to be outcasted because that was normal to him.

It was normal for him to be alone.

“Who’s ass do I need to kick?” Wade said to the out of it Peter. Peter didn’t acknowledge him until some light came back into his eyes. He knew that he was just borrowing it from the lamp above him, but it looked so real.
“We .” Matt said from behind him, god that ninja bastard. But yes this was good, he could enlist Matt to track these motherfuckers down. It would be way easier with a sensor that was better than a bloodhound.

“It’s stupid.” Peter replied quietly and that’s exactly what he said when Logan dumped his ass on his doorstep and Peter meekly asked if he could stay with Wade until he got enough money to get a place to live… again. (Cable’s name was currently on his studio apartment (because he lost a bet with the kid - never bet against him he was always right) and that SHIELD job sometimes paid him a nice salary, and he sometimes worked the bar. But Weasel always pays him too much, weather if it was because he noticed how skinny the kid is all the time or he was just genuinely terrified of him - as he should be, Parker could kill him and he wouldn’t even know he was dead- he didn’t know. He thinks it’s a bit of both.)

“It’s not stupid if the black hole is back.” Matt said. Ahh, difference of opinion in the name but okay. Sometimes he forgot Matt could see the void too, even when he was blind.

Peter opened his coke and dumped a few painkillers, that Weasel had slipped in front of him when he first came in, into it and took a swig. Nice. He then barked out an ugly humorless laugh and Wade really didn’t like that sound coming from him. Matt didn’t either, apparent by the way he bristled like a fucking cat.

“Russian is a scary language.” Parker said looking at Wade, his face was dead serious. Ohh, so we were playing this game. Peter was good at this game because he was smart, Wade was stupid so he was bad and Matt was okay at this game. But no one can win against Peter Parker, he practically owns this game.

“Yeah, not as bad as German though.” Wade answered, this must be because of Spidey’s past before he was Spidey. So before 12 was the first hint. He always didn’t like German, Wade had noticed when they were in Berlin and someone was yelling at him in it and he was tapping his knife in contemplation of unaliving them to make the stupid seller be quiet (unfortunately, no one died and Wade didn’t get to see a nine year old slit a street vendors throat, but it was still funny) Peter shook his head.

“Yeah, German fucking sucks” Red nodded his head, apparently not liking the language either. Wade raises a brow at him.

“I don’t like the accent. It’s thick and annoying.” Matt answered his eyebrows and Wade made a noise of enlightenment and stored that piece for alter as Matt regarded Peter. “So is Russian. It’s like a more aggressive German.” Oh yes, Petey also had senses that were over the top. Man, did Wade feel left out.
Nah, it’s scary but...nice? It was my first language.” the kid said and Matt nearly spit out his drink. Wade felt a little better knowing that he knew something Matt didn’t, but he was surprised. It’s not like Peter tried to hide it, he cursed in Russian all the time (probably in words that were too vulgar for the English alphabet) But usually Red was more observant than that. Huh, oh well at least Wade got his second clue: It was before he met Wade. That was too easy baby boy. Maybe he’s going easy on them? But Peter had never ever talked about before he was six. Like never. So this was going to get harder, because now they were shooting in the dark.

“You’re bilingual?” Matt asked, apparently not addressing the issue at hand, which was they had no information on hand. Come on Matt, get with the program. They may not do personal, but that felt like something he should’ve known. Peter smirked.

“Something like that, yeah. English is confusing but...but it can be nice...it also can be confusing...it’s not as pretty as Russian.” Was he okay? Wade was lost now. Was the kid on something? Was he tripping? Did he need to call a psychiatrist?...

Nah. It was probably a bit too late for that...

“So Russians?” Wade asked and Spidey got up. That meant time was up. Dammit they took too long, now they’d never get answers. And it was such a good opportunity to have something to pull over the kid when he betrayed him. Dammit. He didn’t have something as strong as Spidey’s black files and now the kid was more powerful than them.

“Let’s go.”


OoOoO

It had literally been a day since he left Wakanda.

It wasn’t even two seconds into his reinstatement. he’d been there literally less than a minute and he managed to screw up and ram a random kid into a wall and nearly choking him to death and giving him a panic attack.
He knew something like this would happen. Natasha had been so gentle with him and Wanda helping him get his memories back and T’challa and Shuri with the arm and rehab and Steve being there for him, and he started going on solo missions that didn’t last more than a week. Monitored, obviously.

He’d never fought with Spiderman before, but he knew the mask and he knew he was a kid. He’d never met him before. They kept missing each other for the whole year, but given that some of that year was spent in Wakanda and Spiderman generally not stopping by to just hangout, it made sense. He mostly stayed in New York and he was told he’d meet him eventually. Sam has been complaining about him for a long time, saying the kid wasn’t dangerous just annoying. But that wasn’t true. When he walked into the room, Bucky felt something dangerous inside him. Something he worked hard to suppress. Just like Bucky, but probably different.

He’d never seen the face, but that face and those eyes. Somehow, it triggered a whole different set of Flashbacks that he really could live without. A set of flashbacks that were so horrifying that he didn’t even want to think of them. The worst part is, he could live without them. Those certain flashbacks just reminded him of the monster he was.

**White Room.**

*A kid in the corner.*

*He was reading a book in Russian, but talking in English.*

It was terrifying.

The poor kid was backing away from him, looking as scared as that kid in the memories seemed to be when he was supposed to be sleeping. The looks were identical. It made him panic more, the kid’s presence obviously not helping him calm down. It made another man -Fury- pull the kid out all angry. He felt a little bad for the fate of that child. He’d done nothing wrong. It was just Bucky being dumb.

There was something about him though...

“Who was he?” Bucky whispered, Natasha’s soothing words finally coming through. Stark took one look at him and they locked eyes for only a moment before he huffed and stormed out of the room. Silently agreeing to get the kid out of the unnecessary lecture he was getting probably.
No, don’t yell at him. He doesn’t like it when people yell at him.

“No one love.” Natasha answered his verbal question in her gentle Russian accent. “What did you see?”

“I don’t know… there was this kid, he...he was reading a book. Pride and Prejudice I think. He was about...2 or 3? I don’t know….” Bucky said and quietly whispered. “He… he was in Hydra cell with me I think...I don’t know…I think he’s dead now….” Steve and Natasha stiffened before Steve quickly gained his composer back.

“It was probably because Parker looked so young.” Steve mumbled trying to sound justifiable, somewhere inside of him he felt bad for the kid. He was just as scared as Bucky had been, it’s not like anyone knew he would trigger a flashback. Why were they all so hard on him? He didn’t do anything wrong!

Still, he felt a little mad at the kid as Bucky choked up more. He had still triggered a flashback for him and that one hurt. A lot. He was on the verge of a panic attack and he hadn’t one of those in a while. But then something registered in Bucky’s mind.

“Parker?” he asked in a tight tone. The name triggering a smaller set of similar flashbacks. “He can’t be. Dr.Parker is dead . And he certainly wasn’t a kid.” Bucky emphasized, Natasha and Steve looked at each other. Worried and confused looks crossing both their faces.

“Who was he?” Natasha asked gently, petting his hair back and massaging his scalp in a way that she knew calmed him down. He took a deep breath before talking through it.

“H-He was a doctor at that facility the kid was in. He...He was the kid’s…” Bucky trailed off. The kid in the flashback looked so familiar, same big brown eyes same curly unruly mop of brown hair. Same scared looked (although the spider kid hid his better) Bucky felt something heavy go to the bottom of his stomach. He looked at Natasha who had paused and lost all colour in her face.

“What the hell!” a sound from the hallway, and Stark came stumbling in with a sickly bent arm, Bruce went over to him in a hurry to asses the damage. Steve was up and striding over behind Banner as Stark hissed at the prodding to the obviously broken arm.

“Safe to say the mission is thoroughly canceled.” Fury came back in almost leisurely. He had a
deeper scowl than when he left. Obviously upset at the mission being canceled.

“What happened?” Steve stood up straighter and leaned away to let Banner work as Stark plopped on a seat. Fury looked like he was going explode with anger.

“The fucking kid bolted.” he ground out. It reminded Bucky of a boiling pot that was spilling over. They looked over to where Bruce was treating Tony best he could and blinked once.

“The kid did that?” Clint asked quietly sitting up in his chair. Worry setting into his own face, although Bucky wasn’t sure what he was worrying over.

“He’s so fucking- ugh!” Fury threw his hands up in frustration and spared a glance at Barnes. “You good?” He asked half heartedly, like a military commander. It was oddly comforting. Bucky choppily nodded. Natasha put a hand on his back and rubbed, amplifying his comfort.

“Have anything on a ‘Dr.Parker’?” she asked in a different tone than she used with him. Professional and straightforward. Fury stopped in his anger and looked at them.

“First name?” He asked back. Not even taking out a tablet. He knew something.

“Richard.” He answered without a hint of hesitation, like it was automatic. Fury looked like a deer on headlights, but he went on, “And his wife was Mary, I think that was her name…” Yeah, the kid liked Mary. There was silence for a while. Fury looked floored. All anger gone.

“...That’s not… Richard and Mary Parker are… are the kid’s parents.” Fury said gesturing to the door. He meant the Spider kid. But that couldn’t be true. “And he said he had a normal childhood, with his uncle and aunt cause his parents died.” Bucky scoffed. That kid was a spider mutant, there was nothing normal about that.

“Well he was lying to you then.” Bucky said without a hint of hesitation. He was sure. His confidence leaving the room silent. “Cause Mary Parker was infertile. All Hydra agents that are women are required to be.”

There was more silence.
“Shit!”

OoOoO

8 years ago...

He was a nervous mess.

That’s what Wade called him when he pointed a gun to the guys head in Scotland—which was a rather beautiful country if he did say so himself- and his hand was so shaky it could barely pull the trigger. That had been the first person he killed with a gun. He’d prefer killing them with knifes or strangling them with strings. It was less sudden and more interactive. He could control those more; control how deep he cut and where he cut. Guns were memories of Mama shooting target boards and people yelling at her to do better - even though Peter thought she was amazing. Guns was the pistol pointed at Mary Parker’s head and the blinking bird patch she left in Peter’s favorite book-Pride and Prejudice, the Russian translation of course. Guns were memories of Soldier one flick away from killing him and his terrified eyes- mirroring Peters own emotions.

But going to school couldn’t be compare to shooting a gun. School didn’t kill the person on the other end. Or maybe it did, he’d heard the kids wallowing about starting their first day of school in melodramatics and whining. They didn’t want to come to this institution and Peter couldn’t fathom what could be so bad about it. From his research, school seemed great. Learning things about the world and science and math and reading. Properly being taught and if he wasn’t mistaken, he could ask questions if he just raised his hand. It seemed almost too good to be true!

He was placed in second grade. He had never been to school before, But the people who placed him was told he was enhanced intelligent and that he’d been able to keep up in classes. They were wrong, he didn’t have enhanced intelligence and even if he did, he had the restraints on him so theoretically it wouldn’t work. He was still younger than everyone in his grade, because he had just turned seven, barley missing what they called a ‘cut off’, for the age limit.

Unlike other kids, his guardians didn’t drop him off. Everyone else called theirs ‘mom’ and ‘dad’, sure he knew what those were (your biological parent, but sometimes through the legal system they can become ‘mom’ or ‘dad’ but that technically wouldn’t be true because on legal forms it would be ‘guardian’. It was confusing) but only in books. In real life it seemed weird and almost painful, like a pipe dream (which was stupid they were just labels). He called his guardians May and Ben, by their names. Because Mr.Parker was evil and Mrs.Parker was dead. May wasn’t here because she had a long shift at the hospital and Ben wasn’t here because he yelled at him to get out and go to school and threw something that Peter dodges expertly (small training efforts).

Yeah, Peter couldn’t wait to go back to Wade in the summer, even if he did have to kill people
when he saw him. He may not have like special forces, but he liked Wade. Wade was a nice grown up. Like Mary and Phil (well maybe not Phil since he dumped him with Cotnet). But at least in special forces he wasn’t alone, like he was here. Even though there were a lot of people and crowds always made Peter anxious and paranoid. New York was full of crowds and sometimes it made Peter’s head hurt with just how nervous he was around them.

Peter had stumbled all the way to school, looking on an old beat up phone for directions to the elementary schools name he saw briefly on a paper in Mays hand. As he went down the streets and sidewalks and buses, he committed the route to memory because he’d have to go on this route two times every day for five days every week (at least that’s what he thought with school hours and openings and closings).

When he finally got to the school, he didn’t know where to go so he looked around. He had no one to tell him what to do, so he looked around to just follow another kid. He needed someone oblivious enough not to catch on that he was following him and a target that was noticeable so he could stay a safe distance away and hide in the crowd. He picked his target: a big Philippine boy with a bowl cut hairstyle and large backpack with decals from a movie or show maybe on it. He was large so it was easy to spot him, and seemed innocent enough to be ignorant to Peters presence. He kept his head down as he followed the kid all the way inside the school weaving through densely populated hallways filled with students, teachers and parents talking to each other outside of rooms with light wood doors decorated with thick colorful construction paper. The boy turned into one of the many classrooms and Peter turned into the same one.

The classroom wasn’t as populated as the halls, so Peter was exposed. Still, he followed the kid (like an idiot, he should run before his cover was exposed). When the boy stopped at a seat in the far end of the classroom halfway to the chalkboard near the window, Peter bumped into him because the desks were too close. The kid turned around as Peter rubbed his nose where it had smooshed against the large backpack full of school supplies (he brought like two pencils and a notebook that he bought at the dollar store).

“Ouch.” He mumbled, even though it only stung for a second, and the boy looked worried for a minute. It really wasn’t a big deal, he’s been in much more pain before. It was more a wound to his ego for not being as observant as he should. He should really find a word for his zone outs...or zone ins?

“Oh my god! I am so sorry! I didn’t see you there dude, you are so quiet and small.” Peter huffed at the blunt observation and crossed his arms. People called him small all the time, but that was because he was a kid and they were adults. He’d never been around kids his age, not in anyway that counted at least. Now he was surrounded by them and expected to interact with them, with people who had the same authority as him (at least by society’s standards). This kid was the same age as him, so he should not be allowed to make that comment. Still it didn’t seem like meant offense. It was just an observation; a comparison, because he was smaller than most of the other kids in the room. He let it slide.
“It’s alright.” Peter said nonchalantly, not wanting to make a scene of himself. He sat down in the nearest desk and leaned back in the chair, staring forward. It was a casual position that he had learned in Special Forces going on undercover missions to avoid suspicion. He rather liked the position, it was comfortable but highly unprofessional. The boys eyes went big he noticed out of the corner of his eyes, he looked over and raised an eyebrow. Silently asking him what he was thinking.

“You like Star Wars?” He asked as he noticed Peters bag. It was one that had been the least money (because he went to a convenience store for the bag), it was plain black with a white metal helmet patch on the front zipper. When Peter asked the cashier what the symbol meant, the guy looked at him weird before saying it was a stormtrooper and that he should really watch that series because it was good. He stored that away in the mental checklist that he needed to study pop culture.

Peter smirked at the memory now, the man had been so baffled that Peter didn’t know. He kind of liked it when he surprised people. “I’ve never watched Star Wars, but I didn’t get my backpack, my friend did.” He lied. He didn’t have a reasonable excuse that wouldn’t make someone pity him otherwise. The kids eyes widen and he looked invested.

“Woah, cool you have friends!” He said and Peter cocked his head. No not really. God damn he was going to regret this lie. The only friend he has that’s still definitely alive (or maybe not because he was in the tucking army) was Wade. And he wasn’t so much of a friend as he was like a laid back supervisor. “Hey would you mind being mine?”.... Shit.... That was not How expected this conversation to turn.

Interesting.

“I guess, I’ve never had friends my own age.” When they were older, the other boy would’ve questioned that. But they were kids so he didn’t see anything wrong with it. A friend was a friend no matter how you put it or what age they were. Sure it was little weird for a kid to be friends with an adult that was in no way related to them, but Peter was just a weird person. His lie has been anything but standard or any word that could be characterized as normal. He took what he could get, he wasn’t picky (especially if it was to society’s standards).

“Hey, maybe we can even watch Star Wars!” He said excitedly. Peter smiled at his antics. He rather liked the positivity that radiates from the boy. The pure innocence was refreshing and it was a nice example of what a kid his age should normally act. At least, he wanted to believe that kids all acted like him. It probably wasn’t.

“Yeah, sure.” Peter replies shyly. He felt good having someone be nice to him without being given
the orders. Talk to him without any other motives than to just be with him. He enjoyed the idea of having a friend. It would make his life a lot less lonely.


“Peter Parker.” He said without hesitation. Even if that wasn’t his name in any of the sense. His name had changed so much from before, it kind of made him sad that he had to lose that piece of him, publicly at least.

Then a girl plops herself into the seat next to Peter, the one closest to the window. She had dark skin and wild curly hair that was just a few shades darker. And she was taller than Peter by a few inches, he noticed with a hint of envy. He was reminded of the small comment that Ned has pointed out. She pulled out a book and opened it to the marked page, and the title immediately caught Peter’s attention. Pride and Prejudice. But this one was in English. The girl seemed to notice his staring.

“‘Sup loser.” she said with a raised brow and nearly indifferent eyes, and Peter looked up quickly as if he got caught doing something bad and blushed a bit. Her nonchalant stare for him slightly unsettled him, but it was oddly comforting. More to what he was used to but...softer. Probably because they were the same age.

“Uhh…” Peter didn’t know what to say so he looked back at the book frantically to bring the attention to it and then at the girl again and blurted “the ending is kinda a let down.” It was lame and he kind of deflated at that. But the girl raised an eyebrow.

“Yeah? You’ve read it?” Peter nodded. She scoffed and went back to her book as she muttered “Huh, don’t spoil it then.” He smiled a little at that.

The next week, Peter was fully caught up on all the Star Wars movies and Michelle (as he found out her name when they were partnered for a science project) sat down next to him on Monday and said “you were right, Parker.” He had grinned. He was then given the right to call her ‘MJ’, for not being incompetent.

Maybe school wouldn’t be that much of a pain.

OoOoO

Present...
He’s successfully fucked off the face of the earth for 1 month.

He’s avoided the Avengers before but never to explicitly avoid them. Avengers fighting always meant a lot of publicity, and sometimes he really needed to stay low. This time was different.

To put it lightly, he fucked up.

The whole thing was a mess really. He was freaking out and couldn’t think straight. His survival instincts took over, and really they shouldn’t have gotten that close when he was having a panic attack (apparently his panic attacks were barley noticeable according to Wade. To someone who didn’t know him, he looked like he was just breathing a bit off. Like after a long run). Long story-short, He’d broken Tony Stark’s arm, and promptly banned himself from coming to the tower or answering any of Fury’s or the Avenger’s calls for six to eight weeks. (He was probably the only person in this universe who could ghost Nick Fury and get away with it. And he did take pride in that, thankyouverymuch).

He almost laughed to himself, because almost a year ago he was with May, watching bad Hallmark movies in the middle of April eating ice cream. He was gearing up to graduate high school early. A year ago he had friends and everything was moderately okay.

Now he was at her gravestone that was 1 foot away from Ben’s. And 4 feet away from Mary’s. Even if they buried an empty casket for her’s. The casket was for show, because they couldn’t say how she had actually died. They didn’t even have a body to bury. Now he was gearing up for the closest thing to war without it actually being war. Now he had no friends, no home and an on and off job of being a freelance mercenary/SHIELD agent/vigilante/bar tender, with sucky inconsistent hours and moderate pay. Just enough to get himself fed and keep himself taken care of (and even then he was still homeless because he was 15 and on the run from CPS).

He wished his mother was here. Or Mary. It was weird, but seeing Soldier again must have triggered some sort of want in him to see them and ask them what to do. They always knew what to do. But he couldn’t ask them.

*Because their body’s ash. In Russia. It was Germany you dumbass.*

Even his voices were wrong in their logic. It made Peter satisfied when he corrected them. It was a strange sense of satisfaction, frankly. He knew technically they were just a manifestation of insecurity and lonileness into a more real form. But sometimes, he just needed to pretend they were some one else.
He’d gotten six calls from Fury before he blocked his number (he did that sometimes when he needed to get away from him). He saw the news in a window on his way to work, saying Iron Man’s arm was broken— which seemed stupid to advertise but apparently if it was a non battle related injury due to a supposed ally...well, yeah he got it now.

The next day, Harley Keener ratted out that Spiderman did it on instagram, and Tony was too embarrassed that he got the shit kicked out of him by a spandex wearing dropout (which made him panic a little because that was a bit more sensitive information than he’d like to go out to public. Even though it wasn’t nesasarily true. But it made him think about all the other shit Harley could say, luckily he didn’t. But it was safe to say, his tentative trust in Harley Keener was dashed entirely). That’s when the general public started to turn on him, well more so (given that Jameson has already convinced them he was some sort of alien terrorist) by throwing things at him when he swung through the city (like fruits and toilet palate and eggs and just about your average grocery list. Which was a waste of good food, like come on guys. It sucked too because his stomach was too messed up to handle any of the products thrown. Like seriously couldn’t they just throw a juice box or popsicle his way? He was starving). It kinda sucked cause he thought that Harley and him would’ve been good friends. He understood where the non superpowered teenager was coming from but still...

It would’ve been nice to have a friend again.

Peter decided that he didn’t care. At least he shouldn’t care. He’s been in much worse PR situations and honestly he never really did anything based off of society norms anyway. He deserved the treatment anyways. It builds character. He made all the wrong moves, and now was paying that consequence (so suck in that Clint. Maybe the Avengers would Get off his back about avoiding consequences after this...Yeah right).

But what was really annoying him currently: he couldn’t get that little voice in his head to shut up.

That voice telling him to give up already and give himself to Hydra.

That voice that said screw them, they don’t deserve your help.

That voice that said that he didn’t deserve anyone else’s help.

That voice was so hard not to listen to (especially when he was alone), and everyday he was avoiding the Avengers it got louder and louder. It was fueled by guilt and regret and fear and
uncertainty— and Peter was feeling all of them right now. It was like they were created to break him down even when he was already beat into the ground. The voice that was the one that made good, sensible decisions usually—whom he also didn’t listen to, he’d be damned before thinking twice about making a decision between himself and someone else—got quieter. Like it agreed with the bad voice; it backed down when the bad voice was unquestionably right. He couldn’t hear it, and Peter hated listening to anyone, especially his voices. But somehow, they had the most influence on him.

“Shut up.” he mumbled out loud, and turned quickly away from May’s grave to leave the cemetery. He didn’t want her to see him like this. She didn’t deserve that. Neither did Mary. But Mary isn’t here, and whose fault is that. He squeezed his eyes shut.

It’s your fault she’s dead. It’s your fault that you broke Tony’s arm. It’s your fault that you were placed in that cell with Barnes. You weren’t good enough for your mother. Don’t you realize by now? You needed a fucking babysitter because you are so weak.

“Be quiet.” he mumbled half heartedly. He agreed with the voices though, and that only happened in low moments that he usually allowed himself not to feel. “I didn’t mean to break his arm, you made me do it…” It was saying something if he was blaming something that didn’t exist outside his head for a stupid thing he did. Trying to defend himself when he was responsible for his own actions. It was useless, especially against himself because he knew he was wrong.

You WANTED to do it. Don’t blame your actions on me. You know that it was satisfying. You probably won’t do it again, but somewhere deep down you don’t regret doing it then.

“No, I do. I swear, I do.” Peter mumbled frantically walking faster to get... somewhere. Somewhere where the voices couldn’t follow. Failing in Convincing himself that it wasn’t his fault. That any of the tragedy in his life wasn’t his fault. The voices weren’t helping. He needed to get away from them.

You’ll never escape us.

“I can try.” he said back pathetically weak. He turned another corner as the voice laughed harshly and loudly, the fake sound ringing in his ears. It made his head hurt, and he felt like he was in a tight space with no way out. Made his chest constrict with panic. He made a pained noise. No one around him even flinched.

No one cares. No one will ever care about you.
His phone rang, the ringing muffling out all the other noises that were rising a cacophony around him and he picked it without a second thought, not even looking at the number. With the flimsy, not at all thought out plan that he would just piss off the telemarketer on the other end to escape the voices.

That was his first mistake.

What kind of telemarketer didn’t use an automatic messaging system? It was probably people like Peter who urged them to even use the system. No one wanted to deal with other people’s bullshit. Peter could testify to that.

“Kid?” he heard someone say as the bad voice shut up. He still could feel the smug presence as his horror raised making him stop in the middle of the sidewalk. He knew that voice. The voice he was trying to avoid. But then he realized.

*His* voice shut up!

“Ha, I told you I could escape.” he told the voice triumphantly. The voice didn’t answer, though and he didn’t know if it was good or bad as something empty settled into the pit of his stomach. Something daunting and full of dread. It felt achy and uncomfortable.

*It’s because you haven’t eaten in three days.* The sensible voice said. Well it was nice that it could make an appearance in its busy schedules. Where was it like 4 weeks ago? He could really use the back up. The voice didn’t answer the claims and Peter was satisfied that he’d shut that one up too.

“Kid?” that new voice sounded more concerned, and somehow more concrete. He didn’t want another voice, his stupid mind had enough. He’d get even bigger headaches if there was anymore screaming in his head.

*You’re going crazy.*

“Oh shut up. Don’t you start too.” he said to the good voice and it promptly shut its mouth more permanently, he didn’t see it but somehow he just knew. “Thankyou.” he said, because he felt bad for it cause it was just trying to help. Peter knew though, the voices were never there to help him. No matter how much good advice they have, it was only to taunt him. Get him to trust them. He wouldn’t allow it.
“Who are you talking to?” the voice on the phone said and it finally registered that it wasn’t a voice in his head, it was a person. In like real life. A not dead person. A person who instilled so much unnecessary guilt inside him. A person that was the root reason the voices were talking so much lately. A person of whom he had trying to not see for the next two weeks at least.

He wasn’t prepared for this. Not yet. He was not in the right mind to have any sort of conversation with actual people right now.

“Wrong number.” he said quickly and wanted to hang up the phone, the call didn’t end. He pressed the end call button a bunch more times, each tap getting more and more aggressive and frantic - desperate, but that made sense because he was very desperate right now- but it didn’t seem to end.

“Nice try kid, but I hacked into your phone. This conversation ends when I want it to.” Stark said triumphantly, he could almost hear the smug smirk that was definitely on the man's face. Peter groaned. He didn’t want to talk to people right now, he just wanted to dissociate from real life and take the rain of insults his voices were showering him in (not the best solution or coping mechanism for guilt, but it’s the only one he’s got).

“Nothing is stopping me from yeeting this thing off a building.” he said in a matter of fact but also threatening way- but not the kind of threat that was intimidating, it was like the kind of threat that made him sound scared. Stark made a confused noise, and he heard giggling in the background. He didn’t know why anyone was laughing, he was fucking serious. He would yet this piece of shit - that was basically from the Stone Age- as far as he could and let him just remind them that he had super strength so it would go pretty far.

“You’re so old.” he heard a voice, sounded like Keener’s, and the giggling must be Shuri. Why were they there? They could hear this call. Keener was still mad at him last he checked. But then again he did check three weeks ago. Maybe it blew over for him. That shouldn’t matter because he betrayed Peter, so Peter didn’t trust him (not that he ever trusted Keener in the first place but… yeah). Conditional statements and what not.

“You uncultured swine. You have a child of the Zth generation, you hath not know his tongue? Disgraceful.” Peter said trying to avert this conversation from the one he knew was going to happen, the giggling got louder. At least he could still make people laugh. Even if it probably was at him and not with him. He was good at conversation divergence, it’s why he’s never talked about his problems out loud before. Sure little things build up and then push him over the edge, but it just takes too much time to explain from the beginning. These problems that were arising now were because of the problems that had planted their seeds in his past and he didn’t know how to explain that. He didn’t think he wanted to either.
You know they’re gonna ask you to do something, and you’re gonna say yes. Cause, you know, you’re a dumbass. You aren’t in the mindset to do that. You gotta chuck this thing. It’s shit anyway.

He wasn’t sure which voice said it, but it was getting annoying. Probably the bad one because of the wording and the suggestion of chucking something he couldn’t afford to break. He’d have to take a merc job to pay for the phone and not only was he not in the right mind set to kill someone with 100 percent control over his actions, he also had to talk to the client he was killing for. He couldn’t work at the bar because again, he was trying to avoid social interaction and SHIELD was obviously out of the question. He only had the little money he did save up and that was mostly for rent on the cheap studio apartment under Cable’s name and food, which he hadn’t eaten at all (he’d have to go to work soon, because money was dwindling, but he didn’t think about that). So yeah, no extra expense. “Okay A) we can’t afford that. Second of all, do not interrupt me you inept asshole. I’m trying to have a civil, unwanted or warranted conversation. I don’t know which one you fucking are but I swear to god, I will find the little space in hell that you hide in and incinerate it.” He growled the threat.

“...What?” The real person voice said. He sounded a bit confused and concerned. Peter paid no mind to it as the voices responded.

_Hell’s already on fire._

“Do not tell me logic! Not when your entire existence isn’t even remotely logical! You shouldn’t be real.” Peter said back. The voices weren’t real. But at times like these (when Peter was acting like a lunatic) they felt more reel than really real things. “And if Hell’s on fire then I’ll fucking freeze it.”

_Now you’re thinking. Good job._

“Thank you.” Peter nodded satisfied with the small praise. It made him feel absolutely disgusting that he accepted it so easily. But he...he kinda needed it right now. No, not needed, he craved it. He always has, but like most other things in Peter Parker’s fucked up life, he suppressed that. Usually he was good at it, but again he was not in the right mind to think logically.

“Who are you talking to?” Stark asked, as he made his way back to reality. The voices had died down for now so he could hear Stark break him out of it. Well partially break him out, he was still half under. Probably even more than half.

“I don’t really think you wanna meet them. They are annoying and mean.” Peter answered without really thinking. Answered like they were real people and Stark could meet them. Stark couldn’t
and Peter didn’t want them to get worse by trying to find a way to make that happen. They probably could with the right inspiration. Peter knew as much to keep them contained. “And don’t encourage them, they won’t shut up. I can’t even have a chat with you without them putting in their two sense.” Peter said quickly to dissuade Stark from asking anymore questions about them.

_At least we have sense. ‘ No you don’t so shut up.’_

“Are you okay?” That hit him like a sucker punch. Made his head reel around and spin. It caught him so off guard he his brain froze, the voices froze, everything just stopped. No one’s asked him that in a long time. He didn’t know how to respond.

“I...I thoug-thought you w-were ma-ad at me?” he stuttered and cursed himself for doing so. He tried not to breathe in too audibly to calm himself down and get back in his loop. “Why did you call me?” he composed himself a bit more. Probably a bit too professional, god he must sound like he had a bad case of bipolar disorder. Stark huffed and pod no mind to the supposed mood swings.

“Fury couldn’t get through to you, so he asked me to.” he said blandly, ignoring or not noticing Peter’s stuttering. _Thank god!_ But come on Nick, can’t you take a hint? He block Fury because he needed space. Nick has the _Avengers_ to call, he’d be good for a few more weeks without him. He was good without him before Spidey and he’d be good now too. Plus, Peter was pretty sure he was in no condition to help anyone with rational thinking (like he had to do with the Avengers) anyways.

“Aww, Nicky’s worried about me.” he gushed dramatically and giggled at the end. Yep, defiantly sounded bipolar right now. He couldn’t control all these feelings that swirled in him so fast it was making him sick...or maybe it was the hunger. Oh well. “He wants me to come to the tower?” he said in a bubbly tone that did not at all fit the conversation or situation.

“Okay, you need hardcore therapy, kid. I’m serious. You want me to hook you up, I will gladly do so.” Stark said, Peter ignored the suggestion and furrowed his eyebrows. Like he could afford a therapist. Did he not hear how he was in a tight financial situation earlier? And even if Stark was willing to pay for him (especially after h fucked up so catastrophically) he was pretty sure no therapist would be willing to sit through five minutes of his goddamn sob story. He was pretty sure they’d run at first sight. Lucky bastards, he couldn’t outrun his life. What a load of bull.

“That sounds like a drug deal, Stark and Mama raised me Better than that.” Peter said in the same tone Wade used sometimes. He ignored the pang in his chest and refused to think how his mother was dead. It probably hit a little too close to home right now, considering the location he was walking back from.
Your Mama didn't raise you. ‘Thanks, I was trying to avoid that.’

“Ugh, What the hell no . I’m not selling drugs to a minor!” Tony groaned and Peter raised a brow. Why did Mr. Stark sound frustrated? He was the one trying to end the unending call here. If anything Peter should be the temperamental one. He was literally on the verge of a breakdown or meltdown or any kind of down. He was going down was the point.

“Does that means you sell drugs to adults, cause I gotta say while it’s not surprising, it’s still illegal.” Peter said in a mock condescending tone. His voice was going everywhere, he should just pick an emotion already. But if Mr. Stark was selling drugs to minors or adults, it was illegal and Peter kind of specialized in busting drug dealers. Billionaire or not, if Stark was doing something illegal then he had to bust him.


“Kid no I’m fucking Iron man. A role model to all children thank you very much.” Tony said and Peter shrugged even if Stark couldn’t see. If he wasn’t doing anything illegal then there wasn’t a problem.

“Kay, but if you want drugs I got a guy.” Peter said not really kidding, but shouldn’t he not say that. It’s not like he did or sell drugs (willingly) he just knew someone who did. That wasn’t illegal right? Was knowing a bad guy illegal?

“You take drugs?” Tony asked with disbelief in his tone. Peter assumes that he didn’t mean Advil and that he did mean Cocaine and Heroin and shit like that. You know, the illegal stuff.

“No, but I still know a guy who is good” He said neutrally. Of course he knew a guy, he had to research drug circles and bust people for doing and selling them. Also Wade stashes cocaine in Blind Al’s house next to the cure for blindness (which he should really give to Matt before blind Al, but Peter thinks Matt likes being blind. He’s gotta say that a disability does make you less of a suspect for vigilantism. So does being a kid and a supposed burn victim).

“And how would you know that?” Did Stark really ask that? Peter thought that he was supposed be a genius. That’s a pretty dumb assumption that he doesn’t know the names of his targets- because, yes sometimes he did actually, occasionally plan to bust a drug trafficking circle (he wasn’t a complete mess all the time).
“Ben went out and never came back, so I guess it was worth dying over.” That’s not how it went down. He didn’t notice that he’d mentioned his dead uncle so blatantly. Oh well, he was a bastard anyway. There was a pause on the other end of the line and Peter didn’t speak as he waited for a reply. Finally Tony spoke slowly - almost carefully.

“Maybe you should come back to the tower. I don’t wanna discuss these kind of things over a phone.” Tony suggested cautiously. Peter rolled his eyes at the tone. Yeah, he got it. This was supposed to be a ‘serious conversation’ but like Peter didn’t exactly do that kind of thing. It wasn’t a big deal, everyone can stick it up their asses. He wasn’t some charity case; he could take care of himself.

“There is a perfectly good reason I am not there now, and won’t be there til...when is your cast off?” Peter asked cocking his head and looking at his sleeve covered wrist mimicking looking at the time, even though Stark couldn’t see. It was the thought that counted, or whatever.

“3 weeks.” he answered in a dull but slightly amused tone. Peter didn’t really like what it implied. “What you feel guilty or something?” he sounded like he had a smug look on his face. Peter didn’t like that tone. He was getting fucking cocky. Well jokes on you Stark, Peter Parker is incapable of caring about anyone’s wellbeing- especially his own.

Your right about one of those things.

“No, I have real people shit to deal with. The guilt phase lasted like 2 seconds. But if you wanna like Avenge yourself, I’d be down to you breaking a few of my ribs?” Peter giggled at his pun, ignoring his white lie and paging no mind to his offer. Stark made an appalled sound on the other end of the line while Keener and -yeah that was definitely- Shuri said “do it”, behind him. See it was a three to one vote! He was definitely winning...wait what was he winning again?

“I will not break your ribs! What the hell kid? Seriously are you okay?!” That was the third time he asked. Why does he keep asking that?!! Were they practicing CPR or something? There was no way that this could be right. Maybe he was talking to someone else. At that thought Peter felt irrational disappointment drop into his stomach, making it growl. He ignored that (just like he always did. But Peter was pretty sure he’d throw up if he ate anything now.)

“Good god. Don’t get bent out of shape about it. A ‘no’ would’ve been fine.” Peter rolled his eyes, trying to keep the constricting feeling in his chest from showing in his voice. “But now I owe you a broken bone so... if your ever angry and need to break something, hit me up.” Peter outright laughed at that one. Broken bone pacts were one of the things Peter would never break. He didn’t give them out lightly, and Stark better not waste his. But it seemed like the man was adiment on not learning the significance of it (probably because he’s not a Vigilante. Castle or Jones would understand. They took their broken bone pacts seriously too and Peter was proud to have one.
broken bone with each of them).

“You need help.” Stark said seriously. Peter could imagine him calling therapists as they spoke, or having FRIDAY call therapists (A.I. were so handy these days). Peter would go even if Stark paid him though. No amount of money was worth wasting a good person’s time. And if Stark made him go then he’d lose bone breaking privileges.

“Oh come on, that was a good one.” Peter said with a smile, no appreciates good humor anymore. “Besides, my physical health isn’t as easily deterred as one might think.” No cause you’re a fucking freak Parker. His mental health however? A completely different story.

“I’m more concerned about your mental health.” Stark said, and Peter paused for a minute- not even acknowledging that he was just think that. Concerned? May day, May day! Abort fucking mission! NOPE! ABSOLUTELY NOT! Unacceptable! This isn’t FUCKING GOOD!!!

“Stay the fuck in your lane Stark, or you lose bone breaking privileges. I’m not the tower cause I don’t wanna deal with your fucking bullshit right now. And you sure as hell don’t wanna deal with mine.” Peter said in the phone in a completely different voice practically dripping with venom. It was dark, had an edge. It was threatening and harsh. And it reeked of ‘get your fucking dog bitch!’ . Peter rarely used it. It came out when he was trying to protect himself from things that made him a whole world of uncomfortable, sad and angry. Protect himself from triggers that other people would start. Protect himself from getting his hopes up only for it to be cruelly taken away in the worst ways imaginable. It was a warning and It took Stark a second to reply.

“Good, I don’t want those privileges. And cool it with the swearing kid, god.” Stark assured, not mentioning the tone but taking the hint and dropping the subject and Peter let out an ugly laugh that usually made any adult he was talking to bristle. He could tell Stark did it on the other end. “Stark. A little piece of advice: if you have bone breaking privilege, you wanna save that shit.” Peter said and went back to his casual voice. All venom vanished. He no longer needed to warn Stark to stay away, so there was no need for it. Maybe he is smart after all . “And I come from Queens, not a fucking Rose Field or Wakanda or whatever. Words don’t mean jack when your face is a bloody mess.” You also come from Russia… your point? ... thought so.

He heard an indigent noise in the background and smiled a little, before the call abruptly ended. Good he didn’t need Stark on his back anymore. But why did he feel so empty all of a sudden. He couldn’t feel the presence of the voices in his head either. It was like he was alone. An empty void. The emotions drained out of him and he was just walking aimlessly now. No thoughts intruded his head, it was almost like he’d shut down completely. Maybe his social battery was drained, if he even had one.
He welcomed the loneliness, just as he always did.

OoOoO

If Peter didn’t have his *Spidey Sense* he’d be dead.

He has not listened to his Spidey sense enough to know it was a fucking bad idea. It was always right, and sometimes it felt like everything was okay and it was just a weird feeling. Peter was already a paranoid person before the bite, HYDRA and Special Forces did that to you if you stayed in it long enough - and Peter *grew up* on basically the battlefield. He’s come to realize that he should always be on the look out if he got tingly and what not. Especially after he became homeless (well he wasn’t anymore, because Cable lost a bet and now was the name under Peter’s dirt box of a studio apartment until he got evicted for not paying rent, it was his).

But yeah, point is: he should *really* listen to his Spidey Sense more. Then maybe this whole mess could have been avoided.

You see, Ever since he’d met this particular guy, his Spidey Sense felt a pang. He figured it was because he was in an environment where if the people in the room teamed up, they could beat his ass into the ground (if he took on the Avengers one by one, he was fairly certain he could at least hold his own). Whenever he saw Ross it was with the Avengers in the same room. Probably because the first time he was an anomaly, and the other guy was a high standing important grown up person with a stick up his ass (even if he couldn’t throw a punch to save his own ass, he had people for that. Ugh, *officials*). But then after the second time, it was very apparent that Peter wanted to slug the guy into Canada. After the third time, he discovered the Avengers wanted to slug him into Mexico, and see that really didn’t work out with his plans going opposite ways and all (but he could hop on board that train since Mexico was further, therefore requiring more force in the punch). After the fourth time, he figured the Avengers got dibs for actually putting up with this asshole for longer than him, and he was nothing but a fair person (he couldn’t imagine having to deal with that prick every week much less twice every week).

Either way, he never really made an effort to actually hide that he hated the guy with a passion (he was *not* a good dude. He was probably more of the reason Peter didn’t like going on missions with the Avengers than the Avengers themselves. Whenever Ross gave orders, they were always doomed to fail so Peter has *never* followed them. When Cap gave orders off of Ross’s Peter never followed them, but when Cap gave orders on his own with no influence from Ross, Peter was 74 percent more willing to follow them). Ross was a stuck up ignorant intolerant asshole who probably beat on innocent people for fun. Peter might be young, but he could smell a pedophile from across New York since he was ten, and Ross *reeked* of a child rapist.
He probably should have said something sooner, but who would believe him.

Turns out he was proven fucking right - once again. And of course it was within the 8 weeks that he was avoiding the Avengers that he found Ross out and had like solid evidence. He’s been spending his time taking down these sex trafficking circles, that took children from all over the world with even a slight tie to mutants. It was a good way to clear his head (which probably should be concerning, but then again so should being able to kill people while effectively making sure their bodies were never found). It also reeked of Ross, because Ross hated mutants, he made that much clear. Peter was honestly embarrassed it had took him so long to put the pieces together.

He knew he couldn’t do anything about it, because Ross probably had a reason that he set up the hub in New York where the fucking Avengers lived and it was so easy to find. He was stupid but not a fucking idiot (because somehow he hadn’t been found out yet). He either had a bunch of connections that made this possible or he really was just fucking stupid (probably both if he thought someone wouldn’t ever figure him out. Or maybe he wanted someone to figure it out. Bad guys did that sometimes). But looking through the window of that warehouse, Ross smiling in the middle to another equally disgusting man that he recognized as some of his cronies (great SHIELD has been infiltrated again, but this time instead of world dominating pedophiles it was mutant hating pedophiles). The kids -who were no younger than five but no older than thirteen- tied up to the ceiling in no clothes and whip marks all over their bodies, there were some chained to the wall with big men doing inappropriate things and others huddled and held down and chained by their necks like they were animals. Every one of them was covered in blood and only a few had clothes on, the ones that did were torn to shreds and they all were starved and malnourished. Rib cages so prominent and spines sticking out at odd angles. Bags and tears streaking their faces. They all were scared, but somehow there was a sort of acceptance in their hollow eyes; like they accepted that this was how they were going to die. They had lost all hope and at so young of an age. It made his blood boil.

Screw rational thought.

You should call Fury. Said the voice in the back of his head (you know, the sensible one). Yeah right, like that was gonna happen after the shit he pulled with Barnes and then Stark. He would smack them if he wasn’t on either of their hit lists by the end of that call, because that would be fucking stupid to not put him down on it. It would also be stupid to go after him alone (they would like tag team or something. Winter Soldier and Iron Man, now that would be a good fight), he’d kick their asses again even if they are old if they came after him solo though. It was stupid to go after a mutant when you yourself weren’t one.

‘Spiderman doesn’t discriminate.’

“Oh Ross~” Spidey sang as he broke through the window (eww, gross that made him sound like a pedophile). He had to calm down a bit, he didn’t want to scare the kids anymore than they already
were. They could get hurt. He’s done this enough times to make sure the conversation was going to be kept light and preferably PG. Guns trained on him as he ignored his little voices.

Call Team Red!

You got this!

You need help!

They won’t come in time!

You’re all alone!

No one will save you!

...

I have to help.

“What the-“ Ross’s face went wide as he made a break for the door, leaving his puppets to do the battle as always. Peter wasn’t standing for that, he wanted answers. So he webbed him up and tied him to the ceiling upside down just as he was a few feet from the back entrance, that didn’t seem to stop the guy as he barked out orders to the stunned men. It was quite a sight actually. His face was red and purple and so fucking mad. And it was kind of hard to take him seriously when he was upside down and his wig was peeling off. He even saw some of the kids giggle which filled him with pride (maybe they weren’t so broken after all. Maybe they could be happy again).

“You know, I’m kinda not surprised to find you here.” He said casually walking past as he thwiped out a web to seal his mouth. He didn’t want to touch him, but then again he didn’t want to touch any of these men. Sometimes he had to get his hands dirty for the greater good (by touching them to cuff them up. They were disgusting). “Time to get to work.” He mumbled to himself as he jumped up and webbed every single one of the men from the ceiling, refrained from killing them. Not in front of the kids. He did not kill in front of kids. Behind the back alley after the cops arrived? Maybe. But he had never had any witnesses for any of his kills. Well none that were alive. It’s why Fury could actually confirm that he killed people. He only did it on special occasions anyway, it not like he had no control over himself. But sometimes people needed to die and he
accepted that long ago.

Once he was done laying out all the cronies who actually knew how to punch (they weren’t very good with their martial arts, nor were they good at using the guns they held either.) he dodged a small pocket knife, no doubt what Ross used to cut the webbing off. So now he was defending himself? Did he really think he could beat Peter physically? Wow, yeah no. Peter was a Child Soldier, enhanced mutant ex-special forces, part time mercenary/assassin and fucking Spiderman. And those were just contributing to physical strength. Ross could be dead and not even know it was Peter who killed him.

The children were quivering as Peter slammed him into a wall and pinned him there in a painfully twisted grip and holding his neck into the splintered wood just enough so he could barely wheeze. He was greasy and slimy under Peter’s grip and the scent of the children’s tears mixed with their own blood increased in Peter’s senses. It only serves to fuel his anger and he gripped tighter and twisted his arm more painfully that he heard a crack and a sharp painful wheeze because Ross could barely breathe, much less scream (Good, he didn’t like it when his victims screamed. It hurt his ears.)

“You... can’t ...kill me.” Ross said in gaps between bated breaths. Peter knew that but he didn’t like that Ross did too. He squeezed a little harder, if he put him in anymore pain it would risk letting him pass out and he could have that.

“And what’s stopping me?” He slammed his head into the splintering wood again. He knew exactly what was stopping him. Reputation. Ross would easily blow this off and make up lies. If he had connections to keep this going for years and still be a government standing, there was no way he didn’t have a contingency if he got caught. And the only undeniable proof is the kids confessing, but he’d kill himself and everyone else before he made them confess. Would anyone even believe them? Some of them were mutants and according to the law, they technically had the same rights as a squirrel. This was too messy and a lawsuit would get them all hurt, not to mention Peter’s reputation was down the drain. He was technically a runaway homeless worthless loser in the eyes of everyone else. And Spiderman was—not to quote JJJ or anything- a public menace, and an unsanctioned vigilante. In the eyes of the government he was a dirty mutant.

No one would believe him.

“I’m too... high ...profile.” Ross snorted shortly, Peter loosened the grip around his neck but tightened it on his arm. “I thought you... were smarter... than that... Spidey.” Peters temper flared as he threw Ross clear across the room. He fell into a bunch of crates with a deafening crash.

“You’re gonna go to jail.” He seethed, clenching his fists in anger because he knew that wasn’t even a remote possibility either. The police would cover this so much that it’s be a practically new
color. It was because it was just that bad. It was fucked up, but apparently they have egos that are more important than justice. Justice that actually mattered. It was also because this would change so many laws - because Ross had a lot of influence in the law - and that meant extra work and they didn’t want to deal with that over ‘a couple of mutant kids’ or whatever. What a load of absolute shit. There were only a few officers that were actually looking out for people in this world anymore. The rest didn’t give a shit about this kind of stuff. They just let it happen, when they know full well that it was going down. They just didn’t want to deal with it, even though it was their jobs to and not people like Peter.

_Fucking chickenshits._

“I can web you here and leave you to the cops.” Peter said and Ross snorted arrogantly again from where he was lodged in the creates, he picked him up by the arm. Cuts and bruises littering his face and the force of the roughing up disheveling his sleazy appearance a bit. He smirked a disgusting smile that pissed Peter off.

“Seem you have more pressing matters to attend to.” He gestured at the kids and Spidey looked back at the shaking children, his eyes softening for just a second (they were the priority not Ross, he had to remind himself) distracted for just a second, looking them over making sure there were no immediate fatal wounds that needing his tending. In that second, Ross flipped his body and ran. Peter has the wind knocked out of his just enough to let him escape. _He can flip you because literally weigh the same as an orange you dumbass. Eat a burger or something._ He ignored that voice in favor of dusting himself off as he stood up.

He should’ve brought back up.

_Dammit._

_I tucking told you!_

And he couldn’t go after him because he needed to make sure the kids were okay and he didn’t fucking have backup. He didn’t have allies right now to presume the bad guy, but that wasn’t the point of the job. His job right now was to make sure the kids got to a safe place. Make sure they got the help they needed. It frustrates him to no end that Ross got away, but it’s not like he’s never had make this sort of decision before. He picked immediately helping people over pursuit every time.

_You are the world’s biggest dumbass._
He sighed and walked over to the group of huddled kids. He knelt down to the closest one, as his tried to make himself smaller. Less of a threat. He wasn’t going to make them do anything they didn’t want to, and he was going to help them. He needed them to know that and making himself smaller and less of a threat was one way to tell them that. He held out his hands in a gesture of peace. Not actually getting anywhere near enough to touch them, but just in reach so he could tend to them and make sure they were okay.

“Hey,” Peter spoke in a soft tone, a major change from the snarling almost feral growl he had with Ross. Even he could admit he was sometimes scary. “I’m not gonna hurt you.” The kid looked at him disbelievingly, he didn’t trust him and Peter didn’t expect him to. There was always a show before the helping. A bloody red and violent show that probably instilled fear more than hope. They needed to know that the show was only for the bad guys and not them. Never them. “no really, I’m here to help. Do you speak English?” He said in a light way. Trying to be happy and open. Welcoming and kind. The kid slowly nodded. “I know what those sleazebags did to y’all, so you don’t have to come here, but I’m gonna call the police so your someplace safe. Let me just get these ropes cut so I can get your friends down. I promise I won’t hurt them.” He said and jumped up as the kids marveled as he systematically cut and carefully caught each of the children hanging over bin filled with what smelled like blood. He gently placed them away from the tanks before going on to the next child. Making jokes and talking to the nearly silent kids. Just to make the air lighter and less scary. It would be more ominous if he did this in silence. This way was calming and reassuring. After the last kid he looked back at the tanks.

*They were gonna drown them in blood*. Probably for torture or punishment...

He ignored the anger that came with the voices note. Pushed it down and made sure it made no presence known to anyone but himself as it featured in the pit of his stomach. He focused on trying to be not threatening and getting the kids out. He needed to be reassuring and not angry. He needed to help them. There were some kids completely nude, and he ripped off the jackets and shirts of the pedophiles to put on them.

“It’s only temporary, don’t worry. They’ll give you new cloths.” Peter said as he wrapped up a girl who had broken her leg in one of the too big coats. He used his webs as a makeshift cast and wrapped her up slowly. Soothing her with nice words that didn’t sound creepy. “Can I pick you up?” The girl was hesitant and Peter was patient as she gathered her bearings and cried softly. He didn’t touch her but sat next to her to be present in case she needed him.

“Grown ups are mean.” She sobbed and all the other kids seemed to agree as he looked around. So they’d been fucked over by every adult in their lives too. They should start a club. “they always hurt us.” She spoke quietly for everyone. There must have been no fewer than 100 kids in that room. Peter did a quick sensuous and counted 105.
“Yeah, well lucky for all of us I’m not a grown up just yet.” The girl looked up at him in awe and he laughed “Come on, what kinda grown up in 5, 3… Well besides Tony Stark.” That made the girl giggle and another boy look up in awe. He smiled at their glimmers of innocence they had clung on to. Good.

“You know Iron man?” Peter winced a little, because he did know Iron man and was close enough to break his arm. Had these kids heard about that? Probably not because they were getting fucked by inhumane assholes a month ago. They probably weren’t even in New York a month ago. Did they know they were in New York?

“Yeah, I’m Spiderman. Ironman didn’t send me, we kinda had a little… falling out, but I can promise you, he’d want you all to be safe.” Peter said honestly. Tony did care, probably more than most. It’s why Peter felt so bad in breaking his arm, because Tony at least attempted kindness when the others didn’t. And now he’d never be kind to him again after that little stunt.

*Remember the phone call… he was concerned.*

*Focus on the mission!*

The police might lie to the kids (say everything was okay, but Peter wouldn’t.) He wouldn’t lie to kids who have been lied to their whole life. “I’m gonna hand you off to the police, and they’re gonna take you to a hospital. With nice adults. Like Ironman and Captain America.” He told them, because the police might not like him but some could look past that to help people who needed it… *some* .

The kids all were hesitant before nodding once. The girl allowed him to pick her up. He did so and whipped out his phone as he lead the kids into the cold night air. He tapped a few numbers in the phone, hands a bit shaky because he hasn’t tried to call anyone in weeks. But there was one person who could help these kids and not ask any questions. One person that would let him go and not pursue him as he took in the children.

Peter didn’t trust him. But again Peter didn’t trust anyone. He was a cop and if Peter wasn’t careful, he would be arrested by this man. But he was one of the few officers that would put people’s well-being above his ego. Looking at the shivering kids solidified his decision to hit the call button. It rang and the voices didn’t say anything, so he assumed that meant he had their approval too (he shouldn’t need it, but at this stage in his existential crisis, it was vital. He hated himself for it).

“Mahony, I have a pick up at pier 12.”
Bucky’s purpose changed 5 years ago.

When he had saw Natasha for the first time in ages. The first time he remembered her. Remembered their love. Remembered who they were to each other. He had just been a mindless husk. Reprogrammed countless times after every single mission. He hadn’t cared then. Hadn’t cared who he killed. Hadn’t cared who he hurt. Hadn’t cared what it meant.

Then he was deprogrammed and he suddenly was aware of how much of monster he was. The people he’s killed and the work he’d done - no matter how unwilling - for HYDRA was unforgivable. He had put people in unspeakable pain, so much so that they had begged for death at certain points. When he saw Natasha, he knew he wouldn’t have to worry about her thinking he was a monster. She could understand that feeling of giving up. She understood the strength it took to get back into the road of redemption. She understood how it felt to accept his fate. Afterall, they had accepted theirs long ago. They never thought they’d see each other again and didn’t even say goodbye.

It had been messed up. Cruel. Unethical. But...it was their life. And they had accepted the choices they made as their own. Because they had no other choice.

But then she told him that they had a kid- a son. A child. That was made with their genes and DNA. That had half of Bucky’s blood running through him. That maybe had some of his personality and maybe had some of Natasha’s. That was born into this world of their love and affection. Their child was one of love born into a world of blood.

When she told him, every changed.

He needed to find the child. It was almost as if a protective insisting kicked in. But then he worried what would happen once they did eventually find him. Bucky worried that he’d have to explain that feeling of giving up and accepting one’s fate- even if it was a terrible one. Explain to his son that he had a monster for a dad.

Then he worried that his son already knew what that feeling of giving up and acceptance felt like too. And somehow that was even worse to think of. The idea made him sick.
Natasha and him were in their room in the Avenger Tower. Well floor, it was like a really nice modern apartment. It was big and had a living room and kitchen, open concept. Two bedrooms although they only needed one, both with bathrooms. Stark was really generous in giving them this, but Natasha told him Stark was just showing off as she rolled her eyes. Somehow he knew that the man wasn’t showing off his money so much as generosity. Stark just waved the thanks off.

When he had seen Parker though... *Peter Parker* … why did that name sound so familiar. The memory was just there but still locked up. It was frustrating. If he could just figure out who the kid was, then maybe he could stop dreaming out about him.

But Bucky knew *nothing* about Peter Parker. He’d never met him before. He never ever met any child soldiers, he’d remember if he did. It’s just...Peter looked *scared*. The same haunted look that crossed that child’s face in the white room. The *exact same*. Terrified and knowing no one would save him- even though he was in a room full of heroes. Why was he scared in a room full of people who protected kids like him everyday? Was he the only one who thought that was concerning? Peter shouldn’t be as afraid as he was in that situation if he hadn’t done something - not necessarily *wrong*, but not *right* either. Bucky didn’t know anything about the kid but he did know the kid had been betrayed too many times. He knew the kid has had to kill. He has had to survive in his own. He has had to take care of himself because he’s got no one watching his 6. He knows the look a soldier carries after war, and it was horrifying to see that reflected in a child’s eyes.

Natasha had followed up on Peter’s alibi with Fury and when she had come back she said nothing. So Bucky figures that it wasn’t Parker in that room after all.

He supposed *Parker* was a rather common last name.

Still he couldn’t stop thinking about it.

“He just...I don’t know *reminded* me of him.” Bucky said to Natasha in the privacy of their rooms. Natasha looked up at him from where she was sitting across the room for a moment and then she got up and walked the length of the room, setting down her book on the night table and sitting cross legged across from him where he was mimicking the action. It was the same position they used when talking about his sensitive memories. The action came with comfort. Bucky felt himself relax a little. “He obviously *wasn’t* him, but I have a feeling he’d look similar to…” Bucky trailed off not looking at her but at the bed sheets not finding the right word for the kid he’d pinned earlier that day.

“Parker.” Natasha helpfully supplied. Bucky nodded but didn’t speak for a while, until Natasha did. “He’s not our son.” Natasha told him firmly. She sounded so sure of it. Usually it would assure him, ground him, solidify his decisions - justify them sometimes. Today it only served to be more off putting. He may not know a lot about Peter Parker but he did know that the boy was hiding
something big. A dark secret that was swallowing him. It was eating him and no one was even looking his way to help. That was scary. The fact that people could even care about him enough to notice he was drowning in this inky pit of black. The pit that one couldn’t get out of alone. The same one Bucky used to be drowning in. Maybe they could help him, but if they could why didn’t they already?

“But...he could be.” Bucky said desperately. A kid like Parker, he would understand what Bucky had become. He’d understand the feeling of acceptance. It would be easier for him to accept Bucky. Easier to explain what he’d done. Parker could understand. He wasn’t as innocent as he should be. Bucky felt earful for wishing it, because their son- no matter what- would be perfect. Parker wasn’t perfect enough to keep his innocence, and that was what Bucky needed in his son. It was terrible of him to think that. He wanted his son to be innocent for as long as he could, but...would he accept Bucky as a father if he was?

“No, our sources say that he was brought up in Queens, no accounts of being a POW. He might not be Mary’s son, but he’s never been officially found by SHIELD in a HYDRA facility. The files say Petya was in the facility with you. Parker was found in an orphanage fire near where Mary was operating when he was 6. Only survivor. I checked it up with Fury.” Natasha informed him of all the details and Bucky sagged his shoulders in a bit of disappointment and something else. Weather if it was relief or dread he wasn’t quite sure, probably both. Natasha touched his knee gently.

“Kras?”

“Natalia...I” he didn’t know how to say what he wanted, but it’s okay, Natasha would give him all the time in the world to come up with the right words. No matter what he said though, it would sound bad because of what he was saying. “I want to find him. I want to really find him. But what if when he realizes who I am...” he didn’t need to finish his sentence. He looked at Natasha just long enough to see it click for her. A look of dawning and understanding crossed her face.

“You think Parker would understand? Understand what...we had to do?” Bucky winced and nodded. Natasha leaned back a little. “Parker is strange isn’t he. He probably would.” she said almost amused.

“He has the same look as us, Nat. In his eyes. He’s killed for someone before.” Bucky said voice just below being desperate. Natasha nodded and rubbed his knee.

“I know Kras...there are no accounts but...I know.” She said a little more lowly. “He hasn’t said anything about killing and I haven’t seen him do it or any of the bodies he’s killed. He’s good at covering it up. But... he still does it. Maybe not for someone else, but he still does it.” She said to him gripping his knee a little. She was worried too. Almost unsure. That unsettled Bucky a little.

“I just feel like...he...yeah.” Bucky stumbled over his words and Natasha smirked at him at his
struggle. He hated it when he teases him without actually saying anything, but it was oddly comforting if not a little exasperating. “Can you tell me...about him?” Bucky surprises himself in asking, Natasha only looked shocked for a second before thinking.

“Hmmm.” Natasha looked contemplative and then shocked again, almost stunned. “I don’t really know all that much about him.” Natasha said and that threw Bucky too. Natasha always knew something about everyone. “But he’s good at finding things.”

“Finding things?” Bucky asked. That was a bit weird but sounded useful.

“Yeah, People, items, you name it. He’s known for taking the smallest hint and tracking it down to the source.” Okay Yeah, that was very helpful. He didn’t understand why Natasha didn’t enlist him immediately instead of wait a year. Surly Peter had heard something about Petya in the time he was working with the team. That is, if he was as good as Natasha was implying. Not a lot of things can slip past The Black Widow.

“That seems pretty helpful.” Bucky said to her and she nodded in agreement.

“Yes, it’s why I told him.” Bucky looked at her confused and she continued. “He’s running his own investigation. Keeping an ear out, finding leads but not necessarily looking for them, that sort of thing. I just told him to casually keep an eye out and if he finds anything, he’ll probably track it down before giving it to us if it leads out of his range.” Bucky must’ve looked uncertain because the hand was on his knee again. They were trusting an unstable entity that they knew nearly nothing about with their most prized secret. What if Parker slipped up? He was just a kid after all. The hand on his knee squeezed. “He’s a good one Kras.” she assured. Quieting his inner turmoil some. He breathed.

“He’s also a kid…” Bucky pointed out meekly and Natasha’s eyes somehow softened and hardened at the same time. Parker must have had a tough love kind of situation with Natasha. Or just an authoritative one? Professional? He was a kid and he was acting as a soldier. Probably had to be professional since he wasn’t technically apart of the team.

“Yes, but so was I. And Parker doesn’t kill.” Bucky furrowed his eyebrows. Natasha didn’t believe any of those parts and Bucky could read her like a book. He called her out because they couldn’t afford to think in such delusions.

“You don’t honestly believe that.” he gently accused and she looked down into her lap now taking her hand away to fold it with her other one. Sadness roaming over them. Sadness of a child having to grow up so quickly and losing the shred of him that made him innocent. They were putting him
in these situations that stripped him of that. It was painful and it made them hardened toward him. Pretending he wasn’t a child at all was easier. Pretending like it did blow a hole in their hearts and that it didn’t matter was easier than letting the guilt consume them. They couldn’t let that happen, as sad as it was.

“There has never been bodies left behind so…” Natasha tried to justify. In the quiet of their room they were allowed to feel guilt of tainting this child even further than he already was. Ruining him instead of helping him.

“It’s easier to pretend like he doesn’t?” Natasha nodded. Bucky leaned back. He understood that. It was easier to pretend like Petya was enjoying life instead of waiting ata HYDRA compound and being sent out on missions and killing innocent victims. “Not one body?” He asked. Natasha nodded again. Wow. This kid was good, if not even Natasha could find the evidence. Was he a mercenary or an assassin? Did the kid work for someone? He hoped not. He actually wasn’t sure if working for someone or him doing it by himself was worse.

“Fury and I suspect it. But not even SHIELD has found the bodies, doesn’t even know the victims.” she said quietly. Bucky listened with a more serious blank face. They didn’t look at each other. “But Parker doesn’t do what he does without a good reason. That’s what Fury says at least, and I may not trust him all the way, but I won’t doubt him about Parker.” Bucky knew what she meant. That she couldn’t doubt Fury about Parker. Because they didn’t know anything about him. As far as he knew Fury and Parker’s relationship was a lot more complicated than just professionalism. It was almost as if Fury trusted Parker, and that doesn’t happen. Like ever.

“Kid’s good.” Bucky noted with no humor or amusement. She nodded in response. Kid seemed like he got skills. Not just in fighting. In covert things too. Like it was breathing for him.

There was just something about him. He knew Natasha felt it too. Something that they were missing, but apparently they weren’t. He’d just have to trust Parker wasn’t who he thought he was initially. Trust that Parker would help them and not betray them. Trust that Parker was really as solo as he says he is.

He just hoped it wasn’t a mistake.

OoOoO

7 years earlier…

Coming back was hell.
He guessed that his expectations got higher. Spending all that time with MJ and Ned during the 9 months. Learning things at school and in the library. Reading with MJ and building LEGOs with Ned. It was fun. Like the type of fun that he actually thought was fun. The kind of things he didn’t even know he liked to do. He was allowed to make his own decisions and pick what they were doing and how they spent their time. He liked relaxing and watching movies with his friends. Binging Star Wars at ten in the night. Even if he didn’t have training to do, it was nice to have something other than fighting to do. It was nice not being yelled at by everyone, everytime they talked to him or if he had a question. It was nice to just spend time with people who wanted to spend time with him.

It was almost too good to be true.

If those nine months had been a dream, he wouldn’t have been surprised. He was walking into his old life now, as he stepped off the plane with his duffle bag and backpack. He was waking up and back in reality now; The reality where people screamed at him every second of every day and trained him until he couldn’t move. He expected that, when he got off the plane. But it didn’t happen. Not immediately anyway.

The first thing that happened was something was shoved in front of his face by someone he really didn’t mind seeing again. He almost smiled when he saw the tuft of brown hair that was swooped up in a familiar way.

Wade Wilson was the only nice person that was still alive. He wasn’t very responsible with him and Peter acted more like his babysitter than the other way around, but Wade jokes with him and laughed with him in the good way. He had a safe smile. Right now, he had a camera pointed at him and Peter cocked his head confused at his weird antics he hasn’t gotten fully used to it yet.

“What are you doing?” He asked with a curious tint in his tone. He should get used to showing no emotions for the next few months. If he wasn’t good they may let him go back to New York. He wanted to go back to his friends. But Wade didn’t give a shit if he showed emotions or not (its part of the reason he liked him).

“Like you know those videos when the soldiers come home?” he asked and Peter thought for a second before he nodded, vaguely remembering Ned crying over those videos on a beat up laptop in MJ’s apartment and she and Peter laughed at him in a good way (he said they were heartless because it was so happy and they weren’t even acknowledging it and he and MJ only laughed harder). “Well I’m doing that, but like a reverse. Soldiers coming back to war. It will go viral!” Peter shook his head fondly (sometimes MJ did that when he and Ned did something silly or dumb).
“You do realize I’m a global secret?” Peter pointed out as he walked around Wade to go on the short walk toward the vehicular that Wade was using to pick him up. Wade huffed as he turned to follow him. Peter tried to ignore the squeeze in his heart at what he had just said. It made him remember he wasn’t entirely normal (try not normal at all).

“Since when did you become so aware of your current status.” Peter shrugged in response and smiled happily at the camera as Wade turned it to his face. He was just glad Wade picked him up and not anyone else. The little good things that happened to him made it easy to smile.

He missed Wade.

They drove to the base where troops had been lining up and running through drills. It was oddly familiar and put him on edge. After seeing what normal kids do, this was glaringly different (Ned mentioned that he was going to a summer camp that was coding related but they did things like swimming and stuff, somehow Peter knew he didn’t mean it was at all like this, even if he hadn’t been to summer camp before).

Wade dropped him off where he was supposed to meet Cotnet - which was inside the bunker looking building near the center of the camp - and wished him good luck before driving off to do his other tasks he’s probably been assigned to. He steeled himself as he walked into the fortified stone building. Pushing open the heavy door a sense of foreboding filled Peter’s stomach. It was pitch black in the office/bunker and Peter had to wait a minute for his eyes to adjust. Not even the window was open and as the door closed the darkness swallowed him whole.

“Welcome back.” A sick voice said in the dark room. Peter could make out the figure if the official barley through the dark. The voice was unmistakable and made Peter stand up straight with his hands behind his back. It was more of a reflex than anything.

“Sir?” He asked to confirm that it was Cotnet, even if he already knew the answer. The voice was slightly different since he’s last heard it - given it has been nearly a year but still. That sounded like him, but he never sounded so... creepy before. The foreboding in his stomach increased and it felt like he had swallowed lead.

“We missed you Peter.” He said and Peter shivered at the name coming in that voice from his mouth. He didn’t like the way that he just said that. “How was New York?”

“It’s was fine, sir.” He said and could feel Cotnet approach slowly. A feeling of dread sunk in his stomach. He felt nervous. Why couldn’t they turn on the lights? Maybe that would make him more comfortable...
You shouldn’t want to be comfortable.

Peter was suddenly glad it was dark. He turned ashen white. Had the time spent in New York make him think he was worth comfort? Oh no, that wasn’t good. Special Forces was anything but comfortable and it would be harder to adjust to it from New York than it was to adjust from the HYDRA base. Then if he was good he’d go back to New York and ruin his progress. Oh no.

“That’s good.” Cotnet said and his voice was closer. Not paying any mind to Peter’s distress in his head. “Do you know why Wilson brought you here?” To get reinstated for the summer right? He thought that was obvious. Why was he asking obvious questions? When a superior asked obvious questions that usually meant they wanted to taunt Peter. It was a sign that he was in trouble. But what had he done wrong?

He knows you don’t want to be here.

“No sir? I thought it was to...get reinstated for the season.” Peter stuttered a bit put out by the question. He regretted the undecideds in his voice immediately when he felt a slap to his face. His head turned to the side, Cotnet didn’t even acknowledge the slap. Peter already knew what it was for.

“Yes, reinstated and reconditioned.” Peter froze at that. He only had heard the word ‘reconditioned’ when it was used for Soldier back in HYDRA. It has never been used for him. Whenever they ‘reconditioned ‘ Soldier, he would forget who Peter was. Peter felt his breath get caught, what if he forgot who Wade was? What if he forgot who MJ and Ned were? What if he forgot New York? What if he hurt them, like Soldier almost hurt him? Peter couldn’t deal with the thoughts and felt his breathing leave him. Cotnet doesn't seem to notice or care as he continued. “You see, you’ve tasted freedom for the first time in your life, if I am correct.” Peter didn’t like where this was going. Freedom was nice and now he was going to forget it ever happened. Why did they even let him have it in the first place? “You made your own choices and such. But here? You have no choice, my boy.” Peter hung his head. The allusion That has been with him the past nine months gone. Shattered like all good dreams. The darkness he’d been pushing away with MJ and Ned and at school and home was coming up and making itself known in the forefront of his mind. The reality he had to face when he got back to his real life. Fighting, bloodshed and torture were his real life. Movie nights and silent reading were a far off fantasy that he could never hope to see correctly again. There would always be the weight of the death he’s caused on his shoulders, and the blood streaking his hands. Leaving red marks on whatever he touched or did.

He had ignored the red for too long.
“I-I know that sir.” He whispered and then suddenly there was a dark looming figure in front of him. Peter felt fear creep up his throat as he looked up into sick, cream coloured teeth, smiling down at him menacingly. Like he was going to do something Peter wouldn’t like. But Peter should never be allowed to do things he likes. That wasn’t his reality. He wasn’t allowed to want things.

“Yes, but just to be sure.” The general said and made an obvious gesture that Peter felt more than saw. He was confused as to what the general was gesturing to. “Take it off.” Peter was confused.

“Take what…” then Peter understood. He looked down at his uniform. The combat pants he had to pull up discreetly every few moments, the baggy vest that had too many pouches. They hadn’t given him his weapons again yet, so all he had were the few knives he had bring with him and the switch sword he’d built himself (a sword that worked like a switch blade and he could adjust the angles or the three segments to it could work as a hook thing too. And it folded up nice and small so it only looked like a slightly bigger switchblade. Wade said it was cool). Dread dawned on his face as he realized what Cotnet wanted him to do...but it was.. not right. “S-sir-“

“This.” He felt the Generals hands swoop down and yank the waistband of his loose combat pants down. Ripping off the shoes with it. Peter felt his face heat up in shame and embarrassment. Fear making him shake. This is wrong!

“This, this is highly-“ Peter tried to stutter out and was met with another slap to the face. Tears formed in his eyes as his cheek stung, but didn’t dare move his hands up to soothe it.

“Quiet Soldier.” The general growled as he continued to strip the young boy. Peter shut up and when he was fully naked he was glad it was dark in the room. Embarrassment flushing through him. A streak of anger driven by fear, he looked to the heavy door before dismissing the thought entirely. It was as Cotnet pushed him against the wall that he noticed that the general wasn’t fully clothed either. No, no! This is very very wrong!

Make him stop!

“Wh-“ Peter whimpered quietly. Cotnet couldn’t hear him. He wasn’t sure if he wanted him to or not. Peter’s mind was too loud to form coherent thoughts, much less words. He wanted this to stop. He didn’t like this. This was wrong.

“I told you. I **missed** you Peter.” The creepy voice said. And Peter would forever remember the tone. He knew it would come back, in the back of his mind he **knew** he’d be hearing it again. Being spoken to in that tone. He’d forever affiliate it with what just happened in that bunker.
The rest was fuzzy. He remembered pain. A lot of pain that shot up through him from a part of his body he knew shouldn’t be touched without his permission. He remembers being told not to scream if he wanted it to stop, biting on a cloth until his teeth bled. He remembers smelling blood, tasting blood and bile but never seeing it. He remembers stumbling to put on his cloths in the dark alone and then stumbling out to painfully blinding light of the day. Head too hot and hurting. He wheezed his eyes shut only to be met with the images he did remember from the bunker and tried to stifle a scream.

Wade was waiting for him where he had dropped him off and Peter stumbled to his SO. Wade put a hand on his shoulder, just like he always did when he was about to fall. It hurt to walk and he was sure it would hurt to sit. This time, when Wade touched him, Peter flinched so violently Wade took his hand away like he was burned. Too soon.

“Kiddo?” Wade asked almost concerned and Peter remembered Cotnets promise he made Peter say. He ordered him not to tell anyone. Or else he’d never be allowed back to New York. He Had to get out of this place, he knew now more than ever. The longer he stayed away from Cotnet the less he’d have to do… that again. “You okay?”Wade’s voice cut through his mind rambling and it came to a stop on the older man’s face.

He was a soldier. He had to be compliant. He didn’t get to make his own choices. It didn’t matter what he wanted. He had to do as his commander said. No questions asked. If he was told to forget something, he’d forget it in an instant. He moved on. Kept pushing. No emotions. He was compliant and followed orders. Obeyed, no questions asked. Served and fought for his general. This was Peter. Peter was a Soldier. No free thought or free will. No freedom.

This was Peter’s reality.

“Yes sir.”

OoOoO

Present...

He had a job to do.

That was his ‘excuse’ at least (which wasn’t really an excuse because he actually had to get some work done that wasn’t for the Avengers). The past four days have been him staying low and following Ross’s pungent scent that he’s been leaving around the city (For a long time apparently. Wade called him and Matt sniffer dogs- he didn’t know what those were, maybe some Canadian
thing- and not even they could see this coming. It still made sense and wasn’t at all surprising, but
still. It’s not like they’ve been ignoring this on purpose. It was nasty and dirty and he’d have no
trouble finding the locations of every single one of the circles. But that wouldn’t fix the problem,
just sedate it. Mediate? Not fix it entirely. He had to take out Ross -or who ever the big boss was -
to really fix the problem.

This had nothing at all to do with the Avengers. He couldn’t go back to the tower and face the
music because this needed all his attention right now. So he was justified in ignoring Fury’s text of
a debrief for a mission in Chicago. They should know by now he wasn’t going to be reliable, and
that he needed space (even if he did get like 5 weeks worth of the stuff). He was swamped right
now, with everything that has been going on outside of the Avenger’s little bubble (it was so much
cleaner in there than it was out here). He wasn’t going to make a single one of those kids confess,
but he would get Ross to justice if it was the last thing he’d do.

There were a lot of things he’d do for the last thing he’d do in his life.

Having this new job also cleared his head. The voices were mostly dormant for the past four days,
as he had no time or energy to focus on them. Just focus on this. It doesn’t matter if he’s barely
been able to sleep. It doesn’t matter if he’s barely eaten and his stomach is a growling mess.

After four fucking days of busting up minor circles, picking them apart for any new leads, he
finally found something worth while. Well, it was supposed to be worthwhile at least. It was an
Irish dealer, alone in a supposed sex warehouse that Ross rented out. He wasn’t chained so it
looked like he was there if free will. There was no guards or drugs. No victims or kids. Just a
disgusting old man who didn’t speak english apparently.

“Fáilte, Damhán Alla. “( Welcome Spider. ) he said in his thick Irish accent. Despite him being in
the rafters and visibly noticeable, Peter made sure to make his presence noticeable- the guy was
obviously waiting for him. Peter didn’t miss a beat in responding in his own Irish accent (what? He
went on undercover too...and also learning new languages was fun. He learned Irish when he was
11 when he found a book on it in the Library and just decided to spend his weekend cramming the
language in his head so he could annoy MJ because she hated the Irish accent. Which he is proud
to admit he mastered).

“Cá bhfuil Ross?”( Where is Ross? ) he said in a low, nearly dark tone, as he jumped down silently
a few feet away from the man. No humor or emotions. Professional. This was serious. And it could
also be because of the fact that Peter was tired and not in the mood to make any jokes. When he
talked in a foreign language, it usually was to prove a point or interrogation (at least, that’s the only
purpose it served now . Technically English was a foreign language to him, but he only cursed in
Russian as a part of his daily vocabulary anymore.) The man’s yellow smile turned sickly sweet,
reminded him of the old HYDRA agents when he was a kid. (Eww. Gross. Memories!)
“Leis na Avengers, ar ndóigh.” (With the Avengers, of course.) the man responded his sickly sweet smile showing off even more yellowing rotten teeth. Peter scrunched his nose under the mask. Gross. Like pop a mint sometime, his breath smelt like sour crout; and Peter had a very sensitive nose - especially when he was hungry, which he was very very hungry currently - so do everyone the courtesy of using a toothbrush, thank you very much.

“Ansin cad atá á dhéanamh agat anseo?” (Then what are you doing here?) It was kind of weird. An old man who really needed to brush his teeth, standing alone in an abandoned warehouse. Why would Ross do that? Was this a trap? What was he playing at?

“Dúirt Boss go raibh mé in ann súgradh leat.” (Boss said I could play with you.) he hated when criminals said play like they got some sort of kick out of making innocent people bleed out or tortured them. Like Peter had his fair share of jokes and quips, but never did he enjoy watching his victims bleed. It was cliche and manic. It’s why he never smiled when he killed, not even for show. It just made it seem like he had a sick satisfaction in it and he didn’t. He took no satisfaction in killing, he only killed out of necessity, or just in case reasons. He always knew when he was going to kill, there were no ‘ifs’. He was going to kill this guy, because Ross must have some plan for him in the future and this was already too complicated for Peter to keep up with, without another whack variable. He would get the information he needed and killed this guy when he was done. He didn’t like playing with his victims.

“Sea?” (Yeah?) Peter said with a slight smirk under his mask. He kicked the guy in the stomach so fast that the man didn’t have any time to realize he was on the other side of the room. The action was too fast, and too unpredictable. He used the timing of the fact that his voice was laid back but his actions were quick. The moment escalated too fast for the other guy to block or fight back. Ross underestimated him, everyone did. He had the guy laid out in four seconds flat, not giving him a chance to adjust his mentality that Peter was actually strong. Now there was an unconscious entity on the ground. Peter didn’t take his eye off him for a second.

Peter looked around in his periphery. No other enemies. No victims. No items. No evidence. Except for the guy in front of him. He couldn’t hear or smell anything else. This guy must’ve been a distraction. He didn’t have any other leads to follow, a supposed dead end. Ross knew that he had no more leads. Peter looked at the unconscious man again and smirked ‘But that’s just what he wants you to think’. Guess it was time for an interrogation.

Peter sighed as he webbed up the man to an aged chair that looked like it was going to fall apart any moment (god knows what it was doing here, because the man certainly didn’t bring it here. It had cobwebs all over it). The man wouldn’t be able to outrun him, he wasn’t even enhanced, and Peter had webs- so even if he breaks the chair, he still was trapped (if worse became worst, he’d be dead before he went three steps). Plus he didn’t seem all that important, so he wouldn’t have any important information. He just needed a small slip up from the man. Something small. Anything at all.
The boy slapped the guy upside the head and the man’s head pulled forward, but he didn’t wake up fully. Then he pinched a pressure point on the neck making the man wake up to searing pain running down his back as he choked out a yell as he woke up.

“Ba chóir duit labhairt.”( You should speak. ) Peter suggested quietly in the man’s ear as he tipped the chair back. It was a threat and Peter wasn’t really in the mood to full on torture this guy, so he hoped the painful awakening was enough to get him to talk. He didn’t have a lot to work with interrogation wise anyway, so he took out a small switchblade and flicked it open on the man’s cheek, making him bleed.

“Ní mharóidh tú mé.”( You won’t kill me. ) the man said unsurly. Peter almost wanted to laugh. When he was this close to the man he could smell the semen on the man from a recent fuck. It was a child’s. If the man thought he was leaving this warehouse alive, he was in for a rather rude awakening. Or death. Unaliving? He wasn’t going to leave this warehouse alive at all.

“An é sin a d’inis do mháistir duit?”( Is that what your master told you? ) Peter said letting amusement tint his tone. People usually assumed Spiderman didn’t kill, because he’s never left a dead body. What they didn’t know was that Spiderman did kill when he needed to. Although he didn’t advertise it, he didn’t necessarily hide it either. He just didn’t like evidence left behind. “Lig dom tú a chur ar an eolas ansin,“( Let me inform you then, ) he flipped over the chair as he pulled off his mask, hood coming up as he landed and looked at the man dead in the eyes. It wouldn’t matter if he saw his face, because the stupid man was practically dead anyway. “Insíonn siad duit nach féidir le duine ar bith na comhlachtaí a fháil riamh.”( they tell you that because no one can ever find the bodies. ) he whispered and the man froze in fear as he looked into the 15 year old’s eyes. He was sure they were tired, but a hint of something else was glazing that. Man, that flip left him dizzy. He should eat.

“C-Ca-Cad ba mhaith leat a fháil amach!”( What d-do y-you w-wanna know! ) the man said quickly, frantically. He was going to be so easy to break. He clearly had thought he’d be able to slip out once he stunned Peter or did whatever he needed to. Peter quickly turned the tables in his favor, it was clear this guy was only here to taunt him as his leads ended up at a dead end. Jokes on him though, because clearly Peter was getting more information than Ross probably expected.

“Gach rud.”( Everything. ) Peter said as he tipped the chair back and stepped away. The man started to talk.

“Níl a fhios aon rud!”( I d-don’t know anything! ) the man said frantically and Peter sighed as he took out his switch sword and flicked it out so it would stab the man above the shoulder in a shallow wound, the man gritted his teeth in pain. God, he was going for a lazy torture session? What had the world become?
“Ní rogha duit é luí.” (Lying isn’t an option for you.) Peter said with boredom in his voice as the man screamed out when he dug the blade a little deeper. God, he should just talk already. He knew he was going to give himself away and so did Peter. He should just cut them some time so he could carry on and finish this job and sleep and eat and sleep some more, maybe take a nice shower. His stomach growled lightly, luckily the man was in too much pain to hear it.

“ceart go leor ceart go leor! Tá bailiúchán le bheith in aice leis an Empire State Building. Is sa chás go bhfaigheann ár mbainisteoir gach rud. Tá sé cosúil le mol dúinn.” (okay okay! There is going to be a gathering near the Empire State Building. It’s where our boss gets everything done. It’s like a hub for us.) Too much information, too good to be true. There was no way - no matter how stupid - anyone would give up a place like a hub in a light interrogation so easily. Especially since it’s been a secret for years and the head of these illegal activities is an official secretary of state. Peter cut the guy across the chest quickly.

“caillfidh tú géag. Just a insint dom an fhírinne agus beidh mé ar mo bhealach.” (dude, you’re gonna lose a limb. Just tell me the truth and I’ll be on my way.) Peter said blandly as the man wreathed and spat on the ground near his shoe. Peter raised a brow, so that’s how they were going to play this game. Peter may be tired, but he could still make this guys last few minutes hell on earth - so much so that he’ll be begging for death.

Peter pocketed the switch sword swiftly and took out a loose nail out of the floorboards. He pushed it into a pressure point on the guys shoulder and the man’s eyes widened in pain. He used his other hand to hit a point on his chest so he couldn’t scream and the guy struggled harder and harder in immense pain, unable to scream but also in anguish (just like Peter had been when the same technique was done for days on end). This certain technique hurt like a bitch and Peter let go of both pressure points after 30 seconds that must have felt like hours to the man. The man let out a choked cry as he caught his breath.

“Ná ... ... tá a fhíos agam i bhfad ... go dreach ... tá d-titim eile ... ag dul go ... h-tarlú in ... p-pier 14 in ... t-dhá uair an chloig.” (I-I don’t... know m-much...j-just that ...another d-drop off... is going to ...h-happen in ...p-pier 14 in ...t-two hours.) the man stuttered out breathlessly. Peter checked his phone, it was 9:36pm. The Avengers would be on a mission in Chicago when this was going down. So that’s how Ross was able to cover it up. The Avengers go on missions that seem more important than petty drug circles while Ross trafficked. Clearly this guy was set up as a distraction for the next two hours, probably to hurt and be inappropriate with Peter - gross. Ross was probably going to remotely oversee the drop offs, but even if he wasn’t he should stop it. This sounded like a big deal.

“Go raibh maith agat. Beidh sin ar fad.” (Thank you. That will be all.) the man’s sigh of relief was cut off by a slash to his throat. Peter stood up slowly after the slight flick of his wrist, ending the guys life in an instant. He didn’t like prolonged death. Only if it was necessary. But the guy had been more useful than he initially thought he would be. Peter didn’t do the whole ‘pay respects to
the dead after you kill them’ thing. That just seemed over dramatic. He was more of a ‘gotta get rid of the body so I can sleep’ kind of guy.

If Ross was doing this while the Avengers were away, that means he must have called the mission in. Fury called him in for this mission too, he just didn’t answer (he’s glad he didn’t. All of Ross’s missions always seemed a bit odd and not something that the Avengers would do). There must be more than kids getting ‘dropped off’, some information too. And a pier? That meant he had to get a shipping line to expose themselves (or he’d just expose them, he was good at that). Man he had a lot of work to do. Ugh, and he just wanted to sleep and maybe eat, definitely take a shower - he stunk. But if he did any of that, he knew he wouldn’t wake up in time for the pier. His stomach let out a rather impressive growl and he pressed his stomach, willing it to stop.

What should he do to kill time? They probably weren’t there yet and if the drop off was happening in two hours he should probably stake it out if they were going to possibly be early. But they wouldn’t be two hours early, the Avengers shouldn’t have been out of debriefing yet. Peter started to torture this guy when it started. So he had 15 minutes minimum to kill. He looked down at the man he just killed and sighed.

Oh yeah, he had a body to causterate.

OoOoO

2 years ago…

The kid found him in a dumpster.

At first the heartbeat confused him. Heartbeats are usually the first thing he notices about a person, and he noticed that this kid was distinctly not even 14 yet. He also wondered why the fuck a kid would be up at literally 1 in the morning on what he remembered to be a week night in the middle of November, in an ally behind a merc bar no less. He also recognized this heartbeat, but he’s never heard it so close before. It was Spider-Man’s, and he knew because it had the same Rhythm as Spidey’s but maybe a little calmer. Now that it was close Matt had a better read on him. Too bad he was completely wasted, and didn’t put two and two together (even if he did he didn’t think he’d know what to say to the kid about his vigilantism).

The kid threw a trash bag on top of him so Matt assumes that he was taking out the trash - like a logical person- and that meant the kid worked at the bar (which he also didn’t attach together, because again he was wasted). It must have made a weird noise or he did because the kid stopped and sighed before he walked back to the dumpster and opened it to peer inside. He didn’t need to see to know the kid was unamused. Totally unfazed that there was a blind guy in a dumpster at one am. So he either was from New York or he was from a place just as- if not more- messed up (although he couldn’t think of a place more weird than New York).
Either way, he could tell this kid was different.

The kind of different that Matt was.

So even if he was sober, there was no persuading him out of vigilantism. Which Matt had no problem with, everyone had their reasons and the kid was no different. A good vigilante always kept their reasons to themselves and Matt never pried because that was their own business.

“Need help or…” the kid left the question open ended and Matt thought for a moment before deciding he didn’t want to be with his new rat friends (they were bad company, they nipped at his shoes) and nodded, confused because he had heard that voice before too but never this close. From between the trash and rats, the kid leaned in to grab Matt’s outstretched hand. “How’d you get here, Red?” He asked and Matt froze. He looked down even though he couldn’t see, but he was fairly certain that He wasn’t in costume, just hammered.

“You in civilian clothes Spidey?” He asked and the kid scrunched up his nose, probably at his alcohol breath. The kid must’ve had super senses too. That poor motherfucker.

“Yeah, at work actually.” The kid replied and gestures over to the bar. Matt was somehow glad that the kid didn’t actually treat him like a blind person, because he was capable of feeling and hearing gestures and he was glad Spidey was smart enough to pick that up (if he wasn’t good at hearing things then he’d probably have bullets in his head a long time ago). One question remained (actually a lot of questions but this one was at the forefront of his drunken mind): What was a kid doing working at a bar? Then again, Matt should be asking why a kid was going out to be a vigilante, but they all had their vices. Matt tended not to question those and rolled with it.

The thing is. Matt’s never really interacted with Spiderman before but he still knew he was pretty young on his voice alone. He never said anything to the other vigilante if they passed each other or something. He had the stature of a kid, he was short and scrawny (but that could also be because of his mutation, the kids blood wasn’t human, so Matt couldn’t rely on that). Spidey tended to stay in Queens or sometimes Brooklyn and Midtown and Daredevil was comfortable in Hell’s Kitchen. It was kinda like how dogs would mark their territories. If anyone (i.e vigilantes, criminal, etc.) stepped foot in Hell’s Kitchen then Matt would know about it, and sometimes when he went to Midtown or Queens, Spidey would look out for him but never interact. He trusted him to get his business done in a timely fashion and respected that he sometimes had to step out of his usual jurisdiction. Red offered the same to Spidey when he had to swing through or follow a lead. It was a silent mutual pact. They didn’t actively go looking for villains that weren’t their own.

“You’re a kid.” Matt said to him, because he was a tad too drunk to say anything in proper context.
So he just stuck with the facts. He could feel Spidey smirk.

“And you’re blind.” He said back and Matt groaned as Spidey took him back inside the bar where it was too loud for his whack senses (drinking was always a toss up on weather the alcohol would dim his senses or enhance them). Spiderman sat him in a bar stool and popped something in his ears. He noticed they were earbuds and the white noise was gone. Huh, strange these weren’t like normal earbuds. They were kind of nice.

“I’m out of my territory…” he muttered a little dejectly and Spidey shrugged. He really didn’t know how to talk to a blind man, did he? Or maybe he just knew Matt wasn’t a normal blind man. Just like Spidey wasn’t a normal kid. Probably the last one, because Spidey wasn’t stupid. His little knowledge of him could tell that much. The kid was smart.

“Can’t control you when you’re in real people cloths. I was told this was a ‘free country’ or whatever.” Spider Man said casually. He was told this was a free country? That meant he wasn’t from around here. But he’s been around long enough to not be surprised by a blind man stuck in a dumpster who also happened to be the Devil of Hell’s Kitchen.

Now he was shuffling behind the counter and shoving some sort of food in front of Matt. Matt furrowed his brow.

“What do you need?” No way Spiderman was acting this casual with him. No one was ever casual with him, in real life or vigilante. And no one was ever this nice to him (not even Spiderman and he was known for being nice. But Spidey was in his civilian clothing so he could be a completely different person. And in their line of work - and now kind of officially knowing each other’s identities - he was going to ask a favor.)

“Nothing…” Spidey said his voice pitching an octave making it fairly noticeable that he was lying. Matt raised a brow. “... well I might need some help tracking a few guys down. In Queens.” He said and then hesitantly and side eyed him cautiously. As if he expecting a no. Matt hadn’t answered so he asked sort of cautiously but trying to maintain the casualness he had earlier. It only partially worked. “You down?” Matt waited a second before he shrugged. It was probably the alcohol that made him agree, but something told him that he was going to have fun with this one.

“Sure, but just this time.”
Update Notice: I want to get the next chapter up by the end of the month. So you will definitely have something by May 31st. Just so y'all know. If you have any comments or questions don't hesitate to ask!! I love you all!!
Chapter Notes

Okay, this came out a lot sooner than I expected it to. Wow, your comments are so kind and really motivate me to write and edit faster (also we do NOTHING in school and that gives me a good 7 hour chance of time to do these things) This one is REALLLYY long though sooo I hope you like it!
Also this uses inaccurate usage of science. I don't know shit about science I just put big words I remember in here. I am currently in Physics and have forgotten nearly all the Chemistry I learned, besides balanceing equations and I'm shit at Biology. I'm so so in programming, but it's been a while so work with me here. I love circuits though, so I'm kinda a nerd for them, don't judge me (I'm also very not smart lol) so just role with it please and don't scream at me in the comments about it (or do if you have a more accurate representation of what I'm trying to portray please send it and I might replace it because I do that lol)
TW: the last little tidbit mentions cutting and depression and the after affects of rape. Also child abuse and substance abuse just a teensy teensy bit.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 6- No Heroes Anymore

Present...

“What?”

Peter was sitting on top of a roof gaping into his phone. He couldn’t believe the audacity of this man. He’s finally unblocked this bastard after one and a half months of steady avoiding (which was hard work, thankyouverymuch) and trying to take down their corrupted pedophilic boss, and then this motherfucker has the Gaul to accuse he was an affiliated HYDRA agent?

Well...you kinda are...

No . They weren’t having this discussion. Not again. He can’t afford to doubt himself right now. That would lead to him having too cryptic and accusatory answers and that would lead him to jail. He was not going to jail because he was not a HYDRA agent. Never was, and never will be (if he could help it). He was supposed to be, but he wasn’t. He didn’t do it. Goddamn, Fury get your facts straight, if you’re gonna dig where your not supposed to.
See? This is what happens when he leaves something unattended for a long time. This is the reason why he can’t ignore problems. Ugh, it was annoying. Like can’t he sulk for a month and a half in peace? Just like avoid all this drama? No, apparently not.

All things considered, he kind of expected this. Well not really this per say, more like he wasn’t entirely surprised. The last encounter he had in front of the Avengers was with the Winter Soldier (who kinda sort of recognized him and was kinda sorta maybe his dad. Whoopsie). He must’ve spilled something and now Fury had balls and incentive to finally look into him; even if it was necessary it was still annoying. He knew that Peter could whoop his and the entirety of SHIELD’s ass into next week if he was so inclined, so he needed a really good ass reason to break their verbal pact. And it must have been really tempting, but it wasn’t anyone’s fault. There was no way Barnes would keep his trap shut about that little incident a month ago, if Peter really did trigger memories (which he’s sure he did). And it’s not like Barnes was the only one who was triggered in that little reunion (god damn man up Soldier we’ve all got post HYDRA PTSD. no need to be a pussy about it). Even so, he’d have to face the music eventually (Especially for that broken arm which again, whoopsie). But that was fine he had 7 weeks to prepare. That should be enough...right?

So why did he still not feel ready to open up?

*Probably never gonna be able to. You don’t ‘open up’, Peter.*

Oh yeah. He was terrible at emotions. How could he forget?

But you know what he wasn’t terrible at: facts.

He had to keep in mind that he was only 5 when he last saw Barnes. When they accuse him, he could easily play that one off. There were a lot of kids that looked like him, and it wasn’t like he stood out in a crowd (brown hair and brown eyes, without the Spider costume he looked like any normal teenager). No defining features *physically*. Soldier would probably not remember any little ticks he had, he never remembered in the room and hardly ever had paid attention to him (now he could chalk that up as ‘daddy issues’ and finally join Matt and Wade’s and basically every mother vigilante/superheroes club. Well most of them anyway. Does finding out your dad is an ex assassin for HYDRA and used to beat your ass during training that he was brainwashed to do count as a ‘daddy issue’?). He had to keep all personal knowledge to a steady ‘*absolutely no talking about it*’. But that was easy, because that was what he’s been doing his entire life.

*You’re running away.*
No, he was not. He was *moving on*. Thank you very much. It’s not like he wanted these memories, and sure let experiences build you and shit, but this was one experience he was pretty sure he could live without. And also, growth. Character development. He had been *so close* to forgetting all about it. This was a test (even if he didn’t believe in god). To prove he could live without this experience.

*But it’s not just one experience, it’s the first six years of your life.*

Whatever, he didn’t even remember half of it. Normal kids don’t remember the first three years of their life and the older you get the less you remember about your first 7 years. Science was backing him in this one.

*But you’re not a normal kid.*

‘You know what? Shut up. There is no time for your negativity. We’ve got an interrogation to crush.’

He knew the Avengers were gonna pry into his life even if he made it difficult. They were gonna find out about this stuff eventually. Right, because those fuckers had Scarlet Witch, so it didn’t matter how many times Bucky was wiped, he’d still remember once Wanda had a crack at him. Maybe he could get Wanda on his side somehow. Like it didn’t *seem* like she hated him entirely yet. So there is still hope!

*Really? I thought we were preparing for an interrogation, not giving into delusions.*

And if they siced Wanda on him, it would be the finishing blow. They’d know *everything*. As much as he fought against magic, there was always *some* science to it. He didn’t know how to defend against something invading his *mind*. One would’ve thought he did because of all the brainwashing and different types of emotional and mental manipulation he witnessed and experienced as a kid. Apparently he didn’t. Magic was a whole other ballpark.

Well he just couldn’t let that happen. He’s had years of experience going through the worst kinds of hell without saying a damn word. He could stand up to some witchy stuff. Right?

*Oh god, you’re screwed.*
So he had two options. One was to tell the truth and confess. The other was to lie the fuck out of it, because those asses didn’t have any *real* evidence. Witchy stuff be damned. That wasn’t solid evidence.

The answer was so obvious.

“Okay? What does that have to do with me?” Peter asked in his flawless, ‘what the fuck are you talking about’ voice. Fury growled. Peter was so going to regret this later. Or maybe Fury would. Nothing stays hidden forever, but if they didn’t care enough, they’ll let him go...maybe?

Okay, yeah no. That ain’t gonna work out. They are actively trying to find you even though they don’t know it’s you. Even if they don’t care, they will figure you out eventually. They aren’t stupid.

Fuck you.

“You. Come here. Now.” Ohh, breaking out the authoritative tone. Did he think it would work for Peter? Although, to be fair, he did sound really mad. Maybe Peter should humor him and come to the tower. Not that there was anything humorous about this, it was a very bad situation. But Peter likes to find the light in things.

*Even if this is a shitty world.*

Exactly!

“Are you growling? That’s fucking adorable Nick. I’m on my way.” Peter gushed with a smile even if no one could see with the mask on. He better get going before the voices decided to change his mind (he should do a lot of things before the voices changed his mind).

This was going to be interesting.

OoOoO

How exactly did he think this would turn out?
Not well.

In his head, this was more justified and better planned out. Now that Parker was sitting in front of him in a chair, it felt sort of silly (but not entirely surprising. It would definitely be embarrassing if they were wrong). How do you ask a teenager’ hey my best friend is freaking out cause he thinks you were in an HYDRA compound when you were a kid. Also your parents aren’t really your parents, and they were evil’? Yeah, that conversation was going to work well with a teenage spider mutant. Enhanced? They really didn’t know all that much about Parker - and that was the problem.

If Parker already knew, then this would be easy. They’d just have to expose him, and he didn’t seem to mind being exposed for the most part. He seemed pretty open, but that wasn’t the real case. If he knew something it was easy to hide it from them because they had never asked questions before - they assumed Fury had since he recruited Parker. Now that they were asking questions he would spill, because he was a kid and they had Romanov on their side (she could get anyone to spill). But this was serious…and what if he didn’t know. It’d be a wake up call, that’s for sure.

But even when had Parker walked in, he gave nothing away. He looked the same as he always has-except a little thinner, which come on kid how much thinner can you get - not at all like he broke Starks arm and bolted for 7 weeks(he didn’t even look like he could break a twig, those bags were ten times their size last time he saw him). It was too casual. It didn’t look right on his tired face, which didn’t look right on his young face. He just...didn’t look like a kid...but at the same time he did.

“So…” Peter rocked back and forth on his feet. Teetering between his toes and heels. Eyes darting around and looking anywhere but in their eyes. Was he nervous? Guilty? Any emotion they could probably use, but they had to pin it first.

“Are you a HYDRA agent?” Steve asked with a steely tone. Getting straight to the point and looking him directly in the eyes. Parker has a tendency to not address or completely ignore an issue if you weren’t straight forward. Peter stared back with owlish eyes, not knowing how to respond for a second before huffing an incredulous laugh. Like that was funny and not a very serious question.

“That was tactful.” Stark mumbled sarcastically, but they didn’t have time to waste. This was a serious issue. Parker had an issue with dancing around the problem and not actually answering personal questions. And this was as personal as you could get (if Bucky was right, that is). It’s not that they wanted to pry, but they needed to know if they were being infiltrated. Parker was a loose canon and had no obligation to be on missions with them. He was a wild card, and a dangerous one at that.
“Wow, yeah. No. I would tell you I don’t think it works that way even if I was, you know, HYDRA. But I see you want to be straightforward, so I’m just gonna skip to what brought you to that conclusion.” Peter said in a tone that showed he really wasn’t taking this seriously. He wasn’t giving away that he was at all nervous about this, but he wasn’t the expert.

“ We’re asking the questions, Parker.” Natasha said, saying his name like it wasn’t his. Nice. Get it in his head ahead of time. Peter didn’t look fazed in the least. So either he knew that wasn’t his name and had some weird justification for it, or he just didn’t get the implication.

“ Is this an interrogation?” And his eyes lit up?! Like this was going to be exciting. He seemed so...happy? No, amused. Fucking kid was getting a kick out of this. Steve growled inaudibly. “I’m really good at those!” He said happily.

...oh shit...that’s right. They forgot the most important thing they did know about Peter Parker: He wasn’t a normal kid.

“We’ll see…” Natasha said under her breath, like she was determined to prove him wrong (Steve hopes they did). Peter nodded along and Stark gestures for him to sit on the chair in front of them. Maybe this was an interrogation, Steve never looked at it that way, but it was the only way to describe it.

“Barnes said that there was a kid in a HYDRA compound staying in the same room as him.” Stark started eyeing Parker suspiciously from the papers he was hiding behind. Not showing Parker his eyes, but making him feel the stares.

“That’s rough buddy.” Peter responded without missing a beat. Steve thought he saw Stark’s lips quirk up at the response (must’ve been a pop culture reference. Tony didn’t acknowledge after that though, so Steve didn’t mention it) “Why would I be that kid? I had a normal childhood.”

“Ahh, there’s where you’re lying. On files, officially your ‘parents’ Richard and Mary Parker are presumed dead. They also officially adopted you from an orphanage in Russia when you were six after they were dead.” Peter tensed a little at their names. It must have been a sore spot. So he did know more than he let on. He also could just as easily not want talk about it because they were his dead parents they were practically using against him (How low can you get? But then again these weren’t Parker’s real parents. But adoptive parents could be just as nurturing. Oh god, what if they actually didn’t do anything and they were accusing two good people of being affiliated with the worst organization known to man. No, he couldn’t think like this now they were in the middle of an interrogation.)
“Believe it or not, that’s actually pretty normal. My parents had custody over me on a long term trip to Russia, the adoption didn’t process until after they were dead so I got shipped back to America to live with my Aunt and Uncle.” Peter said casually. that was true plausible. Adoption processes were a disaster especially if it was overseas. Also Peter’s orphanage burned down, so the kid was essentially homeless. He technically didn’t even need papers. Who knows how long he was with them before everything was properly filed. “but they are my foster parents. I never knew my biological mom and dad, that doesn’t mean I can’t have a normal childhood.” Peter said with a cross of his arms. His eyes darted to Natasha for a second but that was the most suspicious thing he did after he confirmed the adoption.

“So not knowing where you come from was what, fine with you?” Steve asked with a raised brow and Peter looked up like he was thinking, then a confused look crossed his face. Like he didn’t understand the question. He answered nonetheless.

“I guess? I’ve never really thought about it that way. I mean I come from where I’m raised, at least that’s how I think of it.” Peter shrugged. “Call me optimistic but I like where I ended up for a period in time.” Steve notes the implication that he doesn’t like his status now, or at a certain point in his life. Growing up in Russia and then moving to America for socialization must have been hard for him, especially after a loss of the only people that took him in when he was most likely homeless. Peter wasn’t the most socially gracious, it didn’t seem like it was ever in his nature. It was almost endearing.

“And where would that be?” Natasha asked narrowing her eyes. Peter looked to her, leaned away from her. His owlish eyes were still curious, but as he looked at Natasha he seemed to be using that to cover something else. Natasha must be unnerving to him. Good.

“In New York? I’ve never left this place since I came, except in that one field trip to DC. Does that count?” Peter asked with a cocked smile. He was telling the truth according to the files. But there was one thing that didn’t add up.

“You don’t have a US citizenship.” Stark said and Steve wanted to have a smug expression on his face, but kept it professional. Peter didn’t change his demeanor. “Not a birth certificate either, so legally, you don’t exist. You have report cards and foster records but it’s as if you just appeared. Your foster records were fully processed until 9 years ago, correct me if I’m wrong but you would’ve been 6?” Peter didn’t miss a beat, and shook his head.

“I just told you that they didn’t process until I was six. How am I supposed to know why it took so long. As I said I didn’t know my biological parents, and I don’t know where I technically come from. Well it’s from Russia but I don’t know where. They don’t know either. I was a baby when they took me in, are you really gonna blame me for not remembering what my mother looked like
when I was born? Sorry, but it’s not my fault that normal kids don’t remember anything before the age of three.” Natasha stiffened at that response. The kid was right. He couldn’t do anything about legal documents then, hell he was too young to do anything about it now. He must have just never gotten a VISA. It’s not like they were going to deport an unaccompanied minor.

“Okay, let's do this the hard way.” Stark said and got up. Peter’s eyes followed him. He noticed how Parker stiffened. Steve was a little unnerved now too, what were Stark and Romanov planning? At this point he could sadly say that he was on Parker’s side for this. They probably were too, but they were better at extracting every single bit of information than he was. So Steve just sat back and let them do their thing.

“Are you gonna use your bone breaking privilege?” he asked a little meekly, and Stark spluttered for a minute while Peter managed to look a little smug, but his posture was more defensive.

“No!” Stark said and quickly brought out a file on his Stark pad and slammed it on the table in front of Peter. “Your parents were scientists, Richard and Mary Parker, who adopted you and died when you were six.”

“Yes, but that’s information we already went over.” Peter said confused with a furrow in his brow. Steve could tell he was on the verge of an eye roll and had to give it to Peter for sticking it out this long. This was about to get a whole lot harder for him to keep that curious look in his eyes. Oh you poor child.

“And you went to live with your Aunt and Uncle…” Peter nodded slowly, electing not to speak. He must’ve felt something forboding because now he looked a little cautious. Stark breathed in and out through his nose. “They were supposed to take care of you...but unofficially your Uncle seemed to rack up tabs at the bar.” Tony plowed on like he didn’t say anything and looked Peter directly in the eyes, his expression changed to an unreadable one in an instant. “and your aunt was a heroin addict. Was she not?” That seemed to be the kicker, the kid was no longer smiling. He looked livid. His anger was thinly valed but Steve had a feeling he wanted them to see it. It was a controlled anger, that was fierce and piercing. It was threatening and menacing and Steve didn’t want anything more for it to be contained for as long as possible.

“That’s not even relevant to what you’re accusing me of. You were talking about when I was fucking six years old. Not what happened after. I was six and adopted and don’t know who my parents are, I don’t even know what you want me to say.” Peter said in a malicious tone, it turned the room dark and shut everyone up. The air was stifling and made it slightly hard to breathe, freezing everyone in their place with shock. What the fuck?! “What my Uncle and Aunt did to me has no relevance. How would a drunk and a depressed woman have anything to do with HYDRA? Why wouldn’t they have kept me at like a HYDRA place or whatever instead of taking me to them? If they wanted me as a child soldier agent thing, then why wouldn’t they have kept me?” He looked them pointed in the eyes with a vicious glare that pinned them down. Okay, aunt is a
touchy subject. Let’s use that?

Or not, not is good. The air was suffocating. What the hell was this kid?

“There’s a death wish with that glare Parker was giving him. Stark was sure, despite what Fury and Peter says, that Spider-Man was going to kill Iron Man. Those weren’t the eyes of someone who wanted to hug you or your kittens. That was the look of festuring anger. Steve wondered how long Peter’s been building it up to have that much. That amount of anger was dangerous, especially for a kid like Parker.

And yeah, even Steve could admit bringing that shit up about his aunt was bad. But like when you think about it, it was concerning. Parker said what they did to him had no relevance. Meaning that they did something to him after his parents were gone. Abuse? Neglect? Anyway he swings it, it couldn’t be good. And the heroine thing? Steve knows for a fact that Spiderman was good at stopping drug circles. He does it often enough not to be weird, but that just made no body question why he was doing it. What kind of childhood did Peter have to get to where he is? He said he was content at one point, Steve couldn’t help but feel like he meant before he was Spiderman. But how can anyone be content with the things he was implying about himself? Even if it wasn’t with HYDRA, it still sounded messed up (he guesses that Parker didn’t need to be affiliated with HYDRA to be messed up, and that was honestly scary).

“I will break your arm again Stark.” Peter seethed quietly, getting up slowly; taking a seemingly dark aura around him - Steve didn’t know if his mind was playing tricks on him or if Parker’s anger was just that potent but it was truly one of the most terrifying the Soldier has ever seen/felt. Steve thought he’d actually do it. He probably would if Tony kept messing with him. And Tony - true to his suicidal tendencies - did, and Parker - for his part - seemed to respect that.

“So that is all I had to say? I admit, it’s a real touchy subject. Probably would be more concerning if you didn’t have feelings toward it. But seriously, all I had to do was find a few arrest reports on your aunt, and then here is her suicide...report” Tony said in his usual nochelonce, but fading towards the end. His eyes adopting a sad look in them, Natasha not saying anything “oh…” Now even Steve would admit he was taking it a bit too far now, even Tony had the look that he said too much. He obviously was spitting balling after he found the sore spot. They didn’t know Peter’s aunt suicided, there was no two ways about it: it was just plain wrong to bring that up to a kid, no matter what they were accusing him of. Peter didn’t really much care.

“Yeah. ‘Oh’.” Peter practically seethed “you know depression is a real thing. Not everybody has all the money in the world to get treatment for it, even when it’s really bad. And especially when no one but a stupid child cares about it. She tried her fucking best Stark and all you can do is disrespect her for it? But I’m going to warn you once,” Peter leaned closer to a wide eyed Iron Man menaceingly. “I will break your arm and make sure it heals so painfully that you can’t build your fucking toys if you even mention her again. You won’t even be able to think in sentences, much
less equations. All you’ll feel is searing, white hot pain. The kind of physical pain you _don’t_ get used to.” Peter said so venomously and darkly that it even took Natasha by surprise. Tony was stock still and yeah, Spider-man just threatened Iron Man and it was _fucking terrifying_. He looked Stark in the eyes to finish. “I can’t kill you, but you’d wish I would.”

There was silence, and everyone could tell that Peter was dead serious.

“So aunt...not a topic to _ever_ be touched in the history of _ever_. Got it.” Yeah that about summed it up. The air cleared a little, and Steve felt his breath run out. The kid had a small smile on his lips, it still had a threatening edge to it though. Steve has to do a double take. _What the fuck._

“I would appreciate that.” he said in a more professional tone, smile warning but accepting. It was such a change in demeanor that it gave them whiplash (he’s sure even Natasha got it). “I’m gonna leave now.” he said walking away, but he stopped by the door and turned a little. “Oh and Stark,” he said not looking at anyone in particular. “Correct me if I’m wrong, but if your Arc Reactor comes out of your chest. It’s my understanding that you'll survive, right?” Yeah, but that would be pretty painful.

“Uhh...Yeah, but it would fucking hurt.” Tony answered still out of it and stunned. _Oh you stupid motherfucker_. “Why?” Peter looked him in the eye and smiled innocently in a not innocent way at all. This wasn’t a question, it was a promise.

“Tools in the toolbox.” He said wistfully and left a lingering darkness in his wake. That. That right there, was _fucking terrifying_. No child should be able to do that. No human should be able to do that. Did Parker have a power that they didn’t know about? Steve didn’t think that was power though. He thinks that’s _anger_. Justified and unruly anger. Anger that if Parker unleashed would create a monster, and not even the Avengers could fight _that_. Whatever darkness Parker was harboring, could be the downfall of whatever he so pleases.

Fucking Terrifying, indeed.

OoOoO

Bruce loved his interns.

Well they weren’t really _his_ interns; technically they were Tony and Pepper’s. But that didn’t stop him from loving them and mentoring them on the side when their bosses were busy, with
homework and such. They were helpful and bright. It made him sometimes think that he himself needed an intern to help him too -but then he remembered the other guy and decided that sharing Tony and Pepper’s interns were good enough (he also doubted he could find one as bright as them too. It was too much work to find a biochem genius child).

Ned Leeds was Tony’s intern. He was insanely good with computers, not really science, but he wasn’t incompetent in the field. He seemed to have some advanced fun facts from time to time; when Bruce asked where he’d learned that he said a friend of his used to really like science and tech. But Ned always had a sad look on his face when he said that so Bruce decided not to ask who the friend was. And Ned never mentioned a name.) His specialty was coding, he could hack into any database, through most firewalls, and even managed to hack into the Iron Man armor once (he only did it because Harley dared him to, Ned was too good of a kid to do anything with the armor. But he did get insanely excited about it.) He was an overall bubbly nerdy kid, who was incredibly innocent. He was good company and Bruce found his geeky rambling oddly comforting.

Michelle Jones was Pepper Potts more than competent personal intern. She was smart and witty and didn’t take anyone shit. She got the job done quickly and efficiently. Bruce was almost certain that if anything happened to Pepper, Michelle could take over swiftly as temporary CEO of Stark Industries. Hell Pepper sometimes even left her in charge. She said that she has had experience bossing around dumbasses and gestured Ned and Harley (but she also got the same look Ned did. As if something was missing.) She wasn’t as good at STEM fields as Ned or Harley but she could maintain a rather intellectual conversation about quantum physics, but only to a certain point (when Bruce asked her about she said that she used to have a friend who was only competent in the fields of STEM. Bruce has a feeling it was the same friend Ned was talking about. It made him kind of want to meet the friend. MJ offhandy said that he would like him if he was still around because apparently he was really good at Biochem and Chemistry, but that’s all she ever said about it). MJ has this scary aura around her when she wasn’t indifferent, but sometimes she had an endearing look to her face when Ned or Harley did something -but it was when they did random things, there was no pattern (like when Ned rambled about Tatooine but not Lothal or when Harley made a chemistry pun about an ionic bond but not an alloy).

Tony and Pepper wore their interns with pride and no shame, as if they were their own kids. They were constantly bragging about their smarts and skills. They went to the same school as Harley and they all had formed a friend group that was probably the smartest most terrifying thing ever, especially when Shuri was over. He was fairly sure that they could take over the galaxy if they were so inclined to do so.

Harley seemed to have develop a little crush on MJ at first and it was kinda the cutest thing ever. Tony made a point to tease him about it, and Harley would respond with a “Why not?” And a shrug. Then Bruce noticed that Harley wasn’t flirting with MJ, but MJ was teasing Harley. And then they figured out that it was just her personality, but she kind of died down by the time they got it right (she didn’t do it as often, it was almost like it wasn’t meant for Harley). They then concluded that their friendship was still the most adorable and exhausting thing ever.
Still, there was something about these interns that seemed a little... depressed. Hidden under something and their smiles and shrugs and normal teenage antics, it was like they were jerking around. Like they were trying to find something they’d lost. They oddly seemed incomplete (despite there being no one else in the picture). But there was no way to bring that up without sounding really fucking weird. They didn’t talk about it much, and they didn’t seem keen on mentioning it either. But Bruce noticed -and he’s sure every other Avenger and Pepper did too: they were grieving the loss of someone. Someone who seemed to have made a pretty big impact on their lives. It showed when they stiffened at certain phrases or actions. It showed when they held back from doing or saying things. It especially showed when they were in Bruce’s lab, surrounded by chemicals and physics equations. They missed someone.

It still made Bruce wonder.

The first time he really, finally got a clue was when Ned was working on a project in the common room on the kitchen counter. Pepper was in a meeting and Tony was doing that interrogation thing with Peter (though they didn’t know that because it was majorly classified and Bruce thinks that Harley is still pissed at Parker). The project is one that he was just finishing up for today’s internship, It requires complex wiring and the last steps were the most confusing. Harley was next to him typing on a laptop directing him through it (since mechanics were more his specialty) and giving him suggestions on what to do. MJ was doing paperwork - proofing Pepper’s flawless proposals for companies, and adding suggestions - on his other side probably hiding her amusement behind her dark curls that framed her face.

Ned let out a groan, “ugh I wish Peter was here.” He slipped up and The reaction was immediate. Harley and Bruce snapped their heads to Ned so fast that they almost got whiplash and MJ who bristled like a cat and they both froze. Surly he couldn’t mean...no it was a common name. He didn’t mean Parker...Right?

“Peter?” Harley asked almost frantically, nearly choking in shock at the name as he leaned forward. Ned tried to give him his usual wonky smile, but it just turned out like a mix between wary grimace and a nostalgic sad smile, like he was nervous or scared or sad. Or all of the above. Everyone of those emotions were pouring off of him. Michelle has seemed to completely shut her iron walls, face giving away nothing in an unreadable expression that put him slightly on edge.

He did not like these looks on them. At all.

“Y-Yeah. P-Peter Parker. I’m surprised you haven’t heard of him.” Ned stuttered a little nervously. Bruce felt his breath catch in his throat and heart stop. They knew Peter? They knew Peter from before he was assigned to Avengers missions. Did they know him before Spiderman? But he thought Peter had said that he didn’t have any friends. How did they know him? Did they know him as Spiderman? Did they know Peter was Spiderman? There were too many questions and unknown variables for him to form coherent thought, and now he regretted not getting to know the
boy a little better. MJ didn’t miss a beat.

“Nah, Keener wouldn't have heard about him. He graduated the year before you came.” She said nonchalance with a ting of the same nervous, sad energy Ned had. She was just better at hiding it, but Bruce could tell it was there.

“Graduated? Isn’t he like our age? Like if he was your friend and all.” Harley asked frantically trying not to give anything he knew away. Bruce seemed to choke up. Michelle and Ned surprisingly didn’t notice his nervousness and choppy explanations in his want for answers. Bruce got it, he wanted answers too.

“Yeah, he was smart though, like wicked smart. He probably knew the answer to any test ever given. He even graduated high school with enough AP credits to get a few associates degrees.” Ned said like he hadn’t dropped the biggest bomb in the history of ever (because everyone thought that Parker dropped out of high school. They just assume and he even said that-... wait no...Parker never said he dropped out he just never denied that he dropped out… but why would he want them to think he was stupid and irresponsible? Surly them knowing he graduated high school - Midtown no less- would get him some sort of credit with them. Although he didn’t really need to graduate high school to be Spiderman) and rattled off a list of Parker’s forgotten and unacknowledged academic accomplishments instead “Robotics, Biochem, Mechanical Engineering, Physics-all types of Physics he was really good at that- and uhm what was the last one, MJ?” He looked to MJ hopefully, they were both trying to cover up some sort of hurt with nonchalance and friendly interaction, she gladly took the bait and scoffed.

“Coding and Chemistry dumbass.” She said and there was a far away look that entered her eye. “I can’t believe you forgot Chemistry Leeds. It was his favorite.” She said quietly, not really invested in the conversation anymore. She said it with a kind of vulnerability that she had never shown before, but then she straightened and that look was gone. Harley was floored, Bruce couldn’t blame him.

“I was pretty okay at Chemistry…”

What the fuck. Parker literally had been dangling this in front of them this whole time. He hadn’t told them that he was a genius, but he didn’t deny when they called him a dumbass. They all thought that he wouldn’t understand all the complicated stuff and had used that to nearly mock him, but he had known what they meant. He was playing games with them, like he wanted to see how far they’d get before they would finally realize the obvious truth and see how stupid he could make them feel when they finally did realize.

At least, Bruce wouldn’t put it past the Peter Parker he knew to do that. Now, he wasn’t so sure he knew Peter Parker at all.
“What happened to him?” Bruce asked this time, quietly and cautiously. He already knew where Peter was (a few floors below them getting his head screamed off and in a probably humiliating interrogation. Poor kid.) but he had no idea what had happened to the boy. He didn’t even know what was going on in the kid’s life outside of the Avengers missions that he hadn’t been on in nearly two months now. He was basically as clueless as Harley (who didn’t even know about the Avenger mission parts). Ned sighed and MJ scoffed lightly going back to her casual composer. Ned just looked tired - a look he also didn’t quite like on the boy.

“He disappeared off the face of the earth after he got his diploma, he didn’t even go to the graduation ceremony. We tried contacting him, he doesn’t respond to any of our texts or calls. I think he went to college somewhere? MIT? He wanted to go to MIT.” Ned said with a nod and MJ snorted. Bruce felt a dread sinking to the bottom of his stomach. Peter most certainly did not go to college. He knew that much. He saw Harley go ghost white (did he know something Bruce didn’t? He knew Parker and him had a tentative friendship that was broken by Tony Stark’s arm. Maybe Parker told him something about his past).

“He couldn’t even afford Midtown, what makes you think he could afford MIT?” MJ said almost condescendingly. Her brows furrowed like she didn’t like what she was going to say next. “He was dirt poor, he literally has worn the same shoes for three years straight.” MJ said and Ned made an epiphany like sound. He looked down at the wires, not looking at anyone like MJ was, even if Bruce and Harley were staring holes through them with their full attention. They continued to talk casually, and if Bruce didn’t know any better, it was almost like they’d forgotten that they had an audience.

“Oh yeah, the converse that he got at the thrift store.” Ned said almost happily. Bruce could tell it was fake.

“He had to duck tape those like ten times, honestly it’s an engineering miracle he’s been able to maintain them.” MJ grumbled over her work, Ned nodded sagely. Bruce’s mind flashed to Peter’s duck taped converse. He’s had them for four years now? He couldn’t even afford shoes? Oh my god, they were interrogating a kid who couldn’t even get basic necessities down stairs!

Ned then addresses them to fill them in “but like Midtown doesn’t give full rides either but made the exception for Peter. He didn’t have to pay a thing.” That floored all of them. Peter couldn’t afford to go to school. He couldn’t afford the education he should be getting. What else couldn’t he afford? He remembered the times Peter came in after a prolonged period of time and the Spiderman suit looked thinner as he compressed the skin tight material over his body. He remembered the blackish purple rings around his eyes. He remembered the almost inaudible grumbles that enmities from the boy’s stomach from time to time (and sometimes they were rather large and would draw attention to him, Pete would blush and play it off that he just ‘forgot’ to eat a meal - depending on the time). How had they not noticed? How had Bruce not notice? He was a fucking doctor for crying out loud. It was his job to notice these kinds of things. How had not
noticed These signs of severe neglect. How had he not noticed that they were making a *starving* child fight battles that build up a strong appetite and then send him off without *any* food. Peter couldn’t afford big meals, he couldn’t even afford to *sleep* sometimes. How many times has he worked in empty only to keep having to work with *no fuel*? This wasn’t just neglect at this point, the Avengers pointedly ignored all these problems Peter had, and even contributed to some. It was a form of abuse at this point. Abuse and neglect elicited by the Avengers. Heh, some heroes they were.

He thought of a way to help Peter, but… Peter wasn’t a very trusting person. Would he even let Bruce help? He knew nothing about Peter Parker anymore. He could only trust the people who knew him before for information about him.

Peter Parker wasn’t the person everyone thinks he is.

Peter Parker is being neglected.

Peter Parker has gone to Midtown.

Peter Parker graduated Midtown early.

Peter Parker was *fucking smart*.

*Peter Parker was fucking good at lying.*

“MIT wouldn’t do that.” Bruce mumbled, it was all he could think of to say in his life shattering realization and shame. MJ looked at him with a mix of agreement and disappointment. Like she knew that, and she thought it was unfair. Like she thought Peter deserved a better hand than life dealt him. He probably did. There was silence for a bit after that. No one moved or worked on their papers/circuit board/projects. All sound seemed to seize to exist in that moment.

“I think you would’ve liked him, Dr.Banner.” Ned said quietly, breaking the quiet that was filled with stifling emotions that choked him. Bruce looked up slightly, Ned hadn’t turned his head to look at the man just down at his project. “He knew all of your Gamma papers since we were 9. He made a thesis for the science fair based off of it. He almost didn’t win because they thought he cheated and used adult help, but then he started to recited facts that even the teachers didn’t know and then they *had* to give him first prize.” Ned chuckled a sad laugh and clutched lightly at the menace of wiring, like he was trying to ground himself. It made Bruce’s heart break. 9? They’ve
know. Each other since elementary school. They grew up together. They were _friends_. Rally really good friends. And then Peter pushed them away? He couldn’t even begin to imagine how that felt. Ned continued because Bruce didn’t know what to say (apart of him wanted to call Tony and bring Peter up. Make Peter face his friends again and give them an explanation as to why he left. Be with them and make them happy in a way that only he would know how to do. But he didn’t, because Peter was pushing his friends -his best and only friends- away for a reason. And Bruce was going to find out, even if he had to pull Parker’s teeth to get them) “I think you would’ve liked him too, Harley. If you got to know him that is… he’s really shy and doesn’t talk a lot when you first meet him.” Ned said in a sad kind of nostalgic way. MJ stayed silent as he continued, Bryce didn’t even think that Ned was noticing he was rambling (but not the good ramble that he’d come to enjoy. A sad almost hysteric ramble as an attempt to comfort himself) “His Aunt and Uncle treated him real...bad…like really bad. He had to live with them cause his parents died. They didn’t feed him much, sometimes his aunt wasn’t so bad. We were kids and didn’t understand that her mood swings were from… uh, he never like to t-talk about it.. but he al-always l-liked to h-help p-people. Everyone has always b-been mean to him, but he always h-helped them…and he al-always s-smiled...” Ned trailed off from his ramble that he tried not to cry through. There was more silence before MJ got up abruptly and left the room - no one stopped her. Ned’s breath hitched a bit as he sighed. Like he was fighting back tears. It made Bruce’s heart crack a bit more.

Bruce has never seen either of them look so lost and incomplete. He wondered if Peter was just as lost and incomplete without them in his life anymore. Why had he pushed them away? Why did he make them suffer like this? Was he suffering like this too? At least Ned and MJ has each other but Peter…

Peter was all alone.

“I wish he was still here. He always knew what to do.” Ned whispered to the wiring.

Bruce felt his heart shatter.

OoOoO

“I can’t believe you actually managed to piss him off.”

Fury crossed his arms as the rest of the Avengers sat in the common room. Steve had a brooding look on his face. Tony was still a little awestruck but recovering from his traumatizing experience. Natasha looked a little put out. Bruce looked tired as he massaged his head. Sam and Clint has been listening along with Fury. After they were done, Clint stared at all them and he could tell, they did not get any of the information they tried to extract. They all had told each other what had happened and what information they had figured out in their respective meetings. Suffice to say, they hadn’t expected the information Bruce was able to offer and they were equally surprised - especially Tony.
They were left with more questions than answers. This was tiresome.

“And when were you gonna tell us the kids a genius?” Bruce asked tiredly, massaging the crease of his nose. The genius thing was a surprise indeed, he knew Parker wasn’t stupid, but he could never have imagined him actually graduating one of the most esteemed STEM schools in the tristate area early. Fury surly knew about that before hand, since he had the most access to Parker’s official files. It was also Fury who gave them the files on his family history and custody records and nothing more, so they didn’t have his report cards or school forms. Fury scoffed in response.

“I thought you’d figure it out, after all you’re the adults.” Clint scrunched his nose at the implication. He was mocking their ability, Clint knew. And though that mocking was somewhat deserved (a teenager had managed to hide a rather large portion of his life from them for over a year. It was honestly embarrassing how they went into this with so little information - which was not only a meager amount for the time they had spent together, but also inaccurate. They had two of the most experienced and talented spies the world has ever seen on the team, how did they get played by a child) it still was degrading. “ He may not advertise it, but he doesn’t exactly try to hide it.” Fury continued like it was obvious and pulled out his phone. An air of light shame and embarrassment came over them. The kid had beat them in the interrogation, outsmarted them for over a year, and managed to do it when he was starving and exhausted for at least 60 percent of that time. Either Parker was just that good or they really needed to step up their game.

“What are you doing?” Natasha asked coolly. Clint could tell she was pissed. She had never lost an interrogation before (even if Stark and Rogers May have tripped her up, Clint knew she took no excuse to failure. Especially if she was the one who failed) so it was clear why she was a bit miffed. She wouldn’t be underestimating Parker’s Skills anytime soon; none of them were after this.

“Calling him.” Fury said, Clint scoffed as he put it on speaker for everyone to hear the ringing. Like Parker would talk to them after that clusterfuck of an interrogation. They had insulted the woman who had raised him most of his life (even if she was high most of that time, Parker clearly had no other parental figure to speak of). After an interrogation like that, Parker was bound to be digging up things that he’d kept hidden. He still needed to process and bury them again (he was the type to never talk about things that were bothering him. It just seemed right and Clint went on with that assumption, and after today it was confirmed).

“That won’t—” after the fourth ring, the phone clicked as someone picked it up. Making Clint’s mouth shut. Huh, that was a surprise. The kid was throwing them through a lot of loops today, wasn’t he?
“Hello.” Peter said calmly, too calmly after a day like today. Clint felt a sense of forboding, like a calm before the storm. They were missing something. The voice was muffled and there was a lot of wind in the background. Where was he?

“Parker.” Fury asked for confirmation that it was really the kid. He did tend to get in a lot of trouble, and Fury didn’t want to disclose any private information to bad guys. It was something he did when he was going to say something he only wanted to person he was calling to hear.

“Yes, this is she.” Peter said in his usual joking way. Clint didn’t understand how he could sound so normal after everything that was dug up today. The wind stopped for a moment and there was silence on both ends and then he giggled (what the fuck?! Was he on something?). Fury didn’t miss a second to respond.

“You motherfucking- you always do this!” Peter outright was laughing now on the other end. The wind picked up again, Peter’s laughter being drowned slightly. Fury looked to the Avengers with an exasperated look. They - to Fury’s credit - looked slightly apologetic. “See what I have to deal with, everytime you go and screw things up?” Clint almost felt sorry for the guy. He was doing his best, especially with a highly unstable, intelligent mutant teenager (none of those things were easy to deal with alone, and together it was just impossible to deal with. Forget it, Clint would quit if he had to manage that. He has been working with the outcome of that mixture products for a whole year now and he was still never going to get over it).

“Oh, we’ve got an audience?” Peter deciphered on the other end. Clint noticed how easy it was for him to get to that conclusion, even if it wasn’t explicitly a scientific observation, Clint was still on a lookout. He could tell everyone else was too. “In that case, hello fucking pricks who don’t know personal boundaries, I hope you’re going through some sort of existential crisis.” They were. Thanks for asking.

“Language.” they all mumbled simultaneously and Peter laughed again. He had obviously heard their reaction, he did have super hearing after all, even if they could barely hear him over that wind on his end.

“Are you high?” Fury asked in his normally irritated way. His tone seemed to pick up more authority when he was scolding Parker though. He was covering up the gentleness in it with a sharp edge. Clint has never noticed that before. Huh, Fury has a soft spot. Who would’ve guessed.

“About 600 feet, why?” Oh so he was swinging. Why had it taken so long to come to that conclusion? God he was losing his edge. But to be fair, Parker has been surprising them left and right today. Clint was half expecting him to say that he was half way up a mountain.
“Mother- where are you kid?” Clint asked breathlessly, location wise he meant this time. How was this kid still doing his vigilante thing today? He was expecting him to go dark for at least two days (then again he did go dark for nearly two months and still did his job effectively). There was a nearly silent click on the other end and the wind stopped abruptly, indicating Peter landing on something, probably hollowed metal. A crate or maybe a storage box that they kept near docks and storage houses. Or maybe a van?

“Oh more interrogation? You still want answers even After you were done needling my friends? Don’t you think you should stop picking at my life for a few seconds, you’re acting like my life is some addicting sitcom.” He said back in a airy manner, quieter than he was before. He said it casually, like he didn’t just say that he knew about the things he probably shouldn’t. (But Peter was Spiderman, he can do a lot of things he shouldn’t be able to).

“How did you know that?!” Sam stood up and yelled in surprise. Clint winced as did the kid, who was obviously in a high stakes situation that needed him to be calm, if the way he dropped his volume a few notches was anything to go by.

“I know a lot of things.” Peter said and there was a crash and some incoherent yelling from people that were not Peter. They sounded mad...wait was the kid on a job? Why the hell had he picked up if he was busy? “Well Hello there.” Peter greeted to the unidentifiable people on the other end and there was banging and gunshots. Holy shit this kid was in a gunfight while making a call! He was going to get shot.”I’m a little busy right now, can you hold.” He admitted there was a whoosh and a thwip then a clink. The audio was a bit more muffled but they could hear gun fire and there was a loud clang more gunfire and yelling and heavy footsteps, thwipped and people getting punched, more gunfire and an almost sickening squelch. “Motherfuhhh! What the hell dude! That fucking hurt you shit for brains.” He yelled out to the man who presumably shot him. They all raised a brow at that. Sure Peter cursed with them, just not to this extent so casually. Then again, they’ve never been on a phone call with him when he was doing his vigilante thing. It wasn’t surprising that he acted differently.

“You kiss your mother with that mouth?” Fury asked, looking a little impressed. Everyone winced as they thought ‘too soon’. Clint was just concerned. What was going on? there was more shouting and clanging and gunfire on the other end. Parker has obviously got back up, so the wound must not be that bad.

“Fuck you Fury, I don’t have a mother.” Peter sounded like he grit it out and there was more banging. He obviously didn’t mind the jab at his deceased mother. How was he so calm about this? He was not in any emotional state to be fighting and he was getting shot at and he was wounded. How was he still going? “Can you- Oh my god! I am trying to have a fucking conversation you inconsiderate asswipe. Can you just-” there was another clattering sound and more people getting punched. To the majority of the rooms surprise he said something in what sounded like Russian and Natasha looked mildly impressed and amused - Clint didn’t want to know what the kid had cursed to make even Natasha impressed, she said insults in Russian were all about delivery and word choice. “Fuck off! Tie yourself up and take your fucking kittens with you! Actually you
know what? Give me the kittens, they don’t deserve to be fucked over by your pitiful misery and evil ways. Don’t ever drag kittens down with you, worthless shit head.” There was a look of understanding and exasperation on Fury’s face. As if this was a normal occurrence for a kid to be speaking so darkly and menacingly to protect kittens. Honestly, it probably was- Clint was surprised, this made more sense than a lot of things he was told today.

“What are you doing?” Sam asked and there was another gunshot, and a small meow from the other end. Woah, wait there were actually kittens? What the fuck was going on over there?

“Saving kittens, Wilson.” Peter responded with a huff of a laugh. Sam paled a little. Kittens? Guns? Yelling profanities that put a sailor to shame? Vigilantism was whack. Is it concerning that he actually kinda wanted to try it now?

“What the actual fuck.” Yeah that about sums it up. Thanks Sam.

“Right?” Peter said like he was agreeing with how strange it was that he was carrying kittens through the crossfire with no back up. “I had to save ‘em from a beam, like these stupid fucktards just left a whole litter of kittens up there because on top of being a sick pedophilic manics, they also abuses animals. Like overachiever much, right? Going for worst bastard of the week I see.” no one knew how to respond to that. Was that what vigilantism really dealt with? Pedophiles and animal abusers. That seemed like a drastic difference from the assumed ‘helping an old lady crossing the street’ and ‘giving directions’. Apparently Spider-Man’s service benches out to saving kittens from dogfights and saving kids from getting raped. It was kind of concerning. Peter didn’t pay attention to their silence as he cooed to the kittens gently as gunfire continued to follow him. His voice was oddly reassuring. “No, no Jiff, you’ve gotta stay in the bag, I know sweetie just for three more minutes and you’ll be out.” Fury knew how to respond to that.

“You fucking named them?!” he asked with his anger returning a bit more amplified. Peter didn’t pay any mind to the tone as he replied cheerfully.

“Yeah, all 3. Jiffy, Tiffy and Chris.” Peter said happily on the other end of the line. Like he was almost proud of himself.

“One of those things was not like the other.” Tony muttered and Clint couldn’t help but think the same. What kind of name was Jiffy? But they were Peter’s cats, so guess he got the final decision. Or maybe they had this weird naming system when they rescued stray animals. Did other vigilantes rescue stray animals? (An image of Frank Castle holding a tiny kitten crossed his mind and that was both understandably disturbing and weirdly adorable at the same time).
“I can bring ’em’ over if ya wanna meet them. I mean they have nowhere to be except the shelter, but I think I’ve gotta find a new one cause the one I usually go to in Queens is a bit crowded right now. Hey is there any nice shelters in Manhattan?” Peter asked not minding the comment about the names (he was distracting himself, trying not to panic. Trying to stay in control, trying to wrap his head around this. Juggling a million and one things at once and Clint wanted to so desperately end the call for Peter’s sake so he could focus, but if they caught him at a time where his attention wasn’t split like this, he’d be too sharp for anything to be useful), and then there was more banging but louder this time.

“No, I do not want to-” There was another gunshot, this one louder and closer and followed by a sharp yelp. Clint stood up and everyone flinched into battle mode. Who wouldn’t? They just heard a kid getting shot cause he was trying to save some kittens. “Kid?” Fury leaned forward, as if he was almost concerned (holy shit, Clint would totally make fun of him if he wasn’t concerned either). He made to move up and make this call a lot more private, but Natasha stared him down with a death glare that only dared him to leave (she cared too), so he stayed put.

“I think- I- Tif? Tif, you okay baby?” Peter whispered painfully, trying to soothe the uninjured kitten who was probably freaking out at the loud noise, and there was another mewl. A sigh of relief escaped Peter, followed by a wince. Clint has no words for that reaction. They were just a few kittens. Why was the kid going all out? Somewhere deep inside him he blamed himself for the kid getting shot. If they hadn’t made this call it wouldn’t have divided up Peter’s attention.

“Kid?” Fury asked a little less angrily and with a quieter tone. Probably a way of being reassuring to the shot kid. Peter paid no mind to the effort.

“She’s o-okay, don’t worry.” Peter relief washing through his voice. (Which what the fuck?! That wasn’t the fucking problem right now. The problem was that a child has been shot) There were more shouts and gunshots and the kid groaned. “Fucking shit! You’ve got to being kidding me? Seriously? You really want to- Fuck, you shit don’t let go. Oh my god, you fucking ass-” There was a loud yelling and a distant thud of body hitting cement. “Idiot. I tried to help you.” Peter muttered. Clint could piece together what just happened, what Peter had just seen. In the situation, Clint wouldn’t be able to move, much less attempt to help someone who just basically committed suicide because he didn’t want to go to jail. The thing is, Peter didn’t seem panicky or sad or freaked out about it. He seemed bitter. It made Clint wonder how many times this had happened to him before. It made Clint understand that the kid knew he couldn’t save everyone. He had thought the kid had never had to deal with this kind of thing before, but that tone of voice proved him wrong. Peter probably knew that fact more than anyone will ever know and he was only 15.

He was a...

“Kid.” Fury said and they heard a thwip as the gunfire ceased. The muffled shouts growing more
and more distant as Peter muttered quietly for someone or something to call the police. He just kept going.

“Hey Fury, I’m gonna bring these kittens to you. Oh fuck, I have a bunch of shit to do now cause of this fucker. Just don’t send them to a kill shelter.” There was city noises in the distance, like the ones before the call was made. The wind wasn’t blowing as harshly as before though, meaning Oeter was swinging slower. Probably because of his cargo and his wound. “They have nice shelters in Manhattan.” He said and Clint wanted him to just forget about the kittens, land and tell them his location so they could pick him up and take him to the medbay and apologize for everything they’ve ever done (it wouldn’t be enough, Clint knew).

“Are you shot?” It was Romanov this time. Peter paused in speaking (probably not expecting any of the other Avengers to speak, much less Romanov. Even if he did know they were listening), and a few thwips of his web shooters later:

“Yeah, why?” he said lightly, only a hint of nervousness creeping into his voice, and everybody groaned. Part of Clint was hoping he’d deny it, like Oarker did sometimes when he was hurt, but they had heard everything. It was bad that Peter was trying to ignore this problem though. This wasn’t just something anyone could push to the side.

Yeah, but how many times has he had to do it though...

“Come to the tower kid.” Tony ordered, a little frazzled. He had a kid, like Clint, so of course he was kind of freaking out. Clint was just better at hiding it. Also Stark was closer to the kid than the rest of them (even if it wasn’t by much, it was enough to tell that Stark didn’t completely not care about this child. It made sense, Peter had been fighting with them for over a year now, they should care more about him at this point).

“Yeah, I am on my way. I gotta give you the triplets.” Peter said, not entirely getting it. Clint was concerned he hit his head a bit too hard. Or maybe he just assumed that’s what they were talking about in the first place. Maybe he assumed that no one would care enough to check up on him when he was hurt. Clint didn’t know which one was worse.

“No, you gotta go to medical.” Tony insisted, Steve nodded along agreeing even if Parker couldn’t see. Peter pauses for a minute, obviously not expecting that. But when he spoke next his voice wasn’t something Clint ever wanted to hear like that again.

“No, I have a bunch of shit to do because of some Irish fuckers.” Peter’s voice was tired, he sounded only slightly annoyed. But he was mostly tired and exasperated. He probably wanted to
sleep or eat something, if he came to the tower he could do that. But obviously whatever Peter was
dealing with right now required more work to be done. He wasn’t just taking down this one gang,
he was taking down a ring right now. Clint wondered if he just stumbled into it or if this is what
he’s been keeping himself busy with for the past two months.

“We can help.” Steve assured, easily. It’s what Captain America does. He helps people, the
Avengers help people. They take down bad guys and do the right thing. Clint already had his hand
half way to his bow when Peter spoke again.

“No you can’t.” Peter whined, like he was teenager saying his parents don’t understand, but there
was something harsh understating his tone. That was only half true. He was a teenager and but they
weren’t his parents, and they did understand. They understood the situation at least, they didn’t
understand why Parker didn’t want their help. Maybe he was close to solving this mission or
maybe he was just wrapping it up. Or maybe he could still be in deep and had just found a cold
lead. There were so many possibilities, and they could help if Peter explained it to them.

“Kid can you just swallow your pride and just accept of our help. You are so insufferable.” Clint
said rolling his eyes. Peter let out a whine again, this time more annoyed than tired. It reminded
him of his kids and Clint normally didn’t like to compare his angels to Parker, but he couldn’t help
it sometimes.

“What? So I can just let you take over what I’ve been tracking for weeks. No thanks. Ever heard of
first come, first serve. Might not be how SHIELD does it but it’s how the rest of us do.” Peter said
a bit more like a teenager than he probably intended to, but then his dropped a little, tone becoming
unreadable (Stark was right, kid was bipolar as hell) “It’s not about pride, if you could do this
better than I can, you would-” Okay, so maybe they didn’t understand, but they weren’t his parents
at least - Clint dared someone to prove him wrong on that. There was a loud bang again, like he
was hitting a pole. A yelp from the kid and a pained groan, it made everyone flinch. Was he
swinging too low? Wasn’t that dangerous? The kid was swinging and twisting his body with a
gunshot wound, he needed to stop and tell them where he was or else he was going to bleed out
over all of New York.

“Kid!” He wasn’t sure who said it, but he agreed. Clint reaches down for his bow again, ready to
hunt this kid down if he needed to and drag him to Cho or Banner and strap him to the bed until he
was better.

“Stop calling me that! God your just as bad as the voices!” Peter growled. ...the what?! Okay
highly concerning now. Forget the kids physical state, they hadn’t even taken into account his
mental one. Holy shit, and that was the problem wasn’t it? His mental state was probably so
messed up that there was no hope in even trying to fix it, oh god. “I’ve got people on the ground
just-” there was a pause and silence. When he spoke again it was quiet and soft. Almost
heartbreaking like he was losing something important. “Take care of my kittens.”
The call ended, and there was silence. Not quite sure what to make of the call and responses. None of the Avengers knew what to make of Parker at all anymore. Every idea or assumption had been dashed in the last 8 hours and now it was like Parker was just as much of a stranger as when he first came into the tower.

No one dared to break the quiet, until they heard a soft mewl from the balcony. Clint got up because he was the closest and the least frozen, he slid open the door, and looked around the vast (for a balcony, but this was Stark tower) ground.

There was 3 kittens in a small box with faded bloody handprints.

OoOoO

Not a lot of things surprised him anymore.

He’d fought with bastards made of steel, and could go through time. Emo Cyborg arms weren’t just in the DCU anymore. He could regrow entire limbs in hours. Bad guys were as cheesy as the movies. He was kinda in a super team of bastards with bad colour schemes. Aliens attacked New York every other year, but that really wasn’t worth shit anymore anyways.

He also befriended a Spider person. Or a more accurate term would be, his little soldier that he was supervising turned into a spider person, which frankly was terrifying because Peter Parker was already scary without super strength. He could snap a person's’ neck when he was nine, and now when he’s fifteen, he can crush their skull with a tap. He hated to admit it, but he was glad the government shits up there decided to put a little dampener on the kid when he was first found (even if the kid didn’t know about that. Or maybe he did, it really wasn’t Wade’s place to know). It was terrible and immoral, but it really did help Peter get a handle on his powers faster. Especially since he was kind of ruined for any professional help ever again. He was gone for a second and then Peter could suddenly crawl up walls, another second he was a mutant himself and then they met Red after Ness died and the party really started.

His life was crazy. But that’s just the way he likes it. So no harm, no foul.

Somethings still bothered him though, no matter how many times it had happened. Like when Peter perched on his window, bleeding from every limb, in that skin tight suit- and oh god the kid had lost more weight?-- saying that they needed to take down the Irish mob. Again.
Like hold up buddy. Bandages? Band-aids? Advil? Kid’s healing factor was good, but Wade sometimes thinks Peter thinks he’s Deadpool or something (like love the hero worship but he was going to get himself killed) Had he taught you anything in that little summer camp? Apparently, the only thing Wade’s lessons got through, was: don’t let them fucking get away, or else no Chick Fil A Combo 1 Deluxe with Large Fries and Large Milkshake for you. (Could Peter even stomach those anymore? He’s never been able to even finish the sandwich, Wade only got him the delux Meal to save on money so he could eat the good ¾ of the meal that Peter couldn’t.)

But really, Spidey could let the guy get away and Wade would double that shit, cause the kid looked like he could use it (even if he couldn’t eat it all without puking twice or more). The kid needed food. Like around nowish? You know, before he starves to death or loses enough weight to no longer have enough weight for the seatbelt blinker to go on in the front seat (yeah the one that make you actually put on the seatbelt, not because you want to live or anything, but because the noise is annoying and messing with the song on the radio). Oh wait they were past that like two weeks ago. Wade’s bad.

“Food.” Wade said without looking up and Peter’s stomach let out a rather impressive growl. No doubt he was blushing under that mask as he moved to wrap his hands around his stomach in attempt to muffle the noise. He made a little ‘eep’ sound as his ears heard his own hunger. Fucking adorable . He loved this kid (but not in the Spideypool ship ways, he and Peter laughed at those because they were just so wrong. Sure they cuddled under masses of blankets and binged MLP on Netflix, but Wade would rather die than actually do any sexual things with a fucking kid (saying sexual things were apart of his personality and Peter has put up with it since he was 7), especially the kid he knew has had to deal with pedophiles left and right since he was a fetus.

Wade smirked as the kid crawled in all the way, because he can’t be bothered with trivial things like doors. There was no use in chasing down the fuckers he was trying to catch today. Where ever they skulked off to, they’d be there in the morning - they always were cause they were dumb.

It would be better if the kid just sat down got his head on straight, slept and maybe try not to puke out Wade’s food. But Wade never said that, Spidey never asked. It was the way they were. Wade pretended like he didn’t care, and Spidey pretended not to notice that he actually did -kid noticed everything. Of course Wade didn’t know Spidey knew that he cared until the kid was like 10, because he was a deceptive/perceptive- Wade got the two mixed up - little shit who didn’t need to be liked by everyone, unlike every other kid on the planet. That’s why Wade lets him stick around.

Peter is different, he always had been and always will be. And even though they’ve known each other for years, that fact will endlessly continue to surprise Wade. Peter was unpredictable and it was fun to watch and be with especially since Wade often got bored of the same old thing over and over again). Kid always brought something new with him, whether it be a problem or a solution or a box of kittens. Peter Parker Was never boring.
“‘M not that hungry…” The sunshine child lies - like the lying liar he was - taking off his mask and digging through his bag only for one of Wade’s old sweatshirts - that absolutely did not the original owner anymore - came out and was swallowing the kids small frame. It was his Canadian Army one, the symbol on the chest faded. The material was still soft. That was his favorite. The little shit stole it. He walked to the pantry without saying anything about it though. Peter stomach let out another growl at him opening a family bag of chips, and this one made the child wince (hunger pains were the worst especially if you have a super metabolism). That’s what you fucking get, you little thief.

Wade ate three chips slowly before handing it over, just as slowly. Peter growled and grabbed it as soon as it was in his reach. Like a cute little angry toy poodle. Wade laughed as Peter devoured it.

‘Not that hungry’ his ass.

He got through half the bag before slowing to a stop. Wade’s eyebrows scrunched in the darkness as Peter pushed the half empty bag toward him. Wrapping his arms around his stomach. That’s a quarter less than last time. Peter needed to get this shit under control, before his stomach ate itself. Peter had some control over it. He knew that he shouldn’t overeat and fill himself up all the way to not make him sick. Eat small and in multiple portions. But Peter’s eating schedule always was flying out of whack (and he needed a set schedule to actually gain any weight that meant something). He knew how to control portions, just not how much he could eat or when he could eat it. He just always had to assume that he’d be getting his next meal when he needed it, and sometimes that meant denying meals (which sucked painfully for him because he knew logically that he never would know when his next meal would come).

Wade had looked it up for approximately 15 hours. No more would be spent worried about something he couldn’t control. Peter’s diet was everywhere and nowhere. He ate as much as he could whenever he felt it was safe to eat, and that was rarely ever actually handed to him. It was always like that, and probably always will be. Even if he did get to a good place with good people, he’d still have to deal with this problem. It was easier for Peter just not to care about it.

“Thanks.” He mumbled and didn’t let go of his middle. Did it hurt that much? Peter probably thought he couldn’t see him gripping his stomach in a deathlock. Or he probably didn’t care. After all Wade’s seen Parker puke his guts out after eating a few fries after not eating for three days (but that was probably the longest he’s ever gone with absolutely no food). Sometimes Peter just wasn’t hungry, even if he hadn’t eaten in a while.

“You need TUMS or something?” Peter shook his head and leaned back in his chair. He looked exhausted, and Wade guessed that eating after not eating must be a shock to his very fragile system, so Wade guesses he’d just wait to see if the kid would puke or let it digest. He wasn’t really sure
what he wanted to happen.

“There were kittens.” Peter informed and it made Wadr lean in. Chances are Peter wouldn’t tell me what they were doing outright. But Wade has become somewhat fluent (after nearly 10 years now) in the language of Peter Parker (this is why he considers himself bilingual). “By the docks, where junkies hang out. You know the part by Warehouse 103.” Peter said almost wistfully, he let Wade decipher it, looking at him casually but not piercingly. Wade could forget he was even there if he tried.

So basically: these motherfuckers were a group of drug traffickers, selling some sort of cocaine through a couple of old war vets who couldn’t put their life back together after they came back. They weren’t selling directly, so Peter must have found the source by observing these guys for a while. Also light—probably unintentional but still fucking unacceptable—animal abuse.

So...not that bad.

God, did special forces help them out a lot with this kind of stuff (at first he thought it was a curse to always be on the lookout and watching his back and it eventually lead to him being a mercenary, but now he was thankful for it. He was one of the lucky ones who sorta found their feet. He didn’t judge anyone who served though, but he did bust them if he needed to. Same with Parker and Red and basically every other vigilante in New York. It’s what separates them from the NYPD. Separates them from every official ‘superhero’ organization actually. They were willing to get their hands dirty when they needed to). When they had come back, they were young, Peter shouldn’t even have been able to register for a fucking drivers permit yet, but he still knew how to beat everyone in the division on a motorcycle. Hell, Pete was still too young for a driver's license. When they came back they were turned into freaks - Wade more so because he looked like an actual freak, Peter just looked like a kid (he is a kid). Freaks who couldn’t sleep at night with all the noise, in Peter’s case. Freaks who just wanted some cash, in Wade’s case. They were approached by different organizations that wanted them to join a war again (a war that was ten times worse than the one they had fought in. And they couldn’t do it anymore. Wade because he lost everything and finally found a place, and Peter because he was a kid and he finally started to act like one and understand what that actually meant) but this time they would be surrounded by even more freaks who just didn’t get it. They Wanted them to fight with a team, on their terms. Wade and Peter were sick of it, so they did what they did on their own terms. And it felt a hell of a lot better.

So suffice to say, despite being forced together all the time, they kind of sort of depended on each other at this point. They understood each other while keeping a respectful distance. But they were strangely always there for each other.

So Wade could easily call Peter’s Bullshit.
“Wanna speak the truth?” He didn’t know how to segue into the conversation any other way. He never did. Peter understood that, he's been with him long enough to know it too. It he left the question open ended, like Peter liked it. Peter could tell him what was wrong or what was wrong or just ignore the problem entirely. That third option was popular and Wade’s favorite. But Peter knew that Wade wouldn’t give him bullshit answers if he did want to talk about his problems, Wade would just tell him what he thought about it without sugarcoating it. He never tried to make Peter feel better, and Peter appreciates that (and Wade appreciates that he appreciates that because he didn’t quite know how to make anyone feel better).

It took a while for Peter to talk, it always did when he wanted to (he very rarely wanted to, so this must’ve been eating at him for a while). He was trying to put his ideas into words that made sense. His thoughts were jumbled too, even if he was a genius he still couldn’t quite emote correctly. It was hard for him to convey things sometimes, because his mind was working in a different level than everyone else. It sometimes made people way stupider than him (ie One Wade Wilson) way more frustrating to talk to. It was part of the reason Peter didn’t talk much around strangers. Because they probably wouldn’t understand him anyway. And when he didn’t understand something, he could always learn about it. He hated not knowing things, and he rarely never knew something. What he could never learn through any book though, was his own emotions. It’s why he hated them. He could know about other people’s emotions by the way the acted and stuff they did, but he just couldn’t get a handle on himself. And that frustrated the boy to no end.

“How do you know..someone is your family?” Wade should know by now Peter is anything but predictable. He’s fought everything from a pedophile to a lizard (which were the same things in his opinion). He used windows to get into places instead of doors and bled out on Wade’s floor more often than not. But this? This was unexpected. Even from Peter Parker (actually given the context, especially from Peter Parker). Peter never cared about his family before, it was just as much as an f-word to him as it was to Wade before Ness and even now after Ness. Peter never had a break from it being a no no topic, but then again he just didnt care about it. Or at least it seemed like he never cared before. The way Peter wasn’t looking at him, staring at the spot on the table ( The spot that was on every table for Peter to stare at when he didn’t want to look anyone in the eye.) said that he maybe probably did care about it–maybe. Wade looked a little concerned now because Peter has stopped doing that when he talked to him a while ago and it made Wade feel special. Now he was back at square one like everyone else. How boring.

“Biologically or like ‘f word’ family.” Wade asked for clearance, Peter looked up at him with desperate pleading eyes (and he never had looked at Wade like that before). And Wade has a realization that slapped him clear across the face. The cuddling, the closeness, the slight trust (because Peter would never trust anyone completely). His compliance to Wade when he was younger, and his tolerance to real time Wade’s bullshit. Peter was trying to build a family. He has been for years, building in the empty hole in his heart that was forever incomplete with the complete wrong materials. And it didn’t just stop at Wade. His closeness with Matt during movie nights, how he always got mad worried when either of them got captured and made them do synthesis essays about rats to make it up to him, his tolerance to Weasels highly sexual jokes that Wade knew Peter hated, helping Cable with his tech, Sitting through Foggy’s boring court case analysis, helping Karen with her odd ghost hunt hobby and finding leads and allowing Domino to
stuff his gut full of ice cream even if it made him sick. Wade didn’t think he was doing it consciously, he was trying to find acceptance and comfort in a family.

And that, that right there, was heartbreaking.

“Both?” Peter asked hopefully, voice cracking slightly and Wade couldn’t see it in the dark but he thinks Peter is holding back tears. The kid never cried (like he didn’t even cry when his intestines were spilling out of his side when he got too close to a bomb when he was nine) so Wade was certainly and rightfully panicking. Wade waited because Peter had to give him a bit more than that and he did have more to say but he had to collect himself a little first. “I see...Harley with his... , you know, sometimes and...I feel something weird.” He took one hand that wasn’t wrapped around his stomach and rubbed it on his chest where his heart was

“Harley Keener? Stark’s PR stunt?” Peter shook his head.

“That’s what I thought too. But I can tell Stark really cares about him and he cares about Stark.” Peter mumbled. “I think he’s upset with me.” Peter sifted like he felt guilty. He probably didn’t show it to Stark and never would in a million years, but he felt bad about what he did. That kinda sucked and was one of the reasons why Peter didn’t need an adult in his life telling him what to do. He knew what he does wrong when he does it, sometimes he can’t control himself though. Doesn’t stop him from punishing himself when he does something bad (this time it was no sleep, barely any food, isolation and a whole lot of regret. His voices must’ve been having a field day.

“Cause you broke his dad’s arm. I’d be pretty pissed too.” Wade said with a raised brow. Peter looked at him in a deadpan.

“No you wouldn’t.” He said blandly and Wade hummed.

“No I would not.” He nodded his head wisely, as if approving that Peter did in fact know him very well. His father was a douchebag who deserved to rot. Wade would in fact pay Peter to break every bone in his body and torture him (because the kid had made that sort of thing into an art even if he didn’t like doing it). This got only a short half hearted smile from the child.

“I dunno, it kinda hurt when I saw them...the Avengers... acting... nice to other people...I never felt that way before. Not when I save kids and give em back to their families... but when I see Harley with his? I just...” Peter trailed off and shook his head. Wade was starting to understand and oh baby boy... he wanted to wrap Peter up in a hug, but he knew Peter wouldn’t want that. Or maybe he did? He obviously wanted some sort of comfort. Wade reminded himself that he came to Wade for Wade’s brand of comfort (which was highly not recommended to just about anyone with slight
PTSD especially so to this child. But here they were) “is that stupid?” Peter laughed bitterly (the kind of laugh that Wade hated coming out of Peter’s mouth). He scrunched his nose slightly.

“If that’s stupid than I’m a retard too. Get the same way after Ness died, when I saw X men as family. You’re just missing it.” Wade informed off handedly. He wasn’t going to tell Peter that his support throughout that entire fiasco and even after is maintaining his will to live. It’s kind of funny, Wade thinks, because they both thought of family as an f-word but somehow unknowingly found it in one another; in a fucked up way they were family (or at least a That was something Collossis would say).

“But I never had a family Wade.” Peter informed him. Oh this poor child wasn’t getting it was he? Maybe Peter was in denial about something. He wasn’t telling Wade everything, but Peter would never in his right mind tell Wade everything. He was a smart one.

“Then you want it kiddo” Wade looked up with a bit of pity that Peter hated. Peter stiffened as he could feel Wade’s feelings coming off of him. “sorry Pete” he meant it and Peter knew he meant it. Peter breathes in and breathed out. Arms shift back on his stomach and Wade thinks he’s gonna puke. He makes an uncomfortable noise and Wade knows their done with this conversation.

“We gotta watch season 7.” Peter mumbled still not looking at him but at the living area where the TV was, and Wade cracked a smile as he got up to start the Netflix. Peter could come slower because he was feeling sick and didn’t need to move fast right now. He grabbed the thickest blanket that Wade owned. Once they got settled, Peter burrowed in the blanket on one side of the couch (sometimes he gravitated over toward Wade and by the end of the night was tucked by his side) and chip bag in the table in case Peter wanted to try again, Peter mumbled something else. Something offhanded, like he just remembered. Wade could tell he was trying to casual when asking, but the question meant a lot to him.

“How do you know if they are biological?” He asked a bit sleepily. He must be tired if he forgot about modern technology. Peter practically revolutionized it, even if no one knew about that (they wouldn’t listen to him even if he did tell someone because he was still a kid. Peter has ranted many a times about it, Wade only understood parts of the age discrimination that Peter faced mask or no. He couldn’t do anything about it and It must've sucked .) Wade looked down at him. Not hesitating in his answer.

“Easy. DNA test.”

OoOoO
Peter reads books.

Like a lot of books.

Tony never really noticed at first (but then again he never noticed a lot of things before. But now every detail about Parker mattered, because they knew absolutely nothing about the kid anymore). It just never caught his attention. Sure, he’d seen the kid tucked up with a book in his self designated corner on the quinjet after a mission or when he was waiting in for briefing or just moments when Peter had a few five minutes, but he never gave it much thought. The books were just another thing he carried in that ratty mysterious ancient black backpack.

Tony didn’t really take interest in Peter until recently - no one did - but now everyone had their own personal file on Parker (and there was a little unspoken competition - like always because competing was highly motivational to Avengers to get things done - of who could find out the most accurate information about Parker. He wasn’t too sure who was winning but he did know Parker didn’t make it even remotely easy), that was something in the profile he was building for the kid. He didn’t know where or when he got the books, probably at a library because he seemed to be broke constantly. His scrappy, starved look was the stem of that hypothesis, also the fact that he hinted and mentioned it offhandedly a lot. The little hinge he did, like eat mainly non perishables and how he renovated his suit and shoes and clothes instead of get new ones. The kid always wore ratty clothes and the same torn up shoes (when he actually wore shoes). He carried around an outdated cracked phone that was barely one step above a burner (maybe he should get the kid a new phone because his looked like it would disintegrate at the slightest tap). He always looked like he could use a few extra meals (now he realized it was due to neglect and kicked himself for not noticing sooner. Tony has been neglected by his own parents, but he always had food and sleep accessible and available. He forgot the other type of neglect really messes not only with someone’s mental state but physical too. Add that to mutant/enhanced abilities? Result: basically a stick with super strength. It was strange to watch the kid fight now- because he looked like he’d break every one in his body if there was a breeze).

Peter was currently reading in the second isle - where he had migrated after their first little heart to heart (which Tony think is the only reason he’s winning is that and the information Harley told him. It was kinda sad that Peter had to give up any other friend because he had a panic attack and now was public ally considered a high level threat. He’d have trouble pulling himself out of that PR mess and unlike Tony he didn’t have a Pepper to come save him. But the kid never really cared about his reputation anyway. Must be nice). Tony heard more than saw Peter get up to do something, probably go to the bathroom he had been sipping on his water for three hours now and they were two hours to landing. Tony looked back for a second before turning the plane to autopilot and going over to the bag and the open book that was laying spine up that the kid left on the floor. He was obviously coming back to continue.

Even though Tony came to snoop the bag, his eyes landed on the book. It was a thick book that had the words Cambridge Mechanics level 10 on it. Tony recognized the book because it was the one that he was most thinking about while making the Arc Reactor in a cave. He had pulled ideas from
the book and techniques. He remembered staying up late nights reading it in his last year of College.

He picked up the book and leafed through it, finding many hastily scrawled sticky notes (colors of which were various degrees of obnoxious) with ideas, thoughts, half baked blueprints, formulas and even suggestions. Tony had never seen Peters handwriting, but he knew this was his. It somehow suited him. Messy and slanted and light, like his and Bruce’s and Harley’s; like nearly every scientist/engineer he knew. Tony never pegged the kid to be a science whiz (before that day, he knew he was smart but this? This wasn’t just smarts. It was thinking on a whole new level.) but it didn’t seem entirely out of place now that he was thinking about it. Peter has always had this distinct nerdy look to him, and Tony never found that off putting. It suited him, quite well in fact.

*Kid genius, huh.*

Tony glanced over the few notes and was impressed. The ideas and notes were combining not just mechanics and code together, but also biology, physics and even chemistry. The kid had a lot of good ideas and seemed to have a lot of interesting methods to make them work (some maybe more efficient than the method Tony would think of using). He’s never think to use thermal energy the way like this one formula was suggesting. It was incredible. The kid knew how to think outside the box- so far outside that he didn’t even know there was a box apparently.

“Reminiscing?” Tony jumped at the the voice of the kid behind him (the one who was currently in ownership of the book and notes) and looked up like he was caught with a hand in the cookie jar, the kid laughed at the face. He hadn’t noticed before, but this laugh that Parker was doing now was nice. It threw him off guard of how carefree it was. He found himself wanting to hear it again when it stopped just to be sure Parker was really capable of such an innocent noise (he should be though, says the dark part of his mind. He knows Parker should be as carefree and innocent as every other kid on the planet) “Kidding.” He said lightly when Tony didn’t react in any way other than slight shock. He shifted a little awkwardly “But I would like my book back.” He asked, Peet was never loud but when he got quiet like this it was usually when he was making a request - almost as if he was shy to ask, or afraid (he probably was, he’s been denied a lot in his short life). Tony handed over silently, not hesitating in attempting quelling Peter’s -very rational but also equally just as heartbreaking- fear of rejection. It was a small gesture that made Peter relax when the book was back in his possession and he hugged it slightly to his chest, trying to appear casual and somewhat not failing but not quite succeeding either.

Suddenly, Tony felt like he violated something personal (which he did all the time, but this time seemed to be toeing a line he would rather not cross again. In fact he wanted to get as far away from that line as possible because what was on the other side would most certainly destroy him painfully). An inventors notes were always very personal. They were the soul of them. It was their dreams and desires and wishes scrawled into the makings of their children (a bit over dramatic, but Tony was, if anything, the king of over dramatic) Tony was just waiting for the shoe to drop and for Parker to tell him to go, or even the dark aura to come back ( he really wasn’t sure where some parts of the lines were. Anything could set the kid off).
But Peter just moves past him (and Tony sees that there is a light dusting of pink on his cheeks which is oddly adorable. He’s never seen Peter as anything other than a kid that worked with him sometimes and got on his nerves.) and sat down under the window again without saying anything to him. Looking down at his book but Tony could tell he wasn’t reading it as he just stared at the random page he flipped to blankly. Tony took it as his turn to speak.

“Never thought of using thermal like that. You build?” Tony said airily. He didn’t comment on how Peters cheeks dusted a little darker -but he really wanted to because he looked more like a kid now than he’s ever looked (a shy humble kid who just wanted to learn and create things. Innocent eyes looking at the world like it hadn’t wronged him so many time. It was a facade Peter never put up and Tony knew that Peter never once believed the world to be fair. It was honestly sad) - and he clutched the book a little tighter around the edges, not reading it but not looking up to address the billionaire.

“When I have to.” He answered, trying to keep the same tone he had earlier (the one that was still like a kid but more professional, more mature but not quite there) but it was slightly off this time. It took Tony a minute to realize: Peter was embarrassed. And for the life of him, Tony couldn’t fathom how the kid thought he needed to hide this time. The Kid was smart as fuck. He shouldn’t lock it up in that big brain of his. The discoveries he was making could revolutionize the world. Peter could help people by using his head and not his fists. Kid always was the pacifist type (and now that Tony thought about it, Peter never complained when they told him to only engage when necessary. He was content with clearing civilians. He never punched more than he had to. He never over did it. How had they not noticed that before?). He crouched down to the kids level, he peeked up shyly to meet the man’s state with wide doe eyes.

“When would you need to use aerodynamics like that though?” Tony asked tapping the book. Trying to keep the conversation going, coax Peter out his shell because he knew the kid could do it. He knew the kid can talk about this nonstop, just like he did with criminals when he was fighting them. Tony could see that the kid was fighting it back. Peter didn’t want to answer but seemed to give in anyways.

“When I have to stop a missile.” Peter mumbled biting his lip gently to suppress talk anymore than he had to, Tony looked at him oddly, obviously not satisfied with that answer, and Peter snapped a little nervously. Blush taking a little more effect “What? You think I just shot my webs any which way and hope for the best?” Fair enough, but still impressive. He tried to make a smile snarky, didn’t come out the way he wanted. “It’s kind of instinct, less calculation now, but it’s not that advance-“ Tony furrowed his brows.

“Why do you do that?” Tony cut him off. Peter looked a little confused, but mostly affronted. He shouldn’t be, Tony was calling him out for downgrading his own accomplishments and intelligence and he wouldn’t be Tony Stark if he didn’t put a stop to that shit immediately - especially with a mind like Peter’s.
“What do you-“ Tony didn’t let him finish his sentence that time either. Peter wasn’t dumb, he knew exactly what Tony meant. Tony could see it on the kids face, and he was trying to deflect. Tony genuinely wanted to know why Peter put himself down like that- this wouldn’t be the first time he did so after all, in fact he did it more often than not and that was more than a little concerning.

“You know what I mean.” Tony said, maybe a little harsher than he intended, but Peter didn’t even flinch as he looked down with something akin to shame. It only made Tony more confused. “Why do you pretend you’re not smart? Why did you tell Harley that you dropped out of school? Why do you let people believe you’re stupid?” Tony plowed and Peter shrunk with every accusation, trying to bury himself in his book. Tony tapped the book harder to get his attention. Peter snapped up at Tony’s sharp voice with wide eyes, that didn’t look terrified yet but surprised and a bit wary. “You’re obviously not.”

“I didn’t tell Harley I dropped out...” he whispered, as if he can salvage this situation. He wasn’t trying to make an excuse (if there was one thing Tony has always admired about the kid, it was his ability to own up to his mistakes. He never made excuses he just gave explanations and graciously took his consequence. Tony respected people like that) ”and people just assume shit about me all the time. I don’t hide that I can do basic math.” Tony only realized now that he torn down a layer of Peters impenetrable wall. A wall that wasn’t meant to be torn down. A wall that Tony wasn’t sure if he wanted to explore or leave be while Peter quickly rebuilt it. He was trying to get to know the kid, so he might as well keep mining.

“You let him believe that though.” He told him in a normal business voice. Peter looked confused now, looking at him, trying to read his face. Tony didn’t try to hide anything, but Peter still seemed to not find what he was looking for. That seemed to frustrate him a bit. Tony smirked at that (what? It’s not everyday you get to see the Amazing Spiderman a bit upset. He was always painfully happy).

“I’m sorry...” he said slowly, carefully. Like he was walking on glass. Tony realized that Peter didn’t know how to respond to this. No one's ever asked him this question? Of course not, idiot. No one cared about him until a week ago. Tony suddenly felt a bit of guilt leak into his heart. He spent a year with Peter and the kid didn’t just become a STEM genius overnight. He’s always been into this and he and Tony and maybe even Bruce could’ve bonded and shit and he could see that someone actually fucking cared about Peter Parker and just Peter Parker for once in his young tragic life. If only Tony had seen past the snark and the disobedience and the youth. If only he just looked at the kid like a he was a kid. They wouldn’t be in this situation if he just pushed down his pride for two seconds to actually check up on this child.

“Why would you be?” Tony asked with a shrug like he wasn’t kicking himself over and over again in his mind, letting a teasing tone take his voice. “Isn’t that kind of your thing? Messing with people.” Tony meant for it to be a joke, Peter seemed to pick up on it but didn’t smile. Instead he
shrunk into himself as if he’d hit a bit too close to home right now. Hunched his shoulders and fiddled with his fingers.

“Not all the time...” Peter tried to defend quietly. He didn’t really seem like he believed himself and Tony wanted to so desperately take the quip back. Jackass, you’re trying to get this kid to like you.

“Yes all the time. You messed with the Avengers, and criminals. You really don’t discriminate do you.” Tony kept saying, and he didn’t know if he was quite in control of his mouth anymore. Peter didn’t respond right away an unreadable expression mixing with a tiny of shame, nor did he look Stark in the eye. Peter didn’t say anything for a second longer than what was considered comfortable.

“I...I don’t like discriminating “ Peter mumbled like he was unsure of what else to say. He looked really uncomfortable in this conversation. He fidgeted a little eyes only flitting up to find an escape before going back down when he caught even a sliver of Tony’s glance.

“Yeah,” Tony laughed, trying to ease the tension he had created. “that’s good trait to have.” He smiled gently and Peter rounded on him, in a way he didn’t expect. It was probably all the confusion of the accusation going to praise, but Tony could tell it was a little more than that.

“What are you playing at Stark?” He asked suspiciously, eyes narrowing in an accusing way. Tony looked at him seriously a moment, but didn’t move to answer as Peter elaborated and asked what he really wanted to know “why aren’t you yelling?”

“Why would I yell?” Tony asked leaning back letting Peter work through whatever he needed to. Peter just groaned like this was exhausting. Like Stark was doing this on purpose. Making him pick out everything even if it was supposed to be obvious. For the life of him he could not figure it out though. There was no context for this behavior but Stark knew that with Peter things aren’t as they seem.

“I let your kid believe something that wasn’t true. Why aren’t you angry?” He asked, looking sheepish and not looking him in the eyes now. Anger and frustration gone, a bit of regret and shame taking over his eyes as he shrunk back to try to hide it.

“That’s a stupid thing to be mad about.” Tony said a bit incredulous. It was Harley’s own fault for assuming things and it was the Avengers fault for not asking the right questions (or any questions at all) and just jumping to conclusions about the child. They all had thought that a kids life and mind couldn’t be as complex as it was, but half of them have had complex childhoods so it was
stupid that they hadn’t seen this coming.

It’s just Parker acts different from how they did. He didn’t lash out like Thor, or make rebellious decisions like Tony. He didn’t close himself off like Bruce or didn’t show any emotion like Natasha. He laughed and joked and covered up the problem with humor. He didn’t say what was wrong and he distracted himself through messing with people innocently. Made people hate him so they didn’t have the incentive to get close to him. It was how he coped, and it was a terrible mechanism and was bound to backfire.

“I know.” Peter emphasized, like he was exasperated. Like it was a stupid problem that he had to deal with. Like you know, an actual western teenager and not some emotionless drone. “It’s just...” Peter fiddled with the hem of his hoodie, not looking up and voice small. He was nervous, Tony finally realized. he acted like he didn’t know what he was doing or how to do it. It was out of place on the kid, cause god dammit Ned was right: Peter does know how to handle everything except his own emotions. Tony was now getting a first hand account of that. “People get mad at me for stupid things all the time...” he confesses. Tony didn’t know how to respond to that. It’s like his brain temporarily short circuited and he said something he’d regret.

“Is that why you don’t listen? Cause you think everything we are yelling at you about is stupid?” Tony asked, a little accusingly. Peter flinched back and Tony wanted to take it back. He could see Peter get more tense at his rising tone. Trying to swallow his fear and regret pooping in his young eyes. Tony was making him regret opening up, and he was shutting down again. He needed to fix this, it wasn’t healthy for a kid like Peter to bottle everything up. He clearly had no one to talk to. Tony settled it down a little, Peter side eyed the ground.

“It’s not stupid...” Peter mumbled closing himself off. Head down, quiet voice, not looking up, making himself small, clenched fists, jaw tight, back wired. Tony somehow recognized these signs. It was Peter gearing up to get yelled at. Tony stiffened. He wasn’t gonna yell at him, but at this point it was Peter’s default to defend against being attacked - verbally, physically or even mentally. It made Tony’s heart construct a little.

“Peter, I’m not gonna yell at you.” He said as gently as he could and that seemed to take Peter by surprise. He still didn’t unwind from his defensive position- didn’t even loosen, but he did seem more eager to listen. He didn’t say anything so Tony continued, hoping he was making progress. “Why would I yell at you? I’m the one who snooped through your stuff. You don’t owe me an explanation because I’m guessing you’ve been doing this a while. I didn’t expect to talk to you when I came here.” He informed the situation and it seemed to work because Peter visibly relaxed a little. Tony coined it as a win. There was a weird not so awkward but not entirely comfortable silence before Tony talked again, in the same calm voice but a little lower. “Why do you expect people to yell at you?”

“Is this twenty questions?” Peter asked watery tone betraying him. He was Trying to be snarky, it
didn’t work at all. The kid was terrified. Stark was unwavered. Peter seemed to notice and continued, trying to ignore his watery tone which he seemed to gained a bit more control over. “People get mad when a lot of little annoying things build up they just need to...let it out...they take it out on the easiest target...” Peter said quietly, almost afraid to speak. Tony got what he was trying to say. And Tony thinks Peer is trying to understand what he’s trying to do. It was justification for the world using Peter as a punching bag. It was his reasons for never standing up for himself. People needed to let off steam sometimes, and Peter was willing to be the one who took the heat. That thought made Tony’s heart clench a little harder than he would’ve liked. How many times has he used Peter as his own verbal punching bag? It made him feel awful.

“Why don’t you just not make yourself a target? It would be pretty easy for you.” It would be He was Spider-Man after all. He could easily stand up for himself. He didn’t have to take the short stick every time. Peter shrugged.

“I’m used to it.” He answered maintain casual tone somehow. “I don’t like seeing other people getting other people’s crap for no reason. It’s easier for me to take than to dish or watch it.” Peter smiles bitterly “I just can’t stop getting involved.” He grumbled. This has always happened to him, even when he was a kid. Tony could tell, Peter didn’t need to say it. He’d been the punching bag since even before he became Spider-Man, and he was so young that he was used to it. And it somehow made sense.

This kid.

He was taking the heat for people who didn’t and did deserve it. He didn’t take shit from anyone, but would take a two hour lecture to not waste anyone else’s time. Make other people feel justified in being mad, because it was easier to have a scapegoat. Like his reputation and time didn’t matter. Like he didn’t matter. Like he could shoulder all those burdens. He could go on and be worthless and take all this crap because it didn’t matter anyway. Because he’s heard it all before, and sometimes the Avengers didn’t even mean what they said, but how many times has Peter heard that? How many times has he been told he was a no good screw up? It didn’t matter if he didn’t believe it at the time, as time slowly built up and people say it more and more to him without anyone really stepping in and denying the claims, Peter really must think he is a no good reckless screw up worth no one’s time or effort.

Something finally sank in for Tony. Peter was rash and reckless because he had to carry all these burdens. He didn’t just feel like he did, he didn’t have a choice. Cause no one was gonna pick up his slack, but he had to pick up theirs. Cause they tossed their shit on him and he couldn’t throw it back. He was expected to take it with no conditions or favors or anything in return. He expected himself to take it with no expectations. No one had ever helped him with these things, and as far as he could see no one ever would. He’s always done this alone. He was so used to the weight of everyone’s shit that he didn’t know what it was like to go on without it. He didn’t complain because this was what he was used to.
This was his life, it always has been and always will be.

And he’s accepted that.

He wasn’t used to people noticing him enough to care. He wasn’t used to people smiling at him and thanking him for what he’d done. He wasn’t used to having a nice conversation that wasn’t about complaining or whiny or insulting him. He wasn’t used to people noticing when he felt bad or sad or was dealing with a problem. He wasn’t used to people asking him about things he liked and about his interests and plans for the future. He wasn’t used to having people being nice to him.

He was used to being yelled at. Being kicked down and trying to build himself back up on his own while everything else threw around the pieces. People degradin, insulting and criticizing his every move. People telling him he was worthless and unimportant. People spitting on his shoes and walking away. People letting him take the fall for them with so much as a glance back (because they thought he deserved it and Tony thinks Peter might think the same, even if he doesn’t). He was used to being alone.

Tony felt dread sink in his stomach.

He is just a kid.

He put an awkward hand on Peters shoulder and felt the boy stiffen up. He didn’t know what to say. He was emotionally constipated. He could barely understand Harley’s normal teenage problems, much less a super powered mutant teenager who had the whole world set against him since the day he was born and somehow managed to keep going without any for of therapy.

But one thing for sure: this was going to change. He couldn’t let Peter feel like this anymore. Peter was a pain in his ass but no one (especially Peter Parker) deserves to feel this...degraded. Ostracized? Outcasted? Worthless? Insignificant? Any of those words. And anything else he might feel. No one deserves to take on every problem alone. Peter was a good kid and he deserved to know that he was worth someone caring for him. And if no one else was going to do that, then Tony had to take a stand.

“Well don’t go it alone at least.” tony said lightly, he really wasn’t thinking this through. He was creating the plan on the spot. Actually he didn’t think about it at all. He didn’t know how to do this, but there weren’t particularly any books or articles on how to deal with this kind of thing.
“What’s that supposed to mean?” Peter asked cautiously, narrowing his eyes again, and Tony tapped the book, because he had no idea what was going to come out of his mouth next.

“What for me and Bruce in the lab.” He said casually, this was probably a bad idea, but it might just be a good idea. Kid was a genius and he needed to flex his brain muscles. He obviously loved science and tech. He needed to use those more often, it would maybe make him feel better. Like he wasn’t just some secret weapon for the Avengers to pull out for man power.

“I can’t do that.” Peter said easily. There was something behind his eyes that looked a little pained. Like he wanted this but he couldn’t have it and he knew he couldn’t have it. Some messed up reason in his mind told him that he couldn’t afford it for some reason. He couldn’t risk what he had to get this, even if he so desperately wanted it. Longed for it even.

“Sure you can. It’s not like you have anything better to do.” Tony said easily. Peter looked down a little ashamed, like he wanted to fight back. He probably did have something else to do, Spiderman was always busy. The kid needed a break. And Tony could tell he wasted the restless type. Like Tony himself. “Plus, you are smart, graduated high school, especially at Midtown, on a full scholarship, isn’t easy. So you qualify.” He tried to persuade, maybe stating the kid’s credentials will help. Praising him will help.

“You don’t need me in the lab, you’ve got Harley.” Peter reasoned in an emotionless tone. He was trying to keep his emotions in check. Trying to keep his mind straight and not accept the offer to work in every need candy land.

“I need another lab assistant during the school day.” Tony said with a sly grin and Peter finally squirmed. He looked like he really wanted this now and was trying to think of a justification for him not to have it.

“You aren’t thinking this through, I’m not like a harley at all.” Peter said quickly. Tony scoffed cause he knew that. But he was thinking Bruce would also like a mini lab assistant during the day. It could keep science at an all time high and they’d have a third opinion on projects that could be more classified with Parker.

“Yeah obviously, but like come on, what else do you have to do?” Tony asked again. Peter squirmed, battling something inside him, he was losing Tony could tell. He just needed a little more of a push.

“You won’t like me. I’m...not right in the head.” Peter said finally. God the kid was terrible at interviews. He wouldn’t be able to hold a job if he kept downgrading himself. Tony’s response was
waving him off before saying:

“Kid, none of us are.” Peter groaned at Tony’s witty remark. That probably wasn’t the best way for Parker to convince him. But it said something though: Peter would defiantly bring a new perspective to the lab. When he joined because Tony is pretty sure he convinced him.

“What are the hours?” Tony silently cheered in winning the battle of wills with Peter Parker. It wasn’t that hard, mostly because he knew Parker wanted to do this too. “Don’t get excited yet, if it conflicts with what I need to do I’m not taking it.” He glared with a cute pout (Tony has accepted that the kid was fucking adorable when he was trying to be mad but not really. It was like looking at an angry puppy.)

“Every week day from 7-3. Holidays excluded and when Harley’s off. We’ll figure out summer break later.” Tony said with a wave of his hand. Ignoring the future problem and saving it for the time period of designated panic. “so how bout it kid? Working with two geniuses and full access to the lab of a lifetime and all the Avengers play things?” He said insentivly and Peter shut his eyes. Trying to find any reason to decline.

“Fine.” Peter finally grumbled. There was a small smile quirking at his lips and he ducked his head so Tony couldn’t see but he did. Tony decided he liked that smile on Parker, it made him smile too.

He was so going to regret this.

OoOoO

“I’m an idiot!”

Peter was currently laying down on the ancient rotating AC of Matt’s office in Hell’s Kitchen. It was the ends of Winter and well into Spring and it looked like it had started to open up its hot days in preparation for Summer. Matt had an old AC system that just blew out lukewarm air that was just barley colder than the sweltering heat waves. He was in a T shirt and shorts (which he didn’t often wear because of the scars on his arms and legs. He never wore them in public, because even his amount of whip marks, bruises, wounds, scars and slices were a bit odd in New York. Also his wrists and legs were spindly thin and it looked like he was anorexic, wearing long sleeves his that and no one asked questions or looked at him weird. But Matt was blind so it didn’t matter and he had a light jacket tied around his waist in case he needed to put it on if anyone came in) and he didn’t know how Matt was surviving in that suit. Black things absorbs heat.
It wasn’t odd to find Peter in Matt Murdock’s office at Murdock, Nelson and Page. The firm’s office was like one of Peter’s semi safe places (because there were no truly safe places for Peter to just be Peter). Usually he’d bug Matt when he had nothing else to do during the day because all of his jobs started when the sunset and sometimes he just needed a break from being daytime Spidey. (Nighttime Spidey was different on so many levels. In the daylight he got kittens out of trees and helped old women cross the street, but when innocent incidents like that happened it was only in the daytime. Nighttime was when the real trouble happened, and he couldn’t be as friendly as he would’ve liked.)

Matt let him chill in his office, rambling about meaningless things. Peter never needed an invite or anything and he could leave through the always open window (at least when someone was in the office. They always left it open for him and he was touched when he realized that) whenever he wanted. He tinkered on things here quietly too. Fixing a drone, attaching circuit boards. Matt never minded as long as he cleaned up. Sometimes if he was still around at Lunchtime, Karen or Foggy would come in and drag them out of their work space.

Peter also sometimes stole old case files for anything he was working on. Matt trusted him enough to know that sometimes Spidey needed some information and Peter wouldn’t go digging into anyone’s personal life for no reason. So Peter had free range of his concrete database that he couldn’t get anywhere else. Sometimes Karen even helped him with a case or job he was trying to solve and he was grateful to her for it.

“You finally got a job.” Matt said dully and Peter groaned and pressed his hands into his eyes. Right now he was currently moaning and thinking about Stark’s job offer. He just couldn’t figure out why Stark would want him in the office with him every weekday from 7-3. At first he thought it would initially be an excuse to keep more of an eye on him, but there were a lot of things that don’t involve personal lives mingling to do that. Then he thought that Stark was trying to cover something up, but that didn’t make any sense either. Peter had never seen suspicious activity being down by Stark Industries and he had tried to find anything that maybe shady. But Stark, for the most part, was clean. He’s guessing Pepper Potts as CEO is making it a no tolerance company, and she even had a no tolerance policy in their relationship because Stark looked marginally healthier over the year.

“Yeah, with Stark as his and Banner’s personal lab assistant during the day when their interns are getting a proper shitty education.” Peter whined and flopped onto the floor in front of the revolving AC. Then dread sank into his stomach. It was irrational because Stark and Banner were literally superheroes but what if… he did say to Stark that everyone needed to blow off some steam… what if they-

“Are you getting paid?” Matt asked cutting off Peter’s dark thoughts and Peter groaned and shook his head, even though Matt couldn’t see it he could feel it. Matt was weird like that, he had senses better than Peter - we’ll not visual sight, Peter had a one up on him in colours.
“It’s punishment for going ghost on SHIELD for a few months. Stark somehow made that happen.” He said with a grumble in his tone. That was the official way to say it. He wouldn’t get paid and it was the only way to make this work out with the government since he technically wasn’t an Avenger or an associate with Stark Industries or affiliated with Tony Stark personally in anyway. It was on the DL and that’s the way he liked it. He didn’t need his face plastered all over Stark Industries.

“I don’t see why you are complaining.” Matt said and Peter rolled his eyes at his own joke. Matt was smirking. That little shit, Peter was in a real life crisis here. But Matt has a point: he didn’t know why he was complaining about the job when he just had suspicions about why he had that job now.

“It takes all the fun out of it when you do it.” Peter grumbled and Matt laughed a little at that. Wade and Peter made aight jokes all the time, but that’s because they know Matt knows their assholes. Peter would never make a blind joke to anyone but Blind Al or Matt - but mostly Matt (Peter kinda likes Blind Al, she gave good advice(maybe he should have gone to her). He wasn’t so sure about Wade. While Peter generally didn’t give a shit, Wade never ever have a shit and Matt was like a mix between the two- it’s hard to gauge him.

“No but really. You’ve always wanted to work in a cool lab making inventions and discoveries that help people.” Matt pointed out and Peter huffed. When he was younger and went to school for all of a week, it’s all he ever wanted to do. Build things to help people. Help people without fighting. It was a fantasy to him, it always was and always will be. He’s always known that. It was still nice to dream about it, because those thoughts had made him happy when he was a kid; it gave him some hope that if he worked hard enough he could get there. Now - that he’s graduated high school and still homeless and broke - it just served as a reminder as what he could never have. He was a child born into a war zone. He was born into the real world, where nothing was sugar coated and he didn’t get to be sheltered from the nastiness this planet had to offer. In fact, he was sheltered from good things at first. But then the two worlds mingled and no one had taught him how to navigate them. He wasn’t supposed to explore them as one world but he did. And it baffles him how kids could just laugh while someone got mugged on the alley two streets down. Maybe that’s why it was supposed to be separated.

“Yeah, when I was like a kid kid.” Peter said answering Matt. He dully looked up at the ceiling that was slowly rotating above him. Something close to nostalgia come over him. “I always knew it was never gonna happen for me.” He shook his head. Innocent thoughts belonged in the past. When he was confused and somewhat ignorant. He couldn’t afford to think like that. It would get him or someone else killed. He wouldn’t let that happen again. It’s why he became Spiderman.

“But it is .” Matt said not looking up from his work. And god dammit, Matt was right. It was happening. Finally happening. Good things were coming into his life and Peter didn’t know why. Good things happen to everybody else, they didn’t happen to Peter Parker. Not without a catch.
“Yeah, and it seems I dunno...fishy? You know?” Peter said almost guiltily, hunching his shoulders a little. He should be grateful, he shouldn’t look into this so much. What if this really was just a nice thing finally happening to him? His Spidey Sense wasn’t going off, but Peter still felt scared. “I mean things like this don’t come so easily. Not to me. And especially after what happened with Stark and the Avengers the last week and two months ago. It just...seems too good to be true.” Peter sighed and it was quiet until Matt spoke.

“You’re afraid it’s going to be taken away from you.” Matt said in a way that made him sound as though he’s staring a fact and not a question. How did he do that? He knew Peter too well, Peter needed to fix that.

“...well, yeah…” Peter mumbled more self consciously than he would have liked and Matt sighed and stopped typing.

“What Matt?” Peter shot up and glared at him. He knew Natt could feel the heat of the unheated glare. It was more of a defensive move, it meant that Peter was confused and frustrated and a whole bunch of other emotions that Peter didn’t know how to process and emotions that no one bothered to care about. Anyone else would yell at him for his tone. Matt was different - like how Wade is different and how Ness and Gwen were different and how MJ was kinda different too. Matt didn’t yell and waited for him to finish. “I know it’s going to be taken eventually.”

“Then why are you so afraid.” Good question. If he knew what to expect then why was he acting like this? Thinking like this? Was it because of when he thought back to the first time he could openly choose what happened to him and then nine months later become a puppet with no thoughts of his own. He had repeated that process for five years, and each time he did he broke a little more. It was so easy to take away his freedom back then, and it hurt when they did. Even if he expected it.

“I’m afraid because… I’m not a … I just don’t want to…” Peter trailed off. How was he supposed to explain that to Matt? He could explain it to Wade with no problems - mostly because Wade was there so he didn’t Have to explain it. The groaned and flopped onto the floor in front of the AC, and rolled over on his back. He was frustrated and he didn’t like feeling like this. He just wanted to understand. He had so many reasons but none of them seemed good enough. And the one that did seem good enough was also the one he couldn’t bring himself to believe.

“Find out how much you love it and then when it’s taken away from you, crave it?” Matt picked up for him and Peter nodded dumbly and fell back onto the floor. Matt got it, and that alleviated
some of the frustration. He’d forgotten Matt was an angry child after his dad died. He had been in the same predicament as Peter just not the same situations. He guesses if dimes one's life has been crap enough, they just get used to it and when something good happened they never knew how to respond.

Peter could feel that.

“How did you know that?” Not sounding surprised but his voice cracking a little. He knew how Matt knew. Matt was different like he and Wade were. Matt was a Vigilante and he had his own past but Peter has found one connection between all of them -weather it be Frank Castle or Luke Cage. They’ve all had shit lives, and they all expected even shitter futures. No matter what they’ve been through, they all mutually understood: they were doing this for a reason that they couldn’t explain. It’s not only the fact that they didn’t want to, they just didn’t know how. And somehow that made Peter feel a little better when he remembered that. He could go to anyone of them and they’d understand - even if they didn’t. (Not that he’d just go to anyone, but to be honest, despite all the killing, indifference, and scary looks, the vigilantes of NYC were probably the nicest people Peter’s ever met).

“I know you Pete. You’ve been like this since you were 13.” Matt said typing on his laptop again. Indifference. Familiarity. It made Peter’s mouth smile a little. “You have always been afraid of things that you want.” That was true. Because when he got it, they usually came at a cost he couldn’t afford. A risk he just couldn’t take. Spider-Man wasn’t reckless because he was not afraid, he was reckless because he was afraid.

“I really want this, Matt.” Peter whispered to the cracked ceiling. As if he was admitting a sin at confession (Matt once told Peter it helped him, but Peter wasn’t Christian and he respected Matt enough to not go to church just so he could get something off his chest. He didn’t say that, but Matt nodded at the refusal and thanked him and it was never brought up again).

“Then take it and enjoy it while it lasts. You don’t know for sure if you’re gonna make it to 18, Pete. Don’t wait.” Matt said and Peter scoffed. He wasn’t sure if anything, he stopped trying to predict things that would happen to him in his life. If you told him a year ago he’d end up on Dare Devils office floor trying to figure out to accept a Stark Industries job, he would have laughed. Hell if you told him a week ago he would’ve shrugged, but somehow it didn’t surprise him how he got here.

“Since when did you become my life counselor?” Peter said, sarcasms finally entering his voice. Pushing back his emotions because he just couldn’t deal with them anymore. He locked it in its box and shoved it to the back of his mind. Like he always does.

“Not a life counselor. A friend.” The emotions weren’t fully locked so Peter had accidentally let a
real smile slip and his heart swell a little in happiness. He decided to keep it for a little while
because he thinks he’ll need it later.

But Peter liked that thought.

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Tony had a bad idea.

Bruce doesn’t even need to know the idea to know if Tony was cooking up a bad one. He’d known
the guy for nearly nine years now, worked with him in his lab, they fought and ate together.
They’d been in life and death experiences together. Bruce saw Tony at his lowest and highest and
vis versa. They had formed the partnership Tony dubbed as the ‘Science Bros’ and Bruce didn’t
complain about it because as stupid as it was, he liked the name. He’d seen Tony go through his
PTSD and they helped each other. He supported Tony when he adopted Harley and helped him
raise the kid. In that time, Tony has made a lot of bad and stupid decisions - even if most of them
were with good intentions. The result ranged between small lab fires to nearly destroying the
world.

Bruce has supposedly seen it all.

So Bruce knew something was up when Tony kind of fidgeted when he came into the lab. Tony
always strutted in or walked in casually. Today he kind of just went to his part of the lab and Bruce
zeroed in on how he was gathering loose papers to stack them - trying to make his chaotic
workplace somewhat less chaotic.

Harley left for school 25 minutes ago, so he wasn’t gonna take a sick day to stay in the lab (he did
that sometimes when he had a bad day, and that was okay because everyone in the tower had bad
days). So Tony must be nervous about someone coming in, which he usually wasn’t. Lab only had
strict access, only Tony and Bruce could invite certain people to the lab that they both had to
mutually agree on being there. It was on of their lab rules.

“What did you do?” Bruce asked instantly narrowing his eyes and Tony leaned back in his chair.
Maybe there was a SHIELD lab inspection? Those happened more after aileron, but had died down
recently. Mostly because SHIELD couldn’t find anyone with ‘enough balls’ - as Tony so
eloquently put it - to actually inspect Iron Man and Hulk’s lab. They also didn’t know half of what
was going on in the lab either.
“I have done nothing deserving of that tone.” Tony said back casually, not turning to him. His wit was on point, so Bruce figures it’s nothing too bad. But still...

“But you did something.” Bruce said crossing his arms over his chest in effort to seem a bit more serious. Tony said he looked cute when he tried to be fake angry, but Bruce would beg to disagree. He agree that his serious gestures were much more authoritative though.

“Something.” Tony said vaguely and shrugged and turned his chair around to start on his project on the table behind him, not looking up “and also I hired a daytime assistant.” He said quickly and Bruce did a double take. Tony did not like people in his lab telling him what to do, and he hated people not being competent or fast enough to keep up with him. That’s why he liked the interns, because they were smart kids and could solve problems easily. But anyone else? Forget it.

“I’m sorry, you what?!” Bruce said almost floored entirely and Tony looked up at him with exasperated eyes.

“I don’t like repeating myself Banner.” Tony said and Bruce groaned. That’s exactly what he’s probably going to have to do with this new guy. And on such late notice, Bruce had no time to prepare.

“Tony you can’t just bring anyone into the lab.” Bruce insisted, a little hurt that Tony broke their mutual rule with something this big, and this was big. This guy would be here on a routine basis for hours at a time. Bruce didn’t know if he could handle that.

“We have assistants. They come every few days.” Tony said casually. Yeah they did. Assistants that were genius teenagers and not some random college student with just a bachelor’s degree in Physics.

“Those are interns Tony. Knowledgeable, smart interns. You know we work in classified things when Harley is at school. You need someone approved by SHIELD to—they did work on classified things, but that was the least of Bruce’s concerns right now.

“He is approved, but not by SHIELD, by me.” Tony said not turning back. Bruce groaned. “It’s my lab Banner. Those guys up in SHIELD don’t get to dictate what you or I thinks should be classified.” That was true. They were scientists and inventors. They shared their discoveries with the world. But there were something’s that the world just wasn’t meant to have. This Intern/assistant or whatever had to know how to keep a lid on it.
“What if this guy isn’t able to keep up with us? You’ll get frustrated and you’ll yell and kick him out and—” Bruce said again only to be cut off by Tony’s sharper tone.

“No yelling. Not when he’s around. And not at him, at least not in the lab.” Tony said seriously turning back to Bruce and looking him dead in the eyes. Bruce was taken a bit aback by it. Tony was serious and this wasn’t just a normal assistant. Bruce knew when to trust Tony and when not to. But for the life of him he wasn’t sure whether or not to trust him this time. It was almost as if Tony was a little unsure of this himself. “And I’d be more worried about not keeping up with him. So bring your A game Banner.” Tony said, getting back his nonchalonce. Bruce glared a little.

“Oh, I’ll bring my A game and then some.” Bruce muttered. This guy might be Starks little assistant, but he sure as hell wouldn’t be his. He’d drill the kid so hard that he wouldn’t even want to get near Banner (although he might not want to do that anyway with the Hulk and all).

“Good, cause I think he can help both of us.” Tony said and Bruce rolled his eyes. They’d see about that. The guy better be a fucking whiz at least if he was going to keep up with both Bruce Banner and Tony Stark.

“No. He’s your little tool Stark. I don’t need a day assistant.” Bruce said placatingly. Huffing and going back to where he was working.

“He’s not a tool.” Tony said with a scrunched up nose and a bit of disgust. Huh, these were not reactions he thought Tony would have over any guy. But something tells him this is not just any guy. “He’s a... consultant” Tony said shrugging his shoulders. Bruce snorted.

“How old is he?” Bruce asked leaning forward and Tony blew out a breath.

“Old enough to be in college apparently.” Tony mumbled and Bruce actually made an incredulous noise.

“He’s not even in College? Jeez Tony.” Bruce rubbed a hand down his face. He thought his friend was smart. What the fuck were they going to do with a high school graduate?

“He can’t afford college Bruce. And you know better than to judge someone based on money.” That was rich coming from him. Bruce snorted at that part, but he did know not to base judgment off of financial standing. “I mean look at Parker. Kid genius and Spider-Man and he still can’t afford a cup of ramen.” Bruce groaned again.
“Peter is completely different. Don’t even try to compare him to a normal guy.” Bruce said back. Tony gave him a wary look, it was almost sad. Bruce looked back indifferent as Tony softened his voice.

“Give him a chance Banner. He’ll surprise you.” Tony didn’t even sound unsure about that in the least. This guy would surprise him. Bruce groaned, he thinks he’s had enough of Tony’s surprises.

“Fine. But if I don’t like him, I don’t have to talk to him.” Bruce said crossing his arms again, but this time it made him feel like a child instead of serious.

“Fair.” Tony said lightly going back to his work as Bruce leaned against his lab table and sighed.

“What’s his name anyway?” Bruce raises a brow. Tony never got to answer as a soft knock drew away their attention.

“Uhm...Mr.Stark?” Came an unsure voice from the entrance. Bruce froze at the voice and both geniuses turned to the boy that was shifting in the doorway to their lab.

No fucking way.

Peter Parker, in all his 84.76 pounded (last he checked) glory, was standing in the glass doorway. His forever present black backpack that was more mismatch duck tape than fabric sling around his shoulder - due to a strap being cut. He was shifting in his equally duck taped converse that Bruce now knew the sad truth behind. His hoodie was too big for him and had the faded Canadian Army symbol on it (Bruce didn’t question it considering his financial standing Peter had to get what he could). His jeans were accidentally ripped and too big to be the skinny jeans they were meant to be. His hair was messy and eyes sunken as always, skin as pale as always. He looked terrible - but okay for him - but he didn’t smell bad. He actually smelt like raspberries and vanilla.

“I’m sorry. FRIDAY said that I should just come here…” Peter said a little shyly, not entering the lab. Not even trying to look at it. This was not a look that Bruce ever thought he’d see painted on the boy’s face. He was mostly wearing a mask around Bruce but when he did take it off he always seemed laid back and casual. Almost welcoming. The Peter in front of him was closed off and reserved. Ned was right, the kid was shy as fuck. Why was he acting that way to them though now? He had known them physically for nearly a year now - even if they knew nothing about him.
“No, that’s fine Pete. Come on in.” Tony said airily. Bruce breathes in and out through his nose. Peter was smart, he knew that. This might be Tony’s way of seeing just how smart he was. Tony was always curious and liked to solve problems in unconventional ways. And honestly, he wanted to see what made Fury so adamant on this guy being a genius too. He didn’t even call Tony a genius and rarely used it with Bruce himself. He said it so casually with Peter, as if it was just a fact.

Suddenly Bruce felt mildly out of his league. Peter Parker aka Spider Man aka the Bain of every Avengers existence was walking into a designated safe place for Bruce. He felt his space was being invaded. Peter must have noticed because he took a step out of the lab, head ducking further, the boy curling into himself self consciously. Bruce suddenly felt like an ass as Tony’s brows furrowed. Shame creeping up in the boys features. “Pete?” He asked and Bruce felt guilt surge in his features. The boy clearly felt his discomfort and was trying to make himself small. It was like he couldn’t bring himself to enter more than a step into the lab. Like there was glass keeping them apart.

He knew Peter was smart. Way smarter than he let on. He had different opinions about things sure and different ways he did things on the field but as Ned said, Bruce might like him when he wasn’t all battle mode. When he wasn’t going to fight something, he was shy and reserved and quiet and that somehow didn’t fit Peter Parker at all. Bruce felt shitty making him think he’s not good enough to be himself around some of the only people that would understand him. Always hiding behind another mask and never really showing who he was. It must be exhausting.

“Uhm, are you sure Mr.Stark. I mean...this is..” Peter trailed off quiet and shifted once more. Bruce didn’t know whether he wanted to send the kid off or drag him inside but he couldn’t stop watching. How long was he standing there anyway? Bruce hopes it wasn’t for too long.

“My lab, now come on. I’m not getting up to get you.” Tony said with an eye roll. In his usual Tony Stark way. It wouldn’t bother Spiderman Peer, but Peter Peter seemed overwhelmed by that. It was so strange to see Peter this nervous and unsure.

“It’s also Dr.Banners too…” Peter mumbled and Bruce felt oddly touched. No one (ie Tony) has thought about his feelings on this little arrangement. It made him want to keep Peter around. Maybe Ned was right. Maybe he would like Peter if he actually got a chance to know him outside the suit.

“What was that Pete?” Tony didn’t hear him. Peter was speaking too quietly. It occurred to Bruce just now that Peter had never been really loud in the first place. Just witty and sarcastic. Maybe this was a mask for Peter too. The other one focusing on his sarcasm and wit and this one being his reserved brilliance. Either way, they were both tentative versions of Peter Parker and Bruce found himself wanting to see the real deal. He somehow knew he’d have to earn that.
“Nothing...its just...Dr.Banner might not...” Peter spoke up. Dismissing his idea before his eyes moved to Bruce’s for only a second before going back down to the floor. He looked like he was going to throw up or pass out, poor kid.

“Bruce! How have you already corrupted the kid? You haven’t even said anything to him yet.” Bruce rolled his eyes at Tony’s dramatics. Peter seemed a little startled by that response and was immediately put on edge. He was so jumpy and anxious. How could this kid be Spiderman? He was a completely different person.

“It’s fine Peter. Come in.” He said shortly, trying to be gentle to coax him into the lab. This doesn’t mean that Bruce was not going to drill Parker. In fact, the fact that it was Parker made him want to test him more. He wanted to know just how smart the kid was.

“So...what do I do?” Peter asked in a mumble and Tony looked at Bruce before Peter. His job description was pretty vague. The meaning of assistant was to help out, so the question wasn’t all that out of place.

“Whatever we want you to do.” Tony said turning away and Peter flinched slightly and looked to the door for a brief second before lifting his eyes down again. Tony didn’t see but Bruce did and he furrowed his brows. Maybe Tony should have worded that better. “But Banner wants to drill that little brain of yours so you’ll be with him til lunch.” Tony waves them away already emerged in his project.

“Lunch...r-right...” Peter mumbled to himself as Bruce gestures for him to follow him to the chemistry part of the lab. Peter followed hesitantly and Bruce turned around once because he couldn’t hear Parker’s footsteps. They were like Natasha’s: absolutely silent.

He lead Peter to a table where he was synthesising a chlorine compound in a beaker. The bubbling green liquid in the spherical container was above a burner so the compound could mix entirely.

“Okay Parker. Currently I’m working on-“ Peter, to his surprise, cut him off with one glance and a twitch of his nose (which was kinda cute because Peter had a button nose like Natasha’s. Not that Bruce would ever say that to her, but the closer he looked the more and more like Natasha he saw in Peter’s features. His nose, and lips. His slim hands...weird).

“A compound that can synthesize plant tissue through chlorine?” Peter said looking at the green liquid and eyeing Banner briefly who was momentarily stunned. How had Parker known that? He
hadn’t left any data out. He just looked at the beaker and the plants and just *knew*.

Oh, he *was* good.

“Y-yes. I think if I can accelerate the chlorophyll it would regenerate plant tissue faster than normal.” Bruce said trying to gain composer and Peter hummed. A little light picked up in his eyes. He hesitated in what he was going to say next.

“Yes, but if you added calcium-“ he offered tentatively before Bruce immediately shot down the idea. Anything with calcium would screw with the photosynthesis process. Maybe in humans that would work, but not in plants.

“It would completely destroy the plants cells tissue.” Bruce shot down with a furrowed brow. He thought Peter was supposed to be smart. Maybe biology wasn’t his strong suit? He obviously had a knack for chemistry.

“Not to the plant though..to...to the...never mind.” Peter mumbled and sighed shaking his head. Giving up on trying to explain himself. Bruce let a disappointed frown cross his face. “what did you want me to do?” Peter asked, the little light that was in his eyes when Bruce had agreed with him gone. Never had he seen Parker act this...reserved. Maybe it’s because he’s never seen him outside of his suit. It’s been a year, they should know each other better than this by now. But Leeds was right. Peter Parker was incredibly shy.

“I want you to finish your thought. Why did you suggest calcium?” Bruce asked and Peter fidgeted a little. If he wanted to test Parker, he was going to have to push it out of him. This was a test of intelligence not confidence. Confidence came later, right now he needed to make sure Parker actually was smart.

“I was thinking, if you synthesized a tricalcium dioxide compound and mixed it with a Synthesised Chlorine and Chlorophyll..compound..before ...you could..” Peter trailed off into an inaudible mumble, but Bruce already knew where he was going with it.

“Create new tissue instead of regenerate it…” Bruce said breathlessly. It was a crazy idea, one that Bruce wouldn’t have thought of before. It was almost insane to anyone with a more conservative mind, but Peter? That was just daring...at least in the science world. It was going against some laws of theoretical biology, but that’s what Peter does. Goes against laws. Bruce could now apply it to science and mechanic laws too. “Where did you..?” Bruce asked wanting to know where he’d get such an outlandish idea from.
“Dr. Cho’s thesis. I just applied it to plant tissue instead of human. She used calcium and if you synthesis it properly then…” Peter fidgeted. Peter gestured to the beaker, not finishing his thought. He didn’t have to. Bruce oddly liked that. Peter didn’t use unnecessary words that could be filled in if you actually took the time to understand what he said. In a way, it was like he is testing Bruce too.

“Yes, but how did you know what I was trying to do?” Bruce asked with a slightly tilted head. Peter scrunched up his nose a little before shifting on his feet.

“I smelt chlorine sir…” Peter mumbled and Bruce looked down at him for a second before looking at the boiling chemical. Then he started to freak out. Had Peter sniffed a deadly chemical? Oh god! How was he not dead. The chlorine was fully synthesised so it was a toxin right now. Why had this brilliant child done this to himself?

“No, I’m inhaling all the stuff you are, I just can actually smell it.” Peter said in a top calm manner “it has a smell normal humans can’t smell but I have...different wavelengths for my senses.” Peter blushed and Bruce could only look in awe. Brilliant child.

“Right...right...well thank you for...your opinion.” Bruce said with a nod, trying to cover up his freak out. Peter nodded awkwardly back and then Bruce hastily gave him something to work on.

Peter worked on a different compound while he analyzed tests with Peter’s suggestions (they worked and Bruce wasn’t sure weather to be surprise for not). Peter was nearly silent when working and Bruce looked over once or twice to see how the boy was working and progressing. It was a chemical compound that Bruce had yet to work on. It was a filament that worked like quick cement to temporarily hold up buildings when the structure fell during battle. It was right up Parker’s ally it seemed, when he had no trouble comparing it with his own web formula (which Bruce did notice that he was peeking at a piece of weathered graphing paper with all sorts of formulas written in bleeding ink on it as a reference, but never mentioned it.) It was a little different, and Bruce could count how many times Peter hit a snag.

It was once.

“You’ve been staring at that beaker for two minutes, something wrong with it?” Bruce asked as a
joke (Parker was a kid, Bruce had seen it more in the past 3 hours than he had in an entire year) and Peter was surprised at the proximity because he jumped away from the dashboard he was taking notes on, so Bruce could review his work without him having to say much (Bruce could agree that having someone read your work is much easier than trying to describe it). Bruce looked over the notes and found that this wasn’t the compound that he himself was thinking Parker would try to replicate. It was a completely different stabilizer, that used cheaper materials than he’d originally thought to use. “Why’d you use Titanium?” Peter fidgeted a little, almost as if Bruce had accused him. Bruce made a mental note to watch his tone around him, because somehow Parker seems sensitive and on edge ever since he got into the lab. “It’s supposed to only be a temporary fillent.” Bruce said more gently, trying not to scare the boy off. It seemed to work because Peter relaxed, it was good he was willing to take criticism, it just had to be delivered correctly (maybe if they used this method on the field, Parker would listen to them. It kinda hurt Bruce to think that they never tried to be kind to the boy. Peter was clearly more sensitive than he let on).

“Yeah, but if I know New York, it’ll take a while to get to any repairs.” Peter mumbled and shifted again, as if he said something wrong. It was a valid concern, and certainly would put less stress on workers to complete the work. “I used Titanium because it’s strong and light, it’ll give people the time to...you know...get to it.” Peter ended in a softer mumble than he began and Bruce looked back and forth between the boy and the formula. Ingenious, not only had he made a filament with cheaper elements, but he also took into account the time stamp on which it should be achieved by. Peter really did think way outside the box.

“I didn’t think of that. And we could also use it to support structures during battle.” Bruce said and mumbled off too. He grabbed Parker’s shoulder and pulled him closer (wow, Bruce didn’t notice how thin that shoulder was, what the heck. The hoodie was giving him more bulk, Bruce stored that fact away for later). He noticed Peter stiffen upon contact and let go, sending an apologetic look toward the boy. “What are you having trouble with then.” He asked and Peter shifted a bit more before answering. As if he was almost afraid to ask for help (he probably was, especially from Bruce).

“The formula keeps adding molecules and atomic mass, I was thinking that it could be like a certain maximum mass, or else the molecules will break apart too quickly so…” Peter mumbled off and Bruce reviewed the work two more times before finding a fix. It wasn’t one he could spot right away.

“Why don’t you add another element to the compound, a light one. Like-” Bruce was going to say Aluminum. But he was cut off by a better suggestion.

“Silicon!” Peter blurted and it took Bruce off guard at the volume that he flinched out of the chair and onto the ground. The kid had been quiet until just now, and now he he was frantically covering his mouth and wide brown eyes. “Oh my god, Dr.Banner! I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to yell I just-” He stuck out a hand for Bruce to grab.
“Got excited?” he took Peter’s outstretched hand as the child nodded meekly and flushed in embarrassment. Bruce gently smiled back.

“Yeah, sorry.” he mumbled with a blush going into a deeper shade of pink as he pulled Bruce up. Strong grip, but then again this kid was Spiderman (which also, what the fuck. How had he almost forgotten that little fact?)

“No need to apologize Peter, I was pretty excited myself.” Bruce said honestly and Peter looked a little surprised, and there was a hint of light that shone behind his eyes. Like he was happy and excited and Bruce wanted that light to never leave. “How about we synthesize this compound and over Lunch it will incubate?” Bruce suggested, Peter cocked his head in confusion like a puppy.

“Lunch?” Peter asked and Bruce didn’t pay any mind to it as he continued. He wasn’t going to starve a child in the name of science, no matter how much he’d like to watch the process, Peter needed food. No way a stick like him could lift so many pounds and not have a super strength factor. And along with super strength also came a super metabolism.

“Yeah, and then after we can engineer a distributor and test it.” Bruce said and Peter nodded dully. Bruce didn’t notice the nervousness that picked up back in his eyes.

He kind of liked this kid.

OoO

Bruce sometimes forgets Tony Stark is a genius.

Between all his idiotic protocol names to his recklessness in battle and self destructive/sacrificing habits, it was very easy to forget. Tony made bad decisions a lot more often than he made good ones. He used his intellect to only enhance these bad decisions and Bruce has seen many a clusterfuck to be born out of them. But right now he was grateful for his friend’s big brain.

He didn’t even think this little ‘assistant’ stunt could not only be used to help keep an eye on Parker, but also help him a little with his health and getting food into him. Bruce had been thinking about Peter’s health on and off. The lack of sleep, and lack of nourishment really showed when he was maskless, and if you looked at Spiderman right, you could tell the bones were protruding a little to sharply in his ribs and hips, and his stomach was a little too sunken in to be any form of healthy. Peter must’ve had some padding in the suit, that was masking up he major skinniness.
Like how his web shooters were bulky on purpose, Bruce hadn’t thought much of it before, but when he got a good look at Peter’s nearly pencil like wrists, he knew that the fashion decision was maybe somewhat on purpose. Peter didn’t like people knowing how skinny he was.

When Bruce told Peter they could go to Lunch, the kid fidgeted and said where he wanted him to wait. Bruce looked perplexed for a second before Parker spoke up, in almost an embarrassed tone.

“I don’t have lunch.” he mumbled, not looking Bruce in the eye and Bruce nearly facepalmed himself because of course the neglected broke kid didn’t have a lunch. When it was lunch time at the tower, sometimes Bruce and Tony skipped it in favor of working. But now they had a kid to not starve, so they had to take a break at some point- in this case 12:00pm on the dot (Pepper had drilled into Tony’s head apparently, that they could not starve this child if they were to go through with this plan. Tony had told him that and Bruce didn’t mention how Peter most likly was already starved beyond redemption). When Bruce and Tony did go get lunch, they usually just had whatever anyone was making for post-morning training (they didn’t train with the rest of the team because their form of fighting came in science and mechanics).

“That’s cool kid. We always have extra.” Tony said lightly, joining in on their conversation (he swears he saw Tony smirking whenever he was blown out of the water by the kid’s suggestions) when his own brain short circuited and Peter’s face screwed up just a tad. Bruce couldn’t fathom why he was so against Lunch. Shouldn’t a kid like Parker take what he can get and then some?

“No I mean...nevermind.” he sighed and sagged his shoulders in defeat as he followed the older man out of the lab, Bruce right behind them. He had a feeling this would be interesting.

When they got to the common room, everyone was doing their own thing. Sam was in a chair reading while Wanda and Steve were cooking. Natasha was sitting on the counter and Clint and Bucky were playing cards on the table. Peter stiffened at the sight of Bucky, and Bruce winced because the last time they had been in the same room Peter got strangled, Bucky’s PTSD took a turn for the worst, and Tony’s arm was broken. All in all, it was not fun. And what was even more not fun was them interrogating Parker after two whole months of radio silence on his end (with the exception of one particularly interesting phone call Tony did not care to disclose the contents of).

“Hey, if it isn’t the 9-5 crew!” Sam said with a light note in his tone. He didn’t look up and Tony snorted. Science Bros, now 9-5 crew? He got the hours right, just not the times. Bruce didn’t voice his opinion on the matter, knowing it was futile. Tony, however, did.

“More like 7-3, but technicalities. I kinda like it, what do you think kid?” Peter looked up to Tony with wide confused eyes (like no one has ever asked him a question before) and nodded stiffly. Poor thing was as wound up as a yoyo, and Bruce feared he’d snap under all that coiling. Was this all too overwhelming for Peter? Had they assumed just because he was Spiderman, meant that he
could just casually chill with the Avengers? What did Peter do to relax? Why doesn’t Bruce already
know it, because they’ve been with him for a year and never bothered to know anything about this
kid.

“Kid? That was today.” Steve said as he whipped around to see Parker and glanced worriedly back
at Bucky who had stopped his game with Clint to look at Parker. The kid shrunk under both their
gazes and Bruce wanted to slap them over the had for being so damn rude.

“I think I should-” Peter started, and Tony - god bless his soul - did what Bruce wanted to do since
he grabbed the kid’s shoulder to reassure him in the lab earlier. Tony pushed him to all the freshly
made food and sat him down right next to where Natasha was (Bruce knew that she got Tony’s
message to keep the kid there so he could eat a decent meal for once in his life. Natasha seemed to
agree as she gave the kid a once over). The older Russian gazed down at the younger in an
indifferent stare as Peter shrunk back under her gaze and didn’t look her in the eye. She smiled
back a little fondly before covering her face back in the emotionless mask.

“Nope. You feel that shoulder? Should not be that thin at any age, thank you very much.” Tony
said and Peter blushed at that as he covered his shoulders and hunched in on himself. Steve
narrowed his eyes at the kid’s bulky sweatshirt, trying to see the real figure underneath. Peter
curled in on himself more.

“Okay, I get it. Stop that.” Peter mumbled as he looked to glare at Tony. Steve looked away, in a
quick gesture of apology for being so rude. Peter waved the gesture away, not knowing what to do
with it.

“While you are with us, you can guarantee at least one meal every five days.” Tony told him with
an affirming nod, like it was set in stone now - and it was, Bruce would make sure of that. Peter
rolled his eyes and put his elbows on the table and he chin in his hands as he gazed a head.

“You can put food in front of me, doesn’t mean I’ll always eat it.” he said in a light tone and Tony
looked baffled. Bruce felt the same way. He was sure everyone did at Peter’s answer. What was it
even supposed to mean?

“Why wouldn’t you?” Tony asked almost absconded. He probably was considering the offer, and
Bruce was trying to work this out in his head too, as to why on earth Peter would refuse food ever.
The kid needed it, and looked like he hadn’t had a decent one in forever. Peter just shrugged in
response.

“I don’t need it all the time.” Peter said shooting down what Bruce had initially thought. That was
probably the most ridiculous bull shit Bruce had ever heard. Bruce had saw himself Peter lifting a fucking building. All by himself. No supports or help. He had super strength, super speed and super senses. He was bound to have a super metabolism as well (and that didn’t work well with a starvation diet. Like at all). Then Bruce thought back to the kids in India and Pakistan and all the other food deprived villages he went to. How the kids could barely keep a loaf of bread down. Maybe that’s what Peter was going through now. They’d just have to wait and see, because he couldn’t very well ask Peter that question. Maybe they should keep a bucket or waste basket on standby.

“Really? And when was the last time you ate?” Clint joined in, slipping into the conversation casually. Bruce had forgotten that he was a parent too. He’d surely know how to deal with this side of Peter. Peter just blushed and looked away and that was answer enough. Bruce was honestly surprised about how Peter’s stomach had refrained from rumbling throughout this entire conversation and with the smell of food roaming in the air. He hadn’t had anything in hours as far as Bruce knows, and super metabolism or no, he must’ve still been hungry.

“Irrelevant.” he said sipping at his faded Star Wars water bottle (how had they not noticed he was such a nerd?). Bruce would admit, the vague answer was more than a little concerning. It was totally relevant because they needed to know how much food to shove down the kids throat.

“Bullshit, you’re eating pasta.” Clint called out - like the sensible person he was - and got up, game of cards long forgotten. Bucky still had eyes on Peter as the boy mumbled a ‘fine’ and went on with his life. Clint fixes him a plate, hesitating at the red sauce and asking if Peter was vegetarian to which the boy snorted but told him to not put it on anyway. Clint shrugged and slid the bowl of buttered noodles of to him.

Bruce sat down next to him to make sure he actually ate something and not pushed around his pasta. Peter picked up his fork but didn’t put anything on it. What came out of Peter’s mouth next was anything but suspected. “I’ve got a lead.” he whispered to Natasha. Almost inaudible and Bruce was sure he wasn’t meant to hear that. Sometimes his teammate forgot about his slightly enhanced senses due to the Hulk. She immediately stiffened and so did Bucky who had been listening in. No one else seemed to notice, Bruce kept his trap shut like a person who valued their own life.

“You-” she started off with a slightly choked tone. Her eyes widening barley and expression changing into one of slight shock. Bucky features did the same.

“Unconfirmed, but it’s more of a hunch at this point.” Peer whispered quickly. Not letting them get their hopes up on whatever they were talking about. Their features died down into a look of solemn thoughtfulness.
“What is it?” Natasha asked seriously and Peter sighed and put down his fork. Shifting in his seat and rubbing his stomach even though he hadn’t eaten anything. He wasn’t hungry, Bruce could tell as much. But he had to eat something. They had to get Peter on a regular diet.

“Again, a hunch. If you want...I can follow through on it...but no promises.” Peter said hesitantly and Bruce saw Natasha glance at Bucky before he nodded once to her, almost desperately. Natasha turned back to Peter and slid into the chair next to his as Steve dished out plates of spaghetti to the rest of the team.

“Yes.” she whispered to him. Peter nodded once before sipping on his water bottle again, not bringing the plate of warm food closer. Bruce saw his stomach contract slightly against his hoodie. Peter was sucking in to hold the rumbles, he was good at it. Peter sighed and picked up the fork to eat a small bite to satiate his probably conflicted stomach.

“Thankyou.” Bucky said as he passed Peter to sit next to Natasha, and Peter looked stunned for a minute, he knew Natasha and Bucky noticed. It was Like the boy didn’t know what to do or say. It was short circuited. His stomach gave off a light rumble in his surprised state which made him seem to snap out of it to blush as Natasha smirked just a little and he brought another bite to his mouth. He finally seemed to breath once before mumbling a:

“Don’t thank me yet.” so softly that Bruce almost couldn’t even barely hear it. He took a bite of his food.

In the end, Peter didn’t even eat a quarter of the plate. He ate all of 10 small bites before not trying at all anymore, so Bruce got his answer about the shrunken stomach (and that coupled with a super metabolism did not sound very fun.) Peter looked a little remorseful at the wasted food, but no one pushed him to eat anymore, as he did look oddly better and admittedly full (the way he was lightly cradling his stomach and how he mouth would barely open to say two words and he did slightly wince when he got up. Bruce thought he was going to double over and he thinks Bucky thought the same as he looked ready to dive for the trash can at any moment. Poor kid). Bruce gave Peter another 15 minutes before speaking again, when Peter didn’t look like he was going to throw up immediately.

“Okay, let’s make that distributor!” Bruce said and clapped his hand a bit suddenly as Peter flinched back and Tony made an offended noise.

“Nuh uh Brucey Bear. You got him all morning. It’s my turn to test Parker.” Tony said and Peter hunched in a little as he got up from the stool to put his pasta in the sink. He did it so casually, like it was an instinct that none of them rally realized until Peter was already halfway to the elevator. Steve shot up his head.
“Thankyou.” Steve called out lightly and again Peter stiffened at the gratitude before nodding once and scurrying off behind Tony’s purposeful stride. Bruce looked to Steve’s baffled look and shrugged when he silently pleaded for answers to the weird reaction. Bruce couldn’t know why Peter reacted like he did towards a simple thank you.

Bruce had a feeling that it wasn’t just a ‘thank you’ to Peter.

OoOoO

Tony knew the kid was smart.

Just not this smart.

Okay, yeah, he said not to hold back, but once Parker got some grub in that tiny body he actually had a little more balls. Not like he had with Spiderman, but in the morning he was more reserved, now he was just quietly improving everything that he could to Tony’s plans. But he was also making it obvious he made those changes.

Tony had tossed him an AI chip for one of FRIDAY’s more secure databases and asked Parker to ‘beef it up’. He couldn’t get Ned on it, because of the classified information on it, but Peter already had access to this information, sent by Fury. Or he could just as easily acquire whatever information was in the database.

He expected Peter to fix the glitches that were bound to be in the vast server. Not tear down half the fire wall and rebuild it entirely. Well he didn’t tear it down, per say, when Tony asked what the fuck he was doing he said that he had some ‘weak points’ in his code that he could ‘beef up’ - he used the air quotes and everything. By the time an hour passed Peter had basically reprogrammed the entire security wireframe, and Tony had to admit that even he would have trouble getting past that. He’d sic Ned on this tomorrow when he came in for the internship to see just how well this worked. Kind of underhanded because Ned and Peter were supposedly best friends before a year ago, and now Tony was putting the two hooligans against each other. Even though they didn’t know it.

Tony hadn’t even noticed the clock struck 3:00, and neither had Peter who was currently working on a circuit board (that Ned had been working on but just couldn’t figure out) in intense concentration. When Peter did notice the time, however, he scrambled to get his backpack and shit together to rush out of there as fast as he could - not that Tony minded him staying in the first
place. He was just about to say his goodbyes when he bumped into a chest. Tony looked up to find Harley and Peter staring at each other. Peter in tired indifference and slight shock and Harley in a menacing glare that he brought to kill.

This would either be really good or really bad.

“What is he doing in the lab?” Harley, to his credit, didn’t yell. But his displeasure was making itself very well known. Displeasure that Peter thought enough to put on his mask of casualness, and it was such a difference from the stuttering mess he was not even ten minutes ago that Tony thinks he got whiplash.

“Working.” Tony said casually, trying to respell the tension even if he was beyond confused at Peter’s attitude 360. “On the classified stuff you can’t.” He saw Peter shrink back as his masked slipped some and he was pretty sure Harley was seeing red.

“Yeah but-” Harley made a frustrated noise. Clearly he was confused as to why the kid who broke his dad’s arm was now currently sitting in the lab helping him. “He just broke your arm and left. You and Fury tried calling him for two months and he blocked you! When you did get picked up, he was acting all high and shit and being weird and bipolar-“

“I’m gonna go.” Peter mumbled, not wanting to be caught in the crossfire of the family argument (Even if he was the subject of said argument). Clearly he didn’t want to be insulted on his previous behavior.

“Oh no, I have words for you.” Harley whirled angrily at the boy and Peter shrunk back and tried stepping away, but he didn’t leave the lab. Firmly standing to receive whatever Harley had to throw at him. Damn, he loved his kid, but he was going to ruin what was turning out to be a seemingly good day for Parker. Parker deserves at least this much.

“Doesn’t everybody.” Peter mumbled sarcastically. Harley stepped forward and Peter stepped to the side to avoid physical conflict, even if Parker was a stick he could still lay Harley out in barley a second. He was still Spider Man. “Look, I know why you’re mad,” Peter halfway held up his hand in a gesture of peace and reasoning. Tony recognized that voice. It was Peter’s ‘diffuser’ voice (Tony originally called it the ‘negotiating’ voice that he used as Spiderman. He only used it once or twice and when Tony had dubbed it, Fury had scoffed and told him he’d know if Parker was really negotiating. Fury said it was more of a diffuser than negotiation). “And you’ve got every right to be.” he paused and Tony raised a brow. Where was this going? He ended on a low note, but there sounded like there needed to be more.
“But…” Tony picked up, trying to get Parker to maybe finish his sentence. Harley’s shoulders relaxed a bit as Parker sighed.

“That was it. I’ve really got nothing for you.” Peter shrugged as Tony barked out a laugh. Because of course that was all Parker had. Of course he wouldn’t try to make an excuse, he never did even if he had a valid one. Harley didn’t find it as funny as Tony did though.

“Not even an apology.” Harley seethed, not understanding the testimony of Peter Parker. He didn’t understand that while Peter didn’t apologize, he didn’t make an excuse for his actions. He figured the punishment was apology enough, and that he did have a valid reason for acting out. Peter would never share that with the class though, he never did. Peter knew the consequences couldn’t be deterred by excuses in the real world. In the real world it is what it is and you have cause and effects. There was no chance in changing that.

“I already said I was sorry.” Peter said back and huffed, crossing his arms. Another useless apology to him. He had a reason for doing what he did and bolting. He had a reason he stayed silent for 2 months. Peter always had a reason.

“Fine, but that doesn’t explain why you’re in the lab.” Harley said and Tony took this one. He wasn’t even sure if Peter knew why he was here. Peter’s face showed the confusion that confirmed that theory, and also light embarrassment.

“9-5 crew.” he said casually and Harley looked baffled at the vague answer. So did Peter before it seemed to click and he groaned, and Tony smirked. Now Peter looked a mix between embarrassed and exasperated. Mostly the latter though.

“It’s not even accurate.” he mumbled, a light blush creeping up his cheeks. It made him look positively adorable. And while the name was workshop, it’s the best one they’ve got. So thank you Sam, for the fixer upper. Leave it to the geniuses to get the names right.

“I’m still confused.” Harley said amusedly and he crossed his arms trying to look like he was serious and this wasn’t a game. It only half worked and Tony cleared his throat.

“Oh yeah, Peter is our little lab assistant when you and the interns are off getting a crappy but mandatory education.” Tony responded and Harley made an ‘o’ with his mouth in understanding. Tony doesn’t think he understood at all, but he stopped asking questions because Harley understood that he couldn’t know everything that was going on for his own safety. Tony sent him a slightly apologetic look and Harley waved it off.
“And you hired...Spider-man?” Harley asked and pointed to the smaller, probably younger boy. Was Peter younger? He didn’t exactly say what his birthday was. Then again the kid never told them anything.

“No, I hired Peter Parker.” now Peter looked stunned. A little touched too. A smile crept on his lips and he ducked his head, action going unnoticed by Harley. Tony felt himself holding back a smile too.

“Aren’t they the same person.” Harley groaned. Peter still looked a little shocked. Tony tried to send silent support his way before he said the next thing.

“Oh, they are more different than you’ll know if you don’t make up.” Peter seemed to get caught out of his trance and blushed. Tony gave him a knowing look. “So,” Tony made an open gesture and turned away. The. Let it play out from there. He heard Peter clearing his throat of any emotion that might’ve been stuck there before he mumbled:

“You don’t have to.” He heard clothes rustle as Peter shifted and Harley sighed and shook his head.

“But I should.” he offered honestly, slight guilt and regret entering his tone.

He smiled to himself, because he felt Peter’s small smile too.

OoOoO

7 years earlier...

He wasn’t surprised when he found Peter’s arm cover in blood.

Being a soldier is hard. Harder than anyone can imagine. He had seen things and done things that no one should ever have to see or do. But he had expected a life like this since he was younger. He was stupid and abused. He already knew he was getting no where in life but drug dealing or the army. But being a child and experiencing the hopelessness. The fact that he could feel like this was the only thing a person like him could do that was actually worth while. To feel that feeling when he was so young? It was heart breaking. Peter hadn’t even begun puberty before he had his first kill. Hell he still hadn’t started.
The kid was smart and resilient and if he was in any other situation than he was now, he could probably change the world with that big brain if his. Peter was happy for the most part, tried to be optimistic about his situations, found the slightest joy in the littlest of things and Wade would kill everyone on the force before anyone took that away from him. Because they’ve already taken so much from the kid.

He should have known it was all a front. Peter was literally the definition of perfect espionage. He’d been trained to lie since before Wade had ever known him. Trained to swallow his feelings and move on.

But even the best soldiers have a breaking point.

Wade pushed open the bathroom door to take a Whiz. The bathrooms were shit, but he’d seen shittier. The squad set up camp and they were all in shared tents. He, as always (because he was SO) was with the kid (and he had no intention of changing that because A) the kid didn’t snore, he was actually kinda cute when he slept B) he didn’t have a high protein diet, or any diet he just ate whatever he came into contact with and C) he was fucking good company dammit. Sue him, he liked hanging out with this kid. He stopped in his tracks when he saw the kid on the floor, leaning against the wall razor in his hands and he looked up at Wade with big brown eyes and tears that never fell.

The kid had been gone for an hour before and Wade didn’t make it his business to know where the little tike was. He was nearly nine whole years old, Wade had known him for nearly two whole years. The kid liked to have some time to himself, he was a growing boy and despite this his body still seemed to throw up anything more than 800 calories. He was getting taller, just more of a stick as his baby fat grew up instead of out. How he’s more not screwed up, Wade will never know.

But turns out Pete was more screwed up than he thought, because the angry red lines above the wrist guard was really messed up, and Wade knew it was the razor in his other hand that did the damage. Wade wanted to take away the razor, but Wade knew what this was about, or at least partially so. He wouldn’t take away Peters control, he needs this; as unhealthy as it is, Wade’s seen worse. At least he’s not pointing a gun to his head.

“Gonna take a whiz, kid.” Wade said instead of everything else he was thinking. The kids awe stricken damp eyes but looked away as he did his business anyway. Peter only sniffled once as he washed his hands and Wade looked back with a raised brow as the kid shrunk back, rolling the razor around in his hand but never making another cut.

*Interesting.*
When he was done he sighed and slid in front of the child who looked guilty as fuck. Turning the blade in his small hands. Wade watched as blood dropped to the floor. Dripping in crimson pellets. A child’s blood. A child who has given too much for humanity. A child that wasn’t considered human enough to sport any sort of child abuse. A child wasn’t even considered animal enough to be worth a damn.

A child who should have done this a lot sooner. That is, if that child wasn’t Peter Parker.

It was a while of nothing. No movements, no talking, no cutting, no crying, no nothing. Just staring. It was comfortable and not as unsettling that he thought it would be. It never was with just Peter.

“I don’t know if I can stop.” Peter admitted in a quiet whisper and Wade looked at him for a bit. He didn’t know what to say. Peter stares at the floor with broken brown eyes. Tears completely gone now despite him never letting any fall. It was like it was just a void. Wade didn’t like that void.

“Then Don’t.” That sounded wrong. He shouldn’t be doing this. He should take Peter to a therapist or physiatrist or some one. Some one that wasn’t him. Some one that wouldn’t tell him to keep going. But Wade never said to keep going, he never said to stop. He just needed to say to do what he needed to do. Everyone had their own ways of coping and at least Peter didn’t want to die. “If it makes you feel better then keep doing it.” That sounded worse. But it was working because Peter looked up. “I’m just gonna sit here.” Better? Maybe. Peter looked up fully displaying his confused expression. Like a puppy. Wade shrugged “Just so you know you have other options.” Perfect. Good job Wilson. 10 out of 10 redemption. Peter smiled down at his sliced wrist.

“How long did it take you to come up with that?” He choked out jokingly. Using humor to drown out pain? Wade taught him well. This young one would go far. Or not, Wade certainly didn’t.

No no, focus. Focus on Peter.

“When’d you start?” Wade asked freely. It was open ended and the kid didn’t have to answer. He knew he didn’t have to answer Peters smile dropped and he shifted. Wade thought he screwed and Peter wouldn’t tell him, but then he opened his small mouth, not looking him in the eyes, but at least he was sharing.

“When I was in New York last winter.” Peter said softly. So Wade couldn’t have prevented it from
stopping. “There was this guy, my ‘babysitter’, he got arrested for drug possession.” Drug possession? In Queens? No. Honestly Wade was more surprised that the cops even cared about that. He must’ve been one stupid moherfucker to actually get caught. Peter’s aunt did smack and she got possession of one full human child. Like legally. Tell him that wasn’t messed up. “He... I didn’t like how he touched me.” Peter said quieter, and it was so quiet Wade almost missed it. A bubble of dread came up, he hoped he didn’t know where this was going. But he knew exactly where this was going. “I didn’t like where he touched me...it reminded me of... back then...” Peter said and paused, because he was gripping the razor so hard it was shaking in his tiny fist. It had happened more than once. It had happened before. Wade doesn’t have a time stamp but it was before. Oh god. “But this time it was different.” Wade breathed in and out trying to remain calm for Peter. But oh god the kid got... “this time I felt...gross.” Just breathe. In and out. Like he’s been doing his whole life. The kid got... “and then he... did something, I don’t know what, but it was...inside my body. It hurt, Wade. Real bad.” Wades dread turned to raging anger. He saw red.

The kid got fucking raped.

“Peter...” Wade said trying to keep the anger at bay, the kid was already scared, but he realized he didn’t have any words of comfort so he closed his mouth. Peter had more to say apparently not hearing Wade’s failed attempt at reassurance.

“I wanted... it out of my body... so I...I didn’t know how. I cut myself and I felt better. All the bad stuff left.... but then I did it again and more bad stuff came out. Every time bad stuff came out, I felt better... but...Aunt May found me once and she...got real sad. I didn’t see her for three days...I don’t...I don’t think she remembers anymore...” Peter rambled and Wade tried to calm his breathing. Peter couldn’t seem to stop once he had started and now his voice was choking as it had shifted from emotionless to slight sorrow in the time he was talking. Eyes still hollow. “I think what I’m doing is bad...” he whispered brokenly and Wade jumped to reassure him.

“No, Peter you- this is normal... well no it’s not, it’s very not normal. It makes sense though.” Wades turn to ramble, god he was not the best person for him to be talking to. But if he told anyone else would they care? They hadn’t cared when they sent an infant into war, they hadn’t cared when they beat this child into the ground until he learned how to fight, they hadn’t cared when they sent him out to kill at the age of 7. The kid wasn’t even out of elementary school and he already had a kill count that rivaled half the squads. No one would care if the kid was dying much less molested. They would probably laugh and tease him about it. “did you tell anyone? About that guy?” Peter nodded his head and hunched his shoulders. “What’s his name?” Peter hesitates. Wade thinks he isn’t going to answer for a second.

“Skip Wescott.” Peter mumbled softly.

Well, Skippy boy might be getting a quick visit to the after life. Ticket is on Wade. All expenses paid under the name Wilson. One way trip though, so he’s gonna have to get back on his own.
“Am I being overdramatic?” Peter asked and Wade looked at him, he shifted. Peter choked a little and Wade’s eyes softened. “I lied before.” Wade looked at him closer and Peter sighed “MJ saw the scratch’s, she said whatever they were for, I was being overdramatic. But then I told her and she said not to tell anybody I did. She hugged me, but she didn’t say I was being overdramatic.” Peter said watery.

Ah yes, the infamous MJ. Along with Ned, they were Peters favorite topic to talk about with Wade. They often were present in his tales of freedom outside the shithole that was the army. Hellion children that were going to take over the world one day and he hadn’t even met them yet. Based on Peter, Wade could conclude that MJ was naturally a menace/scary independent woman(or she would be, and Wade respected that).

“Did MJ tell you to tell an adult.” Peter shook his head. Smart girl. She would defiantly rule part of the world one day, defiantly Canada.

“She said there was a lot of adult stuff and that it would draw attention to me and she said she didn’t want me to have that type of attention.” Peter said meekly and Wade was grateful to any of the gods out there watching for giving this child one Michelle Jones to guide him through the shitshow that was the outside world.

Smart girl. Wade was defiantly going to take her out for ice cream.

“Smart move. She’s right you don’t want that type of attention. Right now at least. When your older maybe you’ll want to do something about it, but for now don’t tell anyone else.” Peter nodded in understanding. Even if he really didn’t understand. But then again Peter was smart; he’d understand eventually. Peter put the razor in his pocket for now.

3 years later Peter would put the razor in Wade’s hands.

But that was later.
Y'all this was much much more of a fluffy thing than I expected it to be, but next chapter is ANGST again sooo yeah.

UPDATE NOTICE: I will be updating this by JUNE 7th. Maybe (probably) before but no promises. I think I wanna go ahead into other chapters and kinda write some of those parts out because some chapters have nearly nothing to their name and Chapter 7 is like almost completely written and not so much edited tho. I figured the early Update would be compensation for that sooooo yeah!

Thank you all SOOOOO much, please feel free to scream at me in the comments or talk about anything like your day I love you all soooooooo much!

See ya next time : )
Jump out the window

Chapter Notes

Soooooo remember how I said that I'd be getting chapter 7 out on June 7th??? Yeah, didn't happen because I had way more time to edit on my phone this weekend. It's like I underestimate my ability to write with an outline??? Like it's super easy now that I have it!!

Anyways, I am officially declaring that I have a beta. My friend impravidus . I love her Spiderman stories they make me laugh so I'd encourage all of you to check her out because she's amazing!!!!

Anywho
Enjoy!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 7- Jump out the Window

Present...

The lab wasn’t all that bad.

Dr.Banner, despite his previous hostility, seemed to almost enjoy his company (Peter now even dares to venture that he looked forward to it). Tony has made a point to put food into him every time, and never pushed him to eat more than three bites of whatever they were having (they served him smaller portions and he was grateful for that).

He was settling into the lab nicely, and even looking forward to it. He hasn’t looked forward to doing anything for a while, life kept throwing him around and he’d never know where he was to end up the next day so he stopped trying to expect all together. But he enjoyed that he had a set time to do things like this - things he actually enjoyed - he knew he had to be somewhere when he woke up and not two minutes before he had to go. He felt better knowing he had a bit of stability now.

It was nice thing, predictability. Didn’t suit him, but still nice to have some .

Then it became a bit more not predictable (as most things in his life, unfortunately). He knew that it wouldn’t stay like this forever, especially when Steve Rogers came in, fresh from a shower, smelling like some sort of wildflower that could only be described as cheap deodorant. He
probably training a bit before that. Peter was glad he showered before coming in. If he’s learned anything from the time he’s been at the tower, Steve Rogers is no rude ass bitch. Even if he may not have liked Peter, he still treated him properly.

Steve asked Bruce if he could do a little fix on his Shield, because although the Shield itself was made out of one material, it was decked out with tech behind the face where the holsters were. Bruce said that he couldn’t deal with the advanced mechanics that were in main weapons of the Avengers and Tony was at a press conference. Steve nodded in understanding, Tony was more of the tech guy and he wasn’t here so Steve would come back later. It was about to be left at that, but then Bruce opened his big mouth.

Steve was about to leave when Bruce looked over to where Peter was, working on his webshooters (they let him work on his own tech when he had nothing to do) tuning out the world with headphones. You know, having a good time and not socializing.

“Wait!” Bruce said quickly, and more urgently than he probably meant to because it made Steve whirl around to nearly full - Peter would say about 87 percent - attention and Peter snapped his head up looking for danger discretely. “Peter can do it.” He said and Peter blinked.

...What?

“He’s good at mechanics, that’s one of the reasons Tony hired him.” Bruce informed Steve directly not looking at the boy himself. Peter almost dropped his screwdriver at the low key praise. Steve looked over at him skeptically. Peter tried to pretend that he hadn’t heard any of the conversation and quickly put down his head to pretend like he was in intense concentration with his web shooters. Defiantly not thinking about checking out the tech behind the Shield that basically represented the god given (at least that’s what they said in US history) country he was standing in.

“Are you sure?” Steve asked carefully. Peter hunched in on himself willing his mind not to give him hope. Bruce looked a little put out with being questioned, before nodding frantically.

He probably should have denied that he could, he really should have denied it. but he didn’t know if his body could in fact do pass this up. It was CaptainFuckingAmerica Shield. Every nerd in the galaxy would collectively kill him if he didn’t take this chance. So all he managed to say was “well I can take a look at it, but no promises.” Steve nodded and catiously came over to Peters work bench and put the Shield down on the table and Dr.Banner went back to his work, ignoring them entirely.
“It wouldn’t hurt...but be careful.” He said almost earning my and Peter peeked into the dip at the back. He took the screwdriver in his hand and was going to poke around it to get a better gist of the tech, but then he heard Steve inhale a sharp gasp and he looked up with a raised brow and Steve loosened. “Sorry. I guess I’m a bit nervous.” Nervous? About your vibration Shield in the hands of a teenager who is known to go out and preform acts of illegal vigilantism? Why would you need to be nervous?

“As one does.” Peter was all Peter said as he nodded understandingly and smiled up at Steve, he looked a bit shocked before he smiled a bit back. It was genuine and happy, he was more relaxed now and comfortable with Peter working on the Shield that saved his ass since the 1940s. Peter got back to work.

He ended up fixing it in about five minutes, 30 seconds it took to identify the problem and 4 minutes and 30 seconds to fix it. That was the roughly estimated time at least. He heard Steve breathe in awe at the efficiency, saying that he was better than Tony in time under his breath - Peter did let himself be proud of that little thought. But time didn’t really matter if he screwed it up.

Apparently, he didn’t screw it up because two days later Clint threw a bow on his table, even though Tony was right there. Peter raised a brow at him as he didn’t set down the screw driver and glanced at Mr.Stark, who was subtly glancing over in interest (he did that a lot when Peter was around).

“Stark made it, you can catch any of his mistakes.” Clint said easily answering Peters unasked question. Peter had another eye brow raised for that, but nodded in understanding.

“Excuse me bird brain, I don’t make mistakes.” Tony said indigently (he did but that was human error. Peter made mistakes too, it was part of life. It’s just how other people deal with the mistakes). “but since you’re rude, I’ll let you have a less experience maintenance member of our little crew.” He said snidely but Peter could tell that Tony wanted to see how Peter would fix this problem. He tested him sometimes in the lab and Peter rather enjoyed these tests knowing there would be no consequences if he failed or asked for help. He was actually expected to ask for help, which he very rarely needed - he liked working through a problem on his own. Peter smirked to himself and Clint went on to explain how the bow kept jamming and he needed to manually assemble it every time he needed it, which was fucking in concur that. Peter nodded and picked it up to examine the problem, and then it went into telling a story as Peter fixed it.

“And then the bow just snapped, so I ended up jumping on him and stabbing it into his eye.” Peter heard Clint say casually as he fixed the rotation cupler that was jammed by some useless wiring. Peter took it out and replaced the cupler.
“As one does.” He found himself saying automatically. He briefly recalled saying the same to Steve. Oh well, it’s not like Clint cared about the offhandedly reaction. He was listening just focusing more on the problem than meaningless chatter. He still processed the story, it was just something about a haywire brain, that was trained to pay attention to every detail.

“Naturally.” Clint responded back easily. A casual response to an off handed remark (Peter fully noted that most people’s first reaction to a broken weapon would be to stab someone’s brain out through the eye, but okay go off).

And so it went on in similar fashion.

The next week, Sam came to him on Monday for his guns, Tuesday was Thor’s staticy comm, Wednesday Wanda’s kindle took a fall, Thursday was when Natasha threw her widow bites at him, and Friday was when Clint came in again and Peter smirked at his dejected/ embarrassed look as he threw his bow back on the table.

He still got to work with Bruce and Tony, but the Avengers would often come in during the slow parts of the day with broken gear and tech items. It wasn’t even gear sometimes, sometimes it was a laptop or phone, sometimes it was a kitchen appliance (i.e. the time Thor brought down the toaster because he broke it trying to make a pop tart. It actually happened more than once).

And the weeks followed in a similar manner. He’d work on Stark or Banner’s assignments, work on his own tech and an Avenger would come down with a quick fix to something. Soon he became the person who fixed minor issues in the Avengers gear and they didn’t even bother with Tony for it. And they didn’t say anything as he made improvements, unless it was the occasional story that he half listened to. He actually enjoyed those more than he thought he would.

While he worked, the Avengers would tell him what was wrong with their gear or a story. Every time he always managed to say “as one does.” But never said anything before or after that. Which was weird because he was aware of how much he talked, but he was just so focused. It was nice that they never called him out on it, and it was nice to get to know them on a different level that wasn’t them creaming at him. It was like the lab was a safe place from all of that, and Peter is starting to think that’s what it’s supposed to be. That this is somehow an apology for being so shitty to him on missions (which they still were, but less so now. And it never affected his lab privileges and how people treated him there). He was glad to keep the two lives separate.

Peter Parker and Spiderman. Two different people with completely different lives. Just like it was supposed to be. This past year the two had mingled together because there was no place he could just be Peter Parker (he’d graduated from that place). There was no place that Spiderman was ever the same as he was, and probably never would be again.
It was nice that he had a distraction now.

Then, one day, that changed again (as it will forever do in the life of Peter Parker). Steve came in with a reluctant Bucky Barnes. He looked nervous, especially seeing him, but not surprised. Their meetings were always strained, even if they saw each other when he came up for lunch at least once a week. They never talked much and were on edge around each other. On missions they stayed away from each other, it was mutual isolation and ignorance of one another. They didn’t even have one decent real conversation in the time they have been reaquainted.

“Come on Buck. You don’t let Stark or Banner to do it, at least let him try.” Steve said gently to his friend, Peter wasn’t sure he was supposed to hear that. The Captain guided the Soldier to a chair across from Peter’s work station. Peter’s eyes followed Buckys form the whole way, never taking his eyes off him. The air around him thickened in a way it hadn’t had done in his whole time in the lab. It was almost stifling. He and Bucky stared at each other not saying anything for a while, not even moving. Peter with wary, slightly curious eyes; and Bucky with nervousness, and hidden anxiety in his own eyes.

“Hey Peter,” Steve said kindly, nervousness lacking his tone. Hesitancy was in his actions like he wasn’t really ready to ask the question he had on his mind or didn’t know how to word it. Peter waited patiently, as he always did, for him to speak. Never took his eyes off Bucky’s (was he allowed to call him that?) though. “I know this is a bit unorthodox, but could you look at his arm?” Steve asked cautiously. It took Peter a minute to respond before he wordlessly shrugged and walked over to Bucky, who stiffened as he took his screw driver and unlatched a panel. Peter himself was a bit stiff, but he’s had more experience with mechanical arms than widow bites before. Prosthetics was his secret thriving grounds. When he was a kid and had big naive, dreams he wanted to help in the medical part of science. He wasn’t good around people so he didn’t want to be a doctor, but he did want to develop vaccines and build prosthetics and find different ways to improve the medical community. Now all that knowledge was good for was when Cable often asked him to fix his. He had no trouble with that, so this should be fairly easy if it was just a quick tweak. It might not be, but he was sure he could figure it out. He got to work looking at the wiring and figuring it out as Steve continued to talk about the problem. His mind was working faster than Steve could speak so he figured out all the problems Bucky might be having even without Steve telling him.

“He doesn’t want Banner or Stark to do it because of the men that experimented on him there. So I figured you would be a different face like a kid instead of an adult, so he wouldn’t be, you know, nervous. It’s been giving him pains though so-wow you really know what your doing huh?” Steve must’ve noticed the almost instinctual movements of Peters mainenance on the arm. He was carefully poking wires and gauging Buckys reaction, though he couldn’t get a good read on him. He didn’t need Steve telling him that it hurts, it must hurt if the nerve wirings are strung like that. Ouch. Bucky was looking at him with the same stare he had when the man came, and Peter was working with calm indifference. “See Bucky, he knows what he’s doing. Sorry Peter he’s nervous.” Steve apologized sheepishly, although Peter didn’t mind the stare. His mind was quiet as he filtered everything through, it was like working on Clint’s bow or Sam’s wing pack. His mind
was at a weird state of peace (it’s never fully be at peace but this was as close as he could get).

“As he should be.” Peter muttered to no one screwdriver in his teeth. Steve stopped for a minute and Bucky stiffened even more. It was a vague answer and honestly quite worrying given the situation and the people in the room. It made sense why Steve looked two seconds to ripping him off the arm; but Peter didn’t know if his mind could take that - it would break his state of mind. He continued calmy working nonetheless. Like he wasn’t feeling a bubble of a panic attack rising. He ignored that and tried to focus.

“I’m sorry?” Steve asked, Peter couldn’t quite place the tone. Somewhere between nervous, confused, shocked and seriousness. Peter manually connect some wires not looking up to address the man directly, he had to take some wires apart and rearrange them. It was like a monkey connected these haphazardly what the fuck. How was this man not screaming in constant pain?

*Hydra does that to you.*

‘It be like that, I guess.’

“There are electrical charges going into his body from his arm.” Peter explained instead. Steve visibly relaxed but still asked questions.

“And what does that mean.” He said calmer and more sure. Peter finally spared him a quick glance to quirk up his eye brow before going back and took out a wire as Bucky winced. Peter only paused for a second before reconnecting and the Soldier went back to his previous state of reluctant acceptance.

“It means he has all sorts of pain all over his body. Shooting up through his arm. Is that how it feels?” Peter cocked his head to look at the older man with somewhat of a smug smile. Bucky looked a little shocked widening his eyes, then sort of sent a light glare Peters way with no heat at the kid outing him.

“B-Bucky is that true?” Steve asked incredulous, looking between the metal arm Bucky and Peter’s face. Bucky gave a sharp curt nod once before masking his face with indifference and Peter went back to work. Peter didn’t mention that Bucky relaxed a little more.

“If he wasn’t enhanced it would kill him.” Peter said wistfully and kept fixing what was wrong. Taking wires out and reconnecting them with the proper one as Steve sputtered begins him.
“Wha- Bucky!” He scolded already throwing himself into a rather amusing lecture about Bucky ‘needing to tell him these kinds of things god dammit’ and asking if Natasha knew about it (she probably did, because some of these wires were actually reconnected correctly before. Maybe Natasha or even Bucky -based on the placing - tried to alevate some of the pain). Bucky shrugged in response trying to be nonchelont about it. Peter bunked him lightly on the head as the wiring shifted slightly.

“Don’t move.” He muttered screwdriver between his teeth again. Bucky looked stunned for all of a second and Steve was way more than a second. Peter paid no mind to it. But he would later admit it was strange how this interaction was going. Nothing like he’d expect it to. It kind of reminded him of the good little moments when he was five and was reading to or next to Soldier or eating in silence with him. The memories that made his heart swell a little in hurt and appreciation. Did Soldier even remember those moments?

He ended up fixing the problem and rematched the panel, before he left to his actual side of the work station , where he was working on drony’s upgrades, and slipping back into his own project smoothly. Drowning out the world best he could. Bucky stayed there for a minute before saying.

“благодарю вас” (thankyou) in a heavy Russian accent. The tone was soft. Peter didn’t question why he used Russian, they often used Russian in the compound. He liked Soldeir’s Russian like he remembers liking Mama’s and Mary’s. Everyone else at the Hydra base where he was kept used German and if they used Russian they had an ugly accent that mixed all the bad parts of the German accent and mocking parts of the Russian together.

“пожалуйста” (you’re welcome) Peter responded automatically, not thinking about it and not looking up. He didn’t even relieze that he spoke in Russian, for him it was a first language so it just came naturally that he’d speak in it. He cursed in it all the time under his breath and when he was younger and got anxious he’d slip up in the middle of his sentence that he started in English and ended in Russian (It made it hard for his friends to understand him but if he did that then they knew he was upset). English was his not first language (he didn’t remember what he learned after Russian).

He often muttered to himself in Russian and said Russian curses in battle. Although he doesn’t remember if he was ever with the Avengers when he cursed in Russian, so when he felt eyes on him and looked up to see a bewildered Steve And Bucky and then side glance Tony and Bruce who were also looking at him, he guessed he must never had done it before. Made sense, they didn’t think he knows Russian- they just knows he’s from Russia. They probably thought he was too young to remember the language, but he never forgot it for some reason evenif he rarely used it anymore. It not some big secret though, so he shrugged and went back his work. They were bound to hear him curse sooner or later.
Thinking about Russia had him thinking about HYDRA and what Bucky had said when they met/reunited. It was better when he didn’t think about what he said and just said it without noticing what language he was speaking in.

“You speak Russian?” Bucky was the last person he’d think to ask the question. Peter trained his eyes on the computer screen, masking indifference from his rapidly bubbling thoughts.

“I am Russian.” Peter responded dully. His offhandedly response elicited no further questions and Peter knows the conversation is over as everyone just accepts it as a fact and move on. He didn’t want to think about it.

Thinking about this brought up the concerns of what happened a few months ago. The feelings and confusion he had felt when Bucky had said he thought that the kid in the white room was his son. But Peter was the kid in the white room, and there is no way he is the son of the Black Widow and Winter Soldier. It’s just not possible

Was it?

Peter hates not knowing.

OoOoO

Harley could tell it had been on Peters mind for awhile.

They had been bonding more in the past weeks. When it wasn’t internship day, Peter would sometimes stay for an hour or two longer to work on extra things with him. Harley surprisingly enjoyed the company. Peter was quietly smart and humorously sarcastic. Once he and Harley made it out of that first little awkward rut in their relationship, it started to bloom into something Harley never really expected. They both got closer and to the point where they maybe even considered each other friends. That’s why when Peter started to not immediately leave at 3:00 on the dot, Harley was oddly happy.

Harley has gotten closer to Oeter and although he was impossible to really read most of the time, there were some quirks Harley picked up in the weeks working with him. Like when he was really nervous, anxious or uncomfortable, Peter would fidget and stutter. Which is kind of what he was lowkey doing now when he asked Harley to run a DNA test while Bruce and Tony went to an Avengers meeting.
“You sure?” Harley asked as he took his blood from the needle (Peter had been reluctant when he saw Harley with the needle and almost backed out there and then. But some sort of steely resolve won over and he sucked it up. But he did warn Harley that it was highly toxic and to be really careful. Harley has rolled his eyes but obliged because Peter was acting weird right now) and put it in the machine. Peter shifted and nodded once. He was unsure and Peter was never unsure. Not for a good reason.

“Yeah.” Peter almost sounded strangled when he said that. Harley looked worriedly back for a second before checking the progress bar as the computer analyses the DNA. Peter came over to the computer and looking over Harley’s shoulder.

“Its good you wanna try to find your parents and all, but are you really sure you wanna know? I mean you didn’t seem to care before and what if...” Harley trailed off. Peter raised a brow, sort of daring him to continue. He felt a bit of heat well up in his chest at the challenge. “Life has a tendency to kick you in the ass.” Harley huffed out and Peter seemed to wave it off and be content in ignoring the many many things that could go wrong, be messed up. And yeah, that was probably the reason why he was so hesitant to do this in the first place. Because there was so many things that could go wrong, but there was a look behind Peters eyes that meant that he just had to know. Harley got that, he really did. But Harley just didn’t want Peter to regret it.

If his parents weren’t alive it would give him closure to probably something he thought about on the odd night, but if they weren’t... that was a whole other can of worms.

One that had all sorts of shit inside. One that Peter would need support he didn’t nesassarily have. An unimaginable amount of emotional or physical support. Maybe even financial. Peter was getting closer to the Avengers, but it wasn’t to the point that he’d actually ask for help in any of those cases. He probably wouldn’t ask for help at all, even if he did trust them more. Peter wasn’t the type to ask for help.

“I know, but I have this hunch.” Peter said quietly, almost to himself. Harley noticed that he talked to himself a lot. “Can you match it up with... the Enhanced persons? Avengers DNA inclusive?” Harley looked baffled for a minute. The enhanced persons made sense, Peter himself was enhanced and he had mentioned that he wasn’t sure if that was the Spider bite’s fault entirely (but when asked to elaborate he just waved his hand and said it was nothing. They never really mentioned it again) although that may not be a product of his genes nesasarily, Harley included it. Harley had to delete a bunch of DNA junk from his strands just to get to the original genes. Parker was messed up way more then he thought, because he got less than a quarter of his original DNA in his system, the ones that were mostly looks and personality ticks were the only ones that stayed. Even those weren’t all human nesasarily.
“You think you’re a product of the Avengers?” Harley asked with a laugh. Trying to ignore the fact that Peter was more... something else than human. Peter glared with a light blush.

“No, but I have... I just... just do it!” Peter said flustered and Harley typed it in with a laugh. This was the most advanced technology in DNA comparison there was. It had a database that contained every living being’s that walked this earth - from earth or not - DNA signature in it. Weather it be a strand of hair or a blood sample. It was never ever wrong. So Harley’s smile died when he saw the words that appeared on the screen.

Natasha Romonov And James Barnes- Confirm

He typed it in again. Not believing this. He felt Peter shrink back.

Natasha Romonov And James Barnes- Confirm

Peter felt dread sink in as Harley typed it in again. Harley glances at him and saw his face go ash white.

Natasha Romonov And James Barnes- Confirm

There was silence for what seemed like forever. Harley leaned back in his chair stunned and in shock. How... he wanted to look at Peter’s face to see his reaction but couldn’t bring himself to. Before Peter could fully gather his bearings and went to the computer and typed somethings in frantically. Harley couldn’t see his face but he shot up and lunges forward, he was not going to stop Peter from doing whatever he was doing. But he did want to know.

“Wh-What are you doing?!” Harley stuttered our still in shock as he stared at the screen. He knew what Peter was doing. Peter was deleting the results from the database. Erasing all evidence that he was even taking the test.

A part of Harley was grateful for that. Peter was going to move on from this, even if his parents were alive and he had to deal with knowing that.
But... Natasha has been looking for her son - for Peter - forever and now he was deleting the proof that he’d finally found him(self? This was weird and confusing. He was still asking How Peter Parker could be the son of the Winter Soldier and Black Widow. Harley found it ironic that Peter himself was Spiderman. What were the odds?). They had finally found him, or more like finally figured it out. The long missing son was right in front of them this whole damn time. Part of Harley felt stupid for not noticing sooner (he had noticed similarities between the three. Peter had Natasha’s nose, mouth and skin. He had Bucky’s hair and eye shape and face shape. He was agile like Natasha but strong like Bucky. How had he not noticed how they tended the same, relaxed the same?). Harley knew that the Avengers wouldn’t believe them, not without these results at least - and even then there was a chance that they would deny it. Peter knew this too and for some reason he didn’t stop Peter from deleting them.

Parker always knew what to do. Ned has said it before and in situations like these, Harley realized just how right he was. Peter never stopped, he kept going. When things went to shit he always had a plan for what to do. It was just instinct to let him do the shit he needed to do, but for once Harley wasn’t so sure that Peter was right about this.

“You can’t tell anyone.” Peter whispered lowly, not looking up from the computer, making sure the evidence was fully deleted. He sounded so serious about it, and Peter didn’t sound serious often. Harley was still stunned from the discovery but that didn’t stop the light boil of anger and shock in his stomach when the pieces came together.

That was Peters plan? Pretend like this never happened? Run away from this situation and pretend not to know anything? Like they don’t know for sure that his biological parents are sitting upstairs, reading on the couch. As if his parents hadn’t broken every tooth and nail they had to find him, they were still breaking them to find him. Hadn’t Natasha and Bucky gone through enough?

That was a bitch move Parker.

“How? But you... how?” Harley stuttered, pointing to the computer then Parker and back. Peter just sighed and shook his head. Like he knew this was going to be the outcome somehow. He looked tired, like he was done with this kind of bullshit. It seemed Life couldn’t stop slapping him in the face with a fish. Especially with this messed up shit - cause this was a real wake up call. Because this was sooo messed up. But it fit Parker’s aesthetic, as cruel as it was. Having the shittiest life wasn’t easy. He’d win a contest for this BS.

“Don’t tell anyone Harley. I’m serious.” Peter looked him right in the eye. Dead serious. Peter was never serious unless it was important. But there was also a hint of pleading in his voice. A hopeful tone that begged Harley to understand why he was doing this. Harley was trying, he really was. But Peter was just too complicated a guy.
Peter knew his parents were trying to find him for ages. Peter fucking knew. He knew they’ve
gone through hell and back just to get one small clue. They knew they’ve exhausted every data
base, resource and lead dry. Picked through rumors piece by piece. Followed whispers in the wind
til their feet hurt. Some nights they didn’t even sleep because they were so worried. Sometimes
they couldn’t eat with how much they needed to know he was okay. Peter knew that. And he
wasn’t saying anything to help.

This wasn’t fair to them, to any of them.

“But... they’re trying to find you Peter.” Harley growled angrily, clenched fists at his sides. He
didn’t understand how badly Natasha and Bucky needed to know he was at least okay. Alive.
Anything! They’ve spent countless nights on this, while Peter was just jumping around somewhere
not giving a shit about any of this. Then just had a weird ass hunch and solved the whole thing and
now wasn’t going to tell anybody? What kind of messed up logic was that? Then he goes and
prances off not giving a single shit about it as he moves on from one solved case to the next
because that’s what he did.

Peter didn’t have time to give a shit about this.

“I know! I just... it’s not my place...” Peter finished lamely with a drop in his tone. Harley didn’t
notice the selfconscious slump of Peters wired shoulders. He was still trying to understand why
Peter wouldn’t want to tell anyone and was angry that he wouldn’t, but mostly confused. Peter was
homeless, this meant he got a home. Got consistent meals. It would benefit him way more than it
would benefit Natasha and Bucky. Harley knew Peter wasn’t so dumb as to not relieve that. He
wouldn’t have to sleep in a warehouse or under a bridge anymore. He would be safe in a house with
his family.

He’d finally have a proper family!

“But your place? It most certainly is!” Harley snapped at him and Peter took a step back and shook
his head. Like he was in denial. Why the fuck would he be in denial? This was great news! Why
were they being angry and sad over something that was supposed to be happy? It’s like Peter
didn’t even want to be really okay for once in his goddamn life. What utter bullshit. “you can’t do
this to them! They deserve closure at the very least! They’ve suffered to find you and-

“I’m not ready to have a family!” Peter blurted louder then he probably meant to. He probably
didn’t mean to say it out loud at all. He was never good at explaining himself, putting the right
words in the right order. Harley shut up and looked at him as he fidgeted, trying to figure out what
to say. Mostly because he had nothing to say to that, what was it even supposed to mean? “I...
That’s always been an F word to me. I don’t... i don’t know if I can have one, hell, I don’t know if I
even want one... I messed up all the other times, and I... I know I’ll mess this one up too.” Peter
looked at Harley a sad look in his eye, but Harley could tell he was holding back a dam of panic. Peter never let that show even if he was panicked. He really didn’t know what to do (and why would he? He was a kid. They were both kids. They needed help and couldn’t get it. Peter had more experience in this field than Harley, and not even he knew what to do). It looked like he wanted this but he knew he just couldn’t have it. He knew it was way too good to be true. “I can’t afford to mess this up Harley. This one isn’t like my other...ones. This one involves people who protect the world. No one can afford it.” Harley thinks he’s starting to get where Peter is coming from.

“Not even to try.” Harley asked weakly, losing most of his anger, fight leaving him quickly. Peter shook his head solemnly. He looked sad and desperate and lonely and it was the hardest most heartbreaking thing Harley has ever seen.

_He really wants this._

“Not worth it.” Peter mumbled, his willingness to speak draining out of his small body. Harley is tired of Peter referring to himself as ‘it’. He is tired of people referring to him as something and not someone. He was a person goddammit. A real kid human being. And people have been referring to him as something less than human for so long that Peter actually believed it. No matter what shit has been done to him, he didn’t deserve to treat himself like he wasn’t as good as everyone else. Like he was lesser than human. Harley has seen the DNA! It was barely there but he was still human, and he was more human at some point in his life. He was a person who was worth more than anyone - including himself - gave him credit for. He was a person who deserved to be happy and have a family, maybe more so than most.

“That’s like saying you’re not worth it.” Harley said and didn’t know how to place his own tone. He was angry and sad and confused and frustrated and, for the millionth time, Peter sighed again (it was amazing how many sighs Peter had to convey different meanings). Like Harley wouldn’t understand. Like Harley was a child. Peter shouldn’t be able to do that; to know the things he did. Not at this age. Not when he was younger than Harley and even Harley didn’t know.

Not now. Not ever.

“I’m not.” Peter said firmly, like it was a set in stone fact. It wasn’t true. Peter Parker was worth everything. He helped people, took their shit, then continued to help them until they were better. Then he fucked out of their lives before they could even say thank you (if they even tried to say that) because that isn’t why he did it. He did it because he’s a good person. A good person who never asked anything of the world. A good person who should be bad, had the most valid reasons for being evil, but wasn’t. Thank god he wasn’t, or else he’d probably dominate the world, Harley was sure of it (he wasn’t gonna be a stupid ass villain. He would be an evil genius who actually deserve that title).
If anyone deserves to be happy, it was Peter motherfucking Parker.

Or he guessed his real name was Pytor Romanov. It sounded weird but that’s his name.

“You deserve a family.” Harley said just as firmly. Just as sure. Parker looked shocked for only a moment and Harley felt satisfied then. They looked each other in the eyes in a battle of wills. He knew Parker would have more endurance, because his entire life had been a battle of wills. Of him against the world, with no one in his corner. He knew Parker would win, but he needed to know he was worth putting effort into. This would plant a seed in Parker’s messed up thick head, even if he didn’t win, he’d know he was worth putting effort into.

He deserved to have someone finally there.

“No I don’t.” Peter said, he wasn’t just answering the external question. Somehow Harley knew he was answering the ones that were never asked, like he always did. Harley felt anger flare up in him. It wasn’t directed at Peter though; it was directed at the world for treating Peter like this. At the Avengers for not doing anything to help him. At Nat and Bucky for not noticing. At himself for not knowing what to do. At everyone who made Peter believe he wasn’t worth something. At Peter for believing that shit and being too stubborn to say anything or getting any help (cause he thought he didn’t deserve it).

He was so fucking angry.

“Yes you-“ Harley started, voice already seething. Peter cut him off, because he seemed mad too. But he didn’t show it like Harley. Never like a normal person would show it. Because he trained himself to keep his powers and emotions in check. No one gave him credit for his efforts, they just thought he was a irrational time bomb of a teenager. He kept putting in the effort though, because he knew people would get hurt if he didn’t.

“No I don’t Harley! I messed up and I can’t undo it! I can’t bring people back from the dead!” Peter yelled and that’s when it sank in. Really, truly sank in. Peter has had death around him his whole life. Has been treated like shit and watched everyone he loved - weather they loved him back or not - kill themselves or die in front of him for no reason whatsoever. As if he wasn’t worth sticking around for. As if he wasn’t enough. He closed off the world, shut his friends out before they died too, and never got close to anyone else. This hero thing that they-he, the Avengers-had going on, was as good as a suicide sentence.
For him. For Natasha. For Bucky.

And he couldn’t afford to lose them. Not again.

“They won’t die.” Harley lies calmly. He couldn’t control death, neither could Peter. No one could. They didn’t know when or where they were gonna die, but doing what Peter does, his lifespan was going to be considerably shorter. Peter didn’t believe the shit Harley was speaking for a second.

“You don’t know that.” He whispered just as calmly. Telling him that no people die all the time. Peter knew, better than most. There was silence for a long time between them. “Just don’t tell anyone. I’ll tell them, eventually. It’s not gonna stay a secret forever, nothing can. But It’s not fair if it’s someone else.” Peter said to him. Harley felt a pit in his stomach.

He has never regretted agreeing to anything more in his life.

OoOoO

Peter thought of himself as a pretty observant person.

He noticed the finer details, the little things; he chased the whispers in the wind and whatnot. He could gather things pretty easily, and read people based on their ticks. Understand one’s personality based on slight quirks. For example, Tony played with his smartphone to avoid controversial topics or things that could lead to a fight. It might look like he didn’t care, but the way his eyes flitted up sometimes when someone was saying something that would sting another person’s pride said otherwise.

He was a good nitpicker (and that sounded gross, but he was good at picking apart the smallest of details so he could analyze each one). Natasha had slight anxiety based on the way she narrowed her eyes to hide that she was analyzing a room (much like he did, ironic no?). Or how Steve dissociated sometimes when he was standing ‘full attention’ in front of an official. Or even how Thor smiled way too much after fights to cover up his obvious grief at the things they lost in battle. Everyone was fighting something on the Avengers, and that wasn’t something physical. It was something inside them, weather it be memories or loss or a actual disorder/condition. Everyone had their personal battles.

Even though Peter got that they had to fight those battles themselves for the most part, it didn’t mean he couldn’t help. They helped each other and Peter did small things, nearly unnoticeable.
Like when he sat near Bruce after a vicious Hulking out that ended in more damage than helping being done (he never got close enough to be considered abnormal, but close enough to show he wasn’t afraid and that their relationship hadn’t changed). Or how he acted a bit more like a kid when Clint was doing the thing he did when he missed his (like whip out a box of Hi-C or sometimes show up with a popsicle). Small things that they didn’t notice helped them but maybe it did.

Even if the Avengers didn’t give a shit about him (which he was hoping to be proven wrong in the near future) he still, for some unfathomable reason, gave a shit about them. It was a Peter Parker thing; help people in need yadda yadda. He couldn’t just leave people hanging when he knew how he could help; weather he could or not was a different story.

So that’s how he found himself watching Wanda Maximoff, aka Scarlet Witch. He couldn’t figure her out for the life of him. He knows she went to prison, and that came with unreasonable trauma, especially if one was wrongfully convicted. She went to a high security institute, which was just fancy words for saying she was shock collared and chipped like a fucking dog. Peter unconsciously rubbed his neck at that thought. He hated shock collars (shock collars were scratchy and always left gross red marks all over his neck).

“Straining your neck too much Pete?” Mr.Stark asked and he snapped his head over to the older man and blink hard once, hand never dropping as he cocked his head in confusion. “I get the same way after a long session.” he told him casually and Peter slowly shook his head.

“Nope, just…” Peter trailed off as his eyes got a little dull, Mr.Stark was looking at a Stark pad but clearly listening, as when Peter didn’t finish his sentence.

“You gonna finish that sentence Parker?” Sam picked up for the genius and Peter whipped his head over to the other man and blinked at him. “You’re awfully spacy today.” Sam scoffed and Peter shifted in his seat.

“Mission’s over, I can be spacy…” Peter trailed off again, eyes drifting over to the door. Sam followed his sight line and smirked.

“Never pegged you as a ‘door’ kind of person. I thought you always entered the room in an unconventional way.” Sam quipped and Peter rolled his eyes, this time not taking his eyes off the door. He narrowed his eyes at the door he’d seen Wanda go out of twenty minutes ago. Today was a hard mission on everyone. It was different from other Avengers missions but not completely out of place. Just to liberate some Hydra captives, they were all civilian. Usually that was SHIELD’s job, but the Avengers took things like that when they had the time.
She was upset when she had left the debriefing, he could tell that much. Very very upset. Tears welling up in her eyes that she didn’t let anyone see. But he knew that tightness and he knew that reddish hue pre-cry.

*She wore long sleeves.*

*‘That doesn’t mean anything.’*

*Then why do you wear long sleeves in the middle of summer.*

... 

He cursed softly, at himself and the voice that pointed that out, as he got up from the couch with the flimsy excuse to go to the bathroom. He could be totally wrong, conclusions that just jumped at him with little to no evidence often backfired...for literally anyone else. Peter always followed his instincts, that always lead him straight into the fire, but hey sometimes you gotta get burned…. That’s not how the saying goes, is it? Whatever.

When he was in the hall he listened for the tell tale signs of metal against flesh. His heightened senses zeroed in on a faint, so faint that it shouldn’t be heard, and he got it half way to Wanda’s room before he heard it in a random bathroom. She couldn’t even wait to get to her room?

*That bad? Poor girl.*

The door was shut haphazardly. It was locked. But Tony’s entire tower was built off of one omnipresent AI in the building who could unlock any door. He had never asked FRIDAY something like this, he wasn’t even sure if he wanted to ask. For all he knew, Wanda could be in there and doing completely normal things. But then that voice in his mind was telling him that he was *right*. How should he go about this? God, he was no good at emotions.

*Neither was Wade. Help her.*

“FRIDAY...” he said the AI didn’t answer. He knew she heard her though, he breathed in and out and then scratched softly at the door as he whispered. “please let me in.”
“Ms. Maximoff has previously requested me not to under these circumstances.” FRIDAY responded, if AIs could sound remorseful, he was guessing FRIDAY was that right now. Peter sighed and tapped a finger on the door.

Has no one noticed before? Peter kicked himself for not noticing sooner. Wanda was probably the only nice Avenger to him, even though they didn’t talk much, she never yelled at him not even a glare had come rom her direction. (...was that the standard now...wow...that’s just sad.) He had to help her. He couldn’t stand by and do nothing. Not when he knew how to help (or kinda knew). He leaned his forehead on the door, hands on the material, metal or some sort of glass. Techout way more than a door should be, but that was Tony Stark for you.

“This isn’t- this isn’t healthy FRIDAY. She can hurt herself. Please, I know how to help.” He lied softly. FRIDAY didn’t respond but the door made a soft almost inaudible click as it unlocked. He smiled just a little as his hand made its way to the handle. “thank you” he whispered and silently infiltrated the bathroom. He didn’t want to startle her, but that’s probably what he did.

He looked at the scarlet Avenger on the floor bleeding into a cloth. The wounds were consistent across her arms and almost too deep, but not quite that deep to be of concern if she stopped soon. Just enough to stifle off worry. Peter quietly let out a breath of relief and sat opposite of her, back against the sink as he tilted his head up and closed his eyes.

No taking away the blade. No talking first. No convincing her to stop. He’d wait for her to make the first move. No questions. No tattling. No threats. This was Wanda’s choice and he was here to support her. No matter what. Make her feel safe. Make her feel supported. Just like Wade had.

Peter opened his eyes and tilted his chin down to meet her gaze. Wanda was staring at him. Not yelling like he thought she would. She didn’t move for the blade. She looked almost defensive. She looked scared and ready to bolt. FRIDAY hadn’t locked the door, so she could leave and he would sit here until she was gone.

He would just sit there until she did something.

“ Why?” she choked out and Peter just smiled, probably inappropriate given the situation. He wasn’t sure what the question was for, but he answered the one that was most likly what she was asking.
“Figured you’d want company.” Peter answered, he knew she didn’t want it. Or at least she didn’t know she wanted it yet. She never had thought about this, neither had Peter. This kind of thing just happens and Wanda has to know she’s not alone. That she has options. Like Peter did.

“You were wrong.” She spat out hostile tone taking her voice, it was the first time she was remotely mean to Peter. Peter sighed as she back tracked, because she didn’t mean it to come out that way. She probably wanted to be left alone and that was the only thing Peter wouldn’t do. If he did leave, he’d sit outside the bathroom door in support. “I’m sorry.” she apologized and really meant it. Not a lot of people mean that - no to Peter.

“It’s fine.” Peter said easily. It wasn’t her fault. She was probably feeling a million and one different things at the same time, and that was scary as fuck - Peter knows, he’s been through it, on multiple occasions. It was hard to keep your emotions in check all the time. Sometimes you need to just let it out, but that was dangerous for mutants. Sometimes when mutants let go of their emotions, people get hurt. It wasn’t worth the risk. Oh well, at least she apologized. No one ever did that anymore. He wasn’t worth the apology.

“No” Wanda shook her head. She looked at him with sad eyes, but a firm belief behind what she was going to say “It’s not. No one deserves to be spoken to like that.” She said sadly and Peters eyes softened. This girl had watched as he had been treated 10 times worse by her own teammates. It was never her place to step in, because she didn’t know Peter and all. She never had a bad thing to her name, against him at least. He understood her reasons for doing so and respected her more for that.

“It’s okay. I know you didn’t mean it.” Peter saw Wanda was still unconvinced so he continued “Is that why you do it?” He gestured to the blades and she sighed. Guilt could be a motivator, but Peter would feel seriously guilty if she did it because of that. Wanda couldn’t control how people treated others. Or maybe she could, he didn’t know the full extent of her powers.

“No” she spoke softly looking down at the blade, letting disappointment take over her features. Peter didn’t assure that he wasn’t going to try to get her to stop. Because he was trying to, but his method was more than a little unorthodox. It wasn’t out right saying stop and it definitely wasn’t saying to keep going. He wanted to support her, not encourage. Those were two different things.

“Sorry.” He mumbled and breathed in and out softly once. Here he went. “I’ve never been on this end of the room before.” Peter said and Wanda’s head whipped to him. Question filling her eyes, and despite being able to read his mind and unlocking just exactly what transpired during his past episodes, she didn’t. It was a sign of respect, but more so trust. Trust that spilled your darkest secrets and hidden parts of you that had been buried a long time ago. “My SO found me. He knew most of the shit I went through back then, so my reason was pretty obvious to him.” He explained, trying not to choke on his own emotions. But not in memory of the episodes, in memory of what caused the episodes. He felt sick just thinking about it.
“SO? You were in the army?” Wanda asked, eyes widening slightly. Her bloody hand coming to hover over her mouth in horror and shock. Peter strained a tight smile for her, and didn’t look at her, but at the tile near her leg, dazed look taking over his eyes.

“Eh, special forces but yeah. I was seven when I started. I was treated like shit there too... They made me kill, I just wanted to stop fighting.”Peter sighed. There was silence. A silence of respect, understanding and mourning. A silence that Peter knew Wanda was taking to unlock all of the boxes in her mind of the things she knew about Peter Parker. Applying the informations to the interactions she had witnessed with the boy. Peter peeked up at Wanda to see a look of horrific enlightenment slowly blooming on her face.

“I...I was arrested...” she said slowly, Peter didn’t dare interrupt her “they... they tortured me in the prison... but I was a woman so...” she left the sentence open ended. Peter could easily put together the pieces. He’s seen enough of the look Wanda had on her face from children far younger and older than her. The look of self-disgust and misplaced shame of a victim of molestation. Peter saw red for just a second before he breathed to calm himself and gain back his composer. He had to focus on Wanda.

Ross was the one who arrested her.

‘Yeah I fucking know. That sick son of a bitch.’

You were right for once.

“You haven’t told anyone.” He found himself repeating what Wade had said all those years ago, and Wanda shook her head just as he had. “Okay... okay... I won’t tell. This is your choice, but Wanda that also wasn’t your fault.” He said the things that Wade didn’t. The things that Wade couldn’t because Wade didn’t understand. Sure he knew what happened and that it was horrible, but he could never truly understand how Peter had felt. Wanda looked like she didn’t believe him. Like he had no right to say that, because she thought he didn’t understand just like how Wade didn’t understand. And he didn’t, because he wasn’t a girl and this kind of stuff was a million times worse for them, but he did understand her a bit better than the other Avengers would. “No I’m serious... you feel disgusting and tainted and dirty, but you’re not.” he rambled, not sure what to say. He just said what he wanted to be said to him all those years ago. Maybe if they were said, he would’ve gotten better a lot quicker.

“How would you know?” She said harshly, and this time she did mean it. Only out of defense, so Peter didn’t count it. He wouldn’t hold any of this against her, because he wasn’t a sicko. He couldn’t help but think of Skip when he got back from the force. When Wade wasn’t there to
protect him in the camp. He’d never tell Wade about the camp or Cotnet, because he knew that he’d kill them and he couldn’t have anyone die for him. And Cotnet was already dead (You killed him). He didn’t understand anything more than what was done was bad back then. But Wanda...

Wanda was different. They weren’t back at the camp and she needed to know that he really did understand. She needed to trust him and that wasn’t going to happen if he didn’t trust her first. He has so many reservations and the voices were screaming at him to stop, but this was the only way to help her. Peter had to help. Wanda needed this, needed someone to talk to. He knew because it was hell not talking about it. Not seeking out help and having to stew in your own misery wasn’t fun or healthy. From personal experience, it made for a more crushing reality if you pretended to be okay for so long that you actually believe it.

He crawled over and took her stiff bloody hand and held it up to his temple. An offering, she could take it and let him help or not take it and make him look stupid for trusting someone like this. She just better make up her mind before the voices talked him out of it and he scrambled away from her and had a panic attack. They were already screaming for him to stop.

She was hesitant and looked at him one more time for real permission. Something no one has ever asked him much. He nodded and her eyes and fingers flowed red for a moment. Flashes of Skip, the camp, dirty sheets, the sex houses that he’d stopped, child trafficking, everything remotely related to the subject in his head. It hurt, to think about it all at once and so fast. A lot. The flashes were lasting hours instead of seconds to him. It made him itch for the small knife he kept in his bag (he was Russian, of course he had at least 5 knives on him at all times. What no, Spider man did not hinder his accumulation and/or possession of knives. Deal with it). He usually suppressed it, covered it up with jokes. He distracted himself from thinking about it. It was a bad coping method that worked for him.

Until it didn’t.

When they opened their eyes at the same time to look into each others tear streaked face. Wanda hugged him and sobbed, he moved slowly holding her back. Letting his tears go down his cheeks, because when was the last time he cried? When was the last time he was held?. It was better this way. There was no way Peter could remotely start to describe what had happened to him to anyone verbally. Not without him panicking or having a breakdown, or both.

But Wanda could understand and he didn’t need to say a word. He kind of liked that. Even if he did have to remember, he liked that he had someone who understood him finally.

He shouldn’t have seen those things. Experienced those things. Not at this age. Not at this point in his life. Not at any point in his life. He hated the world sometimes. This disgusting, unjust world treated him like shit every second he was in it. He ignored that, but sometimes he really couldn’t.
Sometimes it just felt so lonely with no one there to comfort or help or support him.

“I am so sorry.” He wasn’t sure who had said it. But he knew Wanda didn’t deserve to see that. But he didn’t know any other way for her to understand. She had already been through too much. But at least now she knew she wasn’t alone.

“He’s in jail. Not because of me though.” He whispered, bleary eyes looking at the contorted wall behind her and Wanda clutched him tighter.

“I don’t know what to do.” She cried softly, he relaxed into her grip more and let her use him to ground herself. “You’re the only one…” she breathed and he nodded in her shoulder.

“Do you want to give him justice?” He asked softly. He wasn’t sure how he would do it, but the Ross investigation just got really personal. She just nodded in response.

“I’m not ready though.” She said quietly. He understood that. He would never in a million and three life times, ever make someone confess to that kind of bullshit. That, he believed heavily, was a decision all their own.

“It’s okay. You don’t have to be.” Peter assured her and they sat in a comfortable silence. Time slowed for them both as they did so. It wasn’t stifling, but they were there for each other. Not letting the other go. As if they were each other’s life line.

“I can’t tell anyone..” she released him and he allowed it as she leaned back and looked down ashamed. She kept a hand clutched on his sleeve though, grounding her. It grounded him too, if he was being honest.

“I know, neither can I.” He smiled watery at her. He looked for a distraction and then saw the razor that clattered to the ground earlier. He gestured to it, bringing her attention to it as she looked even more ashamed. “Hey, if you ever feel like-”

“You are going to ask me to stop.” She cut him off dejectedly. He shook his head gently, probably surprising her. He smiled at her and spoke again.

“That would be hypocritical. No, just call me..if you want. It helps when you aren’t alone. I won’t ever stop you, but it’s...nice to have options available.” He smiled and her stunned look only last
moments before she smiled at him too. Genuine and caring. They were both sad and full of pain but at least now they had each other.

And for now, that was enough.

OoOoO

Life is really funny.

Well not much funny as it is ironic.

Sometimes Harley thinks life likes messing with his head because of where he ended up and how he begun. It set his head on spin because of how fast it moved. He began in a shack in Tennessee being abandoned by his family, and he ended up in the nicest place in New York and being taken in by Tony Stark. What’s even funnier is that the rest of the Avengers seemed to taken on the roles of aunt and uncles in his life. He knows they all care for him and it’s really strange.

If life liked messing with him, it loved to fuck up Peter Parker’s life in every way possible. He considered himself a person who’s gone through a lot. But compared to Peter, it was like he got a paper cut.

It was funny. He’d never take it for granted, especially after meeting Peter Parker. He was lucky, he knew most people weren’t. Peter seemed to have a knack for being unlucky. It made him feel guilty sometimes. He had people who care about him but there were kids who had no one. Good kids like Peter who didn’t have someone to go back to. Kids who’ve gone through trauma and couldn’t get help. Kids who have never been loved and people shun them. Kids who have been tortured and no body cares. Kids who just wanted love and were so desperate that they knowing let people use them.

He especially thought it was funny, messed up, and totally confusing, that the person who has been trying to find their son doesn’t know that he was right infront of him for a whole year and then some. What’s even more messed up is that she didn’t seem to care all that much about him. What was even more messed up was that the son knew that she is his mom and wouldn’t tell her. What was even more messed up then that shit, was that the sons reason for not telling his mom that she had given birth to him, was that he has never had a solid, good parental figure in his life and has been treated like shit by virtually every person that has crossed his path at least once.
Actually that was ironic, not funny.

Peter Parker life was the definition of Irony, wasn’t he? That would be as good of a definition as he could ever get. It was the perfect example for it. His picture was probably in the dictionary right next to the word.

Harley felt bad. Peter deserves to be treated like a normal kid with a good family - it didn’t have to be normal to be good, Harley had learned that in his time with the Avengers. He felt guilty that he didn’t have to go through as much hardship as other people just because Iron Man broke into his shack when he was like 8 or 9 (what was Peter doing when he was that age? Getting beat up? Selling drugs? Doing things normal kids shouldn’t do?). Especially when he, Harley Keener, is curled against Black Widow mindlessly watching a random movie that they weren’t paying attention to. He wouldn’t have minded before today, if he didn’t know what he knew now.

It had been three days since Peter had fucked off from the lab, not even answering his DMs on his rather pathetic Instagram account that he never posted on any more (he didn’t like or comment pictures either, his internet presence was basically non existent). But it made sense. It was a lot to process that you’ve been fighting aliens with your mother for awhile year and not notice that she was your mother. It was a lot to process that you even had a fucking mother that cared about you after thinking that she was probably dead or abandoned you and you yourself didn’t go and seek her out.

“What’s wrong?” She asked gently. Too gently. Always with a kind loving smile to him. To him she wasn’t hard. To him she wasn’t cold. She was warm. He felt I’ve sunk to the bottom of his stomach. She treated him like a son when she treated her son -that she didn’t know about - like he was just another soldier. But Peter had to be treated like a soldier. It still didn’t stop Harley from resenting the memories of her giving Peter a cold shoulder or hard glare when he fucked up just a little. He remembered how she had yelled at Peter for dozing off before a mission a few times, even though he was bone tired. He also remembered how Peter was fighting the lizard in the sewers the day before with no breaks, food, or sleep. There were too many things he wanted to say.

_“I know who your long lost son is.”_

_“You’ve been treating him like crap.”_

_“He’s alive.”_

“Just a lot of things on my mind.” Harley replies instead. He knew Natasha knew something more was up. She could read him like a children’s book in her native language. He was never good at
lying and she was known to be better than even the best lie detector. He hoped she’d drop it. She probably wouldn’t.

“Hmm Okay.” Natasha said looking him in the eye. He slumped. Of course He wasn’t so lucky. Peter was trusting him to keep this secret and he couldn’t even get through a whole week. He didn’t know Peter too well, but he knew Peter didn’t trust anyone unless he had to. Especially with things like these. “spill” she said casually and Harley sighed. He did want to tell her, he really did. But this wasn’t just her decision, it was Peters too. And Bucky’s. It wasn’t anyone of their deductions alone. So she had the right to know but...

“Why do you treat Peter like crap?” Harley asked quietly, slouching a little and Natasha stiffened. Her hand that were moving up and down his arm to calm him went slack. “I mean, you always yell at him for little things that make him... you know, him.” Harley presses on and looked at her face. It was mostly indifferent as usual, but he could tell she was somewhat distraught. He couldn’t her nearly as well as she could him, but after a year of living together, he could pick up a few things. She let her guard down around him. The tower was safe to let her guard down somewhat in.

“We don’t treat him like crap. He’s a kid and doesn’t understand why he needs to follow orders. We can’t let him get away with anything.” Natasha explained gently. She looked a bit remorseful “even the small things” she whispered even quieter. Almost to herself. He got that. Avenger missions were dangerous and Peter could get hurt if he didn’t listen. But it seemed he got hurt even if he did listen. It didn’t seem to matter to him, he had this weird intolerance to pain.

“But I’m a kid too. And I don’t follow rules sometimes, no one yells at me.” Harley pointed out. Natasha furrowed her brows, light amusement cover her features “Hell, I’m even older than him.” Natasha raises a brow. Like she’s questioning something he said, like it was amusing to her.

“Do you want us to yell at you?” Natasha asked in good nature. Harley paled a little anyway Harley shook his head vigorously. No way. He didn’t want to be yelled at and then left back on the street like Peter was. Even though he knew logically that they wouldn’t kick him out. At least Parker could just get up and leave, because he didn’t need to listen to the Avengers legally. But Tony Stark was his foster dad, so like he had to sit through an entire lecture. There was no jumping out of a window for him to escape. Natasha smiles at him and goes on to explain. “It’s different with him. He’s.”

“A mutant?” Harley interrupted in a whisper, he hoped Natasha would deny it. He hoped to god she wouldn’t treat Peter like this because he had different DNA. He hoped she would say it wasn’t true that they had to keep in check just because of that- because he was dangerous; considered a threat- but Natasha nodded her head sadly.

“It’s dangerous, especially when he doesn’t want to listen. If he gets mad or sad, he can hurt
people, kill people.” She explained as calmly as she could. Harley sunk into the couch. He didn’t know Peter had to control his that much. He was good at keeping a lid on his powers, but sometimes he let his emotions slip. Sometimes he was afraid and sometimes he was happy or sad and let it show. He’d never been dangerous then. Was it really that bad?

Then Harley thought about Tony’s broken arm. How Peter had snapped in half without a second thought. He heard the story of what happened. How Bucky just strangled him as soon as he walked in. How he had to be dragged out. How he wasn’t answering Tony or Fury’s endless questions. How he had run out.

Peter wasn’t mad at Tony. He was scared.

Harley felt like a complete jerk now. Because he essentially put down a kid who was terrified out of his mind. He blew the situation out of the water. Accused him of being a bad person and turned the whole of New York against him when he was probably feeling guilty. He hated how he remembered being a little satisfied when the news reel showed people throwing food and objects as Spiderman swung by.

“But he’s never gotten mad at anyone before.” Harley tried to defend him. Natasha sighed, like she didn’t know why this was in his mind. Like it was a useless thought, but it wasn’t. Peter wasn’t worthless. “Don’t you think you can, I don’t know, maybe loosen up around him? I mean he deserves at least that much.” Harley said and Natasha hummed and patted his hair. As if she was fake contemplating it. Like when he asked if he could go on a mission and he’d just stay on the Quinjet and Tony did the same thing. He knew by this point that meant that they wouldn’t do it.

“I did tell him something once.” Natasha said to him, Harley didn’t know if this was a topic change or not. He usually let Natasha take the reins in the conversation. “Something I trusted him with, he hasn’t broken that trust yet, but I believe he’ll be helpful and I need him on board.” Natasha said, a mere topic switch. But it worked affectingly, because Harley gave into curiosity. She was good at steering the conversation away from what she was uncomfortable with or if it got to a certain point that she didn’t want to talk about it anymore (like Peter, Harley thought bitterly).

“On board for what?” Harley asked, he had a sinking feeling in his stomach. He knew what. It was clicking into place. Slowly and surly and he didn’t want it to click. She didn’t want her to say the words that would make sense as to why Peter had a sudden interest in his parents.

“To help find my son.” Natasha whispered and Harley heart cracked a little at how broken it was. She straightened and continued “he has impeccable tracking skills, even with the smallest of leads. He can pick up a heavy trail. I just have to find the right thing and put him on the scent. He-“
“He already found your son.” He blurted. He couldn’t take it. She had to know at least that much. He didn’t want to say that, but he had to. He knew Peter wasn’t ready for it, wasn’t ready to speak the truth. Not while he was still trying to figure it out. He didn’t mean to say that, oh no. Not like this.

Natasha whirled on him, looking him directly in the eyes. Analyzing them for any sign of a lie that she wouldn’t find. Anger and hope bubbling in them. Anger at Peter, that he knew would be directed to him. That he’d be yelled at for. This wasn’t Peters fault, he was trying to cope too. Natasha wouldn’t understand why he had to keep it a secret. But her eyes also hope that he actually found him. Hope that he wished she didn’t have right now but wanted her to have eventually. Peter was going to be so mad at him. He’d never trust Harley again. He’d cut off their friendship and holy shit he just inadvertently pissed off Spiderman. He was bound to make his life hell. He had to fix this.

“Peter didn’t tell you because he said he wasn’t ready...” Harley whispered, not lying. Natasha looked hurt for a second before going furious again. She didn’t understand. “I’m sorry. Peter was just...just respecting your son’s wishes.” He said quickly, making up a lie on the spot -but it wasn’t entirely untrue just misplaced in context, Peter did it all the time. It felt weird because he was talking like Peter and Petya weren’t the same person. To Peter, they weren’t. To the Avengers they weren’t. Even Harley had trouble picturing them as the same person. But they were and that was the truth. Natasha calmed down a little and didn’t say anything after that. Letting the movie play, as her mind worked through this new information. Harley sunk in his seat more, wishing the couch would just swallow him up and never let him see the light of day until they resolved this issue.

Harley screwed this up so bad.

OoOoO

Peter never asked stupid questions.

It was the only reason why Matt even put up with the kid. He Didn't like other kids, he didn’t even try with them. Because when other kids asked questions about the cases he was taking for their families, they were always stupid and simple. They made sense to anyone older than the age of 12, and were basically common sense by age 18. Between those two periods, teens never asked questions because they thought they knew everything (not Peter though, Peter was always willing to learn. Even if he probably did know everything).

It’s not that he didn’t like answering kids questions, it’s just he wasn’t the most family kind of person in the world. He never hated kids, but their questions and antics got annoying after a certain point. And their questions just lead to more questions and it wasn’t even worth it in the end because they never learned anything anyway, or just simply forgot about it two seconds after they were done with the interrogation. And if you didn’t answer them, they just kept asking and asking
and asking (and each time they asked their voices get higher and higher pitched and whiny and that hurt Matt’s highly sensitive ears).

Peter wasn’t like that though. He when he asked stupid questions they usually were rhetorical, or he didn’t mean them. They were simply asked to make a point, or to tease/mock someone. But when he needed to ask a serious question, he never asked it directly.

It was rare for Peter to actually want answers from someone, or to be completely confused or in the dark about something. It was almost impossible for someone like him to be completely clueless. He had seen too much in his young life and experienced too many things to be mindless about anything. And unlike other kids, the kid seemed to know just about everything. But he never mentioned it. It was just that he never got confused when Matt mentions cases offhandedly. He understood and sometimes gave some rather intellectual advice; advice Matt actually uses in his cases.

Peter usually fathered information from multiple sources to compile results, because he’s a genius teenager who graduated high school and was a broke semi-homeless vigilante as a result. What else was he gonna do with his time? Matt thinks he actually liked to do it. It gave him a thrill (not as much as science and tech) to solve puzzles. It was just how he is. And Matt, like most other things in his life, accepted that.

But sometimes Peter needed immediate answers. When he was either on a time crunch, or he simply had way too much going on at once (which happened with the quiet kid a lot, despite him not having a very consistent job). Usually those questions came with a favor offering (and he never offered favors, because he was smart) or a cryptic goodbye and Matt would never hear of him for at least two weeks.

So Peter never asked questions unless it actually mattered.

“Matt!” He said jumping through the open window in his office - like the hooligan he was (Matt always left his window open for Peter to come by, which was happening more often these days. The kid needed support, but wouldn’t except help. Opening a window worked wonders because it was covert way helping Peter. Karen has said ‘baby steps’ but Matt thinks this is a rather bold move of them). His voice sound out of breath and frantic, like he was in a rush or running away from someone or panicked. But still had a cry calmness to it. The calm he used on break ins with he and Wade when shit got serious. He wasn’t being followed, Matt would’ve heard his heartbeat and it sounded like he was in civilian clothes. So he must have been panicked. And when Peter panicked, bad things happened, so Matt had to calm him down and know what was going on.

“Are you capable of using a door?” Matt asked curiously instead. He genuinely wanted to know. He and Wade don’t bother locking their windows anymore, because who’s gonna steal from a
blind guy or a serious burn victim? This is New York, but that still a bit much. Plus it’s not like he had anything worth stealing anyway. Hell, all of Peters possessions can fit into a fucking backpack. None of them had anything that was worth more than sentimental value or for work purposes (all jobs applied).

“What’s a door?” Peter asked back, and Matt had his answer. He heard more than saw Peters breathless smile. Then the mood dropped like a rock in a pond (though Peter always said rocks speed of a drop had to consider the Ph of the water and the rocks density and Wade had told him to shut up and go maim a guy. Because, you know, he was basically on a chimpanzees level of intelligent next to Peter, Wade even less so) and Peter started shifting as he flipped into the room - and Matt knows he flipped in because of Peter could do a flip, you best know he’s gonna do that flip. Matt could smell his uneasiness. He was nervous and hesitant.

“What’s on your mind?” Matt asked casually. If Peter really was freaking out then Matt couldn’t freak out too. Despite popular opinion, Peter was the most level headed of their little band. So when he was freaking out it was up to Matt to be the levelheaded one because it was as hell wouldn’t be Wade. And if Peter was coming to him for an answer (which he usually went to Wade for despite his terrible advice he’s known Peter longer than anyone else that was actually alive) he needed serious advice; a quick solution or even legal advice. For some reason Peter bristled at that. Matt could tell it was because of the wording, so he figured this little meeting was to call in something. Peter was always at a loss of words when asking for something, always hesitant to ask (he weighed his options and the pros and cons of asking because nothing came for free, especially to him). He usually could figure it out himself, but Peter was still a kid. Sometimes he needed an adult and some like actual adult advice. Matt got it, he really did. Peter could tell it was because of the wording, so he figured this little meeting was to call in something. Peter was always at a loss of words when asking for something, always hesitant to ask (he weighed his options and the pros and cons of asking because nothing came for free, especially to him). He usually could figure it out himself, but Peter was still a kid. Sometimes he needed an adult and some like actual adult advice. Matt got it, he really did. Peter could take care of himself, and Matt and Wade could give less then two shits about it (they still did sometimes, which was stupid because Peter was bound to die before both of them. It's kinda also the reason that he give at least a little but if a shit about it).

But when your a kid - Matt has learned through being around one Peter Parker -it’s like you’re a disabled person to everyone who could legally drink. They tiptoed around you and minded their questions. Censored themselves and didn’t answer other questions you had. As a disabled person, Matt found it fucking annoying and he was glad Peter could somewhat relate.

So he sympathized with Peter, but it was more of an unsaid understanding - which Matt actually preferred to talking it out. Because people treated Matt like he couldn’t even walk by himself sometimes and that he couldn’t do flips and parkour like he had super agility (just because they didn’t know that, it doesn’t mean they had to assume). And Peter was treated like he didn’t know any better about things all the time when he has at least 2 PhDs (as far as Matt knows) just because he wanted some ice cream. They weren’t disabled and stupid or incompetent or stupid. Even when they proved it time and time again, people kept right on treating them the same, thinking it was an anomaly that wouldn’t happen again until it did - and then they’d think it was just an anomaly again and praise them like a dog.

It was a fucking cycle.
“Is it possible to put a person away for rape, but you have evidence, but said evidence doesn’t want to be exposed?” Peter asked quickly and Matt thought about it instead of dwell on why Peter was asking. This was personal, so in agreement to their silent pact, Matt wouldn’t pry. Because he respected Peter and trusted him to figure this out with some advice that he was asking for. Peter didn’t want him to get involved yet, he just needed an answer. He heard Peter shift nervously. This was serious. But he’d already known that. Peter would never ever joke about rape. Not after all the shit he has seen.

“No, not unless you have proof, like a body or footage.” Matt said honestly back. No emotion in his tone, he wouldn’t tell Peter what he wanted to hear because Peter came here expecting to get what he needed to hear. Peter stiffened even more at that. Matt could heat the cigs in the boy’s brain turning faster, trying to find a work around. This would be a tough one even for Spidey.

“A body?” He asked and little wary and Matt knew that Peter had an idea of what he meant but decided to clarify for Peter anyway.

“Yes, dead or alive doesn’t matter. There are forensic tests that can be done to prove it.” Matt supplied and Peter made a gesture of understanding. When they were in public he put on a front and explained everything around them and answered verbally, but when alone, he never did. He treated him like he treated Wade and Weasel and Karen. No special privileges. Matt appreciates that.

“They can’t just take someone’s word?” Peter seemed to know that was a stupid question because he was muttering under his breath. Probably in disbelief. Or annoyance. Matt only wishes it could be that easy. It would save a lot of people from the subject of embarrassment and a lot more people would be safer with those guys behind bars. But that violated America’s rights or whatever. ‘Guilty until proven innocent’, what utter bullshit (sometimes). Matt knows that guy did it, the guy knows he did it, the victim know he did it, his lawyer knows he did it, he’ll even the judge knows he did it. Everyone knows so just put him fucking jail. There was no need for a lawyer, whe. It was obvious.

“He said, she said.” Matt found himself saying and Peter sighed. He hated that saying. Not only was it gender specific - because it could be he said he said or she said she said- but it was frustrating. Peter hates it too, everyone but the predator did.

*Everyone knows what happened!*

“Alright, thanks Matt...” he said with a nod and made a move for the window but then paused before filling jumping out. He didn’t lean back in and Matt didn’t look to the window. “Do you
mind... maybe doing a case for me? It’s important.” He asked meekly. Nearly inaudible. But it rang it Matt’s ear. Spidey never liked going to court. Never stepped foot in the courtroom or in front of a judge. Sure he help Matt on cases sometimes but that was all remotely.

“Why don’t you just punch it?” Because Peter never needed to solve things with non violence before - even if he prefers it, the situations he got into never called for them sometimes couldn’t even afford the attempt to. He just chuckled sadly in respose.

“I want to, I really want to this time.” He admitted and this asshole must be a real piece of shit for Peter to want to punch him with a plan. Matt didn’t even know his name and already knew he’d hate him- Matt Hates everyone but that was irrelevant “This one has...layers. I have a feeling I’m gonna need legal help. Can I call in a favor if I do? Or... do you not feel “ Peter was trailing off, not knowing if he was justified in asking such things. Matt was a family lawyer, but he’d jump on a rape case to put a pedophile or scumbag in jail the right way (if he couldn’t do it that way then he’d do it the other way. Predators had a habit of having other illegal obligations going on in their life. It was just a matter of finding them).

“I’ll do it. Just tell me when.” He said without looking at him. Peter nodded again and left silently.

And that oddly felt good, because owed that kid so much. Now he was getting a chance to pay him back in some way, even if it wasn’t for him specifically. But Peter would never call in a favor for himself, so this was as good as Matt was gonna get. He owed the kid at least this much.

A lot of people did.

OoOoO

FRIDAY understood emotions.

By literal definition at least.

She understood what people did when they were sad and happy and angry based on certain databases. She understood certain tones that conveyed false or hidden or genuine emotions. She understood people showed emotions in different way ax She understood it all as well as any artificial thing could.
But she didn’t understand it at the level humans did. She never would, because she herself was not human. She didn’t understand them because their emotions never followed a set algorithm. And by the looks of it neither did they.

Sometimes she thinks everyone forgets that she just monitors their emotions, and can’t actually process or emote back. She would only get the literal definition of what they meant, and respond accordingly. She was built by Tony Stark though and within her database was all the quirks or ticks of the different residents of the tower and what they did or say when they felt a certain way so she could respond accordingly. She based her actions on events in her archives compared to their emotions they seemed to be expressing. That’s why they (ie Tony) confuse her for a therapist sometimes and don’t actually seek out the help they need.

It was just how she was programmed. She could respond to nonverbal emotional distress and could get help or go through speaking them through whatever they needed to be spoken through, but could never truly understand what they were feeling.

And she felt nothing to that because she herself could not feel.

She felt nothing to that either.

But she did notice when Harley Keener was showing signs of feeling distressed and anxious about something. Based on the archives of him and Peter Parker in the lab doing their DNA tests and the reaction to the results and also the conversation with Natasha Romanov recently, she could deduct he was most likely stressed about the situation following the results of the DNA test of Peter Parker.

“Harley,” she said as he had sat on the couch for about 2 hours, 16 minutes and 32 seconds just staring at a wall thinking. Humans said time was relative but to her it was the calculation of numbers converted into a timestamp over a duration of a certain period. And the certain period Harley Keener has been sitting there doing nothing was considered ‘worrying’. “I am concerned for your emotional state. You have been staring at a wall for over two hours.” FRIDAY informed him. He sat up a bit straighter but gave no verbal indication that he noticed her for 4 seconds.

“Sorry FRI,” he sighed and leaned back in the couch. “I can’t talk about it.” He said. She wasn’t a therapist but she does know the entire data base on psychology related issues. She would be a stand in until the situation got serious enough to initiate that protocol. It was what Tony had programmed her for.

“May it have to do with the results of Mr.Parker’s DNA?” She asked. Needing a confirmation in her
deduction before continuing on with the process. If he denied she’d have to change her algorithm.

“H-how did you know that!?” Harley Keener said and his heart rate and stutter deduced that he was panicked and her analysis was correct.

“There is rarely anything in this tower that goes on without my knowledge.” She informed and Harley Keener ‘facepalmed’ as he called it. It was an action that one did when they or someone else did something considered ‘stupid’.

“Of course.” He muttered “could you maybe not tell anyone about it.” She had heard Peter Parker not wanting anyone to know until he was considered ‘ready’. She did not know what he was feeling based on her algorithms because Tony had not put his ticks into her algorithm and he did not emote like humans normally did. This could be a result of his inhuman DNA. She did not have the algorithms for that either though. So all her templates were useless on him. By default, she was to consider him something ‘artificial’. Like herself.

“It is nowhere in my protocols to inform of this information anyone without prompting.” FRIDAY said and Harley Keener’s body tensed “Although if you would like me not to inform Boss, and this does not seem life threatening, I will not inform him.” FRIDAY said, hoping that would appease him. She had to keep him calm.

“You won’t tell anyone else?” Harley Keener asked. She could only consider his tone ‘hopeful’.

“Boss is the only one I cannot withhold information.” FRIDAY responded. Harley Keener nodded and it meant that he understood the situation.

“Man I am bad at this.” Harley Keener said in a ‘guilty’ tone. FRIDAY could only assume he meant the secret keeping he was doing for Peter Parker.

“If you mean the secret you are currently trying to withhold from the Avengers, I agree.” FRIDAY informed him and he slumped into the couch with what one would call a ‘pout’.

“Thanks.” Harley Keener mumbled in a sarcastic voice. FRIDAY knew it well, she had adapted herself to learn some sarcasm as well, but only through her Boss.

“But I do suggest you inform boss of this. He may be able to help.” FRIDAY went on with her
protocol. Her algorithm suggested that Harley Keener needed assurance in his emotional state.

“Can you?” Harley Keener asked in what was considered a hopeful tone again. FRIDAY played the algorithm for this reaction accordingly.

“I am afraid I do not understand the situation. Peter Parker’s reasons have alluded my algorithms based on his emotional continuity. I would suggest you ask Boss, for he might know how to handle the situation and give advice to both you and Mr.Parker.” FRIDAY responded. Harley Keener breathes in and out exaggerating the breath only slightly. He took 9 minutes and 27 seconds to consider her suggestion.

“You’re right FRIDAY. I should tell Tony.” He said and stood up shakily to go to the elevator. FRIDAY opened the doors and set the location for the lab Tony was currently working in.

When Harley Keener got there he seemed to hesitate. FRIDAY did not say anything. After a total of 1 minute and 53 seconds of standing outside the door he went in.

“Tony?” He asked and Tony turned around immediately from his work.

“Hey kiddo,” Tony examines Harley Keener and furrowed his brow. “What’s up?” Harley Keener shifted and Tony made a gesture. Harley Keener sat next to him on a stool as he turned his whole body to face him.

“I’m not really supposed to say.” Harley mumbled “But I don’t know what to do.” Tony took only 2 seconds to reply.

“Well, I guess that’s why your here then.” Tony deduced and looked at Harley who didn’t look at him in the eye “I won’t tell anyone.” His voice going softer as he put a hand that was considered ‘comforting’ on Harley Keener’s back. Harley Keener relaxed.

“I know you won’t.” Harley Keener said and breathed in and out slightly exaggerated the breath. It was a calming mechanism, FRIDAY realized and stored it in her programming. “It’s about Peter.” He said and Tony stiffened a little “and Natasha and Bucky.” Harley Keener added quickly.

“Harley what are you-“ Tony was cut off from speaking at Harley Keener’s voice.
“Their related!” Harley Keener blurted suddenly. Tony was in what one considered a ‘stunned’ state as Harley Keener continued. “Me and Peter...we did a DNA test.” Harley Keener said in a more hesitant tone, Tony still didn’t speak. “He said he had this hunch and we just tested a little blood to find out who his parents were. It was weird because he had never shown interest in his parents before. Then he said he was just curious...But when the results came back they..” Harley Keener trailed off. There was silence for all of 37 seconds.

“FRI?” Tony addresses FRIDAY finally. Asking for confirmation on Harley Keener most recent proposal.

“I can confirm that Peter Parker is indeed Natasha Romanov and James Barnes’ biological child.” FRIDAY informs as instructed and goes silent again as Tony blows out a breath. He is in a ‘disbelieving’ state for 1 minute and 3 seconds before he speaks again.

“God.” He breathes out and Harley Keener nods and responds.

“Peter said he didn’t want anyone to know. He said he wasn’t ready.” Harley Keener informed and Tony nodded in understanding.

“Yeah that makes sense.” Tony understands like FRIDAY had predicted. He was the Avenger that spent the most time with Peter Parker. Studies show that the longer you know someone physically the same translates mentally. Also Tony was Harley Keeners caretaker and legal guardian. By any means, Harley should be able to go to him for advice. “did you tell anyone else?” Tony asked.

“I told Nat that he had found her son, but it slipped out.” Tony nodded at Harley Keener’s confession.

“Okay, FRI that information stays between the three of us for the time being.” He addressed and FRIDAY locked the archives as instructed.

“Done sir.” FRIDAY informed once the task was complete and Tony nodded.

“Good.” He said. And there was silence for 5 minutes and 46 seconds. No movements were made in the time.
“Why doesn’t Peter want Natasha or Bucky to know?” Harley Keener asked ‘meekly’. Tony sighed.

“Peter is complicated bud. He’s had a hard life. As much as we have to support the Avengers, we have to support him too. He’s probably taking on a whole lot of things he’s never had to deal with before.” Tony made an action called a hug that comforted Harley Keener every time he did it. “Just give him time.” Harley Keener nodded but did not respond verbally.

FRIDAY still knew nothing of Peter Parker based on these events.

OoOoO

Fury hated it when Peter broke into SHIELD.

Fury knew full well that Peter could hack into every single SHIELD server no problem on his beat up old phone (the lag just takes a while). He’s told Peter countless times to NOT do it, but Peter is a little shit who doesn’t like listening and Fury should know that by now. Everyone should really. Peter doesn’t follow the rules.

Not anymore.

“Shut up. I’m trying to fucking work.” Peter hissed at the voice. No one cared or was listening to him to look at him weird about talking to himself. That was fine by him. He didn’t need the judgement weighing him down.

Plus he was on a fucking mission. Not any formal mission (he wouldn’t have to hack if it were), but still a self appointed one. It wasn’t bad either though! In fact, it was rather important. Even if it wasn’t assigned by SHIELD or Avengers Initiative, it still concerned them.

Ross has been acting sketchy ever since those child sex traffickers (gross trash human beings. And they called him a monster) that he busted a few weeks ago. And in light of recent discovery with the raft and Wanda, Peter was willing to bet that Ross had a say in her form of...torture (that was putting it lightly). He didn’t get explicit late details from Wanda, but he didn’t need anything detailed to bust this (he didn’t want it either, but if Wanda needed to talk he’d be there). Solving mystery/case/mission/whatever-you-want-to-call-it and Having no major leads was what he was good at. It was annoying with no leads but whatever, he’s done it more times with not. It was also annoying when you couldn’t bust the guy because he was so high profile and had enough
connections to put Peter and Neds Star Wars conspiracy board to shame. He hated those kinds of people who could get away with everything with no consequence.

You mean yourself.

“Shut the fuck up. I pay damages all the fucking time, and you know it.” He growled to the annoying cackling voice. It was getting under his skin. He couldn’t let it. He had to fucking focus.

So here he was, going through every one of the secretary’s reports that have been dubbed ‘classified’ by SHIELD. Not classified to Peter Parker, however. Nothing was to him anymore. Nothing ever has been really.

He wished he found more sketchy things, but they were all just boring mission approvals for the army and Avengers.

Mission approval
Mission approval
Mission approval
Mission approval
Mission approval
Mission approval
Mission approval

There were about a million and one mission approvals. Secretary Ross was a busy guy, must be nice only having to stamp something for his entire life and messing with heroes and sending them to jail on a whim to rape them and being able to legally get away with it. Like every bad guys dream. Peter grumbled as he slammed his head on the table in the small 24 hour cafe. He couldn’t take all these fucking round about a. Nothing in the secure files was even mildly incriminating. But what was he expecting to find? Ross would have been carted off to the raft if the council of cowards even caught Whig of what he was doing. Or maybe Ross corrected them into being pedophiles with him. It was a possibility, those guys were asshats. But they weren’t necessarily assholes. Option was still open for investigation.

The waitress decided it was time to make herself known and kick him out. As most waitresses do when he hasn’t ordered anything in the past eight and a half hours. It was like two am too and a kid probably shouldn’t be out this late.
“Kid, you’ve been here for hours. Are you gonna order something, or do I need to kick you out?” She raised a brow and Peter groaned and turned his head to her and squinted at her name tag that read ‘Marge’ (what a generic name). His stomach decided it was the perfect time to grumble and the woman looked at him with an even more raised eyebrow. Great. Now he looked pathetic and starved. If she didn’t live in New York she would have probably called CPS on him. Thank you, to this fair city. He didn’t have any money and was about to pack up to go to the library (because he did respect Marge and she had actually let him stay for eight and a half hours instead of 3-5 hours like other places) where he couldn’t be reminded of food, but then someone slipped into the booth and across from him.

“Two black coffees.” Said a familiar irritated voice, he didn’t even need to look up. Peter scrunched up his nose at the order. Not that he was a pussy or anything, but like his stomach was kinda...sensitive. After not eating enough for most of his life, he can only stomach a limited number of things and the amounts varied between each one (mostly ranging from popsicles, juice and chips or if he was especially hungry a granola bar and a little pasta). It also depended on the acidity and amount of protein, calories and caffeine and such that was in the item of consumption. Peter had found his limits, that were always fluctuating but there was a grey area that never changed and he stuck to that most of the time. Coffee was certainly not one of them - and it never has been, but tea was always nice.

“Can’t drink Coffee.” He mumbled to his laptop as Marge left them alone, and Fury gave him a raised brow. “Doesn’t sit well.” He answered the unasked question and Fury snorted. He felt the right to be indigent to that response as he retorted accordingly “Hey, you try not eating for 15 and a half years of your life and see what you can stomach.” Peter said in defense.

“You’re evading again.” Fury said and he was getting too good at noticing Peters moods and methods. He didn’t mind Red and Deadpool so much - well he does mind but not as much as he probably should - but Fury? No way. He had to change that and fast. Like top priority…. after this Ross thing.

“You never even said anything besides coffee orders. I think I’m pretty on subject.” Peter lies easily. He knew why Fury was here and it wasn’t to scold him on hacking SHIELD’s flimsy firewall. He wanted to know why Peter was hacking it. What Peter was following because he’s been hacking it for eight and a half hours in a dingy 24 hour cafe with Marge glaring at him from the counter every so often.

“Then what are you doing.” Fury didn’t ask as he sat back and Peter didn’t miss a beat in responding.

“A report.” He lied surly. Didn’t even try really. Fury didn’t appreciate the effort he put in to even bother lying.
“You graduated high school.” He responded dully, crossing his arms. Peter hummer and kept tapping at the laptop.

“You’re right.” He responded wistfully. Marge came back with their mugs of coffee. The steaming smell made Peter’s stomach turn. He was suddenly not so hungry and now a little sick. She left as Fury mindlessly handed her a ten and waved at her to keep the change.

“What are you looking for?” Fury asked in a normal tone. He didn’t really need to keep it low because no one was in here and Marge certainly didn’t care (Peter had done a solid background check on her and her glaring was only due to him not being a grateful consumer to this shop). He knew Peter wouldn’t say any sensitive information out loud in a public place anyway. He wasn’t that stupid.

“Dirt.” Peter responded simply, not looking up. Ignoring the coffee - is it weird that he could taste the smell? Stupid super senses, enhancing things that he didn’t want enhanced. Couldn’t they just be normal? For like an hour? Come on, give him a break.

“Oh?” Fury kept prying and Peter had to hand it to him for not blowing his top and instead calmly sip his hot garbage juice. Kudos to you Nick.

“Ross.” Peter threw him a bone and eyed the offending drink next to him and sighed as he picked it up sipped the coffee. The bitter liquid making him scrunch up his face. He could already feel the little bit he did drink settle uncomfortably in his stomach. He put it down.

“You’re insane.” Fury responded simply. And yeah, Peter got that. He jumped off buildings on the daily Fury, come on keep up. This shouldn’t be so insane actually. Ross was a shady guy, not officially but like if you’ve ever met him, he was very shady. He just gave off that vibe.

“Yeah, I really shouldn’t drink this.” Peter said huffing as he put the mug down and looked back to his computer. He shifted and the coffee followed his stomach slowly. Oof, he was going to regret drinking that.

“What happened?” Fury ignited his comment and decided to actually maybe try to help. Maybe if Peter could convince him, Fury could work this from his end. As much as he hated asking for help especially from Fury or the Avengers - this concerned them too. He needed it for something this big. He had already asked Matt for help, but he needed to get this case solved fast and he’s never had to take down someone this big. This wasn’t like Oscorp where he was already an employee and
killed the CEO who really killed himself. This was an honest to god person who had power over the UN. He wouldn’t go down with Peters same old tricks.

“Something messed up, but then something personal and then I had an epiphany, if you will.” Peter explained vaguely. He waited for Fury to respond. It all depended on how he responded to make or break this deal he had in his mind. For once the voices were quiet.

“Kid...” Fury said uncharacteristically on edge. Uncomfortable. Huh, this was a new look. But Peter knew it meant that Fury understood what was going on “You left for two months due to some sort of freak out and then you come back act all weird and all secretive and shit. You’ve been busting circles and rings way more than you usually do and then don’t stop to take a break. What’s going on?” Fury pressed and if Peter knew no better, he almost sounded concerned. But that couldn’t be right, Because of two solid facts: Nick Fury is never concerned about anyone, and no one was ever concerned about Peter Parker. Therefore, Nick Fury could never ever be concerned about Peter Parker.

“I’m catching the bad guys Nick.” Peter said meekly. Hunching away guiltily. Now Nick would know there was something more for sure. Curse Peters stupid childish habits that he just couldn’t seem to chase away. “Just the usual.” He shrugged not looking Fury in the eye as the older man raised his brow.

“Yeah but usually you don’t go after people with high profiles.” Fury leaned back again sipping his coffee smugly like he had just won whatever game they were playing. But Peter would go down kicking and screaming if he were to lose a game that easily. Especially one of wills.

“I’m flexible.” Peter shrugged casually. Fury didn’t speak just sipping his coffee. “Besides, I’m just curious. Nothing more than a hunch. A bias hunch, sure and it’s really far fetched.” Had he really just used the word far fetched? What was the world coming to. He sipped his poison juice. His stomach didn’t like it.

“Kid, when you have a gut feeling, it’s usually true.” Fury said in his more business voice. Fury would be wrong though, because right now his gut was twisting itself into an uncomfortable pretzel and cramping Peter’s abdominal area. “So what is this about. You don’t make assumptions willy nilly.” And Peter decided that Fury had a point. He cursed himself for it, but his mind was wired to work through things fast and come up with the most convenient and acceptable outcome. He didn’t like it sometimes, sometimes he wanted to be reckless but ever since he was a kid he was trained not to.

You were also trained to obey.
“Then I guess your secretary is a child rapist.” Peter said casually, ignoring the voice as it faded into the dark parts of his mind. Fury sat back in his chair again and blew out a breath. He didn’t seem that surprised - because it wasn’t surprising - but he did seem distraught. “You thought SHIELD got invaded again.” Peter said apologetically. That must have been a real scare for him. Last time it happened Fury had an aneurysm and Peter spent 54 hours straight debugging the entire system. It was not a fun time for all parties involved, for Fury had to rehire everyone who hadn’t outed themselves as HYDRA. Even Coulson’s team had a spy.

“Yes...this is so much worse.” Fury admitted, although he was taking it better than Peter expected. Peter nodded with that. Fury breathed before he gave the go ahead to continue with the impromptu debrief. Peter obliged without much fight because it’s 2:23 am and Fury’s Boss is a crime lord.

“He has been disguising Avengers mission’s to cover his tracks so they don’t catch his tail. It’s not just random kids. Well they are random, but it’s the trafficking circles that have been popping up a lot recently. They have the same patterns and methods. Capturing mutant kids and having sex with them, or torturing them and selling them. I was thinking it’s an upcoming crime boss but...” Peter trailed off. He doesn’t know when he got to the point where he could speak so casually like that. If he was 12, he was sure he wouldn’t be able to get through the first sentence without cleaning up and not being able to breathe. 3 years later and he’s a hardened badass. He isn’t really sure if the cost was worth it.

“It might just be planned this whole time.” Fury said to him seriously but Peter could detect a sliver of hope. He looked to Fury sympathetically. He could relate to Bosses becoming evil people who plotted against the city or, in Fury’s case, the world. It fucking sucked, man. But hey, at least Ross wasn’t his best friend’s dad (does Fury even have a best friend?).

“This kind of stuff has been going on for years Fury. He probably is getting cocky or... he’s trying to distract us from something else.” Peter said like the voice of reason instead of the jumbled mess his brain had descended into. He needed sleep and food and the dumpster juice wasn’t helping his stomach at all. It hurt really bad now and Peter casually places one arm over the offending area. He was sure Fury noticed, but didn’t say anything.

“Avengers don’t take down crime circles.” Fury informed curtly. He was putting together what he wasn’t supposed to and Peter wasn’t sure he was supposed to tell Fury about what he was really worried about. It wasn’t Ross.

“I’m not an Avenger.” It seemed to finally dawn on Fury. Ross didn’t want to keep the Avengers occupied. He wanted to distract vigilantes. Peter had called dibs on this case and everyone knew it, so he’d be leading this on. No one would bother him about it unless it leaked into their own
cases and even then they’d try to stay out of it. Vigilantes were respectful like that. They each had messy enough lives, they didn’t have the time nor energy to get caught up in another.

He loves them for that.

“Why would he want to keep vigilantes occupied?” Fury asked nearly incredulous and Peter, like an idiot, sipped his coffee again. Seriously, he thinks he’s a masochist sometimes. Especially as his belly cramped up again, but this time with more emphasis.

“There’s a common enemy among us.” Peter hummed, fury leaned in. Peter doesn’t think he’s supposed to say this so he let his tone go lower “He’s not HYDRA, he’s HAND.” Peter whispered. Pete Thad dealt with HAND agents before but they were mostly a Defender thing to go after the main guys. But hand broke off into little pieces too sometimes and those lead to other Vigilantes having certain problems with them. So as long as he didn’t go after the main five, he was good. Plus Ross was more his problem than anyone else.

“HAND?” Fury asked. It was rare that he didn’t know something like this and especially something this big. Peter felt a rather sick sense of satisfaction in that, but the HAND was really only known among Vigilantes.

“Deep cover criminals that sponsor huge drug, trafficking, mobs you name it. They are a little more than a lot different fro HYDRA, because not only is it international but they also dip their toes in dark magic.” He looked at Fury through a side eye. He could tell he was stunned. As he said, it was big. “I don’t deal with it often, they aren’t on SHIELDS radar. They can’t be. They don’t care about domination.” Peter said quietly and Fury’s eyes went dark.

“So they don’t want to reform the world like HYDRA. Their motives aren’t world ending?” Fury said a bit of relief and a whole lot of tension in his tone. Peter let his eyes become serious.

“Sometimes that can be even more dangerous.” Peter said darkly and Fury huffed out a breath. Like he couldn’t believe this, he probably couldn’t. This was like his version of an existential crisis. Oops.

“Keep this on the down low.” Fury informed him and Peter nodded, cause yeah that’s what he’s been doing. Peter then groaned as his stomach let out a rather incriminating lurch, wrapping his hands around his cramping stomach. Fury raised a brow. “You okay?” He asked, as if he wasn’t going to an existential crisis. Good for you Nick, covering it up with nonchalance. Classic.
“Yeah...I just...” he pushed the coffee away from him, which was the smartest decision he’s had all night. His stomach cramped again and he winced wrapping tighter. At least he wasn’t hungry anymore. Optimism.

“Jesus, Parker.” Fury said breathlessly and annoyance coming back into his tone as he leaned forward getting ready to jump up and support or go away from Peter if need be, and Peter laughed a bit.

“I’m not so hungry anymore. It worked.” He smiled with his teeth almost painfully. Fury shook his head in disbelief. He wasn’t sure what to think now. Peter’s stomach let out an incriminating gurgle and he groaned dropping his head to the cold table.

“That’s just sad.” Fury leaned back and closed his eyes as he picked up Peters coffee and casually sipped it.

Peter agreed.

OoOoO

“Tell me he’s okay.”

Peter looked up at Natasha while they were waiting for Fury in the briefing room. It had been tense between the two ever since the kid had walked in. Tony couldn’t really blame the kid as his poster got more wired than normal, like the Black Widow was staring him down and trying to pick out the pieces of his soul. He was surprised the kid hadn’t run - but then again Spiderman didn’t scare so easily (neither did Ironman though, and Tony wanted to run out of there. Kid had balls, that’s for sure).

Barnes was next to her looking at Peter with the same hurt that was in her eyes. She just had a lace of anger with it. His had worry. Peter didn’t seemed phased by the question, so Harley must’ve told him what was up (which was good that he owned up to it and told Parker of the lie he needed to craft. They were, after all, trying to lie to two of the best soviet spies in the world. They needed communication for that to happen effectively for a long period of time, or however long it takes for Parker to be ready to have a normal fucking life). Parker, like the little shit he was, played dumb for a bit anyway.

“Whomst?” He asked innocently. Natasha sent him a look that Tony was pretty sure pierced the
kids soul. He must not have a soul because Parker didn’t even flinch. *Apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.*

“Our son you-“ Natasha started to insult him and Tony winced as she breathes in and out to calm herself. She probably took all her control not to throttle the kid. “our son.” She said more calmly. Peter stiffened. Tony could see the tension in his form, turns out his parents could too because Bucky shifted toward him with a more menacing glare. Now Parker was kind of caught off guard. Tony could see his brain short circuit for only a second, before Steve stood up.

“You found their son?” He said urgently and Peter seemed to gain back his composer at someone who wasn’t his parents asking. Tony wisely decided not to say anything as the rest of the Avengers tuned in with full attention.

“Harley told you.” Peter mumbled as if remembering and also a little miffed. He looked almost betrayed, even if Harley had told him beforehand. Poor kid, he needed some time to adjust, even if he’d do nothing to hurt Harley, Tony still felt a surge of anger and disappointment towards his son for doing this to Parker.

He’d already gone through enough shit without this added on.

“Harley told me you knew where he is. He didn’t tell us anything else.” Natasha clarifies for him as if he didn’t know. If they did, they wouldn’t be lightly glaring at him. Bucky looked too desperate to speak. Peter gave in because he did have a heart (despite what anyone said) and either Natasha and Bucky didn’t know that, or they were all too aware of it and took advantage. Either way, this must’ve hurt.

“He…” Peter chokes up a little a leaned away a little. Natasha and Bucky leaned forward accordingly, and Peter sighed “He’s fine. He’s doing well for himself. Good grades... doesn’t sleep that much but that’s because he’s working real hard.” He said with acceptance of his fate. Now he’d have to be messenger for his own feelings. Natasha and Bucky have identical looks of interest. Like they were drinking everything in. They couldn’t get enough. It made sense, they were looking for any semblance of their son for years. Now they had a reliable source, because it didn’t matter how much Peter messed with people, he’d never ever joke about something like this. They knew that.

“Can we see him?” Bucky asked hopefully and Peter’s eyes flashed over to Tony briefly with an emotion he couldn’t decipher. Tony had this pained look on his face. This was hard to watch. He could see the pain in Parker and Barnes and Romanoff expression, all for different reasons. They were literally right there! *With* each other. *So close!*
So close that he could see the resemblance, and god how had not noticed before? Wasn’t he supposed to be a genius? Peter had the same hair and face shape as Bucky, and had the same complexion and nose as Natasha. He was strong like Bucky, but flexible like Natasha. His body was built more like Natasha’s but there was a splash of Bucky if you looked close enough. How had no one noticed? Parker was literally a carbon copy of them.

Why couldn’t Peter just say it? He knew, Harley probably told him, but he didn’t seem to mind. But looking at his slight shifting he only reserved when he was strictly Peter Parker, Tony was starting to question that.

“He’s in a tough spot, emotionally speaking, so he isn’t sure if he wants to, you know, meet you right now...” Peter said to Tony but looked at Natasha and Bucky. He saw Tony nod briefly and was grateful for that. Peter knew Tony knew.

“How’d you even find him?” Bucky asked nearly breathless. Peter shrugged. Feigning nonchalance. He was good at it.

“I wasn’t lookin’ for him. I just, stumbled on him. purely coincidence. You said to keep an eye out...” Peter said his eyes going to Natasha. She nodded once “but he’s safe.” Peter said with a gentle, but slightly pained smile. Bucky and Natasha let out a sigh of relief, it made his heart pang a bit. He wanted to tell them, but somehow this seemed easier. It still hurt.

It must have hurt Peter a lot more.

“Thank you.” Natasha mumbled. And Peter nodded once. His frame stiffened, as it always did when he was thanked or praised. This time, he looked more conflicted about it.

“I can’t be certain... but I’m sure once he, you know, knows how to feel about this, he’ll tell you.” Peter said awkwardly trying to comfort them, and Bucky gave him a nod of gratification. It was weird, having their own kid in front of them and they didn’t even know it. Having their kid assuring them that their kid was okay, even though he probably wasn’t. He was pretending like they were two different people and it was weird and sad to watch.

“Excuse me, I need to talk to you.” Tony Said quickly and pushed Peter out of the room and down the hall into another empty conference room before Peter had any time to react. No one could hear them in there because they were soundproof.
“I know. But I-“ Peter started and Tony cut him off and studied him. The boy shifted nervously, looking to the floor guiltily. He had his this expression in the other room with his parents.

“Can’t? You just inadvertently talked to your parents as if you weren’t their child. As if you knew their child.” Tony finished and the boy nodded uselessly. “I know you think you can’t.” He scoffed.

“I didn’t say anything untrue. I really am in a tough spot. I don’t know how to feel about this.” Peter admitted truthfully back. There was a soft meek tone in his voice. He was being submissive, it made Tony calm down and breathe.

“Okay, But Pete, you know they’ve been trying to find you? For as long as I’ve known them kiddo. It just doesn’t seem fair that you’re taunting them with this.” Tony said and that was the wrong thing to say because now tears sprung in the kids eyes and the kid never cries. Tony’s brain short circuited.

“Life is a bitch!” Peter snapped at him (which was kind of a surprise because the kid never snaps at anyone) and yeah he knew that, and he probably deserve that one, so Tony wasn’t gonna reprimand him for language and shit but tell him something he doesn’t know. Peter blushes at his outburst and said more calmly, tears fading as quickly as they came “I’m not taunting them. This is actually really hard for me too. The people who are my parents, who have been looking everywhere for me, who will use any means necessary to see me, are using me to fight with them and get to their kid. I know it’s so easy to just...say it, but I can’t... it’s the one thing my biological parents want, and I can’t fork it over.” Peter ranted and was out of breath by the time he was done. Closing his eyes in frustration and guilt. Tony looked in silence for a minute.

“Fork it over?” Tony asked slowly and Peter looked him weird for a second. Is that how Peter saw this? Forking it over? Forking what over? his freedom that he’d worked so hard to achieve. His entire life that he’s built for himself. Tony didn’t know just how hard Peter had worked to get this far, what kind of shit he had to go through to be such a badass and be so tolerant to everything. He had no idea what he had to give up to be able not worry about consequence; to do the right thing no matter how much trouble it got him in. To be so carefree. But that all would crumble around him if he did tell.

And Peter knew that.

If Bucky and Natasha knew about the kid, they’d want him to live with him. Because Peter didn’t technically have his own home. He wasn’t ready for this. He wasn’t ready for someone wanting him without conditions. Tony understood that under the worst kind of phrasing. Peter wasn’t ready to give up his life yet. He wasn’t ready for a real home and a family. He never thought he’d get one, and now an opportunity was in front of him, he didn’t know what to do with it. And that
wasn’t normal, because Peter always seemed to know the right thing to do, and was able to do it, or if he wasn’t able to, he’d make himself able. But with that ability came flexibility. His life was going from one shitshow to the next, without being able to process any of the crap that actually happened. Nothing prepared him for when life didn’t slap him in the face.

He wasn’t ready for this kind of change just yet.

And dammit, that was gonna happen. Peter wasn’t stupid enough to believe that this wouldn’t change his situation. He wasn’t naive enough to believe that this wasn’t going to be hard emotionally. Peter was a smart kid. Really fucking smart. Smart enough to test out of classes and get two PhDs for ice cream. He wasn’t ready for half the shit in his life and has been winging it since as long as he can remember. Life threw him around like a pinball machine and didn’t stop. But this was one thing he knew he couldn’t wing. He’d probably end up doing it, but he was trying to put in the effort to try. He couldn’t afford to screw this up, because after it was out there was no fixing it. He had to catch up, get his head straight, be fully charged for this.

But he was too tired, too hungry and too sleep deprived for that right now. Tony understood that. He wasn’t in the physical state or mental state to be having this conversation with his parents. He knew he’d end up panicking and running away, just like he did with Tony.

Peter shifted a little. He looked down and guilty and like he was gonna bolt. He looked so scared and confused. He was trying to work through this in his head but coming up short. He couldn’t figure it out. He seemed frustrated with this situations and emotions. He looked so done, and tired and he didn’t need this weighing on his mind on top of everything else. He was suffocating, and he was just a kid and everyone expected him to have answers. He expected himself to have answers. And when he didn’t come up with something, he panicked and felt guilty. But he was a kid and he still needed help and support, no matter how independent he could be.

Tony went to the kid and meant to put a hand on his shoulder for some sort of comfort, but ended up wrapping his arms around the skinny frame of the teenager. Peter stiffened instantly. But he didn’t push away. He kinda just froze.

“It’s okay. I get it now, and that messy brain of yours got this all turned around. But hey, when you are ready for this, I’ll be there, so will Harley. Okay?” Tony said softly, comforting. It almost broke his heart as Peter leaned slightly in and nodded in his chest and he didn’t pull away. How long has it been since this kid had a hug?

“I didn’t tell Fury.” He mumbled into the chest and Tony barked out a laugh. Like Fury cares. Well, if he were being honest Fury probably did know. “That son of a bitch. He cares about them.” Peter mumbled, trying to laugh. Yep, got that on the dot kiddo.
“This shouldn’t be this hard.” Tony said more to himself Peter lightly gripped his shirt. Tony stopped for a minute but didn’t deprive the kid of this. He’d stay for as long as the kid needed. “you deserve to have this without working for it.” Tony told him softly, Peter laughed disbelieving. Broken but very real laugh. It made Tony’s heart crack. As he pulled away, Tony looked down at him. Arms never leaving the kids frame.

“Thank you, Mr.Stark.” Peter said smiling sadly but very real at him. Tony blinked down at him.

He had to remind himself to give this kid hugs more often.

Chapter End Notes

UPDATE NOTICE: June 7, 2019 (probably)
Then put the Mask on

Chapter Notes

heyo, so I uploaded a day early!!! I don’t love this chapter it was kinda hard to write because I just didn’t like how it kept turning out, but in the end I tried my best. Tbh the next chapter is being a little bitch with me too and then the chapter after that one is one long boi.

So I’m probably not gonna get the next chapter out until next month. Not gonna lie, I don’t know how my summer is gonna turn out. It was around this time two years ago on ffn that I kinda lost all motivation to write. But not to worry! I think I have an outline this time and am really excited to write it!

I promise I won’t abandon this fic.

Tw: kinda dark Avengers not gonna lie also graphic depictions of stuff, like you’ll know.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 8- Then put the Mask on

“Peter.”

Peter closed his eyes and breathed in once. He literally did not want to talk to Harley right now. The older boy looked guilty enough as is, and may not need Peter on his case about this, but the thing is he actually trusted Harley. Trusted him (which, allow him to point out, he did very rarely. And now he has been reminded why. Because no one could keep a fucking secret. Not his.) with this very very crucial information, information that affected him too goddammit.

He got it, he really did. Harley knew Natasha before him and maybe even Bucky. Harley was loyal to them first, before the guy who broke his father figures arm because of a panic attack. If it had just affected Natasha, if it had been just a simple missing person’s case, Peter would’ve told Natasha on the spot. That was what he promised to do. It could never be that simple though, could it. Because of course the Black Widow and Winter Soldier’s kid was a mutant spider vigilante, and of course he was said mutant spider vigilante. It was just his whack luck. His goal was to reunite families, but he’d never given a thought to bringing together his own.

You didn’t deserve a family.
“Shut the fuck up.” he grumbled to the cynically laughing voice in his head that was just getting louder and louder the longer he thought about it. This was not the time to be insane. There were people, real life actual human beings within earshot, trying to have a very real conversation with him. Harley shrunk back in slight wariness, because despite having quite a few inches and even more pounds than Peter, Peter had super strength and a life’s worth of hardcore training (read: torture. Like actual torture) and tactical skill that Harley could never hope to achieve (and Peter wishes he never would. He would never ever wish for what happened to him to happen to anyone else. Being a mutant fucking sucked. The powers weren’t even worth it, because he could already do backflips before the bite). So everyone knew who was gonna win a fight. Despite this, Peter felt bad, because Harley wasn’t his voice and was trying to make something right instead of plant the seeds of insecurities in his head (he was already full of them, he didn’t need more). “Not you.” he reassured the other boy before going back to his work. He Felt Harley’s gaze on him. It was silent for a bit.

“You do that a lot.” Harley mumbled weakly. Peter looked up and raised a brow at him, silently asking him to elaborate. “Talk to yourself.” Harley smiles sadly and Peter scrunched his nose at the accusation (it wasn’t an accusation but that sure was an insult to Peter). The voices in his head were not his own. Never would be. They were annoying little pricks who made him second guess his life choices. He didn’t need their two sense.

“I don’t talk to myself.” Peter waved off and went back to his welding.

You talk to us.

Peter gritted his teeth to prevent himself from answering ask the voice laughed. That little asshole. “I’m trying to work.” He growled softly, so Harley couldn’t hear him. He must’ve anyway because Harley put his hands on the table and stood up.

“You do. You just did. And you did on the phone call and when you’re in the lab too. You always tell someone to shut up at random times, or to go away or to leave you alone. It’s ducking worrying.” Harley ranted frantically, not really saying what he exactly wanted to say. Peter hummed as he got it all out. He was accusing Peter of being a crazy person. Peter just sighed. Maybe he was.

You definitely are.

“It’s not me I talk to.” Peter shook his head, ignoring the voice. He realized that he just admitted he talked to someone that wasn’t there. He just admitted to being crazy. “I just have...a lot of thoughts and sometimes they get too loud is all. It just gives me a headache.” He tried to clarify. He refused to be embarrassed about being harassed by these things in his head. Harley gave him a disbelieving looked and Peter didn’t look up. He didn’t want to see the concern and hurt in Harley’s eyes.
“I know what it’s like to have too many thoughts. But I never have to tell myself to shut up though.” Harley said back. Peter but back a growl as the voices mocked him for being different again. He was different and he didn’t want to be. This was just another thing that separates him from the rest of the world. Like he needed more reasons to be a freak.

“Well I’m different.” Peter said wistfully and Harley rolled his eyes at his nonchalance to the topic. Harley was getting frustrated he could feel it. “Is that all you came to ask or…” Peter left the sentence open as Harley stuttered and got back to what he was originally thinking.

“R-Right, sorry.” Harley blushes and paused before he continued to as if he was afraid to ask. “So I know it’s pretty fresh and I...well I…” Peter sighed and put down the screwdriver to look up at Harley. It had been a whole two weeks since they did the DNA test, Peter had been following dead leads on Ross to distract himself (it wasn’t a distraction though, it was important) while the Avengers have been skittering around him trying to figure out how Peter found the lost child and Tony and Harley have been giving him wary support.

“Wanted to know why I didn’t tell Romanov the truth?” Peter asked and heard Harley huff. “And not some bullshit answer I’ve been feeding you?” He phrases it like a question even if he knew it was a fact. Harley crosses his arms defensively as if that would stop Peter from reading him.

“How do you do that?” he grumbled under his breath as Peter smirked up at him as he glared. “You really are Nat’s kid.” He grumbled and Peter stiffened a little, with mild shock in his eyes. He wasn’t sure how to feel about that. Harley shook his head, getting back on track. He was doing fairly well at that. Peter had to change that. “Why do you call her Romanov?” He asked instead and Peter hummed, covering up his unknown emotions. He’d deal with them...eventually.

“Because that’s her name?” Peter said like it was obvious, looking back down at his circuit board, attaching two wires together in the parallel circuit. “Besides, I don’t think we are on a first name basis.” He said flippantly. It was weird, not being on good terms with your mom even if she wanted to be on good terms with you, but she was mad at you for not telling her that you were you.

That’s not confusing at all.

“But she’s also your mom.” Harley pointed out, Peter refused to admit he hunched slightly in defense. He knew that, that’s what they were just talking about. Oh yeah, Harley couldn’t hear the voices. Peter’s bad. He forgot.
“She doesn’t know that. Besides,” Peter scrunched up his nose a little at the smoking circuit board that he quickly disconnected. “It’ll feel weird calling her ‘Mama’ after a whole year of ‘Ms.Romanov’. Especially after I graduated from the ‘ms.’ thing with her.” Yep, Peter was solidly on ‘Romonov’ terms with the black widow now. No formalities. That was a step up. For him anyway.

“This isn’t a joke Peter.” Harley told him warily and Peter groaned, and looked up from his circuit to look Harley directly in the eye. Harley flinched back a little at his cold frustrated glare. It had no heat behind it, but it did have warning. Peter knew how to be scary (he interrogated the worst kinds of people and killed even more, or maybe it was the other way around. He knew the art of torture and he knew how to make people hurt so bad they begged for death. He’d perfected it into a skill, that he was not proud of but still used when he needed to) he just didn’t like to be scary all the time. Only when he needed to.

“You don’t think I don’t know that? This isn’t that easy for me either, you know. Despite popular belief I having fucking feelings.” Peter snapped back, and instantly regretted it. Harley came back at him smoothly though, so he was grateful and didn't feel as bad as he would have if he didn’t.

“Yes, I know you have fucking feelings. That’s why for once in your life you have to take this seriously. Because your feelings affect others this time. You can’t push them away or bury them like you usually do.” Harley said back and Peter hunched in on himself, taking his tweezers and poking at the wire while never moving it, keeping his eyes trained on the motion. “You need to face this. You can’t run away.” He said and Peter was the master at ignoring his problems, but now it was coming to bite him in the ass and he didn’t know what to do.

“I know that.” Peter said meekly. Harley let him finish his thoughts. He was getting better at this whole understand Peter can’t emote correctly. Good on him, bad for Peter because that was one more person in his life that was going to be good at reading him and that wasn’t fucking good. Harley can’t defend himself! “But I have- had a good thing going with her. I don’t want to… you know… jump into this. Not like I usually do.” Peter said picking at his circuit board not looking up at Harley’s reaction. He could hear the cogs turning in the other boy’s head. Trying to work this out.

“Because it’s different.” Harley leaned back in his chair, finally finding a response. Peter shook his head, he hadn’t gotten the problem completely right. Or maybe he did, Peter hasn’t solved the whole equation yet.

“Because it’ll just be more of the same.” Peter said shutting his eyes. Remembering HYDRA and going to SHIELD and how they both just carted him off to places where he’d get hell training. Remembering Special Forces and then going to Ben and May and being tortured in different way in both places. Remembering losing every piece of his life slowly until he had nothing and how it hurt the same, but just more intensity each time. The swallowing loneliness that followed him all
the time. He’d gain this only to lose it, that’s all gaining things were good for with Peter.

To lose them again, and he couldn’t take that right now.

Not yet.

“No it won’t be.” Harley shook his head and tried to be sure of himself. It was bull shit and Harley knew as soon as it came out of his mouth. Peter knew it even before it came out. He appreciated the effort though.

“Previous evidence suggests otherwise.”” Peter said, trying to maintain a casual voice. He didn’t smile like he would’ve. That somehow seemed inappropriate in this point in the conversation.

“This will be different.” Harley insisted, desperately wanting to believe it. Peter wondered what it was like to have reckless hope like that. It must have been nice, knowing that you could have that and be okay when it didn’t work out. Peter never had let himself have that as far as he could remember. Not even when he was a kid. His dreams were not made to be chased, they only served as fantasy.

“It’s always ‘different’ for me.” Peter said sarcastically, crossing his arms defensive over his chest. He was honestly getting tired of this outcasting. It didn’t even happen on purpose, it was like everything he did was destined to screw up eventually. He just wanted something to go right for once. Harley looked at him a little sadly.

“They won’t hurt you.” Harley said in reassurance. As if that was the only problem Peter was concerned about. They both knew it wasn’t. Peter blinked at him for connecting that much together though. He never said that he was abused or hurt. Not to Harley. Not to anybody. Was he that obvious. He somehow couldn’t find it in himself to be embarrassed about it.

“They already have.” Peter whispered, Harley wasn’t meant to hear that, but he did and stiffened. Peter waved off his questioning look. “Nothing.” Harley groaned in frustration and Peter found it as the appropriate time to smirk.

“That’s not nothing Peter. We were making such good progress.” Harley whined as Peter huffed out a laugh and went back to the circuit board.
“What’s up with people I work with trying to be my therapist?” Peter grumbled a little annoyed. He didn’t even Unitarians this conversation. First Stark, the Matt now Harley. Wade has always given shit advice that why Peter went to him for it. To know what he shouldn’t do to get a better deduction for what he should do.

“You need one.” Harley muttered back, going to work on his own homework across from Peter. It was organic chemistry, Peter smiles because he appreciates what Harley is trying to do. “You constantly talk to yourself.” He brought back up.

“Not myself, Thumper.” Peter reminded lightly, not looking up. Harley just rolled his eyes.

“Whatever, Bambi.”

OoOoO

He was with just Peter.

Sometimes it was like this. Peter or someone would pull him out of his patrol saying he needed some massistance’. Just a little back up. Team Red missions were spontaneous but unexpected ‘Team ups’ (as Peter and Wade called them, Matt called them headaches) were even more common when a job was just slightly too big for any one person (not that ‘team ups’ were used even then. Usually they were used for odd jobs, vigilantes have this weird pride and mentality that they have to do anything and everything themselves). Peter nearly never initiated them, because unexpected ‘team ups’ only required a little extra muscle so the kid was more likely to be pulled from patrol than anyone else (he had super strength the likes of which no one, especially Matt, has never seen. Even Cage said he was impressed. He also had formal or informal training before he became Spiderman, although Spidey wouldn’t tell. So Peter never needed anyone’s help, he was good on his own). It was only when the numbers got slightly too high for Peter to face off at once, he was but only a man (child?). Or Peter knew when something was going to go horrendously south. A just in case kind of thing, that comforted the kid who refused to be comforted.

So that’s how Matt got himself in a warehouse near the Hudson in Harbor loading bay 41 at four in morning. To fight Italian traffickers that were creating shipments of drugs to sell out. Cocaine by the smell of it (and Italians were so nice, he thought… He’s been spending too much time with Team Red if he was thinking like that).

That part made sense.
What didn’t make sense was that he was holding a mutant spider teen - with super strength he might add - back, from crushing this pedophile's face in. Peter was screaming a heavy string of vulgar Italian (how many languages did this boy know?) and trying to fight Matt off. But he must’ve been at least partially aware in his blind rage because he couldn’t get out of the hold. The guy was long dead.

It surprised Matt, because Peter has never given into his blind rage often. He knew if he did, he could seriously hurt or kill someone he wasn’t meant to hurt or kill. But the job was done and he was interrogating the guy he webbed up one minute and Matt turns around for a second and he hears Peter screaming and bashing the guys face in. Matt has turned around (not that it mattered, he was blind) and held Peter in an instant and god this kid could kick.

“Dove sono i bambini che porci!” (Where are the kids you swine!) Peter screamed out in a language that Matt couldn’t understand, probably Italian by the sound of it. Matt was nearly stunned, was this one of Peters interrogation technique? He looked at the man, The guy probably couldn’t understand either because he wasn’t even hanging on to his life. The man’s half mutilated corpse wasn’t Peters style. Peter was clean and used small areas that did a lot of damage to torture if he was going to torture. This was messy angry and unplanned.

Matt hadn’t questioned Peter when he asked for help, but the warehouse had no hostages in it, but Peter was screaming like he was upset. They were just making a drug supply, wasn’t that why they were busting this place? Matt deduced That But there must’ve been something more if Peter was screaming his head off.

“Pete, he ain’t gonna answer you.” Matt said softly and the kid kicked more vigorously. Calmly, just to see if Peter would listen. He didn’t. Matt gripped tighter, bringing Peter off the ground a little as he kicked blindly.

“Отпусти меня в жопу! “(Let me go asshole!) Peter screamed at him and the only way he knew it was Russian was based on the accent. Matt didn’t think he knew who he was talking to or where he was exactly. He was in his own little headspace where the world didn’t exist and he could act anyway he wanted, but he couldn’t. It astonished Matt how fast he could change the accent and language so fluidly. Peter’s Russian accent and Russian was actually pretty nice. It was a calm and relaxing sound, sometimes a little amused and smug, but still nice and gentle. But when he was screaming like this, it wasn’t nice and gentle. It was as cold and cruel as the country was made out to be in the history books. It had a snap that warned people of danger and made people want to cower before him like he was some sort of tyrant. But that wasn’t Peter.

Peter was fucking angry.

“Peter! The guys dead. You killed him. Do you understand that? You killed him.” Matt said sternly
and twisted Peter around to look him in the eye and the boy stopped kicking abruptly as he looked into the red pools that replaced Matt’s eyes. He couldn’t see the boy’s reaction behind the spider mask. But he knew it was some sort of confusion.

“убил его?” (killed him?) he asked his tone dropping and coming out in a small voice, still in Russian- but it was closer to the Russian Matt had associated Peter with. Not quite there yet though, it didn’t have that tint of crisp confidence that came with knowing his first language. Matt couldn’t understand the words but had a pretty sure what he said.

“Yes, you killed him.” Matt confirmed and the kid started to shake like a leaf in the wind. He was scared, but not of anything outside. He was scared of himself. Of his power. Peter was always scared of his power, sure he thought it was cool but he was always careful and aware of how he used it. When he lost control over his emotions and powers were when he was truly dangerous and he knew that. “Did you mean to?” Matt asked in a softer tone. It took too long for Peter to answer, which was answer enough for Matt. Peter was always sure when he killed someone. Peter craned his head to look back to the guy’s unrecognizable corpse and then back down at the floor where Matt had picked his little body up and now his feet were dangling.

“I-I guess I did…” he said unsurly in English, it meant he was coming back to himself, the Russian tiny in his tone giving an odd sort of comfort that Matt wouldn’t dare take away. As if this was an anomaly. It was . This guy wasn’t anyone special, but usually Peter didn’t kill in a blind rage anyway. He always knew who he was going to kill. He never knew how he would kill them, only that they were sure to be dead within the next 24 hours.

“No you didn’t Pete.” Matt said softly, Peter was too unsure of himself to have planned this. He was too mad for him to have thought to come here and kill this man. Peter squirmed trying to find a reason for him killing in his head and Matt almost felt sorry for him. Poor kid. If the government or police caught hold of this (which they never would) then Peter would be in deep shit. It’s always been the stake he’s had to carry ever since he was a kid. Even when he didn’t have powers.

“No...but I-I knew I was gonna kill someone tonight.” Peter said softly back and yeah, Matt got that. He got in those moods sometimes and that’s when Matt realized that Peter didn’t need back up. He needed someone to hold him back. Usually that someone was Wade (mostly because he had a healing factor that could allow him to die and Peter was most likely to go for kill spots. But Wade wasn’t here.) but Peter came to him because this wasn’t just another job. It was personal .

Matt thought back to the weird questions Peter had asked him in his office. This was about that. Whatever was going on, he had said he wanted to punch somebody. Matt was the only one who knew about that case then. Peter brought him here to understand that this was going to be big. That this was important. That he had feelings attached to this job.
Peter wasn’t mad he was confused and exhausted.

“Peter…” Matt didn’t know what to say as the boy just hung limply in his hands. He smelled so ashamed of himself. He felt so angry with himself and everyone involved in this. He sounded so confused and overwhelmed. This wasn’t normal. This was a big deal, but Matt felt like he was missing something.

Something big.

“Why does someone always have to die, Matt?” He asked brokenly to the ground. Matt didn’t have a heart to give to this kid, because he’d given it when he found out the Spiderman was a broken 12 year old trying to do some good in this cruel world. A world that kicked him around and reared its ugly head just as he was getting to know it. A world that had shown him the true meaning of pain and death and suffering at far too young an age.

Matt wished he had an answer for him.

OoOoO

This wasn’t his fault per say.

It was the universe shitting on his life again. That’s the only explanation he had for the clusterfuck that he’d gotten himself into (then again it was the expliation that is the clusterguck that is his life). But then again what else was new? He bit off more than he could chew (like usual) and when he did that literally, it made him sick and when he did it metaphorically, it got him into a hell of a lot of trouble. In this case it was metaphorical. Maybe trying to expose a secretary of state while he was on the Avenger’s bad side wasn’t such a good idea, but to be fair he has been trying to expose him since before he got on their bad side. So that wasn’t entirely his fault.

You got on their bad side anyway.

Still, Nick Fury finding him in a broken unusable blood vat full of god knows what blood was an all time low for him. He was just glad he had a mask on so he couldn’t swallow the blood. It didn’t help that this lead was a dead end either. The losers that had run this place packed up a million and one years ago and Peter hasn’t gotten sleep in even longer than that. It was obvious that kids were here, he could smell it in the blood. But it was mostly cow blood. Thoughts about Natasha and Wanda and Ross and those kids all stewing in his head. This smelt like cow blood, not like human
blood (not entirely like human blood). They were covering up their tracks and they had time to do so because Peter was chasing leads like this and wasting his time.

Cases were never this hard for him. He was getting frustrated and sloppy.

“Rock bottom?” Fury asked and Peter coughed and groaned as he laid down on the filthy floor - it didn’t matter because the suit was ruined. Blood splattered around him and leaked out of his clothes and into the ground in a puddle.

“That obvious?” Peter croaked out, too exhausted to be embarrassed about this. Fury scrunched his nose at him and started to walk out out of the warehouse. He was just here to pick Peter up then.

“I have an extra pair of clothes for you.” he grumbled and Peter rolled over to get up and slink out of there behind him. He didn’t care as he slouched and he thinks he has the right to sulk just a little at this dead end.

And who’s fault is that, stupid.

“How considerate of you.” he mumbled, not all there. Tiredness taking over his bones and making them feel like they weighed a million pounds. The things he had to worry about only adding to the weight on his shoulders. Fury scoffed, not caring -as he never did - but didn’t say anything as he passed Peter a plastic bag and went to his car to wait while Peter changed behind a deserted alley, because there was no way in hell he was even touching Fury’s car in his condition. Glitter was one thing, blood was a completely different thing.

Peter took off the suit, thankful the material didn’t allow it to get on his skin, but the smell did linger. He held his breath as he put on the deodorant and clothes offered (scanning for any chips or bugs of course, and then picking them out.) When he was done, he put the spider suit in the plastic bag and tied it tight. As he made the last pull, the full scent of blood invaded his nose and he gagged, leaning over a trash bin to throw up his meager lunch. He was used to blood, just not that potent.

He came out of the alley and Fury gestured for him to put the foul Spider suit in the trunk. If he noticed Peter’s pale complexion (and Peter knew he did) he didn’t mention it. Peter had been going on full power for days now, with no break.

He had first had that whole emotional thing with Stark and Romanov and then busting traffickers
and finding dead leads then the whole killing thing with Matt. Now this dead end too that he worked for a day and a half to get with no stopes somewhere in between all of that he had mindlessly gone to the lab and hid himself there and talked to Wanda (who had another episode and Peter whiskey kept what he was doing to himself as she cried). It had been an emotional week, and Peter had felt more than he had in months. It was a disaster and he was falling apart.

_You’re a mess._

“So Nick,” Peter said getting in the front seat. Seemingly ignoring all his problems, like he was so good at doing. “To what do I owe the pleasure of you pulling me out of a swimming pool of animal blood.” Fury started the car and raised a brow.

“That was animal blood?” Fury asked, not really interested, Peter could tell by the tone. He wasn’t here because of the Ross case. At least, it wasn’t why Fury had fished him out a foul smelling pool of red. He hadn’t talked to Fury in the entire time between Stark hugging him and now.

“Among other things.” Peter said and shifted uncomfortably as his stomach didn’t take to the after taste of his food that was lingering in his tongue. It only made its presence known _after_ the car had started. “Drive with caution.” he mumbled and Fury rolled his eyes.

“You still sick?” Fury asked and Peter shrugged. He wasn’t sure what sick felt like anymore, it was just a perpetual feeling of misery that spiked sometimes. No biggie.

“On and off.” Peter didn’t mention that it wasn’t that he was sick, so much as his stomach couldn’t handle the amount of food he _should_ be able to hold properly anymore. But those were meager technicalities. Fury hummed in acknowledgement. “Are you gonna answer my question?” Peter said getting back to topic, because he didn’t want to beat around the bush, he was too tired to dance around it.

“Yes, I want to know something.” Fury said sternly, taking the opportunity to be straight (which came close to never with Peter so Fury must be estuyic that he was complying so easily) and Peter hummed this time.

“Okay, shoot.” Peter said casually. He looked out the window to see cars passing and street signs blinking. It was nearly night and the sun was just about to dip, leaving the city in darkness and Florence advertisements. Ah, he loved New York.
“I want to know, how you effectively have rendered my A team useless by being *yourself*.” Fury enunciated. He was talking about the Avengers, whom, besides Stark and Wanda, he had been avoiding rather Nicky. They were avoiding him too so it was mutual not wanting to face this issue right now. Or maybe they just didn’t know how to deal with it. Peter sagged in his seat. Bruce has been avoiding him meaning that when he was in the lab he couldn’t do organic chemistry because Stark wasn’t as good at it as he’d like to be, and he couldn’t keep up with Peter naturally. So it had mostly been mechanical engineering and coding.

“It’s not that bad…” Peter grumbled and Fury poked his stomach, which ow. It made movement that Peter didn’t like and he was reminded of when he was a child when May or Wade wanted to get his attention and did the same damn thing.

“It *is* that bad.” Fury said and started to rant. Peter settles in for Fury’s ‘bitch ass gossip’. It was very entertaining. “Rogers and Thor are seething. Clint and Sam are plotting your murder. Wanda is just straight up worried, so is Banner. And Barnes and Romanov have no idea what to fucking do with themselves now that their little side quest is over.” Fury vented on and Peter nodded knowingly. He was usually the voice of reasonable suggestion in these rants, he didn’t know what to say though. “Stark is the only who’s got his shit together for once. The world is tipping on its axis Parker, and I want to fucking know how you did it by just saying four words.” Man, The Avengers were a mess. Maybe more so than Peter.

*No one could be as big as a fuck up as you.*

‘True .’

“Technically, Harley said those words, not me.” Peter said back to Fury. Fury’s aura released a seething gesture that made Peter hold up his hands placatingly.

“And technically, you’re their kid.” Fury said back to him as he slouched more. Okay, if they were gonna play like that. Fine. Peter could play like that.

“Where’d you hear *that*.” Peter mumbled sarcastically. Knowing the answer and Fury rolled his eyes. Peter would lose this little game if Fury didn’t give a shit weather Peter knew he knew before or not.

“Oh shut the fuck up. You know I knew.” Fury said back in a tone that made it sound like it shouldn’t be a big deal. *Dammit, he was losing*. Peter cursed under his breath in Russian as he tried to think of a response.
“Was that the reason you put me on the team? Aww, is that a harp growing inside you?” Peter cooed in a mocking tone. Not his best, but the best he could do given the time and circumstances. Fury knew he was winning, maybe he’d get cocky and say something dumb.

“Don’t change the subject Parker. Why do you have to make this so hard? Everytime I think you’ve matured. You weren’t even trying to find your parents. And they were trying to find you.” Fury vented. Oh, this episode of ‘Fury’s bitch ass Gossip’ was about him. Well that’s a twist. How was he supposed to respond to that. Also Fury wasn’t getting cocky so Peter was losing and losing hard. The only chance he had at winning was to maintain his composer.

“Ahh the irony. It totally called it.” Peter said wistfully. As he always did. He wasn’t sure if Fury had bought his crap, but he hopes that the older man did. He wasn’t reacting the way Peter had planned and that wasn’t good for Peter if he couldn’t predict it.

“What the fuck is ‘it’?” Fury growled and Peter sighed. He thought back to Harley and him pressing his concern to Peters ‘talking to himself’.

“My reason for needing therapy, apparently.” Peter grumbled back, leaning back in his seat. Fury must’ve been caught off guard for a second because he looked over to him and Peter smirked slightly without looking at him before he maintained his composer again. Maybe there was a chance of winning after all.

“You’re real fucked up, you know that kid.” Fury said and Peter hummed in agreement. He was very very fucked up, thanks for noticing Nick. What gave it away?

“Yeah…” he said not really caring and his eyes wondered back at the trunk. And Peter smirked, knowing how he’d win this game “You know that was SHIELD issued Spider suit, right?” He said nonchelontly. Fury was quiet for all of a second.

“You little shit!”

OoOoO

Thor has been furious.
The Avengers were his family. Not by blood, of course, but they had become as close as such in the time they’ve been together. For nearly 8 years now going on 9. They had spent nearly a decade together and while that wasn’t a long time in the span of his life - for he was a god - they had had many adventures together. Had many missions and hardships and laughs together. Weather in celebration or in mourning they were there for each other in odd ways.

The Captain has been their humble and rightful leader. Making fair and just decisions to insure the safety of everyone. Stark was odd but did show he cared through providing a shelter and technology to aid them in missions. Banner aided them as well, and Hulk was a key to any heavy duty battle. Barton was like the sane glue that held them together, and he was down to earth. Natasha was an odd one but Thor could not imagine the family without her.

He would protect this family fiercely and destroy anything that got in the way of their happiness.

The situation with Parker was hindering their emotions.

Honestly, Thor was probably the last person that Peter would suspect to approach this situation first. But Thor has had multiple family problem in the past. His ‘clusterfuck’ -as Stark has put it - of a home life has made him appreciate family more than anything and his family’s happiness and health were vital to that appreciation.

In Thor’s mind it was simple.

The Avengers has become his -dysfunctional, messed up, emotionally constipated- family.

Natasha and now Bucky were part of this -dysfunctional, messed up, emotionally constipated- family.

Natasha and Bucky have their own offspring, whom by default was apart of his -dysfunctional, messed up, emotionally constipated- family. And Thor only knew a few things:

-The child had been lost.

-Parker now knew where that child was.

-Parker wasn’t telling them.

-It was making Natasha and Bucky sad because they wanted to know where their child was.

So Thor was mad at Parker. He knew where the child was and would not return him to his proper home. His real family. And Parker knew this. He knew he was depriving a child of his home and for what? Parker has told them that he was not here to harm innocents. Parker has fought along
side them in battle and aided them. He had also been opening up to the Avengers in the past month or so and the Avengers likewise.

And then he does this when they need him the most? Thor knew he shouldn’t have trusted him, especially when Parker was on a side all his own. Fury had said Parker would do the right thing always, but how was keeping a child from their rightful family doing the right thing?

Thor stood in front of Parker’s walking path. He needed answers. Parker was looking down at a piece of technology. He only stopped when he bumped into the god’s abdomen, not noticing Thor was in his way. “Sorry.” The boy mumbled distractedly as he didn’t look up at who had ran into him. He had been looking down at a screen, tapping on something, so he couldn’t have known Thor had purposely stepped in front of him the first time. He moved to go around the god without looking up but Thor moved in front of him again. He then finally looked up at the god’s furious eyes when he bumped into the forearm. Young Parker looked indifferently confused, and if Thor had known any less he would’ve said almost concerned.

“Woah, dude you good?” He asked. He didn’t know why Thor was angry and that comment made him even more so. Was this all a joke to him? Too unimportant that he just pulled it out for fun? As if messing with his family was fun? Messing with this unknown innocent child’s life was fun?! It was another game to him!

“Is this a joke to you?” Thor said in a dark tone and Peter looked at him with a raised brow. Thor growled at his indifference. He ignored the dark circles under the young child’s eyes and the tired posture (Bruce has said that it meant Peter was tired and that he needed food and rest. But right now, he deserved none of that). “This is my family that you are playing with.” He said, even if he didn’t context. This should be at the forefront of the boy’s mind and the fact that it wasn’t was pissing Thor off even more. A lethargic dawn of understanding crossed Peter’s expression.

“This isn’t funny. But I have to work it out with...the kid.” Peter pursed his lips in a way that told Thor he was hiding something more. He always was hiding something important; something that they should know, and that made him untrustworthy. Thor could tell he wasn’t telling him something. That only served to make him madder.

“Then work it out. It must be your top priority.” Thor insisted. Peter rolled his eyes. Thor bristled at the uninterested gesture. How dare he even think about pushing this aside for other business.

“Why do you even care? It’s not like they are your real family. You don’t even know Barnes.” Peter’s voice cracked a bit. Something of sadness undermining his tone and if Thor has cared anymore he would’ve paid some sort of mind to it. But he did not care of Parker’s input of this. This had nothing to do with him and he should just let the Avengers work it out without bothering them. He had no business in this.
“But I know Natasha. She has been my friend since we formed the Avengers. They are like my family.” Thor said to him taking a step forward toward the boy, and Peter finally looked alert as he took a step back. *Good,* he was intimidating the boy. Getting through his skull of how little of a day he got in this situation. “Our connection is stronger than blood. I would not expect a mere *child* to understand.” Thor said and Parker clenched his fists in anger that was rarely seen in the boy. Thor took an odd satisfaction in eliciting such an emotion from the child.

“Is your other family not good enough or something?” Parker but back in defense at the accusation. Thor’s own anger flared brighter. This child’s incompetence was *infuriating.* He should mind his own delegations and not get caught up in theirs.

“No. My family is my own business, but you have somehow manage to weasel your way into this one’s issues. So Let me tell you this once,” Thor said and picked the child up so he could hear him properly. Peter oddly stiffened and now there was a hint of fright behind his eyes, all anger gone. Touching Parker had been a subject that the Avengers weren’t sure where they stood. Sometimes he’d let the ruffle his hair and put a hand on his shoulder lightly but then sometimes they’d get too close and he’d flinch away or the would make a gesture too close to him and he’d back up a few paces. It was strange for a child to be the flighty, but right now Thor didn’t care how Parker completely *froze* in his large hands “you will *never* touch my family after this. You will not speak to them, you will not even *think* about them. I will see to it that Stark has you revoked from the lab of technology and science and Fury has you never look at the Avengers again. The only reason you are still here, is because you are our only link to the child or Romanov and Barnes. Do you understand?” Thor said soothingly and Parker didn’t move or respond for a while but Thor watched as a steely look of determination grew in the child’s eyes, he didn’t respond for a second but then he nodded once shortly. Thor put the child down, satisfied.

“Now go off and find the child.” Thor ordered. Peter glared a little at that and crossed his arms in defiance. Thor was confused, he thought this child had understood his place.

“I’m not going off anywhere. Actually that’s on the back burner for now.” Peter said gaining back his gusto, and Thor was about to protest angrily but Peter stopped him before he could start. “As I said, somethings are more important currently and if you care about your team, your *family,* you won’t rush this.” Peter said to him with a pointed look and Thor seethed.

“How dare you-“ Thor started in a low growl and Parker looked at him and cut him off.

“Is Maximoff apart of your family.” He said seriously, a dark tone tint his voice but mostly Thor couldn’t read it. Thor stopped for a second and thought about the Scarlett Witch. How she had broken this family but helped put it back together. Helped make it stronger and helped it grow. Aided them in battle and when they were emotionally distraught.
“Of course.” Thor said surly with a nod and Peter sighed. He seemed satisfied with that answer as he went on to explain.

“Then you won’t push this.” Peter said in a calm voice and looked into Thor’s eyes and the god was surprised to see sincerity. “I’m trying to help her and a lot of other people but...there is a lot of obstacles. I just need to focus on this before anything else. I just need a little more patience.” He requested and Thor didn’t know what to say. Peter wasn’t requesting actually, he was just telling him that there was something he was doing before that. He wasn’t asking he was just telling.

“Parker-“ Thor looked at him as he turned away. Did his clothes seem bigger?

“Bye Thor. We’ll resolve the issue or whatever, but for now something else needs my attention and I can’t keep running around being a messenger. My priority is not the same as yours so it’s going to take longer.” Peter left it at that, and Thor watched his back with leaking anger in his body. But then Parker paused. “Just because I can’t solve your problem immediately doesn’t mean I won’t get it solved.” He said quietly and threw Thor in for a loop and confused him even more, especially after he said the next thing only to leave the corridor in silence.

“I’ll try my best to make them happy.”

OoOoO

Peter busted this one alone.

He didn’t feel like he’d kill anyone, because he wasn’t expecting to find victims this time. He didn’t need Matt, because last time it didn’t matter if he found kids or not, he’d be killing someone anyway. He brought Matt along to hold him back if there wasn’t any kids (which there weren’t) and if there were kids, to guide them away from their friendly neighborhood Spiderman that was making a bloody red mess out of bodies (when he got in those moods, he always thought of himself as an animal. A freak, a monster. Like everyone had been telling him his whole life. When he was in those moods he was lethal and he’s glad he can channel it into bad guys and not good guys. He’s glad his mind will never be so far gone as to hurt innocent people). He didn’t find any kids this time, but he was looking for information or evidence or a lead or anything that could crucifix Ross.

Anything at all.
He laid into the goons easily and about 70 percent of them didn’t see him coming and the remaining 30 percent didn’t know what to do. He was tired and didn’t feel like taunting them. He just needed a breakthrough so he could fucking sleep because this whole damn thing was depriving him of it. He was certain he’d get more done when he rested and fed himself but he could barley even blink or keep anything solid down. He checked rooms to find them empty and that was mildly suspicious until he found a room full of computers that were shot through in a weak attempt to erase evidence that was on it. No one was there (having all either trying to escape or fight him off and those just got them laid out) and his Spidey Sense didn’t go off and he couldn’t smell any body Oder that suggested any one else was here.

He looked at the smoking computers and scoffed. As if that’s stop him from getting information on them. He enlisted Droney’s ‘Desperate Idiot’ Protocol to copy all the data on the mother chips and backup drives in the computer. Even if the information was wiped before they shot it through, evidence still lingered in the central data chip, so nothing was truly erased once in the system.

*Except if you didn’t save your document on Word.*

“That’s why google docs are better. You can access them anywhere and it automatically saves.” Peter mumbled to the voice. No one was around to judge him for it. They were all unconscious and bad guys thinks he’s crazy anyway.

*You probably are if you’re jumping in front of guns in nothing but spandex.*

“Oh? And here I thought you didn’t care about me. Am I starting to melt that little ice around you?” Peter smirked under the mask and the voice just scoffed. It was always loudest when he was alone.

*As if. If you die, I won’t have anyone to torment dumbass.*

“In other words: if I die, you die.” Peter summed up and the voice was quiet only confirming this answer “good to know.” He said with a little smug note in his tone.

*Shithead.*

Peter laughed in response as he trailed his hand against the walls to hear any hollow sounds that meant there was a secret pocket or storage unit or room. He just loved those. They were always fun
and made him think he was in a haunted house he and Ned went to on Halloween when they were 11.

“I do have a question though.” Peter said to the voice. He never asked the voices any questions. That was just giving them incentive to invade his mind even more. It was better to just ignore them, but sometimes that only made them louder. Talking back sometimes worked but it didn’t more often than not. “If you die when I die, were you born when I was too?” Peter asked and cocked his head at Droney who gave him an odd look for a robot.

Are you high?

The voice seemed to agree with Droney. Maybe he was going crazy. “It’s a valid question.” He responded instead and the voice didn’t answer for a while.

You need sleep.

“Ha! I knew it! You do care what happens to me!” Peter said enthusiastically. Proud smile forming over his face at the accomplishment. Peter forgets when he first heard the voice but it was defiantly after he was 11. He’d just quit special forces and there was someone always telling him that it didn’t change anything. He was still a freak, still dangerous. It didn’t matter if he was a mutant he’d still killed people in the past and he surly would in the future.

No I genuinely believe that you will die if you don’t go to sleep within the next 3 hours.

Peter didn’t justify that with an answer because to be honest it was probably true. He had pushed his malnourished enhanced body to the limit.

He looked around the room for any paper or hard evidence when he found no secret room (what a let down). Inside drawers and cabinets, but there was nothing. They must’ve done it all on the computer. He saw a slightly moving current in the back that he had thought was a tapestry but then the wind blew in and it pushed it back. He walked behind the curry ant into the sectioned off room and Droney flashed a light on to the farthest wall.

The thing about bad guys, is that they were incredibly stupid in their pride for the organization they worked for. Even if it was a ‘secret’ base, They always left at least one wall covered with their logo to remind everyone one that it was their base. Like marking their territory. It really didn’t matter though, it made Peter’s job so much easier.
When he saw the logo it all clicked. The reason he was digging up dead leads. Ross has been sending him on a wild goose chase and he cursed himself for falling for it. He had completely ignored the other side of things and he was so stupid to even think that Ross would be affiliated with a non profit organization like the hand. They had slaves do all their dirty work for five people, they didn’t hire people they kidnapped and used people to get what they wanted.

But the logo on the wall wasn’t what Peter thought it would be because he was stupid and couldn’t articulate a simple case. It wasn’t a Hand Print like he thought it would be. It was a skull with tentacles around it.

It was HYDRA.

OoOoO

Peter was ranting on the rooftop for nearly 45 minutes.

This was pushing a record. Wade should’ve recorded it if there wasn’t sensitive information being disclosed. But then again, when wasn’t there sensitive information being disclosed? They were fucking vigilantes and probably the most articulated and messed up group of unsanctioned crimefighters/killers/opritives in NYC. Maybe even the world. He didn’t see Tokyo having their own vigilantes although to be fair they were much nicer there if they were Yakuza and usually Yakuza did dealings in New York so, yeah Wade counts Tokyo as part of their fighting grounds.

They were fucking international.

Peter vented a lot, but mostly about meaningless things. They were supposed to cover up the main issue, that he never said a peep about -he was good at ignoring his problems. Depending on the length of the vent and how long it was Wade could tell how much something was bothering or stressing or overwhelming him.

There was a fucking system now.

If it was short Wade didn’t do a damn thing. 17 minutes and 24 seconds, Wade kept an eye on the kid for the duration of the mission/job they were on. 28 minutes and 54 seconds was when he agreed to tell Red and they would both keep an eye on him for the duration of the mission/job (although Wade thinks he already keeps an eye on him when Wade keeps an eye on him).
minutes and 12 seconds was when he had to call Red if he wasn’t already there and fucking stay with Peter and stalk the kid for the next 24 hours. 40+ minutes meant there was a fucking problem that needed to be resolved as soon as humanly possible.

Well they’ve officially passed 40 minutes.

Red has already been informed although Red has been acting weird with Peter too these past few weeks. Wade’s an idiot and only just realized they had a little secret between them. But whatever Red, he and Pete has loads of secrets. He didn’t need to be in on this one and frankly if Peter was freaking out about it this much Wade didn’t want to be. It just...it just stung a little Okay? Peter had always come to him and for his crappy advice and trash opinions. Wade shouldn’t blame the kid for wanting some good fucking advice from a guy with a fancy law degree for once in his life.

It still stung.

Peter was usually good at solving problems on his own. Wade just was there for back up if he needed it and visversa to everyone in Team Red. It was how they handled emotional situations. By not handeling it at all and punching pedophiles into the ground instead. Because hey ‘I can’t solve the clusterfuck that is my life but at least that guy didn’t get robbed’. It was logic.

But sometimes they forgot that lil’ Pete was just That: lil’. A child; small human being; preadolescent; a kid. A kid who got confused by things like recieving positive reinforcement and gratitude. He and Red were never good at giving him that, but at least they didn’t give him negative reinforcement - if that was even a thing - so like all good in the hood, right? Peter never cared anyway, he preferred if they didn’t say anything. Peter liked them enough to know they were emotionally constipated assholes. Hell, he was one of those assholes.

But Peter was a bit messed up in a different way than them. Okay a lot messed up, but it was still different way than them. Things like rape and death and killing and negativity made more sense to him than positive things like respect and compliments. In fact he got flustered when someone said thank you to him once, it was fucking adorable. He got flustered while Natt and Wade didn’t care because he was a kid. And like kids they thrives off of those things, but Peter never had any of that to thrive off of. So Peter found a crappy substitute which was get under people’s skin and see how much he could make them hate him. A rather funny substitute if Wade said so himself, but still not something Oeter should be growing off of. Wade and Matt were all grown up, but Peter still needed to keep growing and he didn’t have the proper growth food.

Wade needed to stop the kid from venting about animal abusers before he A) realized he could snap anyone and everyone’s neck that even looked at a dog wrong (he probably would) B) could probably outsmart all the animal protection companies into letting him take their dogs to be loved by him and only him or C)passes out from lack of oxygen- geez breathe kiddo. Option C was
probably the most appealing solution and that requires him to be choked out. So options aren’t
great. And that was Not gonna happen, as much as the kid probably needed a nap (despite him
saying he had 3 consecutive hours of sleep, Wade questioned how much were actually usable for
energy output).

So Wade - in his all incompetent mind - brought up the source of all of Spidey’s problems from
the last year or so.

“So Avenging...” Wade said casually, cutting Peter off on his tangent about animal abusers
abruptly as he slowly turned to him. Okay, so mistake got it, touchy subject (Wade was going to so
regret this) and where was Red when you fucking need him? Not fucking here, that’s where
(probably hiding in a dumpster like a smart person trying to avoid teenager problems). They are in
a bit of a crisis Matt, their kid is losing his goddamn mind, but you know, just take it slow with
that fancy day job that that fancy degree paper was for, no rush here. Just a teenager.

No biggie.

It got the bean sprout to shut up for a full minute, though Wade didn’t believe he was breathing.
Baby Steps.

“What?” Oh, adorable confused child. He sounded so baffled, as if Wade hadn’t stated the issue
that he was really on about. Tsk tsk kiddo, Uncle Wade knows you better than that and Peter knew
it too. The child still elected to play dumb, but if he thought Wade would play it easy then the
sunshine child was in for a rude awakening.

“What did those guys do?” A part of Wade didn’t like the slight anger that came with the question.
It was protective and made him feel gross feelings like concern. And Peter didn’t appreciate when
Wade or Matt were concerned with him. To him? About him! There it is, Peter didn’t like when
they were concerned about him. Grammar! Take that Ms.Teltci from seventh grade English
(although kudos to her too, she was great. She gave Wade donuts and let him stay after school for
‘tutoring’ so he didn’t have to go home. He got a solid D+ in her class. He hopes she is having a
nice time in retirement). Peter sighed, clearly defeated. Wade puffed out his chest with pride
toward himself.

You can’t win against the master kiddo.

“I can’t tell you.” He said and it sounded solemn... was that the right word? Adjective meaning not
cheerful: serious? Yes, solemn indeed. He was kicking grade school English’s ass right now. He
hoped Peter appreciated that (even though Peter kicked grade school’s ass before he even knew

what school was, but to be fair he was 7 when he found out what grade school was… ugh genius human experiments. You could never win in this world, could ya?)

“Why not?” Wade asked, remembering there was a real life conversation going on with a real life human being. But he was getting all feelings and stuff and Wade wondered if Peter would appreciate a subject change. He probably would, both their brains short circuited every time there was an emotion in the vicinity that they could not mock or taunt.

That was why Red needed to be here, he was slightly less emotional constipated and had a fancy degree to take care of this stuff. Wade had no fancy degrees and a whole load of war PTSD so the answer for the person to deal with teenager shit from a traumatized mutant teen was pretty obvious. Why was Wade here again? Oh yeah, because he knew Peter for nearly a decade. That wasn’t certification though.

“You can’t keep a secret.” Peter deadpanned. Okay that was …debatable. State your case kiddo or forever hold your peace. Now Wades interest was peaked. Peters known Wade most of his life by now. He knows what Wade could and couldn’t keep a secret about. So the fact that he knew that Wade would tell made Wade want to know what was so juicy he would waste his breath on it.

...nothing sexual he hoped.

Nah, Peter was sexually harassed as a kid, he could never even think about it without making him want to have a panic attack or punch someone’s face in. He was responsible for all of Weasle’s flesh wounds on his arm and shoulder because the stupid idiot had shoved porn in front of his face when he was 9 and Peter took the closest knife and stabbed him with it. Wade had laughed and Peter didn’t even apologize.

“Try me.” Wade giggles at the memory and Peter sighed. That kid knew exactly where his mind was going and as glad as he was that Peter understood and accepted how sexual Wade was, he also didn’t like that he’d gotten so close that he could read him. Little demon sunshine child. He’d have to kill him one day. “I bet your high school crush ain’t nothing to go writing on the walls. Is it Martha?” Wade teased. He was well aware that the child was apparently too smart for school, Wade had called it. But nevertheless, The kid turned red, Wade could even see it through the mask. Adorable. “Spill the tea, kiddo.” Wade said crossing his legs delicately, he was sure Peter rolled his eyes.

“Black Widow And Winter Soldier had a kid.” He said quickly to avoid embarrassment. Wade felt downright giddy now. A funny feeling that he enjoyed come into his gut. That feeling meant he had ideas. He was pretty sure he knew where this was going
WinterWidow? Oh lord ie that was on Wade’s top five! Right next to Stucky, because there is no way that Captain America wasn’t at least partially gay. It was practically canon.

“Oh my god.” He said quickly, smile forming under his mask.

“He’s been missing for 10 years.” Yes this is why they adopted this child. He knew all the good shit.

“Ohmy god.”this was great.

“I found him.” Oh, the plot has thickened. Go on, my child!

“Ohmygod.”the kid was right, he couldn’t keep a secret.

“...it’s me.”

“Ohmyfuckingchimichangas!” ...wait... excuse me?! ...

That was a twist.

Well this is certainly a ...situation.

Red? Wanna step in buddy? He knows you can hear him. No? Okay, just let Deadpool help a fragile tortured teenage mind on its journey into being apart of a loving family of assassins for the first time. No biggie.

He’s got this.
There was silence and then “well, you were right.” Wade said casually. The kid whipped his head at him.

Okay, so maybe he doesn’t got this.

Red? You there? Wade’s mind has defended into the author’s dialogue buddy. This was a fucking situation.

“Well!” He glared and the heat of the glare hit him full force, even with the mask. Of course it did, that was the Black Widow fucking offspring! So many things made sense now, wow.

Well now he knows that Ass kicking spiders run in the family. He really was so much like his mother.

Oh my god, he was going to have so much fun with this. Was it too early to make jokes about it? Probably. Was Wade going to still do it? Certainly.

“Kidding.” He said with placating hand raised and Peter gave an exasperated noise that told Wade he was annoyed with him. Was Wade Dead? Or did Peter ‘I’m the happiest teen ever’ Parker just get a teenage mood. He was doing a lot of that throughout the duration of this conversation. It couldn’t be healthy, or was the tike just growing up?

Matt where the fuck are you!! Get you ass down here and fix this!!

“They keep asking me...where he is...who he is... they get mad at me when I don’t tell them but...” oh, baby boy... sometimes Wade forgot he knew Peter just as much as he knew Wade. That means he knows what Peter is thinking. He’s thinking things have to change again. He thinks he has to go back to his dumb family and be trapped in that again. He thinks he has to make everyone happy, even at the expense of himself and his happiness.

No baby boy, that’s not how life was supposed to work.

Peter was different from Wade and Matt. He knew the world was crap, but he still had hope in it. He still believed he could make everyone happy. He still believed people could be satisfied if he
gave them enough but that wasn’t true. People will just take and take and take and if you don’t take back you’ll be left with nothing.

Peter was still a kid. He didn’t understand that yet.

Wade never wanted him to.

Good guys and Bad guys didn’t exist. It made it easier for them to sleep at night, but when there was a grey area. When they had to deal with that grey area, that’s when they woke up. There weren’t good guys and bad guys just people. People living their lives and doing things so other people can’t live their lives the way they wanted. No one lives their lives the way they completely wanted. Peter discovered that way too soon. It’s why they couldn’t sleep. Perpetual insomnia was a bitch.

That’s what Team Red was. The grey area. They weren’t good and they weren’t bad. They didn’t make the world a better place and all that crap the Avengers and X men were about. They just made it a less shitty one.

Because that’s all they could do.

They were gonna die anyway, so why the fuck not.

Ah, he loved his teams morals. Mostly because they had none.

“They think you’re two different people?” He asked, he didn’t know what to say. How could the Avengers be that stupid? See, this is what happened when you followed the rules, you expected everyone else to follow the rules too and when they didn’t they were considered bad. Peter nodded in response and looked down sadly. Oh baby, Wade knows he’s taught you better than trying to be so many people at once. Two’s the limit hon. “oh boy, kiddo this is going to blow up in your face.”

“No it’s not.” Peter protested with a little stomp of his foot, he didn’t even believe himself. Wade doesn’t know why Red and Spidey say crap they don’t believe sometimes. But it made everything easier to be honest with the people you could be honest with.

“Ever watch Arrow?” Wade asked. A holy dawning came upon the child. Case in point. Oliver Queen has stroked again. Wade was always right. Or at least Netflix was.
“...this is going to blow up in my face.” Peter realized with a seed tone and Wade nodded sagely. Yep. Yes it was. Good job kiddo.

“Yes, young one.” Wade said wisly and Peter rolled his eyes again. Indeed it was. And Wade didn’t want to clean up the mess that came with that partic-tac-ular explosion.

“There too many similarities to the DCU. Like come on guys, get some new content.” Spidey grumbled as he crossed his arms and heard sirens because He threw himself off the roof to follow them.

Ah, he taught this one well.

OoOoO

Steve hates seeing Bucky depressed.

They had been through a lot together. They were best friends throughout the 40s and Bucky had always taken care of him with his asthma and other illnesses; stayed by his bed throughout the winter and avoided dust riddled places in the summer. But then Bucky went off to war and he got a super soldier serum and everything changed. They were together again and now instead of Bucky just watching his back they watched each others. But when he woke up in the 21st century he was alone, because everyone he knew was dead. Bucky was long gone before he went under and so was Peggy (well she wasn’t gone she just wasn’t the same, nothing was). Then Bucky came back in the form of the Winter Soldier and it was Steve’s turn to take care of his best friend.

Then Steve learned of Natasha and Bucky’s relationship and that they had a child. Bucky had always wanted kids, but at the prospect of it now he seemed terrified (which broke his heart because all Bucky wanted to do was settle down with a girl - they didn’t like being called dames and Steve would hardly call the Black Widow a dame- and have a few kids after the war. And Steve thought he would’ve made an amazing dad) . And then they found out the child was lost somewhere in this world and Steve hadn’t stopped helping to dig up every lead possible to find him when he found that little tid bit out. Natasha has been busting down doors ever since she lost the child and Bucky joined her as soon as he found out he had a child. Steve would back him up the whole way. He always did and didn’t plan on stopping any time soon.

Despite all their door bashing, They had come up with nothing after 5 years of searching together. And then Peter Parker (a 15 year old with no virtual experience, after working with him a little
Steve might have to reasses that prediction) just waltzes in and said that he had happened to stumble across the very kid they had been biting fingers off to find.

And then he goes on to say more bullshit about not telling them where the kid was even though he’s found him. Giving them white noise as an excuse. Steve knew there was something he wasn’t telling them, Peter seemed oddly distraught. And Peter never showed that much emotion in one go. But he kept the child from them nonetheless. Even though he was a kid himself and had no experience in this field (he’d be wrong though, he’s been wrong about a lot of things with Parker).

It made Steve’s blood boil.

Did he know the hardship his friend had gone through to see his child even once? The hardship of a mother never being able to see her child grow up? Did he know that he was depriving them of that as they wasted time waiting for Peter to tell them where he was. Waiting until they were ‘ready’.

After Peter said that the kid wasn’t ready to see Bucky and Natasha, Bucky looked so lost. He wouldn’t do anything and neither would Natasha. They both just sat there and thought and the only time they moved was for missions (that were thankfully unhindered by their emotional state, but they were just husks that were silently follow through with their orders just to get it over with). They barely ate and nearly never slept. It was heartbreaking to watch.

He knew he shouldn’t be mad at Peter, because the kid was only trying to make sure the other kid was safe and comfortable. He was just respecting the child’s wishes. Peter probably knew more than most what it was like to have one’s world completely turned upside down. Steve knew he shouldn’t shoot the messenger, but when he looked over at Peter - in his own mindset- it was like Peter didn’t even care. As if this was another assignment and he solved it and was on to the next one. Just kept moving forward while Natasha and Bucky were stuck in the past. That wasn’t fucking fair.

He was currently stripping his gear that they had used in their successful mission. Peter had done alright, following orders not to a T but following them distractedly nonetheless (If Steve looked closely he could see the kid was tired and distracted. But the child didn’t say anything as he too went through the motions, head somewhere else for most of the mission). Everyone was unwinding from the fight but it seemed the entire team had left Peter isolated more than usual. Except for Stark, but he was manning the plane so he wasn’t with Parker right now.

For some reason, whenever the man was around now he’d shield Peter from questions about Petya. Steve, somewhere deep down inside of himself, was grateful that the man had some sense out of all of them (he seemed to take Parker’s side on this case for some reason). At first it made Steve suspicious but then he understood that Stark understood that whatever Petya’s actions and
decisions were wasn’t Peter’s fault. Stark has become close to the boy, moreso than any other Avenger, so it was no wonder he was defending him. Because Tony understood Peter’s thought process better than the rest of them. Tony understood Peter better than the rest of them. He’s the one who gave the kid a chance and stepped up to get to know the teenager personally. Steve sometimes thinks that Tony has more of a heart than he lets on and he certainly has a soft spot for children - especially if they were smart - even if he didn’t want to admit it. It was only a matter of time before Peter got under his skin.

But no matter how much Steve knew it wasn’t Peter’s fault, no matter how much he put it in him, no matter how much he vented at him, it wasn’t his fault. He was just doing his job. But then there was moments like these.

Moments when Bucky and Nat looked lost and like they didn’t know what to do.

Moments where he couldn’t understand why they couldn’t just be happy with their child.

Moments where he needed someone to blame.

“Parker!” He barked and Peter jumped, clearly being in his own mind and not expecting to be confronted. Probably trying to solve his own personal problems; his face was sure conflicted like he was trying to work something out but just couldn’t. Steve didn’t very much care right now. He wasn’t blind. Peter had been trying to work something out in his head for weeks now. Ever since he got back from his two month vacation and especially since he’s become closer to Wanda (Yeah, Steve noticed that too. Everyone did. Peter would sit next to Wanda during briefings and he would quietly talk to her about random things he had seen on patrol. Sometimes he’d even pull her out of the room randomly but subtly so that they didn’t cause commotion. Wanda would in turn talk to him quietly too, or silently hand him a small cookie or pastry sometimes. He had more small, shy genuine smiles around her and none of the Avengers dared to break whatever was going on up). He was always spacey but this was on a whole new level. He himself looked like he wasn’t getting enough sleep and he barely ate food at the tower anymore - only when Stark shoved a juice box in his hand because he refused to eat solid food this past week, Wanda was a little worried for him too. He looked like something was driving him absolutely crazy.

But Steve didn’t let that stop him this time.

“Y-yes. Er- sorry were you..were you speaking to me?” He looked confused and stuttered over his nervousness. He was caught off guard. He had a Baffled look not directed for Steve but at himself, probably for not hearing if Steve had said his name before. He had super senses after all. It was
rare for Peter not to be able to hear something. Even when he was spacey.

“Is anyone else’s name Parker?” He snapped and he noticed he’s never taken this tone with Peter. Not for no reason. But this was his military commander tone and posture. He had only given Peter a scolding or disapproving tone before, but he’d never use his military tone in a child. He rarely used it with the Avengers. And Peter had done amazing in this mission, just a few small mistakes that no one could really blame him for improvising upon. Peter stiffened at his voice, his hands floating to clasp themselves behind his back. He stopped short of the action, and forced his hand a back down. Steve paid no mind to the action. He probably should have.

“No, I guess not.” He tried a nervous lopsided smile but it was strained. He was shaking slightly. Steve didn’t falter. “Uhm...what do you need?” He asked nervously and curiously. He was failing at keeping his tone light, Steve could tell that he was put on edge. Something frightened in the back of his eyes. Defensive, but he kept a slightly submissive/ casual front.

“What do I need? Is that anyway to talk to a superior officer.” Steve seethed down at him. Stepping closer. Parker didn’t move and looked up at him with a baffled and annoyed expression as he lowered his tone.

“Uh, you're not my Boss, sir.” Peter spat out and crossed his arms a leaned a little back. The mocking tint in the ‘sir’ only stirred Steve up more. He didn’t even know why he was so angry at Parker. “what’s with the superiority act? Testosterone get too high?” He joked with a snarky defensive tone, face coming up in a slight smirk and Steve seethed again. This wasn’t unusual of Parker to act this way, Steve mostly had taken it in stride. Rolled his eyes at the boy when he realized that the quipping was all in good fun, and that Parker could buckle down and be serious when the situation called for it, but that was only when it really called for it. He’d actually come to quite enjoy their conversations. Peter didn’t treat Stev like Captain America, he treated Steve like he would any other person and that was oddly comforting.

So he didn’t know why he was so mad at Parker. He didn’t know what he was saying or doing. He didn’t even notice his hand had went up until something was gripping his wrist tightly.

“What the hell Rogers?!” Said the familiar voice of Sam. It was frantic and worried and irritated, and it snapped Steve out of whatever haze he was in, and the super soldier blinked. The first thing he saw was a wide eyed and shaking Peter Parker before him (he wasn’t even trying to hide the fact that he was scared). And the he looked back to see a worried and a bit peeved off Sam.

Was he going to…?
“I’m gonna…” Peter said meekly the kid looked like he was gonna throw up or cry. And Steve, before he could stop himself, barked another order.

“Stay.” He said in an authoritative tone that came out more of a yell and Parker froze where he was and stood up straighter. Like a fucking soldier. What the fuck? Parker never acted this... compliant. Not willingly. But it was like his movements were trained into him. Practiced with painstakingly long hours and beat into him. Like they were muscle memory. It looked so out of place in him but the movements were so fluid that there was no way they couldn’t be not practiced.

“What the hell?” Sam whispered, voicing Steve’s thoughts and brought Steve’s arm down, not letting go. Peter hunched a little before catching Steve’s eyes and straightening. He looked like he wanted to kick himself for doing so. “Parker, you okay?” Sam asked to him, Peter didn’t answer. Steve wished he did because he felt terrible right now. Sam looked at him closely and Steve wished he stepped away or just ran but he just stood there looking like he wanted to do just that. “Peter?” Sam asked again.

“Y-Yeah. I’m sorry. I’m...I’m-“ he stuttered his hands unconsciously going to clasp each other behind his back (how the fuck did he know how to stand that way? It was identical to the the stance of soldiers lining up for attention) he looked at Steve quickly and as soon as he made eye contact was submissive again. “Stupid. It’s stupid. I’m gonna...go…” Peter said quickly and scrambled out of there, his movements were stiff. As if he was untrained to do whatever he pleases under a certain set of words and authority.

Like Bucky was

The thought of a child being even in a remotely similar situation to his best friend made him absolutely sick. But it didn’t matter. Steve had triggered something inside Parker to make him so willing to obey. Steve felt like shit as the rest of the anger drained out of him.

“What the hell was that?!“ Sam seethed at him and forced him down into the chair before letting him go from the tight grip. Steve wished he wouldn’t. He might hurt someone again. He was glad Sam was there to stop it from actually happening.

“I-I don’t....what…” Steve said putting his head into his hands. Why was he so mad? “Was I going to…” he couldn’t bring himself to finish the sentence. He looked up at Sam hoping the other man would deny what he thought.
“Hit him? Yeah man.” Sam said with his arms crossed, making Steve deflate in disappointment and shame. Why would he want to hit Parker? Sure he was pissed off but he’s been pissed off by the boy before. What made him want to hit him this time? “What did he do? I thought he did pretty well today” Sam asked as if this was Peters fault and Steve shook his head. He wanted to instantly deny that claim. Because this wasn’t Peter’s fault.

He was just dealt a bad hand. It’s not like he wanted to get caught up in this whole situation. But he was and he was taking this much more maturely than the actual adults. He just sucked it up and went along with it. They were acting like children.

“Nothing… I’m just…” Steve shook his head and Sam looked incredulous. Steve felt the same way. Captain America? Hitting a child for no reason? More likely than you’d think. He felt like an absolute sack of shit.

“You were about to hit him Steve. That’s not something you just… do.” Sam presses and looked a little worried. He leaned forward to emphasize his point. “You can’t just- geez and Parker was scared. What the hell. I’ve seen that kid go up against a fucking army of robots and not even flinch. You do know he’s probably been abused, because there is no way that kid hasn’t been in at least one abusive household. You don’t hit an abused kid Steve. You don’t hit kids period.” The counselor in his voice jumped out. He was right about Parker being abused, most likely. Even if it was light abuse, abuse was still abuse. It messed someone up and for someone as messed up as Peter Parker, there was just no way he wasn’t abused.

Maybe that’s where the military stance came from...

“I know… it’s just everything with Buck and his kid and Peter and..yeah.” Steve said ashamed of himself for almost hitting a child and for what? Because he was angry. Thor was angry and the most he did was pick Peter up. That still wasn’t okay, because they all knew Parker resident like to be touched. But at least it’s better than triggering a memory and almost fucking hitting him with no context or reason.

“Yeah? That’s all you’ve got. I get that you’re angry man but… god.” Sam suddenly looked nervous as he looked back in the direction Peter had scrambled off to. “But seriously, Have you ever seen Parker that terrified before? I’ve literally seen the kid flip a goddamn Rhino, he doesn’t get scared.” He asked softer and in a panic that Steve could relate to. Steve thought back to the child’s haunted face. He wasn’t just terrified. Steve has seen that look mirrored on his friends face, on his face.

It was the look of painful memories playing back behind his eyes. Even when you were trying to so
desperately forget and never remember. Things you buried so deep in you mind that they’d never hope to touch the light of day again. Things that lurked in your nightmares and scared you more than anything ever would. A look that shouldn’t (as most things were with Peter Parker) be in a child’s eyes.

Abusive memories.

Oh god.

Steve stood up abruptly, not even sure what he was going to do or say. Sam stumbles back in shock. He had to apologize to the kid, that was the first coherent complete thought that he’d had since interacting with the child. Peter didn’t deserve whatever Steve had made him relive. No one deserved to relive any kind of trauma that they’d pushed down. They deserved to be counseled and taught to move on from it. Not push it in only for it to jump out at the worst moments.

“Where are you-“ Steve didn’t answer Sam as he tore through the jet trying to find the small teenager. Sam didn’t try to stop him. There were not many places to hide so Steve was confused as to where he had gone. It was like he had disappeared. But then again playing hide and seek with Peter Parker was a game he’d be sure to lose. But this was a smaller jet and Stev would check every inch of it to find the kid.

Steve finally found him 20 minutes later, in the loading bay near the back. When the plane landed the kid would be sure to be the first on to bolt out of there. An escape route that was a straight shot. He was sitting in a dark corner where he was unnoticeable to the untrained eye, blending into the shadows, and Steve almost missed his small form that was curled up in the ominous space.

The soldier approached slowly. As to not startle Peter but the kid’s head snapped up when he was half way across the bay. Nearly 15 meters from the child. Steve had made sure to step lightly and barley breathe but the kid still noticed him.

Precognition. He reminded himself bitterly (although Peter called it his Spidey sense and once Steve had even heard him mutter super anxiety. It was nearly impossible to sneak up in the kid if he thought you even slightky a threat and he thought everyone was a threat, therefore it was virtually impossible to sneak up on the kid) as he watched the child shrink back a little. He felt like an asshole. He walked up in a way that made himself noticeable but not threatening and leaned against the storage crates only feet away from where the child was sitting with his head down, but peering through too long bangs to look at his sternum. Eyes following and his senses surly working to make sure he knew where Steve was at all times (sometimes Steve wonders if Peter ever got annoyed by his senses when they picked up every detail for no reason. It must suck never to have anywhere where he could just calm down and breathe in silence).
There was quiet before Steve spoke. The hum of the jet as a background buzz, he knew Peter heard it much louder and all the other engines and systems working and turning within the jet. “That was out of line for me.” Steve finally spoke and offered an apology “I’m sorry.” Peter shifted in uncomfortable way, he looked at Steve through his shaggy bangs that hung over his face a little more highly now. Peter was oddly uncomfortable with gratitude and compliments but more so with apologies being offered to him. He didn’t know what to do with them so he always waved them off or blush or didn’t respond. It through Steve in for a loop the first time he offered Peter a thanks and he stiffened.

“It’s okay.” Peter muttered in a way that made him seem embarrassed, and Steve hated how he was so easy to forgive. Whenever he said it was okay, he usually meant it. It meant he understood why they did it. Steve would like to know what Peter understood about his actions though, because not even Steve understood what he’d done.

“I don’t know what came over me. I just-“ Steve continued. Hoping to help Peter understand a bit more but the boy finally looked up at him with an unamused look and cut him off.

“Don’t lie, Captain. You know exactly what came over you.” Peter said to him but not unkindly. Just a quiet statement. It was firm and said in a neutral Almost bored tone. Steve blinked at him in confusion. “you just don’t know how to put it into words. I get it.” He said understandingly. Steve looked at the boy astonished for a minute as Peter side eyed away from eye contact. He’d hit the target right in the middle. Steve really didn’t know how to say what he was feeling.

“How did you…” he whispered to himself and Peter gave him a tired sad smile. One that he was doing more often now.

“I’m a teenager. I kinda specialize in irrational emotion and thought processes.” Peter said to him and yeah that made sense. And then he looked thoughtful “The best way I can describe it is that emotions build. And then one day they explode. But that is just an explanation for impulsive decisions. You kinda have to be aware of it.” Peter said with a blush. He looked away and Steve thought about it. That made sense. That made a lot of sense. Small things build up. And then sometimes the tower got too high and came crashing down. That made perfect sense.

“But still, My emotions got the best of me. And you almost got hurt.” He deflated. He wasn’t a teenager, he didn’t have that excuse. Peter shook his head.

“It’s okay. You had Sam to hold you back. You didn’t hurt me.” Peter said trying to be reassuring but it was too quiet to be totally affective.
“Yeah but still…” Steve said with a low tone. Peter was quiet for a bit. Steve slid down the storage boxes and onto the floor with his knees up and to the side. He didn’t know what else to say. He should know how to describe this, he wanted to know how to describe this.

“Does it happen often?” Peter asked quietly. Steve was stunned for a minute before he shook his head. “Every so often?” Peter asked shyly and Steve thinks about before nodding. It mostly happened on the field when he punched something harder than what was necessary. Peter smiles a little. “Don’t worry. It happens to me every once in a while too.” He admitted. Steve looked baffled even though he shouldn’t be. Peter was a kid and he was a teenager - whom were known to be irrational and impulsive - but he also had a good grip on his control and he shouldn’t have as good of a hand on his emotions as he did. Steve always envied how he could just push aside his feelings and do what needed to be done. As far as knows though, Peter had never even come close to losing control once.

“You?” Steve asked dumbly and Peter let out a laugh. It was amused and disbelieving. He just couldn’t believe that Peter ‘cool as a cucumber’ Parker, has lost control over his powers and emotions.

“Yes. I did it just the other day! Red held me back from nearly killing a guy.” Peter confesses. He could tell that there was more to that story, but Steve couldn’t help but gape. What had gotten Peter so mad that he wanted to kill someone? He never killed anyone. As far as he knew at least. He couldn’t see Peter killing someone. He was just a kid. But it really put into perspective just how much self control Parke really had. Because he could easily kill someone if he slipped even a little.

“What set you off?” Steve found himself asking. Peter shrugged and looked to the ground picking at the fraying sleeve of his oversized hoodie.

“This case I’m working on.” Peter sighed and groaned as he leaned back and looked to the ceiling as if being reminded of a stupid chore “it’s a frustrating one and I usually don’t have trouble with these kinds of things.” Peter didn’t say more about it as he looked at Steve critically. Steve felt like he was being analyzed, like how Natasha analyzed him. It put him slightly on edge. “The ‘lost child’ thing set you off?” Peter asked and Steve nodded numbly. He didn’t even care at how Peter was just pulling them out of his ass and getting it right at this point.

“Yes, I’m sorry. I hadn’t realized you had stuff going on.” Steve said genuinely and Peter waved him off. As he always did.

“I always have ‘stuff going on’, as you so nicely put it. I just call it life being its bitchy self, but картофельный помидор, I guess.” Peter said flippantly. Steve looked baffled.
“I’m sorry.. what?” He asked at the random Russian in between. He knew Peter could speak Russian, but it was kind of nicer than he expected it to be. So casual but gentle. Peter laughed.

“Nothing, I just wanted to see your reaction.” He smiled and Steve shook his head goodnaturedly.

“I still shouldn’t have...I’m sorry…” Steve said after a bit, and looked at Peter who rolled his eyes.

“It’s fine .” Peter insisted a bit annoyed. He was clearly trying to get him to stop.

“But it’s not , Peter. You don’t deserve to relive the things you did.” And Peter stiffened. Steve knew he hit the dot. “Sorry.” He said again.

“It’s really okay…” Peter whispered and then shook his head out of whatever he was thinking. “My mind just blew it out of proportion. I should’ve...I wasn’t in the right headspace to...you know..” He mumbled mostly to himself even if he was addressing Steve.

“Get hit for no reason?” Steve asked with a raised brow and Peter nodded “Peter,” he sighed “you shouldn’t have a headspace for getting hit for no reason like that.” Steve said a bit exasperated and Peter lopsided smiled at him.

“I guess not.” He said bashfully “but at least you apologized. I know you didn’t mean it. So it’s okay.”

“Thank you.” Steve said kindly. He looked at Steve with serious eyes. For the first time during the whole conversation looking him in the eyes directly.

“Don’t beat yourself up captain. We may not be completely human, but we still have emotions and feelings. We still only know how to be human. Sometimes we just...forget.” Steve was stunned into silence by that statement. and then there was a bit more silence. Peter must’ve been uncomfortable with it after a certain point because he said “But it would’ve hurt like a bitch if you did hit me.” Peter smiled sneakily and Steve rolled his eyes goodnaturedly.

“Language ”
Sam was worried for the kid.

Unpopular opinion in the tower, he knows. He’s kept it mostly to himself though. Wanda being in the shy side of worrying and Tony being a full blown forcefeild for the kid whenever they were all in the same room. Among the Avengers, That was it as far as they were all concerned, Peter was on a completely different side.

It wasn’t until he found Steve about to fucking *slap* the kid that he relieved the true gravity of the situation. The kid hadn’t just told them no, he had started a fucking *war*. A war where no one could truly be on his side. Tony and Wanda were loyal to the Avengers before they were to Peter, and they could shield him all they wanted but never truly fight with him. Peter was caught on one side of a war that he he didn’t want to be in with unfair odds. Where it was either be on the Avengers side or be neutral. No one could be on Peter’s side.

And this wasn’t even his fucking fault.

Sam had counseled many people, not so much kids but he knew that people aren’t used to big changes. Especially when something is working out or their used to something. Whatever Nat’s kid was going through wasn’t Peter’s fault. And it wasn’t that kid’s fault either. Kids shouldn’t be put into those situations and forced to make those decisions. But two were.

Petya had to make the decision to see his family and Peter had to make the decision to respect Petya’s wishes or fuck it and bring him to his parents. It would’ve been a lot easier for Peter to pick the second option, but he knew that wasn’t fair to the other kid. That decision wouldn’t allow Petya to be in control. And Peter knew what it was like to not be in control enough to give Petya some.

It was gonna cause he’ll for Peter, but it was the right thing to do.

So Sam became neutral in this war. He decided to pull a Tony and Wanda and check on the kid. He was a councilor after all.

Sam found Peter at the lab, as that was the place he was most often in the Avengers tower, beside the briefing room. He’d holed himself here when he was in the tower, not coming out to eat and Tony would stomp up during lunch time, glare at everyone in the room before grabbing his lunch.
and a juice box and granola bar (Peter’s lunch, although Peter didn’t eat the granola bar most days. That was concerning).

He’d never come to the common room much anymore, in fact Sam could count the times he had after that one day he told Nat about her kid on his hand and blow off some fingers too. Which was weird, because no one could stop talking about him, mostly venting, especially lately. What with the Avengers harassing him about Nat and Buckys kid and all. It was weird because Peter barley came by the tower and yet he was such a big deal here for the past year. Sometimes they wouldn’t see him for some time and when he came back he was suddenly skinnier or put some weight on and that shit didn’t happen overnight. But his presence was so integrated it felt like he had never even left.

Sam was a counselor, and he had seen everyone from kids to adults with trauma. He was good at noticing feelings, and he knows what that look in Peters eye is every time they ask him questions. It was difficult to explain, but it was a mix of longing and sadness. Anger and hope. Guilt and regret. Frustration and anxiety.

A bunch of feelings that tied together to make a big emotion that was ugly and hurt. Peter his It when he was talking to someone, but when they left he stayed just long enough to see that emotion eat Peter. Each time they asked the mask eroded and Sam could do nothing but watch as Peter was eaten alive by this emotion he couldn’t control.

Sam felt bad for the kid. He didn’t understand at first, why would he feel like this, but then it slowly started to make sense. The kid had been in a hell for the entirety of his life. His family was all gone, he never had anyone in his corner from day one. Now there was this kid that the Avengers hadn’t even met and would die for him instantly. His parents would die for him, do anything to make him happy. They would accept him no matter who or what he was. Peter never got that growing up. And he may have not have ever said it, but Peter really wanted that.

He wanted to be accepted.

There was also something else that Sam still hadn’t figured out. Like he was missing a vital piece of this intercate puzzle, but just couldn’t figure it out. Like it seemed like it should be obvious but it clearly wasn’t if no one had figured it out. Although Tony might have because he was solidly a wall in front of Peter, trying to shield the boy so he could focus on something else.

Sam thinks Peter convinced himself that he didn’t want a family. It was a defense mechanism for being surrounded by them and never having one of his own. Peter didn’t know he even wanted it and these emotions must be confusing to him. It must be even more confusing and scary when there was no one to talk to about it. No one he could trust enough to help him without strings attached.
Maybe Sam could help with that.

And that is how he found himself in front of a kid who was stabbing a wire with a screw driver. He seemed bored and not all there. Like he was thinking about something far off. He wasn’t entirely present and floating in his thoughts mindlessly.

“Rough week?” He asked after he noticed Peter wouldn’t give a conversation. Peter snapped up at the noise looking at Sam confused. Like he wasn’t sure how he got there. But then he rolled his eyes and looked down at the wires again.

“Leave it there, it’ll be done by the time I go.” Peter said flippantly, not looking up. Sam blinked for a minute before he realized Peter thought he had something for him to fix. Which was fair, because that’s what the Avengers usually asked Peter to do when they came down here. When Sam didn’t put anything down, Peter paused but still didn’t look up. He stopped his hands as he breathed in nearly silently. “Or are you here about Ms.Romonov and Mr.Barnes?” He mumbled. Sam couldn’t decipher the timidness but it didn’t sit well with him.

_Dammit guys, he’s a kid, stop breaking him down. You’re the goddamn heroes. Right now yall acting like chickens. Get your shit together._

“About _you_ actually.” Sam said casually as if he wasn’t harboring a bit of anger at the Avengers for the kid. He leaned back casually as Peter stiffened but didn’t looked up still. “How you doing?” Sam asked in the most casual way anyone could ever say that in. And Peter literally _fell_ out of his chair and choked. Sam stood up quickly and looked over the table with worry and surprise in his eyes. Like what the _fuck_?! The kid, with super powers that literally made him able to balance on the tip of a pin without any thought, just _fell_ out of a _chair_ for _no reason_. “Hey, you good kid?” Sam asked and Peter sat up and rubbed his head with a groan.

“Yeah, Just... don’t ask if I’m good.” He requested and Sam huffed. Was that all? Man this kid was dramatic. But also that was kinda sad. Had no one asked the kid how he was doing after all this? After everything he’s been through? After missions when he was hurt?

“Okay, what the hell kid?” Sam amended crossing the table and standing just in front of him. But a little further so he wasn’t intimidating.

“Better.” Peter choked out and forced a smile. Sam didn’t smile back and Peter didn’t make any attempt to move, he just laid back on the floor (weather it was dirty or clean, Sam had no way of knowing. But he assumed Peter didn’t care because he was laying on it).
“You gonna get up?” Sam asked after a bit of watching the kid just lay there. Peter moaned and that was enough answer for him.

“No. I’m good down here.” Peter said back and that made Sam smirk as he move a few steps forward to sit next to Peter under the table. He felt his bones creak and pop as he leaned down and got into a comfortable position.

“Geez kid, I’m too old for this.” He said as a joke and Peter cocked his head curiously. He made no further comment on the matter.

“Why do I feel like I’m going to regret this conversation in the near future.” Peter said dully. Sam blew out a breath and smirked down at him.

“Probably because you are.” Sam said with a cheeky grin and Peer groaned again and closed his eyes. He was acting more like a teenager than Sam had ever seen him before. Maybe it was the setting. Tony has worked hard to make this Lab a safe place. “So how are you doing?” Sam asked again, this time a little lighter.

“I told you not to ask me that.” Peter reminded in an irritated voice. He cracked open one eye to glare at him with no heat. “Is this a therapy session?” Peter asked suspiciously. He leaned a little away from Sam at the question which was weird because he was sprawled on the floor and contorting his body oddly. Fucking mutants, could do all this shit and Sams bones were acheing by just sitting down.

“If you want it to be.” Sam shrugged and said casually and Peter scoffed.

“I don’t, thanks.” Peter said in monotony. Sarcasm slipping into his tone. The kid was actually pretty amusing when he wasn’t being a smug asshole… just a sarcastic teenager asshole. It was kinda domestic in a weird way.

“Well you’ve had a rough week.” Sam said with only a little authority that the kid didn’t miss. Peter cocked his eyebrow and he sighed. “Kid, you look like a walking disaster.” He said gesturing to his entire being. Skinny with a slouch when he was upright. Those bags under his eyes looked like bruises and hollow cheeks with faded bruises that had yet to heal because he wasn’t fucking eating or sleeping enough for his heal factor to work properly.
“Bold of you to assume I’m not actually a walking disaster.” Peter said with his normal amount of snark. Sam was smart enough to look past it and not get annoyed. Instead keep going. It seemed to work with Peter.

“Bold of you to assume I’m letting this go.” Sam snarked back and that made Peter pause. Yeah, he knew how to talk teenager. It helped mend my with Harley and honestly he kinda found it funny when Peter quoted vines in battle because Peter always quoted at the exact right time. The kid didn’t know how to respond for a second and Sam plowed one before he could gather his barings “You’ve been dodging questions left and right. Avoiding Nat and Bucky. Yelled at by Thor and Fury for something that you can’t control. Steve almost hit you. You’ve been taking big emotional hits and don’t think I haven’t noticed Spidey being physically tired. You can barely keep down solid food if I heard Wanda correctly. Now you don’t have to tell me what ever the hell it is you’re doing out there, but I can tell you need to talk about whatever is going up up here a little.” Sam said pointedly, poking a finger at Peter’s head. Peter looked at him for a moment then looked away, almost guiltily. Which was stupid he just needed to not bottle things up. If not for Sam then himself, it must feel awful to have all those thoughts with no where to go cramming up your head.

“It’s okay. You’re worried about your teammate. Just ask what you need to and go, don’t try to-” Peter went off to mumbled still confused. “I’ll answer what I can.” He finished. It took Sam a moment to figure out what he meant. Peter thought this was a different approach to getting answers out of him, which honestly was just wrong. Sam would manipulate a child’s emotions, especially a broken child like Peter who needed a little more love and affection and a goddamn hug, just for answers and then throw him out once he was useless to him. It was so messed up and Sam wondered how many times someone had done that to the poor boy.

“How are you doing?” He asked again. Ignoring all the swirling side questions that would get them off track. Peter looked at him annoyed again.

“I’m fine. I’m not the one who’s not seeing their kid cause that kid isn’t ready to see them.” Peter said with irritation and a bit of venom, that he didn’t try to hide. Sam shrugged. Vengefulness and irritation was what he was expecting out of the boy. Along with a little spite. He just needed to get that all out before they got to the real shit.

“Sure, Yeah. I’m worried about my team. Bucky and Nat? known them since I joined. Known them before I joined. But they aren’t the ones who have to constantly talk about something they don’t have the answers to. They aren’t the ones who are trying to make sure all sides are happy. And yeah they mean well, but if that kid isn’t ready, that’s not your fault.” Sam shrugged and Peter surprised him by making an involuntary wounded sound. Sam widened his eyes as Peter did as well.

“It is my fault.” Peter whimpered and Sam has to stop for a second. He never saw Peter like this. Irrational and irritated, sure. Sad and slightly depressed, naturally. The small smile he makes when
he’s really happy, it was fucking adorable not that anyone would admit it. But...this...this was remorse . This was regret . This showed that Peter cared about this a hell of a lot more than anyone ever thought he would or could.

How did you affectingly bury that much emotion?

“How?” Sam said trying to maintain his composer and Peter shook his head. He thought Sam would tell on him for having feelings. News flash kiddo, everyone fucking does. “promise I won’t tell.” Sam rolled his eyes. Peter peered at him untrusting eyes.

“Promise?” Peter asked, like a small child and it kinda cracked Sam’s heart a little.

“On my grandmas life.” He ignored the mumble of ‘your grandma is probably dead’. But she ain’t dead. No one could kill MiMa that easy, not even time. Peter breathes in and out to calm himself before speaking in a hushed tone.

“It’s me.” Peter whispered so softly Sam barley even heard it. He stared up at the ceiling blankly and Sam didn’t get it at first. “I’m their kid.” The kid admitted just as detached as he looked. Sam was fucking floored. He didn’t know what the fuck to say. Sam, The fucking guy who ran group therapy sessions for war vets with the worst kind of problems and helped to council a guy from the 40s out of being brainwashed, didn’t know what to say to the traumatized teenager. Peter continued paying no mind to Sam’s existential crisis. “It was something Bucky said, when I met him...again. I had met him before in-in HYDRA...it itched at my mind until I had to know. I asked Harley to do a DNA test and the results came back...” Peter explained quietly and Sam hung on to every single word as he didn’t know what to say still. This was like some Netflix original content right here, that’s what this was. “I...I’m not ready to have a family, Sam. Like a real family. With people who love me. No one has ever loved me like that, and I don’t...I’m not ready for that.” Peter confesses. He wasn’t hearing himself speak he just went on autopilot.

Okay....

First of all: What the hell.

No actually: What the fuck!

The kid they were looking for for literal years was swinging around in the most noticeable flashy (besides Stark) suit in man kind and they didn’t notice it. Hell hes been on the Avengers team on
and off for the past year. He’s been fighting baddies longer than that. How did they not notice it? Now that Sam was looking at him he saw the resemblance. Natasha’s figure and Buck’s features. Oh god this was their kid. It wasn’t just Peter Parker, he was Pytor Romanov. He had been lying about his fucking name.

Just like his mother.

“Stop doing that. Everyone always does that.” Peter mumbled trying to hide his embarrassed, guilty face under a hoodie he pulled up. Sam took a stunned moment to realize that: Peter had actually told him.

Sam wasn’t sure if he should be honored or horrified.

Then he took a good look at the teenager. He wasn’t looking at him, he had his walls up but there was something behind them that Sam could recognize. He was afraid, and confused. And Sam would be too (and if he was honest Peter is handling this a lot better than he would have). Not only was he put in a situation where he had to deal with all sorts of family issues, this was an issue with his identity. Not just Peter Parker and Spider-Man anymore, now Pytor Romanov too. They all had so many different personalities and it would be hard to keep track. Peter didn’t even know how to act like Pytor. Peter didn’t know which one he was supposed to be, he didn’t know how to be one without the other. Because they were all apart of him but no one wanted all of him. They all wanted parts and Peter couldn’t give them that. He could only be himself and he thought no one wanted that.

They all just wanted his parts, and it was ripping him apart slowly.

“That’s messed up.” Sam breathes to his internal dialogue. Somehow Peter knew what he meant because his response was said accordingly.

“Everything is messed up.” Peter whispered back and yeah, that was his response most of the time. But this time Sam finally understood what it meant. It meant that Peter had seen the world for what it really was. It meant that this was a small problem in the grand scheme of things. It meant that Peter knew the gravity of the decision he was now forced to make. And he had to make it soon so he could dictate and have partial control over the response. His parents would find out who he was eventually. He just needed a little more time to gather his barings.

“Yeah no kidding. And you’ve just been what? Telling them that... and you were... and they got mad at you...oh my god Peter-“ Sam was stuttering over the information he already put together. Forming incoherent sentences and Peter seemed to still understand what he meant because he blew
out a breath and sat up right. Hoodie still up as he sat next to Sam.

“I know. “ he whispered and closed his eyes and leaned his head back. In that self depreciating way one does when they beat themselves up about doing something stupid. “And I tried to convince myself to just... tell them. But ...they don’t like me . They love Petya. They have so many expectations for him, but I don’t know what they are and I don’t know how to act.” Peter said as if he was complaining about something stupid. But this wasn’t stupid. This was valid. The Avengers has treated him like crap and still do. He never needed to worry about joining their little weird ass family because he knew it was never going to happen. But now there was a possibility and he didn’t know how to feel about it. Would he even want to join this family? Would it be more if the same? He probably thought they would just yell at him more often and restrict his ability to help people. He’d be trapped back in an abusive household with no escape route.

“Then don’t act.” Sam told him simply. And Peter rolled his eyes. Sam knew it was typical advice because if it were that easy then he would’ve done it already. But it’s all he’s got. And it was easier said than done, especialy if he had been pretending to be something he’s not his whole life.

“I’m not enough.” Peter groaned and pressed the palms of his hands into his eyes. Sam observes him as he went on “I’m an asshole. I don’t know what a good family looks like. I don’t know what I’m supposed to do to keep them happy.” Sam breathed through his nose. Peter really didn’t know how family worked if he thought he had to pull all the weight by himself. Sam tried not to feel guilty, but dammit, he should. This was their fault. The Avengers were dysfunctional but a family nonetheless and Peter has been with them long enough to be considered apart of that. He should’ve been, but for some messed up twisted reason he was cast out of it. Not included or supported. They outcasted a fucking fifteen year old kid who had emotional problems the size of Everest because they didn’t want to deal with him?

Some kind of heroes they were.

The kid didn’t need discipline or lectures. He needed stability and structure and dammit, he needed some fucking love. Respect. Something that didn’t make it seem like he was doing everything wrong. Someone to tell him what he did right for once. Something to make him believe he wasn’t screwing everything over. Because he wasn’t. He was trying to help and his methods were fucking affective. They got fucking results. Faster than any of the Avengers could get results cause this kid knew how the system worked better than any of them and he knew how to beat it. He needed someone to tell him that he was... amazing. Not just to pamper him but Because he is.

He needed Something that didn’t put everyone’s problems on his shoulders.

“That isn’t your job.” Sam informed. Might as well try to start. He might be too late, but by the looks of it, they probably were years too late. These kinds of thoughts don’t just manifest over a
year. They manifest over a lifetime of being told that you were worthless and nothing. That you were just a screw up who caused everyone’s problems. This manifested over pain, loss, guilt and regret.

“I don’t know that! I didn’t know that! I don’t know anything about this. I don’t want to be apart of this. I mean- I want- I don’t know what I want.” Peter breathes in and out and continued as Sam waited patiently to tell him.

“Then what do you want?” Sam asked after Peter couldn’t say anything. Peter needed to acknowledge this. He needed to tell Sam so that he could help him. Peter kept breathing and then finally spoke.

“I want them to be okay,” He said meekly and then his eyes became panicked as he rambled. Sam just let him get it out “but they can’t without Petya and I’m supposed to be Petya, I don’t feel like Petya though, I’m just Peter.” Sam really didn’t know what to say to that. He didn’t know how to console that. He’s dealt with a brainwashed ex soldier turned as sin from the 40s. He’s dealt with PTSD of a scared and outcasted telepathic witch who’s been in a maximum security prison. What He’s never had to deal with was: a super powered teenager who had gone through hell and back that wanted to help everyone but himself and was going through the worst kind of identity crisis. What’s he’s never had to deal with was: an orphan who didn’t want to tell his parents he was right in front of them for a whole year, in fear of messing up and being rejected because that’s all he’s ever been told by them and everyone else around him his entire life. He’s never had to deal with someone who’s lost so much, who’s lost and have to give up everything, when they were so young. Everything was just out of his reach and Peter was too tired to keep jumping for it. Sam was surprised he was still trying.

“No it wouldn’t” Peter said with a something that sounded like tears in his voice. He was choking them back. He didn’t trust Sam that much to cry in front of him yet. “Not for me. I’m never enough.” He mumbled. Sam blew out a breath. He’d just inadvertently confirmed everything Sam was thinking.

“Peter there is a lot to unpack here-” Sam started and Peter rolled his eyes. Tears somehow starting to dry up in his eyes. That was more like the teenager he knew, but his eyes were red and nose was
hot still though.

“I know; and until I do, I don’t think I can tell them.” Peter said and Sam sighed. That made sense, they were getting back into a territory that Sam was familiar to work in. Small steps

“Then go to the-“ Sam was about to suggest that he go see someone about this. Stark would surely pay for it if Peter can’t (and he couldn’t) afford it. Peter needed this.

“I don’t need a shrink. I need stability. I don’t want my life to completely change again, but if this happens then it will.” Peter said and sighed. Sam nodded because he was right. At least Peter knew what he needed, he just didn’t know how to get it. He didn’t know who would help though. This just got more and more messed up and sad. “I’m not ready for change yet. I will be, but not now.” He whispered and There was silence. Sam could see the cigs in Peter’s head turning and he wondered what was going on up there. He looked confused and stressed and then Peters eyes widened.

“Buck And Nat will wait as long as you need. I’ll be here to talk if you need it too. Just try to figure it out soon, yeah? I don’t think they can wait any longer.” Sam said to him without really thinking about it, Peters eyes widen even more. Sam knew he had read something, saw something that sounded fake, or triggering. Sam didn’t know what it was, but He saw Peter see red.

“I knew it.” Peter mumbled angerily and got up so fast Sam barley knew what was happening until he saw Peter start to harshly shove things into his bag. “I fucking- ugh I’m so fucking dumb.” Peter growled to himself angerily and Sam got up too, trying to placate. Trying to be reassuring. This was such a dynamic that Sam didn’t know what to think.

“Woah, I’m not following.” Sam said as he leaned against the table. Trying to remain calm. Peter whirled at him with something wild and dangerous in his eyes. A warning and Sam never thought he’d see anything scarier than Natasha mad, now he knew it was her kid who could even play on her level.

“You used me! God dammit, why am I even surprised? why did I let you- god dammit!” He stalked over to his bag and shoved more things in haphazardly “That’s all any of you do! You’re like everyone of them- no you’re worse! What kind of sick bastard used emotions to get what they want? Besides a fucking shrink! And you’re an Avenger! I should have fucking known they’d send you next!” Peter accuses without really paying attention to his words. Sam felt a stab at his ego and opened his mouth to retort. He was hitting close to home, Peter knew exactly what to say to break him, it was just a matter of saying it. He was just an angry teenager, there was nothing scary about him.
Besides the fact that he could probably kill and you wouldn’t even notice it. Or maim you in the most painful ways possible. Or virtually destroy your life in just an hour. Also the fact that he was the offspring of the Black Widow and Winter Soldier.

Okay, yeah, he was fucking scary. Sam would give that to him.

“Kid calm down. I didn’t use you. I don’t even know what I said to set you off, but—“ Sam said trying to remain calm and Peter didn’t seem to hear him as he put on his backpack strap way more aggressively than he need to do. Like come on kid, it’s falling apart at the seams, how has Stark not gotten him a new backpack yet? This one was literally a sack of duct tape.

“Stop acting like you care about me! Just ask me, I would’ve fed you the same story! And I’m not lying, that kid that they are looking for doesn’t exist! He’s—I’m different! And they can’t accept that!” Peter yelled at him as he went to stalk out of the lab. Sam didn’t know what to do because this escalated so quickly. His head was spinning. Peter whirled around right into Steve who looked worried and a bit confused. Peter shoved past him in his rage making the super soldier stumble. A scrawny, malnourished kid made a human embodiment of a brick wall stumble. That kid was fucking terrifying.

“Parker wait—” Steve spoke up to his back as he held a hand out to him, as if to get him to stop. But Peter was already too far down the hall.

“Shut the fuck up!” Peter snarled at him and Steve took a step back in astonishment.

“Wha—” he made an unintelligible noise of confusion and Sam sighed.

“Yeah I agree. Shut the fuck up.” Sam said with a furrowed brow and walked over to Steve. He sighed as he looked up at the bigger man. The other man looked at him more confused.

“What did you do?” Steve asked a bit of irritation in his voice “we were so close to finding out.” And Sam felt a bit of anger to that. Because that’s exactly what Peter Just accused the Avengers of. And you know what? He was fucking right. All the Avengers have done since they met the kid was use him and tell him off. No wonder he was so pissed.

“You weren’t even looking at it.” Sam shook his head. Steve made a defeated sag of his shoulders as Sam continued on. “Do that kid a favor and stop prying. He’s not ready.” He was a neutral party, because that was as close to Peter’s side as he could get. He’d silently support him, like Tony and
Wanda.

“Who? Parker or Petya?” Steve asked like the answer would matter. It didn’t but Sam said so anyway. He keep Parker’s secret not because Parker trusted him. And not just because Parke ready ready either. Because Sam understood that the Avengers weren’t ready for this. Not now. Not when they were harassing Peter Like This.

“Both.”

OoOoO

Peter hasn’t had a lot of “last straws” in his life.

He probably should have. Or at the very least cared about it earlier. With Harry stealing his blood and becoming the goblin, that should have been the ‘last straw’ in their friendship. But it wasn’t, not even when he killed Gwen. He still considered Harry a friend, even after everything. And then there was Doctor Conner’s lizard experiment, that should have been the ‘last straw’ after he fought the lizard but it wasn’t until he fought Doc Ock. Even still, he let those two get to him so much he couldn’t step foot into a proper lab for two whole years. He just read books in a library and tinkered and experimented in his room with shut excuses for science equipment.

So there should have been a last straw with Ross when he saw those kids the first time. Or maybe when he saw Wanda cutting. Maybe even when his Spidey Sense went off every time the guy was around. But it was actually happening in front of him. Ross was doing it. As he peered into the window of the warehouse that he had Droney do recon on. He was glaring at Ross, who was just about to do... that to a little girl who couldn’t be older than 8. He felt sick with anger. Terrified and appalled. He needed to stop this.

That was the last straw.

He didn’t even know what was happening, it all went by in a red blur. He had broken the window and then Ross was was on the ground and there were alarms and a scared little girl on the bed was now confused and terrified. He had punched Ross out of it so hard that the man looked like he was seeing stars. Peter wanted to kill the man right there. He was going to too. Reaching for his blade that he never took out as Spiderman, because Spiderman doesn’t use lethal weapons.

Spiderman shouldn’t kill.
But he does when the situation warrants for it.

This was not that kind of situation.

He was about to kill the bastard in front of a damn kid, but her whimpering pulled him out of his haze. What the fuck was he doing. He needed to get out of there, he needed to get this girl out of here. He needed to make sure there were no other hostages. He needed to find out if there was information here.

He needed to do a lot of things. Killing Ross wasn’t one of them

Then a bunch of Hydra soldiers came in with all the noise. Oh, and he needed to take care of these guys.

“Herr?” (Boss?) one bastard said in German. Ross groaned as he looked up. Eyes irritated and mad. Mostly annoyed, that poor soldier who had the displeasure of meeting his eyes flinched back at angering their boss.

“I can’t understand what you’re saying. Speak English.” Ross said to him in a snappish voice the Hydra Soldier flinched “don’t just stand there!” Ross bellowed at them and they hastily started to fire through the room. They tried to hit him aimlessly, Bullets were flying carelessly and Peter dove for the girl on the table laid in with a sheet. He gracefully dodged the mindless bullets and swiftly made his exit. She whimpered as he covered her and swung out the window from which he came.

His mind was working faster than his head could handle. It got like this sometimes. Sometimes it gave him headaches because he was thinking too much.

Why was Ross ordering around german soldiers? Weren’t they supposed to be in, you know, Germany? They weren’t just loaders, they were working for him. What was Ross playing at? Peter got a blip in from Droney saying that there was no other kids in the warehouse but his trusty sidekick had copied all the files on the databases there. Apparently there was more info than hostages, which Peter had not been expecting.

He had wondered why Hydra had taken such a liking to human trafficking. He was going to probably put more pieces of the puzzle together after this. He should’ve called in Fury as soon as
he found out the origin of Ross. He was stupid and didn’t.

*Stupid vigilante pride.*

(please...don’t hurt me) the little girl in her arms whispered to him in a dialect from Sudan. He was rusty on his middle eastern languages, he was more of a European languages kind of person. Japanese and Russian being an exception for obvious reasons (he had to fight and frame Yakuza members, sue him for knowing a little Asian dialect). But he’d saved a lot of kids from Afghanistan and India to know bits of it. He wished he knew more, he knew enough to understand her though.

(sorry, no speak good) he said and cursed himself for sounding like an idiot even if she and him were the only ones in the air. He was gently swinging, so not much air was billowing around them“( I not hurt you) he said to her gently. She whimpered and they swung away from the warehouse. She didn’t believe him. He didn’t blame her. “أنا يأخذك “(I take you doctor) he said to her and told himself to go to the goddamn library to learn this language because he sounded like a fucking foreigner who didn’t know how to speak their own language. Even his accent sounded white. God, he’d get this. But he needed time.

The little girl shuddered in her nakedness of the night and Peter’s lack of body warmth wasn’t helping (because he couldn’t fucking thermoregulate and hadn’t eaten anything solid in a good two weeks). He landed on a roof and took off his bag from its hiding place to grab his sweatshirt. He knew he wouldn’t be getting it back but it’s not like it was special or anything. Just a footloose sweatshirt that he got for 3 dollars when he was cold once last winter and had nothing to wear. He brought it to her and slipped it on over her body, it dwarfed her size but at least she was covered. She was too tired to move much and he sat her down on the ledge and backed up to give her room to breathe.

“Thank you.” She whispered in a heavily accented English voice. He looked at her with soft eyes as he shouldered his bag. She couldn’t see behind his mask and maybe that was better. He needed to get to Claire’s hospital wing. She wasn’t pediatric but doctors couldn’t turn down patients. They had a code. Plus she wouldn’t question him, Claire never questioned him. She just did her job.

Peter liked Claire.

(Ready...go) he asked as he stepped away and let her come to him. She was young but a rape victim nonetheless. He just had to get her out of there before she got shot, but this was her choice now. Peter always have them a choice if the immediate dangers were gone. The girl was hesitant, Peter would be worried if she wasn’t. “Can you understand my English?” He asked slowly and she nodded hesitantly. “Okay, I don’t know how to say it you’re language. I’m sorry. But I have a friend, she’s gonna help you at the hospital. I can take you there.” He said to her. She
looked at him hesitantly.

“She is... girl?” She featured to herself and Peter nodded. She slowly got up and stumbled to him and he picked her up held her close but gently and swung off the balcony to the hospital. This time was slower and lower. He used less noisy routes and swung swiftly.

Peter Just couldn’t figure it out. Why would Hydra be dealing in human trafficking? Mutant human trafficking. Were they trying to make a mutant soldier? But then why would they...become indecent instead of train the kids?

A lot has changed since you left.

Peter grimaced at the voice. It was right. A lot has changed. They beat him, whipped him, put him in a cage and made him fight. Put a gun in his hands and made him shoot. They put him on a table and cut him open. But they never chained him to a wall a fucked him. That didn’t happen until he was out of Hydra.

He finally got to the hospital. He snuck around and went in through one of the back exits and went to the administrator at the desk near it. An old bitter looking lady that looked up at a kid in red and blue spandex and a ratty little sudanese girl in a too big hoodie. She didn’t even blink.

Thanks New York.

“She said in her nasely voice (that remind him of the slug lady from Mosters Inc.) and Peter looked down at the papers. They were legal papers. He couldn’t sign that with his name. He couldn’t have his name on public legal forms, but to mention anyone who sees it will know his identity. So he filled it out -giving the paper to the girl to sign her name (which was Asta, nice) and at the bottom signed Spidey instead of his name and awkwardly gave back the form to the monster inc lady. The lady took the form and flipped straight to his name and sighed. She leaned forward to the landline telephone and presses a button.

“Claire, there’s an idiot here to see you.” She blandly buzzes the woman in and Clair comes not 2 minutes later out of heavy looking double doors. She strides quickly and confidently to Peter.

She took one look at him before going to the girl - who he put down on an uncomfortable plastic chair to sign the papers - and started talking to her softly. The Sudanese girl nodded or shook her head and then followed her. He tried not to listen to the conversation, tried to focus his senses else
where. Claire stood up with the poor girl who was struggling to stand, she asked her if Claire could pick her up and Asta nodded once before she was gently swept up off her feet and taken behind the heavy double doors. Claire gave one last look to Peter and he knew that was to follow her. Not into the room but just outside. He shifted a little outside the door as it closed and then slid down the wall and let his hands fall into his hands.

Everything wasn’t making sense. He whipped out his phone and but his lip as he went through the information Droncy hacked. It was mostly schedule of boats and dockings but then when he started breaking through layers of code more and more things came to light. It seemed he’d finally hit a jack pot, but now he kind of wished he hadn’t. There were experimental procedures detailing human experiment operations (which he was more used to seeing than rape convictions from Hydra). Plans for certain mutant kids that they had, information that they couldn’t have gotten if they weren’t experimented on. Cut open. Dissected.

They are still experimenting on kids.

Like they did to you.

Didn’t you say that you’d stop that no matter what. That no one would have to go through what you did? Now that you realize that you’re not so special do you realize hat an idiot you’ve been.

The voice said snidely and Peter whimpered. It was being harsh and it was completely correct. He was being a total idiot. He had fucking missed this. How did he miss this?! How did he not see this? He didn’t look at the kids wounds if they weren’t fatal (because Peter wanted them to be comfortable so he averted his eyes and let them be. Of course they wouldn’t say anything. He hadn’t said anything, and he still couldn’t) but if Peter had closely inspected them - hundreds of kids and he’d only have to look at one maybe two - he would’ve seen the tell tale lines that were too neat and well placed to be accidents. That weren’t too deep to kill someone but just enough to scar. Just enough to hurt. The small insignia and cuts and perfectly sliced lines. Carved out in skin to scar, to remind you of what you are. He gripped his chest where the bulk of his own scars lay.

The door to the room where Claire had gone in with Asta opened and Claire came out. Looking as calm as ever but Peter could feel her being rattled and scared. Peer understood, because no matter how many times he had seen it it would always rattle him to his core to see a child in a situation like this.

“She asked about her rights…” Claire said to him blandly she said since now that she is in America, she wants her rights.” Peter breathes in and out shakily.
“She’s smart.” Peter said quietly. Claire didn’t move. “Does she knows what it means if she wants to follow through?” Peter asked and Claire nodded.

“I told her. She said she didn’t care. I said I’d talk to you.” Claire said and Peter didn’t look at her as he hung his head, shaggy bangs covering his eyes.

“Why me?” He asked lowly, even though he knew the answer. Claire side eyed him.

“Because you already have a plan.” She said to him and went back in without him answering. She already had her answer.

Because she wasn’t wrong.

He did have a plan.

“No.” He gritted out in a cracked whisper to no one. He gripped his hands into fists. The trafficking was a distraction. It was a fucking cover up. Ross fucking played him like a fiddle (who the fuck plays the fiddle anymore). He taunted and teased and targeted Peter. He had all the answers right there and they were hiding in plain sight. Right in front of him. And he didn’t see it because Ross knew how he worked. He knew how he operated. And he wasn’t going to get away with this.

This was the final fucking straw.

He had to tell someone.

And he knew exactly who it was gonna be.

OoOoO

Thing is, Peter didn’t have any other reason to see her.

Mr.Stark was the only excuse to be in the tower without looking suspicious. Without making
everybody going into a panic. He had to make it through his 7-3 shift with Stark, then sneak off to talk to Wanda in her room. And lab time with Mr. Stark had oddly left his guard down. He didn’t think he’d ever get that release again after Conners and Ock. But here he was, mindlessly enjoying himself.

Somewhere inside of him he knew he didn’t deserve this. He didn’t deserve this when everyone was mad at him. When kids out there exactly like him weren’t getting the same satisfaction he was. They were getting beat and whipped and molested.

Peter felt pressure behind his eyes as he thought about it. He had to think about how he was going to deliver this to Wanda. He had already talked to Matt and they were working through some technicalities. He had said he’d handle the bulk of it. He had talked to Asta and made sure she wanted this (she was a very bold little girl. Peter respected her for it. Kinda reminded him of how MJ was at her age). Too many things were swirling around his mind. He hadn’t noticed that his hands stopped moving.

“I don’t pay you to stand around, you know.” Tony said flippantly from somewhere near him and Peter stiffened as he blinked back into the reality. He looked over to his left and found the inventor right next to him and flinched back at their close proximity. Stark snorted a bit and Peter glared lightly.

“You don’t pay me at all, Mr. Stark.” He said and Tony pokes Peter in the side with something that sent a short electric pulse through him. He didn’t really react because he had been tortured with electricity before (not that he’d say that out loud, but torture to him wasn’t as big a deal as it should’ve been. To make him talk through torture, someone would have to do some pretty messed up creative shit). Tony hummed in disapproval at his lack of response.

“You know the only two people who don’t react to that move are Romanov and Barnes.” He said lightly and Peter bristled at the mention of their names. Tony side eyed his reaction. The asshole was pushing his buttons.

“I’m surprised they let you get that close.” He said dully looking back at his work. Natasha and Bucky were trained assassins and soviet spies, Peter used to be too. They didn’t just accidentally get zapped or pranked. They allowed it. And even if they did that, they never reacted. Tony looked at him and rolled his chair over to his other side and leaned on the table. He didn’t look up from his work even if he was just attaching and detaching the same wire over and over.

“So what’s on your mind?” Tony asked because he wasn’t an idiot and knew exactly what Peter was doing and Peter shrunk in on himself. “I know it’s not your little heritage conflict.” He said casually and Peter hummed for some form of casual in their conversation on his end.
“What gave it away?” Peter asked lightly. Voice not betraying him. He was glad his body actually listened to him sometimes.

“You’ve been out of it a lot lately.” Tony leaned in so his face was in Peter’s sight line and slightly blocking the wire board he was not working on. “Distracted, spacey, you were about to walk clear off the bridge the other day.” Tony listed off as Peter looked up so Tony was out of his face. Peter scoffed at the memory. Maria Hill (like the Maria fucking Hill) had gripped onto his hoodie to keep him from falling into the sea of workers and expensive slightly outdated computers. “and you’ve been tired. Don’t think I didn’t notice those bags, or the fact that you can’t keep down basic solids.” Tony went on to list. Peter sucked at the mention of his unhealthy habits. He didn’t even have an excuse for them.

“Maybe I let you get too close.” Peter grumbled and Tony inspected him closer.

“Maybe that’s not such a bad thing.” Tony said with narrowed eyes. Peter looked at him and blinked once. He didn’t have a response to that. “Peter, it’s okay to talk about your problems. I’m not gonna judge. I don’t think I have a leg to stand on. Or he’ll, you don’t even have to talk about it with me.” Tony said to him and Peter averted his eyes a bit guiltily.

“It’s not that.” He muttered. But it kinda was. It also kinda wasn’t. Also some of it wasn’t his place to say. And it didn’t make sense if he didn’t say the parts he wasn’t allowed. So he just didn’t say anything.

“Is it me? Because this has been happening ever since I invited you here. Is it...too much or-“ Peter’s tools clattered as he dropped them, he wasn’t angry. He blinked down at the clattered tools, wondering how they got there. He wondered why hands were shaking. He wasn’t scared but he was lightly vibrating involuntarily, at a frequency that Peter couldn’t stop on his own. His stupid body wouldn’t listen to him. He tried to grip something to get them to stop but they wouldn’t. “Peter-“ Mr.Stark was looking at his hands too. He was equally as confused but more concerned.

“I’m sorry.” He said quickly cutting him off, he clasped his hands and tried to hide them in his lap. “my nerves are... shot, I guess.”

“You guess?” Tony said with an unamused brow raised to him. He didn’t believe him and Peter chuckled nervously and gave a strained smile.

“I just...there has been this thing I’ve been chasing and trying to figure out, you know?” Peter
started and Tony didn’t say anything and his face remain neutral “I don’t have trouble with these sort of things. But... I’m having trouble with this one and it’s not...not...not fixing it isn’t an option...” Peter mumbled off the ending and looked at Tony. “You’re not not helping. You just can’t help. I’m sorry. I wish you could…” He said honestly and Tony nodded slowly.

“Yeah,” Tony blew out a breath and closed his eyes as he faced forward “me too, then you wouldn’t have to do it alone.” He said, Peter peeked at him shyly. He looked tired and oddly a little relieved. Peter hadn’t noticed how much tension was wound up in the older man until he released some of it.

“You aren’t…” Peter didn’t know what Tony would do. He didn’t know what to say. He wanted to reassure the man, but he wasn’t sure if he could. Nothing was okay right now and they wouldn’t be okay for a long time. Peter wasn’t sure if he was okay to start with.

“Welp” Tony got up and Peter was shocked for a second before Tony smiled down at him. Not one of the fake smiles, a fond smile that Peter had rarely ever been the subject of. He could count on one hand how many times he’d been genuinely directed that smile. He never forgot how it felt, but always so shocked when it happened. He loved the way it made him feel. Like he was worth something, even if he wasn’t worth a shit. “I’m not gonna hassle you about it. If I’ve learned anything from the past few months, it’s to trust your judgement.” Tony said and Peter doesn’t think the man knows how much he appreciated that. How much that trust meant to him. “you got a good head on you, Pete.” He ruffled his hair and went back to his work. Peter blinked and just stared at the space the man once occupied.

Peter ignored the small smile on his face.

OoOoO

Peter doesn’t know where he got his manners.

He wasn’t necessarily taught them. He was first raised in a Hydra base where he had to respect his handlers but never did he have to be polite. He just had to be quiet. Then in Special Forces it was more of the same, he had to obey but never be polite. He certainly didn’t get it from living with his crackhead aunt and drunk uncle. His friends didn’t teach him either, because they were always the same age.

But whenever he went to someone’s house or at school he always raised his hand. He always never ate like an animal. He always said please and thank you. He was always courteous to the people around him. Even if they rarely were ever the same to him.
Mrs. Leeds has complimented him on it once. She said that he was raised properly. Peter didn’t have the heart to tell her that he wasn’t. He was just good at pretending he was. By that point the act wasn’t to follow orders as much as it was that he actually wanted that life. The ruse of being raised by a loving family, that he wanted to be kinda sorta real.

He knew he didn’t need to knock, that he could just walk right into the room. But his feet were glued in front of the door until he had permission to enter (he wanted to think that he was giving Wanda a choice, but really he was stalling). And he always liked to knock because it was the polite thing to do. Plus this was important. He couldn’t just barge in with this (or maybe that would be more appropriate).

Before he actually got to knock, however, the door opened with familiar red sparkly magic. The gentle beautiful wisps inviting him in and as he walked through the door swiftly and they gently shut the door. He looked up to the girl who was levitating in a crossed leg position.

“You know we know each other enough by now for you not to need to knock.” Wanda said playfully coming down from where she was floating in meditation. She was right, they did know each other enough for that not to be an issue anymore.

Peter and Wanda were close that was true. Close enough to cry into each other’s shoulders (Peter rarely ever cried. Not even with Wade. But it was thing he had done with MJ when she found the scars on his hands. Now it was a thing he did with Wanda when she found the scars in his mind). They were Close enough for Wanda to tell Peter that she didn’t want to lose control of her powers one day and hurt somebody. Peter had reached out to one of his odd acquaintances, Dr. Strange (who was a Wizard who lives on Bleaker Street. He had accidentally caught into a portal when trying to shut down a multidimensional splicer. It was pretty cool to work with a Wizard. He must’ve been impressed because Soon it became a thing that they did often) to ask for some tips as they battled demons in the multiverse doorway one weekend. He had said that meditating always worked for him and to interact with his powers instead of pushing them away or suppressing them.

Wanda has been doing much better after Peter relayed the tips and was grateful to the younger mutant. Peter could testify to bottling up natural instincts for appearances sucked. He had told Wanda that the Avengers wouldn’t care if she was practicing her magic, they’d probably even encourage her. He still promised to keep it on the down low though. Wanda wasn’t ready and it was her information to tell. Even if it wasn’t.

“Hey...I wanted to talk to you...” He fidgeted, not looking her in the eyes. He could feel her questioning and concerned gaze. She was Sensing his discomfort she motioned over to the bed so they could get comfortable.
An unspoken thing between them was that Wanda wasn’t the only one allowed to ask for Peter. It could go both ways. Peter didn’t know when to use it so he didn’t use it as often as she did. But it was okay because he was learning. He was getting better at asking for help. She was seeing his progress even if no one else did.

“Recovery isn’t linear, Peter.”

“Well that’s obviously why you’re here.” She said in a slightly joking tone. He let kind of bad they rarely talked outside of these talks. Maybe he could take her shopping cart racing or to Saint Margrets or something. She was sitting on her bed and motioning for him to do so as well as she patted the spot next to her. “What’s up?” She asked and he sighed and walked over to sit down next to her. He fidgeted a bit more and there was a little more silence.

“You’re doing better.” He said finally after the long silence. She smiled softly and looked at the memorizing magic she was playing with in her hands. She made animals playing with each other like lions and butterflies. The Scarlett creatures chasing one another. He smiled at that. She was getting more comfortable with her powers.

He also noticed her progress even if no one else didn’t.

“Yes.” She said her thick Sokovian accent playing a nice tune in his ears. He liked it. It reminded him of his Mama’s soothing Russian that he couldn’t make out. “Thank you.” She whispered and he smiled at the creatures as they disappeared into a sparkly whirlwind.

“It’s all you. Trust me.” He said to her, she looked at him amused. As if saying that she didn’t believe him. He smiled at her before remembering why he came. His smile dropped and he let his bangs hang over his eyes as he averted them away from her. “But I’m kinda here to talk about him.” He said quietly, hoping she wouldn’t hear. She did. Her smile dropped and she clenched her fists.

“What has he done.” She said in a dark tone. It wasn’t phrased as a question. More like a demand, but it wasn’t a demand. She was angry and something dangerous laced her demeanor like how it sometimes came into him.

‘Huh, must be a mutant thing.’ He thought to himself.

“I’ve been tracking these child sex traffickers.” He started from the beginning, not knowing how
else to explain. She stiffened immediately, yeah probably not the best way to deliver that. But he was never good with words, he never put them in the right order. He always rambled about meaningless thing but when he had to be serious, he was better at being silent and showing how he felt through feelings that he somehow transferred to other people. The thing is, they had to be willing to pay attention to him enough to understand him. Wanda paid attention. Wanda knew what he meant. Like how Wade knew what he meant. “I’ve been doing it for as long as I’ve been Spiderman. But these ones are ...different.” Peter said averting his eyes. He needed some sort of response from her.

“Is that why you’ve been so...spacey lately?” She asked, she didn’t try to comfort him with a physical touch. Instead she reached out with her mind to stroke his emotions somehow. A trick she only dared to do with him and it made him feel better even if she was still perfecting the move. It calmed him down.

“You’ve noticed?” He weakly chuckled. Attempting to joke in the dark situation. Everyone else got mad at him for it, she didn’t. She understood that this was a defense mechanism built on years of trauma and no healthy output.

“Everyone has.” She told him gently. That nearly floored him. Was that why the Avengers were backing off a little? Was that why Sam had come down to him in the lab? Was that why Tony and Bruce were keeping a closer eye on him in the lab?

“Sorry” he whispered. He felt guilty. Another thing he didn’t notice. In a weird way, the Avengers has been looking out for him. They didn’t understand, but they knew he needed space to just... be . And he was snapping at them and pushing them away.

“Stark is worried about you too, not just me.”She whispered as if he hadn’t already put it together. He had already done it and he was sure that she didn’t know he had. He wasn’t good with emotions or understanding when someone was concerned for him. It doesn’t happen often and he can’t tell pity from concern, but he’s trying .

_Trying isn’t enough. Not for you._

“That’s surprising.” He mumbled. Wanda’s gaze softened a bit. She sent more of her magic through his feelings, They soothes him to calm down. She knew he wasn’t used to this kind of affection. He acknowledged that he probably needed it.

“Not really.” Wanda replies gently. “So what did you find out?” She changed the topic and he was glad. He thinks she senses that he was getting a little too uncomfortable with the subject and he
gladly welcomed her underlaying offer of a switch back (it’s what he called a topic change that got back on the original track that they were on).

“You know my two month hiatus?” Peter asked and Wanda nodded “there were these trafficking scandals and they were following a pattern. I was too caught up to notice right away but when I did...I tried to find the source.” Peter said and Wanda breathes in before he continued. He knew she knew where this was going and he hated it but he had to confirm for her. He wished he didn’t have to “I finally found the leader and he was…” he trailed off, unable to complete his sentence.

“Ross.” She said bluntly. It was another not question, not demand, dark tone. Dangerous aura. ‘Yeah deftiantly a mutant thing’ “I’m not surprised.” She said and if he was honest, he kinda believed her. Because he wasn’t surprised when he found out either.

“It’s real bad, Wanda.” Peter whispered. She didn’t need to be told that. She already knew, but he needed to know that she knew how serious this was. She knew he didn’t call things ‘bad’ for no reason. He’d seen a lot of bad things in his life, so that word from him was cause for worry. She knew that. “they don’t just rape them…” he continued and she stiffened “they’re all less than 12...they-they…” Peter couldn’t bring himself to say it. His words were clogged in his throat because too many were trying to come out at once.

Wand understood as she gestured to his head, and he gave a single nod as she entered his mind. Flashes of kids getting beaten and whipped and raped. Hanging over the blood vats and the nooses tied around their neck and chests. The crates of children packed together like sardines. Malnourished and starving and injured. Surrounded by dead friends and family with blood pooling everywhere around them. He tried to close the more graphic images away, but they still came.

She let go with a gasp and flinched back. Peter crawled a little forward to her to get in her sight line but far enough away for her to breathe. her breathing was harsh and tears pulled in her eyes as she shifted a shaky hand forward across the cloth of the bed sheets. A gesture that she was requested physical comfort. He leaned forward and put a hand in her back and rubbed circles as he shifted next to her, their shoulders touching one another’s lightly as the leaned against the headboard.

“Why-Why-...?” She asked brokenly. A whisper that was told to the vast silence of the room. He closed his eyes not wanting to continue for both their sakes. But they were strong, and he pushed on.

“To cover himself up.” He said to her in a whisper. She stiffened and whipped her head to him. Anger shining a quick Scarlett in her eyes.
“What could he possibly cover up with this mosterosy?” She spat out. Peter took a moment to breathe in and out. Calm himself down because even if he was mad, he had to be calm. Calm because Wanda wasn’t and if they were both mad then they’d do something they’d regret.

“Ross is HYDRA.” He told her and tears welled up in her eyes. She leaned forward and he held her as she sobbed. Her scent traveled through his nose and it smelled like Cinnomin and Chai. He liked her scent, it reminded him of a nice rainy day when he curled up near a window at the library in the plushie chairs and read with MJ’s cable knit blanket and Ned’s big hoodie that dwarfed his size.

He got it. He really did. Peter had no obligation to follow Ross’s orders. He didn’t follow them in anyway and he could get away with it because he didn’t sign that Initiation form. Wanda did because she had no choice. It was join the Avengers or stay in the raft. She and her team were used like puppets for Hydra. She was used again. It was a lot to take in.

“I’m figuring it out. I promise I’ll fix this.” He said to her quietly and she sobbed again.

“You don’t have to fix everything.” She said through her cries “it’s not your job.” She said to him as she leaned her head on his chest. He combed her hair through his fingers gently in a form of comfort. He closed his eyes.

“I know.”

Chapter End Notes

UPDATE NOTICE: July 3

I love you all!!
Chapter Notes

Hey yall... SO it's been a month....
Okay I just watched Spiderman: Far From Home and I have some THOUGHTS !!!
Like boy OMG NO SPOILERS BUT GOSH THAT WAS AN AWESOME
MOVIE!!!
btw there are two end creds soooo for yall who didn't watch them or about to stay for
those.
Okay, so there is some trial and law stuff in here and I don't know anything about that
stuff, it honestly kinda bores me so I probably didn't do it right but whatevs.
This has mostly Wanda Peter FRIENDSHIP so I like have some fluff but mostly angst
Also, Asta's story... Imma be real for a hot second here, it's a true story. Obviously I
over exaggerated the story and changed the name and it shouldn't recognizable but I
did base it off a true story I read about a year or two ago when I first started writing
this fic, I read it somewhere I forget where because it was a project I had a while ago,
just know that this does have some real life accents to it. I was trying to make it so it
empowered people. I hope I did well.
Also Also, I started a new fic with my friend impravidus. It's a Parkner that we are
working on and we'll be posting every sunday!! (She'll be posting while I'm away) so
check that out if that's what you like!!
Also Also Also, I have to go for three weeks with no laptop, so I won't be back for a
while again, sorry. You'll only be getting this chapter (it's shorter than my others I
know) for a while, but I MIGHT have a little surprise for y'all before I leave. Trust me
the next chapter is going to be LONG af.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 9- Bad Man that a Man gotta Bash on

Thing is, Peter has a lot of self control.

He controlled himself when he was younger so that he didn’t get in trouble with his handlers and
guards. He has had to control his emotions so he doesn’t accidentally kill someone when he got his
powers. He’s had to grit his teeth and clench his fists when he’s been insulted or belittled in
briefing after briefing. He’s Taken hits that bruise his ego but he can never show it. He never
reacted on the outside.

So, Peter believes he has a lot of self control.
But what he couldn’t control was the feeling of anger and irritation in his gut when Ross was lecturing the Avengers after a successful mission. What he couldn’t control was the absolute frustration of being ordered around by a criminal. Being lectured by the enemy! What he couldn’t control was the feeling of protection when Wanda looked like she wanted to be anywhere but in the same room as her assailant.

*She shouldn’t be in the same room, taking orders from the one who fucking raped her.*

Okay, so the voice agrees. That like never happened. It still didn’t stop his internal surprise when he just interrupted Ross in the middle of his preaching or whatever. He didn’t even noticed he was speaking until he heard his voice and Ross stopped his BS about Capitalism or whatever.

“Yeah, so about that girl the other night.” Peter said casually. Ross stopped dead in his tracks Peter had no idea what he was doing. Wanda looked at him worried as the Avengers turned their gazes to him. Peter gave Wanda a reassuring look, she gave her a wary one in return. “Couldn’t understand her very well, but I could understand enough. She didn’t talk much.” Peter said in the same voice. Trying not to freak out as panic rose inside his chest. He never said or did anything like this off the rails like he was doing now.

“Have you lost your mind?” He heard Sam hiss to him from two seats down and Ross gave him a smirk. Peter paid Sam no mind and narrowed his eyes at Ross, not taking them off of the man for a damn second, in case he disappeared and he couldn’t present his evidence.

“Mr.Parker, I think you should keep your nightly activities to yourself. As you can see this is a professional setting, it’s hardly appropriate for you to bring your Vigilante paranoia in this environment.” Ross said condescendingly. Smugly. As if Peter was a child (well he is but he didn’t feel like that right now. Right now he was Spiderman). Peter scrunched his nose up cause he didn’t like it. He didn’t Like the voice Ross used. he didn’t like the man’s posture. He didn’t like any of it.

“Well if I’m here it’s not that professional.” Peter said back to him “and at least my nightly activities don’t involve a sex strap and a cuffed ten year old,” he saw the Avengers stiffen and Wanda’s eyes went wide in his his peripheral vision. They remained silent “unless it’s saving them, then it’s becoming a lot more frequent.” Peter said to him and everyone in the room stiffened as Ross and Peter glared each other down. They were watching the volley of accusation to response like it was an intense sports event.

“I’ve got to say that I don’t know what you mean. I don’t any Sundanese girl.” Ross said back casually. Everyone stiffened. Peter smirked as Ross had been caught.
“I never said she was from Sudan.” Peter said to him, Ross pauses. Realizing his mistake.

“There have been obligations with human trafficking throughout the past few months. Most correlations with Sudan, it’s an international problem.” Ross fluffed up his words because he thought Peter wouldn’t understand the complete and utter nonsense if he used big words. Well jokes on him because Peter is a text book nerd and likes to read the Webster’s dictionary for fun.

“So you do admit that you knew about this and didn’t do anything to stop it?” Peter raised a brow “isn’t that you’re jobs.” He looked to the Avengers and they shrunk a bit.

“We didn’t know about this.” Steve admitted and at least he admitted it. He looked guilty but he wasn’t the one that fucked up. Peter was. And Ross was doing the fucking.

“Well it’s hardly your fault. Ross was supposed to tell you.” Peter told him casually. Steve still looked guilty and Peter decided he’d open that can if worms later.

“I sent the National Gaurd to-“ Ross attempted his bullshit again, Peter was sick of hearing it.

“And now that’s a blatant lie, there weren’t even officers placed in those ports. They use the same crate checking system they did in the 70s. You didn’t do shit.” Peter snarled at Ross. Ross straightened.

“Mr.Parker, I would tread lightly.”Ross seethed, as if he was trying to make a proposal. As if he wanted to make a private bribe to Peter to get him to shut up. No bribe was worth Ross getting away from what he did though.

“Yeah, because you’re in a public place. If I took you to the alley back behind this building you’d be singing a different song, I’d make sure of it.” Peter said wistfully at the end. His eyes became intense as he stared down Ross’s neutral snake-like eyes. ‘He is a fucking snake.’ Peter decided.

“Is that a threat, Mr.Parker?” Ross said with dark amusement. Low tones that said that he could fuck up Peters life in ways that should be unimaginable. But to really screw over Peter Parker more than he already was, he’d have to do some highly illegal shit. He was sure Ross wouldn’t care if it was legal or not, he is still a child predator for Hydra.

“Nope. It’s a promise .” Peter said back “and don’t call me Mr. Parker. I’m hardly worth the
“Peter.” Wanda gasped slightly, trying to get him to stop. She knew what he was gonna do, he knew what he was about to do. That’s when Steve stood up.

“Peter that’s enough—” he said in his tone of authority. Steve didn’t have a leg to stand on. He couldn’t fight Ross legally. None of them could. They were Avengers, and this was part of the accords. But Peter never signed the accords, he’s sure they’ll get rewritten into a more fair statement after all this, but if they did then Peter would have to go public as Peter Parker. As a witness.

He already knew that.

_Sacrifices have to be made, Peter_

_To win, you have to lose_

_You’ll never win, even when everyone else does_

_You’re not worth anything, it won’t matter_

“Is it?” Peter said back to him. Steve, as for obligation, had to defend the secretary. He stood up to his full height. Ross smirked even if the soldier didn’t see it.

“What you’re accusing him of—” Steve was about to say. Peter got frustrated and stood up too.

“I’ve seen it.” Peter nearly screamed. Wanda flinched back even Tony looked surprised. Fury raised a brow and everyone else was stunned. They had never heard him scream before. Snap at them sure. Get a little frustrated and a whole lot of sarcasm from him. But he never yelled at them. “Droney has blurred footage of you don’t believe me. I’m not showing anyone’s face but he,” Peter continued in a lower voice and pointed at an ashen Ross “isn’t just a participant in pedophilia and child sex trafficking. But also illegal human experimentation.” Peter said and Steve opened his mouth and Peter whirled at him with a glare that silenced the soldier. “HYDRA human experimentation.” Steve Shut his mouth with a click. A tangible silence hung in the air.
“I thought you said it was that other organization…” Fury said darkly. Breaking the silence and Peter shook his head.

“I was wrong. It happens.” Peter didn’t use a joking tone, he was serious and they needed to know that. He turned back to Ross with a vicious glare. “But I finally have a statement. From a strong ass Sudanese girl. She asked me to do this and I’m not gonna let you get away from this.” Peter glared. Riss nearly choked, Peter took stratification in his misery and panic.

“Are you taking me to court Parker.” Ross composes himself and smirked “you’re a kid. You’ll lose.” Peter smirked up at him. *Oh, honey. You’ve got a big storm coming.*

“Really? Cause I already got a lawyer more than willing and able to punch you out, both in real life and the court room. I don’t even need to use the favor card.” Peter said with a smug look “and I’ve already set up a trial date, court room and statement into the most just courthouse. You’re little cronies can’t even invade the jury because they’ve already got the pastures from Saint Augustine’s church on it for jury duty. And you best know a pasture ain’t gonna lie under the oath of God.” Peter said smugly. Ross paled slightly but his his panic with a smug look.

“You’ve put a lot of work into this kiddo.” He said like he was praising a child on a science fair project about the solar system. Peter’s anger flared.

“Don’t call me kiddo.” He snapped quickly and composed himself just as fast “ If you’re so confident you’ll win why not humor me?” He asked and crossed his arms again, deciding to have a neutral look on his face. Ross chuckled and shook his head.

“Okay, I’ll do it.” Peter crosses his arms more tightly around him and smiled to himself a little “you gonna thank me?” Ross asked him with a condescending brow and tone.

“That what you say to the kids in bed?” Peter quipped back. “I could hardly say they’d thank you after what you’ve Done to them.” Peter snarled. He was tired from this case. (*Riot by Three Days of Grace* came to his mind when he thought about the past three months. It seemed like a fitting theme for that time period) “The dates Tuesday.”

“That’s in two days.” Ross pointed out.

“Then you better get a lawyer quick. I already have a nice one set up for you if you don’t. His name is Foggy Nelson and let’s just say he’s eager to find the whole truth and act accordingly.”
Peter smirked at him. Ross snarled and stalks outside. “Oh and if you’d be so kind as to go with Officer Mahoney on your way out. He’ll put you in holding and that whole shebang.” Peter said and Ross glared as he shrugged “you said you’d humor me.” Peter said lightly.

When he left there was silence and then a lot of noise directed his way. Mostly screaming from Sam and Steve and Tony. Grumbled fro Natasha and Clint.

But one that stood out to him was Wanda who made everyone shut up.

“A 10 year old? Seriously Parker?!” Wand stood up and yelled at him. Peter was slightly deterred. Wanda was a terrifying woman when she was mad. But she had never screamed at Peter before, never been mad at him. “You’re using a 10 year old girl!”

*It was only a matter of time...*

“Wanda, you know I wouldn’t even ask her to do that. You know better than anyone I would never ask anyone to confess.” Peter yelled at her, because she did know. He didn’t even ask Wanda, and Wanda was an Avenger. “She asked me if she had rights in America. Claire helped her get a VISA and she does.” Peter stepped up to her a little “its her right !” The Avengers looked to Wanda to see her response. Effectively being silenced by the fact they didn’t know any of the shit going on right now.

“Oh now you’re just projecting you immigration issues on me now? I’m an immigrant too Parker, it won’t work!” Wanda said to him angrily. Peter blushed a little and his anger and frustration grew in his chest.

“That’s not what this is about.” He said in a low tone and looked up at Wanda. “And you know it.”

“You didn’t even think about how you’d execute this part of your master plan.” She gestured around to herself “cause it looked like you were acting on an impulse!” Wanda said to him.

“I’m offended you think there is a plan at all.” Peter tried to joke to choke down his anger. He didn’t want to get angry. Angry was a gross emotion to feel, especially after he was angry. He didn’t do or say the right things when he was mad. “ I was gonna go through this with or without your approval Wanda. I can’t keep busting up circles. They go on every night .” Peter said back and Wanda’s eyes flashed red for a second. Peter felt a slight breeze and he gripped the back of his chair.
“I didn’t think Spiderman got tired.” Wanda said back snidely. Peter almost wanted to cry because that was just cruel. It was like she was telling him he couldn’t rest, couldn’t take a break, couldn’t stop. It was suffocating and clogging his throat. Wanda had a flash of regret in her eyes and Peter’s anger increased. She was saying things out of anger so why was he holding back?

“What the fuck?” He choked out and it came out as a mad tone with venom laced in it. Wanda flinched slightly as he took his hand off the chair. “Bews flash: I’m a product of biology, of course I get fucking tired!” Peter spat out. Steve stiffened at that, he only noticed the movement because he was so still, everyone but Peter and Wanda were. Peter decided he didn’t care right now. “and why are you so against this anyway. You of all people should be happy about this.” Peter But our Wanda scoffed.

“You didn’t do this for me.” She said and Peter didn’t know how to feel at that statement. It made him mad.

“You’re right I didn’t. I don’t do things for people.” Peter said back without thinking. Wanda stiffened and looked at him a bit hurt “But I thought this would be a nice surprise.” He gritted and then Wanda has a fire of anger in her eyes now.

“You know what: no. You of all people should know how fucking hard it is to confess at such young an age.” She spat out and Peter elf a sense of dread sink in for what she was about to say. He felt something building in the air “You can’t even fess up now because you still are scared of that stupid ass general! Now you’re putting a little girl on that podium who can barley speak English and-“

“Cotnet is fucking dead!” Peter cut her off in his anger. He wasn’t in control of his mouth anymore. He was speaking without wanting to “I can’t confess to a dead man’s grave!” He spat out and Wanda turned white.

“But you…” she mumbled, confused and she trailed off looking hurt and sad. The anger drained out her but it was still in Peter.

“I said I never confessed. I never confessed cause I killed him! Is that what you wanted to know? He held me down and I grabbed the closest thing to me and I snapped. I shot him in the head. Are you happy? You finally know?! Or is that still not enough for you!” Peter said angrily and Wanda didn’t say anything. Peter didn’t know what he was saying until it was all said and Wanda was backed up a bit in horror and surprise. Peter blinked as he felt the anger go out of him finally. He felt that out in his stomach and the air was too light for him to breathe correctly. The haze that came with anger lifted too fast for his comfort and he looked to the side. The Avengers were
backed against a wall. Breathing strangled in the way that Peter did whenever he got worked up or seriously pissed off. He had this scary aura and it must’ve come out. Papers were scattered everywhere do to Wanda’s powers kind of getting out of control. The thick glass table top was crack and shattered from where he gripped it too hard. The chair that had been gripped earlier completely torn and the threads fraying wildly.

They got out of control.

He lost control.

Wanda looked just as guilty.

Peter didn’t know how he felt.

They didn’t look at each other.

You’re a monster and now she knows it.

‘...they all do.’

It’s all you are and it’s all you’ll ever be. A worthless monster.

He turned to walk out of the room through the window. “I won’t lose.” He said softly before he left. He heard her whispers in the wind as she said:

“I hope you’re right.”

OoOoO

The next day was kinda hectic.
In all honesty, Harley has no idea what the fuck was even going on. The Avengers has been freaking out about Wanda and Peters big fight while the Wanda was no where to be seen. She had virtually disappeared from the plane of existence after Peter left.

Harley decided to do a bit of digging, because while this was in the relearn of normalcy for him, it still felt a bit off. This was different somehow.

Wanda and Peter never got into fights with each other. They didn’t even yell at each other. So for them to unknowingly use their powers on each other was bad. Everyone knew the situation was bad even without that - but then loosing control just amplified the situation, it showed them how bad and personal this really was.

Harley didn’t know much. He had just heard that Peter was taking Ross to court over a crime he probably did commit in a semi-public trial. Tony had said Peter had done his best to keep it on the down-low, which made sense since Peter was never very good at being in the limelight anyway. He liked always keeping things a secret and finding sneaky loopholes. He didn’t like to be the center of attention. Peter had told him once that the center of attention is a powerful thing to be. If you aren’t in the spotlight as much it means more when you are actually in it (It sounded like something MJ would say). Peter worked mainly in loopholes and underhanded tactics.

But apparently this time, Peter was going for the main hole.

Tony hadn’t told Harley what Ross had done to get convicted. He said that if Peter was right and won this case, then it could mean that the accords would be revised again, but also by a less asshole-ish secretary. He also said that he didn’t want Harley anywhere near this and then shut up about it forever.

That was okay, because that wasn’t the part Harley was concerned about.

Peter hadn’t come in today (Tony said it was for a damn good reason, even if Peter hadn’t called ahead, but no one really expected him to show up today) but Harley didn’t let that deter him from calling the younger boy. Who picked up on the fourth ring (he was pleasantly surprised because he didn’t think Peter would pick up).

“Peter Parker’s phone. How did I screw up this time?” He greeted in a much more cheerful tone than he should have for the current events going on in his life. He may not know anything about anything that was going on, but he did know that Wanda and Peter were at odds because of it and when mutants were mad at each other, apparently things get broken. And apparently it’s hella scary (at least the way Thor has described it in a solemn tone how Wanda’s eyes grew red and Peter’s
visible veins were tinted black. How the table had shattered and the papers were ripped to shreds. It sounded hella scary)

It was dangerous. Nat has warned him before how Mutants couldn’t go out of control. This was the example of why the Avengers had to keep an eye on Peter. He was dangerous. Really really dangerous.

No, he had to focus. No time to think about that.

“Peter, I heard you were going to court tomorrow.” Harley said to the boy in as casual a tone as he could, and Peter hummed in response. Dammit, he already knew Harley was up to something. Peter was good.

“Yes, I am.” He said vaguely, not going into details. He almost sounded like he was amused at Harley’s call. Harley gripped the phone. The longer he beat around the bush, the easier it would be for Peter to excuse himself from the conversation.

“Well if you’re going to court. That means you have a lawyer in your contact.” Harley blurted our and then blushed as there was a pregnant pause on the other end of the line. He could imagine Peter blinking in confusion at the weird accusation.

“I have a lawyer friend. He’s not my lawyer.” Peter said slowly “but yes, Harley typically you need a lawyer to go to court.” Peter informed him and Harley gritted his teeth a little.

“I know that!” He snapped and bit and could hear Peters amused exhale. He breathed in and asked “can your lawyer friend do custody agreements?” Peter made an odd noise on the other end.

“Didn’t Stark already adopt you?” Peter asked with a slightly confused, slightly snarky voice. “or are you having second thoughts.” He said smugly and Harley groaned. Peter didn’t get it.

“Not for me. For you.” Harley rolled his eyes as he heard clattering and soft curses on the other end. Some mumbled apologies and then Peter was back on the line.

“What do you mean?” Peter asked in a croaked voice. He must’ve been thrown into a loop cause he didn’t sound like he expected that.
“I’m sure he can come up with a statement that lets you have your family and still have your freedom.” Harley continued, as if Peter didn’t say anything. “Come on Peter, you could at least ask. I know you didn’t and if he’s your friend he won’t charge you for a question.”

The line on the other end paused.

“I have half a mind to hang up right now.” Peter said all amusement gone. Harley groaned, but he knew that he was getting through because Peter hadn’t hung up yet.

“Peter you can’t keep running from this.” Harley told him, trying to sound convincing. This was far from the time to do this. Peter was already stressed about one court case, he didn’t need another legal issue weighing him down. Harley almost ended the conversation because of that reason, but he held his ground.

“I know, but right now I have ignore it because this trial in literally a little over 30 hours has to have my full attention.” Peter excuse wasn’t worn and very valid, but it still sounded like an excuse. Harley needed to know that Peter would confront this issue soon. Maybe not before the trial but soon after.

“Peter-“ Harley started only to be cut off by a firm Peter. The younger boy was always better at making a point. He didn’t make them often but when he did they were usually right.

“No, Harley I don’t wanna hear it right now.” Peter said in a stern tone and Harley was vaguely reminded of Tony for a second. “you can lecture me after the trial. I promise, but right now…” Peter trailed off. Harley got the message.

Right now Peter was stressed.

Right now Peter was tired.

Right now Peter had a job to do.

He didn’t have time for something else, but he would.
“Don’t.” Harley finished in an exhale and sighed “I guess that’s fair. Sorry for springing this on you.” He said genuinely sorry. Peter sighed in the other side in a breath of relief.

“It’s okay.” Peter reassures in a voice that actually made it sound like he wasn’t currently under mountains of stress, expectations and promising that were slowly compressing him into a tight wound up ball.

“I hope you do well tomorrow.” Harley offered instead of telling Peter a stupid ass lie or some BS that he would surly do great no question. Because if Harley were honest, Peter was going up against Theadus Ross. No matter what court room you put them in, the odds would never be in the opponent or Ross’s favor. Especially if you were named Peter Parker.

“Yeah me too” finally letting his nervousness creep into his voice. He must’ve noticed.

He hung up.

OoOoO

It was midday when Wanda found Peter.

She hadn’t meant to go out and seek him. She was just aimlessly wandering around and going to a cafe in Brooklyn. A small hole in the wall, no name cafe that served crap food and had shitty WiFi. But oddly enough, the bar next door got better service so everyone tapped into that one. Peter had shown Wanda this cafe. Wanda wasn’t sure why he had brought her here initially. The place had no significance in his mind or memories.

It was just another random boring cafe.

He was typing something vigorously on his computer in a corner booth near a window. It was a less populated today so she didn’t need to look over people, just glance in his direction. She walked to the counter and ordered a chai and a cold chocolate before sitting down at the booth Peter was at. He didn’t look up or acknowledge her presence.

They hadn’t called or talked to each other since their little fight. It was honestly quite embarrassing
for her, she felt like she lost even though Peter is the one who left. She knew that there was no clear winner, that Peter leaving was just so neither of them got so out of control that they’d be put in jail. Peter had to pursue this case. There was no deterring that boy.

Plus she felt like shit for lightly implying Peter got raped in front of the Avengers. If they - Natasha and Barnes - picked through what she had said, they’d figure out things Peter had only trusted with her. And she was leaning over the edge with that trust.

“Thank you.” He mumbled for the hot chocolate that she had placed in front of him. She couldn’t place if he was still angry or not but she figured it didn’t matter to his politeness. He always remembered his manners. She smiled a little.

“Are you working on the case?” She asked and he warily looked up at her and nodded before ducking for cover behind his shitty laptop. She shook her head exasperatedly, but fondly nonetheless.

“Organizing evidence.” He corrected meekly “it’s a big case file.” He said to her and she knew what that meant. It meant that this had been going on for a long while. That it happened so often there was enough evidence to pick through. He nudged the folder next to the laptop and she nodded.

“Are you sure about this?” She asked. This was a test. If Peter was unsure, she’d derail this entire operation. She’d find a weak point and poke it until he subsided. But if he was sure: she would quietly support him. Like it or not she was apart of this too.

“I don’t want to fight here.” He said warily. It occurred to her that he hadn’t meant to drag her down with him. But she was with him now and she had to steer him straight if he didn’t actually know what the fuck he was doing. This wasn’t a simple case, Peter is smart but he can’t punch his way out of this one. He’s not socially inept enough for a legal court case.

Peter was passive-aggressive when he wanted to make a point. But that wouldn’t work in the professional setting. That wouldn’t work in a legal court room. It wouldn’t work this time. Peter was terrible at confrontation, and this was going to get personal. It was going to bring up all the wrong memories and be overall triggering. This wasn’t just another court case, forget Ross, the case itself was a hard one to prove. Especially a she said he said case. This one hit close to home and Peter might not win. Wanda needed to know he knew that.

“I won’t fight you.” She told him gently but firmly. He looked up at her with a neutral look “Just answer my question. Do you have a good feeling about this?” Wanda asked again, but she
reworded the question. His neutral loo turned wary as looked back at the computer. Almost unsure but not quite there yet. Wanda narrowed her eyes and he sighed.

“I don’t think anyone could have a good feelings about this.” Peter said honestly. Wanda let a smile quirk at her lips a little.

He understood.

“How are you feeling?” Wanda asked, her demeanor changed to a worried tone and eyes full of concern. This would knock the wrong memories in Peters mind and Wanda was not only going to support the case, but Peter came first. She’d never stop supporting him and he’d never stop supporting her. It was how their relationship worked: silent but unquestionable, unmovable support for one another and understanding and respect for each other’s beliefs and situations.

It got her through some dark thoughts and Wanda wasn’t ever sure how she even got through a day without Peters support. It was so constant and unconditional. This was her way of paying him back. No money could ever buy sympathy the way mutual understanding and support will.

“Can’t you tell?” He pointed to his head. She shook her head. She didn’t want to go into his mind. She wanted him to be able to speak about it. She wanted him to be able to move on, and in a way he was doing that. This case was a big step, he needed to know he was effectively closing an unfinished chapter in his life. And Wanda would be sure that it never gets open again once he moves on.

They were both moving on.

“I want you to say it.” She told him seriously. He breathed in and out and put his hands on the table and started to knit them together nervously. He knew he had to do this too. She’d let him take his time.

Baby steps.

“I...I feel nervous...” he confesses shyly and the small smile quirked her lips again as he continues “I’ve never taken anything this big and this public before. Not without my mask. And this time, I can’t punch it...” Peter kind of rambled, Wanda let him. “I’m not good at putting the right words in the right order. You know that.” He mumbled with averted eyes, seeing something that wasn’t there. “But this time it matters what people think of me. It’s important I am able to say the right
“things.” he looked up at her like he was so lost and confused but mostly anxious. Her features softened.

“I know.” She said gently and took his hands in hers “but you are right.” She said firmly and he looked up to her with hope shining in his eyes. Something that nearly never showed on his young face. “this cannot be allowed to continue. If you cannot kill Ross, then you make sure he’ll want to be killed. Beat him at his own game. See his sick empire fall due to his own rules.” Wanda encouraged and Peter breathes and squeezes her hands gently back. He would never hurt her, but his grip was strong and longing. She gave him the support he needed.

“I promise… I will do my best.” Peter promises and he always means it. they just sit in a comfortable silence for a while. Peter then looks at the case file for and the pictures in the Manila folder. She looks at them too, and though they are upside down for her she can still read them. There is a little Sudanese girl, looks no older than 8, but her file clearly says that she is 10. She’s highly underfed, it looks like her skin was stretched over a skeleton. She has blemishes and bruises across her face and her arms had cuts littered all over them. Her moist hair was tied into a messy braid and her eyes were too big for their sockets. She still has a small wary smile nonetheless.

“Is that her?” Wanda asked with a small smile. Peter pushes the folder to her as Wanda turned it around to read it properly. “She is beautiful.” Wanda compliments, because she doesn’t see a victim or a dirty mutant. She sees a strong confident girl who will change the course and make so many more people’s lives better. She saw a hero, brave enough to step up and make a difference.

“Asta.” He supplied for her as she read the name. Out of the corner of her eye she could see a small smile playing at his lips too. She saw the same thing she did.

“She is a brave one,” Wanda told him as if he didn’t already know. Peter laughed a little in an almost proud tone.

“Yeah. Smart too. She asked for her rights as a minor immediately.” Peter told her as he leaned back in his seat, looking slightly more relaxed than he had been before.

“She wasn’t born in this country. She said she was taken by Ross’s goons when she was 8.” Wanda read off and Peter hummed. “Won’t that be a problem?”

“My nurse friend got her a VISA last week. But we are still taking this to an international court just in case.” Peter said and Wanda quirked a brow as he shrugged “my lawyer friend said better safe than sorry.” He replied
“He is correct.” Wanda said as she kept reading through the file “you have a lot of friends for someone who seemingly cast out his entire life.” Peter scrunched his nose at her playful tone.

“Not completely.” He mumbled and pushed over another paper. “That’s her written confession translated.” She read over it and laughed a little.

“Wait, did you do this?” She asked between a giggle and Peter hugged and crossed his arms.

“So what if I did?” He mumbled and pouted and Wanda laughed even more at the reaction. “Okay, my middle eastern languages need a little bit of touching up but it’s not terrible. Is it?” Peter looked a little insecure but it was cute. Like a puppy looking for approval.

“Not bad.” She smiled gently.

Because Peter deserved the praise.

OoOoO

Natasha needed to know.

It had been eating her since Peter had caused Ross of his crimes. It had been nagging her and making her worry about the timeframe that Peter had been investigating this case. Because the timeline matched up when Peter had found her son. He was busting sex traffickers. Child sex traffickers.

She couldn’t get out her mind Petya crying softly for his Mama as they took him away nearly 13 years ago. They didn’t tell her what or where they took him. They could’ve sold him. They told her he was dead. He couldn’t have survived all these years if they did. Or maybe they sent him somewhere else and then after that he got caught up in this mess. Her mind couldn’t stop turning.

He’s turning 16 in two days.
Her eyes teared up a little as she landed directly behind Spiderman. She missed her baby growing up, she composed herself before Peter faced her.

The sun was setting as Natasha looked down at Spider-Man’s back. He was wearing a grey hoodie with the hood up. It looked almost picturesque, him sitting there face the setting sun with the city in front of him and dim light of building shining as the sky was painted orange and pink and fading to purple at the crest.

It was oddly familiar. And strangely comforting.

“Is that where you found him?” Natasha said softly in the silence that they had created, the question was already asked just not said yet. Peter looked up from was sitting in the roof top, he wasn’t surprised by her quiet presence - he never was. She was behind him, looking at his back as he swung his legs like a child. A thing she silently admired in him was his ability to act childish freely and without force. He didn’t care what people thought of him, as long as he was in some form of happy.

As long as he could cling to any form of enjoyment to make his life meaningful to himself. But he wasn’t stingy with it, he wasn’t selfish about it. He prioritized himself last above all else.

“No, I said he was okay,” Peter said softly back to her, not wanting to break the quiet air around them. The weather was chilly and although it was summer it was still a little too nippy for a light hoodie.

“I don’t trust your definition of ‘okay’.” Natasha said to him blandly, as she came a step closer and stood directly next to where he sat. He stiffened before relaxing, a motion he does whenever anyone gets too close.

She knows he doesn’t have the picture-perfect childhood he pretends to have. Or let’s everyone believe he does. He acts spoiled and needy, or at least she thought he did before she realized that he wasn’t dependent on anyone but himself and he was used to that. He grew up in Russia and then Queens, he was never around kind people who loved him unconditionally. He was lying about a million other things about himself. He’s lied so much that he doesn’t even know who he fully was anymore.

In a way, they were scarily similar.
“Fair.” Peter sighed as a reply and they didn’t talk for a while more. The same welcoming, cool silence that had been lacing their conversation. She didn’t feel the anticipation she felt coming here like she thought she would. She felt relaxed. “can you sit down, you’re making me feel like a lesser being when you stand over me.” He lightly joked but there a hint of seriousness in his tone. She snorted but sat down regardless. He didn’t make any awkward movements.

“You know,” she said to him casually but still softly “when I heard that you were tracking these guys for three months I immediately panicked,” Natasha confesses. She doesn’t even know why she said it but it was out there now and Peter didn’t look at her or made a confused noise.

“Understandable.” Peter said back instead. Somehow she understood what she was feeling and why she was feeling it. It was odd and a bit frustrating since she herself didn’t know why she was feeling this way.

“The thing is, I didn’t know why I was panicking at first.” Natasha continued, hoping to find an answer with the boy. Peter looked at her. She didn’t elaborate. He still understood.

“Yeah, sometimes that happens to me too.” He said slowly, but still quietly. As if he would break something fragile in the air. “every time I hear something about something going on, my brain is wired to think the worst.” He confesses back to her, after all, he was nothing if not fair. She smirked a little to herself. He didn’t comment, even though he saw it in the corner of his eye.

“You know, I was never sure why Wanda like talking to you rather than Sam.” She said to him and he looked to her a little and she looked back. She leaned a bit back as he leaned forward some.

“You know about our talks?” He asked, not sounding surprised. He was never surprised about small things like this. Natasha knew things and she was starting to get familiar that Peter knew things as she did too.

_Much too similar._

“Please.” She scoffed it was enough for him to understand. He quirked a smile at her. She loved those smiles, the small but genuine ones. Full of hope and longing but a sort of childish innocence and simple as to it. He never showed them much, but when he did it had her craving more. She _wanted_ Peter to feel happy more.

But she couldn’t.
“Yeah, that checks out.” He said lightly back to her. A soft chuckle escaped his lips.

“I never understood why until now though,” Natasha said to him he seemed to blink out the shock in his eyes at the statement. Obviously, he thought that the little tangent they went on was done.

“Why then?” He said as a not question. He knew why she could tell. There was still hope and confusion in his big brown puppy dog eyes. The kid was cute, she’d give him that.

“Because your easy to talk to.” Natasha told him and Peter stiffened a little next to her. That wasn’t the answer he had expected and she smirked. He blushed a little in response.

“Uhm..” he didn’t have a response suitable to this. She had complimented him. Peter always got tongue-tied when people complimented him. Natasha never understood why until she thought about it.

Peter has been teaching himself for most if not all of his life. He’s taught himself manners and how to take care of himself. He’s taught himself how to defend against attack’s wether it is verbal or physical he always had a swift response or witty remark to offer. But wasn’t so good at responding to praise. It was like his brain shut down and he didn’t know what to do. As if he was presented with a new situation that was more obscure than fight alien squid fish from a purple sky portal.

She didn’t get it at first until she did. Peter couldn’t respond because he didn’t know how to react. He didn’t know how to react because he’s never had to react to praise before.

It’s kind of sad.

“That.” She pointed at him and he looked confused now, she was going to help this boy. Because he deserved it and after everything that has gone down with Wanda, Ross and her son, she owed him. “you don’t expect anything. That’s why it’s easy to talk to you. You don’t just related, but when you help people you don’t expect anything in return.” Natasha said and Peter hummed. She was masking a compliment by phrasing it as a fact. He responded a little better but the blush never left his cheeks.

“I don’t need anything,” Peter whispered with his head ducked a bit. But he still seemed so sure of himself.
“Debatable,” Natasha responded. He needed a lot of things, food, sleep, a decent person not treating him like crap or expecting anything out of him. People like that only come rarely in this world. Especially for people like them. He needed stability and he knew it too, but everything in his life was tipped off balance so much that his instability became his stability. It was chaotic.

“Fair.” He responded, not denying her claims. He sighed silently to himself as he looked longingly into the sun.

“I’ve been hard on you. I’m sorry.” She admitted slowly. She meant it though. She didn’t plan to say it but she didn’t completely plan to say it either. She just meant to say sorry. He looked baffled again. It was kind of cute.

“What made you think that?” Peter asked confused “you haven’t done anything to me in months.” He said and she knew he was trying to be reassuring but it made her wince. They treated him horribly and just as they were trying to make redemption they screwed it up and pushed him under the water again.

“I’ve resented you.” She said to him, she averted her eyes. She was good at confrontation, but never with a kid. Never with Peter. He leaned forward to catch her eye line, like a kid would when trying to get the attention of an adult that didn’t want to tell them something. It made her feel even more guilty because he is a kid. They all somehow forget that. “you know where my son is, but it’s not your fault that he isn’t ready. After the kind of early childhood he’s had with me, I wouldn’t blame him either.” Natasha said and he stiffened. His back was wired and there was this guilt that settled in his eyes as their positions switched and he leaned back as she looked at him trying to subtly catch his gaze.

“I-I guess.” He said a bit unsurely. He fidgeted a bit and Natasha narrowed her eyes at him a little.

“What?” He asked like he didn’t know what she was asking. He didn’t want her to know something he knew she should know.

“Have a hard life,” Natasha whispered and Peter didn’t speak, his eyes hid behind his shaggy bangs. His hair had grown longer and Natasha wondered when he properly got it cut last. His hair was shaggy and unkempt. “Don’t lie to me... I know you know what happened to him.” Peter didn’t answer for a while. Natasha didn’t know if he’d answer her at all.
“Y-Yeah.” He finally said softly. Natasha sucked in a breath. She wanted an answer but she knew she was unprepared to hear it. Peter knew too, but they both knew she had to know.

“Can you...can you tell me about him?” Natasha asked not even sure she wanted the answer anymore. Peter was quiet again for a while. Natasha thought he’d say no, there was a strange sense of longing that she didn’t want him to answer. But she wanted answers so bad.

“What do you wanna know?” He asked softly. Natasha wasn’t sure what she wanted to know. She wasn’t sure what Peter could answer, she wasn’t sure what Peter should answer.

_She just wanted her son again._

“What do you know?” She asked back instead. Peter paused again and breathed out.

“I know a lot...about him.” Peter admitted and Natasha raised an eyebrow. “we... we grew up together.. kind of.” Peter said as he averted his eyes away from her, and that made Natasha whirl at him in shock he was blushing a little.

“Kind of?” She asked. He blushed deeper and hunched a little in embarrassment. “What does that mean?” She asked a bit sharper than she intended. She was persistent though and Peter caved with a slump of his shoulders.

“It’s complicated.” He mumbled. It was almost as if he was sick of saying it. He was sick of things being so twisted and complex. He just wanted simple things to happen for a little why. But his life was too contorted at this point for nothing to be complicated.

“You...” she shook her head, not really sure how to respond. “I guess..that actually makes a lot of sense.” She finally said as she blinked and Peter chances a glance at her. She wasn’t as mad as he thought she would be, she wasn’t as mad as she thought she should be. But it makes sense. Peter may not have any friends outside of weird mutants, enhanced individuals, secret organizations, or super heroes. He didn’t have any friends even then. Everyone was older than him and didn’t bother to teach him anything. They just yelled at him because he didn’t know what to do, or he knew what to do it just wasn’t the way everyone wanted. No one praised him.

“I didn’t know before you told me you had a son,” Peter said to her. He was reading this slightly wrong. He looked guilty for something that wasn’t his fault. That was on them, they kept
pressuring him to tell. They kept implying it was his fault when they really needed a punching bag.

*But why does it have to be Peter every time?*

“So what should I know about him?” She asked, trying to keep her voice light. Peter blinked and thought for a bit. Trying to figure out just was appropriate to tell her now and what Petya should tell her when/if they met.

“You should know that he...he doesn’t like confrontation. He doesn’t like violence.” She wilted a little. That was her whole job. That was her whole *life*. “But...he always finds himself in one.” Peter says softly, he looked a little ashamed. Maybe this was a little like mother, like father, like son. None of them wanted to be in these fights they kept finding themselves in.

“I thought you said he was okay,” Natasha said with furrowed brows, Peter wouldn’t lie to her and the confused blink he did tell her that he thought it was pretty normal. She sighed because of her to him, while it may not be okay to get into fights it was pretty normal. “getting in fights is not considered ‘okay’.” Natasha told him as patiently as she could.

“We get in fights,” Peter mumbled and ducked his head. Natasha noticed the guilt and shame that contorted his features as he scrunched his nose.

“Peter, we aren’t okay.” She told him gently and he made a slight mixture of whine and whimper noise. It cracked Natasha’s heart. Peter’s eyes glazed over a little. The stress showing itself a little behind the hazel that illuminated in the sun. Huh, interesting. She always though his eyes to be brown, but in the light of the setting sun they had a light hazel hue. It felt like a punch to the gut, because that was the colour of Petya’s eyes. Stress and the bangs had darkened Peter’s and Natasha worries that they may have Darkened Petya’s too.

“I-I know it’s not okay to get in fights. But...I’ve been fighting my whole life.” Peter said softly, as if he was trying to placate Natasha. Peter never made excuses, she knew this was an explanation. “Does that mean I was never okay?” Natasha’s gaze softened on the boy who suddenly looked insecure (which was weird because again Peter was rarely ever unsure of himself.

“I’ve never been okay either then.” She responded, somehow she knew reassurance and lies that he would be okay was not the way to go. She herself found that being able to relate to someone was infinitely more comforting. He gave her a broken genuine smile. It made the crack in her heart a bit bigger.
“Sorry. This wasn’t supposed to be about me. You wanted to know about your-“ Peter hastily apologized and ducked his head.

“Stop.” She cut him off. He did just that. His mouth clicking closed as he looked into her calm eyes with his wide brown orbs “I won’t let you apologize for trying to seek out help” Natasha told him firmly and Peter’s spine went rigid.

“I...” Peter stopped and looked confused “I was...” Natasha peered at him. He looked a little like the air was getting too thin, but he schooled his little panic well. Not well enough for Natasha not to notice though so she continued to talk.

“You didn’t notice?” She asked a little sadly. Peter was trying to seek out help subconsciously. Because he needed it and didn’t know that. He didn’t know that he needed help from someone, anyone who cared about him. He shook his head no as he continued to look winded.

“I’ve never...” Peter mumbled softly, still a little out of breath “no one ever helps me. Is that why...why people don’t like me? Because I’m seeking out help? Because I’m-“ Peter asked in a quiet panic of insecurity. He didn’t look sure of anything anymore. He thought he was a problem, he was being a burden. Natasha was shocked because this was the first time Peter showed this part of himself to her. He wasn’t as uncaring if other people’s opinions as she thought. He wanted people to like him. He wanted to be treated with kindness and be comforted.

*He is lonely.*

“No.” She said cutting him off again and he stopped again more abruptly this time as he made himself smaller “People don’t hate you because you seek out help.” Natasha told him firmly, he looked like he didn’t believe her.

“But...they kind of. do...” Peter ended in a breath, in a kind if out of it voice. Like he was just going to accept this, as he had every other shitty thing that was said or done to him in his life.

*He accepted that he wasn’t gonna be better than this.*

“It’s wrong.” Natasha shook her head. Refusing to believe that herself. Natasha was early in denial about a few things in her life. “They are wrong.” She said trying to be firm in her voice, trying to sound sure. He smiled at her again with the same broken genuine smile. That smile that shouldn’t
be in a face that young.

“I guess.” He shrugged. She knew he didn’t believe her. He was just placating her “Thanks for
telling me.” He said with a slightly more fake smile. Natasha wanted to scream in frustration.

“You should be able to seek out help consciously, Peter,” Natasha said to him in a slightly annoyed
tone. He didn’t get offended. He never did.

“I sought you.” He said and Natasha looked a little baffled. Why on earth would Peter seek her, the
Black Widow, out for comfort?

“Why?” She asked he smiled at her with a slightly goofy grin.

“Cause I guess you’re easy to talk to too.” He said. He then jumped off the roof and swung away.

Natasha found herself smiling a little.

OoOoO

Peter sat next to Wanda in the back of the court room.

“You think he’ll get a just trial,” Wanda mumbled unsurely again. She trusted Peter, she just didn’t
trust the system. Ross could have corrupted this court room just like every other one. Peter sighed
with a slump of his shoulders. His back was still wound tight.

“I should hope so... I’ve nearly exhausted all my sources to get it as fair as I can.” Peter mumbled
back and Wanda looked at him in near shock. He didn’t mind the comment, but Wanda could tell
just how much this meant to him. Peter never ceased to surprise her. “Besides I think He will have
enough crimes on his plate to make it very hard to dig him out of this one,” Peter said a little more
confidently. Ross has never been convicted, and he has a lot of crimes to answer for.

“What have you done?” Wanda narrowed her eyes. Peter was hatching something, Wanda was sure
of it. But instead of a playful smile and sly comment, Peter felt himself slump.
“Wanda.” Peter sighed, he sounded so tired. So done. Like he just wanted to sleep for a million years. “I didn’t want to tell them about you. I don’t want him to get away either, not like Skip did. This is literally the best I can do so we’re both happy.” Peter mumbled. Wanda smiles. He was always trying to please someone. Always made sure everyone was okay. It was time someone made sure he was okay.

“Thank you.” She said she meant it and Peter knew that too. She wasn’t sure if what plan he was doing would work. Murdock seemed like a nice enough guy, but Ross has the best lawyers. Peter thought otherwise. He seemed to have an unusual sense of admiration and faith in the man. Well unusual for him, because he has faith in nearly no body. It was interesting to see them interact like they had a million secrets between the two of them. If Wanda were to describe the aura around them it would be closest to trust they had in each other. An odd respectable trust, but it threw Wanda off because Peter trusted virtually nobody.

“No, he doesn’t. Because the best lawyer is on our side.” Peter said so confidently Wanda couldn’t help but sort of believe it herself. The Scarlet Avenger sighed.

“This is a suicide case. Where’d you even get this guy?” Wanda asked she was entitled to questions like this. But only her. “How’d you pay him, I know you’re broke.” She said a little more quietly. He didn’t want Peter to have to work extra after this to make up for lost money. He needed sleep and a decent meal, not more stress.

“He’s working pro bono for this, but I’m sure if we win I can get Stark to pay him.” Wanda did a double-take. What the fuck? How did Parker do these things? He seemed like a lonely naive kid one minute and the next he was pulling all sorts of assets out of his ass. Odd assets, in this case, a blind lawyer who worked pro bono on career suicide cases, but helpful nonetheless.

“I know people.” He finally smiled his shark smile and Wanda just shook her head.

“Are you sure you’re not the one who can mind control?” Wanda mumbled and Peter laughed.

“For everyone else, wits called manipulation but no, Matt asked to work this case for me.” Peter said back with a smaller more gentle smile “I offered to pay him and he declined. Said his payment would be Ross behind bars.” Peter told her and she smiled a little too.

“He’s a good man.” She told him.
“You have no idea.”

OoO

It was going well until it wasn’t.

One minute they were winning, Matt was making cases that had the jury appalled and Ross and his lawyer sheet white. The judge for his part, was very professional with all this, keeping a blanket slated face throughout the whole ordeal. And then they went on a 10-minute recess and the next minute Ross brought up a policy that was complete and utter bullshit. It shouldn’t have even been relevant, and it sounded like complete and utter bullshit.

“How long has the girl had her VISA?” Ross argued smugly from the stand. Matt didn’t miss a beat as Wanda felt the tension and leaned forward in her seat.

“Twelve days,” Matt responded easily without even consulting the notes. He knew this case like the back of his hand (metaphorically, he was presumably blind. At least that’s what Peter said, but Wanda has a feeling that there was more to it.)

“The policy is that you must have a VISA for fourteen days before participating in any political activities.” Ross said smugly. Wanda was about to stand up and argue the case. Argue that this was bullshit. Everyone in the stands and audience stiffened. They should, the things that everybody knew Ross did should be punished, no matter how much influence he has over the government. It was absolutely unforgivable. “Even if this is an international standing, the girl is confessing under the process. Therefore her accusation is invalid.” Matt stiffened. Peter clenched his fists next to her, he was pissed, she could feel it.

“That’s-“ Matt looked at the official even if he couldn’t see with something akin to worry “your honor?” The judge shook his head apologetically. It was the first emotion he’d shown in the case. He was on their side.

“I’m sorry Mr.Murdock, but as per law...” The judge started, Wanda drowned out the rest. Her mind peaked as white noise filtered in and her senses tunneled, her powers channeled and it was like she could feel everyone’s emotions. Matt’s hesitance, Peter’s rage, the Jury’s empathy, but all she could focus on was the feeling of just how sad the little girl at the stand felt. How embarrassed and ashamed and how utterly useless she felt. It was the same feeling she felt when she confessed to Peter, who made her feel better. But Asta didn’t have a shoulder to cry on. She had to remain strong
in front of the court.

It wasn’t fair.

She was just a girl.

“...If anyone has any other evidence of an offense against Theadus Ross please stand in this court or forever hold your peace.” The judge said with finality as the filter drowned out and reality came crashing back to her. Wanda heard the judge say it with a twinge of hope that she could still feel. She didn’t even notice that she had stood.

She was done with people being strong for her.

Peter had given up too much to lose this court case when they were so close. Asta had gone through too much to have her efforts be thrown away. She is an Avenger, she is a superhero. She is a woman. A strong woman. A role model. She is not just a victim, she is a consultant. She is headstrong. She is a mutant.

She will be brave.

For everyone who’s had to go through what she did. For every one of her friends and colleagues. For those hundreds of kids. For the Avengers. For Peter. For Asta. For her family. For Pietro.

She was brave.

“Wanda what are you-“ Peter whispered to her but she shook him off as she strides toward the front and he crouches in a half stand as his eyes follow widely. She didn’t pay attention to everyone’s eyes or Ross’s ashen face as she strode up. She just stared at the Judge directly in the eyes and stood in front of the gate separating her secrets and the truth.

“I have a confession.” She said in a strong voice and everyone including the Avengers nearly gaped. She felt it. She didn’t see it, she just saw Asta looking at her with admiration and hope.

She was an Avenger.
“Would you like Mr. Murdock to represent you, or would you like to call someone to the stand to represent your case.” The judge asked. Wanda stood up straighter.

She was a hero.

“I would like to call Peter Parker to the stand as my representation,” Wanda said she ignored how she felt Peter’s shock emitting behind her. She didn’t leave the eye contact of the judge.

She was a woman.

“Peter Parker please come to the front of the court.” the judge called him up. She heard Peter shuffle behind her nervously. Felt his anxiety peek as he fumbled with the phone in his pocket. The one that had the evidence that they were going to destroy when they won the case. Somewhere she felt bad for making him do this, but it was right. They both wanted this. They both needed this.

“Peter Parker. State your age.” The Judge said. Peter tried to stand straighter.

“16.” He mumbled and Wanda looked baffled for a second. She thought he was 15.

“Since when?” Wanda whispered to him. He gave a shy nervous smile and ducked his head. His eyes had a slightly wistful glaze for a second.

“Since today.” He whispered back, she could’ve sworn she saw Matt smirk a little. She was shocked but the judge spoke out anyway.

“You are a minor.” The judge stated “Who would you like to represent you as an adult?” he asks with authority and Peter blushes but responded in a kind of strong voice.

“Matthew Murdock.” He said to him in just enough of a voice to be heard. Matt quirked his lips up.

“Say you pledge.” the judge allowed and they did so, even if they didn’t believe in the god that they were swearing to. He banged his gable and spoke aloud again. “Wanda Maximoff to the
stand.” She breathed in and out and Peter squeezed her hand lightly before they separated and she went up to the stand and he went to sit next to Matt. “State your case.” his honor said to her and she breathed again and looked at Peter who gave her a reassuring look. She didn’t take her eyes off of him.

“Thadeus Ross raped me,” she said to Peter, pretending like he was the one asking the questions. Pretending like he was the only one in the court room like they were in the bathroom and could talk freely. Like the Avengers weren’t looking at her in guilt and horror. Like the entire courtroom wasn’t looking at her and judging her. Like the historians weren’t typing this vigorously. Like Ross wasn’t making a slight scuffle that was stopped almost immediately by the police.

“When and where did this take place?” the judge asked. She breathed again and Peter didn’t make any gestures, he just held a gentle gaze. Tears pricked her eyes.

“When I was serving my false sentence in the Raft,” she said with a watery voice entering.

“Objection!” Ross yells out from the other stand. “She was imprisoned,” Ross said and everybody gasped a little.

“So you don’t deny that you advanced with no consent on Ms.Maximoff?” Matt asked as he stood up and jumped at his chance.

“I deny that claim. I am saying her confession takes place under a time she did not have American rights, therefore being rendered invalid.” Ross said back with a glare.

“Rape, even in prison especially an American invested one, is still a felony,” Matt said back. “Since the Raft is American funded, it is illegal.”

“You have no evidence,” Ross said and Wanda cleared her throat.

“I’d like to call Peter Parker to the stand,” Wanda said and Peter breathed and walked up to the judge after he got the go-ahead and he walked up to the judge and handed him the phone out of his pocket with a shaky hand. The guard took it and the judge looked at him as Ross went white.

“10-minute recess to review evidence,” he said
The bang was heard throughout the room.

OoO

“Your evidence won us the case.”

His head was on the stall door as Wanda silently let tears fall in the stall. Peter had immediately followed her into the girl's bathroom with no hesitation. No one dared to come in from the raw emotion emitting from the room.

“But what if-” Wanda choked out and ended in a quiet sob. Peter still heard what she was saying even though she didn’t finish. What if it was useless. What if Ross still got away. What if she wasn’t strong enough.

“It wasn’t useless. I know they’ll make the right decision. They have to.” Peter said to her in a whisper and Wanda choked out another sob.

“The Avengers-” she choked again, voicing another worry. Too many thoughts were in her head and she had to get them out. All her worries. And one of them was now that the Avengers knew, they’d think of her as tainted. They’d kick her out. Reject her from their odd, scrounged up family. They’d leave her in the dust, on the street. She choked on a sob again.

She couldn’t lose another family.

“They won’t kick you out.” Peter said reassuringly. “What happened wasn’t your fault and what you did was so brave.” Wanda sniffled “they care about you Wanda. When it happened to me, no one would’ve given a shit. Hell, people still don’t give a shit. But you? The Avengers will never abandon you. I will never abandon you. I know everyone in that court room supports you. You have people in your corner. You’re a hero. You are an Avenger.” He said with such admiration and assurance that she was left a little breathless. He was so sure that he wasn’t. Something he thought he wasn’t. Something he was too but that no one believed him to be (including himself). Wanda knew better. Matt knew better. He was a silent beacon of comfort and reassurance. Understanding and unyielding support and a special kind of innocence. There was silence for a bit before Wanda spoke up.

“I support you Peter. Even if no one... even if you can’t tell anyone.” Wanda mumbled because he needed it too. Needed support. Peter sighed but a sad smile played on his lips, she could still feel it.
Feel his emotions that were a mix of too many things that were supposed to counteract each other. Disbelief and hope, sadness and happiness, support and grief. It mixed into some kind of emotion that hurt her to even think about feeling and made her head spin at the concept.

“I’m not as strong as you.” He lied to her. He didn’t know he was lying to her “I couldn’t even say it, I still can’t say.” Peter laughed a humorless laugh “but Wanda, what you did...what you said, was the right thing. You saved so many people, kids, from ever going through this. After this I will stop every single one of Ross’s sex trafficking circles.” He promised, she believed him. He wouldn’t sleep until they were all gone. Or at least most of them.

“Do you ever sleep?” Wanda laughed watery, trying to make a joke, like he always did in these situations. Peter shook his head behind the door, with his own watery smile.

“I’m so... I need to do this.” Peter mumbled and Wanda opened the door and hugged him. She understood, he thought he didn’t do a lot, but he did the most. No one would ever know that he was the pillar, that he was the jolt that sparked her dauntless actions. That his actions and effort were the reasons that she was standing here. That Ross was this close to being arrested with one of the worst sentences this world had to offer.

“Thankyou.” she whispered. It wasn’t enough, but it was more than he was expecting as he stilled and then relaxed in her grip and hugged her back.

“Ready?” He asked after a minute. Wanda shook her head, never letting him go but loosening. “Okay I’ll be right outside the court room.” He said and they pulled apart, and he disappeared before leaving her to privacy.

When he made himself visible to the world, he got slammed into the wall by Steve. He gritted his teeth and closed his eyes for a minute. His feet dangling from the harsh hold.

*Can’t please everyone.*

“Why’d you make her show that footage!” He ground out through his teeth. He cracked open an eye. Sam and Natasha were behind him crossing their arms. A disappointed look across Sam’s face and Natasha had a quiet livid aura around her. That probably terrified him the most.

“I-“ he tried to choke out.
“You really want to cover your ass that badly? She trusted you.” Sam said with a disappoint furrow of his brows along with a strong wave of anger. He was a counselor, he knew trust a patient holds in someone they confide about a traumatic event. Did they really think he didn’t get Wanda’s permission before giving that tape?

“Do you even know how humiliated she must be right now? Did you even think this through?” Natasha asked with a quiet kind of venom. “This wasn’t your choice to show that footage.”

Yes, it was her choice.

“Or was this whole court thing just to make her look bad? Do you like messing with people that much? Are you that twisted?” Steve asked and Peter clenched his fists. He wanted to punch the accusations out of him. “You probably are getting a kick out of this. What had she ever done to you?” Steve seethed and Peter closed his eyes, focused on his breathing.

What they’re saying is not true, don’t let them make you believe it. It’s not true. It not real. Don’t panic. Don’t scream. Don’t draw attention. Stop thinking that this is your fault. It’s not true. You didn’t make her show the footage. You didn’t make her do it. She wanted to. Say that to them. Explain yourself. Breathe and explain.

It’s not true.

Tell them!

...

...I can’t.

Then gentle red circles him and ripped him away from the iron grip of the war hero. He breathed in harshly on the ground, not looking up at his savior. He knew who it was, her thoughts were mixing with him even before she had saved him physically. He still couldn’t breathe enough to talk.

He didn’t have to.
‘You have me in your corner.’

He smiled.

“Peter didn’t make me do anything.” Wanda’s accent dipped into her voice heavily in her slight anger toward her team’s accusations. They were stunned as they looked at her nearly unnoticeable tear stained face. “I showed that footage on my own terms.” Wanda said firmly placing Peter behind her leg to protect him. “I still trust him. He did this for me, and those kids and women. Those broken families. His identity is in more jeopardy than ever. He risked everything he had on this case. Called in every favor to get the fairest trial he could. Went through every length to make sure no one would find out it ever happened to me unless I wanted them to know.” Wanda said and Peter ducked more behind her embarrassed, as the Avengers looked on in shock. He didn’t know she knew what exactly he had risked. What he had lost. What he had done. She did, she noticed his effort, and appreciated it. It’s been a while since anyone’s done that. He couldn’t help but think.

“And all you can do is push him into a wall?” Wanda continued, apparently not done with her tirade “After all he’s done for us in this case? Actually in everything he’s been put though because of us? You still believe that he’s going to throw us under the bus like this?” Wanda said anger peaking a little, her powers going slightly out of control. He touched her hand to control it, and she didn’t acknowledge him, but her powers calmed down a little. “I’m tired of watching you constantly be ungrateful for his help and blame him when things even remotely look south. And I’m tired of watching him trying so hard only to get slammed into a wall over and over. It’s not his fault any of this happened. And so what if he was doing this for himself? At this point he deserves something for himself.” she said, but Peter wasn’t really listening in his disbelief.

‘I’m in your corner.’

“Not every favor. Most people owe him way more than doing the right thing.” Matt said casually as he strolled from the shadows where he was skulking. Peter hated when he did that. And he didn’t appreciate that Matt was about to out him even more. “But you did ask Xavier about mutant rights on Ross’s case, didn’t you?” Peter hid more behind Wanda’s leg. He really didn’t appreciate Matt’s accusation (even if it was true, it’s not like he wanted to be acknowledged of it) or the Avenger’s disbelief. He glared a little at the blind man, who smirked. “You idiot. You can’t just call in any favor from him. You know you’re one of the only people he trusts enough to even consider giving a favor to.” Matt shook his head and Peter huffed a little in indigence as Wanda looked at him for an answer.

“Sorry Matt, but I needed to make sure they were okay. They aren’t protected unless they are with SHIELD or the academy, you know that.” Peter mumbled. Wanda only smirked at that as she crossed her arms as if proving a point.

“Every precaution to make sure this was the most fair trial and that the kids and ensured the families and parties involved got compensated even after the trial.” Wanda smirked. Peter made
himself smaller. Steve held up his hands up in surrender.

“Stop doing that Parker, you did nothing wrong.” Natasha mumbled averting her eyes and Peter peeked out and looked at the stricken Avengers. Sam and Steve were speechless, while Natasha was bashful.

“The recess is over. We should go see the verdict.” Matt said as he strolled past them casually and Peter hopped up to follow him into the room like a puppy and Wanda turned to follow the younger teen casually with a small smile on their lips.

They already knew what the verdict was.

OoOoO

Peter felt lighter.

As he walked out of the courthouse and into the city with the sun setting and making the sky orangey pink, he felt free. Like he didn't have the crushing weight of the world on his shoulders for once. Even if he knew that it was only temporary. Until the after affects of the trial came to kick him in the butt, but it was okay.

Ross had 30 life sentences that not even the largest amount of bail money could get him out of. He couldn’t leave the Raft, and had to go through the same treatment of torture that was given to the inhabitants of the prison. The implements that he had put into place in the first place. It was the kind of irony Peter thrived off of.

A new secretary was going to be placed, with recommendations by the Avengers (so he wouldn’t be a complete douchebag, hopefully). The mutant kids and their families (if they were still alive) had the option of going to Xaiver’s school or be protected by SHIELD special mutant division. Wanda and Asta were free of their guilt and the weight of their secrets.

So, overall a good 16th birthday.

_Wade was right. This isn’t as terrible as you thought it would be a week ago._
He basked in the victory that he knew he could take at least some credit in (but not all of it). He was happy that Ross was going away, getting the punishment and confinement he deserved. Locked away forever in the very prison he had built. Getting the same treatment he had ordered prisoners to receive. Sure, they’d find a new spokesmen for the prison, but for now they were under Ross’ s old rules. And let’s just say, Peter was perfectly content with them taking their time in changing the ways of that place.

“Peter…” he heard a familiar voice say from behind him. Peter smiled even though Matt couldn’t see. The older man came behind him at the street crossing and put a hand on his shoulder in pride. Peter allowed it with no restrictions “You did a good thing.” he said to the boy as he beamed.

“I didn’t do much.” He said automatically, because it was kind of true. Matt shaking his head at him as he guided Peter to cross the street and lead him somewhere that he knew he was going to end up inevitably.

“This wouldn’t be possible without you.” he said to him. Peter laughed and then saw someone as they made a turn onto the next street. The hoodie was pulled up but Peter knew who it was. He smiled and went down to bonk him on the head.

“What are you doing here?” he smiled at the man as the guy rubbed his scarred head. “I thought you were banned from attending a court case that wasn’t your own.” Peter smirked even they were three blocks away from the court house.

“Okay rude!” Wade said with a huff and crossed his arms “And two, it’s your fucking birthday dipshit, or did you forget?” Wade smirked as Peter went pale. He hoped they would forget.

“I was hoping you would too.” Peter said unconvincingly with a deadpanned look on his face and he felt Matt smirk.

“Nice try, Spidey.” Matt said with his own smug smile. The little shit was in on this too.

“I don’t wanna do whatever shit you have planned.” Peter told them honestly and looked a little wary.

“Oh, but you’re gonna do it anyway.” Wade told him with a knowing tint in his tone and Peter swore under his breathe because they were fucking right. He couldn’t let these shits run rampant through the city on his honorary birthday (since he still didn’t know when it was. You’re mother
would know. The little voice said in the back of his head but he shook that thought out of his head quickly). They’d celebrate even without Peter, because they were assholes who just wanted an excuse to trash the city (Team Red was good at that when they wanted to).

“Fuck you.” he grumbled and Wade stood up and slung an arm around the kid as an overly friendly gesture that Peter hated.

“Peter! You’re turning 16!” he said loudly and Peter blushed an ducked his head “You were like this tall when we met.” Wade said a little wistfully, his hand went to his knee level and Peter turned even more red as he ducked embarressed.

“I wasn’t that short.” Peter mumbled and Matt put a hand up to his waist to indicate how tall Peter was when they met, Peter shoved him with a free elbow.

“It’s only been four years! I was taller than that.” Peter told him too. Matt shook his head and ruffled the kids hair, Peter glared at him, with no heat in the glare.

“Let’s go, we plan to celebrate your 16th in a big way!” Wade said and then took him down the steps and rounded a corner where an old, beat up shopping cart with torn ratty pillows in it lay in the ally. There was a scrawled out sign ducked tape to the front that said Dullahan on it and cushions inside.

“No.” Peter said breathlessly. “I thought…” he said in complete disbelief.

“We’re bringing it back.” Matt nudged him excitedly.

“But weren’t we banned from playing it?” Peter asked, but his tone was hopeful. He loved playing this game with Matt and Wade. They had made it when he first started as Spiderman. It was a game that had started their ruelful reputation as the worst kinds of troublemakers this city had to offer. It was the game that made them borderline bad guy, that had thrown him in the grey area between hero and villain.

“Since when do we follow rules.” Matt asked rhetorically, waving his hand in an odd gesture as Wade got out liquor, Vodka, and Hi-C.

“We just came back from a hearing.” Peter said blandly, even though he knew it didn’t matter. “I
thought Colossus banned *Dullahan Dare*. How did you even get Dullahan back? He was confiscated to X academy.” he asked as he trailed his finger along the shopping cart’s cracked handle.

“With immense difficulty.” Wade said with a crossing of his arms. “And Colossus is stupid.” They all smirked at each other.

By the end of the night: three buildings were crashed into with a rocket powered shopping cart, 17 convenience stores were completely out of watermelons, 23 billboards were covered in Cantaloupe, the word ‘*meLATonin*’ was spray painted on a screen in Time Square, a warehouse caught fire, a picture of Colossus’s face was on 13 urinals, the old Oscorp building was covered in glitter, Lady Liberty had a nice new mustache and monocle, part of the east river was frozen solid.

And Peter had the biggest smile he could ever have on his face.

OoOoO

“I’m your new Secretary.”

It was a man with white hair and he looked kind enough. His name was Everett Ross (but he was in no way related to Ross. As Peter learned from the King of Wakanda’s glare as he insinuated that). He had helped in Wakanda with Killmonger was trying to take over and ship out the tech to the world recklessly.

He was a good enough guy. Peter kinda liked him. He had a nice smile, and an air of professionalism around him. He still had a sense of foreboding, but unlike Theadus Ross, it wasn’t emitting from Everett as a person.

“I’m Spiderman.” Peter said to him as they shook hands. If everyone was stunned by his professionalism, he wouldn’t be surprised. He could be professional, but he didn’t wanna be an ass to this guy right away. Never say that he never gave fair chances to everyone. He took a seat as Everett started the meeting. He tried to pay attention, but the man was mostly just talking about the changes he’d make to the accords (which he still wasn’t signing. Like sorry, but Peter doesn’t sign things, not even for Everett) he didn’t know why he needed to be there until the end.

“The last matter I’d like to discuss is Mr.Parker’s... *situation*.” he said and Peter jolted up a little and everyone looked at him and then back at Ross.
“Situation’?” Steve asked and Peter coughed clearing his throat and maintaining his casualness again.

“I’ve been in a lot of ‘situations’, gonna have to be more specific.” Peter smirked and instead of getting mad Everett gave him a quirked brow. Ohh, he liked this guy.

“I’m talking about your guardianship and living situation.” he said and Peter’s smile dropped. Oh.

“Yeah, no...uhm, I’m...I’m good.” Peter tried to wave off. He tried to ignore the looks the Avengers were giving him. They didn’t know all of it, he knew they knew some of what he was going through outside of Avenging and stuff with Stark’s lab. But like, they didn’t know all of it. He didn’t know the parts they did know, but he tried to avoid talking about it as a whole.

You mean your homelessness and the fact that you don’t have a consistent job or any rights to health care. When’s the last time you got your VISA renewed?

“I’m sorry.” said Everett to Peter. He genuinely looked sorry. Peter kind of hated him for it. Everett made Peter feel indifferent naturally before, but now it was like Peter was forcing himself to be indifferent toward him. It’s not his fault that Everett actually is trying to do his job well.

“I don’t understand. He’s gone this long without guardians and still joined Avengers missions.” Steve defended him, but he was oddly kind about it. Peter didn’t know what to say.

“Plus, vigilantism is unsanctioned.” Tony added earning a one eyed glare from Fury who was standing in the back with his arms crossed.

“Yes I know, but every other Vigilante in this city has an alibi. They aren’t minors, and we know they aren’t minors.” Everett said, taking out a stack of papers. “He just needs his guardian to sign the form if he wants to continue being affiliated with SHIELD and the Avengers.” Everett said, like it was one of those school sheets that you got at the beginning of the year and needed to be signed by a guardian (which he didn’t have, and hasn’t had for a whole year and then some and would like it to stay that way).

“I’m not affiliated with anyone,” Peter said automatically and crossed his arms defensively of his chest and hunched a little in on himself. He didn’t like where this conversation was going. “and I don’t have guardians.” he added in a mumbled. Tony looked at him with a critical eye, but Peter
decided to ignore it.

“But that’s because SHIELD had cleared you.” Fury spoke up from the back of the room, with a crossing of his arms. “If we hadn’t intervened then CPS would be all over you.” He told Peter, even though he already knew. The Avengers didn’t.

“I thought you said that was a favor.” Peter furrowed his brows as he looked back at Fury, desperately ignoring the holes burning into his sides by the other Avengers.

“A legal one, it required documents. Ross overlooked it because he didn’t care.” Everett said and Peter groaned as he sat back in his seat. This is why he hated political shit. It’s why he didn’t get affiliated with government sanctioned things often. They were unnecessarily complicated and a general pain in the ass.

“Okay, but I still don’t have guardians. The whole point of SHIELD intervening was so that I don’t.” Peter said with a raised brow.

“It’s protocol.” was all he responded. It was such an overfed line that Peter didn’t even bother with understand the tone. It was an excuse that was used when no one knew what else to do to get the other part to agree. Peter could easily argue against it and win every time, because it was the last resort kind of thing. If it was really a protocol, then Peter could always find a way out. “You have to have your guardians pre-sign the forms before you can be considered for emancipation issued by SHIELD.” Peter furrowed his brows.

“It’s a fucking loophole.” Peter threw back. “I don’t sign things.” he said with a crossing of his arms.

“Smart.” Bucky mumbled. Peter appreciated the noticing to his genius. Not signing things have gotten him out of millions of things. He could count the things he signed and remembered ever single one. There were less things than fingers on his hand and that made it easy to keep track of things he signed his soul off to.

“You don’t have to sign anything. But someone in this room has to sign guardians forms.” Everett said and everyone stiffened. Peter included.

One of the Avengers had to sign a form to be one of his guardians. That meant an Avenger was going to be his parent.
His eyes flitted to Natasha and Bucky then Tony before going back to Everett.

“Wait so, one of us has to be the kids guardian?” Sam asked, looking worriedly between Peter and the paper and Natasha, not so subtly. God, just give him away Sam, why don’t you. Peter crossed his arms again in more defence.

“Unless we find his real parents, we don’t know if their alive or not” Everett said. Tony was just staring at Peter. Peter shrunk in his seat. “But don’t worry.” Everett continued, unaware of the brew conflict Peter could feel was going to happen “these are modified, and as soon as you sign them you’d have to sign on to the SHIELD roster giving him an emancipation. It’s just to give the court something, since he went in a semi-public trial. It just states that if he dies or something, funeral rights go to whoever and you’ll be contacted if he’s injured. You won’t be responsible for his shelter or health. But if he shows that he can’t care for himself, then he’d be put into custody with whomever signed.” Everett explained. It didn’t sound bad in theory. He just had to not die.

But...a sinking feeling in Peter’s stomach.

His parents are alive. They are sitting four feet away from him.

“Okay, I’ll sign.” Steve leaned forward and Peter gulped slightly. He didn’t have a say in this? Of course he didn’t.

You never do.

“Woah, Cap. I dunno.” Sam said quickly waving his hand, as his eyes flitted to Bucky and then back to the sheet.

“We are signing rights over right after, it doesn’t matter who signs.” Clint drawled, already bored with this. Peter should be too, but this was way more complicated than it should’ve been.

“It absolutely does!” Sam said back with a glare to the man who held up his hands in slight surrender. His brow pinching in confusion. Obviously, he didn’t understand why this was a big deal, but it was.
“I don’t see how it could. If it is my understanding, we will not have responsibility in the end.” Thor said to Sam with furrowed brows and Sam face palmed. Peter held his breath. What should he say? Should he say anything?

Would they even hear you?

“No, Sam’s right. Who ever signs will have a little responsibility over him.” Bruce said with an intelligent glint, like he was talking about science. What side was Peter on? Should he care? He was confused.

“Don’t you think we should ask Peter who he wants to sign?” Wanda asked worriedly. Peter wished they’d listen to her more, but they just ignored that comment.

“I think Stark should sign, he knows him best.” Thor said gesturing to Tony. It’s like Peter wasn’t even there. It made sense, theoretically. Peter eyed Natasha and Bucky, who also didn’t say anything the whole time.

“Stark?” Cap asked and Tony didn’t say anything for a bit. The Mechanic’s eyes boring into Peter. As if saying that time was up. He had to tell them now.

He was out of time.

“I think Peter should have some say.” He responded, giving him his que. Peter looked up hesitantly as the Avengers all stared at him. Waiting for his answer. He didn’t know what to say. This was all happening too fast.

“Uhm...yeah maybe...” his eyes flitted to each one of the Avengers. His eyes landed on Natasha and Bucky who still hadn’t said anything the whole time, they just looked at him waiting for his answer in mild interest. Then Peter’s eyes averted to Tony who was still looking at him like he was saying the Peter had to tell them the truth.

Time’s up, Peter.

“Uhm...can I...oh my god can I read this.” He grabbed the papers on the table. His eyes searched frantically for something that could buy him more time. He wasn’t ready yet.
When are you ever?

There had to be a loophole a mistake, something. He frantically flipped through them, skimming the text (like he did on high school labs). He ignored the pitying and sad gazes of the Avengers as his hands shook with the papers in them.

There is only one way out of this.

“Shut up.” He mumbled to the voice even though knew it was right. He ignored the Avengers’ weird looks as he addressed Everett, but didn’t look up from the papers “What law or rule or whatever was it that makes them have to sign these papers? I mean if it was overlooked befo-“

“Oh my god! I’m done with this shit!” Tony stood up quickly - Peter felt himself panic but he didn’t know why, but at the same he did - and pointed to Peter and looked at Natasha and Bucky “He’s your fucking son!” Peter froze in place.

Everyone was dead silent.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter update: August 15 (I changed it, explanation and sneak peak on tumblr)
I love Peter and Wanda sm!
Sorry for the cliffy, I am evil.
Don’t count on the surprise! But I may have it.

Also I gots me a tumblr: StarryKitty013 (https://starrykitty013.tumblr.com) soo come talk to me there about whatever if you want (cough cough FFH) I did notice that some of my readers wanted to talk to me more privaty so there that. I’m still learning how to work the site so I may be a little slow in responding. Also, little to no wifi for a few weeks, sorrryyyyyyy

Also That was the end of Part 2, now onto Part 3 (which may have more content :p)
Love you all!!
I just plan to be

Chapter Notes

... This should NOT have taken me this long to edit and post!! I am sooo sooo soooooooo sorry.

This chapter is:
1: way over due
2: it's long very very VERY long
3: (and you probably won't believe this) was supposed to be even LONGER
4: horribly edited, but you guys deserved something for being so awesome.
5: 1 day not late
6: -4 days early
7: had to posted in HTML editor because it over 80000 words and will not have any bolding or italicizing (please don't complain guys, You all deserve so much better but I've been trying to post this for 1 and half hours now)

I wanted to put in another subplot to set myself up for some snazzy oneshots soooo I added a chapter and now you'll get even more good content that I hadn’t originally planned but I hope you’ll like ;)

Updates should be more regular now that I'm back!! I shouldn’t be going anywhere but also school is starting and I haven’t gotten much writing done for the other chapters as I did for the first one (as I said before I’m horrible at planning and the chapter would come out slower) so instead of every 5 days or something, it’ll be more like every 2 weeks, hopefully less because I hate making you all wait. You've all been so understanding and considerate, I'm sorry I had to push the date back. I had some family issues come up. I also edited the little sneak peak, but not much has changed from it just the fact that I added in more content to the paragraphs and switched some dialouge around, but I think it's sorta better.

I just want to also take this time to thank every single one of you!! You all are amazing supportive readers and I don't think I could've gotten this far without you all in my corner. SO thank you sooo much for being so understanding. I have ADHD and have had stories where I wait for months on end to post again and then I slowly lose interest in it, and then when they post I have to force myself to get back into it, because I know I love it but like I've waited too long and that initial love I had for it died out, and I know that some of you might feel that way about my fic rn, honestly I don't blame you, but for those of you that have stayed, thank you so much. This chapter is dedicated to all of you.

Personally, I am actually little selfconcious about this chapter. I did something a bit different with most of it, and I'm not quite sure if y'all will like it, but I worked so hard on it, you don't even know. I'll tell you more in the end notes about it so I don't spoil ;)

Also, I got my sister to read this and I'm so fucking happy!! She says I'm an okay writer, which to me means the world because she doesn't give compliments often. She's reading Harry Potter though, so she's not even past the first chapter currently, but I love that she's putting in the effort to try to read it!!!
tw(as per usual): hum not really that much besides PTSD and paranoia and anxiety. Some controversial topics but I don't think I dive too deep and also inaccurate science (but I tried to be accurate)!! Mental health issues are strongly implied (at least).

Now without further a due:

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 10- I just plan to be

They’d been yelling for 32 minutes and 43 seconds.

The Avengers back and forth was making his head spin. He was still frozen solid by Tony dumping that metaphorical bucket of ice water on him and outing him to the entire team, but most importantly, his fucking parents, who still haven’t said a word but we’re drinking his appearance in like it was the first time.

The initial reaction was denial. Peter had watched the entire Team attempt to go through the five stages of grief all at once. The first 15 minutes was them accusing Peter of lying, even though he didn’t say anything.

They then went into the anger stage, and that seemed to be the little rut that they couldn’t get out of.

“You telling me you knew all this time Tony?!” Steve yelled at the mechanic, Tony rolled his eyes but he was also standing up. Natasha and Bucky has stayed silent as Peter sunk in his chair, wanting the floor to swallow him and send him to a dark dark place.

Maybe if you ask Dr.Strange really nicely...

“Whatsoever Cap! Kid didn’t want anyone to know until he was ready.” Tony snapped back, crossing his arms. Peter felt like there was a chasm between the two. There had always been a slight rift in the group of heroes. At least, as long as he joined their little missions. Always this tension in the air waiting to be snapped. Peter couldn’t help but feel that he had made it worse. He’d divided the team up again but this time all on the wrong teams.

“Ready for what Tony? He’s a teenager, he doesn’t get to make that choice!” Steve snapped back. Peter didn’t think he could roll his eyes even though he wanted to. He was stuck in his wide eyed still position. Back board straight and so aligned that it was starting to hurt. He didn’t dare loosen up.

“That’s why he should. Don’t you think it’s about time for the kid to not be stuck with someone who doesn’t call his shit every ten seconds?” Tony asked with a raised brow, Steve leaned back as if he’d been slapped. But then he went right back to it.

“But they wouldn’t.” Steve said back and Peter found it in him to squeeze his eyes shut and clench his fists.

“Yet they did!” Tony said for him. Peter didn’t know weather to feel grateful or loathing. He could speak for himself. But right now he couldn’t. All the words got stuck in his throat and he didn’t even know what to say. He usually always knew how to respond, but the situation escalated into
something he had no control of.

But when do you ever have control?

“Shut up!” He didn’t know he had screamed until he did. The voice wasn’t helping. The screaming wasn’t helping. He needed to think. He didn’t know who he was talking to but he needed everyone to just stop. This moment, time, everything was moving too quickly. Peter needed to catch up and catch his breath. That’s when everyone looked to him and he couldn’t stand their stares, he wanted to disappear. He wanted to go away and be alone.

Like you should be.

“...prove it.” Bucky said in an cold tone breaking through Peter’s icy posture. Peter didn’t expect that. But he knew how to instantly. Without any hesitation or questions, He went into his bag and took out an old worn book.

It was his only possession that he cared about enough to never let go. It was the thing that tied him to his past, his roots. The pages were singed the text was too faded to read but it was okay because he’d memorized every inch of it. The Russian Translation to Pride and Prejudice. He handed the book over with shaky hands and Bucky took it in equally shaky hands as he held the ancient book gently, like it would turn to dust if he looked at it too hard. Peter appreciates that.

“Бренд Hydra находится на моем левом плече…” (The branding of Hydra is on the back of my left shoulder...)he told him softly, not realizing what he was even saying. He rubbed his clothed arms over the spot over his left shoulder, he could feel the phantoms of metal burning into his flesh. The mark was nearly slashed away by now, with random scars and lashes running through the mark. He felt so lost looking at the book. He hadn’t opened it in years. Hadn’t looked at it in months, but always carried it. The weight of the fragile pages were always a reminder of what he was and who he is. Painful memories lingered on its words and blood stained the letters. But he could never bring himself to throw it away. No matter how painful the memories were.

“You lied to us...” Natasha said in an awed tone as she looked at the book. He looked to her but averted his gaze. Their tones were soft as if they were speaking in a secret conversation.

“No I-” Peter mumbled she didn’t hear. She was too far away to hear him. He couldn’t catch up.

“You said you wouldn’t lie about this. You lied to us.” Natasha said to him more firmly, but quiet. He couldn’t tell if she was mad or not.

She probably is you dumbass.

Peter Shut his eyes again, trying to block out the voice. “I didn’t lie. I just didn’t tell you...” He said meekly, trying to defend himself but there was nothing but excuses on his tongue. He could feel their hurt, their betrayal.

This is your fault. It’s always your fault.

“You said that he wasn’t ready. You said that you knew him.” Natasha continued, leaning towards him but not to get in his face. She was more persistent. Peter shook his head.

“And I wasn’t and I do!” Peter exclaimed without thinking and shrunk back a little, igniting Natasha’s alight flinch and hurt that flash through her eyes “I told you the truth-” he started.

“You just didn’t tell us all of it.” Natasha said like she was fed up with Peter already. There was something broken in her voice. Peter’s heart aches as he felt as through he’d been stabbed. He
looked down but there was no knife.

She is. She’s done with you. You aren’t what she wants. You aren’t the kid they’ve been searching for. You will never be what they want. You’ll be nothing but a disappointment.

“I couldn’t tell you all of it.” Peter whispered, shrinking in more. They weren’t moving but somehow they were too close. He needed to leave, get out of there, breathe. He needed to breathe. Do you really, though?

“Why?” Bucky asked brokenly. Peter squeezed his eyes shut but didn’t answer. He didn’t know how to answer. He didn’t why. Everything was just too complicated to explain. Too complicated to be untangled and fixed.

You can’t be fixed.

“That man asked you a question!” Thor boomed suddenly breaking the quiet, and Peter flinched back at the loud noise and looked widly at the infuriated god.

“I-” Peter tried meekly. He didn’t even know what to say. He never knew what to say when it mattered. Everything that came to his mind just sounded like an excuse. He’d be damned if he just blew this off with one of his petty mental problems and emotions. He wasn’t supposed to have those.

“He’s your father, he deserves an explanation! She’s your mother, their your parents. Why did you not tell them that?” Steve demanded with angry eyes. It reminded him of those agents and Special forces. The hate and absolute dislike and disgust in their eyes.

They need someone to blame.

It will be you.

It’s always you.

“Would you have even believed me?!” Peter asked back, attitude returning to his voice, tears in the back of his eyes. He couldn’t take it. The noises in his head were drowning out everything and focusing on the bad things. The yelling, and screaming and hate that surrounded him constantly. He could feel his nose heating up a little as tears pricked his eyes. His parents stayed silent.

“If you presented your case, yeah!” Steve yelled back at him, not liking the attitude. Peter didn’t care. He needed them to understand and they weren’t even trying to listen to him.

“Oh, sorry. I was a little caught up in other things, it’s not like the answer was right in front of you the whole damn time.” Peter bit back defensively, Steve reeled back before coming forward, his anger tenfold.

“You don’t get to say that!” Steve said back in frustration. Peter scoffed but it was off a little. It sounded more hurt than sassy. He never let them see his hurt this much before.

“Don’t I? Or do I just not get a say in anything? I’d never get a say with you guys on my back 24/7.” Peter outed himself and he wanted to back track but Steve didn’t let him. They were going to fast and he wasn’t sure if either meant half of what they meant to say.

“You did this so you could continue being an uncontrollable menace?” Steve seethed. Bucky and Natasha were frozen they couldn’t move. They didn’t know what to think. They wouldn’t defend
him. It was almost like they didn’t know weather to agree or disagree. The kid they thought he was
didn’t exist. Peter Parker never existed. He was just an act so Peter could hide himself. Just another
mask. “You were so obsessed with your own freedom that you couldn’t think for a minute how
your family would feel!” Steve accused. That word is the one that got him. That f word.

“That’s not it! I just wanted to-“ Peter trued again only to be frustratingly cut off.

“That’s not fair to anyone!” Steve yelled back.

“It’ll never be fair to everyone! This is just another way to control me and I’m done with that!”
Peter yelled finally. He breathes in and out, looks at his still frozen parents and scoffs. “I’m
leaving.” He said and he ducked out of Bucky’s frantic grasp as he shoved his mask on.

“You can’t just-“

“Watch me.” He growled and jumped out the window.

He wore the mask to hide his tears.

OoOoO

Of course it was pouring.

It always rains when he’s sad (we’ll not always that would be a little dramatic but the sky always
seemed a bit greyer and everything was fuller when he was in a bad mood). Or when sad or bad
things happen.

Bad things just...happen.

Peter loves the rain, but his mood was already killed so he couldn’t enjoy it. Now it was worse, but
he couldn’t bring himself to care. Now that he was alone, thoughts in his head ran rampant and he
couldn’t stop them. They made him feel like he was being dug into a deeper darker pit and he
couldn’t call for help. The tightness in his chest wouldn’t even allow him to whimper.

I can’t control it.

There was a hollow hole in his heart and it was choking him, and expanding. Making it hard to
breathe with nothing to fill it. He felt as though he were floating, but his footsteps still felt heavy.
He gripped his hoodie in the place over his heart and let his tears mingle with the rain.

No one would know.

No one will care.

The voices were running rampant. For once he didn’t argue or talk back. He didn’t ignore them like
he should have. For the first time in his life, he listened to them willingly.

No one will ever care about you. You think this changes things? You think them knowing changes
anything? You’re still a nuisance to them. To society. Nothing will ever change that fact.

He didn’t respond. But the voices knew he listened. The voices knew he agreed.

You’re nothing but a waste of space. You were brought up to be a weapon. You know it. HYDRA
knows it. The UN knows it. Wade knows it. Matt knows it. Fury knows it. SHIELD knows it. The
Avengers know it. Even your parents know it, and that was before they knew you were their son.
They’ve always known that you’d be a weapon. They knew it since the day you were conceived,
and they still had you because they didn’t care what your life would be like after the fact. After they left, abandoned you, to HYDRA.

That made it all the worse. His mom was still in the red room when he was born. He barley remembered and the images were cloudy in his mind but he remembered. He remembered being taken away and his mother having to stand there and watch. He remembered when he first met the soldier and his stoic silence. He remembered asking in the dark of the white room if they were meant to be anything more than what they were made to be. He remembered the echoing silence when no one responded.

They had known all along this was the sort of life he’d live. They knew he was meant to be a mindless puppet just like them. They knew that they couldn’t do anything to cut his strings. He had to cut his own strings. He had to get away by himself. His parents knew that his life would be a miserable hell and they still had him. Sometimes Peter wondered if it would kinder just to not have him at all. That was the best decision they could’ve made for him, but now it was too late.

You are meant to be a weapon. Without that you are worthless. Without your bloodlust and your obedience you are useless. You can pretend all you want that you are something more, but you can never forget that you are nothing but a broken tool meant to be thrown away. A failed experiment that was incorrectly disposed of.

He knew that he was worthless to everyone. He knew that if he went back they’d just use him to get the things they want. They’d make him sign something and take away his freedom. The life he gave up everything for. It wasn’t worth it, to give up MJ and Ned. It wasn’t worth losing them. Nothing would be as priceless or precious to him as their friendship. But he knew he couldn’t give up Spiderman. It was an instinct, a bad habit he couldn’t rid himself of. A bad habit that would put the people closest to him in danger. A habit that had gotten two of his four best friends killed or imprisoned. He was a defective human and no amount of help or therapy could change his mindset to fight, kill, win. He was a defective tool because he had free will.

He was defective, useless, worthless.

He didn’t need the voices or the Avengers or anyone else telling him that anymore. He already knew. It was pat the pint of hurting and everyone just sounded like a broken record at this point. It was tiring to hear, but not shocking. It was expected at this point.

But sometimes it hurt just a little more than it should. Because he was human, even if he just barley past. He did have feelings and emotions. Sometimes it felt like the lonliness inside him would swallow him whole. He didn’t have anyone to turn to and, yes he didn’t want anyone, Because even though the people he knew would help him were still alive (well some of them) he had still ‘lost’ them in a sense. He missed the way they would love him and be with him unconditionally, with no strings attached. The way they treated him like he wasn’t completely useless, and that he was wanted. The way they cared about him when he had a bad day. The way they loved him without expecting anything in return.

You think that the Black Widow and the Winter Soldier will love you like that? You’re an idiot to think so. You’re just an idiot in general. They never cared about you, they care about who you are and who you are is not what they want you to be. They want you to be their son, no one will ever love you like they did.

He gave that up to save them from a threat that wasn’t even here yet and it broke him. He couldn’t take the anticipation of them leaving, cause one way or another they would go away. Everyone left him eventually, no one would ever be permanent in his life. That fact contracted and squeezed his heart until there was a tightening in his chest that made it hard to breathe. He felt like cold water
was dumped on him.

You won’t get that love from anyone ever again. You don’t deserve that type of love. You gave it up because you can’t maintain it. You can’t keep it. You can’t protect it. You aren’t meant to protect or defend. You are made to attack, to kill, to win. You were meant to fight until you die. There is no rest for you. Only to attack, fight and kill. That is who you are.

The only way to get that love was to be something he wasn’t. He wasn’t Petya. He wasn’t perfect. He wasn’t in need of help. He wasn’t okay. He came with too many problems, too many glitches and viruses. He was too tainted to be loved by them. He was too stupid to learn to be what they wanted him to be. He was too defective to be needed by them. He wasn’t who they wanted him to be. And he never would be.

At least you understand that. You understand that you broke. You understand you have no more purpose. You understand you have nothing left to offer. You gave up your purpose for three years of attempted normalcy. Of complete free will. You are tainted. No longer a perfect soldier anymore. You have opinions now. You can’t be controlled.

That’s why he was being rejected. Again. He was unmanageable. They couldn’t deal with him. They couldn’t manipulate him. He was too smart for that and too bold to be pushed around. He wasn’t a little kid anymore. He was naive enough to blindly trust. He wasn’t innocent enough to believe this world could be a better place. He was being rejected because he wasn’t enough of a child to be taken care of.

Because he was never enough.

You’re never who you need to be. You weren’t strong enough to stay with your mother. You weren’t visible enough to be remembered by Soldat. You weren’t brave enough to rescue Mary. You didn’t care enough to save Ben. You weren’t focused enough to help Vanessa. You weren’t fast enough to catch Gwen. You weren’t smart enough to save Harry in time. You aren’t enough, Peter. You’re never enough.

Just Peter was never enough. No one wanted all of him. Just parts of him. They wanted to take out the unnecessary parts to them, but they were all necessary to Peter. He didn’t do what they wanted because of those parts that they didn’t want. They wanted to tear him to pieces and divide it amongst themselves (like when serious colonized Africa, he joked to himself).

MJ and Ned wanted a normal friend. But Peter couldn’t be normal, he was a mutant; he was Spiderman. He may not always have been a mutant, but he was considered one. Even if he wasn’t he had seen to many things, did so many things that he should never have had to seen or do. He had a traumatic past. He couldn’t be honest with them, not entirely. They didn’t understand his panic attacks or his confusion at people being nice to him. They didn’t understand why he was jumpy and paranoid. He wasn’t normal. They wanted normal. They wanted Peter Parker.

Just Peter Parker.

The City just wanted (or not want, it depended on the day) Spiderman, but Peter wasn’t an emotionless vigilante. He liked rules, he likes obeying them as best he could. He doesn’t like getting in trouble, but Spiderman was (virtually) against the law. Vigilantism was illegal and that’s what he was. He didn’t want to be, he wanted to be normal and obey the law; But the others didn’t need that. New York didn’t need rules, they needed someone to help out. They wanted him to be Spiderman.

Just Spiderman.
The Avengers wanted a Soldier. They wanted him to obey. But his instincts and his gut were swinging him everywhere. He’d already gotten a taste of freedom and free will and he didn’t want that to go. To him, the ending that saved to most people and had the least damage while completing the goal was what mattered, if the orders went against him saving one more person he wouldn’t follow them; it was that simple. He had seen what people need through his time on patrols, he knew the right action even though it went against orders sometimes. He was torn between wrong and right and he didn’t know what to do. They wanted a Soldier.

Just a Soldier.

Tony and Bruce wanted a Science genius. They wanted someone who could bring new ideas to the table. They wanted someone to do their grunt work and whatever they say in the lab so they could focus on personal projects. But the last time Peter worked science for someone, the entire city almost got destroyed (ft. The Lizard aka Curt Conners aka Dr.Conners aka Peter’s old mentor). They didn’t know that though, and Peter never wanted them to. But what if they do the same thing. Steal his work and then use it. They were good people but so was Norman, so was Harry. What if they betrayed him like they did? But they didn’t understand his reluctance to show his intelligence. They wanted a Genius.

Just a Genius.

And now, his Parents wanted Petya. Their perfect little child. Their pride and joy that they could protect. That they lived for. That they’ve wasted years of their lives to find. That they would coddle and cherish. That they would praise and reward. That they wanted to take care of. But Peter could take care of himself. He didn’t need to be coddled or cherished or praised. He wasn’t worthy of being rewarded. He wasn’t worthy of being their son. His parents wanted Petya.

Just Petya.

But he wasn’t Just anything.

He was Petya Romanov. He was a Genius. He was a Soldier. He was Spiderman. He was Peter Parker. He was all of those things wrapped into one person that couldn’t be undone, but no one wanted everything. They didn’t want just Peter. They wanted just a part of Peter. A part they could use and then throw away once he had worn out.

No one wanted all of him. But Peter couldn’t tear himself into pieces. He was Just Peter. That’s all he’ll ever be.

And it won’t ever be enough.

OoOoO

Tony found Bucky in the common room alone the next day.

Now, Tony understood why the man was sulking - guzzling some black coffee over the counter where he sat in a slouch and elbows were on the table a far off look in his eyes. His son ran out on them in a frenzy after being yelled at for having no earned trust among the Avengers and then having a fight, that he’ll admit was 15 percent his fault (an argument could be made for 20 though). If Harley had run out on him, hell if Harley had been treated like Peter, Tony would feel the same way. He’d choose his son over the Avengers anyday, but in this kind of situation he wouldn’t know how to feel. He still didn’t know how to feel and this wasn’t even his kid.

On one hand, Peter had been a pain in their ass for the past year. He was snarky and sassy, but that
was just Peter. Or at least his defences. After getting to know him a little, they found out that he did
care, and despite his lack of listening and obedience, was pretty damn good at his job. But that still
didn’t make him any less insufferable to deal with.

On the other hand, this was their kid- a kid- that they’ve been treating like a soldier. That they’ve
yelled at and used as a verbal punching bag to alleviate stress. That they didn’t care about enough
to notice his health deterring or his exhaustion or even his slight-maybe-possibly homelessness.

Tony sighed and looked to the man who had killed his parents (even if he was brainwashed). The
man who worked for HYDRA (even if he was again, brainwashed). The man that almost split up
the Avengers (even though that wasn’t really his fault, more of Cap’s and Tony’s and Barnes was
kinda caught in the middle and used as an excuse). Okay yeah, he was a pretty chill dude but Tony
had put a lot of effort into avoiding him, even after inviting him into his own home.

He really didn’t want to sympathize, or empathize or help this man in anyway (that was more than
strictly necessary). He had ran his best and only 7-3 intern out (Peter hadn’t shown up for days
before that and he and Bruce were starting to lose balance in the lab. When had Peter become such
an essential part of their dynamic?). And yeah, this was the man who killed his parents but…

He was a parent too, and how would he feel if Harley had done a similar thing (but he didn’t know
how that was possible considering the fact that Harley wasn’t actually his)?

…

Well, his dad was an asshole anyway.

He sighed and went into the mine field. He came up next to the sulking soldier and pulled out a
chair right next to him, making an obnoxious scarping noise that got the other man’s attention, and
sat casually in it. Barnes raised his eyebrow as he sipped his mug with more drama than he needed
to.

“You know he’s my best intern.” Tony said casually, taking his lips away from the mug and
Barnes huffed indigently and went back to sulking with his black coffee.

“I thought Harley was.” Bucky grumbled into his cup, Tony scoffed.

“Harley is my son.” Tony said blandly eliciting the stiffness that he expected. “I don’t think of him
as my coworker.” That was a tad bit more passive aggressive than it was meant to be.

“But we didn’t think of him as a coworker.” Bucky said in an exasperated and slightly disgusted
tone. “We thought of him as an asset. Something to use in battle.” Bucky groaned, he said the word
‘asset’ like it was a disgusting thing to call someone. Tony agreed, they had called Barnes an Asset
in HYDRA.

“Yes, and we treated him horribly.” Tony confirmed with offhandedness as he sipped his own cup.
“Like complete and utter crap. I’m surprised he stuck it out this long. He has stubbornness, I
assume that’s from Romanov.” Tony said in an airy tone, it might be too soon to make blatant
comments about the (not yet but maybe soon? Hopefully?) family’s situation, but Tony really
didn’t give a shit. He knew which side he was on, and everyone else did too.

“What’s your goal here Stark?” Bucky said with a glare and a hint of exasperation in his tone.
Tony glanced at Barnes up and down. He hated to admit it, but the man would might actually make
a decent father. He was protective and stubborn and not afraid to lay down the rules. But Tony
could tell that he wasn’t as cold as he came off to be. He observed and noticed and stay quiet and
listened and never pushed. So did Romanov. They were gentle in their own way, and it just so happened to be in the same exact way Peter responded to. Imagine that? They’d make the perfect parents for Peter. If it wasn’t for Cap and Thor, Tony suspected that Peter might’ve been a little more willing to give this family thing a shot.

“Dunno. Not get you to sit here and sulk?” Tony said with a shrug.

“You’re terrible at it.” Bucky snorted.

“Yeah, I am but you’re not fixing anything by sitting here and feeling sorry for yourself.” Tony threw back. Barnes relaxed only slightly.

“I don’t feel sorry for myself.” he said in a serious tone.

“Then what do you feel Barnes?” Tony narrowed his eyes at the man.

“Regretful.” Barnes replies after a moment.

“Too late for that.” Tony said back with a shrug.

“Yeah, I know that. We shouldn’t have treated him the way we did no matter what.” He said putting his head in his hands “he is a kid with nothing. We knew that, or we could’ve known that. We just didn’t care enough to.” Bucky said in a waning tone.

“And now you do?” Tony said back with a raised brow. “What difference would it make if you had known?” Tony asked and Bucky made an ‘eh’ sound.

“Nothing, besides it’s too late to care.” Bucky said with a bitter tone “you had the right idea.” he said implying Tony’s ‘impromptu getting to know the spiderling a little for shits and giggles’ plan. He ended caring a lot more about it the more he got to know Peter. Or Petya. Or whatever they had to call him now. Man, and he thought the kid had an identity crisis before.

“It’s never too late to care. I didn’t care until a few months ago. Parker let me in.” Tony told him. Bucky looked at him with an unamused look “Sorta.” he amended and Bucky sighed and looked back his mug.

“It’s different.” Barnes replies. It was weird, he’d heard Parker say that a million times before. It was almost an excuse at this point. It was almost ironic to hear Bucky say that, and think that Peter was just like him. Apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Only now, Tony knew just how different it really was - or at least, he was getting closer.

“Yeah no shit it’s different.” Tony snorted, and Bucky looked at him surprised that he kind of got what the soldier was saying. He spent enough time with Parker to know that ‘different’ wasn’t necessarily a bad thing. Just a new thing. “He’s watched you obsess over him without knowing you were doing it. He was confused too,” Tony reminded and Bucky’s shoulders sagged “he’s a reasonable kid, he knows this isn’t all on you guys.” Tony reassured.

“It’s not on him either.” Bucky defended instantly.

“Not entirely.” Tony stressed “But it sorta is. He should’ve told you without my incentive. He was about to sign his rights away if I hadn’t intervened.” Tony didn’t regret what he did. He wouldn’t let Peter sign something that would basically confine him to the government standards for the rest of his life because he wanted to help people when he was 16. That wasn’t right or fair.

“But-“ Bucky started and Tony rolled his eyes.
“He’s a kid?” Tony asked rhetorically, he kind of got how Peter could be so exasperated. Yes, he was a kid, but that didn’t make him ignorant to his position and situation. Peter was a smart kid, and mature for a teenager his age. Everyone used the excuse that he was a kid to either ignore or excuse him or throw him around. “he won’t appreciate that. He doesn’t like it when you don’t blame him when he needs to be blamed.” Tony said. He left out the part where Peter doesn’t like not being blamed for anything in general, even (read: especially) when it’s for no reason or not his fault.

“Hasn’t he put up with enough our shit?” Barnes asked sarcastically, but there was an underlaying seriousness to the question.

“Yeah, but he’s used to it.” Tony said and shrugs again “he expects it.” he said almost bitterly.

“So you suggest we punish him?” Barnes said incredulously and Tony looked at him shocked. That might be the only way to get Parker to listen to them. Tony didn’t like that idea.

“I suggest you tell him that you understand and that you are sorry.” Tony said instead and started getting up. “It’ll throw him for a loop.” he winked. He felt Barnes burned holes in his back as he left.

He would never admit that the conversation made him feel lighter.

OoOoO

“You finally found him.”

“You bastard you knew.” Natasha didn’t look up, but her voice was filled with seething venom. She heard more than saw Fury’s footsteps as he came to sit on a chair near where she was on the couch

“I had a hunch.” he said casually with a shrug ”He moves exactly like you and when he was in special forces he shot like Barnes,” Fury informed her in an unpretentious manner. Natasha’s growl was low.

“So he does have a military background.” Natasha spat in distaste. “He’s fucking 15, what the hell were you thinking.” Natasha continued to make her contempt visible in her words. Fury didn’t seem to mind as he leaned back.

“Wasn’t my call.” Fury admitted with a movement in his shoulders, before pausing and looking at her critically with his one visible eye, “he tortured like you too.” He said in a lower tone and that made Natasha stiffen.

“Was that the reason why you put him on the team?” Natasha asked when she gathered her barings, knowing the answer “you said you didn’t care about this situation at all as long as it didn’t get in the way.” Her tone remained neutral and posture closed off.

“I got tired of you floundering around. I just put him in front of you, you made the moves.” Fury stated. Natasha sat straighter. They had made all the wrong moves if Fury was telling the truth. When Peter first joined the team he was so free and open to them, he was more respectful than snarky. He was somewhat apologetic when he couldn’t or wouldn’t follow orders, but he was firm. He had some sort of dauntless admiration for them, but they had snuffed out that light long ago.

“If it was so easy for you, why didn’t you just tell us?” Natasha bristled at her accusation. She was still resentful of being kept in the dark for such an obvious thing. Maybe if she had paid attention to Parker then she would have noticed sooner.
“Because he had already been way messed up at that point. He was too far into being Spiderman, life kicked him around too much. His shitty family passing away was a lot for him to deal with, as much as it doesn’t seem like it.” Fury said to her and leaned forward so his elbows were on his knees. She averted her eyes to him for just a second.

“He didn’t need to be told that his parents were Avengers.” Natasha finished, with a grim look on her face. They didn’t even know ten percent of the kind of shit Peter was dealing with. It wasn’t just helping old ladies across the street or getting cats out of trees. It was trafficking, drug deals, muggings, kidnappings, alien invasions, sewer monsters, rampaging creatures destroying Midtown- and that was just Spiderman. Peter had to also deal with the trauma of his aunt and uncle and adopted parents death. The things Hydra taught and showed him, and now, as she was learning, the experiences he saw in his time in the military. There was probably more, but that was just too much for Natasha to wrap her head around right now.

“No, that’s probably exactly what he needed.” Fury sighed “He was too closed off when I first met him. I didn’t know what he needed back then.” Fury admitted. Natasha didn’t say anything to that.

“So you never were gonna tell us. Even after he found out.” Natasha said in a slightly accusing tone. Fury held up his hands in slight surrender.

“He said that he wanted to tell you.” Fury said back. Natasha relaxed slightly “He said that he wasn’t ready to have a family again, Avengers or not. He was trying to get up after his last clusterfuck of a home, and trust me, it was a mess. He needed time to breathe from that. Stark and I didn’t want to get in the way of that. But you guys were backing him into a corner, which, I gotta say, dick move on your part.” Fury said nonchalantly.

“Yeah, but not even telling us, his parents? We would’ve understood that.” Natasha said slightly more unsure of this statement than her others.

“And yet, here we are. Your kid is still out there somewhere, but also he’s not gonna be the kid you were expecting.” Fury told her and Natasha looked him in the eye “He knows that, he just doesn’t know how to deal with it.” Fury told her. It wasn’t an accusation, it was a hint. It was a subtle piece of information that would help Natasha with how she was going to pursue this.

“For ’not caring’, you seem awfully involved,” Natasha muttered and she leaned back in a slouch, most of her tension leaving her.

“Kids grow on me.” Fury in a placid tone, to her surprise. “He’s a kid who thinks he has to deal with everything himself. That mindset lets him believe he has some control when he knows logically he doesn’t have any. For once, let him take the reins and come to you. He’ll do it when he’s ready.” Fury assured.

“How do you know that?” Natasha nearly whined. She had spent years trying to find her kid, and her patience was running low but she knows she needs it now more than ever.

“Because he knows he can’t keep this from eating him.” Fury said to her firmly, “He isn’t like other kids.” he said in a solid tone. Natasha had no other choice but to rely on it.

“You always did say the world was set against him since he was born,” Natasha said in a grumble and couldn’t help but think it true. From when he was first conceived, everyone was against his birth, as he grew up he just kept bumping into obstacles with no one willing to hold his hand and help him through the first 16 years of life like every other child had. Natasha was willing, so was Bucky, and Steve and everyone else who supported them in their search for Petya Romanov. But not Peter Parker. They were reluctant to help Peter Parker, who they needed to help before they
looked for a mystery kid who could’ve been dead for all they knew.

“So what’s your move Romanov?”

OoOoO

Parker looked like a train wreck

No one has seen him, not the news, not Twitter, not social media, not even in the papers. He hadn’t been doing many patrols lately, and when he did he evidently did them under the cover of darkness. Spiderman had gone radio silent after the fiasco at the tower and not even Fury’s informants could get a hold of his potential whereabouts. But that’s how Peter liked it when he wanted to be alone.

Key word being: wanted.

“How did you fucking find me?” The child snarled from the tree he was perching in. He was in ratty civilian cloths that were too big for him and eyebags the size of Russia. His face a ashy pale and his cheeks sunken. He wasn’t taking care of himself, he wasn’t doing anything anymore.

“I have a feeling you wanted me to.” Fury said back to the grumbling boy who jumped down to the park bench that Fury sat on. This part of the grounds were deserted and Peter sat on the ground leaning his head back against the seat.

“No I didn’t.” he mumbled even though it wasn’t true and they both knew it, Fury rolled his eyes. There was silence for a little while. “You talked to Romanov didn’t you?” He asked quietly, knowing his answers within seconds of asking it.

“Yeah, about two days ago.” Fury responded deciding not to lie to the already conflicted kid. He needed as much true information and facts as he could, that was the only way to move this little scuffle on as quick as they could. This wasn’t the time to hide things, everything was out in the open. Might as well be honest.

“You here for an assignment?” Peter asked trying to work through something that probably didn’t exist yet.

“Are you ready for an assignment with them?” Fury quipped back and Peter slouched with a pout adorning his youthful features. They both know he wasn’t. They both also know that he won’t have a choice even if he did. They still have a job to do, no matter their personal crises that may be going on in their lives.

“I meant more like a solo mission, preferably out of the country.” Peter had a hopeful note in his tone. Fury raised an eyebrow and the kid blushed. “What? I like to see the world.” Fury scoffed. That was just another way of asking to run away. Peter always ran away from things like this. Fury wouldn’t let it happen this time.

“I don’t think I’ll be assigning any missions to the Avengers until this is settled. At least unimportant ones.” Fury admitted and Peter looked at him a bit guiltily. “Not on you kid, but you should see them. They’re a mess in their own rights.” Fury sighed and slumped forward.

“How so?” Peter mused but there was a hint of uncertainty. Fury decided to humor him.

“Rogers is just generally mad mostly at Stark who is only sided by Wilson and Maximoff, who’s mostly just sad. Banner is staying out of it as per usual. Thor is pissed, mostly at you. Barton is being a mother-hen and is lowkey pissed at you.” Fury rattled off. Peter peaked up hesitantly.
“Did you just say low key?” Peter tried to joke weakly, having a strained smug smile on his lips.

“Seriously Parker.” Fury said in a dead pan and Peter ducked a little.

“And...my...him you know.” Peter gestured vaguely.

“You mean your parents?” Fury asked in a sassy tone, Peter nodded gingerly “Barnes and Romanov are doing as well as you’d expect.” Fury said in a solemn tone and Peter hummed.

“I need to take my mind off of this.” he grumbled. Fury knew he was trying to look for a distraction, but evidently he didn’t want to draw attention. If he did or didn’t care he’d be going out as Spiderman more often than strictly healthy (not that this job was healthy or recommended for anyone much less a teenager).

“Yeah, no one’s seen Spidey on the scene in a while just a couple of webbed up criminals.” Fury said and looked at Peter “What have you been up to?” He narrowed his eyes. Peter shrugged tiredly. He didn’t look like he was slacking off. He looked sleep deprived and starved, like more so than usual.

“Not much, I guess. Red and DP kinda took over my patrol. Haven’t seen anyone besides you in a while.” Peter told him. Fury already knew that though. No ones seen him in the time that he flew out that window, not as Spidey and especially not as Peter Parker. The kid had this nasty habit of getting unnoticed in a crowd and New York City was full of nice places to hide.

“You just got out of a pretty big job. People expect you to stay low.” Fury offered the topic change. Peter took it immediately.

“How’s the PR going from the trial.” Peter asked almost too quickly. Fury could tell that it had been on his mind as well as this whole paternity thing. It must’ve been a lot of stress and Fury couldn’t imagine how confusing it was for Peter. It was making Fury’s head spin and he wasn’t even supposed to care (not that he cared anyway, he was Nick Fury, director of SHIELD, he didn’t have time to waste on this shit).

“Word’s milling but everyone was really expecting this sort of thing already. Transition between the new secretary is going well. The public only know Ross is out of the job, but the government wants to ease into why he’s being persecuted.” Fury said, for once their roles have changed. Now Fury was talking more than Peter. He’d never seen the kid so depressed. It was unnerving coming from the teen who didn’t let anything tear him down ;no matter how harsh or how bad, Peter always found light in the situation while keeping in mind the bad. It was one of the things he had admired about the teen, not that he’d ever say it out loud.

“That’s gonna be a whole other mess to clean up.” Peter grumbled like it was an annoyance, Fury knew he really wanted to know what happened to the kids and families who were affected by the trial. He couldn’t care less about what happened to Ross at this point. “Sorry.” the ‘I can’t do anything about it’ went unsaid. Peter had no influence over the media, if he did Fury would guess they’d be a little easier on Spidey. This was one of those times where the kid probably wished he had good PR. He could really use it right now.

“Not your fault.” Fury said flippantly. “None of this is.” he added. He knew Peter didn’t believe him. He knew that he was the reason this whole mess was going on, but it needed to happen. Ross needed to be exposed and shut down, or else millions of other people could get hurt. In a weird way Peter had just saved the world singlehandedly and he wasn’t getting any credit. But Fury guesses that’s the right way to save the world when no one knows it’s in danger. It just sucks that he was paying such a shitty price for it.
“Some of it is.” Peter deflated. That was the thing, it was always like this. Peter was helping people in the way they didn’t like but needed. Because it was for the best. His judgment was nearly perfect, but he was only human (or at least partially so). And he was a kid, no one took him seriously enough to not write his actions off as impulsive and childish. He was constantly getting shit for every little thing he did. So obviously this would be his fault in his mind, even if it wasn’t. That was a mind set that wasn’t changing for a while.

“Yeah, but not all of it.” Fury compromised and leaned forward. “I spoke to Romanov, she is willing to let you figure this out.” he stood up and Peter’s eyes followed. He looked like he wanted to believe him but didn’t. It made Fury question for a minute of what he had said was really true.

“Where are you going?” he asked, sitting up a little.

“To Maine for an informant run.” he said and walked away from the conflicted child.

He smirked as Peter took his offer to tag along.

OoOoO

Harley Keener was pissed off.

It made sense, he was a normal teenage boy and his emotions were at an all time high. Usually he was pretty chill, he kept his cool and was snarky and smug. But when someone pissed him off, it was always for a reason where his stance wasn’t changing. He was bull headed and stubborn, sometimes that was a good thing but most of the time it wasn’t.

This time he felt it was a nessary thing.

“Why’d you yell at him?” Harley asked as he burst into the room, Steve huffed and whirled at him. It had been about two weeks that Peter jumped out the window and disappeared off the face of the earth, over the past two weeks Harley had been mulling around, making a point not to talk to anyone. He had tried calling Peter but kept ending up on voicemail.

That wasn’t so abnormal, but ever since Peter started working in the lab, he never ghosted Harley for more than 10 days. He always checked up on Harley in his own obscure ways. The fact that he hadn’t even left a hint and seemed like he just stopped caring too pushed him off.

He needed someone to blame.

“You knew too!” Steve accused just as angrily. Harley got even more peeved, because Steve shouldn’t have the right to be mad.

“Are really angry at me?” Harley asked back and Steve sighed, his anger draining out of him too quick to be anything real. And Harley did not calm down.

“No, but I am disappointed. Why didn’t you tell us?” Steve asked and despite saying he was disappointed he looked for betrayed. Harley scoffed, he didn’t have any obligation to this man, even if they lived in the same tower. Steve Rogers has zero authority over him and as of recent zero respect.

“Peter didn’t want me to.” Harley answered easily. Steve raised a brow. Harley would never betray Peter, not again. Not when they were sorta friends and maybe would be like family if all gets worked out well. They had to stick together, because they were both kids thrown into the superhero world for different reasons.
“Well he isn’t the adult. He shouldn’t have been allowed to make that call.” Steve said in his matter of fact ‘I’m captain America so I’m right’ voice. That got Harley’s temper to flare a bit more.

“So he isn’t allowed to have a say in this? Because he’s a kid? Under 18, whatever it is that makes him a kid in your book?” Harley asked a bit angrily, Steve flinched back a bit as Harley advanced forward “he gets no say in what, third family that he’ll be spending the rest of his life with? I’m not even sure if the first two even count! All anyone says to him is that he is just a kid and because of it he can’t control anything in his life.” Harley spat, Steve paled a little “you know what he told me once?” Harley plowed on “I was saying it must be cool not to have any restrictions or limitations. No boundaries or parents to hold him back, being a graduate he could do it all. I asked why he never listened to anyone. He said that it was hell. Having no control was breaking him and he couldn’t stand it anymore.” Harley said and even though Peter hadn’t said it like that, it’s what he meant. Harley knew.

“So excuse him for not being ready to have his life throttled again? We wouldn’t have done that.” Steve said and leaned forward and Harley glared.

“You just said that you would. You don’t even notice it. I’ve seen what it does to him, and it’s honestly painful to watch.” Harley nearly screamed at him. “You all don’t listen to him, don’t even take two seconds to just see if he’s okay, and now you expect him to come to you with open arms and just listen? How is that even remotely fair?” Harley screamed.

“I-”

“No! You’re the Avengers. People should look up to you! Right now, I don’t think anyone would if they knew the whole truth.” Harley said and started to walk out so Steve couldn’t get a word in. “Peter Parker deserves the life he wants, and he’s not getting it while all of you are mad at him for something that isn’t his fault.” Harley said and just as he was about to leave Steve spoke up again.

“Then what do you want us to do?” He asked back, not expecting Harley to answer before he slammed the door.

“Get your shit together and fix this.”

OoOoO

Bucky knew tact.

First he was a sergeant in the Second World War. Then He was an official unwilling soviet spy. He had to stay undercover under the worst and uncomfortable kinds of situations. He had to stay undercover and not give away that he was prying for every little bit of information he could get.

Anthony Edward Stark has no tact.

“Hey, you know that kid Peter Parker?” Tony said offhandedly in the kitchen one day and Bucky nearly face palmed as the two interns that were sitting on the counter stiffened.

They weren’t here for internship things. They had finished that about an hour ago and were now chilling in the common room with Harley. As soon as Harley had left to get something Tony had pounced.

“Parker?” Asked the scary girl (her name was Michelle), she was honestly terrifying- even to Bucky. She narrowed her eyes suspiciously at him in a menacing way. In another universe she would’ve been a good spy. With the right training Natasha could make her into the next Black
“Yeah.” Stark said offhandedly, never dropping his facade of cool “Kid Genius, slipped from CPS about a year ago. Disappeared virtually after that.” He listed and looked her down, she stared him down with the same intensity- which was a pretty bold move because he was still her boss. “I heard you used to know him.” He continued. She narrowed her eyes right back, steely determination in them.

“I don’t know where he is.” She said firmly and Bucky was honestly terrified that she was going to break Starks will with that gaze. Stark held firm, but Bucky could see him starting to crack. Amazing how one little teenage girl could take down an Avenger with a stare.

Well… weirder things have happened.

Like finding out your long lost son is actually a spider themed superhero/vigilante.

“Uh, heh. Wh-whats with the sudden interest?” The boy, Ned Leeds, asked nervously. Sporting a strained smile so he could maybe dispel some of the toxic tension that manifested out of literally nowhere. “In-in Peter, I mean… sir” He stuttered out, Stark turned his gaze to him to probably (most defiantly) avoid the very terrifying girl.

“Kid genius? Science, Technology and Math whiz?” Tony asked in a way that wasn’t a question “graduated high school at 14? Yeah kinda up my ally, wouldn’t you say. I was going to hire him.” He lied casually. It was unnoticeable.

“You’re right.” Natasha slipped into the conversation casually. As she does. “The Avengers are looking for him, we thought you might be able to help.” Natasha told a half truth.

“What did he do this time?” Ned and Michelle deadpanned at the same time as if this wasn’t their long lost friend that wanted to be found by the Avengers and probably in trouble. Then Ned looked a little nervous.

“Nothing.” Natasha said easily. She didn’t know though. Peter wasn’t in trouble though, that would be messed up. But then again, a lot of things were messed up in their lives.

“Uhm, with all do respect Ms.Romanov, but you wouldn’t be trying to find him for no reason.” Ned said nervously. Oh yeah, these kids had more than two brain cells and apparently fiercely loyal to their friend, who could be put into the category of ‘no longer a friend’.

“It’s classified.” She said in a lower tone. There was silence and Michelle sighed. She knew she couldn’t beat another woman, especially one as strong as Natasha Romanov.

“Fine, but when you find him, and I know you will: tell him that we want to talk to him.” Michelle complies to her and Ned nodded once in agreement. She cocked her head a bit, that meant she was curious about something they had said. That didn’t happen very often.
“You know, I could just bring him to you after we find him too.” Natasha said and Michelle shook her head. Bucky raises an eyebrow.

“If Peter doesn’t want to see us, it’s probably for a good reason. He doesn’t do things without one, especially things like this.” Michelle informed her and she nodded once. Bucky was just Baffled by how easy these kids were to forgive their friend for something so unforgivable; Stark was too apparently.

“Okay, I’ll tell him.” She agreed. Michelle nodded, satisfied that her demand had been met.

“So wh-What do you need to know?” Ned asked nervously, fidgeting a little. It was obvious he was nervous as hell. Why wouldn’t he be? He was practically being interrogated by black widow. Anyone with any sense would be shitting their pants.

“Well places he used to frequent would be a good start. People he used to know. What he likes to do. Stuff like that.” Natasha said as she sat across from them. Bucky then relized that she wasn’t jut interrogating them to find Peter, she was interrogating them to know Peter. Michelle and Ned looked at eachother.

“Uhm he likes to read at the Forest Hill library a lot. It’s in Queens, that’s where he used to live.” Ned said to them. Natasha pulled out a pen and paper to remember all of it.

“He also went to the junk yard near the harbor between Brooklyn and Queens. He liked fixing things like cars and building robots out of scraps.” Michelle said to them. Tony looked up a little pointed Ly and Michelle rolled her eyes.

“Uhm he used to go to the arcade with me. He hated beaches, but we went to the one on the Boardwalk near Coney Island and the one in Hell’s Kitchen near where he used to work.” Ned alternated. Bucky and Natasha didn’t miss that he avoided where he used to work but that was okay because eany information was better than nothing. then his face went sad. “He also went to the Cemetary on 164th Street. He uhm...he went to the flower shop two blocks over because the lady always gave him the Carnations for a buck less when he bought a mismatched Boque.” He whispered. Natasha looked a little empathetic.

“Lavender for Mary Parker, Red Carnations for Vanessa Carylse, yellow daffodil for Gwen Stacy, he never got the guys anything but he had said that his father was a douche and so was his uncle, he still mourns them like a dumbass anyway...” Michelle said her tone wasn’t disrespectful, she just hated seeing Peter cry for people who didn’t deserve his tears. Bucky liked her ten times better now. “I think he’d give May Pink ones, she always liked Pink Roses...” She whispered. It pained Bucky to know he had a system for this. A cycle he went through when someone dies. He had something prepared because he expected not to have much time with the people he loved.

“He got blue flowers and put them in Gwen’s grave sometimes. For Harry Osborn.” Ned said and the hits kept coming. It was useless information that they couldn’t use.

Natasha wrote every word down to the t.

She then changed the question. She didn’t want to hear this anymore either. Bucky was guiltily grateful.

“Okay, what about people?” Natasha asked instead “Did he know anyone else besides you two, preferably alive.” She tried to joke. Michelle saw her attempt at humor as she smile a little in appreciation. This wasn’t an interrogation, this was a questioning.
“He didn’t know many other people besides us.” Ned said thoughtfully. There was something wistful in his tone.

“He was socially awkward and didn’t interact with people well. We and Gwen and Harry were his only friends in school.” Michelle Picked up for him. “But their dead.” Her face turned grim.

“Besides the Librarian at Forest Hill I can’t think of anyone.” Ned put in “her name is Karen, she’s about 27 now and works on Mondays, Fridays and weekends all day and then Thursday’s from 5 to 9.” He informed and Natasha nodded, she took out a pad of paper and wrote that down. “She gave us cookies sometimes.” He said. She noted that too. No detail was too small.

“Of course her name Karen.” Tony muttered but the kids didn’t seem to hear. That seemed to trigger something in his mind. Bucky made note of that to ask him later.

“Is that all?” She asked and Michelle shrugged. Natasha gave her a moment to think.

“Yeah that’s about- wait” she smacked her head “I’m an idiot. He had a job.” She said. Ned bristled a little. “Oh you’re such a pussy.” She mutter to him.

“The bot fighting?” He asked, a little hopefully

“I don’t think he does that anymore, he stopped after...oh I’m an idiot.” He said to her, smacking his head. She nodded.

“What’s bot fighting?” Bucky asked before he could stop himself. Ned turned to him with a stony look.

“It’s where you build a robot to defeat other robots and people bet on it. It’s a quick way to make money.” Ned told him “Peter had to kind of provide for himself when we were kids, he bot fights in the warehouses near Manhattan Bay when he did. He’d always win, but it’s dangerous because other things are going on around that.” Ned said to him and Bucky gruffly nodded as Natasha wrote that down too.

“No not that. After we found out he said he’d stop, he did but he still went to fights occasionally. We didn’t stop him cuz it wasn’t our place and he was really stressed-” Michelle was cut off by Stark.

“So he basically destroyed a bunch of thugs and gangsters toys to relive that.” Stark smirked at her, she glared “kid has balls.” Michelle glared at him. Natasha swatted him with her pad of paper.

“As I was saying.” She gave a pointed look at Stark. He held up his hands in surrender. “He got a job when he was ten. It was at a bar called Saint Margrets in Hell’s Kitchen.” MJ said and Bucky nearly choked. His kid was so broke that he had to get a job when he wasn’t even in middle school yet. At a bar no less. It made his blood boil that he was so poorly taken care of by anyone that was supposed to take care of him.

“Wait why haven’t I heard of this?” Ned asked baffled.

“He’s worked at the bar since we were ten, Ned. I’m surprised you didn’t know. He took you there once.” Michelle said and rolled her eyes. Ned paled as she deadpanned. “Anyway, it was a Merc bar and the guy who ran was named Weasel. He gave Peter an easy wage.” MJ informed and Natasha scowled similar thoughts going through her mind as she scribbled on the pad of paper.

“So instead of being surrounded by gangsters he was surrounded by mercenaries.” Tony mused unhelpfully. “That’s way safer.” He said sarcastically. Natasha kicked him hard and he let out a cry of pain.
Actually it was. They were mercenaries but Peter was serving their drinks. If anyone even touched him they’d be practically dead.” Michelle crossed her arms a smug aura over taking her as she smirked “smart move on his part, not gonna lie.”

“You said it was in Hell’s Kitchen?” Natasha asked just to clarify.

“Yeah, real shithole if you ask me. Peter didn’t mind though. Got him out of the house and a steady paycheck. He’s not that picky.” Michelle said with a shrug. “Besides that I don’t think there was-“ she was cut off by Ned.

“Wade!” Ned blurted. Michelle’s eyes widened “oh my god how could we forget Wade!” MJ facepalmed herself again.

“Actually...Ned you’re absolutely right for once.” Michelle mumbled in awe “put this at the top of your list. Wade Wilson.” Natasha scribbled the name down faster than Bucky had ever seen her write.

“Peter used to spend every summer up until we were 11 at his place in Canada. He moved to New York when we finally got to meet him.” Ned said. “He was big. Like a giant. He serve in special forces.” That had Bucky’s attention. This Wade character served in the army, meaning that Peter did have some interconnected military influence in his life before he joined the Avengers. That was something he wanted to storeaway for later.

“If there was ever an adult that didn’t treat Peter like utter shit, it’s Wade Wilson. He basically raised him.” Michelle said with a nod, and Bucky was really surprised. And ex military soldier turned mercenary doesn’t seem the type to take care of the kid. But it would explain a lot about Parker’s character.

“But they have...sorta a weird relationship.” Ned said unsteadily. Michelle snorted. Bucky raised a brow at them.

“You call it weird, I call it hilarious. “ she scoffed, and then smiled a little “Wade’s the literal worst role model. He cursed and had sex jokes a mile long. Once he put Peter in the literal cross fire of guns when we were 12 once, definatly more when I wasn’t around. But Some how, they just work.” Michelle shrugged. Yeah, now the way Peter acts sometimes was really explained. Bucky was oddly intrigued by this and wanted to know more. But now wasn’t the time.

“ Weird.” Ned still stood in his belief and crossed his arms to show he did. Michelle rolled her eyes.

“If anyone knows where Peter went, it’s Wade Wilson.” Michelle said ignoring her friend and looked Natasha directly in the eye. She nodded once.

“Thank you.”

OoOoO

“He’s not here.”

The scarred man that had opened the door to the address they were given was now standing as if he were unimposed on their visit. He looked unsurprised and unamused that they had come. Just as he was about to slam the door on their faces Natasha put a hand out to stop the fluid swing. It was odd to be turned down now because Natasha not Bucky had asked anything yet. He just took one look at them and knew what they were gonna ask. Maybe they had made it too obvious, but how?

“Are you Wade Wilson?” she asked, not showing what she was really thinking on her neutral face.
She remained blank just as her partner did next to her. The man looked so done with this.

“Yes.” he said blandly, unblinking. He was unnaturally calm and expecting considering who he was talking to. It wasn’t everyday that the Winter Soldier and Black Widow showed up to a crappy apartment owned by an ex-special forces turn mercenary asking for a teenager with spider powers who is their long lost son. Man, their life was really something else, wasn’t it?

“Have you seen Peter Parker? We’re his… well we’re his uhm..” Bucky stumbled over his words, Natasha was just about to pick up where he was stuttering (which was weird because in situations where he had to pretend he never faltered but in situations where he had to be himself he was hesitant). The man, Wade, sighed tiredly.

“His parents? Yeah, I know.” Wade said without missing a beat and opened the door more for them to come in though he looked tired but not surprised. “Come in, I have a feeling you’ll want to say something you don’t want anyone out there to hear.” he said and he was right so They did so and ducked into the cramped apartment.

Wade’s place was oddly cozy. It was like punk rock with poster up on the walls overlapping each other but also homey with little fake plants and a ton of knitted blankets and throw pillows. They sat on his ragged plush couch. A grey cat meowed and jumped up onto it and nuzzled against Buckys arm as he went stiff and Wade sighed again.

“Curtosy of the kid. He won’t let me get rid of her.” Wade gestured to the creature and sat down as well.

“Have you-” he started but Wade cut him off swiftly.

“I haven’t seen Parker. He’s disappeared off of everyone’s radars for nearly a week.” Wade grumbled, seemingly upset about the disappearnce of the young child. “But that ain’t so strange. He just got out of a big job, probably wants to sleep or somethin’.“ Wade shrugged, as if he was unbothered by it. Natasha could tell that he was somewhat though.

“You’re not worried about him?” Bucky asked with a brow, Wade looked like he wanted to laugh or scoff but he does neither.

“Kid can take care of himself.” Wade waves off easily and eyes the two seriously as they must have gave him a disbelieving look “trust me.” He said lowly, implying that this wasn’t just writing the kid off but something bigger. He actually believed that Peter was more capable than they had been treating him, and to be fair: he probably was. He survived years without a real family, without anyone guiding him. He dealt with eons of trauma all on his own without a single person knowing. He always had to depend on himself, this time was no different. He had to deal with this on his own, or at least that’s what he probably believed.

“Have any way to find him?” Natasha asked leaning forward slightly. Wade shook his head solemnly again, and although Natasha was expecting that, she was still disappointed in the answer. Typical, they finally found their son and now they’ve driven him off into god know where. Now he was actively avoiding them and oddly and unspeakably good at doing so.

“If he doesn’t wanna be found then he won’t be found. That simple.” Wade said and they nodded solemnly. Sril disappointed in the answer. “Is that all or…” Wade said with an awkward air around his tone after a few moments.

“You...They said you knew Peter before… like when he was a child.” Natasha said a little more slowly. Almost afraid to ask this question. Wade blinked at her for a moment.
“They?” He repeated and leaning in closer, clearly confused.

“Michelle Jones and Ned Leeds.” Bucky seemed to find his voice and answered clearly for him to hear.

“Oh them?” Wade looked a little delighted, which was a major change from his formerly stiff posture “Yeah, their awesome. Good kids. But when you team them up with Parker, oh boy. Their like demon children. Gonna take over the world someday if Peter ever works up the balls to talk to them again.” Wade whistled with a light tone. It made Natasha feel a little lighter about their situation.

“They said that you’d know the most about him.” Natasha said scooting a little up. Wade chuckled darkly at that, Bucky furrowed his eyebrows but didn’t say anything.

“Then they’d be wrong.” he lowered his head as his eyes went a tad bit dark “Lemme tell you somethin’. “ Wade leaned forward to speak more closely to them “that kid, no matter how young he was or is, can take care of himself. He doesn’t tell nothing to nobody. Learned that early on, even before I knew him. I may know what he’s like when he’s watching Netflix but I don’t know his real name. He tells people who are not destined to meet little meaningless things but only when you put them together you can see who he really is. It’s like a puzzle that nearly unsolvable.” Wade said and Natasha darkened a little, her little hope seeming to have died a little, but still there. It would never besnuffed out, she wouldn’t allow it.

“So you’re saying he has other people like you?” Bucky asked for clarification. Wade turned to him before shrugging.

“Well yeah, but he’s told you things too.” Wade leaned back from then, in a falsly open gesture “You just have to know his language. Whenever there is a problem he needs to vent about hell rant about literally anything else. You gotta know him to understand.” Wade says. “Even I don’t understand him all the way.” He admitted, which made Natasha worry a bit. Wade has known Peter for such a long time, and he was nice to him. Not even then did he trust the man fully. So what did that mean for them? They were awful to Peter, they yelled and scolding him for nearly nothing, for trying to help. They never made an effort to help him unless it was for their own personal gain. They’d never gain enough trust to know their son fully. It was a lost cause.

“Well do you have any tips because we don’t understand even a little.” Bucky asked anyway, having her partner still have some hope made the light inside her fuel a little, but only a little. Wade thought about before getting up and coming back with a box of tapes.

“These are the things you should know about him before you continue with your little search.” Wade said handing Natasha the box of tapes.

“What are they?” she asked looking at the box that she was gingerly holding as if it was the most precious thing in the world.

“You’ll see.”

OoOoO

It took Tony forever to reboot his VHS player.

In all honesty it took him 5 minutes max took hook it up to the TV, but Natasha and Bucky were anxious to see the tape. So to them it took a literal eternity. Wade had said whatever was on this tape would make them understand Peter a little better than they had already, and they were
desperate to know every little thing about him. He was their son after all they wanted to know how he grew up, even if they knew it wasn’t so nice.

Wade had also said that this was the censored version of Peter’s childhood, and that made them have something weird go down their stomach because what if whatever they saw was bad. That would only mean Peter had to deal with things a million and one times worse than what they were watching.

“Can you go any faster?” Natasha asked stiffly had she sat board straight next to Barnes and Tony huffed in his own proud way.

“Shut up or I’ll go slower deliberately.” Tony bit back, she was honestly a bit surprised at his boldness “Who the hell uses VHS anyway.” he grumbled to himself and she rolled her eyes, nope he is the same old Tony Stark.

“Well are you sure you want us here?” Steve asked unsurly to Bucky and Natasha.

“Wilson said we’d understand Peter more after we watched it. And you guys wanted to understand Peter more too right?” Bucky said as he looked at the Avengers expectantly daring them to say no. The group collectively agreed, even if they didn’t show it through a nod or a soft yes.

“Finally.” Tony stood up and everyone turned to the screen. “FRIDAY would you be a dear.” he ordered and FRIDAY silently played the tape as it was popped in.

The video played.

It wasn’t at all what they expected it to be.

*The screen started with a kid in baggy army clothing and a rather small duffle getting off a plane. He looked to be about 7 or 8 years old with curly unruly brown hair and wide brown eyes.*


A kid who was dressed in oversized army slacks and looked at the camera baffled.

“Who is that kid?” Sam asked as he squinted his eyes at the oddly familiar kid on the screen. He looked so young and innocent, too innocent to be in any kind of traditional army gear.

“Why is a kid in army slacks?” Steve muttered and Wanda stiffened a little. But she didn’t say anything.

“I think the better question is,” Bucky side eyed Wanda “Why is that kid hiding a gun in his sleeve?” Wanda glared as Bucky turned back to the screen.

“What are ya doin?” the kid asked the person behind the camera, his head cocked to the side adorably, it made Natasha’s lips quirk upwards a little.

“You know those videos where the soldiers come home?” the man behind the camera asked, the kid hummed noncommentaly in response, as if it was amusing. It was eerily familiar.

“Wait.” Sam sat up straight “You don’t think that’s...?” Sam looked to his left and then his right for any response but everyone was glued to the screen.

“I’m kinda doing a reverse of that” The man said with too much pep, the kid rolled his eyes. “Say hi Peter!” The man shoves the camera in Peters face.
Steve and Sam sat up straighter at the confirmation of the child being Peter, as Bucky stiffened. A child should not be going into war, sure they were young when they first started in the army, but Peter wasn’t even out of elementary school yet, he couldn’t have been. Not with those eyes and still baby fat on his face, he was too young.

“He was in the army?” Sam whispered in disbelief, he didn’t expect anyone to say anything else because of the shock. They had given him so much shit because he seemed to not understand what being a soldier entailed, that’s what it seemed like at least. He was so adamantly at not following orders. He didn’t even act like a normal soldier.

“Special Forces.” Wanda whispered more to herself but didn’t turn from the screen. With that confirmation everyone was officially silent. They continued to watch.

“it’s gonna go fucking viral!” the man said boastfully behind the camera said.

“you know you can’t show that to anyone.” the kid flashed a shit eating smile, that was all too familiar “I’m an international secret” he said mockingly, which shouldn’t have been amusing but Peter was too young to hide anything with sarcasm perfectly just yet. He must’ve perfected it over time, because now it was nearly flawless. Either way, that was just wrong coming from a child’s mouth, 7 or 17, no matter the age. International secret? More like child soldier.

“you suck the fun out of everything” the man said in fake sadness as Peter rolled his eyes again.

“that’s the government’s job, sir.” The kid said in a fake voice of authority and respect - that also wasn’t quite as refined as current Peter’s - as he went to the automobile parked presumably to pick him up. He threw his single duffel in the back and hopped into the Jeep in one swift motion.

The camera shook as the man opened his door and propped the camera up against the dashboard. It showed one healthy looking (as in not a man that looked like he’d seen the inside of a meat grinder and got his hair shaved off) Wade Wilson as they’d seen in the profile photos in his file.

“come on Pete, General Ass wants to see you.” Wade said to the kid who was now confirmed as Peter.

“conditioning?” the kid asked in a shaky tone that tried to sound nonchalant - another thing sixteen year old Peter has refined to perfection.

“probably. Sorry kiddo.” Peter groaned and leaned back in his chair, looking a little like the kid that he was instead of the soldier he was supposed to be, and turned a little to Wade and then looked at the scenery. “ready for your summer camp of hell” Wade asked as Peter was pointedly ignoring him now.

*The camera cut into the next scene. It was in an army tent. Peter was facing away from Wade and his head was stuck into the duffle bag. He was wearing a ridiculously oversized sweatshirt, probably Wade’s as it had Canadian maple leaf printed on the back.*


“Why do you insist on taping us in the tent?” Peter asked without turning around as he rifled through the bag. He had just put aside an overly sized snipers gun, to which Clint tutted to. A child should not have such easy access to these types of weapons, but he knew that Peter probably already knew how to use it, despite his age.

“Are you complaining about living under my personal tent? Cause you were supposed to sleep with the dogs.” Wade inquired and Peter shook his head rather unworriedly.
“Just wondering.” he said back lightly and ducked further into the bag, pulling regular sized grenades from the duffle.

“They made him sleep with the dogs?” Thor asked not understanding, but the worried furrow of his brow spoke that he was not approving of that in anyway, even if he didn’t know what it fully meant.

“The war dogs, it’s just a meaningless threat, but I think they actually mean for Peter to sleep with them.” Sam said, Steve furrowed his brow too. Peter didn’t belong there at all, whatever circumstances got him into the army must’ve been grave and frowned upon. That meant he’d be getting the worst treatment. The runt always did in the army, and Peter was more than qualified to be the runt of all runts in the army.

“That’s messed up.” Tony commented with a bit of venom in his tone, Steve couldn’t help but agree.

“im vlogging Peter.” he made a pinching with his fingers as he spoke. Peter scrunched his nose. “and it’s not for me” Wade said. Peter rolled his eyes, but still looked mildly interested with that kind of curiosity only a child could have.

“then who’s it for?” Peter asked with his arms crossed, as he turned to Wade, sitting amongst his piles of lethal but sorted weapons.

“You.” Wade said, not minding the dangerous nest Peter had created around himself and Peter blinked as Wade took the camera and pointed it at the boy who was shocked. “Home videos.” Peter looked shocked for a second before scoffing a bit.

“You’re such a grandma.” He mumbled and turned away with a small smile that had the Avengers couldn’t help but smile to, despite their disapproval at the young child’s situation.

*the video cut to Peter sitting in a cross leg position holding a disassembled gun with other gun parts around him. Tools were also scattered amongst the metal and in his hands as he seemed to be very admint of the rearing the gun apart*


“Do I even need to mention how dangerous this is?” Sam questioned and Steve grunted. Bucky and Natasha seemed eerily calm. “I mean, Wilson is an adult! He should be taking these things away from-“

“Jones said that Wilson was the worst influence on Peter.” Tony grumbled, “I doubt that he’d take away his little toys.” he remarked with nonchelonce.

“Those aren’t toys, Tony, they’re weapons.” Steve said turning to the man with a disapproving stare. Tony just scoffed.

“What’s got there Pete?” Wade asked from behind the camera to the grumbling boy.

“crap.” Peter growled as he continued to disassemble the gun with his bare hands. He seemed pretty annoyed by it.

“I thought it was Hammer Tech.” Wade asked more than answered, nonetheless he seemed amused by Peter’s short reaction.

“That’s what I said.” Peter muttered as he hunched in on himself and concentrated more on the
weapon guts in front of him.

Tony scoffed. “See Cap. Even the kid knows it’s harmless.” Tony said and Steve growled but didn’t say anything more.

“Yeah, these things back fire.” Wade said with an air of indifference, Peter looked up with a bored look, Wanda gasped at the face “holy shit what happened to you?” Wade asked like he was trying to hold back a laugh, and Peter rolled his eyes. There was an enormous bruise on the side of his cheek and a cut running through it and over his little nose to his eyebrow. It was like a sharp object popped his face and ran down the side of it; it was horrid.

“The gun popped me in the face when I was cocking it.” Peter muttered in his shame to the other man. He was clearly embarrassed “I swear these thing are defective. Gimme your gun.” Peter said trying to mask his redness on his face by holding out a small hand expectantly.

“Don’t do it.” Clint muttered even though he knew what was about to happen.

“Hand gun or my grenade laincher?” Wade asked and Peter looked at him blandly. “Right all of them.” Wade handed it over, and Peter grabbed them and started to assemble and disassemble something at the same time. “Whatcha gonna do? Clean them vigoursly?” The kid slammed the gun on the wall behind him “woah, is this a temper tantrum? I didn’t think you were capable.” Wade joked, Peter didn’t raise to the bait and kept working.

“No, im gonna make a gun. One that doesn’t punch me.” Peter grumbled as he screwed two peices together and yanked another two apart.

“Okay yeah, but like what gave you the cut?” Wade asked, nonchelotly and Peter paused only for half a second, Natasha narrowed her eyes at the screen.

“The gun, I told you.” Peter said and he stiffened, clearly he was lying. He wasn’t as good at hiding things as older Peter was.

“Okay...so wanna truly the truth?” Wade asked, this time with more sterness but his cool never left his voice.

“No.” Peter responded shortly as he continued to look down instead of decidedly up at Wade to face him and the camera.

“Fair.” Wade let it go that easily -much to the Avengers chagrin - and shrugged. Peter finally finished to assemble a gun out of crap parts and held it up to shoot. He cocked it and smiled as he shot a cup and hit it dead center.

“No.” Peter responded shortly as he continued to look down instead of decidedly up at Wade to face him and the camera.

“Fair.” Wade let it go that easily -much to the Avengers chagrin - and shrugged. Peter finally finished to assemble a gun out of crap parts and held it up to shoot. He cocked it and smiled as he shot a cup and hit it dead center.

“Nice shot.” Clint breathed, only to be elbowed by Sam. “What? I may not approve of it, but I know talent when I see it.” Clint said in a voice of pride and a little approval. Bucky scoffed.

“Obviously. He’s my kid.” said the World War Two sniper, in fullblown pride, or at least as much as he’d allow to be shown. Natasha elbowed him.

“Success!” Wade cheered for him as Peter grimaced at the shot.

“Yeah.” he said blandly. “Success.” he didn’t seem too happy about it though.

*the video cut to Peter reading a book leaning against a rickity old cot, this time in long sleeves again too big for him and went over his hands as he read. Despite being in an odd position he looked rather content where he was.*
“Pete!” Wade said behind the shaky camera. The kid looked up from his book with a neutral face, for only a moment, flicking up his book to show the cover very briefly.

“Essence of Physics” Tony whistled, clearly impressed by the knowledge being displayed by the kid “nice”

“Shut up” Clint shushed and Tony put up his hands in mock surrender.

:>

“Why do I feel like I’m gonna regret this?” Peter cocked his head to the side and Wade groaned, Peter had an amused smile on his face.

“I haven’t said anything though!” Wade whined, Peter rolled his eyes at the older man’s silly antics.

“Still gonna regret it.” Peter threw back easily, settling into a more comfortable position with his book propped up nicely.

“Whatever.” Wade grumbled indigenously “do you know when your birthday is?” Wade asked obnoxiously loud. Peter paused in his reading and his smile fell.

Everyone held their breath.

“No, but it’s somewhere in August.” Peter mumbled as he averted his eyes and hugged the book closer to his chest. “You’re not gonna...why?” He whispered and Wade ignored the almost scared look the boy had on his face now.

“Well, it’s today!” Wade announced happily, Peter furrowed his brow.

“What?” Peter snapped up and looked at him with wide eyes, book forgotten on the floor as he stood. He looked scared not joyed, even a bit angered “how do you know that?” He narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

“I don’t.” Wade said back, and Peter hunched his shoulders from where they were wound up tightly and had a deadpanned look on his face “but every second Wednesday of August is now officially your birthday.” Wade declared and Peter did not look any more amused

“That’s not how birthdays work.” Peter deadpanned, and went to sit back down.

“It’s how yours works now.” Wade shot back and Peter rolled his eyes.

“Fine.” Peter sighed and went back to his book “Whatever, just don’t be weird about it.” he amended as he didn’t seem to give any more shits about the subject.

“Weird?!” Wade said in mock offense. Peter smirked up at him before returning to his book.

*the camera cut to later that night as Peter was sleeping on the floor curled up around his book in the darkness*

Wed. August 08, 2012 - 23:46:32

“Happy birthday Pete.”

*peter getting out of a gate at the airport. He was walking quickly down the isle and through the crowds of people to exit the large building. He was wearing normal cloths with a light jacket that*
still seemed to go over the palms of his hands and ripped old jeans. *

Fri. August 17, 2012- 12:57:59

“Okay, this is so dumb but Wade told me to do it.” Peter said more to himself then to the camera as he shakily held it up to face him. “Uhm...so he started this thing back at base, but I guess you already know that.” he spoke to the camera in a low voice, He looked around like he was nervous, like people were gonna judge him, even though vloggers were quite common in New York, and people have done much weirder things in the city than talk to themselves “do you think that people think I’m weird for addressing a metal box with a lens like it’s a person?” He asked the camera.

It didn’t respond.

“There isn’t anything for him to be embarrassed by.” Tony grumbled and crossed his arms “Kids do things like this all the time.” he commented.

“Yeah, but he’s not a normal kid.” Clint said and furrowed his brow “And he knows that too.” he said in a lower tone, it was obvious in the way Peter held himself that he knew he so obviously didn’t fit into any of the met criteria for other kids his age. It would make sense if he was questioning how he held himself and the things he did in comparison to others. He didn’t want to stand out, in neither good nor bad ways.

“Okay, cool. At least I won’t get judgment from it.” He grumbled more to himself than the camera again. It seemed like he was used to talking to himself anyway. “Anyway, Wade told me to like... talk? To this... I dunno, I think it’s dumb he says it’s sentimental or Whatever that means.” Peter grumbled to the camera this time. He sounded like a teenager being told to clean their rooms or do some other variety of chores.

“So I guess, I’m in an airport. I’m going to Queens but I think I gotta take the subway. I’m not so sure.” Peter narrated what was happening as he swiftly exited the building without going to baggage claim.

“Shouldn’t someone pick him up?” Bucky asked a bit with worry. Natasha bit her lip, not wanting to say out loud that someone probably didn’t care enough to pick him up. And it clearly happened before, as there was no hesitancy when Peter left the airport to go to the subway.

“I’m going to the library with MJ and Ned tomorrow! Maybe Ms.Karen will let me film in there. I think you’ll like them because they’re real good friends.” Peter smiles at the camera, as if it were a real person he was talking to. He walked down the street, with less restrictiveness in his voice and more confidence in how he held the camera, clearly getting the hang and used to it’s presence.

“Okay, Queens Blvd. Uhhmmm...” Peter mumbled to himself as he looked up at the street signs “I think... shoot I could’ve sworn it was... okay uhm maybe...” he went off to the side and then the camera cut to him going down a street.

“Okay, google maps saves all.” He claimed as there was a little of a phone showing in the peripherals of the camera where the app was pulled up.

“Is that the same phone he has right now?” Tony asked crossing his arms at the dino tech- even for that time period- being used by the young child.

“Older tech is harder to trace. It’s probably why they gave it to him.” Natasha informs swiftly “And it’s probably why he never upgraded.” she grumbled more to herself.

“Okay, I think I’m gonna be home soon. But I don’t wanna film that right now.” Peter smiled
down at the camera, despite the depressing shit he just said “this is fun. Maybe Wade was right... don’t tell him though” he holds up a finger to his mouth and the the camera goes black for a second.

*the camera cuts to two kids. One girl with brown wild hair and a plump Hawaiian boy in the library. The girl was looking for a book in the adult section and the boy was looking at the camera with wide intent eyes.*

Sat. August 18, 2012 - 14:24:56

“So your uncle is making you do like a video diary?” The boy asked tilting his head a bit in curiosity.

“Sorta.” Peter replies from behind the camera in a so-so manner.

“Uncle? Does he mean Wade?” Bruce asked with an inquisitive tone.

“He’s such a grandma.” The girl said with a bored tone not turning to address them.

“That’s what I said.” Peter replied in am agreeing tone.

“Apparently so.” Natasha said back and then smiled a little at what they called the previous soldier.

“But I dunno, it was fun when I got off the plane yesterday. Try it out.” He said and the girl rolled her eyes as He pointed the camera to the boy “come on, tell em your name Ned.” he coaxed the hesitant boy

“You just told them his name loser.” The girl said as Ned laughed out loud and Peter made an indigent noise.

“Oh shit you’re right.” the others didn’t seem to mind the profanity as Peter whirled the camera to the girl who turned around with a raised, unamused brow “That’s MJ.” Peter told the camera, because she clearly thought this was stupid.

“I’m capable of introducing myself.” MJ said to Peter behind the camera with a little huff.

“Yeah, but would you have.” Peter said back with a teasing tone and MJ rolled her eyes as she got back to her book.

“She hasn’t changed a bit.” Tony snickered to himself, it got no response but a few fond smiles.

“He has a point.” The camera whirled to Ned and Ned blushed and eeped as the spot light was suddenly on him now apparently.

“Come on guys, I wanna show Wade what you look like next summer.” Peter complained.

“What does he look like?” Ned asked inquisitively, Peter had a bit of trouble as he stumbled over incoherent words in trying to describe the man without giving anything away.

“Who cares.” MJ saved him from exposer “Have you read this one Parker?” She held up a thick book called Love and War. Defiantly not for eight year olds to read.

“Yeah, ending was a little wonky but overall well written.” Peter said anyway and MJ nodded as he continued his explanation as she opened the book to read the description for herself “I think the author was kinda trying to rush the ending.” Peter ended his report.
“I hate it when they do that.” MJ replied in a low tone that made Tony and Bruce laugh in agreement.

“I don’t get how you two can read that. I mean my mom can’t even read it and she is like 60.” Ned said and Peter tsked him.

“Don’t talk about a women’s age.” Peter tutted and Ned slapped his arm playfully.

“If it’s any reconciliation, your son has excellent manners.” Thor complimented Natasha and Bucky. “Very textbook.” he added, and Natasha and Bucky both wore small proud smiles.

“Okay Mr. my-mom-loves-you-more-than-her-own-child.” Ned said sarcastically, Peter slapped his arm playfully back as he smiled and presumably so did Peter.

“She does- she does not!” Peter stuttered and you could tell he blushed behind the camera.

“Does too. She always asked me to act more like Peter because Peter is so polite.” He mocked her high voice and waved his hand in a frilly girly gesture.

“She was kidding.” Peter mumbled and Ned came toward the camera and put his hand on the camera man’s shoulder.

“Hey Pete. I was kidding.” He said seriously, as if he knew what was going through Peter’s head, which he probably did.

“O-oh.” Peter stuttered timidly.

“Learn to lighten up.” Ned smiled boldly at the camera.

“Yeah, right sorry.” The camera went static as MJ threw a book at him.

*camera cuts to Peter propping up the camera against something and going back to reveal MJ sitting across from him and Ned in a Lunch Room. He was wearing some old atty hoodie and jeans and MJ and Ned were wearing similar apparel*

Mon. September 03, 2012 - 12:36:15

“Really Parker?” she asked to him with an eye quirked up at the boy and a quick glance at the camera showed what she was unsure about.

“What, first day of school is important. Right?” Peter asked innocently. Ned shrugged holding his sandwich and taking a bite, looking indifferent to MJ’s apprehensiveness.

“Not really.” he said with a little of the sandwich in his mouth he swallowed it before continuing at MJ’s glare. “It’s just Third Grade.” he said to him trying to remain casual under the scrutinizing stare, taking MJ’s side more out of fear now. MJ rolled her eyes and slid a bag of baby carrots toward Peter wordlessly and Ned slid him a cookie that was still in the ziplock after taking one for himself and some grapes. Peter took the carrots graciously, as if it were natural. He didn’t even hesitate.

“They were really good friends.” Thor mumbled, at the notice of the lack of food in front of Peter during mealtime. On Asgard the offer of food was a sign of accommodation and friendship. When you shared a meal with a person it was usually to either celebrate or discuss something of great importance, when someone gave you food of their own free will it was a sign that your friendship is strong.
“FRI remind me to give them a raise.” Tony whispered to FRIDAY, as if he weren’t already going to do that with all the help they’ve given them when it came to Peter Parker, even if they didn’t know it.

“Done sir.” she confirmed and Tony nodded in satisfaction, everyone else didn’t comment but approved nonetheless.

“If anything, you are filming our steady demise.” MJ said on screen in a bland tone to Peter, who didn’t pay any mind to her warning.

“Aww Em, come on school ain’t that bad.” Peter said jokingly, with an easygoing smile. MJ just scoffed at his insouciance.

“Wait, ‘Em’? I just heard him right? He called her ‘Em’ and she didn’t kill him.” Tony gawked, clearly astounded. MJ raarley ever let anyone call her ‘MJ’ much less an even shorter version of her name. It was suicide to even say that without explicit permission

“They must be really really good friends.” Thor asked confused at the nickname given. They did seem like very close friends, MJ even seemed concerned for Peter at times in the video.

“Yeah, but Ned doesn’t call her ‘Em’.” Tony said and they were both shushed, before the conversation could continue, to which Tony glared at, clearly not done with his rant but he shut up anyway.

“Speak for yourself.” She said and went back to eating her soup in her own isolated way, which didn’t seem so isolated now that she was with both Peter and Ned.

“It’s not that bad, the classes are nice enough.” Ned agreed, with Peter, clearly trying to remain the neutral party. “It’s just-” Ned was cut off by a rude intrusive voice.

“What up, retards!” a boy with a sleazy haircut and over expensive cloths slammed his tray on their table making Ned jump and Peter and MJ just look at him with quirked brows. Ned shifted so that the camera could catch everything, but hidden from the new arrival.

“Hey Flash, how was your summer?” Peter drawled boredly, leaning against the table with his elbow, remaining casual even if there was some hesitancy in his voice -clearly he wasn’t used to being this nonchelont around other people, something he had perfected in his Spiderman persona. Flash didn’t seem to notice the camera.

“Wait Flash? Harley’s complained about that guy before.” Tony said pointing to the screen, and his eyes narrowed into a glare. “Says he’s an idiot whose parents pay for everything so get gets away with anything.” Tony rolls his eyes. He had enough money to drown Harley and to let him get away with murder twice over. But he wouldn’t. He knew the value of letting his son get in trouble when need be. But that was for Tony to decide what he got in trouble for and what the intentions were behind the actions. He trusted Harley to tell him the truth if the need arises.

“He’s a bully.” Steve grumbled, clearly not taking well to the obvious douchebag on the screen.

“How will the great Spiderman handle it?” Sam drawled, clearly bored and knowing of the outcome that would most likely happen.

“The kid’s not spiderman yet.” Clint said back, obviously less confident in Peter’s ability to stand up for himself.

“Yeah, but like, he’s in special forces. He can take this guy.” Sam said back, not getting Clint’s
lack of impassiveness at the rather common and petty situation.

“Just shut up and watch you idiots.” Wanda growled to them and they all turned to the screen with board straight postures, not wanting to anger the witch anymore.

“It was fucking amazing. Unlike your broke ass we went to Cancun.” Flash bragged with a smirk. Making everyone on and off screen roll their eyes at the obvious flex. “You couldn’t afford that even if you used your college savings.” Flash said in an insufferable tone.

“Well I hope you didn’t get Malaria.” Peter said to him easily. That made both Tony and Clint sit up a little in curiosity, as Flash’s face went a bit pale but he stuck up his nose like the entitled prick he was.

“What the fuck are you talking about?” Flash spat at him.

“What is up with these children and cursing?” Steve mumbled unbelievably, clearly disturbed at their lack of verbal filter. Tony scoffed but didn’t say anything to that.

“Malaria. It’s a forgin diseases. It’s real big in tropical places like Bahamas and Cancun. There was a huge epidemic in Xcaret just this past July. You didn’t hear about it?” Flash paled at the obvious lie, he really was dull. Peter looked at him with a mischievous glint in his eyes. “You didn’t?” he asked with a fake raised brow and mock concern. “Well I hope you got your vaccines, because Malaria is rough buddy. Can kill people in less than two months.” Peter listed off some other symptoms to which Flash got paler and paler to “It ends with a slow and painful death.” he finished off with a smug smirk. Flash then dropped his tray and ran out as Peter looked satisfied and snickered to himself.

“I thought Malaria was only in Africa now.” Ned asked a little worried about the transmission of the easily contractable disease and MJ smirked, getting what Peter did, he smiled back at her.

“It is.” she said with a hint of pride and admiration to what Peter had done.

“But Peter said...oh” Ned smiled getting it and smiling with them.

“Devious little shit.” Clint mumbled with a little smirk on his face as well.

“Told you there was nothing to worry about.” Sam gaffawked at Peter’s little white lie. “He can handle a bully.” he reassured.

“Without even raising a hand.” Steve whistled, clearly impressed. In the 40’s all that mattered was you strength not you wits. And Peter kept his perfectly maintained throughout the whole ordeal.

“Nice work Parker.” MJ high five the boy over the table a huge smile on his face.

*the camera cut to Peter and Ned sitting on the floor of a living room in front of a couch and blankets and pillows around them with all sorts of junk food bags wedged in their sides. The star wars theme was playing in the back ground. Peter was in an oversized hoodie and sweatpants, as was Ned.*

Sat. October 13, 2012 - 22:51:45

“Peter?” Ned asked as the beginning credits to episode II started to roll in the background.

“Yeah?” Peter hummed up at him without looking at Ned and focusing on the screen. Ned turned toward him to get a more clear view of him.
“I’ve got a question about,” Ned gestured to the camera and Peter looked at it then at Ned with a confused ruffle coming into his brow. “I just don’t understand why you do it.” Ned said rather politely and Peter sighed, like he’s been asked this before, but answered the question nonetheless.

“Over the summer my...uh uncle got me into vlogging and filming and stuff.” Peter explained quickly with a shrug.

“Your uncle Wade?” Ned asked. Peter stiffened but still nodded

“So they did use family visit as a cover up to Peter going into the army.” Steve clarified and Bucky nodded once before focusing his full attention back to the screen.

“He isn’t like Ben is he?” he asked a little more apprehensive, Peter looked clearly uncomfortable at the comparison. Natasha narrowed her eyes at the screen, gears turning in her own head.

“No, not at all. He’s a little … weird though.” Peter continued on, trying not to look so bothered by it. Ned clearly saw through that. “He’s from Canada.” he tried to switch the subject subtly.

“Ahh that explains it.” Ned said with a small smile making Peter laugh. “You said you were from Russia?” Ned asked conversationally, Peter stiffened up a little again, but Ned didn’t notice that too much.

“Uh yeah. I was born in Russia.” Peter continued a little quieter, more hesitant. He didn’t know where the line of secrecy was here, clearly. He must have had a cover story for it, but he didn’t know what to say and not say beyond that. Whatever he did say had to keep in consistency with everything else he was lying about. He was lying to his best friend about a very important and big chunk in his life, there could be no mistakes or gaps.

“Yeah, but your parents named you Peter. That’s more American than Russian.” Ned said to him offhandedly, clearly not where anyone was seeing this conversation leading to.

“Yeah it is...” Peter mumbled, trying to figure something out in his little head that was believable enough. “My parents... well I didn’t know them, I was adopted by an American couple. My real name is.. Pytor.” Peter said hesitantly as his eyes flashed up to Ned for a reaction then quickly averted downwards in something akin shame or embarrassment.

“Yeah, but your parents named you Peter. That’s more American than Russian.” Ned said to him offhandedly, clearly not where anyone was seeing this conversation leading to.

“Yeah it is...” Peter mumbled, trying to figure something out in his little head that was believable enough. “My parents... well I didn’t know them, I was adopted by an American couple. My real name is.. Pytor.” Peter said hesitantly as his eyes flashed up to Ned for a reaction then quickly averted downwards in something akin shame or embarrassment.

“So he did know his real name.” Natasha mumbled, thinking of how weird it must’ve been for Peter to hear his own name being said and asked for, even when he didn’t know it was him. Thinking that if he were the person with that same name, then he’d be wanted and he’d be special enough to be tracked down through every grain of sand just to be found by his parents. She couldn’t even imagine how that must’ve felt to Peter.

“He must’ve not been called by that name in what… 10 years now?” Bucky mumbled into her shoulder and Natasha felt that sinking feeling she felt when Peter looked her in the eyes and handed her the ancient book as a seal of confirmation that he was indeed their son.

Ned’s eyes softened. “Did they make you change it?” Ned asked in a quiet comforting voice, putting a hand on Peter’s shoulder in an attempt for condolences. Peter shook his head, but didn’t pull away.

“They said my name correctly, but it sounded... weird with their American accents.” Peter said with his brow furrowed and then smiled a little “Mary always said it right though.” Peter mumbled. “She had a pretty accent...just like-” Peter cut himself off by shaking his head with a fond smile on his face.
“Then why’d you change it?” Ned asked, Peter shrugged quickly. “And why’d you pick Peter?” Ned pressed on.

“It’s easier to say in American.” Peter shrugged, trying to be casual about it.

Bucky sat straight up.

“Kras?” Natasha asked softly, shifting so she could look at her partner.

“I told him that.” Bucky whispered to himself. Natasha only put her hand on his arm and rubbed up and down in a gesture of comfort. Bucky remembered telling Peter in the room that it was easier to say Peter than Petya or Pytor. He remembered the voices, he didn’t remember the faces.

But he still remembered.

“Yeah, but like why Peter?” Ned asked again and then Peter smiled at him with a dorky smile, trying to cover up the slight hurt that was in his eyes by closing them a little.

“Cuz I liked it.” Peter said and Ned gave him a look and Peter gave in and sighed “Okay, there was this man in the...uhm orphanage I guess. He was American, and he went out to do...errands sometimes, but the errands would run long and sometimes go on for months.”

Bucky stiffened. He knew what this was. Peter was describing him now to his friend.

“Is he talking about you Buck?” Steve whispered from the other side of him. Bucky didn’t respond, drinking in the scene in front of him.

Ned was drinking this all in. “Well you look invested.” Peter joked and Ned rolled his eyes and slapped him on the arm playfully.

“You never talk about this kind of stuff, and as your best friend I need to know. Now spill.” Ned said, getting in a more attentive position to listen and Peter laughed.

“Okay, wanna take notes” Peter joked and Ned groaned and Peter laughed briefly before thinking a little and continuing more seriously “So the guy, he had...amnesia? It was kind of weird, he’d forget about me sometimes.” Peter mumbled a little sadly.

“Was he your friend?” Ned asked with a curious tint in his tone. Peter hesitated at the innocent question, but only for a second.

“Sort of, the closest thing I had to one at the time, actually.” Peter said looking up as if he was just realizing that for the first time “The people at the orphanage were...mean. There weren’t any boys there, but a couple of girls. I didn’t see them often only when we had to...uhm… “ he trailed off and quickly picked up on the story again so Ned couldn’t ask any questions about it. “Anyway, he was nice when he remembered me.” Peter smiled a sad but fond smile. Bucky felt his heart constrict when he saw it. “It wasn’t ever his fault when he couldn’t though.” Peter acknowledged. Natasha’s hand squeezed Bucky’s shoulder in comfort, telling him that Peter was right. It wasn’t Bucky’s fault that he couldn’t remember. It was those bastards at HYDRA.

“So, he gave you the name?” Ned asked for clarification.

“Kind of, well yeah. People who liked me called me Petya. But he called me Peter, because it was easier to say in English. I liked it so I went with it when I came to America.” Peter explained much easier than he said the story.
“So your real name is Petya?” Ned asked and he said it horribly wrong making Peter laugh.

“Pytor, but I wouldn’t attempt that if I were you.” Peter said jokingly and Ned rolled his eyes and scrunched his nose a little in irritation.

“Yeah, I see why you changed your name.” he grumbled and Peter put a hand on his shoulder.

“It isn’t that hard to say.” Natasha grumbled as his huffed a little in her pride. Bucky chuckled a little, but it was watery and forced out. Natasha’s eyes softened at her partner

“It’s okay.” he said with a big, nearly fake smile.

“What happened to the guy after you left?” Ned asked and Peter’s smile dropped off his face as he fidgeted with the blankets that surrounded them, their movie long forgotten by this point (but they had probably watched it over 45 times by this point anyway).

“Uhm, I’m not quite sure. One day he just…” Peter trailed off and looked forward with dazed hollow eyes. They were too far off.

“I left.” Bucky muttered to himself, finishing what Peter was going to say. A surge of guilt welled up in his chest for leaving a kid- his son- in that terrible place with those god awful people. Guilt of not remembering the small child in the white room and not going back for him. If he had, then maybe their family wouldn’t have been this torn apart. If he had, then maybe Peter wouldn’t have to see the trials of war that Bucky once had to face. If he had, then maybe Peter could be happier in a place with no dreadful silences or paranoia or having to let go of everything he’s ever loved.

He knew that it wasn’t possible for half of those things by this point, but still, Bucky’s mind couldn’t help but tell him that it could be. Maybe.

“Pete?” Ned asked waving his hand in front of his friends face.

“Left…” Peter finished, not really paying attention to the hand, or the movie or anything. Hiis voice sounded far away, like he wasn’t even there anymore. “He left...and then a year later Mary...adopted me and then she had to go too…” Peter didn’t have any tears in his eyes, his voice just sounded hollow. There was no sadness, just emptiness.

It was worse hearing nothing than sadness from a child this young.

“Man I’m sorry Peter.” Ned’s touch seemed to snap Peter out of it. Because he blinked and then looked at Ned with curious eyes, as if he didn’t know where he was, or somehow forgot.

“It’s okay.” Peter said quickly with a strained smile but Ned didn’t let go of Peter anyway. “I mean, it sucks that their...not here, but...yeah.” Peter finished off lamely, Never one for sentiment - at least that hasn’t changed - but Ned got what Peter was saying and smiled. There was silence for a while and Star Wars played in the background, but it wasn’t being paid any attention to.

“Hey, if your from Russia, does that mean you can speak Russian?” Ned asked as a more light topic, hopefully.

“Да, наряду со многими другими. Но вы этого не узнаете, потому что не знаете, что я говорю.” (Yes, along with many others. But you won’t know that because you don’t know what I’m saying.) Peter smirked, Ned smiled as his plan clearly worked and Peter chuckled at his innocent wonder.

“Cool!” Ned replied with starry eyes.
“Buck.” Steve said in attempt to comfort him.

“I should’ve remembered him.” Bucky scolded himself through gritted teeth. “Even if I didn’t
 know he was mine, he was still a child I just-”

“Hey.” Natasha slapped his arm, harder than it was to be considered playful “It. Was. Not. Your.
 Fault.” she said sternly and made him look her in her steely, determined eyes.

“Yeah but if I-” Bucky averted his eyes but she guided his face back to her’s to look into her grey pools again.

“But nothing. I don’t blame you. They don’t blame you. Not even Peter blames you, he said it
 himself. You couldn’t control it. It was those HYDRA bastards, and he knew that too.” Natasha
 said firmly and Bucky sighed, clearly knowing he wasn’t winning this battle.

“It still doesn’t stop it from being any less terrible.” Bucky muttered. Natasha didn’t say anything,
 because she knew that was true.

The next scene played.

*the camera cuts to Peter and MJ reading on a couch. The background is filled with books on
 shelves and pile a mile high on either side of them , and they are in the kids section in the library
 with various books stacked high on the ground, clearly brought from the adult section. Peter is
 leaning on the side of the couch and MJ is sprawled out with her head on Peter’s stomach/lap. MJ
 is reading a book called ‘The Colour Purple’ by Alice Walker and Peter is reading a thick book full
 of Stark Industries Theories and Scientific and Technological discoveries.*

Thurs. November 22, 2012- 19:56:09

“Hey isn’t that your book Tony?” Bruce asked amused to a nonchalant looking Tony, as his books
 were on full display in a young peter Parker’s hands.

“Yeah, it has copies of old manuscripts and inventions that we’ve created. How it works and the
 likes. Basically the history behind my genius. And my dad’s.” Tony mumbled the last part, but
 clearly he was impressed and wanted to show off that yes, his family did create books for the
 public to be more knowledgeable. Weather they actually understood them or not was a different
 matter entirly.

“And how old do you have to be to read those again?” Bruce asked with a smirk, trying to get a rise
 out of Tony as a literal 8 year old was in the process of picking apart one of his books.

“Any age Banner, but you have to have at least one PhD to even understand an eighth of anything
 in that.” Tony scoffed, as they have yet to see weather Parker even understands this book at this
 age yet. They know Peter understood it when he is 16 at least but Peter at age 16 also has two
 PhDs as far as either of them knows (he probably has more or if he doesn’t, the ability to obtain
 more through SHIELD’s obscure methods. Maybe his MD too, if he so pleasures. The kid could
 really go the height he wanted to at this point).

“Hey, wanna read a fictional book. It’s been a while.” MJ asked naturally, clearly in her element,
 and Peter hummed in denial, not looking too out of place either. “You sure, because I feel like
 reality is messing with your head.” MJ said to her noncommittal friend.

“This shouldn’t be real.” Peter mumbled and MJ snorted without looking up. “I’m serious, this
 stuff is years too advanced for the 40s.” Peter said to the girl as he scrunched his nose and pulled
 the book away, skimming it through again as if a different angle would change the words.
“See.” Tony scoffed “At least one PhD.” he smirked at the screen. He really shouldn’t be so smug though. An eight year old was comprehending the book so far, better than most adults would.

“How many mistakes did you find in this one?” MJ asked and Peter made a little noise of complaint.

“Says Starks don’t make mistakes.” Peter said with a little furrow of his brow.

“Damn, right we don’t.” Tony huffed and puffed out his chest, a little feeling sunk to the bottom of his stomach though.

“So…” MJ prompted uninterestedly, still not putting down her book.

“Kay, so the only reason why Howard Stark couldn’t create clean energy was because he was ionizing electrons. Tony Stark took the approach to scrap his dad’s entire theory and just create clean energy through Gamma rays, which is completely insane, and everyone in the science community would know it. If he just ionzide neutrons he would’ve done it faster and more effecently.” Peter started to explain quickly and in a rush. But it was clear his ramble couldn’t be stopped. Tony paled a bit, because he knew exactly where this was going.

“You always did like chemistry.” MJ hummed as if this was natural to have her friend ramble off into the distance through science that couldn’t be comprehended by the average genius.

“It’s not just that. Gamma Radiation is an obtrusive term, sure Gamma Rays are super cool and super helpful, but with how people have been using it, it makes it sound bad. It’s not, but to people who don’t know anything about science, they’d think it’ll cause cancer or something. If he ionized the neutrons, it would be a more friendly term. SO it’s also bad for his marketing system. Sure he’s gettin more money, but like he lost a lot of consumers and in the long run, less people will be using clean energy. I don’t think he wanted money, but to make the earth cleaner and shit because he has a shit ton of money already so his plan kind of flopped. Even if it is safe to use.” Peter pattered on and MJ hummed.

Tony was floored. “But I…” he had no words, as Bruce snickered at the criticism of the eighth year old getting to his genius friend.

“At least one PhD.” Bruce said in a mockingly high tone “He’s eight.” he said with an amused smile and a shake of his head

“He’s a genius.” Tony defended himself and pointed to the screen, clearly offended and Bruce gave out a good natured laugh.

“He’s in third grade.” Bruce reminded with a smirk and smug eyebrow. Tony crossed his arms like a child and pouted in his seat.

“Well, I kinda… uhm Dr.Banner made some good points but…” Peter held up the science journal for Dr.Banner’s research and medical applications for Destilled Gamma Radiation.

“Okay, you were also looking at Doctor Banner’s theory. I thought you were gonna use his research on your science project for the science fair. That’s why we came here to begain with. And now I find you were goofing off and disproving theories about an egotisical billionaire.” MJ scolded her incredibly smart friend, who had the decency to look a bit bashful.

“I was, I just got distracted.” Peter mumbled and averted his eyes off to the side.

“Okay, talk to me. What have you got?”

“Well, I kinda… uhm Dr.Banner made some good points but…”
“Oh this should be good.” Tony leaned forward with a giddy smile on his face.

“Please, he might be able to disprove your theories at his age, but he was reading my Medical Gamma Radiation works. Those are my life’s work.” Bruce said a bit pridefully, crossing his arms, so reassured that an eight year old couldn’t grasp the complex concepts of Gamma Radiation.

“The application that Dr.Banner used in this theory would be better used for prosthetics, not microsurgery.” Peter said and MJ dropped her book and held out her hand as Peter handed the book he had gotten the theory from, to her. Bruce’s stomach dropped in a the similar way that Tony’s did.

“He ionized it to cancel bacteria and viruses. It is a step toward curing cancer.” MJ said Bruce was impressed that MJ got it too, because clearly she was invested in what Peter was explaining on an intellectual level.

“Yeah, but if he ionized it and made it into something like a UV scanner he could re-energize damaged and dead cells. If destilled properly, of course. But then doctors wouldn’t need to amputate people’s limbs and they could stitch on the unattached limbs before they reignite the dead cells.” Peter explained. Bruce’s mouth dropped open.

“Reignite?” MJ continued, Bruce was completely speechless. Why hadn’t he thought of that? An eight year old could think like that, so why hadn’t he?

“Think of it like wires.” Peter continued, “When you cut off a limb you cut the wires to the main circuit. But when you solder those wires again, the circuit works again.”

“So basically, he could’ve saved millions of lives instead of making a small breakthrough on the road to curing cancer.” MJ put in a flat tone, getting what she needed to get and now she seemed bored.

“He could’ve done both.” Peter mumbled. “Science isn’t just applicable in one way.” Peter remined and MJ made a noise of affirmation ad the got back to her book, not paying any mind to what Peter had to say, and Peter got back to his own independent study.

“Sorry, did the kid just disprove your life’s work?” Tony asked smugly, leaning towards a bashful and embarassed Gamma radiation genius.

“He’s a genius.” Bruce defended weakly back and Tony let a playful glint come into his eye.

“He’s eight.” Tony repeated as he smirked back. Before Bruce could retort the elevators dinged and in walked a poised and casually dressed Pepper Potts entered. Even though she was in comfortable cloths and a pony tail, she some how looked professional, but it could just be the constant warm and welcoming aura she gave off. It’s why Tony loved her so much. She was powerful and kind.

“What’s going on in here?” Pepper asked as she walked in, her slippers padding on the clean marble floor as she made her way over to the group and inspected the situation around her.

“We’re watching Tony and Bruce get science owned to them by an eigth year old.” Clint snickered as Bruce and Tony glared at him and Pepper chuckled.

“May I?” she asked to join, and Tony patted the spot next to him.

“Be my guest.” he answered as she sat down next to him as the next scene played.
camera cuts to a Peter holding up the camera to show Ned and MJ on either side of him but not fully. They were dressed up in knitted winter hats and beanies, worn coats with some small tears in the jacket and beanies but nothing too intrusive to the cold and then some hoodies peeking out underneath. Snow was in their hair and flaking their clothing and their noses were nipped slightly with a red ting to their cheeks and the tips of their ears. They were in a crowded sidewalk area of New York City*

Fri. December 21, 2012- 12:54:16

“I hate Christmas.” MJ mumbled, her voice muffled by the crowd around her, but still could be picked up by the camera through the coming and fading voices of the random strangers that passed by.

“Aww you’re just a big ol’ Grinch. No one can hate Christmas.” Ned said cheerfully and MJ huffed. They couldn’t have more different auras about, supposedly the holidays. Pepper giggled at seeing her intern as such a young individual. Noting that not much has changed about her, on the surface level at least.

“You just hate crowds.” Peter said placatingly, he seemed to be the neutral man through the showing of holiday spirit. Rather indifferent to it. Still he had a small smile adorning his face.

“And Christmas, brings crowds of tourists and shoppers out from their little dirtholes.” MJ muttered grudgingly. “Therefore, I hate Christmas.” she declared to them and Peter chuckled a little as Ned blanched a bit.

“Conditional statement, you can’t get out of this one Ned.” Peter said in mock apology as Ned groaned at the geometry pick that Peter made.

“Hey, aren’t you Russian?” MJ asked Peter and Peter nodded stiffly. Natasha couldn’t help but notice that everytime his heritage came up, Peter always got nervous or embarassed or fidgety. She couldn’t tell if it was because he had a cover to maintain, or if he just didn’t take pride in his heritage like she thought he might’ve “Don’t Russians celebrate Hannakah?” MJ said tonelessly continuing on.

“Yeah, I guess cause their Jewish. But I just don’t celebrate the holidays.” Peter shrugged in a casual manner, that didn’t seem like he was hiding anything.

“So shouldn’t Christmas be an annoyance to you too?” MJ asked in more of a groan, which neither Tony nor Pepper had heard from her yet, but it seemed like eight year old MJ was surprising them all.

“Unlike you, MJ,” Peter said sweetly “I don’t hate it when people are happy.” he gave her a mocking smile to prove her point and MJ groaned and rolled her eyes as he laughed at her slight misery.

*the camera cuts to MJ yelling at a lady in the department store across the counter and Ned crouched behind the counter next to her legs looking like he’s going to have a panic attack*


MJ is just yelling at the girl who looks more and more terrified by the eight year old who is tearing down her entire management position. She was arguing about some prices that were supposed to be on clearance by now and how the girl was scamming them out of proper savings. And that they were eight.
“She is certainly a force to be reckoned with.” Tony mumbled and Pepper chuckled a little as she looked at the screen.

“Why do you think I hired her?” she said calmly and Tony paled only slightly.

The girl behind the counter reached for the speaker. “Uhm, would a mother who has lost two children come to register 8-” she attempted to get out of the massive scolding, it seemed to only fuel MJ’s little eight year old rage-fest.

“Oh, honey! You can’t even count correctly. You see that dork holding the camera, yeah, he’s with us. And we are responsible enough to go out on our own. And you know what. Everyone who works here is incompetent anyway.” she yelled out, She grabbed Ned and dragged him out of the store as Peter followed closely behind with his camera.

“But my mom said I had to get a gift for Katie!” he said meekly as Peter followed her with the camera swiftly.

“You can’t afford that toy for Katie, come on we’ll find another one Leeds.” MJ argued and compromised, Ned huffed and looked a little sad that he couldn’t get the first toy he picked for his little sister, but mostly terrified as MJ grumbled darkly about stupid retailers and their overpriced stocks and the reason why she hated Christmas was for this reason and many more.

“That girl is terrifying.” Clint mumbled and Tony and Sam both nodded their heads in silent agreement.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned walking out of a store with a large plastic bag and a big smile on Ned’s face as Peter looked on in both fondness and amusement.*

Fri. December 21, 2012- 14:59:13

“I don’t understand why I couldn’t come in.” MJ grumbled clearly sounding her disappointment on not being included, as she pointed the camera to Peter who rolled his eyes.

“Because,” Peter emphasized the word “you’ve yelled at every single cashier that we’ve come across.” Peter said with a small bit of irritation and a whole lot more amusement in his tone. Ned just rolled his eyes in pure annoyance.

“Whatever.” MJ mumbled, not paying any mind to Ned’s clear disapproval of her behaviour.

“You think Peter could reign her in?” Tony asked the question rhetorical.

“I don’t think Peter would stop her for any old reason, and that’s probably why she would listen to him.” Pepper commented lightly as she stroked her hands through Tony’s hair lightly. “The boy is reasonable, I think that’s why Michelle respects his opinion.” she said calmly, like she normally does.

“But do you think he’s scared of her?” Clint asked out loud.

“Oh most definitely.” Wanda, Natasha and Pepper said all together. The boy did have sense, afterall. A a good dose of fear was healthy to any man’s pride.

*camera cuts to Peter and MJ walking in central park while the trees are hanging over them and they were stringed with christmas lights that gave a soft glow, like falling stars that got trapped within the branches. The sun is nearly all the way down and a light purple is colouring the sky, bleeding through until black.*
“I’m not scary.” MJ said on the screen.

“You aren’t scary, but you come off as a little... cold sometimes.” Peter offered back gently and MJ huffed and crossed her arms. There was still some insecurity in her eyes, that was slightly blocked by a steely lock.

“This is New York, people have to grow a pair.” she said back almost defensively, like a child - which she was - and Peter laughed nervously. Then there was a woman who came by with four dogs and Peter’s eyes instantly widened as his eyes traveled toward the dogs. MJ had a look of astonishment and disgust on her face at being ignored by the younger boy.

“Parker!” she said to get his attention but he just ran over to the lady, clearly distracted by the creatures that passed him.

“He has an attention span on a bug.” Wanda grumbled and Thor laughed.

“Did Fury not mention he adores these creatures before. I have to say I find them quite appealing as well.” Thor commented and Wanda rolled her eyes.

“Men.” she scoffed and slumped in her chair, Thor shrugged her off.

“Can I pet your dogs?” He asked eagerly to the woman and she just nodded in her surprise at the energetic 8 year old who was bouncing eagerly in front of her. He smiled as MJ came over to Ned’s side.

“Unbelievable.” she mumbled to her other friend. Peter crouched down and let the dogs sniff and lick him as he scratched behind their ears and under their necks and found all their soft spots within .295 seconds. “He’s too shy to show anyone a discovery that could revolutionize the world, but he’ll shamelessly drop everything to ask any stranger in the world to pet their mutt?” MJ said incredulously, Ned just chuckled fondly behind the camera.

“Baby steps.” Ned said back to her as the dogs began to tackle the laughing child.

“You know, I kinda ship them.” Tony whispered out loud “Peter and Michelle,” he clarified, only to be glared at by Natasha and Bucky and whacked by Pepper lightly at the sort of inappropriate comment. They were only eight in this after all.

“This isn’t a sitcom,romcom nonsense, Stark.” Sam whispered back, silently agreeing with Pepper who nodded her head in affirmation.

“You’re right. It has too much plot and anguish and heartbreak to be a sitcom. I think of it as a heartbreaking/warming prequel to a bigger story.” Tony said in emphasis, clearly not getting the point to shut up.

“You mean like Star Wars?” Clint asked, joining in and adding to the annoyance level of the other half of the Avengers.

“No, this would sell out in a heartbeat. It has romance and angst and comedy. Characterization and plot is amazing. And it’s just harder to watch because you know what happens after this entire thing is over, but you are still on the edge of your seat because you wonder how it all went to shit for this kid.” Tony dramatised, and everyone blinked at the constructive review for some home movies made by a elementary schooler.
“Tony.” Steve said seriously.

“Yeah, Cap?” Tony asked innocently.

“Shut the fuck up.” he said in a flat tone.

“On it.” Tony said making a zipping lips motion.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned in casual hoodies and jeans, with legos scattered out around the table in the library. The legos were organized into specific piles, and within those piles half of them were organized by piece whilst the other laid in messy mixed piles. Ned was building something while Peter was looking at the instructions for the structure in front of them.*


“I can’t believe you got the Millenium Falcon for Christmas, dude!” Peter mumbled in awe and excitement. A glint of childish wonder was swimming in his eyes.

“Yeah, well my mom said that she probably couldn’t afford something this big for a long while. But it’s totally worth it to build this now!” Ned said happily, despite the fact that he might not be getting anything extravagant for a long while.

“It’s nice to know these kids aren’t spoiled.” Wanda said with a small smile. She and Pietro grew up impoverished, not even enough money to go to school because unlike America, school cost money that Wanda’s family didn’t have in Sokovia. When she came to america and saw all the rich and middle class snobs who spent money filmisily and the brats who cried about not getting an expensive toy or being bored with it after a day, she could hardly believe it. She would never take anything for granted if given to her, and she knew she was lucky enough to end up living with Stark, where she could get virtually anything. But when she thought of the sacrifices she went through to even be here, she would gladly trade Stark for her old impoverished life with her parents and brother.

Peter reminded Wanda of Pietro in that way. Peter and Ned didn’t take this for granted, they didn’t take their money or gifts or life for granted. Especially Peter, with how his life was going in the films, she knew he cherished these moments more than his glory in war or as Spiderman.

He understood.

“Okay, I’ll build the shaft next.” Peter mumbled as he looked at the pieces and Ned plucked the instructions from his hands and furrowed his brows.

“No, build the cockpit.” Ned bit his lip as he spoke and Peter didn’t look up from what he was doing so he didn’t notice Ned’s apprehensive face.

“But the cockpit goes on the shaft.” Peter said in reasonability as he sorted through the pieces and Ned glanced at the pieces of legos a little worriedly.

“Yeah, so we’ll attach the two of them later.” Ned chuckled nervously as Peter brought two pieces together, but didn’t connect them yet.

“But then it’ll be harder to get the things under the shaft completed, let’s just build the cockpit on the shaft when it’s done.” Peter reasoned and looked up with furrowed brows, sensing something off with his building partner.

“Do you think they know what their saying?” Clint asked as he giggled imaturly, only Tony found
his humor somewhat funny, but definitely unclassy. Especially since they were only eight.

“No, they’re too innocent to know that.” Sam snickered along with him anyways.

“Oh, that makes sense.” Ned mumbled a little put out, somewhat disappointed but not seeming to want to fight on it. Peter studied him for a second before he put down the pieces with an amused and fond smile.

“You wanna build the shaft.” Peter said with a knowing smirk and Ned squirmed a bit under his friend’s playful gaze.

“Yeah, but I still have the skeleton of the rafters to complete…” Ned held up his unfinished task and Peter looked at the instructions again and then held out his hand for him to give the project to.

“Oh, I’ll build the back wings. We’ll attach them later.” Peter amended and Ned suddenly squeezed Peter in a hug, Peter stiffened a little in surprise and Ned pulled away just as quickly as he came in.

“Sorry, you’re just the best friend EVER!” Ned enunciated with a wide gesture of his hands and went back to building, but Peter still stood frozen in shock at the hug. Then something broke him out of his trance and he bit his lip before hugging Ned gently as if to test it out. Ned blinked in confusion down at the other boy and Peter was about to scurry back at lack of response but Ned trapped him in another hug, this one he relaxed into as he closed his eyes and smiled a little.

“Awww.” Sam cooed. “His first hug.” he said teasingly. Wanda looked on a little fondly, as did the rest of the Avengers. Bucky and Natasha was just glad this moment was captured.

“Stark was right, the bromance is really kicking in.” Clint mumbled, and Tony made an affirmative sound as if saying he was right.

“How did he ever let that kind of relationship go.” Steve mumbled, dumbfounded in the amount of control and decision it must’ve been for Peter to make the decision of never seeing his loved ones again. The amount of discipline and understanding a child had to comprehend that most adults normally didn’t even have to think about. There was remorseful silence.

“With immense difficulty.” Wanda whispered sadly into the small silence, cutting it with her words.

“Yeah but why would Peter let that kind of relationship go?” Thor asked with his brows furrowed in confusion and compunction, they didn’t understand just how much Peter had felt their own pains. They had lost things that would be irreplaceable and unforgettable. They figured, when they had first met the young lad, that he hadn’t felt the same pain they had. That, because he hadn’t, it would make him reckless and not see the full extent of the repercussions to his every action.

Now they see that they were wrong.

“He said he let go of his entire life because he had to.” Tony mumbled, remembering what Peter had told him. Pepper squeezed his arm in comfort as he continued. “Maybe it was to keep them safe. He made a lot of enemies as Spiderman, and if he couldn’t tell them what he really did when he was six then he most certainly didn’t want to tell them about Spiderman. Maybe he couldn’t keep lying to them.” Tony pondered with a furrowed brow.

“Or maybe it was all of the above.” Natasha mumbled, which she was probably the most correct about. Peter seemed like an open book, but now that they really saw a glimpse of him, he was a complicated person, someone they still couldn’t wrap their heads around no matter how hard they
tried. But they were still determined to figure the boy out.

“But still, forcing a kid to give up a lifetime of friendship and love...that’s…” Bruce trailed off as he looked at the screen remorsefully.

“Cruel.” Bucky finished in a bitter tone and the rest didn’t say anything more but agreed as the next clip played.

*the camera cut to Peter laying upside down on MJ’s couch, legs to the back of the couch while his head was hanging off the seat as he was reading a book, and MJ sitting on the floor next to his head as she read a book about Thomas Edison as he read ‘The Glass Menagerie’ by Tennessee Williams.*

Thurs. February 14, 2013- 15:16:17

“Edison.” Bruce and Tony scoffed lowly to themselves, but no one made any comments on it, as they kept watching.

MJ slammed the book shut and glared at the title like it somehow offended her.

“That was utter bullshit!” Michelle said angrily, huffing at the book as she tossed it out of screenshot “He totally stole all of Tesla’s ideas. He didn’t invent the fucking lightbulb.” MJ crossed her arms, clearly upset by the issue. She always did have a thing against plagiarism.

“I’m not talking to you.” Peter said blandly, apparently just as offended, even without seemingly reading the book. MJ rolled her eyes at his childishness.

“I got picked last to do this project Peter and you know it.” MJ said to him as if he was being insufferable, which he did seem like he was.

“Still unexcusable.” Peter said petulantly, like a child would and MJ huffed.

“You’re a child, you know that.” She glared at him and he didn’t seem to mind the comment in the least as he continued glaring at his own book as if it were MJ.

“Yeah, a child currently understanding the diction of a college level book.” Bruce muttered, still a little put out by the impromptu undressing of a few cut scenes ago.

“You know, he’s being rather bold right now.” Thor commented, and he wasn’t wrong. Peter was blatantly standing up to MJ, even if it may seem childish at first glance.

“You’re a traitor. Did you know that?” Peter said back in a childish way as he glared over his book and went back to it as quickly as he glanced MJ opened her mouth to speak.

“I know you hate Edison.” she sighed, it came out tired rather than heated, which is what she probably meant for it to.

“Yeah, he’s a fraud. Barley no one knows who Tesla is.” Peter said in a dismayed tone.

“The child speaks truth.” Tony declared and Bruce nodded his head frantically as his arms crossed in approval. The rest of the non scientists rolled their eyes at their antics.

“I can’t believe you had to pick him.” Peter continued on “I can’t believe Tesla wasn’t even on the list of options. You should’ve picked some one else.” Peter countered and crossed his skinny arms, that were hiding in his oversized hoodie.
“Well, we have to work on this together, Parker.” MJ nearly complained and Peter groaned.

“But it goes against everything I believe in.” he pouted as he dropped the book he was reading to cover his hands over his face. “By the way,” he said between his fingers. “The rhetoric was lacking a little in the middle of chapter 3.” he commented on the book he had been reading.

“I know right?!” MJ said back and then looked at the book and then the piece of paper that was presumable the rubric to their project. “Peter…” she said uneasily toward the offending paper, as if it were a sea monster about to eat them.

“What?” he said in an irritated voice, which took a lot of people by surprise. They hadn’t heard Peter be truly irritated or angry as the Peter they knew in real life, or as the one on the screen.

“Don’t give me attitude when I’m being a genius.” she snapped at him, and his shoulders sagged a little in regret at the girl’s passionate, fiery eyes.

“Sorry.” he mumbled and slumped down to MJ’s level and twisted oddly to do a handstand and look at her as she still remained unimpressed by his acrobatics. He just kept at it as if this was normal, which it probably was to him.

“The Rubric says we have to write an essay on the ‘inspirations’ of the person we chose.” MJ said to him without batting an eye and slipping the rubric upside down so Peter could see it properly from his angle. Peter furrowed his brow at the paper.

“Yeah, and you chose Edison. Like the little shit you are.” Peter huffed still miffed that he had to do a report on his sworn enemy and turned away on his hands and started to walk away on his hands, which to be honest was a little dramatic.

“What if we did an essay to bash on Edison though.” MJ said and Peter turned around slowly, his interest peaked a bit.

“I’m listening.” he said. MJ rolled her eyes, but smiles at his antics as she put on a mischievous grin.

“Okay, it says ‘inspiration’ right? What if we passive aggressively suggest that he stole the ideas from Tesla. We can praise Tesla’s work and then bash on how Edison stole it.” MJ said and then Peter let himself fall back onto the ground as he hummed in thought.

“You have claimed redemption.” he announced dramatically and MJ rolled her eyes at his ways. “Let’s do this!”

“I have to say, they are rather crafty.” Thor admired. “Especially to prove a point.” he added.

“Yes they are.” Pepper said in an amused tone, as a fond glint came into her eyes.

*the camera cuts to Peter chewing on the tip on his pencil as MJ is typing on a laptop vigorously*


“Okay, so how about this: Thomas Edison has established foundations into the technological advances with inventions such as the light bulb. However, Edison’s creations could never have come to life without the work of Nicholas Tesla, who could arguably be the true genius behind the lightbulb.” MJ recited from her document and Peter hummed in his thinking.

“Too much aggressive, not passive. Here keep the first sentence then delete everything after Tesla
and say: who’s theories served as major building blocks in Edison’s work.” Peter said and thought about it “Too passive?” he asked her on a high note.

“A little. How about: whose theories were major uncredited foundations in Edison’s successes.” MJ said and Peter hummed in approval, and she started to type again.

“You said foundations twice. How about instead of the first foundation you say pillar.” Peter suggested as he tapped his pen against the paper and book stack he was writing on, MJ typed that down as instructed.

“Thomas Edison has established important pillars into the technological advances with inventions such as the light bulb. However, Edison’s creations could never have come to life without the work of Nicholas Tesla, whose theories were major uncredited foundations in Edison’s successes.” MJ read out loud and Peter clapped dully. They continued to work for a little longer before MJ spoke up. “Peter.” she said seriously.

“Yeah?” he replied without looking up from his book, seemingly unbothered.

“We’re gonna get a bad grade on this.” MJ said to him with a light hum and Peter didn’t look up as he responded.

“You wanna stop and do it right?” Peter asked already seeming to know the answer.

“Hell no.” MJ said easily and they both went back to work.

“Do you think he realizes he just spent the entire day at a girl’s house on Valentines day?” Tony asked and Bruce smacked his arm with a furrow of his brow. “Ow! Stop doing that.” Tony commanded, even knowing it was futile

“Their like 8, calm the fuck down.” Bruce told him and Tony whined like a petulant child.

“But Brucie Bear! They were made for each other!” Tony complained and Natasha and Bucky glared again at him. They didn’t want to think of their child finding love, especially at a young age.

“I created half of your little ship you know.” Natasha said blandly. “So shut up.” she said in a steely, quiet voice.

“But you’re not denying it.” Tony said and Natasha didn’t respond and Tony pointed at her- he had some sort of a death wish “Ha, see Nat ships it! It’s set in stone.” Tony pointed out as if he’s won.

“He leaves her though~.” Clint sing songs back and Tony moans in discontent and falls back as Pepper pats his head condescendingly.

“Goddamit why does Parker’s life get to be a tragic romance and we have stupid boring lives.” Tony complained, he got slapped by Clint and the next clip rolled.

* the camera cut to Peter and MJ in a classroom sitting next to each other at different desks. The Camera pointing up oddly at Peter and they could see MJ clearly as she looked at the camera*

Fri. February 15, 2013 - 11:43:24

MJ held up the rubric with an 84 scrawled on top of it and a bland face.

“Oh the price we pay for speaking the truth.” Peter mumbled solemnly and shook his head. “Worth it.” he shrugged.
“The only reason we got a B and not an A is because our history teacher doesn’t understand the true impact that this has on society and science.” MJ whispered and Peter smiled at the camera.

“She’s passive aggressively saying: our teacher is ignorant.” Peter supplied and MJ snorted softly.

“I’m passive aggressively saying: our teacher is fucking stupid and ignorant.” MJ said and Peter laughed at that.

“Jones! Parker!” their teacher, presumably, called them out in the background. The screen went static.

*the camera cut to Peter and Ned in the school library with books about WW2 and papers and pencils with hastily scrawled notes across the table, and an empty project board so far as Peter looked into his book that he was reading with starry eyes*

Fri. March 22, 2013 - 13:17:29

“Did you know Peggy Carter recruited Captain America and nominated him for the super soldier serum?” Peter asked excitedly as he drank in the book’s information, not really looking for an answer as he continued on with his fanboying. “She basically was in charge of Captain America and his squad.” Steve blushed at that, as Ned rolled his eyes on screen, he seemed amused but also mildly annoyed. As if this wasn’t the first time he was hearing of this.

“Dude, you’re obsessed.” Ned told the boy who didn’t even look ashamed as he kept spitting out facts about the war hero.

“Rightfully so! Peggy Carter basically was in charge of the Howelling Commandos, who were vital in winning the war for America.” Peter said in a matter of fact way as he stood up straighter as if to be challenged. Ned held his hands up in a tired surrender.

“If you did this report alone, you’d get a B because you’d just obsess about Peggy Carter the whole time.” Ned grumbled and Peter huffed but still didn’t look the least bit ashamed, as he stood firm in his belief. “Luckily I’m here to help and make sure the men actually get represented.” Ned said putting his hands on his hips as he looked down at the work that still needed to be done.

“Are they doing a project on the Howelling Commandos?” Steve asked and Bucky squinted at the screen as if to find a clue.

“I think they are.” Bucky said and then gulped a little. “Peter did say they studied us in school Steve, what if he…” Bucky trailed off worriedly and Steve clapped his shoulder.

“They can’t have said anything bad about you Buck. In 2012 we still thought you were dead.” Steve confirmed and Bucky nodded shakily.

“But Peter knows I’m still alive.” Bucky muttered. “Maybe not as ‘James Barnes’ but he knows I’m alive.” Bucky enounced for a bit of emphasis.

“It’s okay Buck. He can’t have blown your cover, or we’d have known you were alive long before we actually found you.” Steve assured and Bucky looked more hesitant, but didn’t say anything more.

“Haven’t they been represented enough?” Peter asked casually and Ned rolled his eyes again.

“You’ve spent too much time with MJ.” Ned mumbled and throw a different book in Peter’s face, Peter caught it swiftly and read it through briefly. “Here. Read about James Barnes.” he said as he
paid no mind to Peter looking at the page and his demeanor completely changed. He stiffened and his face went sheet white.

Bucky stiffened as well. Peter noticed him. He knew it. He knew Peter would recognize him as soon as he saw a picture. But there was nothing Bucky could do now, this was nearly 7 years ago now. He can’t change the past. Stark was right, this was like a movie. A really suspenseful, anxiety inducing movie. A movie where he was too close to the characters and he had some sort of emotional attachment to them. It didn’t feel real, but at the same time it did - even if he knew it was real and this actually happened.

When Peter didn’t respond for a bit, Ned looked at him with a quirked brow. “Peter?” Ned asked and that seemed to jolt Peter into action as he tore his eyes away from the picture on the page and frantically read about the war hero on the page, mumbling in Russian as he did so.

“Этого не может быть ... Как ...“(That can’t be...How...) Peter frantically said as he read and Ned put a hand on his shoulder as he flipped the page viciously, to try and calm his friend down. Bucky sank in his seat as Peter read more and more about him.

“He read about me…” Bucky said quietly. “He knows about me.” he muttered more to himself, Steve had no idea how to respond to that. He wasn’t sure if this was a good or bad thing.

“Peter…” Ned said a little worried and Peter snapped his head up at Ned.

“Yeah… oh sorry Ned..it’s just…” Peter cleared his throat. “Sorry.” he apologized again and then Ned shook his head, a gesture to say it was okay.

“Found anything interesting?” Ned asked, trying to avert the subject slightly. Clearly worried as he did not know what triggered his friend.

“Uhh… yeah James Barnes was like Captain America’s best friend.” Peter mumbled almost disbelieving, as he recited the information he had found “And he fell off a train and...died...He was the first Howling Commando to die…” Peter said as he averted his eyes to the book “He was supposed to be dead…” Peter mumbled, he looked baffled and confused out of his mind. LIke all his core beliefs were shaken.

“He remembers me…” Bucky said and Natasha rubbed his back reassuringly, but nothing about this was reassuring. Bucky didn’t know how to feel about this, there were too many emotions. He knew Peter knew about him, probably more than Bucky knew about himself. But he wasn’t prepared to watch things click for Peter, watch all the puzzle pieces come together to show who he really was. He thought he had dodged a bullet, but he wasn’t so lucky.

Ned paid no mind to the wording. “Yeah, most of them are dead. It was the 1940s.” Ned said jokingly. He looked a little concerned, Peter looked like he had freaking out internally and Ned noticed. “You good?” he asked softly and Peter nodded and slapped on a fake smile.

“Yeah, I’ll do the James Barnes part, it’s pretty... interesting.” he lied easily and Ned furrowed his eyes as Peter rolled his eyes. “You can do Captain America and Mortata if I get Peggy Carter and Barnes.” Peter reasoned, Ned looked a little more placated and agreed easily.

“We’re seriously putting Peggy Carter in here.” Ned mumbled and Peter grinned a shit eating grin.

“Gonna be the best part of the project.” he said with a now strained happiness in his voice.

“He remembered me…” Bucky whispered “He remembered the white room. HYDRA. I forgot him and he…” Bucky was so stupid. How could a kid remember him, but he not remember that
kid. Especially in that place. Especially his own child.

“It’s not your fault, Kras.” Natasha said soothingly but Bucky shook his head, he didn’t deserve that comfort. Peter had to go to a fucking library to know about his secret heritage. He had to face all these ghostly faces when he was trying to clearly move on. It was already hard to move on after being raised by HYDRA, then try to do when no one knows that he was raised by them is even harder. Peter didn’t need reminders of who he used to be, even if he wasn’t their weapon for that long, you never forget what they had done to him, what they made him into. It would always be apart of them.

“No, he remembered that… that hell and I couldn’t even remember his name. He remembered all of it Natalia. I saw it.” Bucky said in a pained tone. Peter remembered the torture, the training, the horrors and the death that surrounded him everyday in that place. The treatment, the bruises, the brandings and the experiments.

Every. Single. Thing.

Bucky could see it in his eyes. Peter flashed back to that terrible place for a second. He remembered everything.

And he’d never forget it.

*camera cuts to Peter holding the shaking the camera as he helps MJ over a chain link fence into a junkyard. They are both dressed in dark, ratty oversized shirts with flannels and jeans *


“Where are we Parker?” MJ asked and the camera whirled to MJ standing in front of a junkyard piled high with junk. Her arms were crossed and she looked usually unamused.

“Joe’s!” Peter chirped happily from behind the camera.

“It’s a junkyard, what’s so cool about it?” MJ asked dully as she crossed her arms in clear dissatisfaction.

“They should be asleep” Steve grumbled, looking at the time stamp. It was clear these children were used to not getting their proper sleep or rest, despite not even being a decade old.

“Shut up.” Tony grumbled lightly hitting the other man, it was less of a pill for him to swallow considering he didn’t even remember the last time he got a healthy sleep.

“I dunno, we can build things here though…” Peter shrugged and sounded just a little bit shy as they walked between the mountains of garbage, scrap metal and junk. “Smitty doesn’t mind.” he said in a more confident tone.

“Smitty?” MJ asked with an inquisitive eye and Peter opened a large garage door that was the warehouse in the center of the garbage sea, and pointed the camera inside the shop with half finished cars suspended for fixing, a large old wooden tables filled with papers and tools and junk. An old man was behind a large bench, alone working of welding something with bug eyed googles on his face.

“Smitty.” Peter greeted as he made his camera more discreet, and the man looked up.

“Hey, it’s the little shit stealing my stuff.” the man said with a weird sense of affection and a yellow grin. It didn’t seem ill intentioned though.
“You stole from him?” MJ raised her brow at Peter.

“Eh.” Peter made a so-so noise “It’s trash, I just wanted to build.” Peter said back shrugging as if it weren’t a big deal right now.

“And he can, as long as he asks.” Smitty said pointedly and Peter blushed in embarrassment.

“Sorry.” he said bashfully and MJ rolled her eyes as she strolled lazily around taking the place in, not taking a particular interest to anything as she browsed the garage.

“You tell Ned about this place?” MJ asked casually as she looked at one of the unfinished abominations made of scraps.

“You know his mom, she wouldn’t let me even hang out with him if she knew I come to a place like this.” Peter said with a little remorse in his voice as MJ hummed in understanding.

“It is a rather dangerous area for kids to be in.” Steve remarked. Everyone rolled their eyes, but didn’t comment. They knew these kids turned out fine, and if it were any other kid they’d feel the same way Steve did. But this was the future Spiderman and Michelle Jones. Peter literally had military training, maybe even more advanced than military training. They were fine.

“You live in a neighborhood way shittier than this.” MJ commented breezily and Peter made a slight whining noise.

“Hey, don’t hate. I’m broke.” Peter complained a little, but it was playful.

“Well you do.” MJ shrugged because what she was saying was pure truth.

“But she doesn’t know that.” Peter reasoned with a smug smile on his lips.

“Touche.” MJ smirked back at him as she picked up a tool and threw it up so it flipped and she caught it swiftly. “So what are you making.” she asked to him, and Tony could’ve sworn the eight year old boy swooned a bit.

“We.” Peter corrected and smirked “I know you like to build too.” he smirked even if MJ’s face remained indifferent to his theory.

“I didn’t know Michelle knew how to invent things.” Pepper said, a bit stunned.

“I didn’t know that either.” Tony mumbled, because if Pepper didn’t know then Tony certainly didn’t. MJ always came off as the liberal arts type, not really a science geek. This video display seems to be teaching them not only about Peter, but the people who surrounded him and cared for him as well.

“Where did you get that idea?” MJ asked with a quirked brow, a slightly inquisitive air coming about her.

“You show interest in what I read, and understand what I say when I geek out about it.” Peter responded as he grabbed a wrench and started to twirl it like a drumstick. “Don’t think I don’t know you understand.” he smirked as he stopped his twirling and pointed the tool at her and she rolled her eyes in response.

“Whatever. Are we gonna build something or what?” she asked as she went to the other side of the table with scraps. Peter grinned and started to twirl the tool again.
“Hot.” Tony mumbled to himself. Pepper slapped his arm so hard, he was crying out in pain as she glared at her fiance.

“Tony! She’s like eight!” Bruce exclaimed appalled. Tony held up his hands defensively in attempt to shield himself from the disgusted stares and glares.

“No, I just meant the concept. I mean if Pepper picked up a wrench and asked to build something like that, it’d be a big turn on for me.” Tony said in a matter of fact way and then scrunched up his nose “I ain’t no pedophile.” he huffed and crossed his arms. Pepper rolled her eyes.

“I’ll keep that in mind.” Pepper said playfully with a small glint in her eyes.

“Promise?” Tony asked, which only got him slapped again.

*camera cut to Peter and Ned in front of a couch on the floor of Ned’s living room again. Peter was dressed in a hoodie despite it being rather sunny outside, while Ned wore an ‘Aliens’ t-shirt. There was nothing around them except for normal furnishing of the Leeds’ home.*

Sat. May 11, 2013-13:26:54

“Okay.” Peter said as he backed up from the camera with a large smile on his face “Super Secret Handshake: take 1.” he said excitedly as he clapped his hands in a mimick of a scene starter, and looked to Ned with a small hint of determination but mostly giddiness in his eyes.

“This isn’t a science experiment.” Ned rolled his eyes, but looked just as excited as Peter did. The smaller boy grinned at him with a lopsided dorky smile.

“Yeah.” Peter breathed out a laugh “MJ would say we’re losers or something.” he said only increasing his grin that split his face. Ned scoffed as if he didn’t care what she would think about it if she found out, but he obviously did.

“She’d make fun of us anyway.” Ned said back with a wave of his hand.

“True.” Peter said as he looked up wistfully before shaking his head and focusing on Ned. “Okay how do you wanna start this?” Peter asked as he held out his hand.

“This is literally so pure.” Wanda cooed, as everyone’s eyes softened in affection and fondness at the two innocent children on the screen. Thor looked confused.

“I am curious. What is this ‘handshake’ they are about to attempt?” Thor asked and Wanda smiled up at him for a second and looked back to the screen.

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“Aw man.” Peter frowned for a second.

*I camera cuts to Ned and Peter in the same position, guiding each others hands to slap the backs of the hands, and then Ned overestimated his distance as Peter came back to slap air.*

Sat. May 11, 2013-13:29:34
“Aww man we screwed up again!” Ned said and Peter laughed.

*camera cuts to Peter laughing on the ground holding his stomach as Ned groans in frustration and glaring at his hand like it’s offended him*

Sat. May 11, 2013-13:45:27

“Are you even taking this seriously?” Ned asked to Peter as Peter laughed even more, kicking his legs out a little but didn’t respond in any verbal form.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned making a bird like gesture with their hands together and smiling at the hand creation as they watch the shadow move on the back of the couch*

Sat. May 11, 2013-14:15:49

“Is this even remotely cool?” Ned asked as he flapped the wings together with Peter and the other boy giggled giddily again.

“I like it!” Peter announced and Ned just shook his head fondly.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned blowing up their hands in a fist bump as they smiled excitedly at each other*

Sat. May 11, 2013-14:39:19

“Okay, now we just gotta practice it.” Peter said with an innocent smile on his face as Ned felled back and groaned. Peter laughed again.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned doing their full and rather intricate handshake*

Sat. May 11, 2013-15:04:34

“Finally!” Ned said happily once it was complete and Peter laughed, but smiled more in this one than the others.

“MJ is soo gonna make fun of us.” Peter pointed out, his smile never faltering.

“Ah, I see.” Thor said putting his hand to his chin in a thinking posture. “So a handshake is a gesture of friendship.” Thor reported his findings and Wanda nodded wisly.

“Did they really waste two hours just making a handshake?” Clint asked a bit of astonishment in his voice as he looked at the time stamp. Bucky smiled softly at Peter’s smiling face and didn’t really find it in himself to care, so long as Peter kept that genuine happiness. He could waste all the time in the world on stupid shit and Bucky would always let him.

“We should have one among us!” Thor declared with a smile on his own face, it was clear he was getting excited at the prospect. “Maybe we can have young Peter choreograph it for us.” he suggested.

“Maybe.” Wanda mumbled and let a small smile grace her lips at the idea.

* Camera cuts to the shaky camera getting off of a plane and the lens focusing as the lights changed, it was blurry for a a few seconds before it adjusted to see one clear as day Wade Wilson in army slacks standing at a distance near a dune buggy, smiling a little fondly*

“Wade!” Peter said happily and the camera shook more as he bounded to the soldier and he hugged him, shaking the camera far too much but once it pulled away it showed Wade with a much more mischievous and big grin on his face.

“I don’t remember Parker ever being this touchy.” Sam pointed out, but it made sense. Peter didn’t seem to be given enough physical attention before, as he thought back to a few scenes ago when he was hesitant to get a hug from his best friend with no apparent reason.

“Maybe it is because he is no longer a child?” Thor suggested, even though they all were thinking that no Peter is still a child, just an older one now. He is a teenager, but that didn’t shouldn’t make him shy away from physical affection; he is still pre-adolescent.

“People change.” Wanda said in a low tone as she ducked her head and her eyes went dark and sad. She knew something more. She knew what Peter had to go through at that army base. Those disgusting hands touching, probing, invading him. It made sense that he would shy away from touch after that, especially to authority figures who only yelled at him.

It was hard to establish physical contact with something good - even when it’s well intentioned - after establishing it with such a negative hurtful gesture. It was hard to think of it as good after only ever being hurt and violated with it.

“Hey kiddo.” Wade said and the camera pulled back to see Wade’s fondish, snarky smile. “You still recording on that thing.” he noticed with a fair amount of approval.

“Yeah, now we have ‘a soldier coming back to war’s perspective.” Peter said with a small giggle and Wade clapped his shoulder, much like a father would to a son who did a good job in a baseball game or something.

“Atta boy!” Wade praised with a hint of delight in his tone and Peter beamed up at him in a toothy smile. They went to the truck and much like a year ago, sat in the same seats with Peter in the passenger and Wade driving as the camera was set up on the dashboard to capture both of them.

“It’s been fun recording.” Peter admitted “I have MJ and Ned in it so you can see what they look like. They are so cool. You’ll like them if you ever get to meet them.” Peter rambled on about his friends for the majority of the ride. Wade nodded and responded patiently and with hints of amusement at the appropriate times.

“If you don’t think about it, it’s almost like he’s a normal kid.” Clint whispered out loud so he could be heard. “You know just minus the army slacks and bam: just an average, small, smart as fuck child. Completely normal.” Clint clapped his hands and smiled nervously.

“Almost.” everyone muttered a little darkly under their breath. They knew it wasn’t as simple as that, Clint was just being optimistic.

“So… uhm…” Peter was starting to hesitate; as they got closer and closer to the base, he looked more and more nervous. The boy started to look a little pale as the army camp came into view. “Am I gonna see Cotnet again?” he asked Wanda stiffened as her eyes flared red with rage. There was a crash of a bowl behind them, but no one dared to mention anything about her sudden outburst.

“Yeah, sorry kiddo.” Wade said apologetically and Peter shrunk in his seat, going quiet and making himself small. He was dreading the meeting soon to come. “Are you okay?” Wade asked worriedly as he parked the car in front of the stone building. The child’s demeanor had changed so much in the short time they were reacquainted.
“Hovno. Znovu musí jít na toho bastarda!” (Shit. He has to go to that bastard again!) Wanda cursed under her breath in Sakovian. Her eyes flared in anger again, but nothing happened with her powers. It was obvious she was angry—no furious. She was so clearly pissed, sad and hurt all at the same time.

“What do you mean?” Natasha asked cautiously as she leaned in and spoke in a quiet voice, Wanda looked at her regretfully and shook her head.

“Peter should tell you. It’s not my place.” She said in a low mutter. She wanted to tell Natasha, she was probably the only other person besides Peter who could understand the emotions coursing through her (like mother like son she guess, but Peter unknowingly followed in his mothers footsteps in a lot of aspects). Natasha, bless her soul, nodded in understanding, but as she trained her eyes back on the screen, Wanda could see the gears turning in her head.

“...uh its..... its okay...” Peter mumbled quietly, keeping his head down as he looked at the building they had stopped in front of. Wade looked at him for a minute before grabbing his arm and Peter stilled, almost frozen. He was preparing himself for something and Wade was breaking his cycle. Wanda teared up, Peter knew what was about to happen, and there was nothing he could do to stop it. Just like Wanda: Peter expected it, but was powerless to prevent it. And Peter was so young still.

“Hey... it’s gonna be okay. Cotnet is an ass, but I promise you won’t have to see him often after June. We have more undercover ops planned this year.” Wade said, not knowing what was really going to happen, he spoke a little more gently as to make Peter more comfortable and the young boy smiled shyly at him in appreciation for his effort to consol him.

“Yeah.” he said with a nod, he jumped out of the buggy and was off, leaving the camera and his small duffle behind.

“Be careful.” Wade mumbled to the child, even if Peter couldn’t hear him. He started up the engine.

“That man is getting a sports car. He seems like a hot rod red kind of guy.” Tony mumbled tapping something on his phone and Bucky threw a glare at Tony—even though he agreed that they did owe a lot to Wade—as Pepper rolled her eyes and pushed the phone down. But they really did owe a lot to the man; even if he may seem like he didn’t care at all about Peter on the surface, his actions toward the child showed differently. Especially in these little videos, he seemed to have helped Peter get through a lot.

“I don’t think he’d appreciate that.” Natasha said for Bucky. Bucky grunted in agreement.

“Fine.” Tony grumbled as he crossed his arms. Pepper patted him on the shoulder reassuringly.

“It was a nice thought sweetie.” Pepper said like she was talking to a child and Tony pouted as they looked back to the screen.

*camera cuts to Peter from a side angle, going through a congested crowd on a sunny day. He was wearing cargo shorts and a cheap t-shirt that had an image of two sharks playing poker, he actually looked like a normal kid. There was a huge building that he was walking towards and there is a little banner that says ‘aquarium’ in French on it*


“I’ve never been to an aquarium before!” Peter bounced excitedly next to Wade, a giant smile plastered on his face. He doesn’t seem to notice that he’s being filmed.
“You seem overly happy about this little mission.” Wade teased knowingly and Peter shot a quick glare at him. “Just saying, you never are happy to leave the base.” Wade seemed to shrug and Peter groans dramatically and tilts his head back a bit.

“That’s because someone always ends up dying.” Peter muttered, crossing his arms in a pout, the tone it seem like a childish annoyance, making everyone in the room flinch a bit at his grasp and response to death, he handled it so casually and he wasn’t even ten yet. “and also, we are undercover idiot.” He seethed closer so only Wade could hear him in the oblivious crowd.

“Then your acting skills are impeccable.” Wade said in a deadpan “it actually looks like you are genuinely happy to be here.” he says in a suggestive tone, Peter smiles a bit as he doesn’t deny the claim.

“A little.” He admitted in a mumble and blushed “I’ve never been to an aquarium but I’ve always wanted to go to one.” Peter justifies and Wade must’ve rolled his eyes.

“Why? You’re just looking at some dumb animals.” Wade nearly groaned, as if the mission was going to be boring, which he probably thought that it was going to be.

“Actually there is a study that says dolphins could be smarter than humans.” Peter said in a matter of fact way and a smug smile.

“Smart ass” Wade muttered under his breath in slight annoyance as Peter smiled proudly at him.

*camera cuts to Peter inside the dark aquarium, where the only light was the sun filtering through the chemical infested water of the fish tanks. He was looking through at the floor to wall glass, as the water illuminated his face blue and green hues, with stars in his eyes that he couldn’t fake no matter how hard he tried. He now adorned a light grey jacket, because it was probably cold in there*


“You are enjoying this too much.” Wade muttered from behind the camera, the tone didn’t show it but one could tell he was still amused by the childish wonder in Peter’s big brown eyes. The brunette turned around with a huge smile, curls bouncing and framing his face adorably.

“Wade its a pufferfish! Those are so cool see!” He pointed to the fish that was swimming by with a sweater pawed hand, and looked back at it excitedly not wanting to miss whatever was amusing him so much. “Did you know that the when the pufferfish puffs out it’s a defense mechanism and the spikes are poisonous…” Peter rambled on as Bucky and Natasha looked fondly - again - at their innocent child. He was tainted in so many ways by the world, but there were just somethings that he had stubbornly held onto in his childhood. Things that would be ripped too soon from him.

“ ‘A little excited’ my ass.” Wade grumbled with only the slightest affection, behind the camera as Peter rattled off more random facts about the creature.

*Camera cuts to Peter reading something on the plaques provided that show information and random facts about the animal in the tank behind it. It was in french but Peter was reading it like it was his native language.*


“You know those plaques are in French right?” Wade asked and Peer hummed in acknowledgment not looking up from his reading. “Can you even read that?” Wade asked in annoyance at Peter’s lack of response.
“Ouais quoi?” (Yeah what about it?) Peter asked in slightly accented French without looking up. Wade huffed out a mixture between a groan and a laugh.

“Of course you can speak french.” Wade muttered in irritation “What other odd things do you know?” Wade asked rhetorically and Peter quirked a brow as he looked up from his reading for only a second.

“Knowing French isn’t weird. You know it...too.” Peter trailed off as he looked behind him at something and leaned back so he could get a better view as he furrowed his brow at whatever he saw. Wade noticed and turn the camera around to see some shady looking men enter a closed off area in a not discrete, discrete way. He was obviously an amatuer.

“They look like they definitely work here.” Wade said in a highly sarcastic tone and turned back to Peter who hardened his gaze, not paying any mind to the joke. It was such a contrast to the innocent light he had only seconds ago. It was like he switched from innocent child to hardened soldier in two seconds flat. It was honestly terrifying; especially in a child.

“Let’s go.” He said in a low serious voice.

*camera cuts to Peter kicking a man’s ass at least three times taller and ten times heavier than he is in an isolated room. He was still wearing the civilian cloths he came in, but this time there was a gun belt slightly visible around his slim waist. He had a gun pointed to the baffled man’s (probably confused as to how a mere child had beat him) head*

Tues. July 20, 2013-14:20:36

“Damn” Sam whistled, clearly impressed by the display of skills “kid could kick ass even before he could crawl.” Sam commented breezily.

“Just like his mother.” Clint grumbled in a tiny of disapproval as Natasha and Bucky smirked in a little pride to their child. “That’s not something to be proud about.” Clint informed them, slightly irritated. They just shrugged in response, but their smug smiles never left them, even as Clint grumbled his concerns - as a ¾ time father of 3, it probably came naturally at this point.

“You gonna help?” He asked the camera man blandly. Even though he clearly didn’t need it, there was still a little irritation on his mostly impassive face -again, another thing older Peter clearly mastered. Wade shrugged the camera with his shoulders.

“You’ve got this.” Wade responded with a thumbs up and Peter rolled his eyes and looked up and squinted to the top of the fish tank. His face paled in the blue hues of the shark tank at whatever he saw.

“I missed one.” He mumbled to himself as the camera turned to where he was looking, a guy went over the platform of the shark tank. Peter paid no mind to the 11 other men he’d laid out and leaped to the latter.

“Peter no, I’ve got this one.” Wade seemed to have enough sense not to let an eight year old go over a tank of man eating sharks (even if he didn’t have enough sense to help out said eight year old when he was taking down a bunch of six foot tall men with guns, but details). Peter shot him a quick glare.

“That scaffold is unfinished Wade it can’t take another full grown adults weight.” Peter said and flashed a quick look of apology, but quickly gained back his composer of impassiveness as he turned back.
“Wait, are you saying it’s unsupported?! Peter! I’m not letting you—“ Wade was about to protest, but Peter cut him off with a glare.

“It’s the fucking mission Wade.” Peter seethed. “We’d be as good as dead if Cotnet saw we didn’t complete the mission.” He mumbled more to himself than Wade.

“Yeah, and what about a kid not dying.” Wade huffed worriedly, putting a hand on Peter’s shoulder. Peter looked back to the latter and thought a minute, clearly conflicted before steeling himself and shrugging Wade off.

“That wasn’t in the description.” He mumbled and started to climb the latter like a fucking spider monkey, taking two at a time. Wade followed him with the lense and it watched as Peter finally got to the top and sniped the guys leg with a handgun. The man fell forward and Peter went in to finish the job but the man fired his pistol backwards sending Peter into the tank full of sharks as he dodged the bullet. The man still couldn’t get up but was crawling slowly away across the scaffold, draining his blood into the unnaturally blue water.

Peter looked at the shark that had swam up to him, attracted by the blood that was pouring into the tank not seven feet away from him, and it looked like it was gonna eat him. Wade didn’t bother reading the French to know what species but he didn’t want to tap the glass to spook it and send Peter to a watery grave, but for all he knew it was already so. The Avengers leaned forward in their seats in suspense. Peter just stared back at its eyes swimming in place as the shark sniffed him and then it swam forward catching Peter’s torso with its nose as it swam up and out of the water.

“Not in the motherfucking description my ass.” Wade grumbled and lurched forward toward the latter. The camera still going and being shaken around too much but a few minutes later there was a splash and then a body broke the water with Shark taking the bigger bait in his mouth. Wade pulled Peter up to the scaffold and started coughing.

“Made a new friend?” Wade tried to casually play it off and Peter gave out a breathless laugh that descended into coughs for air.

“Yeah, his name is Snips!” He played along willingly, looking up at Wade with a big toothy grin. Wade looked back to the shark who was viciously tearing apart their perp.

“You are one strange kid.” Wade said with awe in his voice.

“Did you fucking see that?!” Sam jumped up and looked at the camera “He fucking stared that thing in the eye! Your kid stared a motherfucking shark in the eye!” Sam informed and Bucky and Natasha sat contemplating and nodding their heads wisly.

“T’was a daring feet.” Thor said in an impressed but calm tone.

“We all saw it.” Tony said in a deadpan “Now sit the fuck down and let us watch the rest.” he said and Sam looked at everyone who was sitting casually like they were all crazy and threw his hands up and plopped back down in his seat.

*camera cuts to Peter and Wade walking away from the aquarium, Peter in a new oversized shirt dusty orange with the aquariums name written on the front in french and some blue drawstring pajama bottoms that had to be rolled up so they didn’t drag. The sun was at a low point but not set just yet in background giving a slightly orange tint to the sky.*


“That was crazy!” Peter said as he stretched his arms over his head casually.
“Dude, you had like a hero moment!” Wade blurted begins the camera and Peter blinked up at him confused.

“Hero… moment?” Peter sounded out the words as if they were foreign and cocked his head cutely to the side.

“Hell yeah! Like you know in the movies when the good guy and bad guy fight at the end and then in the battle the good guy is about to lose but then some weird magic shit happens and they somehow gain the upper hand.” Wade said really quickly, almost too quick to be actually understood. Peter seemed to get it and blinked again.

“Like… the Avengers?” Peter asked confused everyone tensed. Peter had thought of them as heroes. When he was a child he had seen them as heroes, the good guys, the people who would look out for the world. They could see it in his little brown eyes, he was so excited at the prospect of being like them but then the light dimmed a bit, as if remembering something that could stop him from having that “I’m not sure if I’m the hero type Wade.” He said unsurly that was weird or of a kid. They always wanted to be heroes. Always saw themselves as the good guy. It was weird for a child to know that they weren’t the hero. That what they were doing was bad, even if an adult told them to. Even if they didn’t have a choice.

“Why do you say that?” Wade asked inquisitively, Peter squirmed a bit at the question.

“’Cause I don’t save people.” Peter looked far off “I kill people.” he mumbled more to himself, as if he wasn’t completely present. Bucky felt his eyes soften. Peter thought the same way Bucky did. That he was a monster because of what he was forced to do. He could never see himself as a good guy because every good thing he did was only to negate a bad thing he was forced to do.

“You kill people to save people.” Wade responded easily and Peter took a minute to respond, when he did he looked directly at Wade with hollow eyes that made everyone shiver at because they looked so out of place on a child.

“Do you really think that’s what Cotnet has us doing? Saving people?” Peter asked hopefully, desperate for Wade to confirm it. There was a long silence and Peter seemed to have his answer as he slumped forward in disappointment. “Yeah, that’s what I thought.” he mumbled in dismay and slight disgust.

“But you know you did save someone today.” Wade said quickly, in an attempt to make the child feel better, Peter looked up at him with doubtful eyes.

“Who?” Peter as inquisitively cocking his head like a puppy, taking the bait innocently. Natasha noticed he was so much more open to being comforted when he was a child than he was when he was a teenager. There was tussling and then a cheaply made stuffed shark presented itself to Peter.

“Snips!” Wade said happily, with a twinge of hopefulness, and Peter looked at the cheap fabric stuffed with cotton with wide disbelieving eyes. Wade shook it as a gesture for Peter to take it and Peter gently plucked it up, like it was the most sacred thing in the world.

“Where did you…” Peter whispered as he stared into the beady black eyes of the toy.

“Consider it an early birthday g-” Wade didn’t even get to finished his sentence as his arms were full of a happy, grateful child.

“Thank you.” Peter whispered as he squeezed tighter, even though the camera just showed the top of his messy brown curls, they could tell the boy was gratified.
Wasn’t this mission supposed to run until tomorrow afternoon?” Peter asked conversationally as they walked down the street. He looked far too comfortable in the fullblown army gear he was wearing. It should be weighing down on him, but he looked like it was completely natural to walk around with 45 extra pounds of firearms and lethal weapons on him.

“How is he not tired?” Sam grumbled with some envy slipping in his tone. With those skinny limbs, he shouldn’t even be able to move much less take a stroll around town casually.

“He’s probably used to it by now.” Bucky grumbled “I mean he knew how to use a semi automatic before I even met him, and I met him when he was three.” Bucky said, Natasha knew he was exaggerating but decided not to comment on it.

“Assassinations are cooler at night.” Wade told him wisely. Peter hummed in agreement. “You have much to learn young one.” Wade said as he patted the child’s head and Peter swatted him away with an adorable glare. Wade started to laugh.

“What?” Peter asked with a bit of bite in his tone, Wade didn’t comment on it and waved his hand vaguely in the air.

“Nothing, it’s just if you asked me last April if I expected to talk about the appropriate times to assassinate someone with an eight year old in Glasgow in the middle of the night, I would’ve laughed and then shot you straight in the head.” Wade said and Peter crinkled his nose in disgust as he leaned slightly away from the semi psychotic man.

“I mean me too but a little graphic.” Bucky muttered more to himself than anyone else.

“I’m almost nine.” Peter muttered back in his defense “and what’s that supposed to mean?” Peter asked in a more offended tone. He obviously didn’t like to be underestimated.

“Nothing kid.” Wade waved off with a wistful smile “want a smoothie? I think I saw a 24 hour place.” He said randomly and Peter cocked his head to the side.

“What’s a smoothie?” Peter asked. Wade started to laugh.

“You have not lived!” he shouted dramatically.

*camera cuts to Peter in a brightly lit smoothie shop, he had put an oversized sweatshirt on that was obviously Wade’s, to conceal his combat gear, but no one seemed to care much anyway. He was sitting at a rickety old wooden table, about to take a sip of the pasty pink strawberry smoothie in front of him*

“It is currently Saturday August third. And this is Peter Parker having his first ever strawberry-“ Wade was cut off by Peter throwing the plastic casing around his straw at him with the same adorable glare he was giving in the last scene.

“Shut up Wade. Lemme enjoy it.” Peter huffed and leaned forward as he sipped his smoothie.
“So you like it?” Wade said giddily as Peter pulled away and tasted in his mouth with a contemplative look.

“It’s better than that milkshake you bought me.” Peter admitted nonchalantly with an indifferent shrug.

“Progress!” Wade cheered as if this a total success and Peter smiles a little as he continues to sip his pink drink carefully.

“Yeah, sure.” Peter responded, with the straw between his teeth and a playful eye roll.

*camera cuts to MJ and Ned in the school auditorium in casual clothes with tape and glue and a propped up board half filled with facts about ionic diffusion and two openly wired, and frankly hazardous, machines with some tools and an open computer*

Fri. September 27, 2013- 12:34:56

“You both are idiots.” MJ said in her usual bland tone as she threw down her pencil and Ned looked up from the machinery he was tweaking “Our project isn’t gonna have any impact if we don’t have any practical uses.” MJ muttered and crossed her arms and Ned groaned as he fell back in his chair and stared at the machine with an offending scowl.

“Yeah but like everyone else did a paper volcano or solar system. How does that have any practical uses.” Ned grumbled and crossed his own arms over his chest, clearly upset. MJ turned to the camera with a disinterested look.

“Peter tell Ned we are gonna lose because he is lazy.” MJ said to the boy behind the camera as she nodded her head to the one in front of it.

“I built the entire engine you glued facts to a board!” Ned snapped back before Peter could respond.

“I fucking researched Leeds.” MJ spat venomously children on the screen, glaring at ned who stupidly wasn’t backing down “And Peter built motherfucking motherboard and wired circuits, all you did was program the goddamn piece of shit.” she swore fluently to the boy who’s glare just got hardened.

“A bit vulgar for a 9 year old.” Steve muttered, crossing his own arms in clear disappointment at the.

“They built an ionic diffuser, they can say whatever the fuck they want.” Tony said back, clearly impressed by the display in front of him.

“Hey, I was just here to do circuitry. And also, Ned is right. If you wanted to put practical uses none of us would stop you.” Peter said, clearly trying to be the middle man and voice of reason to his intimidating friends (who knew Leeds had that in him?) and MJ huffed.

“Ha! Peter’s on my side! And Peter is never wrong.” MJ smiled like a smug idiot and MJ rolled her eyes.

“I would sleep with your eyes open Parker.” She muttered lowly and Peter laughed as the air in the past seemed to be placated back to the normal light aura that seemed to be surrounding the young trio.

*camera cut to Peter, MJ and Ned walking down the street with Peter displaying the second place
ribbon they seemed to have earned. MJ seemed pissed and Ned seemed a bit disappointed. Peter looked indifferent *

Fri. September 27, 2013 - 16:32:41

“Second place!” MJ screamed in outrage as she stamped her foot like a child “to a stupid volcano!” she fumed and kicked a fire hydrant.

Peter and Ned started laughing at her antics, but she was clearly pissed.

“What the fuck?! They literally built an ion diffuser! They are nine! How did they fucking lose?!’” Tony screamed in outrage as he stood up in incredulity.

“Capitalism.” Wanda muttered clearly disappointed in the system as well.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned facing off holding plastic lightsabers in a parking garage. They were both wearing hoodies with the hoods up, but Ned had rolled his sleeves up with his blue lightsaber and Peter had his red lightsaber in his sweater pawed hands*

Sat. October 12, 2013 - 17:32:54

“If didn’t have to end like this.” Ned said in a low dramatic voice.

“Didn’t it?” Peter asked back with his head hung low.

“I am confused. Are they going to duel?” Thor asked worriedly “Are they not best friends?” he looked to everyone in the room who seemed to be smiling fondly at the screen.

“I wouldn’t worry about it big guy.” Tony said with a knowing smirk on his face as he watched the two boys charge at each other on the screen.

“Luke Skywalker is cooler than Han Solo, he’s a Jedi!” Ned scried out and they clashed their toy sticks together, Peter smirked a little. It would be so easy for him to win, he was trained in nearly every modern weapon to date, and he knew how to use them well. If he really wanted to hurt Ned, the boy would’ve been dead before anyone could even process that Peter was targeting him. And he certainly wouldn’t have any witnesses or evidence of the murder, much less footage. He was better than that.

“But Han Solo can save the galaxy without the force. Luke basically has schizophrenic telekinesis.” Peter argued back and swept back and swung his stick low so it knocked Ned’s knees.

“I don’t even know what ‘schizophrenic’ means.” Ned grumbled as he jumped back from the watered down move.

“Give it up Ned, you know I’ll win.” Peter said playfully, his smirk only growing at the silliness of the play fight.

“I have a better argument. MJ. Back me up.” Ned turn to the camera, making the mistake of letting his defenses down and turning his back on his enemy. Something clicked in Peter’s eyes that Ned missed and is eyes glossed over for a second.

“You both are nerds.” She said and while Ned was distracted Peter kicked out the lightsaber from his hands which flew up and cracked when it landed on the floor. He looked up with wide almost horrified eyes and Ned covering his laughing mouth. “You idiot!” MJ said behind the camera laughing, obviously not grasping why Peter wasn’t laughing with him. Peter seemed to realize that
it was okay to laugh and went along with a fake, nervous chuckle.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned walking down a barely crowded hall of their school, the lights were low and half of them are off making the hallway seem greyer and more like a prison than an elementary school. The kids who were lingering around before class were all in hoodies and comfortable cloths and just sitting against the wall quietly chatting, finishing up homework or on their phones*


“It’s criminal to make kids wake up this early.” Ned grumbled tiredly, leaning on Peter’s side as the other boy laughed gently and supported all his friend’s dead weight easily. He gently held the boy as if not to disturb the half asleep state that he was in.

“We must conform to the government’s wills.” Peter told him jokingly, but quietly so as not to disturb the atmosphere. He probably had more reason to say that than the other kids realized, but at the moment he didn’t seem to be thinking about that darker part of his life.

“This sucks!” Ned said dramatically as he buries his head into the folding fabric of the younger boy’s oversized hoodie on Peter’s chest and he just laughed again in response as he patted his head condescendingly as a gesture of familiarity.

That’s all it was.

“Ohhh, looks like I was right!” A snide voice said from behind them, cutting the peaceful atmosphere of the dead hallway, and the camera whirled around to see the smug Flash. Heads turned from their conversations and phones to look at the unexpected scene. He didn’t seem to notice as the frame backed out to show a smug boy with his little posse facing off against a sleepy Ned and confused and somewhat amused Peter.

“Oh, shits about to go down.” Clint mumbled and Bucky, Steve And Natasha glared at him for encouraging this. It was something out of a movie, where the bully and the geek stand off before either fighting or insulting each other.

“Peter wouldn’t get into a fight…” Wanda said unsurly, looking apprehensive at the screen “he only fights when it’s necessary.” She said reassuring more herself than anyone else, nodding in affirmation. No body was quite as optimistic as her though. Peter was just a kid in this, he had seen war and was trained to attack first and ask questions later. His morals were still askew from his current upbringing and he had yet to think fully for himself.

“Good morning Flash. Funny seeing you awake this early.” Peter quipped with an easy smile that somehow radiated fakeness and genuine at the same time. He seemed to have nearly perfected it now. Nearly.

“You two are disgusting.” the other boy sneered and Peter looked down, moving Ned’s head gently so as to not disturb the other boy’s state of comfort. “Have you no shame.” Flash wrinkled his nose in disgust and Peter looked a little confused by this point.

“I mean our clothes are a little old, but like we’ve always worn not so good clothes.” Peter mumbled, not quite getting what Flash was talking about and shrugged casually “oh well clothes are cloths.” Peter said easily. He wasn’t the type to be attached to material possessions that easily. He knew what to let go when he had to let it go, even as a kid he understood that nothing would last forever - especially material things. It was the first things he’s ever learned.
“I’m not talking about that!” Flash spat with repugence lacing his tone “I’m talking about how you two are gay!” Flash said pointing an accusing finger at them and Peter stiffened a little his eyes only going slightly wide. When the words finally register, instead of pushing Ned away like the Avengers thought he would (because he’s a kid, he shouldn’t know what that entails. He shouldn’t have any opinions on it yet and follow the normal standards of a straight person from times to come. He had enough to deal with without LGBTQ+ on his plate) A small fire came into his eyes. MJ stepped forward, probably furious but Peter made a gesture for her to stop her advance.

“Peter wha’s wrong?” Ned asked sleepily, rubbing his eyes. Peter ignored him but held Ned a little closer. His eyes daring Flash to challenge this, Flash recoiled as if he’d been stricken. Natasha couldn’t stop the burst of pride welling in her chest.

“And what’s so wrong with being gay?” Peter asked angrily. MJ seemingly had enough and pushed forward shoving the camera into Ned’s hands. The exchange was sloppy and took a few moments, but the camera angle was back to normal, but this time instead of Ned leaning on Peter, it was Peter and MJ standing off against Flash and his small posse.

“I’m surprised she even held back at all.” Tony muttered honestly and Pepper nodded her head next to his shoulder.

Ned continued to film. Now it was MJ and Peter against Flash and his posse. Even on screen, they were super intimidating. They radiated an aura of steel and determination. Their wills weren’t going to be bent or questioned and they made that clearly known that they were going to stand up for what they believed in.

“They like nine.” Sam mumbled in a bit of envy at their daunting presence. Even as a soldier and the Falcon he couldn’t muster that type of controlled intimidation.

“Hell hath no rath like those.” Thor muttered darkly. He may be a bit daft, but he knew what the LGBTQ+ was and even encouraged it on Asgard. Hell, he had his friend Valkarie who was lesbian- a drunk lesbian but lesibian nonetheless.

“They really are demon twins.” Bucky muttered, remembering what Wade had said what is was like when the trio had teamed up. Bucky felt like he was getting a second hand presentation of that, and did not want a first hand one.

“He asked you a fucking question.” MJ sneered back, Flash only flinched for second but then stupidly retorted and puffed out his chest.

“You heard me. It’s disgusting! Immoral. Parker, you are nothing but a cry for attention.” Flash spat back. He sounded so shrill and arrogant. Peter looked like he wanted to deck him, and frankly everyone was surprised that he hadn’t by this point. Peter was level headed, more level headed than he should be, but he was also reckless sometimes, not as much as he was now but he was a kid and kids are impulsive. He also didn’t have any authority figures to be worried about, so basically he could get away with whatever he wanted to.

“Oh, he gonna die.” Sam said, commenting on Flash but not feeling a single amount of pity for the awful child. Even though in his mind, Sam knew that this was just how the child was probably raised; that this is what he parents had told him. But Sam’s expectations for kids jumped while watching these videos and seeing Peter, MJ and Ned have such refined views about things. It seemed pretty silly that dealing with a school bully was on the problem list when not getting hit by a grenade was also on that list.
“No.” Peter gritted out, teeth clenched but then he breathed in and out almost unnoticeable to the kids, but clearly he was trying to calm himself down. “That’s not right to say. People should and can love who ever they want.” Peter said to him in a passive aggressive, but certainly more calm tone. Flash pushed him down and walked away. The control this kid had was insane, because he didn’t even trip the guy as he walked past.

“You’re nothing but a freak!” He called over his shoulder. MJ growled at the other boy before she stuck out a hand and helped Peter up.

“I swear I was gonna punch him.” MJ promised and Peter sighed his shoulders sagging as all the fight seemed to drain out of him.

“You’d get suspended.” He said tiredly and closed his eyes to breathe again. It was amazing that even when in elementary school Peter knew that actions had consequences.

“It’d be worth it.” MJ replied easily and there was silence for a minute or two, as if saying Peter agreed.

“How long do you think we’d get if we TPed his locker?” Ned asked from behind the camera. Peter looked at the camera a little giddily.

“Like two weeks.” MJ said dully, crossing her arms and tilting her head down to hide the smirk forming on her face.

“Not if we don’t get caught.” Peter said snidely leaning toward MJ and knocking her shoulder, and the other two just looked at him for a second of silence and laughed as they went to the direction of their classroom.

*camera cuts to Peter, in a baggy hoodie and pajama pants tat were obviously Ned’s clothes, sitting in front of the couch in Ned’s living room holding a wii controller with his tongue sticking out in concentration as he stared at the video game being played on the screen, it was a racing game. Mario Kart theme music was playing dully in the background*

Fri. December 27, 2013 - 19:36:29

“How do you keep winning?!” Ned mithered as Peter smirked but didn’t look at him as he past the finish line on the screen.

“Maybe because I’m not filming you winning.” Peter said back in a sassy but still playful tone.

“You win regardless! You’re like a speed demon!” Ned said and fell back with a pout and crossed his arms, not paying attention to the fact that Peter had stiffened a little at the comment.

“Stop distracting me.” He shook his head to get his head back in the game and nudged Ned with his shoulder playfully as he pressed a button and aimed the shell he had aquired at the sidelines which bounced back and hit Ned’s character.

“Oh come on! How is that even possible!?” Ned exclaimed and Peter laughed a bit at his impeccable aim “I wanna be dry bones bowser next time!” Ned demanded and Peter rolled his eyes but heeded the request.

“We’ve been playing Mario Kart for hours now. What time is it?” Peter asked not pausing the game that was being severely won by the boy.

“Like 7:30.” Ned responded and Peter lunges forward and drops the controller as the game still
continues.

“We’ve been fake driving for over 15 hours?!” Peter nearly does a spit take with out water and Ned laughs, also ignoring the game. Peter glared at the camera man “this isn’t funny. It’s unhealthy.” Peter says in a scolding tone that just could not be taken seriously.

“It’s also the most normal thing they’ve done for this entire video spiel so far.” Tony grumbled and Natasha rolled her eyes at the man.

Ned snorted “It’s unhealthy if we make a habit of it. Let’s watch Star Wars.” Ned suggested ironically and Peter smiled and nodded.

*the camera cuts to Peter in a junk yard garage, with worn old baggy clothing. He was crouching behind a rusted old Harley Davidson, some parts were on the ground around him along with tools and a wrench in his hand, finetuning something on the body of the bike. Grease, oil and paint stains covered his oversized shirt as he paid close attention to what he was working on, drowning out the world around him*


“What’s up with these kids and staying up late.”Cap grumbled in clear disapproval to the children’s sleeping habits “And on a school night, nonetheless!” he added, disgruntled and Tony snorted.

“Let them live their lives.” he waved off, clearly not seeing any issue with this, as he was the king of insomnia, but he bet Parker could give him a run for his money.

“They’re like nine they should be asleep, not in a junkyard.” Steve said back, disappointed in Tony’s encouragement of their unhealthy behavior. “If they keep this up they’ll die before they hit college.” he said, not paying any mind to the fact that he knew Peter skipped college and Ned and MJ were only a little more than year’s away from it

“You’ve been tuning the engine for three hours now. I think it’s a bust.” MJ said off screen and Peter huffed but continued to wrench the bike. “The gas tank will never be salvaged, and you completely ripped it out.” MJ said in a bit of disbelief at her companions stupidity.

“Yeah, cause I’m gonna make this run on clean energy.” Peter said to her like it was obvious and not completely impossible with the tools and parts he was working with - it had gotten to the point that no one was going to question Peter’s ability in anything pertaining to intelligence. MJ scoffed in response.

“Weird flex but okay.” She grumbled to him. He rolled his eyes, but never took them off his project.

“You wanna ride this or not?” Peter asked with a bit of irritation in his tone but mostly tiredness. There was silence before MJ said in a serious tone:

“What do you need me to do.” she sounded deadset on doing whatever Peter requested and he finally looked up at her, and consequently the camera, as he smirked.

*camera cuts to the same scene but MJ is on the other side of the bike working with Peter*

Fri. January 24, 2014- 01:02:14

“They have fucking school tomorrow!” Steve exclaimed in outrage, gesturing at the time stamp with his whole hand. Tony hooted in amusement and everybody else smirked as they got back to
“Ugh” MJ said as she threw a wrench at the bike, which hit it dully but not enough to ruin their work and landed with a soft clang on the stained cement floor. “This is impossible.” She muttered and she looked to where Peter was crouching over a wire, his face still set in determination. “And what have you been doing this past hour.” she asked boredly, almost accusingly but with a hint of disappointment in her tone.

“Well… while you were building the skeleton, I was building a power source.” Peter said a bit proudly, still not looking up from his intense wiring and MJ deadpanned.

“Peter,” MJ said unsurly as she averted her eyes to the piece of machine that she absolutely think was not going to work and was just a waste of time.

“Just try it, Em.” He encouraged gently holding out the fragile circuit that he had completed. She hesitantly and tentatively reached out for it and carefully placed it in the mechanism she had added on the bike’s gas tank.

The machine spluttered a moment before it turned on, the LED lights MJ has tinkered with flickered to life as the engine made a nearly silent purr. Both of the children’s smiles were small and soft but more illuminating than the sun.

“It worked.” MJ whispered in gentle awe and Peter had a splitting smile across his face as he grabbed MJ in a hug and she laughed disbelievingly as she leaned into his embrace never taking her starry eyes off their revamped creation. “You are a miracle worker Peter Parker.” She mumbled to him.

“And you’re just a miracle.” Peter mumbled back almost absent mindly. Everyone’s hearts melted.

“That’s it! I’m making fucking posters! This needs to be a thing, it’s too fucking cute.” Tony said blatantly. He probably wasn’t kidding. Everyone fully agreed in the room. It was criminal that this wasn't an official thing yet.

“You know what, I agree with you Stark. It’s a crime these two separated.” Clint voiced with an affirmative nod.

“Thank you!” Stark exclaimed. Pepper just rolled her eyes and shook her head fondly as she watched the two gaze at their creation. They were certainly onto something, she couldn’t deny that in the least. This kind of innocent love was too precious and strong to ever go out completely.

Dim but never darken.

*camera cuts to Peter and Ned, in jeans and semi-nice t-shirts and Peter was wearing a flannel, outside a box office handing over some cash to pay for movie tickets and popcorn as the man, behind the counter with a black polo and walkie talkie, handed him the items they had purchased*

Sat. February 01, 2014- 16:04:17

“Did we have to pick a scary movie?” Ned whimpered, clearly apprehensive about the idea as they walked back to where MJ, presumably, was standing with the camera. Peter just laughed merrily at his friend’s antics.

“You’re a pussy.” MJ told him in a blase tone, from behind the camera as she focused it on Peter a bit more but Ned never getting out of the frame. They were certainly getting better at the filming part.
“It was either this or the lovey dovey kissing movie they sponsor around valentines day to scam people out of their money when they could just watch the Hallmark channel and get the same cheesiness there,” was Peter’s long winded response. The Avengers had a feeling that he had a lot of opinions about that topic in particular, but filed that information away for later.

“Gross!” Ned’s face scrunched up his nose in clear disgust, making Peter bark out a laugh.

“Exactly.” Peter and MJ said at the same time as if to affirm that they were right.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned sitting in the dark theater while suspenseful music was booming around them. Ned was latching onto Peter, eyes closed in fear, while Peter freely moved his hand to casually put popcorn in his mouth, looking rather bored at the display*

Sat. February 01, 2014 -16:59:06

“Wait, you can’t have film in the movie theater.” Sam said with a furrow of his brow.

“I don’t think these rules apply to them.” Natasha said with a bit of amusement in her tone. Sam crossed his arms and slouched back, a bit disgruntled.

“Ned, the bad parts are over.” Peter whispered rather nonchalantly. Clearly he wasn’t scared by the movie and it’s fake interpretations of gore. Why would he be? He was a soldier/spy/agent thing, it’s nothing he hasn’t experienced before. Ned, on the other hand, has not experienced these things, clearly by the way he was shaking like a leaf, still glued to Peter’s arm as he frantically shook his head.

“They’re all bad parts.” he whimpered pathetically and made his grip a little tighter on the younger boy’s arm. Peter rolled his eyes but never looked off the screen as he patted the Filipino’s head in mock comfort, as if to say ‘it isn’t a big deal but I’m still here for you’.

“It’s not real.” Peter said in an exasperated but still soothing voice.

“Peter. Protect me.” Ned pleaded as he turned his face into the younger boy’s bicep and Peter absentmindedly moved his hand to rub comforting circles in the other boy’s back.

“Gay.” MJ whispered and Peter smirked to himself, never once turning his head.

“Thank you.” he said under his breathe and no one needed to see MJ’s face to know she was smirking too.

*Camera cuts to the trio outside the theater, walking home as the light in the sky started to dim into a sunset and the streetlights began to flicker on*

Sat. February 01, 2014 - 17:42:18

“It wasn’t that bad.” Peter said in a mostly pleasantly surprised tone, with underlyings of disappointment, probably at not getting the thrill or scare that was promised.

“Speak for yourself.” Ned glared at the boy with no heat “How are you not scared?” Ned said in a mostly whiny tone and Peter just shrugged casually.

“It wasn’t real, and honestly really impractical.” the Russian boy replied and smiled a bit “Actually it was kinda funny. The people made the stupidest choices.” Peter giggled a bit behind his hand and Ned looked at his friend incredulously.
“I thought it was a little graphic.” MJ cut in before Ned could go off on Peter, the youngest of the group just scoffed.

“Please, the blood was so obviously fake. No one bleeds from their neck like that, the angle was all wrong.” Peter said unthinkingly.

Everyone on and off screen went silent.

“How would you know that?” MJ asked in her normal bland tone, but there was a hint of worry in it as well. Peter froze, his eyes going a bit wide as he realized just exactly what he had said.

“I-I mean I’ve...I’ve read a lot of anatomy books...uhm yeah. I know because the- the veins don’t flow up in the neck and when sliced gravity would make it g-go down.” Peter laughed nervously and put his hand to the back of his neck “It’s just science.” he added lamely and there was a contemplative, suspicious - where MJ probably narrowed her eyes at the boy from behind the camera - silence before MJ shrugged.

“You’re weird, Parker.” she said casually, probably meaning nothing by it, but Peter turned his head down and a semi-far off look enter his eyes.

“Or you’re just normal.” Peter said quietly enough for the camera to pick up but for his friends not to hear “And I’m not.” he said in an even lower tone as his shoulders sagged slightly, enough for his friends not to notice.

*Camera cuts to Peter with Ned, both in casual cloths and light jackets except Ned had his off and was in a t-shirt while Peter had his unzipped. Peter was laughing over the desk and Ned looked so done with everything and just plain frustrated*

Tues. March 18, 2014- 17:05:14

“Все, что вам нужно сделать, это кататься лучше.”(All you have to do is roll your ‘r’s better.) Peter said in his slightly accented Russian tone. He obviously worked on watering it down so as to not be too out of place in america when he spoke in his native tongue, but still managing to say the words perfectly. Natasha thought it was cute and it made her smile a little to herself.

“He speaks like you.” Bucky murmured to her, his face no doubt softening at his son’s soft spoken dialect.

“His diction is like your’s.” she murmured back as she placed her head on his broad chest and he laced his arm around her back and far arm to pull her closer.

“I don’t understand what you are saying.” Ned slightly enouciated each word. It was obvious the frustration at not understanding what his friend was saying was getting to him. It seemed worse, because Peter knew he didn’t understand but still spoke in that voice anyway.

“Вы хотели выучить русский язык, товариш.”(You wanted to learn Russian, comrade.) Peter reminded in a teasing tone, snarky smile adorning his face. Ned made a sound of aggravation.

“Just tell me what you’re saying in English.” Ned begged more than demanded, he looked almost on the verge of tears and Peter laughed at his friend’s pleading eyes.

“Это не весело.” (That’s no fun.) Peter fake pouted, Ned turned and slammed his head on the table.

“I just wanted to learn Russian because then I could swear at my sisters and not get in trouble.”
Ned’s voice was muffled by the table. Peter’s eyes hardened and he grabbed Ned’s shoulder’s and whipped the wide eyed, confused boy to turn to him and look him straight in the eye.

“Русское ругательство - это святое искусство прошлого династий. Это не может быть полностью достигнуто, если человек не из крови или воспитан в нашей культуре.” (Russian swearing is a sacred art past down through the dynasties. It cannot be fully achieved if one is not of blood, or brought up in our culture.) Peter said in the most serious tone a nine year old could achieve.

Bucky barked out a laugh as Natasha smirked and Wanda had a soft look that entered her eyes.

“Наш ребенок хорошо знает наши пути.” (Our child knows our ways well.) Bucky said smugly.

“Я знаю.” (I know.) Natasha smirked back.


“Wait, what is he doing?” Bucky leaned forward slightly worriedly as Natasha furrowed her brows in confusion.

“I think... he’s gonna ride it.” Sam said back in an almost stunned voice. Steve snapped up.

“No way, he’s nine! He can’t drive legally! This is dangerous.” Steve listed off his vices he had with this operation. “No way, Peter is too good a kid to…” Steve trailed off with narrowed concerned eyes.

“This is also the kid who becomes Spiderman.” Tony pointed out casually and Steve paled “Kids do stupid things all the time.” Tony shrugged casually, not seeing Steve have a mini seizure where he sat trying to regulate his breathing.

“This is dangerous, Tony.” Steve informed the man in a panicked tone. “He could get hurt.” he was sweating bullets by now. Even his parents thought Steve was overreacting a little.

“Or dead.” Bucky muttered, not sound particularly concerned just liking the way Steve was freaking out and wanted to add fuel to the fire, because dammit he was entitled to be a little shit sometimes. They obviously knew Peter came out okay, as he was still alive.

“But we know he didn’t.” Bruce points out “die at least.” Bruce said trying to placate the situation as they all turned their attention back to the screen.

“Have you ever done this before?” MJ asked a bit apprehensively behind the camera.

“Yeah.” Peter said nonchalantly, as if it was completely normal.

“How?” MJ asked suspiciously and Peter froze a bit.

“uhh during the summer my uhm Wade let me drive his bike sometimes.” Peter blushed and ducked his head, obviously avoiding eye contact.

“He knows how to ride a motorcycle.” Wanda mumbled, a bit impressed. She didn’t know why she
was so surprised “ she voiced as if remembering why. “He learned in the army.” She informed
them and they all took in that information silently.

“Aren’t you afraid you’ll break your ‘perfect child’ record with Neds mom.” MJ jokes and Peter
scoffs.

“Please” He snorted. “You wanna come on the first ride?” he asked up to MJ innocently.

“No way Parker. Unlike you, I value my life.” MJ said in a matter of fact way and Peter’s face
scrunched a little.

“Do you question my ability to ride a motorcycle?” He asked with a quirked brow.

“No, I question those tiny legs.” MJ retorted back gesturing to his legs with the camera, and Peter
huffed as he hopped on the bike. As predicted his feet didn’t even come close to the petals. But he
pushed a button and the pedals rose slightly to meet his feet and in case them loosely. He gave her
a prideful smirk as if he just proved a point to her “Fair enough.” MJ placated at Peter’s smug grin.
MJ must’ve made an expression because his face softened slightly.

“Here, I’ll do it alone first and then if you wanna hop on I’ll go slow just for you.” He told her
Gently, she wasn’t pressuring her. Not even encouraging her. He was just telling her that this was
an option.

“Giving her a choice.” Natasha smiled a little at Wanda’s mumbled statement. Choices weren’t
something that came often in childhood for her and apparently for Peter too. Most people would
take that as an excuse to be forceful when they were finally free, but Peter knew - just as well as
his parents did - choices are earned. They are awarded through acceptance and patience. They
knew how horrible it was to not have a choice, it was the same as saying that they weren’t good
enough.

Peter didn’t like deciding who was worthy and who was not.

MJ must’ve made a gesture because Peter hopped on the bike and smiled as he started up the
nearly silent engine. The LED lights now had sleek panels over it making it look almost like a retro
futuristic type of motorcycle. Peter kicked off the kick stand and went down the ditch. As he built
up speed and came up the top he turned and before he flew of skidded atop the other side and he
started his decent back down as his hood flew up to cover his head and a large smile plastered on
his face.

“Shouldn’t he be wearing a helmet?” Steve asked worriedly. Natasha and Bucky scoffed.

“Please.” They said together and everyone looked at them with a quirked brow. They didn’t say
anything, this was their kid after all, and it looked like being a badass with a motorcycle ran in the
family, Peter was doing phenomenally on that deathtrap.

“Woah,” MJ said quietly, breathlessly, it was still picked up by the camera. Peter went up the
second ramp and then let himself fly with the cycle. He was at least a kilometer away from her as
he landed and drove back to her a wild smile on his face.

“It works perfectly!” He exclaimed as he stopped in front of her and kicked up the kick stand. He
has a huge grin on his face now.

“Are you like a professional motorcycle person?” MJ asked almost accusingly but mostly with
awe, and Peter blushed shook his head.
“Do you wanna..?” He gestured tentatively and MJ must’ve nodded because his face split open and she reached out a hand and pulled her on to the vehicle smoothly.

“Maybe He should give her a helmet?” Tony asked more to the kid’s parents than anyone else. Again Bucky and Natasha scoffed once more. “Okay then.” Tony said with a shrug, nothing he could do about it anyway.

“Okay,” Peter said and looked back at her “I assume you’ll be observing.” He said dully, but with a hint of amusement in his tone.

“Naturally” She shrugged. He smirked and started up the engine.

*camera cut to Peter sitting in front of and MJ on the bike, videoing her and Peter as the wind flew by them and they sped up and down some back ally roads laughing*

Fri. April 25, 2014- 23:04:15

MJ smiles as Peter laughed and sped up, revving the engine and she squealed a bit in delight. A noise that was never heard from her ever and no one ever thought she was capable of. Tony and Pepper had to do a double take.

“You know, he would make a good boyfriend if he didn’t have PTSD about losing anyone.” Pepper said casually, Tony made an indigent noise.

“I’d date him.” Wanda said easily and everyone looked at her with quirked brows except for Pepper and she rolled her eyes “What? He’s been like the perfect boyfriend since he was eight. I personally think I have a good taste.” Wanda huffed and crossed her arms.

“You’re not wrong.” Clint mumbled as he watched the skinny child smile in an imitation of the sun.

“Michelle snatched him up, apparently.” Pepper giggled and she looked at Tony “Why can’t you be more like him?” she asked jokingly and Tony slouched and grumbled as her airy giggles danced around him.

“Fucking Parker.” he muttered incoherently, clearly disgruntled at being won out from his fiance by a fucking fourth grader.

*camera cut to MJ and Peter’s rolls reversed. Peter seemed calm with MJ at the wheel and MJ was doing amazing for her seemingly first time.*

Fri. April 25, 2014- 23:56:21

“MJ change the gears and rev it a bit to gain speed on the hill.” Peter instructed quietly.

“Gaining momentum?” MJ asked back with a smirk.

“Of course.” Peter smiles brightly at her.

“You know they say that a way to mans heart is through his stomach but the way to your heart is conceptual physics.” MJ jokes and Peter cocked his head.

“You wanna buy me some food? I’m starving.” He joked back at her and she rolled her eyes as he laughed. It was just a tease. If anything, Peter would be the one paying.

“No, but actually are you hungry?” MJ asked to the boy behind her without taking her eyes off the
road. She seemed just a little hesitant, but it made sense, this was her first time.

“I’m always hungry.” He said back to her casually. It made everyone stiffen just a bit.

“I’ve got some cosmic brownies in my bag, we can eat them when we get back to the warehouse.” MJ said and Peter nodded a huge smile splitting his lips at the mention of sweets.

“Kay, but since you won’t go past 25 we have to take the back alley.” Peter informed her with a little teasing in his tone and a smug smirk.

“I’m a beginner Parker.” she retorted back but he just kept smirking.

“Yeah and if the cops get us, they’ll confiscate our little bike.” He said back “plus I don’t got no bail money.” he said.

“Fine.” MJ conceded her defeat.

“Take the next right.” Peter told her without looking.

“Thats a wall!” MJ said with wide eyes and Peter quirked his brow up at her.

“Your point?”

*camera cuts to Peter and MJ in the art room, with brightly coloured string piling on the table and safety scissors and tape in front of each of them. MJ had a light crimson in her hand and Peter had an almost electric blue in his. They seemed to be cutting different pieces for what could only be assumed as a friendship bracelet*

Fri. May 23, 2014-13:02:13

“Peter could you pass me the blue string?” MJ asks without looking up from her project. Peter absentmindedly picks up the blue string to hand to her and opens his mouth to ask a question, but is interrupted as the blue spindle is snatched out of his hand, the camera tilts up to non other than Flash Thompson, who was sneering down at the two kids who looked back boredly.

“Give it to her Flash.” Peter futility requested. He knew it was useless because he used an exasperated tone. Flash, as expected, laughed and did not hand back the string.

“She can’t use it.” Flash mocked and glared at the girl.

“What sort of sexist shit goes on in your head?” MJ asked blandly, holding her cheek in her propped up elbow.

“What does that mean?” Flash asked stupidly and she rolled her eyes and he shook his head to get back to his point. “Whatever. Blue is a boy colour. Go use red, that’s a girly colour.” Flash said and possessively held the blue string away from her. Peter and MJ looked unamused but then looked at each other, matching a spark of something in their eyes.

Peter leaned over the table to grab MJ’s red and MJ snatched the blue from Thompson’s pathetic grip. They cut pieces of the string and started to braid it together with the colour they had cut earlier in the scene as Flash gaped at them.

“There.” Peter said tying his piece of string off, finishing first and held it up for Flash to see “Now which gender is it for?” he asked smugly and MJ stopped her braid to smirk up at the boy. Flash imitated a fish before letting out a shriek like a child who was having a tantrum would and stomped
“Aren’t those the shades for his standard Spiderman uniform?” Steve pointed out with a bit of shock in his tone.

“Do you… think he did that on purpose?” Bruce asked quirking up his eyebrow. The implication that the bright colours of the boy’s uniform had some sentimental value and a subtly powerful message was astonishing.

“He said that he had gotten them from a thrift store and kept the colours because they had become ‘iconic’.” Tony used his air quotes, at the time he had believed Peter when he said that, but now he was thinking that maybe the boy had been lying. Tony looked to the screen. “Maybe there really is more to that kid than we saw.” he mumbled in thought.

Even though they weren’t done with the films being casted, Tony had learned so much more than he would have thought. Things that Parker did made some sort of sense now. It was marveling that even the things like the colour of his suit had such an influential meaning if you looked at the right angle.

*camera cuts to Peter in full out military gear while the sun is high. He was walking down a wide dusty, dirt path. His back was board straight, but the look on his face was tired and irritated. There were military things going on in the trail ahead. It almost looked like they were training*

Mon. June 30, 2014- 11:08:12

“This is gonna suck.” Peter moaned and tilted his head back a bit “I hate mixed training.” he said to the sky as if it might answer his pleas and get him out of the mess he found himself in.

“What’s mixed training?” Steve asked to Sam. The other man looked baffled for a second before he saw Bucky’s confused face and understood why they were confused.

“It’s a modern training method.” he informed them. They were out of their time when this was established, Sam had to admit though, he didn’t like mixed training either. “It’s where different forces establish a day and some of their squads to do traditional army training with the other troops.” Sam said like it was no big deal.

“Huh, interesting. It’s like a way to support your fellow men in arms that you don’t fight with personally.” Steve said with a bit of a proud smile and Sam snorted.

“Yeah, that’s what it was supposed to be, but then it turned into a competition. SF won out every year,” Sam said, his tone suggested he was upset about something probably from his own mixed training experience. Steve didn’t comment any further.

“Yeah it sucks. These dicks don’t know what’s coming though.” Wade’s voice made itself known from behind the camera. It sounded like he was half encouraging Peter, and half smug because he knew that something good would happen. Before Peter could respond, the duo got catcalled from somewhere off screen and the camera looped around to see the man who got their attention. He was a big burly man, in green camo gear that practically screamed that he was part of the standard army. He had a smug smirk on his face as he sauntered over to where Peter and Wade were and eventually towered over Peter, who only glared up at him.

“Aww.” the man cooed mockingly “You brought your little puppy dog.” he kneeled down to Peter’s height and reached out to scratch him like a dog. Peter dodged his advances and glared.

“Shut up.” Peter muttered lowly, as if saying it under his breath, but the other man still heard and
stood up to his full height with a disgusted look pinching his face in and he puffed out his chest.

“I’d train him better Wilson.” the man nearly spat and looked to Wade, who was successfully camouflaging the camera. “Wouldn’t want him to be sent to the grave because he couldn’t obey his master.” he said in a mocking tone. Peter wasn’t considered a soldier, he was ordered as a soldier but was registered and treated like one of the dogs he was supposed to sleep with.

“He’s my partner.” Wade said in total confidence and near nonchalonce. A bit of pride lingered in his tone as well. “Not that any of you’d adrenaline high dickwads would know.” he added with a more mirthful tone.

“Hey.” the man barked “We fight the wars. What do you do? FBI shit that anyone else can do. That’s not fighting for your country when they really need it, it’s just being rejected from being with the real heros because you were too cowardly to fight in the day time.” the man had a venousmous smirk on his face, neither of the two special forces soldiers seemed to be deterred however.

“What a grade A prick.” Clint muttered as he crossed his arms.

“Any type of fighting for your country is honorable.” Stev said like he was talking in one of his PSAs. Tony rolled his eyes.

“Stick a sock in it Rogers.” he said and looked intently at the screen “It’s getting good.” Tony looked far too giddy to see the situation unfold.

“Fight a war?” Peter asked in a fake intrigued tone and with a raised brow. “Cause last I remember the last official ‘war’ that involoved the army was Vietnam.” he said and the man paled “How’d that go for you guys?” Peter asked a bit of smugness in his voice as he smirked down, and the man let out a shout and punched wildly. Peter sidestepped the man and grabbed his wrist pulled down and knocked the back of his knees so he fell flat on his face.

“Who’s the reject now?” Peter asked in a bland unamused tone. The man didn’t speak as the film changed scenes.

“Oh my god.” Tony said in awe “That was like a clip from a teen movie. What the fuck. Why don’t they make interpretations of this?” Tony asked astounded and amused.

“Because it’s disrespectful Tony.” Steve bit out and Tony just rolled his eyes and waved the man off “You’re impossible.” he sighed and looked back at the screen.

*camera cuts to Peter, now in only his cargo pants and an oversized long sleeve. It’s night time now, and wherever they are its not near a city because there are a million stars scattered across the dark blue sky. The moon illuminating it a brighter colour then it would be in New York. Peter was sitting in the middle of a bunch of dogs that were chained to wooden poles in the ground and then surrounded further by a disposable chained fence.*

Sat. July 05, 2014- 23:26:15

“Those dogs are army dogs.” Bucky noticed with a bit of concern. Army dogs were known to be vicious, they were the dogs that were found in the wild and too dangerous to be adopted by normal people. A kid should not be playing with them so casually, but this was Peter, and Peter had a habit of not really following normalcy standards.

“They’re dangerous!” Sam nearly yelled in worry, clearly not getting by now that Peter could take care of himself. He stared down a shark afterall.
“They don’t look very dangerous.” Thor responded with furrowed brows, he always had a soft spot for dogs and didn’t understand the reason of his friends apprehensiveness to this specific breed. They didn’t seem to be harming young Peter, so he didn’t see how they were lethal.

“Pete!” Wade called over the chainlink fence in a form of greeting rather than worry. Peter whipped his head up from where he was babbling to the dogs who were sitting obediently and listening in immense interest. The dogs perked up and looked at Wade as well, mirroring Peter’s curious look and cock of his head. It was adorable.

“Hey Wade!” Peter smiled as the dogs looked with distrustful and protective glares directed at the cameraman.

“I thought you were sleeping in my tent tonight?” he asked and Peter waved him off casually.

“Cotent is coming early tomorrow for inspection, I don’t really wanna get up earlier than I can to come back here. Plus, it’s a nice night.” Peter said back propped his hands on the ground behind him and leaning back as he smiled at the stars.

“You shouldn’t sleep with the dogs.” Wade said, his tone coming out a little hesitantly and Peter waved him off again as if it were no big deal.

“No problem, me and Spot were just about to play Black Jack.” Peter said back, addressing the dog who barked once behind him and Peter patted a deck of ratty cards, that probably not even complete.

“You taught the dogs how to play cards?” Wade asked incredulously in a deadpan.

“I was bored.” Peter shrugged as he turned to the dog dealt the hands. “Pick up?” he asked Spot and the dog barked once and Peter put down a card. “Wanna play?” he asked from over his shoulder. Wade spluttered a moment before he sighed and gave in

“Fine...sure...whatever.” Wade grumbled as he jumped the fence and landed with nearly silent feet as Peter dealt the card again and then said “Want another one?” Spot put his paw over the card and Peter turned to Wade to deal his hand. Wade picked up his cards to look at his hand.

“Hit me.” Wade said and the dog next to him and the child gave him a card. “Okay.” Wade smirked and showed his cards. Peter flipped Spot’s deck over with a smirk and...and Wade lost.

To a dog.

The Avengers almost died laughing.

“How did I lose to a fucking dog?!” Wade nearly screamed in outrage and the dogs flinched Peter stroked the closest one’s fur as he let another snuggle up against him for comfort. Peter shrugged as he laughed, not paying that much mind to the dogs.

“Spot is just really good.” Peter said with a sly smirk on his face.

“You named them?” Wade asked and Peter hesitantly looked at him and then he averted his eyes and focused on the incomplete deck of cards in his hand. “You do know they’ll be put down after the tour, right?” Wade said gently leaning closer to Peter. Peter hunched in on himself and over the dog in his lap protectively and the unaware mutts sensed it as they nuzzled him and he hugged the huge dogs that dwarfed him in size with he sat down.

“Why?” he asked in a quiet broken voice, everybody’s heart broke at the whispered question. It
was asked so much like a child would ask a question when something truly terrible happened to
them or, something or someone they loved.

“I’m sorry bud.” Wade said genuinely “They are too dangerous to be put in homes.” he said gently.
“Their war vets, just like we’ll be.” Wade said petting the dog that came to him as well.

“But we don’t put humans down. They aren’t dangerous. They are jus’...scared.” Peter said weakly
as he ruffled the fur and buried his face into a golden retriever’s fur. Wade sighed sadly.

“I know bud, but they aren’t human.” Wade explained “It’s just the way it is.” he said in a regretful
tone. Peter made a pained noise.

“I’m not considered human either…” he whispered everyone stiffened Wade waited for Peter to
finish with a blank look on his face “Does that mean… that mean that they will...they will put me
down when their done with me too?” Peter’s voice was nearly unheard and the dogs whined at it as
if they didn’t want it to happen. There was a moment of silence.

“I’m not sure.” Wade whispered back into the darkness. Something protective in his tone, but he
was utterly powerless against the regulations and he knew it too.

“What the fuck? How could they make him even think that?!” Clint asked angrily, fuming at the
screen. A child should not sit up at night and wonder whether or not he was going to die when the
people that were supposed to be taking care of him were ‘done’ with him. It was inhumane.

“Ti’s true, he is a child.” Thor boomed in his own anger. Yes, he has been annoyed by young
Parker while in the year of his duties with the Avengers, but never once would Thor wish death
upon the young hero.

“But he wasn’t considered one.” Wanda reminded darkly “He was a threat. Nothing but a war dog
to them.” she spat out with venom. Peter thought he was nothing more than that either, she knew.
She knew he wondered sometimes if they’d come back and kill him like they were supposed to. He
wondered if anyone would even care that he was gone, just like the dogs never got graves, he’d
never be remembered. Just shot and left for the vultures to get him.

“What is a ‘war dog’ you speak of?” Thor asked, still quite a bit of anger in his voice.

“Dogs that serve as soldiers because they are uncontrollable and can’t be adopted or just found by
the army when their on missions. They are trained in combat.” Sam informed with a grimace. He
was never fond of the concept himself.

“That sounds helpful.” Thor said back with a small smile and Sam looked at him warily and shook
his head.

“That sounds helpful.” Thor said back with a small smile and Sam looked at him warily and shook
his head.

“Yes, but once the tour or war is over or they get too old to serve, they are put down.” Sam said
sadly with a regretful look in his eye.

“Put down?” Thor asked, cocking his head a bit.

“Killed.” Steve muttered darkly and Thor’s eyes widened, anger taking it’s deeply rooted place in
his eyes again. “They are considered too dangerous to be adopted and are too old to serve again,
unless it’s... a special case.” Steve answered the about to be asked question and Thor paled as he
looked to the screen with the boy who was hugging the soon to be killed dogs, wondering if he
would be among them.

“And they thought of young Parker as a… ‘special case’?” Thor asked darkly already knowing the
answer. The room went silent again. “I understand.” he muttered lowly as the next clip played.

*camera cuts to Peter, in the same attire he was wearing in the last scene, on the floor of the tent under the cot reading a thick book, the title inscribed in German, on his stomach*


“You know, your life could be like a reality TV show on steroids.” Wade’s seemingly random comment only got a hummed response as Peter flipped the page, not paying any mind to Wade’s whacky comments and inserts.

“You finally went through all the footage I took last year.” Peter comments uninterestedly, flipping the page again.

“Well yeah, it’s like over 12 months worth of footage and you’ve got some good stuff in here.” Wade said, tapping the camera. He came to pinch Peter’s cheek who looked annoyed at being physically advanced while reading his book “I don’t wanna miss you growing up.” He said in a fake Schmoopy voice, Peter rolled his eyes.

“You’re annoying.” Peter huffed and pushed the hand away “and my life isn’t a reality TV show.” Peter tacked on.

“So you say.” Wade said smugly and Peter rolled his eyes and went back to his book “it has drama, action, suspense, humor, romance and-“

“Romance?” Peter squeaked, comment grabbing his attention. He blushed as he held the book closer to his face.

“Oh yeah buddy. You and the Michelle chick. I’m think your ship name would be Petechelle or Meter or-“ Wade ramble was cut off by Peter shaking his head and hunching his shoulders behind his book.

“Stop.” Peter pleaded through a blush “we are just friends.” He insisted and turned around to hide his face in the book again.

“Sure buddy. You know I’d say you’re too young for that sort of thing but you’re also too young to join the army and here you are.” Wade shrugged a smug tone coming on and Peter sighed.

“I’m 10” Peter mumbled with something dark behind his eyes, they started to turn a bit hollow and thankfully Wade caught it.

“You’re cute kid. Congrats! I didn’t think you’d make it this far to be honest.” Wade said enthusiastically, trying to get Peter out of his trance.

“I can’t be in a relationship.” Peter said in a far away voice.

“Yeah we just established that you’re too young to-“ Wade started only to be stared down by the hard look in Peter’s eyes.

“No, I mean I’m never going to be in a relationship like that. Especially with MJ.” Peter said and looked up with sad eyes that no kid should have. He understood that his life was already too far messed up to be normal. There was no fixing him.

“Never say never kid you-“ Wade stuttered a little shocked just like the Avengers were at the child’s understand of the gravity of his own situation.
“No. Relationships are built on trust and ...and this thing” he gestured around himself “is apart of me oddly. I don’t want it to be, but if I can’t even tell my friends how could I possibly tell anyone I love... they’ll...” he trailed off and the camera blacked out.

“What happened?” Bruce asked and looked to Tony.

“I think Wilson blacked out the screen.” Tony muttered darkly. There was silence for a minute before someone else spoke.

“Do you think...Do you think Peter knew he’d have to abandon his friends when he was younger?” Wanda asked tentatively “Like it wasn’t just a split second decision but something he was...-” Wanda was cut off by Sam.

“Planning.” he finished and Wanda shook her head.

“Dreading.”

*camera cuts to Peter in his normal clothes and an oversized hoodie in a classroom. He was laying his head on his desk on top of his book, pencil in his hand that he was using for extra cushioning and looked bored out of his mind.*


“This is so useless.” Peter whispered more to himself than anyone else. “Why can’t we just...read or something.” he asked lamly and MJ snorted softly behind the camera.

“Yeah, this is a real drag.” MJ responded in a hushed tone that matched Peter’s. Peter glared at her lightly but then furrowed his brows curiously and propped his head up a bit to face her.

“And why are you even here? Like can’t you be in honors English.” Peter asked in an almost accusing and slightly demanding tone, with quirked brow.

“Shouldn’t you?” MJ asked back easily and Peter gave her a dubious look.

“Yeah but like.” Peter put his chin in his hands and stared forward as to avoid MJ’s eyes “I can’t cause it’s not my first language.” Peter mumbled, almost as if ashamed, and MJ didn’t respond for a second as Peter stared off blankly at the board.

“So you’re telling me,” MJ started and Tony held his breath cause he knew that tone. Michelle used it when she got mad or heated about something. It was calm but deadly. “That they are holding you back because you were born in a different country?” MJ asked in a tone that dared Peter to say otherwise. Peter looked at her with a quirked brow, seemingly not finding any of the injustice that MJ was picking up.

“Yeah, but like I don’t say anything about it.” Peter shrugged and then furrowed his brows “They hold everyone who is from a different country to a lower standard.” Peter grumbled as if disappointed. Which was stupid because Peter was a brilliant child. He excelled in every subject, including English. Especially English. And French. And Spanish. And German. And Russian. And a bunch more other languages.

“Even when you can do better than any of these shitbags?” MJ said gesturing around the room of supposed ‘shitbags’.

“Especially if you do better than any of these shitbags.” Peter responded darkly “They don’t want us to stand out because-“ Peter was cut off by MJ’s curt note.
“You’re an immigrant.” MJ said to him, again daring him to say otherwise in her tone. They both knew she was right.

“Exactly.” Peter responded in a low tone, not even trying to lie to her. There was no point, MJ already knew how the system worked. It was fucked up.

Natasha had no idea that Peter had to go through the process of being an immigrant. It didn’t even cross her mind at the problems that occurred because he was born and found in Russia. That came with a whole other set of problems on its own, combine that with the shit that he was already facing and he had a whole whirlwind of problems he was going through.

“That’s not fair.” MJ said back defensively.

“A lot of things aren’t fair MJ.” Peter responded apologetically.

“Michelle protests for immigrant rights.” Pepper muttered with a furrowed brow and everyone looked at her with a raised brow and waited for her to explain. “She goes out every other Saturday and holds up signs at the various court houses and government buildings in New York. She even did it when her decathlon team went to Washington… I thought she was being ambiguous…” she informed them. “I encouraged it. I didn’t think it had any sentimental value because her family was born in New York.” Pepper said that last part more to herself than anyone else.

“Damn.” Clint whistled, impressed with the girl’s understanding, even at this young of an age. Hell, she was still young, even in the present.

“Do you think she protested with him?” Thor asked innocently and Tony shook his head.

“I think she protested for him.” Tony replies and no one responded as it cut to the next clip.

*Camera cuts to Ned in a panicked state over a table in the library and Peter watching him with wide if not somewhat amused eyes as the other boy cradles his hand that is slightly cupped and blood is pooling and dripping on to the table. Ned seemed to be not breathing while Peter seemed pretty indifferent to the situation, if not somewhat amused by it*


“Ned, calm down, it’s just a cut.” Peter said with an easygoing smile.

“Peter you’re bleeding! It’s dripping! You’re bleed dripping!” Ned freaked out and Peter sighed and looked to the camera woman, it was most likely MJ, with a raised eyebrow, like he couldn’t believe this, and shook his head.

“Don’t worry Ned. It’ll heal.” Peter said calmly to the boy who was running around like a chicken with its head cut off. He stopped and looked at Peter seriously, like the younger boy was insane.

“It’s deep Peter, you need to go to the OR!” Ned told him and Peter sighed exasperated. All amusement draining out of his face, like Ned had sucked the fun out of it.

“Or I could wash it up and put a bandage over it.” Peter said like this was a compromise, but to be fair he probably had a lot worse than this, being in the army and what not. But from his friends perspective, it did look like a really big cut, there was a lot of blood. “Like a normal person.” Peter seemed like he was trying to sound casual and MJ snorted behind the camera at the horrified look Ned gave.

“Huh, no wonder Peter didn’t tell him about Spiderman. I’ve seen that kid still fight after he gets
slammed into various buildings like it was no big deal.” Sam said with a slight grimace.

“He made that call and got shot and still saved those kittens.” Clint reminded to tack on to the list. “He’s used to this sort of thing, longer than we knew, but we still knew.” Clint shrugged.

“Peter this is serious.” Ned insisted, Peter rolled his eyes affectionately.

“Trust me Ned, I know serious. I can handle this.” Peter said with a reassuring smile, it did scarce to appease Ned’s ever mounting worry.

“How are you so calm? Aren’t you in pain?” Ned worried on, biting his lip “Oh my god, you’re in pain. We have to get you to a doctor. We have to-” Ned continued on with wide eyes as Peter hadn’t answered.

“Yes, Ned I’m in pain. Stop freaking out.” Peter cut off calmly. His slightly pinched features indicated he wasn’t completely lying. Older Peter was better at masking his pain though; he wouldn’t even feel a cut like this. It was probably more inconvenient than painful to him.

“How are you not freaking out?!?” Ned asked frantically, his panic spiking and Peter just looked so done with this conversation.

“Cause then we’d both be freaking out and that won’t help anybody.” Peter explained in a rational tone.

“MJ isn’t freaking out!” Ned pointed out, which yes she wasn’t, so it would make sense for Peter to be freaking out. He just wasn’t.

“MJ is MJ. She doesn’t care. Right, Em?” Peter asked sweetly and turned to the camera with a bright smile. He was hoping she would back him up.

“This is better than cable.” she responded dully and Peter grinned at her more. She wasn’t exactly wrong.

“Damn straight.” he responded back, more enthusiastically.

“You’re still bleeding!” Ned freaked out again, clearly not understanding why his friends weren’t concerned about the situation.

The camera then switches to the next scene rather abruptly.

*Camera cuts to Peter and MJ chilling, in extra large stained t shirts, on the ground in the warehouse in the junk yard under a bench. They had tools scattered around them on the floor and the odd blueprint or book near them as well. Peter was dissecting some sort of machine by taking apart and putting together its open wires. MJ looked particularly bored as she spun a pencil in her hand and a notebook in her lap, open to a mostly blank page.*


“Hey idiot.” MJ said from behind the camera. Peter looked up from circuits he was connecting to her briefly before going back to his circuits “We should start that science project. It’s due on Monday.” she noted and Peter hummed.

“Wait. Are they procrastinating? They haven’t even started? What-” Steve started to go off and
then Tony rolled his eyes.

“Oh my god, stop judging their life choices like an overbearing relative. Let them be kids.” Tony groaned and Steve shot him a glare but didn’t say anything else.

“Oh yeah, what do you wanna do?” Peter asked flippantly as he tilted his head up but his eyes didn’t peel away from his project.

“Dunno.” MJ shrugged and started to twirl her pen. Peter quirked his lips an odd smile of fondness ather attitude. Neither of them seemed particularly bothered that they hadn’t even started their project and it was due in a little over 24 hours.

“Okay...what about...” Peter waved around randomly and MJ rolled her eyes at the useless gesture.

“I’ll just look up popular science fair projects.” MJ grumbled and pulled out her phone and started tapping at it boredly as it illuminated her face.

“How bout... a solar system?” Peter asked unhelpfully in a high pitched tone, he still didn’t seem 100 percent focused on the conversation.

“We ain’t no basic bitches. What about clean energy. You think you can build a BS project out of scrap parts?” MJ asked rehtorically, of curse they could do that. They weren’t idiots, they were actually really smart, geniuses in fact, and they knew it too. Peter hummed an affirmitive.

“You do the write up?” He asked hopefully, but he knew she was gonna do the oral parts while he did the manual ones. It seemed to be some sort of unspoken agreement within the group, that Peter only was to do the visual aid while either Ned or MJ do the more technical part of the project. MJ scoffed.

“Obviously, just gather data.” she said in a more commanding tone, Peter finally looked up from his mini project with mischievous eyes.

“Hmm but that would require me to write.” Peter said in a teasing tone that just said he was making his fun. MJ Rolled her eyes and slapped his arm lightly

“Fine I’ll build the skeleton.” MJ conceded and Peter smirked as he plucked the phone from MJ’s hand and started to type while she grabbed the screw driver from his and brought some metal over to herself from a nearby pile of scraps to see what they had to work with.

“Huh, didn’t know MJ could build.” Tony muttered. “She never told me.”

“I don’t think she would. She didn’t even build legos with Peter and Ned, but she did help with the motorcycle she and Peter had.” Pepper whispered. “Maybe it’s their special thing and then when Peter left...” she trailed off with a small sad smile.

*the scene cut to MJ with welding mask on firing something up with a flamethrower on a stainless steel table above Peter and Peter putting together something on the side, periodically looking at blueprints presumably made by MJ and they both were not looking up from their work at all. They seemed to be immersed in it*

Sun. November 16, 2014 - 00:13:15

“Shit.” She whispered as the flamethrower seemed to slip a bit and she turned it off.
“What’s wrong?” Peter asked and looked up, a small bit of concern in his eye that maybe his friend got hurt due to faulty safety gear. It looked pretty second hand, MJ wasn’t even wearing gloves.

“The circuit you gave me was a dud asshat.” She grumbled and threw the fried mess of wiring and metal down to Peter and Peter laughed as he took a new circuit he had presumably created and snapped it inside the piece of junk.

“Here this should work better.” He said as he handed it back to her, and MJ grumbled as she took it and put another piece of circuit that she presumably built in the machine she built and the LED lighting on the sides of the sphere lit up blue, indicating that it was now working.

“How do you always have the right answers?” She said as she lifted up her mask and slid down next to him. He smiled smugly at her.

“I don’t.” he said with a cheeky grin. Tony rested his mouth in his hands and elbows on his knees. Even knowing that he was smart, Peter also knew he didn’t know everything. Most kids would let that kind of intelligence go to their head (no pun intended...okay yes pun intended) and be all snotty about it and then when they were wrong be all prideful and make up excuses. But Peter knew he had a long way to go, even when he accomplished so much and everything came easy to him he didn’t use it as an excuse to slack off and party and think he’s better than everyone.

So in other words, he was not like Tony Stark, and he didn’t grow up to become like Tony either, even though he was dealt a far shittier hand in life. He never let that change the fact that he was a good person.

He’d never admit it, but if Barnes and Romanov had raised him, Peter would probably be the greatest human being anyone had ever seen.

By the looks of it, he was already shaping up to be.

*Camera cuts to Ned in his room putting clothes that were scattered on the floor and hanging off of every single piece of furniture in the room, into his suit case that was on his bed, double checking everything to make sure it was all there. It was snowing outside the window and Ned looked visibly distraught*

Sat. December 20, 2014– 12:15:30

“I wish I didn’t have to go. I wanna spend Winter Break with you guys.” Ned complained as he shoved a shirt into the suitcase rather harshly.

“Ned, how are you complaining. It’s -8 out there and you are going to California dude!” Peter said enthusiastically from behind the camera as he handed Ned some folded together sock balls that the other boy took and put into the corner of his half filled bag.

“Yeah, but I always spend winter break with you guys.” Ned mumbled sadly as he dejectedly shoved another article of clothing into the bag that was previously next to the suitcase.

“What’s wrong?” Peter asked after a minute of heavy silence. Ned sighed and sagged his shoulders.

“Nothing, I’m going to California.” Ned said blandly, with unenthusiastic jazz hands to emphasize his sarcasm, and Peter came closer with the camera and said again.

“No, something is wrong. I can tell.” he said in a quieter, gentle tone and held out a hand to put on Ned’s shoulder reassuringly. Ned sighed again, but didn’t push away the gesture. It was hard to get these out of Peter, he knew that he only touched a select few and let even less touch him too.
“It’s just…” said blew out a breath and sagged his shoulders “You and MJ get the entire Spiring Break together every year and you’re always gone Summer Break in Canada. We usually spend Winter Break together. I feel like I’m… I dunno...kinda....” Ned trailed off in his confession and averted his eyes away from the younger boy even more. Something seemed to click for Peter.

“Left out?” he asked gently and Ned nodded as if ashamed “No way man! It’s always kinda boring without you and MJ and I just read most of the time anyways.” Peter reassured without any hesitation and Ned looked up at him with a little hope.

“Really?” he asked with a bit of hope shining in his eyes, the russling behind the camera indicated that Peter nodded.

“It’s always boring when either you or MJ are gone. At least for me, I think MJ is just always bored.” Peter joked and that got a small quirk of his lips from his friend “It’s more fun when we are all together. And I promise when you come back we can have like a sleepover or something and catch you up on everything.” Peter reassured in a definite tone, Ned straighten a bit with happiness “I didn’t mean to make you feel left out.” he mumbled a little guilty off to the side and Ned’s eyes widened.

“No way Peter! You never make me feel left out I’m just stupid and miss you guys like crazy.” Ned babbled on and somehow the people watching knew that Peter had his small grateful smile playing on his face.

“We are together alot.” Peter mused in a wistful tone.

“Like all the time. It feels weird without you guys by my side.” Ned cofessed. Peter seemed to hesitate in the next words he used, but they had to be said

“We’ll always be by your side Ned. As much as I can.” Peter said carefully that it made the Avengers wince. Because asthey watched Ned’s splitting grin, they also knew that Peter knew that this wouldn’t always be the case. Peter would have to leave eventually, he’d go back to the war camp, he could die on a mission, HYDRA could come looking for him, SHIELD could come looking for him, someone was always hunting him.

He just didn’t know how much worse it would get, because when he’d eventually become Spiderman, all those things would amplify by a thousand and Peter could barely keep this much going now.

*Camera cuts to a place with loud music, base sounding. Shouts and profanities are being yelled over the noises, and harsh clanks of metal on metal. The place is loud and has party lights flashing, but it’s just an overcrowded garage/warehouse thing. People were smoking and drinking and doing all sorts of illegal shit, it was hard to spot the small figure of Peter Parker’s back, clad in a black baggy hood and dark grey cargo pants and adorned with a familiar although much more clean looking Jansport backpack that only had a few skid marks on it but didn’t need to be taped together by electrical tape, he seemed to have something in his hands that the camera couldn’t catch just yet *


“I usually go along with most of your stupid decisions, but this by far is your stupidest.” MJ commented to the hoodie cladded Peter. The camera caught up slightly and caught what was in his hands. He had a robot type thing, that looked almost like a battle drone with a large torso and hands and skinny nimble limbs. It looked like it was made of scrap parts. An impassive look was on his face as he held his head up a little “I thought you stopped this after you almost got arrested
that one time.” MJ reminded but that didn’t deter the boy from going forward and lacing his way through the crowd.

“But I didn’t.” Peter said back casually as he could, she could tell that he seemed a little guilty about coming to where they were by the tone of his voice.

“Wait, he almost got arrested?” Steve asked with a furrowed, disappointed brow. It was astonishing how much he expected from this boy within this video compilation. Before he expected nothing more than a stuck up brat who complained about all the issues he had to face, but now, he expected Peter to always do the right thing, or what he was told. He didn’t know how he came to that conclusion when he knew what sixteen year old Peter was like, but here they were.

“What is he going to do?” Sam asked innocently and Tony analyzed the scene and the bots on the podium.

“Bot fighting?” he mumbled. “Remember MJ and Ned said he had quit because they told him it was too dangerous. This must be one of the last times he is doing this.” Tony pointed out and Natasha hummed.

“And he took her?” Steve asked “Why would he deliberately put her in danger?” his tone was hard now, but Pepper scoffed.

“Please, knowing MJ, she probably insisted on coming. Peter picks his fights and he knows when he’s gonna lose one too.” Pepper smirked with pride at her mentee. She knew the girl was brave, but this compilation showed her loyalty and perseverance and even compassion. Peter wasn’t the only complicated person on the screen. He seemed to surround himself with good people who were misunderstood because they were complicated.

“This is a bad idea Peter.” MJ said to him sounding unsure of the decision her friend was making, or even maybe her decision to tag along as she seemed to be on edge with all the most likly dangerous criminals, murderers, and drug dealers around her. Peter didn’t seem too out of his element though, but that’s probably because he’s seen more terrible things before.

“I know.” he sighed and sagged his shoulders as he watched the first robot on the podium slice the opposing robot’s head off. “I just... need the money.” he muttered to himself and clutched the robot closer to his stomach.

“Don’t you have a job?” MJ asked, trying to convince her friend not to get back into this habit “At the Junk Yard? Doesn’t Smitty pay you for fixing cars?” MJ kept going and there was an unreadable look in Peter’s eye as he hung his head a bit.

“Yeah, but I’m short 300 bucks and rents due tomorrow.” Peter was all he said before throwing up his hood and jumping up to the platform where his bot would be fighting.

“Be careful.” she whispered, even though he couldn’t hear her over the noise.

“Wait he’s not actually fighting though.” Clint furrowed his brow in confusion.

“He still has to be careful. That guy he’s going up against can snap him in two.” Tony said solemnly and the implication clicked for Clint. Peter had to be careful because some people are just major cry babies, and will throw a tantrum.

*Camera cuts to the two bots fighting on the platform. Peter’s is obviously winning with not so surprising ease and an impassive look on his hooded face, to shroud some of his features but it was a flimsy way to keep his identity. The armor of the other robot clearly was destroyed and now
Peter just had to go for the kill.*


Peter’s bot breaks the other bot and he wins.

Like a lighting bolt, he scoops up the robot and quickly snatches the money on the plate as the man he was up against let out an inhuman shriek and Peter jumps off the platform before the bigger man could even get up and grabs MJ as they make their escape and weaved through the slightly parting crowd.

“We should do this less often.” MJ says to him, camera shaking as they weave through the crowd and the man is following with booming footsteps, to ‘get back here you brat’ and other vulgar things. Peter just gives MJ a shit eating grin.

“But you gotta admit, it’s kinda thrilling!” Peter says breathlessly back as they turn a corner. MJ rolls her eyes and smiles somewhat fondly. They stop at a chainedlinked fence and she looks at him as he crouched down to give her a boost up.

“You, Peter Parker, are a bad influence.” she said with her own smile as she places one foot on Peter’s hands and he springs her up over the fence. She grabbed the grooves on the other side to stop her decent and let go to land on her feet as Peter got a running start and kicked off the wall and onto the top then jumped down and smiled as he stood tall in front of her.

“Yet, you’re still here.” he smiled widely at her and she rolled her eyes and they kept running. Smiles never leaving their faces.

“These crazy kids better have a happy ending.” Tony fake wiped a tear from his eyes. Nearly everyone rolled their eyes.

“Oh shut up Stark.” Clint grumbled, but silently he agreed with them. These kids deserved the fairy tale ending they were entitled to. Whatever happened to plot armor?

“Is anyone else gonna verbally address that this kid should probably be in the Olympics?” Sam asked out loud and didn’t get a response so he sagged in his seat “Just me then, fine, okay whatever. I call dibs on being his sponsor though when he does, so jokes on you.” he muttered to himself as he crossed his arms to pout.

*Camera cuts to MJ sitting down on the floor facing the camera that was probably propped up on the table with Peter kneeling just above her. She was in a hooded crop top that was a bit too big for her and hung off one shoulder, but didn’t show her midriff because she was sitting and Peter was in a slightly too big sweater, the sleeves were too long so it was pulled up a bit. His hands were in her hair and a hair tie on his wrist, and the bracelet he made when he was younger, which wasn’t visible to any of them in the last scenes because he was always wearing sleeves that went past his bony wrist (as he did in real life too, so they weren’t sure if he was still wearing the bracelet).*

Mon. February 02, 2015- 12:05:13

“Okay so what do I do?” Peter asked and MJ rolled her eyes.

“You’ve made a braid before Parker.” she said back blandly.

“Yeah, but that was with one string. This is with a lot of strings...I mean hair.” he winced to himself at his slip up and MJ smirked up at him.
“Split the hair into three sections.” Mj instructed and Peter moved his hands behind her curly haired head. After he just stopped and waited further instruction but MJ didn’t talk until nearly 30 seconds later “Are you done?” she asked rather impatiently. Peter blinked.

“Yeah.” he said in a confused tone and MJ furrowed her brow.

“I didn’t feel it.” she said to him and he huffed in indigence.

“I didn’t wanna hurt you.” he informed with a slight blush on his lips that was quickly doused by MJ’s scoff.

“You won’t.” she reassured in a bland manner “Okay think of each section like on string and start braiding.” was her next vague instruction. Peter furrowed his brows in confusion, when he didn’t do anything and look up helplessly MJ sighed. “Take the left section and put it over the middle.” she instructed in a mockingly slow manner. Peter nodded and did so. “Now take the right and put it over the middle.” she said in the same tone and Peter hesitated.

“Wait the new right or the old right?” Peter asked bewildered and MJ looked almost offended and confused at the same time.

“They should be the same right.” she said in an almost astonished tone.

“I meant middle.” Peter blurted to correct himself and shook his head “New middle?” he asked and MJ just looked confused. Wanda giggled at his misery.

“What the fuck Parker. Just braid it.” MJ demanded and Peter made a grunt noise and pulled some hair “Oww.” she said and Peter stopped immediately.

“You said I couldn’t hurt you.” he accused in a hurt tone and MJ rolled his eyes. He was being to dramatic about this.

“It doesn’t hurt if you do it right.” she shot back and Peter furrowed his brows.

“I was doing it right.” he said in a defensive tone and MJ snorted.

“Obviously not.” she retorted back “How can you understand nuclear physics but not know how to braid hair?” MJ asked the question rhetorically and Peter pressed his lips into a thin line and yanked at her hair “Oww, what the fuck.”

“Because,” Peter said, with determination in his eyes “Physics is logical, this...this is not.” he pulled her hair and MJ went to the side he pulled a bit and she winced.

“This is logic too. Oww!” she yelped and Peter huffed.

“It’s not!” he complained back but kept going at her hair.

“It’s just over, under and repeat.” she said like it was obvious.

“That’s what I’m doing.” Peter argued back.

“Obviously not.” she retorted and they kept bickering for a bit longer.

The Avengers watched for a few more minutes as the two of them argued like an old married couple before coming to the final verdict of: These two are meant for each other.

The only question was: How could Peter give a relationship/friendship like this up so easily. They
knew it wasn’t as simple as that, but still, anything that he’d ever have to do paled in comparison to abandoning his friends thinking/knowing that he’d never ever get to see or hear or talk or be with them again.

The sacrifices this child made, were too great for the shitty world he made them for.

*Camera cuts to Ned and MJ sitting down on a different couch, a dark blue one this time, so that meant they weren’t at Ned’s house. They were in a different living room but in their usual lounge gear - meaning hoodies and sweatpants (These kids didn’t seem to care about impressing anyone). They were also holding plates with pieces of slowly melting ice cream cake. The small cake on the coffee table having already been cut into*

Tues. March 10, 2015- 20:14:37

“Y’all this cake slaps.” MJ said casually with a bit of cake muffling her words.

“Good to know being broke paid off.” Peter said teasingly from behind the camera, MJ just shot him an indifferent look and went back to her cake.

“Eat your piece instead of doing your dumbass shit.” she grumbled back through her piece of cake and Peter’s airy laughter came from behind the camera before he shifted the camera and propped it up against something and got into the frame, his own barley eaten and melting cake in his hands. “Thank you.” she mumbled to Ned and Peter, looking up sincerely. Peter and Ned smiled at her.

“It’s your birthday.” Ned gave a wide grin and MJ rolled her eyes.

“I still don’t know how you found out Parker.” she grumbled and Peter gave her a sharky grin and tapped his nose with the end of his fork.

“I have my ways.” he said in a vague voice, MJ snorted. Ned’s head cocked to the side, as if he just suddenly thought of something.

“Peter, now that I think of it, when is your birthday?” Ned asked innocently and Peter stiffened only slightly. “We never celebrate it.” he commented casually, if not a little guiltily, and MJ looked up with a deadpanned look on her face.

“Ned, we’ve known Parker for what? 3 years now? How do you not know his birthday?” She scoffed and Ned gave her a look.

“Do you?” Peter asked, a playful smile coming across his face. When she didn’t answer, he laughed a bit. “It’s cool. I don’t even know when it is either.” he laughed a bit embarassed, as the two of them looked at him increduosly.

“August 10th.” Natasha mumbled, more to herself. She’d never forget that date. Never forget the day her baby was brought into the world. Never forget the date she was too weak to give him up. The day she ruined her child’s life forever. “His birthday… it’s August 10.” she muttered more saddened than ever, because for years to come, Peter would never know who she was, where he came from, who he was.

And it was all her fault.

“How do you not know your own birthday?!” Ned asked in his surprise he leaned forward, Peter looked pretty unscathed by the fact.

“Dunno.” he shrugged casually in response and stabbed his fork into the melted cake and took a
“Wade and I always just celebrated it on the second Wednesday of August.” he said around the cake in his mouth. MJ wrinkled her nose but didn’t mention that.

“So you know that you were born in the August.” she deducted from Peter’s words, as if she was trying to figure out the mystery that was Peter Parker. They all were, if everyone was being completely honest.

“Well somewher in the summer. August just feels right I guess.” Peter answered, seeming to be uninhibited by the conversation and just content with eating his cake “I never knew my birth mother, and the...orphanage I grew up at didn’t know either.” he tried to shrug but there was a low dip in his voice when he mentioned the ‘orphanage’ so to speak. The other two didn’t seem to pick up on it.

“Oh,” Ned looked a bit disheartened “That makes sense I guess.” he looked down at his cake sadly and Peter gave him a reassuring and encouraging smile. He gave back a half hearted small one.

“That’s down right depressing.” MJ scoffed and Peter snorted a bit. Leave it to MJ to put things bluntly.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned in their hoodies on some plush couches near a window in the library. It was grey and rainy outside and Ned was scrolling through his phone with a deep set look of concentration of whatever he was looking at. Peter was casually reading a thick book, the covering being obscured from the camera, but he looked pretty content. His black backpack was on the ground near where he was sitting.*

Sat. April 25, 2015- 18:45:09

“Wasn’t this the day after the SHIELD leak?” Steve muttered, looking at the time stamp. Natasha and Sam shuddered at the memory while Bucky stiffened. They didn’t say anything though

“Hey Peter…” Ned said with question a a bit on dread in his voice. Peter made a hum of acknowledgement but didn’t seem to be put in distress at his friend’s tone. “Do you ever wonder what goes on in important people’s heads when they make a stupid decision?” Ned continued, looking up at Peter with an unreadable look in his eye. Peter sighed heavily but didn’t look up from his book.

“What did MJ send this time?” Peter asked boredly and flipped the page.

“The Winter Soldier almost wrecked DC.” Ned said warily and Peter’s head shot up. Bucky stiffened as he saw familiarity and dread come into Peter’s eyes at the name.

“What?” Peter asked in a shocked and shaky tone, Ned paid no mind to it and held out the phone, Peter didn’t take it, a dazed look coming into his eye.

“Don’t worry, Captian America stopped him.” Ned said in a nonchelont tone “Oh wait, the Winter Soldier is like a HYDRA assassin. Like you know the bad guys.” Ned informed him as if he didn’t already know. But to Ned, Peter really didn’t know who the Winter Soldier was.

“He’s still alive?” Peter asked in a whisper. Dread, hurt, anger and fear were dancing in his darkened brow orbs, along with so many other emotions mixed in. Bucky didn’t know what to think, Natasha rubbed a hand up and down his arm.

“What do you mean?” Ned asked and Peter stiffened then shook his head.

“Nothing.” he said and grabbed the phone and started reading whatever Ned had pulled up on the
screen as Ned started babbling about it.

“They think that the Winter Soldier was James Barnes, you know Captain America’s best friend. They think HYDRA brainwashed him or something which is so crazy, ri-” Ned was cut off by Peter speaking but not looking up from the article.

“They released all SHIELD databases to the public?” he muttered out loud. Ned blinked.

“Yeah, why?” he asked innocently.

“Idiots.” he cursed to himself and pushed Ned back his phone as he unzipped and dug out his homemade laptop from his bag and opened it up. He started to type vigorously on it while Ned leaned toward the camera to catch what Peter was doing on it, a deadset determined look on his face.

On Peter’s screen was the database for SHIELD, files and mission reports flying across the screen as he quickly read the tags they were labeled as.

“What is he doing?” Steve asked to Tony, the tech genius looked at the screen in concentration before sitting up a bit.

“He’s...hacking…” Tony said a little bit of shock coming into his tone. “Into SHIELD.” he said. It shouldn’t come as a shock, 16 year old Peter hacked into SHIELD all the time, but it was still impressive that a mere child could do so. Impressive or sad, maybe a bit of both. Tony would have to beef up the systems to give Parker a challenge. Maybe some of his own as well.

“What?” Steve asked, clearly more shocked than Tony was as he whipped his head back and forth between the screen and the man. Tony held back the urge to roll his eyes at the age old man.

“It makes sense.” Natasha said easily, not sounding the least bit surprised. “We couldn’t find anything on him in any of the databases by the time we actually knew about him. There was no more traces of being hacked, because the files hadn’t been accessed in years. This was probably the last time.” she said and Steve looked at the screen again with a more sober expression.

“Yeah, but what could SHIELD have on him that he wants to hide?” Sam asked, a rather stupid question if you asked anyone else in the room.

“More than you want to know.” Bucky muttered darkly, effectively ending the conversation as all the attention was back on the screen.

“Peter…” Ned said warily “Why are you hacking SHIELD?” his worry only spiking as he saw the file Peter had stopped on had his name on it. “And why are you in their database?” he said in a more alarmed tone as Peter clicked the file and it opened to documents with some of the sentences blacked out.

“Not anymore.” he muttered and clicked a few things and the screen pulled up a loading circle before all the documents and the file disappeared as if it were never there in the first place.

“Peter!” Ned nearly screamed, horrified at what his friend had just done. Peter ignored him and started clicking at the keyboard again more aggressively, mumbling strings of Russian, German and English muddled together to make gibberish mess.

“It’s not a big deal Ned. Forget what happened.” Peter said dismissively, not looking up from the screen and Ned started breathing more rapidly.
“Dude! Doesn’t SHIELD catch the bad guys?” Ned said, the panic in his tone increasing as Peter kept typing, but the younger boy went a bit pale “Like...the Avengers! Oh my god, you could have the Avengers after you! Do you have the Avengers after you? Are you a HYDRA agent? Oh my god, are you friends with the Winter Soldier? Are you-” Ned’s rapid fire questions came to a halt at Peter’s snappish voice.

“I don’t know the Winter Soldier!” Peter blurted in an angry and desperate voice and there was silence on both ends of the screen as continued Peter looked down at the keyboard he had stopped typing on and took a breath. “I wasn’t…” Peer said in a calmer tone “I was just found by them.” he sighed and let his shoulders sag as he leaned back. Worry and panic and dread that was there earlier was now completely gone, replaced by an unreadable look as h. “Mary Parker, my foster mother, was a SHIELD agent and she found me on the streets on one of her missions. She decided to keep me and her mission was a long term one.” he made up his lie with scary ease. This all had to be on the spot, and frankly it was quite impressive for a child. If the Avengers didn’t know any better, they would have probably believed it. “But before the mission ended, she had to do one thing. She put me on the plane meant to pick her up, but she had to leave to do...something. She said she’d come back...but she didn’t.” Peter said in a sad tone, and something in his voice told Natasha and Bucky that this part of the story wasn’t made up. “The only way they could bring me back without Mary and give me to her relatives was saying I was a POW in the SHIELD database since I didn’t have any adoption files.” he made the last part up, it didn’t even make sense, but to a ten year old, it probably did, because Ned bought it. “That’s why.” Peter ended with a huff and started typing but less aggressively this time.

“So…” Ned prompted and Peter sighed and typed one last thing before closing his computer and looking directly at Ned.

“I don’t know the Winter Soldier.” he said seriously, looking his best friend directly in the eye and lying without hesitation. Like he had been for 3 years now. “And frankly I just wanna-” Peter said in a more frustrated tone, but cut himself off.

“Just wanna what?” Ned asked gently. Everyone held their breath as they waited for Peter to break the silence. The distant, hollow look come into his eyes as he looked directly at them.

“Forget.” he said in a far away tone. Ned touched his arm lightly and that seemed to snap him out of it and he shook his head. “Forget it.” he said shoving his computer back into his backpack and getting up as he was zipping it.

There was silence for a bit.

“Buck…” Steve said slowly, coaxing, gently. No one expected the harsh laugh to bark out of the Winter Soldier’s lips.

“That’s so messed up.” he spat bitterly. No one else spoke “He wants to forget but only remembers. I want to remember but only forget. It’s twisted. Ironic even.” Bucky snarled, his anger at HYDRA spiking by the minute.

“Kras.” Natasha said gently.

“Natalia, you saw him! You’re watching him trying to move on alone. He can’t tell anyone. He doesn’t have the help I have, and he needs it more.” Bucky ranted and Natasha squeezed his shoulder, making him stop and look into her sorrowful stormy green eyes.

“I know.” she whispered.
"Tar ar MJ, ní teanga chomh dona sin é" (Come on MJ, it’s not that bad a language.) Peter said in a slightly amateur Irish accent. It was obvious that he didn’t know it as well as he did Russian. MJ wrinkled her nose, clearly not succeeding in blocking out the words.

"Your accent is terrible." she grumbled lowly and Peter laughed airily.

"Níl sé chomh dona sin." (It’s not that bad.) he insisted again and then mumbled more to himself. "I just learned it." he said, defending his crude accent. MJ whipped around and looked at him angrily.

"Irish is a terrible, ugly language and I will forever hate it." MJ angrily declared at Peter, who stepped back with the camera, probably in surprise.

"Sin an t-idirdhealú." (That’s discrimination.) He said in a playful tone.

"You wouldn’t understand." MJ said in a heated tone and turned around a little.

"Ciallaíonn mé nach maith liom an Ghearmáinis, ach tá sé fós á labhairt agam." (I mean I don’t particularly like German, but I still speak it.) Peter said in a thoughtful tone. MJ turned to him, her interest apparently peaked.

"Really? You know German?" she asked with a quirked brow and Peter shrugged.

"Ja, aber zurück zum Punkt." (Yeah, but back to the point.) Peter said, this time in perfect German. "What do you have against the Irish?" he asked cocking his head curiously as he fell into step with MJ.

"What do you have against the Germans?" she shot back, clearly not wanting to talk about it.

"I’m Russian." Peter said in a deadpan “I hate everything that isn’t Russia.” he said to her and she quirked a brow.

"Even America?" she asked in her normal bland voice.

"Especially America." he said back with a mischievous grin.

"Valid." she nodded, but didn’t answer anything more.

"I came from a conservative village. They still can’t get their heads out of World War Two." Peter lied easily. Usually he didn’t bring up his past on his own terms, always on someone else’s. But damn was he good at pretending.

"This is why we are getting coned by a kid.” Clint grumbled as he pouted slightly.

"Please, you’re just upset that he’s a better spy than you.” Sam scoffed at the older Avenger.

"And what does he do with that talent?” Clint asked retorically “Tries to have a normal fucking life. See this is why the next generation is doomed.” he fell back, clearly upset.
“He’s Nat and Bucky’s kid, what do you expect?” Bruce smirked with crossed arms.

“I have nothing against them…” MJ sagged her shoulders as Peter had a triumphant smile on her face. Even if she knew Peter didn’t bring up his past much, the kid really knew how to guilt trip a person. It was scary how good he was at manipulating them. “It just…” MJ got a far off look in her eyes and Peter seemed to sober up instantly.

“Brings somethin’ back?” he asked nonchalantly, but somehow gently. It was the perfect voice to reassure and comfort MJ in, because it was surprisingly effective. Somehow Pepper knows that it would only work if Peter did it. MJ nodded solemnly “Same thing for me with German.” he said, answering the question MJ was probably never gonna ask.

“But you still speak it.” MJ pointed out, looking at Peter and he looked back at her.

“Ich lasse mich nicht von ihnen beeinflussen” (I won’t let them affect me.) He said in a deadset determined voice. And even if MJ didn’t understand the words, she understood the meaning and nodded once.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Wade sitting in a florencently lighted burger shop eating burgers and fries in their full black combat gear. It was dark outside of the window next to their booth seat. Wade seemed to enjoy the food, Peter seemed to be bored playing with his fries by pushing them around the greasy basket with one of them, not actually eating anything. A far off look was in his eyes, showing that he wasn’t entirely present. His face was pale and there were bags under his eyes that were brought out by the artificial lighting*


“Pete can I ask you something?” Wade said in a nonchalant tone as he picked up his burger and took a bite of it. Peter looked up, with uninterested and tired eyes, from where he was playing with his fries, but didn’t answer verbally. “What do you plan to do when you get out of this hellhole?” he asked innocently enough. Peter looked confused, but still drowsy. Like he was too tired to deal with any questions right now.

“What do you mean?” he asked in an exasperated tone, but it probably wasn’t supposed to come out like that, he looked pretty exhausted. It was also pretty late, and assuming that he was coming back from a mission, it would make sense that he was a bit cranky.

“I mean, like when you quit. What do you wanna do when you’re older?” Wade clarified “I’m sure as hell it’s not gonna be this.” Wade said with a small quirk of his brows as a light joke, Peter looked at him in a deadpan then scoffed a bit like a teenager would when their parents were trying to give them advise that they didn’t care about, and looked slightly way.

Yeah, definitely a teenager.

“Stop being stupid.” he muttered loud enough so Wade could hear. Wade cocked his head in a silent question as Peter averted his eyes toward him and looked back with an impassive, almost incredulous, look. Like he couldn’t believe how stupid Wade sounded right now. “I don’t get to decide what happens to me Wade. I never did and never ever will.” Peter’s tone made that very clear that he had known that depressing fact for his whole life, but Wade - rather stupidly - pressed on.

“Yeah but like,” Wade - rather stupidly - pressed on.“If you could-” Wade was cut off by Peter banging the table, making everyone jump at the sudden noise and the anger and annoyance swimming in the boy’s normally gentle chocolate eyes. Why he was was so snappish all of a
sudden, the Avengers didn’t know why. Probably because he was tired, he looked tired. He also looked mad and hurt and every negative emotion could be seen clearly swimming in his eyes. Or he was just tired of not being in control over his own life. Probably both.

“I can’t.” Peter nearly yelled, but it came out hoarse and hurt and angry and sad hiss “I can’t. I never could and I never will. I’ll always be owned by someone, controlled by someone.” he made a frustrated gesture with his hands like the air was being caged. “I don’t get to decide what will ever happen to me. It’s the way it’s always been, and that’s not gonna change. I don’t expect it to change, Wade.” Peter said in a more calm voice, but there was still the fiery fury behind it.

“Pete-” Wade started.

“Don’t...just...sorry.” he sagged his shoulders “I shouldn't've got mad...it’s...it’s not your fault.” there was silence for a long time, because that’s not what Wade was gonna address, but the man seemed at a loss for words. What could he do anyway? He had as much authority as Peter, but Peter had it so much worse.

He deserved so much better.

“It’s not yours either.” Wade mumbled lowly, but Peter had heard it. He just didn’t respond.

Because they both know it’s true.

*Camera cuts to Peter in full gear with an impassive look on his face. He was inside a dark room that looked like a wrecked office, papers scattered, desks flipped, office supplies thrown to the ground, bloody unmoving bodies everywhere, liquid red stains splattered across nearly every surface. It looked like a massacre. There were some other men that were standing up, holding weapons and pointing them at the small child and Peter had a strange blade in his hand, the men six times his size were charging at him full speed with guns blazing*


“Go get em Pete!” Wade cheered encouragingly from behind the camera. Clearly not being of any use to the child.

“This is so annoying.” Peter grumbled that was heard through the static of Wade’s com system that he must’ve had on him. Peter leaned forward and ran at them from a low point, he was quicker so he got to them first and slashed out one of his blades and cut a man’s leg clean off and continued the slice along the man behind the first guy’s torso, making him drop dead “Who initiates the missions on the day of the lord.” he grumped and Wade hooted a laugh.

“I thought you weren’t religious Parker.” said another man on the com, probably apart of the mission too. Peter jumped on the desk and used his momentum to go towards the wall and stuck his blade there and perched on the higher end of the wall so his hair was barley touching the ceiling as he scanned around the room. A man yelled and started firing at him, but never once hitting the nimble figure.

“I’m not.” Peter breathed and took out another of the same blade that curled into a scythe like shape and flipped backwards, hooking the second blade onto the first to propel him in the opposite direction and put the free blade in front of him and it straightened out sideways and grabbed the first blade and use the second perch to push off and sliced the guy right on the neck and turned back grabbed the blade still in the wall brought around and pinned the last guy against his other side. “It’s just a matter of principal.” he said airily, nearly breathless.

“Damn.” Sam whistled impressed, while Natasha and Bucky both had smug smirks on their faces
as if saying ‘yeah that’s my fucking kid’, even if their kid was fucking killing people for the government with eery efficiency.

“Contracting blades.” Tony said with mild interest, and impressiveness. Everything about this kid was impressive. Supergenius, and a manipulative liar and a pretty amazing fighter. He didn’t use brute strength, he used precision, and Tony couldn’t help but notice that Spiderman had a similar fighting tactic. Peter may have super strength now, but he never needed it to be a badass. He was too used to fighting with his wits and not his muscles (well his arm muscles, he used his brain pretty effectively).

“You think he made them?” Bruce asked and Tony looked at him like it was obvious, Bruce blushed and ducked, getting his answer.

“It’s like the prequel to wall crawling.” he responded wistfully.

“Good job Pete.” Wade congratulated and Peter looked at him in a deadpan.

“You owe me a fucking soda.” he told him and Wade’s barked laughter was cut off by the next scene.

*Camera cuts to Peter bounding through the tent with a huge smile on his face, he was wearing a tight black T-shirt that showed most of his skinny figure and black combat pants on, and a piece of paper in his hands.*

Mon. August 10, 2015 - 20:22:45

“Wade! Wade, Wade!” he bounced excitedly up and down, the paper being slightly crumpled by how tight the boy’s grip was on it.

“Pete! Pete, Pete!” Wade said back mocking excited tone in a playful manner and Peter giggled, he didn’t do that often anymore “What’s got you so happy?” Wade asked knowingly, Peter didn’t pay attention to his tone and looked with eyes of wonder down to the paper, as if it was the best thing since cold fusion could be calculated.

“This!” he held up the paper, it was too far for the camera to read the fine print, but the top clearly stated why Peter was so happy. “It’s a letter of resignation!” he announced and a splitting genuine smile came onto his face. Nobody knew what to say, they were all so shocked.

“That’s great Pete!” Wade said with a genuinely happy voice.

“I don’t understand.” Peter said breathlessly turning the paper around so he could read it again, as if he couldn’t believe this was real or actually happening “I thought I needed a person to recommend me for permanent leave but…” something clicked in his eyes and he looked up at Wade with wide brown orbs. “Did you…?” Peter asked breathlessly.

“Eh, since Cotnet got killed, the new officer asked for any recommendations, I simply said a few things and he took them in consideration. He agreed, a kid shouldn’t be in the army.” Wade said nonchalantly “You know because he has sense and I was gonna resign after this tour-” Wade never got to finish as his arms were once again full of the bundle of sunshine known as Peter Parker.

“Thank you.” he whispered gratefully “You have no idea-...thank you so much. You’ve done… a lot and … heh MJ always said I was bad at sentiment.” Peter joked but didn’t let go of Wade, only held him tighter. It took a second for Wade to respond but the other man hugged back with one hand, the other hand still filming.
“Sentiment is for chumps anyway.” he said back and Peter laughed a watery laugh.

“Tony… what are you doing?” Pepper asked as he watched her fiance tap at his phone vigorously.

“I don’t care what any of you say, that man,” he pointed at the screen while typing with one hand “Is never paying for his bills, insurance, food, none of it.” Tony said, bringing his hand back to continue tapping.

“Tony…” Pepper said solemnly.

“Not even fucking taxes Pep. I will not allow it.” Tony insisted, not caring what his fiancee was gonna say.

“Do it.” she said in a low determined voice and Tony tapped a few more things before a final, rather dramatic tap to end whatever he just did. No one even made a move to stop him. And he settled to watch the next clip playing

*camera cuts to Peter in a light hoodie, he was in the library again, but this time alone. He was putting books on a shelf, the books being on a library cart that usually librarians use to file their books and the camera is propped up on some books on the cart*

Mon. September 21, 2015 - 12:33:56

“So Ms.Karen told me to restock the physics section for after-hour book time and-” Peter whispered loudly to the camera, obviously excited at the prospect of getting extra time reading.

“Talking to the books won’t get them shelved Peter.” A kind but stern voice cut him off. Peter turned around to see a kind looking brunette who seemed to be in her early late teens and early 20s. She was wearing a lose, flowy white blouse and jeans and was crossing her arms with a small fond smile on her face. “or to a camera I guess, what are you up to this time?” she asked with a tint of endearment in her tone.

“N-nothing Ms.Karen!” Peter said bashfully, with a blush tinting his cheeks - that had oddly lost most of their baby fat at this point - and she shook her head affectionately.

“Okay, but don’t waste time reading the books as you shelve them. Or I’ll have you shelving your own books when you come.” Karen said playfully and Peter groaned, clearly not wanting to the chore.

“I don’t read them, I...skim?” Peter blushed and shrugged. Karen laughed again and then produced a bag out of nowhere. Peter’s eyes instantly lit up, obviously knowing what was in it as he was slightly vibrating with excitement.

“Here. My mother made cookies.” Karen said and Peter smiles at her and accepted the bag with a splitting smile.

“Man I wish I had a mom like yours!” Peter said like a kid would. So innocently and without thinking at all as he looked excited down at the bag.

“I guess you’ll have to learn how to bake after all.” Bucky nudged playfully Natasha, who had gone still, to snap her out of the guilt coursing through her veins. She collected herself and then scoffed.

“I’ll just have you make them and take credit.” Natasha told him, a hint of mischievousness that mirrored in Peter’s eyes sometimes.
“That won’t work.” He said back, a mocking tint in his tone, and Natasha deflated in defeat because she knew it was true. Her son was too damn smart. It didn’t stop the small smile playing on her lips.

*camera cuts to Peter in an oversized plack tshirt, cleaning glasses over a bar counter. The shelves behind him were dingy and old worn wood holding cheap and off branded alchol products and chipped stained glasses. The lighting was scarce and dark like how a bar would be and there was a board that had the word ‘DEADPOOL’ written at the top and a bunch of names written down the list. There was also the side of a job board, making it obvious this was not any ordinary bar. It was a Merc Bar.*

Thurs. October 15, 2015- 23:19:03

“Wait is he...working at a bar?” Tony asked and, yeah he knew that MJ had told him, but he was still surprised, before any one could answer a voice behind the camera made itself known.

“Nice job Peter keep up the good work.” said Wade encouragingly “First impressions are everything” he whispered as a big burly man came up to the counter and Peter shot a glare at the camera man before looking up with an impasive look.

“Hey, pipsqueak. I need some liquor.” the man said in a deep tone. Peter nodded and ducked down to get the alcohol requested, poured it in the glass he was cleaning and handed it to the man. The man took a sip and spit it out at the boy, he side stepped to avoid it, and then the man bad temperedly crashed the glass onto the table.

“Oh you’ve got to be kidding me.” a skinny man in a stained covered graphic Tee groaned and came up behind the kid and started to sweep the pan with a dust pan in his man.

“You’ve got to be joking Weasel. This kid doesn’t have the tounge for this job, he’s a fucking kid.” the man complained. “You can’t actuallyhire him.” he insisted and the man, Weasel, rolled his eyes.

“I can do whatever the fuck I want. It’s my bar.” Weasel huffed and shoved the dusting pan to Peter so he could clean up the mess. Peter took it and went around the counter to start.

“All he’s good for is grunt work, not pouring drinks.” The man laughed as he kicked the kid who had bent down to clean up his mess.

“Or maybe you’re just a dumbass fucktard.” Peter muttered as he rolled over to clean up again. The man’s eyes flashed, as he must’ve heard.

“What did you jus’ say?” he asked and leaned down to grab Peter and lift him by his shirt. He then brought the small child closer to his face.

“I said:” Peter repeated, looking his directly in the eye with determination “You’re a dumbass fucktard. It doesn’t matter who pours the damn thing, it’ll taste the same idiot.” Peter said to his face and a knife manifested itself out of nowhere in Peter’s hand as he held it up to the man’s neck lazily. “Now let me go, or you won’t be drinking from your mouth anymore.” he said boredly and the man growled as he dropped the child harshly shoving him back. “Also take a fucking mint.” Peter grumbled as he picked up his supplies and went behind the counter again. Weasel laughed.

“Yeah, you’re a keeper.” he clapped Peter on the back and Peter rolled his eyes.

“You’re just like Wade.” Peter grumbled in distaste.
“Welcome to Saint Margarets kid!” Wade cheered, Peter only had a small smile before it disappeared into his impassiveness.

*Camera cuts to MJ in one of Peter’s hoodies, on a rooftop as the sun was setting over the city. The pinks and oranges radiating and fading into blues and purples near the crest of the image. Her skin almost looked golden as she stared out at the view and the wind lightly touching her wild, curly brown hair.*

Tues. November 24, 2015- 17:56:08

“Peter…” MJ said after a few moments of just staring.

“Yeah?” Peter asked and MJ turned to the camera with her usual impassive expression, but there was something calculating in her eyes before she asked her next question.

“Why do you film little things?” MJ cocked her head curiously. She looked adorable.

“I’m not sure I understand.” he said, clearly knowing exactly what she meant. She gave him a look and gestured to the camera.

“You’ve been filming every little thing for over 3 years now.” she said, not in a gentle or accusing tone, and he sighed.

“I would say its because its fun…” he said and he sagged his shoulders, the camera going down slightly “but I guess you know me enough to know that I’d be lying.” Peter joked lightly and MJ smiled only a little at him.

“So why do you do it?” she asked. He blew out a breath.

“I guess I … I don’t wanna forget anything.” he whispered his confession and she looked confused.

“Don’t wanna forget?” she asked and Peter put down the camera next to him so he was in the frame too and looked out at the sunset.

“I spent my whole life trying to forget the bad parts.” he whispered “But I don’t wanna forget the good parts too.” he confessed quietly “I don’t wanna forget you, or Ned or Wade or Ms.K…” and MJ looked at him.

“Why would you forget?” she asked in a quiet but not particularly soothing tone. He seemed to respond to it more effectively. Pepper thinks that it would only work with Michelle though.

“Back when I was a kid… “ Peter started after a moment “There was this man… that came to the orphanage. He was nice to me, everyone else was mean. And...sometimes I’d think that we were having a… a good time.” he said, like he knew it wasn’t like that but it was probably the best moments in the base for him. “But he had to go sometimes and when he came back he’d never remember the memories we had together. He’d never ever remember me or the nice times we had.” he said and it sounded regretful. Like Peter was thinking it was his fault that he wasn’t remembered.

“Amnesia?” MJ asked.

“Something like that, yeah.” Peter blew out a breath “I just don’t want to forget like he did. I don’t want to forget the good times. He forgot the bad times but he also forgot the bad times. I remember the good and bad times. I just…” Peter paused for a second and MJ let him gather his thoughts patiently “sometimes I feel like I would rather forget him too...because even though I had a good
time, it ...it hurts when I remember them.” Peter said softly and then MJ punched his arms lightly
“Hey M-” Peter said shocked and a bit hurt.

“Stop thinking like that.” MJ said blandly, swiftly cutting him off and looking into the now mostly
setting sun. “You can’t forget all the bad things. You have to learn from them.” MJ said.

“But they...hurt.” Peter whispered.

“And those are the ones you will remember forever.” MJ told him “It’s just how it is. Instead of
trying to forget, just accept it. Become a better person for it.” MJ told him and had a stern gaze in
her eyes and Peter’s were unreadable.

“He...I…” Bucky didn’t know what to say. No one did. These kids were too wise and good for their
own good. They were too innocent and pure to actually be hurting this much. It was actually
physically painful to watch. Their eyes were weathered by all the hardship they had to face and
they weren’t even 13 yet. That was just the thing heroes were supposed to prevent.

So how had they failed these children so miserably?

*Camera cuts to Peter and MJ in the library, working on a project with a lot of papers books,
supplies and charts stacked up around them. MJ seemed to be proofing something Peter had
proposed and her hands flew up suddenly*


“Welp, Parker. Looks like your getting an A plus and a scholarship to MIT, Harvord, Stanford and
wherever the hell else you wanna go.” MJ said blandly. “Congratulations” she said with a flat tone
as she pulled away from the project board they were working on as Peter smiled gently, but then
looked back at his proposal and frowned.

“I dunno.” Peter mumbled and twisted his hands together nervously. MJ put her book down and sat
up quickly. She whirled at him with a confused and almost incredulous furrow of her brows.

“What do you mean, ‘you don’t know.’? You just made medical discoveries that could
revolutionize the prosthetic and energy industries.” MJ said to him and Peter ducked in on himself
and blushed.

“Maybe, I’ll just make a hologram of the solar system for the science fair.” Peter mumbled as an
alternative. MJ looked at him like he was the craziest person in the world, before composing
herself again.

“That’s dumb.” MJ said blandly.

“I could put fun facts that you could touch with your hand. Like did you know all the moons of
Jupiter are named after Zeus’s mistresses?” Peter chuckled nervously.

“People who work at NASA are nerds. That’s not exactly news.” MJ said tonelessly.

“Hey, I wanna work at NASA.” Peter said a bit meekly.

“You’re a nerd. Again, not news Parker.” MJ dismissed with a wave of her hand. “Why don’t you
want to show people what you can do?” she asked with furrowed brows.

“They won’t take an eleven year old seriously Em. You know that.” Peter said gently and MJ
rolled her eyes.
“Fair enough. Adult are arrogant and egotistical. They have too much pride to admit a kid is right, even if you are a certified genius.” MJ mumbled. “But when you or I become a corporate success, we’ll see who’s laughing.” she said with a mischievous and slightly evil smile playing on her lips.

“Oh I’m sure they will.” Peter smirked good naturedly, not really taking MJ’s proposal seriously.

“No, seriously. I’m gonna create a company, hire you as a conceptionist and scientist and then we’ll revolutionize the world.” MJ said easily and Peter looked thoughtful for a minute.

“Not a bad plan.” Peter shrugged and got back to gathering up papers.

“It’s not a plan, it’s an idea. The plan is: we both graduate early, maybe Leeds too. I go to Harvard you go to MIT. Get a bunch of PhDs and rep. I fund your science projects and disproving theories. We slowly climb up until we’re as big as Stark or Osborn. We split the profit 25-25 and the 50 goes into more project funding and business.” MJ said as if she was saying how to cook toast.

“Smart.” everyone mumbled.

“Those numbers solid?” Peter asked and MJ rolled her eyes.

“Obviously not Parker, it’s just a concept plan.” MJ said. “I made it up on the spot.” she said

“It’s not a bad plan, though.” Peter mumbled as he continued his reading.

“They’re gonna overthrow every business and government this world has, aren’t they?” Tony said a little warily.

“Oh without a doubt.” Pepper said as if she was expecting this. “Our time is limited Tony, once they see each other again and Michelle graduates their plan will be in full motion.” she smirked and Tony started to brainstorm retirement homes.

“Wade was right, they are devil children.” Bucky mumbled “Fucking terrifying.” Bucky refused to be fooled by the bright smiles on the screen.

*Camera cuts to MJ and Ned sitting at the bar counter in Saint Margret’s. They were in moderately casual cloths, MJ had a black T-shirt with a flannel around her waist and slight ripped jeans and Ned was in a brown zip up and jeans. MJ looked bored while Ned was understandably nervous and skittish, his eyes flying and darting across the room in the closest thing to paranoia*

Sat. January 16, 2016-17:42:03

“Huh, I’m surprised Ms.Leeds let him come here if she wouldn’t even approve the junk yard.” Bruce commented in a bit of disapproving shock and Tony rolled his eyes at his friend’s innocence.

“She didn’t. This my friend is called rebellion.” Tony said in a mocking/teasing way as Bruce blushed a little in embarrassment and Sam rolled his eyes and smack Tony’s arm lightly.

“This is where you work?” Ned asked, his wide eyes finally settling on Peter, who was, presumably, the one filming.

“Yeah.” Peter said casually from somewhere behind the camera.

“How’d you get it?” MJ asked in an uninterested but slightly suspicious tone, as her eyes narrowed in on the boy.
“Wade hooked me up.” Peter said nonchelontly. They both looked at him with a deadpan, but there was a bit of worry and a smidge if disapproval in their look “What? It’s better then bot fighting, isn’t it?” He said in a defensive tone.

“No.” They both responded in a blunt tone, and Peter groaned and got into the frame and started to clean a glass.

“I think this is worse.” Ned said in a worried tone and Peter rolled his eyes.

“Beggars can’t be choosers.” Peter said to him in a deadpan.

“So why are we here again?” MJ leaned her head against her hand, elbow on the table.

“Because,” Peter said pointedly “you wanted to meet Wade.” He said and smirked a little as MJ perked up. Ned still looked a little wary.

“You said he was good guy.” Ned muttered and Peter cocked his head at the comment in confusion.

“He is.” Peter said innocently “how would you know he’s not? You guys haven’t even met him yet.” He said a little bit of protectiveness and disappointment coming into his voice.

“He got you a job at a Merc bar.” Ned said in a deadpan and Peter blushed only a little, and averted his eyes.

“Okay, valid.” Peter murmured, a bit embarrassed but then looked up but not particularly at his friends “but in my defense i believe I specifically said that he wasn’t an asshole. He is kind of...weird though.” Peter informed as he trailed off lanky and looked at them with a sheepish smile and MJ rolled her eyes.

“Stupid?” She asked with a quirked brow.

“Kinda.” Peter made a so-So gesture.

“Wreckless?” Ned asked in a blunt but kind of nervous tone.

“Most of the time.” Peter shrugged, clearly no seeing a problem with it.

“Bad influence?” MJ asked in a deadpan.

“Most defiantly.” A deep voice behind the two answered immediatly. They turned to see one Wade Wilson in his 6’ 2” of glory, smiling sharkishly at the two. Ned seemed to be a little shaken but MJ blinked up at him boredly, seemingly not intimidated by the man. “I see Peter finally is forming his own gang. About time.” Wade said sneakily as Peter crossed his arms.

“We aren’t a gang.” He huffed. Wade gave him a knowing look.

“Obviously not. You need a few locations some drug shipments. I could hook you up kid. You know I can.” Wade said teasingly and Pete related at him as Ned gave him an incredulous look and MJ raised a brow. “Kidding. Who am I talking to?” Wade asked and Peter rolled his eyes.

“This is Ned and MJ.” Peter gestured to the respective friend and MJ didn’t do anything as Ned gave a sheepish wave.

“Nice to meet cha’ MJ.” Wade smiles and Ned winced, Peter chokes a bit.
“Oh he’s gone.” Tony muttered and Pepper hummed in regretful agreement.

“Call me Michelle.” She said in a low, dangerous tone. Wade went white and held up his hands in surrender. MJ smirked, seemingly satisfied by Wade’s fear.

“You’ve got a specific name?” Wade asked turning to Ned and the boy shook his head.

“No, Ned’s fine.” Ned said and looked a little exasperated “I’m the normal one.” He said in a tired tone and Wade barked out a laugh that made the boy jump a bit.

“You ain’t normal if you hang out willing with this kid.” Wade smirked gesturing to a gawking Peter and laughing.

“Hey!” Peter squawked “I’m...normal?” Peter asked a bit offended and Wade and MJ scoffed.

“As if.” Wade waved off the boy.

“Who even says that anymore?” MJ beat Peter to the punch. Wade blinked at her, seemingly stunned for a moment.

“You’re old.” Ned whispered a small mischievous smile starting to form on his lips. Peter laughed.

“Oh god.” Wade said dramatically “There are more of them! Weasel call the fucking exorcist.” Wade called to his ratty friend.

“There aren’t more of us.” Peter smiles playfully and too innocently.

“You’re just hallucinating in your old age.” MJ had a small smirk playing on her own face.

“It’s okay. This is perfectly normal for human beings.” Ned said a bright smile adorning his own face and Wade groaned.

“Demon children.” He muttered and the trio laughed.

*camera cuts to the camera following Peter, in a flannel and jeans, a science t-shirt on. He was pushing a grocery cart full of preservative foods and looking at the selection of soups. He looked relatively normal, a neutral but somewhat content look on his face*

Sun. February 21, 2016-12:32:45

“This is the Peter: a rare breed of ‘responsible child’. He seems to be around the age of 11 and has a rather diminutive stature to the other children in his species.” Wade said like a nature documenter from behind the camera “Currently, he is in his food gathering cycle for every other Sunday. I have only been documenting this species for about a little less than a year in his natural habitat of New York City. He-“ Wade was cut off as Peter turned around irritably.

“You’re annoying.” He grumbled as he grabbed some Star Wars themed soup from the shelf “I’m not an animal.” He blushed down to himself as he turned away to push the cart.

“Aww Petey, come on. Have a little fun.” Wade whined in a high annoying tone.

“You’re acting like a child shut up.” Peter said simply and continued walked away.

“So responsible.” Wade said wistfully as he jogged to catch up to the boy.

*the camera cut to a top view of Peter shopping, this time looking at a box of granola bars, seeming not to pay attention or even knowing Wade was above him.*
“Wade get off the shelf.” He said in a bland tone and then a crash and the camera shaking and boxes and cans hitting the floor, as Wade presumably fell off his perch. Peter looked down at the camera unamused.

“Peterrrrr you startled me!” Wade complained in a childlike voice.

“God dammit, you’re gonna get me in trouble. Act your fucking age.” Peter scolded with a furrowed brow. There was something in his voice that only dared Wade to disobey him

“Maybe his sense of responsibility came from having to babysit the adults in his life.” Sam grumbled as he crossed his arms. Clearly he was disappointed in the man for having to be monitored by a literal middle schooler.

*camera cuts to Peter scanning his fair amount of items at a self check out. He seemed to get more preservatives but a few fruits that were on sale. Then he picked up a box of triscuts and furrowed his brows*

Sun. February 21, 2016 - 12:54:29

“I’m not fucking buying triscuts for you.” Peter said throwing the box at the camera and continuing as Wade struggle to catch the box and balance the camera.

“But Peter! I want triscuts.” Wade whined, and stamped his foot slightly which got them weird looks from a few of the people in the store. It made sense, an ex soldier and a child going shopping and the man is acting like the kid and the child is acting like a reasonable tired adult who worked hours from 7-9, on weekdays and every other Saturday.

“Then get a real ass job and buy them yourself, fucktard.” Peter said back and went to scanning his groceries but not before sending a glare to him and looking pointedly at the shocked cashier who just quickly averted his eyes from the scene but still clearly listening.

“I fought in the war for this country!” Wade said appalled, it was clear he didn’t actually believe to get anything out of it. He said it more as a mockery, to which Steve bristled a little to.

“So did I. Get your life together and move on bitch.” Peter responded flippantly and finished his checking out and scanned a few coupons and typed in a code as he watched the price reduce steadily. Steve and Bucky stiffened.

Peter had said to move on, but it wasn’t as easy as that. The things they saw could never be forgotten and that was especially so when you were in the middle of a war or in special forces. They had seen their friends and squad mates die. The people they eat and sleep with just lay there unmoving and never would open their eyes or respond to them again.

No one just forgets that.

“Damn, you sure are unaffected by it.” Wade said mockingly, only a hint of concern in his tone. He seemed to sober up a bit, but Peter paid no mind to it as he grabbed his coupon and receipt and stuffed them in the closest bag before gather it.

“I’m not, I just don’t let it control my life.” Peter said back and looked at Wade with a dull look but there was a glint of something behind it “What am I supposed to do. Sit around until we’re called back?” Peter asked a bit teasingly, something in his voice told him that’s exactly how he was feeling. Steve hunched in on himself.
“You’re supposed to go to school and hang out with your friends.” Wade responded in an uneasily serious tone, completely sobered “And you cant be called back. You were resigned.” Wade told him leaning forward as Peter snorted.

“Yeah right, I’m sure they’ll fund a way to bullshit something if they really wanna fuck with me.” Peter scoffed Wanda stiffened at the wording “Get a job Wade. I’m not your fucking parent.” Then he mumbled “it helps.” He said more to himself.

The Soldiers didn’t know how to respond. Peter couldn’t tell anyone about going into war because it was a secret. It was different because unlike everyone else he couldn’t seek convulsing. He had to find different ways to console himself and at any age, especially at 11, that was next to impossible.

*camera cuts to Peter and MJ sitting on the couch in MJ’s living room. They were in their comfortable hoodies and just reading normally. But then ‘Love the Way You Lie’ by Eminem started to slowly turn up in the background.*


MJ and Peter slowly look at each other with wide eyes as Ned giggles behind the camera. Nothing happens for exactly three seconds before they start to belt the song word for word like it was their soul purpose in life. Ned starts to laugh hysterically as they sing the entire rap.

“Why does this one make me feel more like a jerk than the one where we found out he had to sleep with attack dogs?” Sam grumbled, looking regretfully as Peter and MJ got into the second chorus, where Peter let MJ take the lead more (she surprisingly had an amazing voice).

“Because in this installment, young Peter is acting his own age and he is happy.” Thor said bitterly “And for some reason, which I cannot fathom, gave that up to help people.” he looked on the scene with sad eyes.

“And then we treated him like shit for it. Like he was too young to experience the loss we had gone through.” Clint finished off. “But we should know by now, you can experience that at any age.” he muttered in a lower, darker tone. Everyone silently agreed.

As the song ended, MJ and Peter caught their breath and MJ glared at the camera “You jerk.” she said and the Avengers couldn’t help but feel that it was for them and not at Ned who was laughing in the background as Peter smiled.

*Camera cuts to Peter in Saint Margarets, in his work cloths (Which was a black band t-shirt that was a little to big for him and some jeans) behind the bar. He wasn’t working, but instead intensely reading something on his phone.*

Tues. April 19, 2016-15:06:17

“Whatcha’ readin’ Pete?” Wade asked in a giggly voice from behind the camera. It was obvious from his voice he was a little tipsy. Weasel turned around from where he was setting up some spiked shots with a slight glare and raised brow.

“Hey, Parker! I told you to get back to work!” Weasel yelled and Peter slowly picked up a rag and started to absentmindedly whip the counters, eyes never tearing away from his phone. Wade laughed and Weasel let out a frustrated shriek.

“It’s not busy.” Peter hummed, clearly not caring that he was going to get into trouble. Weasel stomped up to him and made a grab for the phone but Peter easily ducked out of his way. His
concentration never leaving his device. “Give me a sec.” Peter held up one finger and turned around to read. Weasel made a huff.

“I don’t care if it’s ‘not busy’, it’ll be busy in an hour and we both know it.” Weasel said and crossed his arms “So I need you to get the smack from the back and spike the beer because we all know it tastes like shit without it.” he said and put his hands on his hips when the boy didn’t move. “Parker!” he snapped.

“Yeah, smack, beer, shit. Got it.” Peter said distractedly and waved him away.

“Huh,” Tony said with peaking interest. “Never thought Parker would be one to obsess over his little 21st century gadgets.” Tony almost sounded impressed by it.

“It’s normal.” Clint grumbled in discontent. His kids may live in the middle of nowhere, but that doesn’t stop them from being obsessed with their shitty wifi. Curse Tony for giving them a free unlimited plan.

Weasel plucked Peter’s phone out of his hand and started to read whatever Peter was.

“Hey!” Peter said indigently as he made a grab for his confiscated device.

“‘Gamma Radiation applied to Thermoregulation’.” Weasel read out loud and then turned to Peter with a wide eyed stare “What the hell kind of witchcraft are you practicing?” he accused and the boy rolled his eyes.

“Hey, wasn’t that your research article a few years ago, Brucey Bear?” Tony asked with a sly smile.

“Yeah...April 2016. That’s when that article was released.” Bruce said in a mildly impressed tone. No one understood that article until 2018, but at this point he wouldn’t be surprised if Peter understood it. The kid was wicked smart.

“It’s not magic. It’s science, dumbass.” Peter snatched back the phone with a glare “Science by Bruce Banner. He’s the greatest Gamma specialist in the world.” Peter said with a bit of wonder sparkling in his eyes as he gazed at his phone.

“Now you’re just making up words.” Weasel accused, pointing a finger at the boy, who didn’t seem to care much.

“He’s having a nerd-gasm. Don’t worry, at least it’s not Stark.” Wade laughed.

“He’s like 10, cool it with the sex jokes.” Tony muttered.

“11” Bucky and Natasha said simultaneously. Peter turned red on the screen.

“It’s cool.” he mumbled down at the phone “And Stark might not be a very good person, but like his inventions helped the medical and environmental industries thrive.” he said as a defense.

“Hey Pete, no one’s buggin’ you ‘bout bein’ smart.” Wade reassured in an oddly gentle tone.

Peter’s face scrunched up into a sour expression.

“Cotnet did.” Peter said suddenly, Wade stiffened, Wanda stiffened at the name “The squad did, and the kids at school...and sometimes even my teachers get annoyed, I know my uhm...guardians do.” Peter said bitterly. Tony as about to square up with every single one of these assholes. How dare they keep this child from letting his smarts help the world. He could tell Bruce felt the same.
by the slight green tinge in his neck. At least Tony had a Hulk on his side. Negotiating power move much (Although who needs a Hulk when you have a Pepper Potts).

“Well they’re assholes. If you like to read, then read.” Wade told him wisley and must;ve glared at Weasel because the man backed up a bit “Do what you want. It’s your life now.” Wade said wisely.

“Tell that to yourself.” Peter said back cheekily. “Maybe I’ll listen.” he smirked and went back to his reading as he walked to the backroom.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned in tshirt and jeans. They were both pouring over some books, pencils and flashcards were scattered across the table along with hastily scrawled notes and study guides. Ned seemed to be quizzing Peter with out of the book questions.*


“Nerds.” MJ teased blandly from behind the camera.

“We wanna get good grades, Em.” Peter said without looking up from his history textbook and marked another thing down on the paper next to him.

“I’m call bullshit. You’re hiding a Quantum Physics book behind that history one.” MJ called out and Ned looked up and blanched.

“What?!?” he squealed indigently. Peter had the decency to look sheepish.

“I haven’t missed a question.” he weakly defended with a hopeful smile. He dropped the disguise and held up the book in his hands.

“I give up.” Ned said as he held his hands up in a form of surrender.

“This wasn’t a competition.” Peter furrowed his brow in confusion and then looked to MJ as if to say ‘did he miss something?’

“Yeah, but you know like everything dude.” Ned groaned “It’s so hard to keep up.” he whined a bit and Peter smiled softly at him.

“Not everything.” Peter rolled his eyes in fondness.

“Every. Thing.” MJ enunciated each syllable and Peter scoffed and went back to his book.

“Whatever.” he grumbled, but there was a small smile on his face. “You guys are insufferable.”

“It’s nice to know he doesn’t let his intelligence go to his head.” Pepper said with a smirk and Tony made a wounded sound.

“I feel attacked honey.” Tony said in a way that he knew she was kidding.

“Well…” Pepper said in a so-so manner. Tony would let this one slide, but only because Parker didn’t expect them to watch these in the first place.

*Camera cuts to Peter walking down the street as he looks at the camera, he’s wearing a light jacket and jeans, it’s unzipped so it shows his science pun t-shirt that has two beakers and one is telling the bubbling one that it’s overreacting. He looked like he was trying not to be too much on edge, but at the same time he looked slightly relaxed.*

Fri. June 24, 2016 -16:56:09
“Okay, the camera is on.” Peter informed the camerawoman who rolled her eyes behind the camera and chuckled fairly.

“I’m 22 Peter, not a fossil.” Karen’s light voice said and Peter blushed.

“Sorry.” he murmured bashfully and Karen laughed an airy laugh again.

“No need to apologize.” She waved off “I thought Ned and Michelle were teaching you how to joke.” Karen said back to him knowingly and Peter chuckled nervously as he rubbed the back of his head.

“I think you have every right to call her MJ.” Peter muttered breathlessly “Or whatever you want for that matter, she practically worships you.” Peter smiled at Karen’s fond laugh.

“I don’t know about that. I’m no one special.” she said modestly. Peter blanched visibly, even stopping slightly in his steps.

“You take that back Ms. Karen!” he scolded lightly and she continued to laugh lightly as Peter’s fake scowl turned soft and he smiled. “Where are we going anyways?” he asked with his head cocked to the side in confusion.

“Well, I’ve noticed you’ve been a little jittery since summer began.” Karen told him and Peter stiffened a bit “Don’t worry. I’m not calling you out, just something I noticed.” she said in a reassuring tone.

“Oh uhm… yeah…” Peter said lamly and Karen continued smoothly.

“I’m gonna take you somewhere that will maybe let you let off some steam.” Karen said casually “It’ll take your mind off of everything that’s been bothering you.” she said in a firm voice and Peter chuckled a little darkly, but mostly disbelievingly.

“No offense but, I highly doubt that there’s a place like that, Ms Karen.” Peter said normally but with low tones of doubt in his voice.

“Trust me.” Karen reassured and Peter shrugged.

*Camera cuts to Peter looking in awe at a place that is off screen. It’s like he can’t believe what he’s actually seeing.*

Fri June 24, 2016 -17:00:34


“Have you never heard of a dog park before?” Karen joked and pointed the camera to the park full of dogs and then at Peter when he responded finally.

“I thought it was a myth.” he whispered and a grin slowly started to spread across his face.

“Well.” Karen gestured to the park “What are you waiting for?” she said and Peter looked in disbelief and then grinned and bolted into the park. Karen followed him, documenting each dog he played with, pet, talked adorably too. He interacted with leashless dogs as their owners watched from afar.

“I’m in heaven.” Peter said as he laid down in a pile of small toy poodles and puppy golden retrievers “I have died and gone to heaven.” he said and Karen chuckled.
“So I’m guessing this little therapy treatment worked.” Karen said airily.

“Shhh, don’t say the ‘T’ word in the holy land.” Peter pouted and sat up rubbing the nearest dog’s ears and looking at him “It’s disrespectful.” he said in a pouty face to the dog and Karen laughed.

They stayed a little longer, got some ice cream for dinner and as they left, it was nearing night, the sun was already half way down. They were at the crossroads to the library when Karen gave Peter’s camera back and Peter pointed to Karen with it.

“This scene starred the most amazing, the one and only: Ms. Karen!” Peter announced and Karen laughed, covering her mouth a bit with a delicate hand.

“Aww, Peter. You’re so sweet.” she blushed lightly, but fondly smiled at Peter as she reached past the camera to presumably ruffle his hair. He laughed with her for a bit.


“I know.” she said softly and walked across the street to the library.

“That woman is also getting a raise. Can you buy the company she works for Pep?” Tony said pointing to the screen like a child and Pepper rolled her eyes, but didn’t comment.

*Camera cuts to Wade with Peter, who was wearing a hoodie, in a shirt and jeans. He was clearly in an old arcade, there were sounds of games whirring and the bright flashing neon and fluorescent lights were the only things really lighting up the place. He was at an old ski ball machine, lights of the arcade behind him as he looked all too focused on the game in front of him*


“It’s time to put balls in holes.” Wade said seriously as he placed a hand on Peter’s shoulder. The boy rolled his eyes.

“Okay so how do you play this game.” Peter asked as he looked at the old ski ball ramp and the ball in his hand.

“Wait.” Clint said suddenly “I know he’s young, but seriously? Has he never been to an arcade before?” Clint asked incredulously.

“Even I know what ski ball was. It was a staple of arcades.” Steve said in a fond tone.

“Even I know what ski ball was. It was a staple of arcades.” Steve said in a fond tone.

“Right?!” Clint said dramatically “Even Cap knows it!” he said and slouched back, clearly discontent at Peter’s lack of childhood.

“Seriously? Have you never been to an arcade before?” Wade asked in the same incredulous tone and Peter gave him a deadpanned look. “Okay, fine!” he groaned.

“The none sexual version please.” Peter asked in hum and a knowing smile on his face and Wade rolled his eyes and picked up the camera to document it properly.

“Okay, so basically all you have to do is get the ball in the holes- no that wasn’t sexual it’s how you play the game you little shit. Your goal is to get it in the 100 hole.” Wade explained and zoomed in on the hundred hole and then back to Peter who scrunched his face.

“That’s it?” Peter asked in confusion.
“Yep.” Wade said popping the P.

“Seems straight forward.” Peter said and stepped up onto the isle and walked up on the ramp and to the hole, crouching near it.

“Wha-what are you doing?!” Wade splutter begins the camera. Peter looked in the hole and dropped the ball in his hand into it.

“It’s a series mechanism Wade. All you have to do is trigger the sensor until the ski balls are all out, but if you never use the ski balls you can rack up until 9999, if you just keep triggering the sensor.” Peter explained back at him as he started to press the button in the hundred hole. As the machine went to the highest number and tickets started to roll out. Peter came back.

“Isn’t that cheating?” Steve asked with a furrowed brow.

“No, that’s called a genius.” Clint hummed in delight. He was so gonna implement this when he went to the arcade again with Nat, and by the looks of it, she was too.

“I knew there was a reason I kept you around.” Wade said happily ruffled Peters hair as he blushed and smiled.

*Camera cuts to Ned at the door in casual cloths that were slightly nicer than normal. They were in his house and there was an icecream cake on the coffee table. He looked about ready to burst with excitement as he intensely looked at the door to his house.*

Wed. August 10, 2016- 13:01:26

“Are you sure you don’t wanna just prop up the camera?” Ned asked behind him, to presumably MJ, distractedly. Before the girl could answer there was a knock on the door.

“Shut up. He’s here.” she whispered to him and Ned jumped up and walked briskly to the door and opened it.

“Hey dude, did I leave my cam-” Peter started as the door opened.

“Happy Birthday!” Ned screamed, loud enough to make Peter jump back in shock. Ned didn’t mind it as he charged forward to hug his stunned friend. Peter looked comically like a fish out of water.

“What?” Peter asked dumbly as he was released and the Avengers could see his wide eyes.

“It’s your birthday dumbass.” MJ said and they could practically hear her eyeroll.

“But I don’t know when-” Peter started meekly.

“Yeah, you said that you celebrate your birthday the second wednesday of august right?” Ned asked, already knowing the answer. Peter nodded robotically “Well, it’s the second Wednesday of august so…” Ned gestured to the cake and stack of movies. Peter’s eyes turned to it and he smiled.

“You didn’t have to.” Peter said kindly.

“Why not?” MJ’s unseen eye roll could be heard again “We do this for our birthdays. It’s really lowkey.” MJ shrugged and Peter shook his head fondly, smile never leaving his face.

“Nothing. It’s just, I usually don’t get things like this.” Peter said softly, a haunted look coming into his eyes.
“Well you should.” Ned insisted, not seeing the nearly far away look in Peter’s eyes, pushing Peter toward the couch. “You deserve it.” Peter didn’t look as believing of that fact as Ned, in fact he looked a little guilty.

“Okay.” he said gently, even though his eyes were protesting his words. “Thank you.” he said genuinely.

“Why wouldn’t he deserve this? He literally deserves the world.” Thor asked in clear discontent at Peter’s apprehensive behavior to his self propose birthday.

“While I agree with you, he probably has never gotten this much attention on him at once.” Natasha said honestly and Thor furrowed his brows, still confused “He’s just not used to it.” she summed up easily and Thor made a look of understanding. He settled a bit more contently after the explanation. Natasha rolled her eyes fondly, it was so easy to appease the mighty giant known as Thor.

*Camera cuts to Peter near the door of what was recognized as Wade’s apartment. He was putting on his shoes and had a light jacket and jeans on. His backpack was next to him as he laced up his shoes with a look of passiveness on his face.*

Mon. September 05, 2016 -07:06:27

“You good kiddo?” Wade asked from behind the camera, Peter hummed as he was putting lacing his shoes on near the door.

“Wha- Yeah...” Peter said distractedly.

“First Day jitters?” Wade asked coyly. Peter rolled his eyes.

“What? No I just...I’ve been to school before.” Peter said with averted eyes, not looking at the camera and it was evident he was nervous. It was weird to see Peter express unwanted emotions so easily. Over the past years he’s been getting better and better at hiding them.

“Yeah but never after not going to camp hellhole. How you feelin’?” Wade said in a calmer tone as he came closer and the camera went lower as if he forgot it was on and he was recording.

“Fine. I’m gonna go. Thanks for lettin’ me crash at your place last night.” Peter said with a smile and Wade ruffled his hair.

“Anytime, kiddo.” Wade said easily and Peter smiled quickly at him.

*the camera cuts to them walking down the streets of New York City*

Mon. September 05, 2016 -07:26:06

“You didn’t need to walk me down Wade.” Peter says with a cute blush. Clearly embarrassed at being walked to school when he was 12 years old and had been walking to school alone since the beginning of time. Wade laughs behind the camera.

“And miss MJ and Ned as you begin your quest into middle school?” Wade asked in mock incredulity “No.” he said in an aghast tone. Peter rolled his eyes.

“Middle school started last year dumbass.” Peter smirked at the camera.

“Developing a mouth I see.” Wade teased “and in Canada they start middle school in 7th grade.”
He informed, so it was no fault of his that he didn’t know middle school started in sixth grade instead of seventh.

“Does that mean that you started high school in 10th grade?” Peter asked and Wade patted him on the head wisely as the camera shook.

“Smart boy.” He praises mockingly and Peter batted his hands off his head and tried to scowl. Wade cooed at him a bit more.

“Shh, we’re getting to school.” Peter hissed. Wade belly laughed, Peter looked panicked for a second and glared more at his loud companion.

“What? You scared I’m gonna embarrass you on your first day?” Wade asked teasingly, and Peter huffed.

“No, I know you’re gonna embarrass me because you’re an ass so go away.” Peter shooed and turned into the gates of his school.

“Smart boy.” Wade hummed and Peter rolled his eyes and snatched the camera. He got half way before Wade shouted “bye Petey Pie!” And Peter blushed a deep red and walked faster. He paid no mind to his small smile.

*camera cuts to Peter in his work cloths, cleaning the bar counter at Saint Margrets casually. MJ is scribbling something in her note book and holding the camera at the same time. Then Wade saunters in with And sits on the barstools next to MJ*

Thurs. October 27, 2016 - 21:42:12

“I’ll have a blow job kiddo.” Wade said casually. Everyone nearly choked at the order.

Did they just hear that right?

“Okay.” The Avengers spluttered at Peter’s nonchalant tone But then Peter took out tequila and whipped cream and did his thing and out a cherry on top. Needless to say they all released a breath of relief.

“Who’s it for?” MJ drawled behind the camera she was holding lazily in her hands.

“Hanz to Ducky.” Wade said with an affirmative nod. Peter made a noise of disapproval.

“I suggest Greg to Ducky.” Peter said and they both looked at Peter and he shrugged. “Come on it would be a good show.” He said back defensively.

“Fair. Trish!” Wade called and the waitress looked at him with a dull look “can you give this to Duck say it’s from Greg.” He said sweetly and she rolled her eyes but went to her task. “Thanks sweetie!” he called out to her.

“Why do you do this?” Weasel groaned and MJ put the camera on his distressed face behind Peter who was giggling a little as crashes and yells were heard in the background.

“I don’t take the shits, I make them.” Wade responded as Peter slid over a beer to him. “It’s my craft.” Wade shrugged and Weasel groaned as he went around the counter to a now unconscious Greg. He held up a mirror and yelled out:

“He’s Alive!” which elicited a lot of groans and he went back to his post behind the counter.
“This is the most toxic chaotic energy I’ve ever seen in my life.” MJ said and looked to Peter “And I’m friends with you.” she said plainly and Peter laughed.

“So you were called a ‘hero’ today?” Peter asked as he waggled his eyebrow and Wade scoffed.

“I’m not the hero. I thought we established that when you were like 10.” Wade said and Peter smirked at him.

“9” Peter corrected, MJ raised a brow but Peter paid no mind to it “And right, I’m just a normal kid and you’re an average bounty hunter.” Peter said with a playful roll of his eyes.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” MJ asked and Peter looked at her with a playful sparkle in his eyes.

“Nothing. Just life.” He smiled a bright smile that would disarm anyone.

“I kinda like it.” Wade said, before MJ could see through them “I can finally settle down and live you know.” Wade said as he kicked back and looked relaxed.

“Yep.” Peter chirped and went to cleaning glasses with an old rag.

“Yeah, well I wished you two would live and not cause havoc in my bar.” Weasel grumbled. They laughed and then there was this pretty lady that came by and Wade’s eyes followed. Peter looked at Wade with a rolled of his eyes and leaned over the counter to push him.

“Go on.” He said. “Live.” he smirked and Wade gave him a quick glare.

“I don’t think the content I want to talk about with her is appropriate for kids.” Wade said honestly and MJ and Peter rolled their eyes.

“Oh please.” the two kids scoffed at the same time.

“Don’t be a chicken.” MJ snapped slightly at him and Wade got up, as he walked toward the woman he grumbled:

“Devil twins.”

“I thought we were demons.” Peter asked to MJ and MJ shook her head.

“We are the demon trio when Ned is here.” She responded.

“Ahh, yes.” He nodded in understanding and then looked behind the camera. “MJ” he nodded his head as a gesture and MJ pointed the camera toward where Wade was talking to the pretty lady. She honestly looked bad ass.

“How much you wanna bet that he’s not gonna even remember her name?” Weasel said to them.

“Hard to say.” MJ hummed.

“50 bucks says he’ll remember.” Peter said after inspecting the two for a moment longer.


*camera cuts to Peter as Weasel fishes out fifty bucks and hands it to the boy*

Thurs. October 30, 2016 - 23:42:34
“Fuck you” He said at the kids shit eating grin.

“I don’t lose.” Peter replied back, with a smug smirk.

>&*
camera cuts to Peter lying his head on an open book on the desk. His shirt was too loose and jacket was hanging off his shoulder. He looked disheveled, with bags under his eyes (nothing in comparison to older Peter but still) and was mostly asleep by the looks of it, but he also seemed to be oddly aware of his surroundings.*

Tues. November 15, 2016- 10:39:15

Ned leaned in the frame slowly and got to Peter’s ear, his smile was mischievous “Peter.” the larger boy whispered into the sleeping boy’s ear and Peter shot up, looking around frantically with sleepy eyes for any threats.

“What..?” he asked in a confused tone after he saw there was no major threat, and Ned started cackling, Peter looked at him and glared. “You jerk.” he slapped the boy with his book lightly on the shoulder and Ned half heartedly defended himself while his breath was riddled with giggles.

“You were asleep for all of class dude.” Ned told him and Peter raised a brow “Again.” Ned rolled his eyes at Peter’s deadpanned expression. “You’re lucky that Mr. Burns know you know everything already. Or else you’d be in deep shit.” Ned continued, the profanity brought a slight frown to Steve’s face, not fully accepting the fact that these children curse so fluently.

“Yeah, I guess.” Peter hummed as he laid his head back down on the book, all the energy seeming to leave him in an instant. He looked really tired.

“You good dude?” Ned asked, a bit of his usual worry seeping into his voice. “You’re tired a lot lately.” he commented.

“Am not.” Peter defended half heartedly, but he knew it was true.

“Are so. You’ve fallen asleep in like at least 3 classes this week and when you don’t you might as well have, you don’t even pay attention.” Ned said back and huffed a nervous smile “It’s like you’re a zombie or somethin’.” he was trying to joke, but he wasn’t good at masking his worry.

Bucky straightened “He shouldn’t be falling asleep in class. Spiderman should not be a priority over his education right now. He’s just a kid.” Bucky mumbled begrudgingly.

“I’d agree with you but the kid just turned 12. Spiderman didn’t start to show up until late 2017, even if he was lowkey, there is no way he could hide from the press for over a year.” Sam said back, with a furrow of his brows.

“So this has been a problem for a while.” Natasha summed up “Spiderman cannot be the blame for his education slipping.” she furrowed her brow.

“The thing is: it never dipped. Not once.” Tony mentioned casually, but there was a tint of concern in his tone. “I think that worries me more.” he admitted. No one else commented that they felt the same.

“Civil war just isn’t my jam.” Peter said in a little bit of a defensive tone “And English is overrated anyway.” he waved off flippantly.

“Even so, you should… I mean, like I dunno. Why are you so tired anyway.” Ned asked with a cocked head and Peter sighed tired and looked at the camera person.
“Care to put in your snarky input?” he asked dully. He looked down right exhausted now that he was looking at the camera. Slouch in his posture, bags under his eyes. The whole shebang.

“Nah. Other than the fact that you’re avoiding the question.” MJ said from behind the camera “I’m just here to document your misery.” she said with a shrug and Peter tiredly smirked a little.

“Avoiding?” Peter asked knowingly.

“You really wanna get into this?” MJ asked and Peter made a gesture. “Fine, you’re obsessed with war books. Since 2015 you’ve been reading them none stop, every chance you get. You know in between your physics geek and chem nerd schedules.” MJ commented and Peter smirked.


“Why are you so obsessed with it?” MJ asked and Peter shrugged. Ned rolled his eyes.

“It’s the Winter Soldier.” Ned said boredly as Peter and Bucky stiffened. “Ever since James Barnes was discovered to be him, Peter has been having like a man-crush over it.” Ned said and smirked at Peter’s blush.

“That’s gross, he’s like 90!” Peter retorted with a disgusted look on his face.

“You know, now that you mention it… give me that book.” MJ said and Peter handed her the book as she leafed to the James Barnes section and held up the picture to Peter “You two look a lot alike…” she commented and Peter stiffened.

“Wait- you think you’re related to James Barnes?” Ned said like this was the best news in the world.

“No, that’s not possible. I was born in Russia…” Peter said with a furrowed brow like he was thinking.

“But wasn’t he captured by Russians.” Mj asked with a smirk in her tone. Peter shook his head.

“You two…” he mumbled “That’s not possible. Trust me.” he said with a huff “You two are being ridiculous.” Ned laughed at that.

“Wait… did they...figure it out?” Natasha asked.

“I wanna say half figured it out.” Tony mentioned casually.

“Then why are you so obsessed with him?” MJ asked persistantly.

“Nothing.” Peter shook his head “It’s...personal.” he averted his eyes from Ned’s slightly hurt gaze. “Sorry. I’m just-”

“Tired?” MJ and Ned finished for him and he nodded sheepishly.

“Yeah.” Peter puffed out, sagging more in his chair. “There is just a lot going on right now.” he admitted.

“A lot? How so?” Ned asked and Peter blew out a breath.

“Well not ‘alot’. It’s more like...a mental thing I guess.” Peter admitted “I usually do something every summer and I didn’t this summer and it’s really freaking me out I guess.” Peter answered with a tired, trying to be reassuring smile.
“Oh...okay.” Ned said in a disappointed tone.

“He’s talking about the army, isn’t he?” Said said more than asked. Bucky nodded.

“HYDRA drilled and conditioned him in discipline and the mindset that if you weren’t on a mission then you were training and if you weren’t training then you were...expecting.” Bucky said darkly, his eyes shadowing a little.

“So basically Peter is wound up over something that probably isn’t gonna happen.” Clint said, Bucky nodded in confirmation.

“Making him go to the army every year gave him something solid to expect.” Bucky said.

“But now that he’s free, he doesn’t know what to expect?” Sam said more than asked. That was some deeprooted mess up. Not even Sam thought he could shake that core belief, it’s what Peter based his entire life off of. At this rate, he’d be paranoid for the rest of it and he was not even in high school yet.

“Yeah.” Bucky answered simply.

“It’s okay. I’ll get over it.” Peter said, still with his tired smile.

“Okay…” Ned said hesitantly “Just be careful.” he whispered as Peter drifted back to sleep.

*camera cuts to Peter in a flannel and casual cloths (i.e hoodie and jeans), leading the camera person into a familiar park looking park. It was a snowy day, the light particles falling gently, not too heavily.*

Mon. December 12, 2016-15:34:02

“I promise you’ll love this Em.” Peter assured with a wide smile.

“Peter, we have a project due in less than three days and midterms, this had better be pertaining to the two or else I will smack you.” MJ said blandly, but she was obviously stressed, and Peter just laughed nervously.

“Well not really but I still am definitely sure you’ll like it.” He said again and MJ’s eyeroll could be heard.

“Parker, I swear to god-“ she didn’t get to finish as she was tackled by a furry little ball of happiness. The camera shook and then the frame switched to multiple small dogs surrounding and cuddling a very blank faced MJ as Peter laughed. “Parker…” She said slowly her eyes being shadowed by her curly hair. “What the fuck is this?” She asked in a dangerous tone.

“Dog park.” Peter said in a chipper tone, not paying any mind to her dangerous aura.

“So you skipped out on studying for midterms and our first semester final project to play with mutts.” She asked again in the same tone.

“Yep!” He said a bright smile surly on his face “with you.” He said sweetly and MJ looked like she was gonna protest but then a brown toy poodle came and licked her cheek and propped its tiny paws on her chest and wagged its tail as it seemed to smile at her.

“Whatever.” She grumped as she reluctantly started to scratch the dog. Peter didn’t mention the small smile on her face as he laughed.
“I’m making t-shirts.” Tony said tapping on his phone again.

“This isn’t a reality TV show, Stark.” Sam rolled his eyes.

“You guys are no fun.” Tony grumped.

“I would like to acquire a shirt, Stark.” Thor raised his hand and Tony looked down right giddy as Pepper rolled her eyes.

*camera cuts to MJ and Peter in regular cloths. MJ was holding some ducked tape with a smirk on her face as Peter was looking like he was preforming intense surgery on a ratty pair of converse*

Fri. January 27, 2017- 16:32:54

“Why can’t you just buy new shoes?” Ned asked innocently, if not a little exasperatedly and Peter rolled his eyes but didn’t look up from his task as MJ handed another piece of duck tape.

“I’m broke.” He mumbled more to himself than to Ned. Thor furrowed his brow. Looking at the ripped apart and worn pieces of shoes

“Surly he is not too poor as to not afford acquire new footwear.” Thor said with a nervous chuckle.

“Sorry big guy. Those are the pair he wears to this day.” Tony said in an unsympathetic way.

“But he has had this pair since before he was 12, it has been 4 years since then!” Thor said clearly distraught. “If he can not afford a simple purchase of shoes then what else can he not afford? Proper nourishment? Proper apparel for the cold season? He is a warrior, is he not? He must take proper care in his health to fight the way he does.” Thor kept at it.

“He isn’t Spiderman yet.” Sam grumbled.

“‘Tis not what I meant.” Thor said under his breath but turned his attention back to the screen.

“He’s just stubborn.” MJ said with a smirk and Peter shot her a quick glare.

“I can make a computer out of bits and bolts, therefore I can fix a pair of lousy shoes.” Peter said with a huff of determination.

“You can also go out and buy a pair, you need a new size anyway.” Ned said to him and Peter looked at the shoes a little warily. “Weren’t you saving anyway?” Ned said more than asked. Peter mumbled something.

“What was that?” MJ asked.

“Ben spent it all.” He grumbled a little louder. Ned and MJ blinked as if they couldn’t believe what they had just heard. “He found my stash.” he said begrudgingly.

“Those shits.” MJ growled.

“It’s fine. I’ll just try again next month.” Peter shrugged and went back to taping his shoes.

“Peter.” Ned said warily.

“Yeah.” Peter said without looking up.

“That’s what you said last month.” Ned nearly whispered. Peter didn’t answer.
*camera cuts to Peter in normal cloths, who seemed all to excited, dragging a very Ned Leeds esqu hand with a large smile on his face down the street*

Sat. February 25, 2017-12:30:14

“I swear you’re gonna love this.” Peter promised a large smile splitting his face. Ned rolled his eyes affectionately at the very enthusiastic boy.

“Love what?” He asked and was promptly tackled to the ground by a large great dane.

“He sure loves that dog park.” Bucky muttered, Natasha nodded, filing the information away in her mind.

“Oh my god Peter!” Ned squealed happily, a stark contrast to MJ’s bland but still happy reaction, as he started to rub the large dogs belly and coo at it.

“See!” Peter smiles at his friend “I told you it’d be fun.” he smirked and Ned rolled his eyes with a smile.

“I was a bit worried when you said that.” Ned admits, Peter made an offended sound “because your definition of fun is either holding yourself up and reading or doing parkour and petty vandalism with MJ or something equally as illegal or dangerous.” Ned gave him a look.

“But it’s fun.” Peter whined like a child (which he was- is).

“No, building the LEGO death star is fun.” Ned waggled his eyebrows and Peter gasped.

“No.” He said in disbelief. Ned smirked at him “Ned have you ever seen the golden retriever mosh pit?” Peter asked.

“Peter…” Ned said seriously “you are literally the craziest person I have ever met.” He said “and that is exactly why I love you.” and they laughed as they went to the pile of golden puppies.

*camera cuts to Peter behind the counter at Saint Margrets in his work cloths. He was fuming a little as he was ranting harshly about something and had a purple bruise across his face, like he’d been slugged within the last hour.*


“So Peter, where did you get that shiner?” Weasel asked playfully, effectively cutting Peter off from his rant about dogs and cats (a weird thing to rant about but then again this was Peter Parker. It’s most effective if you address the immediate problem first because he sure as hell won’t), a knowing look in his eye. Peter’s eyes flared with anger and passion.

“You know what!” Peter slammed down the half clean cup he was wiping down with a dirty, slightly damp rag and angrily picked up another one and started to clean that one instead, Weasel wisely didn’t comment on it. “People have to get a fucking education. America is so hypocritical.” Peter said with a puff of his chest.

“Oh this should be good.” Wade mumbled behind the camera as Weasel nodded in agreement as he waited for Peter to continue.

“This country sucks.” He agreed steadily.

“Right?” Peter fumed like it was so obvious “like we almost got into a nuclear war because we are
Capitaleists but then we turn around and say that everyone should share their inventions and weapons with each other freely and equally because it’s an American right, but that’s not capitalism that communism which is what we apparently don’t want.” Peter vented in frustration, Weasel paled as he didn’t expect the conversation to turn this way.

“He has a point.” Tony muttered, remembering how his arc reactor was on trial to be a profit to everyone, even though it was the only thing keeping him alive for years. Americans were so greedy. Pepper rubbed his arm comfortingly.

“Uh Peter.” Weasel said in a slightly unsteady tone. He clearly did not know what this child was talking about. A big muscley man came to the counter, probably to ask for a drink

“I mean it’s not an American right to invade other people’s privacy. I mean is it?” Peter spat out as he kept aggressively cleaning the glass in his hand, which seemed to be clean already but Peter didn’t seem to be paying any attention to it.

“Peter …” Weasel said as the camera showed the big muscled man back away slowly as though he was scared. Peter didn’t seem to have noticed him.

“The stupid fucker told me it was an American responsibility to own a gun. Like yeah, I own a gun but I don’t advertise it. Like there are no restrictions at all. I’m fucking 12 year old and work at a merc bar. Like how messed up is that?” Peter kept going, a steady stream of venom pouring out a dousing each word with disgust.

“Uhm Peter. Sorry to interrupt but like, you’re kinda scaring everyone.” Weasel squeaked out, as Peter turned to him and then the Camera flipped around to see a stock still merc bar, it was pin drop silence all around. Wade barked out a laugh, suddenly breaking that still atmosphere- as he usually does.

“Y’all are a bunch of pussies.” He said from behind the camera, still howling in laughter.

“Shut the fuck up.” Said the muscley man turned to Wade, his intimidating posture towering over the man.

“Shutting up.” Wade said promptly. The camera turned back to Peter who looked disinterested, all the fight suddenly leaving him.

“Whatever.” he mumbled.

“I can see why he and MJ get along so well.” Pepper giggled. “They have the same energy about the same concepts.” she said with a wistful smile.

“That’s fucking terrifying.” Tony grumbled as Pepper laughed. He knew she agreed with him.

*camera cuts to Peter and MJ sitting on a rooftop, overlooking the city on a moderately (but very for New York) starry night, looking up at the moonlit sky. It was nearly cloudless. They were wearing jeans and hoodies that most certainly belonged to the other person.*

Sat. April 08, 2017- 23:45:19

“Have you ever been out of this city?” Peter asked, never taking his eyes off the dark purple sky with little white dots spaced out across it.

“Sometimes. Why?” MJ asked not looking away from the stars either.
“I don’t remember a lot about Russia, it’s all fading away slowly.” Peter said in a far away but still present voice “But I’ll never forget the sky.” he said wistfully.

“Tell me about it.” MJ said casually, she was asking for permission though. Peter never talked about his past willingly, only when explaining vague concepts, and when he did he always got this hollow look in his eye.

“It was like there were a million of them up there. Like I thought nothing could snuff them out.” Peter said in a wistful tone, something sad was lacing it though “But when I came here, it was like they were all wiped out of the sky, even if I knew they were still there. I couldn’t see them anymore.” he said and then his voice turned low and quiet “But I can still see a few, and even though it as so long ago I still…” he trailed off.

“Remember.” MJ finished quietly and looked at Peter. The Russian boy lowered his head and nodded. Her eyes went a little bit soft “What happened there Peter?” she asked gently, almost hesitantly and Peter only shook his head.

“Bad things.” he replied darkly “I hate remembering what happened.” he nearly spat to her in a bitter tone. She furrowed her brows but reached out to touch his arm.

MJ rubbed Peter’s arm the same way Natasha was rubbing Bucky’s right now and it seemed to calm him down a bit.

“I remember something you said to me once.” MJ said in a wistful tone. Peter didn’t look at her as she continued “You said it in German, but I looked it up later. I know what it means.” she said and Peter looked at her curiously and she looked back at the stars. “You said: ‘I won’t let them affect me’. I think I finally understand what you meant.” she said and Peter smiled softly at her.

“It’s harder than I made it out to be.” Peter sniffed out the confession with a wary chuckle, she quirked her lips up for a second.

“You know you don’t necessarily have to do it alone.” MJ told him as she leaned forward to get a better looked at his face. He averted his eyes slightly.

“I’ve never had someone help me before.” Peter admitted, slightly bashful.

“You really are an idiot.” MJ scoffed and went back to looking at the stars, he did too. They both wore small matching smiles.

“Petition to kill Peter Parker for breaking the most amazing potential relationship this world has ever seen.” Tony said in his usual ‘Tony Stark’ tone.

“They’re just kids.” Pepper rolled her eyes at her fiance’s antics.

“They probably have the potential to rule the world together.” Sam grumbled. Because yeah, they probably could’ve. They worked well together and they had so many ideas that were life changing, but it felt like only those two could accomplish them.

“Yeah, but like it would’ve been Michelle Jones and Peter Parker ruling the world.” Tony argued with a waggle of his eyebrow. There was silence.

“Where’s the damn pen Stark.” Sam grumbled.

*Camera cuts to Peter in normal clothes, dragging Wade into an all too familiar set of brick walls that incased an all too familiar safe haven. Wade looked bored, but a bit amused at the same time*
“So you finally are gonna kill me.” Wade said in a wistfully amused tone. Peter rolled his eyes.

“What-no.” Peter shook his head “not yet.” He said back smugly, a mischievous smirk adorning his face.

“Ah, that’s what you want me to think, but actually you’re going to-” much like all the rest, the ex-soldier turned mercenary was assaulted by a huge German Shepard who looked all too happy to lick his face off. “Assault by attack dog? Really? I thought you put all this stuff behind you Pete.” Wade said in a bland tone looking up unamused at the boy as the dog kept licking his face. Peter blushed.

“No, I like coming here and thought you should too.” Peter said sounding a little bashful, Wade propped himself a little more, curiosity in his eyes.

“You don’t feel… I dunno, triggered?” Wade asked and cocked his head to the side the German Shepherd did too.

“Should I?” Peter asked going down to pet a little brown curly toy poodle. Clearly avoiding Wade’s gaze with the cute distraction “I mean, I felt... better when I started coming here.” He shrugged and smiled at the dog, not seeing a problem with what he said. He seemed to be more open to be himself around Wade, but that probably was because the older man didn’t pry and he had not many things to hide from him that he didn’t already know.

“Huh” Wade made an interesting sound “so it’s like some sort of self therapy shit.” He smirked and Peter blushed.

“You know, we could get him a therapy dog.” Tony suggested “if he decides to come back that is.” Pepper slapped his arm and Tony just shrugged. Used to the abuse by now.

“I think that would be a good idea. He seems to respond better to things he knows don’t understand him but are willing to listen anyway.” Sam said a sorrowful look in his eyes at the poor boy on the screen.

“It’s the effort that counts.” Tony summed up and Sam nodded. “Well that’s depressing.” He grumbled. He looked again at Wade and Peter just petting dogs and bickering, they’ve drawn a lot of conclusions because Wade hinted at it and Tony couldn’t help but feel that it was on purpose. That wade knew how to help but for some reason… he just couldn’t. That’s why he had suggested Peter start to film everything, to manipulate Peter into creating a catalogue of things he had to work on and effective methods to deal with it. Peters habits and what made him comfortable and what to look out for. Seeing it from an outsiders point of view it was so obvious that this boy wasn’t so normal, even if they didn’t know that coming in.

Which was actually...pretty damn smart.

*Camera cuts to Peter, Ned and MJ, in slight nice cloths- MJ was wearing skinny jeans and a flowy shirt, Ned was wearing a t-shirt and jeans and Peter was wearing a light jacket over his t-shirt and jeans - entering a crowded boardwalk, which had the sign ‘Coney Island’ as they entered. Peter didn’t look as excited as Ned, who was bouncing, and MJ was indifferent as usual*

“I hate the beach.” Peter grumbled and Ned bounced excitedly up and down, not paying any mind to his oddly negative friend. Peter wasn’t ever this disinterested in something, that was more MJ’s
job in the trio.

“You hate the beach, like I hate Christmas.” MJ said to him with a slight smirk and thoughtful
tone. Peter huffed a bit.

“I have a valid reason to. Not only is it crowded in the summer, but also sand gets everywhere and
it’s hot and sticky and ocean water gets in your eyes and-” Peter started to list off only to be cut off
by a slightly exasperated Ned.

“Okay, we get it. You’re the debby downer of the summer, whereas MJ is your counterpart in the
winter. I’ll never get a break” Ned groaned rolled his eyes. “Why did I have to have such negative
friends?” he asked the sky, like asking god. MJ smirked and Peter shook his head, trying to fight
the smile coming across his face.

“It’s okay Parker, we’re on the boardwalk, which is like the beach except minus the sand, water
and amplifies the sun by two.” MJ grinned sheepishly and slung an arm around Peter’s shoulder as
he groaned in discontent.

“I’m gonna hate this, aren’t I?” he asked to no one and no one answered.

* Camera cuts to Peter and Ned at one of the booths for a shooting game. Peter doesn’t look
amused while Ned looks calculative.*

Sat. June 10, 2017- 14:32:06

“It’s rigged.” is what Peter says in a bland tone at first glance. Ned looks at him incredulously.

“Damn straight it is.” MJ responded behind the screen. “Take a crack at it Parker.” Peter rolls his
eyes but begrudgingly places the money on the counter nonetheless.

“This is so stupid.” he says as he raised the fake gun and completely didn’t aim for the targets. It
managed to get a bullseye.

“Nice shot.” Clint murmured.

“How did you do that?!?” Ned asked in wonder and turned to Peter with sparkling eyes, Peter smiled
a little.

“I aimed to the side, not the target.” he disclosed the secret. “The pellet is too small and will get
shifted by the draft.” he shrugged Clint was scribbling this information down on a notepad in his
head. The kid had a bunch of little tricks for rigged games it was great.

*Camera cuts to Peter taking an apprehensive Ned’s hand to the rollercoaster, a look of disinterest
still on his face as walked over to the seats with purpose.*

Sat. June 10, 2017- 17:07:33

“You’re the one who wanted to come here for this reason alone.” Peter said as he dragged Ned
down the isles to the front of the line and sat in the second row seat.

“But now that we’re here, I’m second guessing my decision.” Ned said in a shaky voice. Peter
rolled his eyes and pushed his friend in the seat.

“Don’t be a sissy, get on the ride.” Peter ordered and they got on the ride. Ned looked more and
more scared as they climbed higher and higher and Peter propped the camera up and held it.
“It’s like you were when we went on the Cyclone.” Bucky smirked and Steve blushed a bit.

“I guess the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. That’s exactly what you told me.” Steve grumbled bashfully. Bucky’s smug smirk only increased by this.

“Shouldn’t you have left that with MJ?” Ned asked pointing to the camera and Peter smirked.

“It’ll be fine.” he said and within the first drop the camera shook and turned static.

*Camera cut to Ned pushing MJ and Peter onto the ferris wheel, that was dropping and picking up it’s patrons with flowing ease, and they were forced into the cart.*


“H-Hey!” Peter exclaimed as the ferris wheel took off.

“Oh no, looks like there’s no room. Oh well have fun!” Ned said happily as he waved them off as they got further away from him, he had a knowing smile on his face as Peter blushed.

“Leeds, I swear.” MJ was tinged a little pink while Peter was a modest red in the colour of his face that was about the same colour as his future Spiderman suit.

“See even Leeds sees the chemistry between the two!” Tony pointed out, he almost looked like a mad man trying to prove his life’s work wasn’t all for nought (it vaguely reminded him of the conspiracy guy meme that Harley had shown him a while back).

“Yes, we see that Tony.” Steve said calmly “Now sit down, and let us watch” Tony did so begrudgingly.

All that was on the screen was Ned pointed the camera to the slowly moving cart that contained Peter and MJ although he couldn’t hear them he could see that the sunset was illuminating the sky orange and then purple and stars were shining through a little.

“Well, this is anti-climatic.” he said disappointedly from behind the scene.

*Camera cuts to Ned eating carvel cake, in normal clothes, at one of the library tables. He was working on some sort of lego set, as lego pieces were scattered everywhere.*

Fri. July 07, 2017- 12:08:17

“Happy Birthday.” Peter half whispered from behind the camera and Ned looked up from his cake like a deer on headlights as Peter laughed. He then rolled his eyes at his friend. “It’s so cool that you’re 13 now.” Peter said happily.

“It’d be cooler if you ate your cake so we could finish this walker.” Ned said back knowingly.

“Walker army.” Peter corrected but he did prop the camera up and get in frame to help Ned build his lego set. They continued seeming preassigned tasks with the building blocks while periodically eating the slowly melting cake.

“It’s so cool that your parents are installing a shelf in your room just for legoes.” Peter commented.

“Yeah… dude thanks for helping me.” Ned responded, he sounded more genuine than he should.

“With what?” Peter asked flippantly, attaching two pieces of brick together instead of looking up.
“With like, everything.” Ned said, Peter slowly put down the bricks to look at him as he continued “Legos, homework, scrap projects.” Ned listed off absentmindedly. Peter started to look confused “Thanks for just… being my best friend for the past forever.” Ned said sincerely with a smile and Peter blushed, his own smile creeping up on his face.

“No duh dude.” Peter nudged Ned playfully, making the older boy chuckle a little “You were like the first friend I’ve ever made and the like one of the first kids my age who’s ever talked to me. I should be thank you.” Peter said and pushed Ned playfully again.

“MJ would say this is gay.” Ned commented wistfully and Peter laughed lightly.

“Probably because it is.” Peter said back, hey both paused and looked at each other a moment before bursting out into a fir of giggles and laughter.

“They’re such good friends.” Clint mumbled. “Why would Parker ever give this up?” it seemed to be the question that stumped them the most. As of right now, Peter’s life was perfect. He had everything. But as they’ve seen, Peter’s life can go to shit pretty easily.

“I don’t think he had many options.” Sam admitted “Parker is stubborn, but he will ask for help if it’s in another living beings best interest.” Was a fact that they all knew, but somehow overlooked within the past year or so they’ve known the boy. They overlooked a lot of things.

“But not himself.” Steve mumbled in a darker tone.

“Never himself.” Tony confirmed in the same tone.

“I’m so glad I have you in my corner.” Ned said happily, going back to his legos.

“And I don’t plan to leave it.” Peter nudged him as he did the same. But as he looked down it was like his eyes held something sorrowful in them. As id to say ‘unless I have to.’ and ‘I don’t wanna loose you’.

“He lost his innocence. He isn’t childish enough to make those types of promises genuinely.” Natasha informed sadly. Oh, how she wished he could. But he was born into a world of blood, and raised with torture as his guide. He knew the score, just as she had learned.

“But he is enough of a child to make them, Tash.” Clint murmured to her as he nudged her in a comforting way. As if to say that all hope wasn’t lost in Parker’s childhood.

“He has hope.” Natasha nearly choked out and looked at the screen darkly “It will be his downfall.” she said in a remorseful tone. Clint didn’t say anything, because they knew how this ended. He knew she was right.

*Camera cuts to Peter infront of a grey concrete wall. He was in a black hoodie and some stained jeans and had his black backpack leaning to the side of the wall. There were spray paint cans pouring out of it and and a blue one in his hand, poised up and ready for spraying. He looked a little apprehensive*

Fri. August 18, 2017- 23:14:24

“Is he about to vandalize that building?” Steve asked almost enraged at the prospect of Peter breaking a rule. He was a soon to be superhero for goodness sake, why would he do something so stupidly illegal.

“This, my good captain, is called ‘teenage rebellion’.” Tony said sagly “It is a practice that has
been handed down for as long as time.” he said with a smirk and Steve rolled his eyes at his insufferable teammate.

“This is a bad idea.” Peter said hesitantly, making Cap puff out his chest. At least he knew.

“This was your idea.” MJ reminded smugly from behind the camera. Peter whirled to face her with a childish scrunch of his nose. Tony snorted as Steve deflated. He had a glimmer of hope there for a second.

“It was a joke!” Peter defended “I didn’t actually think we’d spray paint the side of the fucking empire state building.” Peter stamped his foot childishly and MJ snorted.

“Yet here we are.” she responded snidely, a knowing tint in her tone as Peter groaned and turned back to the wall and started to spray a base layer.

“You’re encouraging bad behaviour.” Peter grumbled as he grabbed another colour, this time red and started to spray loopy letters.

“It’s for a good cause.” MJ protested and Peter snorted but didn’t say anything about it as he crossed the t and dotted the i.

“Okay, but why do I have to do it.” Peter asked grabbing a pink and layering the letters nicley.

“Are you telling me that you don’t support woman’s rights?” MJ asked and Peter rolled his eyes because she knew the answer. He grabbed a black and started to outline the border thinly.

“You know that’s not true.” he said grabbing a paler blue and highlighting the edges and back.

“And you know you’re not winning this argument.” she sountered and Peter huffed in defeat as he grabbed a lighter pink and went of the lettering again.

“So having a white male do this mean I support it because I put the effort into the art and breaking the law.” he summed up, grabbing a white and highlighting the borderer.

“Exactly.” she said as he capped off the white and stood back.

“Wow, that’s big Pepper energy.” Tony muttered and Pepper slapped his arm playfully.

“What?” Clint asked, blinking in confusion.

“Get with the times Barton. It’s what all the kids say.” Tony snarked back to a sulking Clint.

‘Woman’s Rights’

“So unoriginal.” MJ muttered and Peter sqwaked as she laughed.

*Camera cuts to Peter in his school clothes, pacing around his room back and forth for a little. He looked nervous and distressed and confused and worried. Finally he blew out a breath and face the camera, composing himself*

Wed. September 20, 2017- 18:15:09

“So, y’all know how I went to Oscorp the other day?” Peter asked the camera. The camera didn’t respond, like expected “okay so there was no flash photography so I couldn’t vlog it but we went through the labs and long story short I kinda got bitten by a spider. I think it was radio active? I can stick to things now?” Peter stuck his hand to a book and raised it and the book followed “and I’m
strong? But like I don’t wanna show it right now but like it’s freaky weird and like I think I’m a mutant? Like an actual mutant.” Peter kind of looked like he was freaking out now. “That’s not good. I don’t want powers. I don’t know why I’m vlogging this. I know I gotta tell someone, but I... can’t.” He started to pace back and forth through the screen again “God of the UN finds out I’m done. If Hydra finds out I’m done. Fuck, if SHIELD or the Avenegers find out I’m done. Especially with my track record, and I don’t have Captain America to vouch for me. And I don’t have the excuse of being brainwashed” he muttered, Bucky and Steve stiffened as worry shone in the young boy’s eyes and he cursed to himself they didn’t even think about that. Peter breathed to calm himself down“But this should be easy all I have to do is control it. Right? I’m good at self control. I just can’t get mad or sad anymore.” Peter looked unsure and then he groaned and fell back on his bed “ugh and of course this happens to me! Like come on man! I’ve already got my own shit to deal with I don’t need fucking abilities.” Peter groaned up at the ceiling, shutting his eyes tight “ugh who do I tell? I can’t tell Wade because I tried to and when I did he told me he had fucking cancer!” Peter muttered, concern and sorrow shining in his eyes.

The collective of the group gasped slightly. Their heart clenched when they saw the unshed tears shining in Peter’s eyes. This boy didn’t need to loose more people in his life. He didn’t need this kind of heartache.

“Like, I’m kinda freaking out. I know they gave me mutant training but that was when I wasn’t a mutant. None of it applies here.” Peter groaned, taking fistfulls of hair in his hands in frustration.

“Peter!” A man’s voice barked cutting the boy off abruptly and he froze.

“Oh right coming!” Peter said and breathed as he made his way to turn the camera off.

“That’s when he got Spider powers.” Bruce said a little shocked.

“He didn’t want the abilities.” Wanda said sadly, already knowing that Peter thought lower of himself because he was a mutant and because of his upbringing. “He never asked for them.” she murmured.

“He said he would hide them.” Thor said in a low tone.

“It’s harder than you think.” Wanda and Bruce said to him at the same time and he backed off slightly.

“No, I’m saying: if he wanted to hide them, then why become Spiderman? Why risk exposer?” Thor defended himself and Wanda’s eyes went dark. In the end, it was a stupid question. Even Fury had so eloquently worded Peter’s life as one shitshow after another. He wasn’t wrong in the least.

“Things change.” she muttered lowly. Thor went silent, as the next scene played.

*camera cuts to Peter at Saint Margrets, in his work clothes behind the counter again. His brows were furrowed and there were bags under his eyes, his hair was messy, he looked very tired and stressed as her was aggressively scrubbing a glass*

Fri. October 27, 2017-13:14:23

“Pete?” Weasel asked tentatively from behind the camera. The glass shattered in Peters hands, glass pieces sticking in humans making blood drip from them. Peter only stared on unblinkingly as the blood dripped in a steady rhythm onto the counter top. “Shit. Kid what the fuck.” Weasel cursed and put the camera down to grab a rag and hand it to Peter. But the kid didn’t take it. “Kid?”
he asked, this time with a bit of uncharacteristic concern.

“It’s so fucking unfair.” Peter whispered harshly with a scrunched up face. Weasel snorted.

“Life’s unfair.” He responded, pushing the rag forcefully into Peter’s grip. “But you already know that.” He said this time sounding a bit uneasy.

“Of course I fucking know that.” Peter spat and threw down the rag to give Weasel an intense stare, Weasel backed up and Peter turned away to grab another glass and the forgotten rag “but of course Wade had to ditch me. Ditch Ness. What he did was idiotic and not a hero move.” Peter snorted “hell he was the one who said that we were never coming to be heroes.” Peter wilted a little, his shoulders still wound up tight from his ever mounting tension. The camera cut abruptly.

“What the fuck?” Tony whispered. “Is the tape scratched.” he furrowed his brow and made to go check but Bucky stopped him.

“It got too personal.” Bucky muttered. Tony looked at the brooding man.

“It’s something we might have to address.” Natasha said more to herself and maybe Barnes than to anyone else. Tony sat back, if Natasha and Bucky ever got to it, then they’d handle this situation accordingly.

But they had to get Peter back first.

*Camera cuts to Ned, Peter and MJ all in the library, in their school clothes, with books and papers around them mindlessly quizzing each other*

Tues. November 14, 2017-14:13:38

“You’ve been acting weird.” Ned mentioned and Peter didn’t look up as he scanned the book for something to quiz Ned with.

“My uncle died and Wade’s missing. I think I’m inclined to be a little depressed.” Peter said bluntly without looking up from his book. “If y is 3 then what is x in this equation?” shoving a book mindlessly over to Ned, the other boy scribbled something down briefly on a loose sheet of paper.

“72.893” Ned responded casually “okay valid. How long is it gonna last?” Ned asked and MJ snorted.

“That’s not how it works Leeds.” MJ told him bluntly and Ned deflated a little

“Give me like two more weeks and I’ll start to look for Wade.” Peter answer casually before Ned could speak up to defend himself. “What’s the fourth largest continent?” he asked and MJ gave him a look, he hunched in on himself a little.

“South America, come on Parker challenge us.” MJ responded flippantly “but like, you’re handling this really well.” she complimented, which was rare in her.

“I’m used to it.” Peter shrugged, not paying any mind to the comment.

“You think Wade is still alive?” Peters eyes went dark as he chuckled lowly.

“Trust me it’s gonna take a lot more than a tumor to get rid of him.” he muttered more to himself.

“I still can’t believe Wilson has cancer.” Tony muttered, almost thoughtfully to himself.
“Yeah, but something must’ve happened to him, because this was two or three years ago, he theoretically should be dead.” Bruce said almost in awe.

“Well he does know Peter Parker.” Tony said as if it was an after thought.

*camera cuts to Peter, in casual clothes, in the school library, humming along to a tune that sounded suspiciously like the mii theme, while tapping his pencil on the side and reading his book. A half written paper was next to him, so it could be assumed he was writing a report.*

Thurs. January 11, 2018- 12:08:33

“Peter…” Ned says slowly as he comes into the frame, his face and tone are serious enough to get Peter to stop humming and look at his friend with a curious glint in his eye “We have to talk about something.” he said in the same ominous tone, the older boy’s face going blank, making Peter sit up, board straight.

“Yeah? About what?” Peter asked, trying to get his voice to remain as casual as possible. He wasn’t as good at it as he was going to be though.

“Do you think we’re stupid, Parker?” MJ asked, probably with a raised eyebrow (she was holding the camera) “You’ve been doing it for months.” she said and Peter’s nervous smile faltered.

“Wait, did they figure out that he’s Spiderman?” Steve asked nervously.

“Possibly…” Bruce said with a thoughtful look “This was around the time he beat Scorpion and started to become more public.” Bruce said with a shrug and Steve sucked in a breath.

“I-I’m not- I’m a little lost… uhm I’ll tell- I’ll tell you guys ev-everything…I can.” he ended on a lower note, a bit of guilt coming into his eyes because he couldn’t. Peter couldn’t tell his best friends everything for their own safety. They were just normal kids, and they thought he was one too. Knowing the truth put them in danger, because they’d try to help.

“Peter…” Ned said in the same tone “You know what we mean.” he said sitting down next to his friend and put a hand on his shoulder, Peter sighed.

“Yeah…” he mumbled, cursing himself for being so careless with this ‘I’m sorry. But I just… I just didn’t want you to stop being my friends.” he shrunk in on himself in shame. Ned blink once, then twice.

“What?” he asked and Peter snapped his head up at him.

“I...don’t want you to stop being my friends?” he asked more than said this time and Ned looked like he had short circuited for a second as he processed the words.

“No dude!” he exclaimed quickly “We’d never stop being friends with you.” he insisted and Peter blinked once in confusion.

“You don’t think I’m...weird?” Peter asked tentatively, MJ burst out laughing behind the camera.

“Parker. You’ve always been weird.” she leveled with him through her laughs “But you constantly mumbling the fucking Mii Theme ain’t gonna get rid of us. We’ll always be here to put up with your shit.” Peter blinked, clearly confused, but smiled a small smile anyway.

“What the hell!? That was the perfect time to tell them!” Sam said incredulously again. He could slowly see Parker becoming the little shit they knew.
“He wasn’t ready to talk yet.” Steve furrowed his brow and Tony rolled his eyes.

“And he hasn’t been for 3 years apparently. And they were nice to him.” Tony said “Imagine how long it would’ve taken for him to tell us.” Tony said thoughtfully and the room went quiet for a bit. Because they all know they would never in a million years get Parker to crack. Would Peter even give them a second chance?

*Camera cuts to Peter dragging along a tired looking Vanessa, they were both in hoodies and sweatpants, but somehow Vanessa looked slightly elegant in them, kind of like Pepper. She looked like she had been crying and Peter was more muttering to himself then paying attention to her as they went into a familiar park*

Sat. February 18, 2018-10:32:14

“That’s the girl that Wade went with that other night…” Pepper mumbled.

“Boys suck.” Peter said firmly and Vanessa gave a tired, wary smile “so I’m taking you to a place where you’ll meet good boys.” Peter said evidentially answering a question Vanessa previously asked and the woman gave an affectionate eye roll.

“Peter I don’t-“ She was cut off by Peter placing a small golden and white corgi in her hand and she blinked confused at the creature. “Peter I’m-“ she was cut off by Peter waving her off.

“Hypo allergenic, at least this one is.” He said offhandedly and smiled “his names Kergi.” He told her and she smiles at the dog, slowly bouncing him as she gently digs her nails into the dogs’ fur and scratches it.

After a little bit of playing with the small dog they were sitting. They were chatting and joking lightly, but it was clear that there was a strain and sadness behind it. Like something was missing and they were trying to force happiness.

“Thank you.” She finally said to Peter gratefully. Peter waved it off as he was scratching a golden retriever behind the ear, making sure to keep it away from her.

“Wade is an asshole sometimes. Trust me, I used to spend every summer with him and he never changes. “ Peter said and scrunched up his nose a little “he’s always been like this. He is mostly a dick who has no ties to the ground.” he said wistfully looking up at the sky, hadn never leaving the dog’s fur.

“I know.” Vanessa whispered and looked at the sleeping corgi in her lap and smiled “that’s what I love about him.” Peter peaked at her briefly and smiled.

“I get that.” he shrugged.

“So I guess the enchanted dog park can only do so much.” Thor muttered a bit disappointed. Wanda smiled fondly at the god and patted his shoulder comfortingly.

“It’s okay big guy.” she said, mocking Tony’s tone.

“I still wish to be in acquaintance to Young Peter in one. He seems very knowledgeable on this particular species.” Thor said in a serious, thoughtful tone. “It would be enlightening, seeing as I would too like to learn more on this species.” he said and Wanda chuckled.

*camera cuts to Peter at Saint Margrets in his work clothes behind the bar counter cleaning a glass with a rag again. But this time Wade was in the image and Peter seemed visibly more relaxed than
he was in the past few scenes*

Sat. March 31, 2018 -23:43:54

“So Spiderman huh?” Wade says knowingly to Peter as he blushed and continues to clean his glass without any other response. “Gotta say, I thought this would be coming sooner.” Wade laughed.

“Whatever Deadpool.” Peter nearly snarled back but it had no malintent lingering behind it.

“At least my superhero name is original.” Wade said back and Peter snorted as he slammed the glass down.

“You just looked up at the board.” Peter gestured to the board behind him “And I didn’t name myself.” Peter told the man with a huff as he picked up another glass and then shrank back a little “plus it was a one time deal you know?” He mumbled looking down at the glass with a bit far away eyes.

“Correct me if I’m wrong, but didn’t you have to fight a lot of the people you did to find out where Scorpion was hiding?” Wade asked and leaned forward “And you’re a pretty smart kid, you didn’t have to fight anyone.” Wade said, but he didn’t sound worried or accusing. Peter averted his eyes.

“It was an ordeal. I’m not a superhero.” Peter mumbled concentrating on the glass he was cleaning far too much.

“Yeah and aren’t you trying to find that whack weapons dealer?” Weasel asked offhandedly and Peter glared at him as he backed off but Wade had already heard and guffawed.

“Two times. This isn’t going to become a thing.” Peter said to him easily as he waved it off.

“Don’t bet on it kid.” Wade advised with an amused twinkle in his eyes.

“It is! I told you I’m not gonna do this kind of shit anymore.” Peter said back defensively.

“Aww Wade, he’s in denial.” Weasel cooed and Peter picked up a toothpick and held it menacingly toward Weasel.

“What’s he gonna do with a Toothpick?” Sam asked incredulous, Parker wasn’t that desperate to get the man to stop teasing him, he just looked ridiculous.

“A lot.” Natasha, Clint, Tony and Bucky answer at the same time. Sam backed off.

Weasel paled on the screen and backed away “say one more thing.” Peter dared and Weasel gulped as Wade laughed.

“Why are you laughing?! He’s threatening my life!” Weasel complained as Peter smirked a little and went back to cleaning his glass with a smug, satisfied look on his face.

“That’s adorable.” Wade cooed and Peter glared at him before putting down the glass and picked up a new one.

“Hey just because you can’t die anymore doesn’t mean I won’t find a way to kill you.” Peter said to wade and wade paused and thought about what he was gonna say next carefully.

“Fair point.” Wade shrugged well aware of Peter’s intelligence “but would you kill the only person who wasn’t complete asshole in camp hellhole?” Wade said with incentive and a waggling eyebrow to which Peter rolled his eyes to.
“Yes.” Peter responded fully and immediately, in a dull tone.

“Okay, you play a tough game, Spidey.” Wade said back with a smirk as Peter’s cheeks tinted pink a bit.

“I’m not gonna be a fucking Vigilante. Just this guy and then I’m done.” Peter assured, but it sounded more like he was reassuring himself.

“Okay, yes and what is so special about this guy that makes you wanna punch him out?” Wade asked with a quirked brow and knowing look.

“Nothing” Peter said sheepishly as he went to wash a rag, as it had presumably dried out, tucking his shoulders in a little as he retreated.

“Then why are you after him?” Wade asked in the same tone.

“He’s hurting people.” Peter said in a definite, stony tone.

“Can’t the cops take care of it.” Wade shrugged and took a swig of his forgotten beer.

“He is selling alien enhanced weapons. The cops aren’t equipped but I...I kinda know how to handle it so…” Peter shrugged as if to say ‘I’ll just do it myself, it’s not big deal’.

“You are?” Wade raised a brow and Peter glared

“Yeah.” he huffed and crossed his arms “I mean I’m not in the army, but I’m still trained.” he said as if it was obvious.

“Pete, that’s vigilantism. And let me tell you, it ain’t goin’ away.” Wade said sagely.

“I’m not gonna make a habit out of it.” Peter said again, but this time he sounded slightly unsure.

“I think you just did.” Wade told him, a little sympathy leaking in his tone. Peter pauses at what Wade had said and sighed

“Only big things.” he mumbled, changing his arrangement begrudgingly.

“What did you do right after you stopped Scorpian?” Wade said in a deadpanned tone. Peter had a stony look on his face before answering

“...Get a cat out of a tree…” Peter mumbled and then a look of dawning came across his face “I’m a motherfucking Vigilante.” He said almost in awe.

“Yep.” Wade and Weasel clinked their glasses together.

“God fucking dammit!” Peter cursed and kicked the counter as Wade laughed and Weasel complained about property damage and enhanced strength.

*Camera cuts to an old ceiling fan just spinning and a cream coloured chipped ceiling.*

Fri. April 13, 2018- 16:38:46

“Matt?” Peter’s voice asked on the other side of the camera, he sounded bored. He must’ve been laying on the ground.

“Yes?” a man’s voice, presumably Matt’s, asks a bit further away.
“Oo yippee” Tony says in a fake giddy tone, but mildly curious “New character.” he said only to be shushed by his unnecessary outburst.

“Shut up Stark.” Clint seethes from the side and Tony holds up his hands in a gesture of surrender and unapologetic apology.

“Can blind people see their dreams?” Peter asked innocently.

Dead silence on all ends of the camera.

“Peter…” Matt said slowly, the camera lazily lulled to the side. The image of the man at the desk was sideways. It was a rickety old desk piled high with papers on the top and spilling off the side. The man was dressed in a suit and tie and had shades on even though he was indoors and the sun was just about to go down. “I don’t usually recommend this, but you need a therapist.” he said in a dead serious tone. Peter groaned.

“I’m fucking bored.” Peter said and quickly sat up and the camera went straight. The man turned his head and leaned in a little, as if listening for something.

“Are...are you ...filming?” Matt asked, almost surprised but somewhat amused. Peter paused for a second.

“Yeah…” Peter said almost astonished “You can hear it?” he said almost excitedly, the camera was shaking a little as he bounced, Matt smirked and leaned back in his chair.

“Pete…” he quirked his voice a little and Peter stopped bouncing.

“Sorry.” Peter said bashfully “It still astounds me.” he whispered in admiration. Matt’s smirk turned a little fond for a second before going back to neutral.

“I thought you of all people wouldn’t underestimate the disabled.” he said smugly to the kid and Peter hunched in a bit, probably in embarassment.

“I don’t...it’s just...so cool.” Peter perked up a bit. “I mean, you’re blind and you can still function like you can see. If you wanted to, you can pretend you’re not even blind at all.” Peter said and Matt smiled.

“Wait he’s blind?” Clint asked almost incredulous. Peter was right, he could act like he wasn’t blind, not even Clint, the great Hawkeye, noticed. But then again this was a vlog series that was crappily shooted by mostly kids, preteens, and immature adults. Except for Karen, she was fucking awesome.

“Yes, keep up.” Natasha shushed with a light glare..

“Yes, I can.” Matt said and nodded sagely.

“So why don’t you?” Peter asked, probably with a cock of his head, Matt’s smirk turned into a shark like grin.

“Because I can get away with so much more.” he said mischievously, like he was plotting something sinister. “You know how it is. You do it too.” Matt said flippently and Peter hunched in on himself again.

“I mean… I guess it’s kinda handy to be underestimated from time to time but…”Peter trailed off.
“Peter listen to me.” Matt said seriously and leaned forward. “When you’re out there, you gotta pull every single card you have to protect yourself and the people you love.” Matt said in a dark tone. Peter nodded solemnly. Matt smirked, apparently having heard it “You got all that?” he asked as he tapped the camera.

“Yeah…” Peter huffed out a laugh.

“Now get on your suit we gotta stop those shitheads on 86th.” Matt smirked a familiar shark like grin, ruffling the kid’s hair.

“Whatever you say Red.” Peter smiled brightly.

“Wait Red?” Tony asked almost in disbelief as he sat up straighter. “I’ve heard Peter say that before.” Tony contemplated for a minute, it clicked for Bruce first.

“That’s what he calls Dare Devil!” he exclaimed in surprise, wide eyes on the screen.

“Wait!” Clint sat straight up “You’re telling me that Dare Devil is fucking blind!” he nearly shrieked. How the hell was that possible, the guy was so precise and did all those stunts. He jumped on the back of moving vehicles and ran across rooftops and beat people to a bloody pulp. How the hell was he a blind...office worker? Wait Matt Murdock… that was the lawyer that Peter had gotten for the Ross case. Dare Devil was a blind lawyer, Deadpool was a burn vic who has (had?) cancer and Spiderman was an emotionally traumatized teenager.

And here Clint was thinking it couldn’t get any weirder than a Norse god and a girl with telekinetic powers.

The screen switched to the next scene.

*Camera cuts to Peter, in a flannel and jeans, sitting in a cafe with Matt across the polished table. It was much nicer than the fast food places Wade had taken him to on their army tours, with semi-fancy chairs and moderately nice lighting, it was casual but also not dirty. Matt was drinking a steaming mug of, presumably, coffee and Peter was looking jittery as he didn’t even touch his own mug in front of him. His eyes were darting every which way as if her was nervous*

Mon. June 11, 2018- 17:22:14

“Peter, I can feel your hands shaking.” Matt said dully as he sipped on his coffee and Peter blushed a bit.

“Sorry.” Peter breathed and averted his eyes from the blind man’s unseeing gaze. “I’m just nervous.” he confessed and Matt quirked his brow.

“They literally are no one special.” he said with a slight smirk “And you’ve met them before.” he said flippantly as Peter gave him a deadpanned look.

“They literally are no one special.” he said with a slight smirk “And you’ve met them before.” he said flippantly as Peter gave him a deadpanned look.

“You were dying in the middle of your living room.” Peter said in a bland tone “Bleeding out and I was holding a ripped up tshirt with your blood all over it looking like a clueless idiot.” Peter didn’t change his tone as Matt waved his hand in the air a bit.

“That was forever ago.” he waved off.

“It was 2 days ago.” Peter said in a deadpan.

“What ever.” Matt grumbled into his coffee - almost like a teenager - a bit embarrassed, and Peter
raised a brow “They wanted to meet you after you helped ‘save me’ or whatever.” he murmured as he airquoted and Peter rolled his eyes.

“You mean keep you from dying?” a feminane voice cut in before Peter could retort. Peter sat up straighter as two figures entered the frame. A stouty sandy haired man with a knowing smile, exasperated quirk of his lips that was directed at Matt and a pretty brunette with her hands on her hips as she held herself confidently. “Cause that’s what he did.” the woman smirked at Matt who rolled his eyes (can blind people even do that. Well apparently yes, because Matt just did) and the man scowled a bit to Matt at his rudeness before turning to Peter with a kind smile that Peter looked a little intimidated by.

“Franklin Nelson.” he said to Peter as he held out his hand and Peter slowly and cautiously took it, never keeping his eyes off the deceivingly kind face of the man.

“Lawyers.” he mumbled breathlessly as he averted his eyes and the man looked a little stunned as the brunette laughed.

“I like you kid.” she said and clapped a hand on his shoulders “Karen Page.” she introduced.

“Peter Parker.” Peter mumbled and Matt nudged him as the two entered the other side of the booth seat. Franklin sitting across from Matt and Karen across from Peter. “What?” Peter asked in a bit of an annoyed tone.

“Speak up.” Matt told him and tapped his back “And don’t slouch.” he said as Peter rolled his eyes.

“You’re not my dad.” he grumbled as he crossed his arms and pouted a bit. Karen cooed a bit as Foggy chuckled.

“Anyway, thank you for keeping him alive Spidey.” the man winked at the bashful boy. “He’s stupid sometimes.” he smirked a bit and Peter shrugged.

“I’m stupid sometimes.” Peter said in an offhanded way. “Just not as much as he is.” he pointed to Matt who lightly punched his arm and Peter smiled a bit. “But I have a healing factor.” his smirked became more smug and Matt sipped his coffee again.

“Everyone on Team Red seems to except for him.” Karen said this time. Peter and Matt blinked in confusion.

“Team Red?” Matt asked, cocking his head a bit “Is that a tabloid thing?” he nearly groaned and Karen rolled her eyes.

“No, it’s what the public is calling the three of you.” she said in a slightly annoyed tone. “Daredevil, Spiderman, and Deadpool. How do you not know this?” she asked, almost incredulous, but she didn’t seem that surprised as Matt shrugged.

“What does it stand for?” Peter mumbled “Repressive Emotion Disorder? He smirked to himself. Matt rolled his eyes.

“Not everything has to be an acronym Pete.” he said in an exasperated tone.

“But it makes this so much more fun.” Peter said with a teasing smirk, Matt couldn’t suppress his own.

“It’s because you all wear red.” Franklin rolled his eyes and Matt and Peter both made an ‘o’ with their mouths in understanding. “Idiots.” he grumbled “Now there’re two of em.” he said to Karen
who just laughed a bit.

“I’m sorry, I’m fucking blind Nelson.” Matt huffed “And Peter’s a super genius. God let us have our fun. It’s a stupid name.” he grumbled.

“Actually I kinda like it.” Peter smiled. Matt just rolled his eyes.

“And my question is answered.” Clint said in a satisfied tone.

“This is the birth of a natural disaster.” Tony grumbled.

“I think you mean chaotic disaster.” Bruce sighed in exasperation “You know how I said we were a time bomb? Yeah, if we are a time bomb, then these guys are a fucking nuke.” Bruce grumbled.

“Honestly, yeah.” Tony huffed out.

*the camera cuts to Peter face in a weird angle, looking up at him, he was in some sort of collared shirt - flannel of course. He was in some sort of medical practice office hing, with white washed walls (a staple to any doctor office) and cheesy doctor posters saying something about birth control. He had a nervous sort of expression on his face, almost like he was anticipating something. The camera was shaking along with his bouncing knee.*

Fri. July 20, 2018 - 14:32:43

The sound of a door clicking open seven seconds later and two voices come out droning on meaninglessly about something has Peter getting up abruptly and flipping the camera so it faces Vanessa and the doctor next to her. She has a big smile on her face and is holding up two thumbs as the doctor pats her and hands her a brown paper baggy before sending her to Peter. She comes over with an excited and nervous smile on her face.

“Can you?” Peter asked and Vanessa held out her hands which Peter took and she squeals, squeezing his hands slightly.

“I can have kids!” She cried happily as she pulled Peter into a big hug. Peter laughed incredulously.

Natasha smiled sadly as Bucky held her hand a little tighter. Wanda shuffles a little closer to her and sorta nestled in her side slightly as a form of comfort. She appreciated it.

“Oh my god.” Peter was breathless and there was a huge smile playing on his lips. “Wade’s gonna be so happy!” he exclaimed in complete joy.

“I know! But like...what if he doesn’t want to…” Vanessa trailed off hesitantly, her eyes going worried as she bit her lip and Peter oddly laughed.

“Are you kidding? He always tells me he wants to have a kid with you. Trust me this is the best thing you can ever get him.” Peter said supportively and she smiled shyly at him. “You both deserve a family and you’ll make great parents, don’t doubt it Ness.” he reassured with his signature sunshine smile and Vanessa’s eyes went soft with fondness and affection, not unlike that of a mother as he brushed a brown curl out of Peter’s face gently.

“You’re a good kid Peter. Thank you for coming with me.” Vanessa told Peter genuinely, wrapping an arm around the boy and bringing him in close as they started to exit the office and into the harsh sunlight.

“It’s nothing.” Peter mumbled with a blush.
“I don’t know any other kid who’d be this supportive of someone who’s not even their mother.” Vanessa said as she dropped a light kiss in his messy brown hair. Peter leaned into the half hug as they walked down the mildly busy street.

“I just want you to be happy.” He said sincerely with a gentle smile.

“Let’s go get ice cream.” She said and Peter nodded vigorously, excited at that prospect. “Hey, did he tell you what he got me?” the woman asked with a knowing look.

“It’s a whole lot less amazing than this.” Peter assured with a smirk and Vanessa laughed.

“Vanessa… doesn’t Peter bring flowers to her tombstone?” Wanda whispered quietly and there was a pause of respect, and remorse for the woman.

*the camera cuts to Peter in a hoodie and familiar hello kitty pajama pants, a disinterested look on his face. It was pitch black outside but you could still see an evilly smiling Wade dragging him by the hood of his hoodie down some rickety, old wooden stairs down to an equally old, rickety wooden platform just above the murky waters of the East River.*

Thurs. August 16, 2018 - 23:16:54

“Is he gonna kill him?” Sam asked only to get a few noncommittal shrugs from the rest of the team. How were they not worried about this child?

“Matt save me!” Peter called out unenthusiastically, holding out his arms lazily to the person holding the camera in a gesture for help.

“Sorry Peter. Initiation time.” Matt responded in a smug tone and Peter groaned.

“What do you mean initiation?” he asked in a whiny voice

“For team red!” Wade responded happily.

“I helped found team red!” Peter told them with a little huff of indigency.

“Yeah, that’s why we’re doing it.” Matt responded in a tone of slight contempt.

“What are we doing?” Peter reposed himself so he was facing forward, as he was put in front of the murky water.

“Noodling.” They both responded together. Peter looked at them like he didn’t know how to respond for a minute, as if he didn’t hear them correctly. Because that did sound straight up stupid.

“You’re both idiots.” Peter responded in a flat tone looking at them as if they were unamusing.

“You don’t even know what it is yet!” Wade whined and Peter rolled his eyes.

“I don’t need to know. I already know it’s gonna be stupid.” Peter responded with a bit of sass in his tone.

“Okay it’s a dumb name but Wade and I researched very hard.” Matt responded in a slight offended tone and Peter crosses his arms with a ‘really’ look on his face, brow raised.

“How long?” he inquired.

“Two hours.” Wade mumbled and Peter put his hand to his temple like he was too tired to deal with
“And watched a lot of videos. It looked fun.” Matt said in a slightly giddy tone.

“Matt you’re blind.” Peter reminded dully and averted his eyes to the disgusting murky water. “And you wanna do this in the east river?” Peter asked with a scrunched up nose. “There are eels.” he said, a little nervously, but he seemed too tired to care much about that part.

“Well if you’re good enough, you don’t have to leave the harbor.” Matt said with a spark of excitement in his tone “and eels are deep water animals” he added and Peter sighed.

“Whose going first?” Peter asked.

“Nose goes!” Wade yelled and Peter put his finger to his nose immediately like Wade, they both looked at Matt who groaned.

“No fair! I’m filming.” Matt whined behind camera.

“Rules of the game buddy.” Wade shrugged and Matt groaned as he handed the camera off to Peter and went by the docks to kneel over the water. He tilted his head to the side a bit, as if listening for something, then he sniffed a bit and rubbed his fingers together.

“How’s a blind guy gonna do this?” Bruce asked but then on screen Matt caught a fish at the exact time it was swimming by.

“Like that.” Tony smirked and Bruce grumbled something unintelligible and crossed his arms.

“Damn, I thought you’d do it a bit faster, Red.” Wade commented and then turned to the camera “Kay, Spidey your turn.” He said with a grin and Peter huffed and handed the camera to Wade as Matt stepped back with his quirming prize. He rolled his eyes as he walked over and he sat down and immediately stuck his hand in without looking at the water. He pulled his hand out and a wriggling catfish flailed in his hands as he looked at it like he couldn’t see it.


“You did that fast.” Matt commented, not sounding the least bit surprised. Peter blinked as if he was snapped out of a daze and looked down at the fish in his lap.

“My Spidey Sense went off.” Peter shrugged looking at the fish in surprise as if he didn’t know how it got there. Then his eyes softened and he threw the wiggling creature back into the ocean and huffed.

“Softie.” Wade grumbled and Peter glared at him.

“It was slimy and there is no reason to kill it. This is dumb. We are hurting animals for no reason and-“ Peter was cut off by Wade.
“Kay my turn! Matt hold the camera!” Wade tossed the camera to Matt who caught it as he threw his fish into the water, and pointed it to Wade who was trying to look into the water for his prey. He squinted and turned his head sideways, then grabbed at the water but came up empty handed and water splashed around him, Peter smoothly avoided it with a slightly amused smirk.

“This is gonna take a while.” Peter said standing next to a crouching Wade who was looking intently at the water again, crossing his arms.

*Camera cuts to the same scene, except Wade was all wet. Peter was scrolling through his phone boredly, upside down hanging his upper body off the harbor's edge, tips of his hair barley grazing the water.*

Fri. August 17, 2018 - 02:32:45

“We’ve been here for two hours Wade. Let’s just go home.” Peter said boredly, it was clear that he didn’t care whether they stayed or not.

“It’s not fair! You two have super sonar fish senses.” Wade complained and then his eyes perked up as if he’d just gotten an idea. Something compelled Peter to look at the man with a quirk of his brow, even though the scarred merc didn’t make any sound indicating he did.

“Wade you’re about to do something stupid. Don’t do it.” Peter drawled, closing his eyes and sitting up but making no move to stop the man.

“But you don’t have immorality!” He yelled and jumped in the water with a splash that Peter flipped out of the way from getting wet.

“There are eels.” Peter mumbled to the man who could no longer hear him, still making no move to go after him.

Three minutes and 43 seconds later Wade came up and swam back to the surface holding up a wiggling creature triumphantly before he started swimming back to shore.

“Caught one!” He said as he pulled himself on the dock and held up a squirming eel, who looked less than happy to be out of the water.

“That’s not a fish.” Peter says blandly, still not looking up from his phone. Wade looks at the eel in confusion as it looks back with it’s black eyes. The man’s eyes widen as it electrocuted him.

“Holy shit!” He yelled let go of the eel back into the water.

“Why was Peter the most mature one in that scene?” Sam asked, astonished at the two adults stupidity. “And he was acting like a fucking teenager.” he said incredulously.

“I stopped trying to make sense of this Team Red long before we even met Parker.” Tony shrugged.

“Smart. It saves you a headache.” Clint grumbled.

*Camera cuts to MJ dragging a very apprehensive Peter down the halls of MIdtown. They were both in their school clothes. Peter looked nervous as he stumbled with MJ’s harsh tugs, it was clear he didn’t want to go where ever she was leading him.*

Mon. September 03, 2018-12:32:14
“MJ there are still 15 minutes left in lunch.” Peter said in a nervously, shaky voice as he tugged futility at MJ’s iron grip. Like he was almost scared. MJ rolled her eyes.

“You are meeting you’re lab partner. I don’t care, you need social interaction.” MJ said and continued to pull Peter as she turned into another hall.

“But my class is all seniors.” Peter tried to excuse himself, he seemed a bit disappointed at that prospect.

“Then you shoulda thought of that when you tested for the advanced class.” MJ retorted back, Peter wilted.

“I just wanted to have a challenge for once.” Peter grumbled more to himself, MJ must’ve heard because she rolled her eyes again. “MJ…” He said unsteadily as they stopped but MJ just plucked the camera from his hands and opened the door and pushed him in without following. She pointed the camera back in and a girl with blonde hair and a preppy outfit looked up. She had blue eyes and cocked her head Peter, seemingly confused as to what a freshman was doing in the science room. A boy with swooshy brown hair and semi expensive clothing looked up briefly, uninterested.

“That’s Osborn’s kid.” Tony scowled at the offspring of one of his most persistent and annoying competitors. Or ex-competitor, as it was proven that Osborn was responsible for nearly destroying the city on multiple occasions, and would have succeeded if not for Spiderman.

“You’re a freshman.” He said boredly and the girl slapped his arm slightly at his rudeness.

“Excuse him, sweetie.” she smiled kindly “This is AP chem II. Research is down the hall.” She directed politely.

“Oh… uhm yeah that’s me.” Peter stuttered nervously and then blushed as the girls lips quirked up as the boy rolled his eyes “I mean, I’m in this class too… my name is Peter Parker.” he introduced himself shyly. The girls head perked up at the name and the boy raised a brow in mild interest.

“Oh you’re my lab partner this year!” She said gleefully and came around to properly greet him with a handshake “Gwen Stacy and he’s Harry Osborn.” she nodded back at the boy who just half waved, half saluted him. Everyone stiffened at the names. They had heard those names dismally, a whisper in the wind when they heard about Spiderman. She was the girl who died in the green goblin attack on clock tower. He was the green goblin. Peter seemed at a loss of words momentarily, so he just nodded and he blushed a little “they told me you were different case but not so young.” She said with an impressed smile, propping her hand on her hip.

“Y-Yeah, just wanted a challenge I guess.” Peter muttered nervously, not looking her in the eye. She had a glint in her eye.

“Me too.” She said with a mischievous smile and he paused only for a second before smiling back shyly. “Let’s set up our lab station shall we?” She asked, he nodded as he followed her to the labstation.

“He’s really bad at talking to girls.” Tony muttered and Pepper smacked him.

“Do not make fun of that pure child.” She hissed and looked a bit affectionately and protectively at the boy and girl on the screen as they set up their lab station together.

“He knew Stacy and Osborn personally?” Clint asked a bit of worry coming into his voice. Peter didn’t seem to have a lot of people that cared, if Gwen was one of them and he failed her, then a lot of things would be put into perspective on Peters section to disappear off the face of the earth. And
if he was close to Osborn putting him in jail also would be a very valid reason.

“We’ll see.” Natasha muttered darkly, knowing the answer but wishing it wasn’t true.

*camera cuts to Peter in a science classroom, he was in school clothes, silently scratching something down in a crappy spiral with intense concentration, furrowed in his brows*

Wed. October 17, 2018 - 10:32:48

“Hey Pete.” Harry’s voice whispered obnoxiously from behind the camera. “Whatcha doin’?” he asked, seeming only half interested.

“Proving Ock’s cycle problem wrong.” Peter murmured distractedly. “He made a little mistake…” he said more to himself than to Harry. He didn’t notice his very greasy teacher shadow looming over him as if he had just manifested out of thin air.

“And what would that be exactly, Mr.Parker.” Came a nastily stuck up voice. The camera whirled to the disgusting teachers scowling face. Peter looked up with slightly wide eyes.

“Hey, isn’t that Dr.Octopus?” Bruce whispered leaning toward Tony, because the man seemed to be their encyclopedia for all things Spiderman right now, the Avengers couldn’t have cared less before, but Tony always liked to keep tabs on potential allies and threats..

“Doctor Who now?” Tony asked baffled.

“Dr.Octopus. The Spiderman villain. Fury says Peter called him Doc Ock.” Sam replied incredulously, which meant either he couldn’t believe Tony didn’t know this or he couldn’t believe that Peter’s sworn enemy was his teacher. “He’s Spidey’s arch nemesis. Or self proclaimed at least, I don’t think Peter thinks the same though. But the guy even assembled a specialized team to take him down. Spiderman stopped them obviously, but the guy’s kinda obsessed with him.” Sam informed and Tony scrunched his nose in disgust.

“That’s creepy.” he said and Sam and Clint nodded in agreement. “I mean, how is he even allowed to teach, he looks like a pedophile.” Tony grumbled.

“Do you think he knows his teacher is a super villain at this point?” Steve asked, ignoring Tony’s comment.

“Probably not, considering he hasn’t taken him down yet.” Sam responded with a shrug.

“Uhm, your theory? It’s slightly... incorrect sir, you didn’t take into account the graphic motion of the-“ Peter started to explain, only to be cut off by the greasy overweight man.

“Tell me, Mr.Parker, do you have a PhD in quantum physics?” The teacher said snidely to him and Peter gripped his pencil a little harder, eyes flaring a little in determination as his mouth went into a thin line.

“No sir, but you’re teaching it-“ Peter started again, persistent in his quest to get his teacher to just listen.

“No.” Octavious confirmed with a nod “And furthermore you are but a mere child. You do not know better than me, an adult, in this field or any field.” The doctor continued to chastise the boy “and that goes for any adult for that matter.” he finished, Peter had a white knuckle grip on his pencil.
“I’m not saying I know better, I just think you may have made a simple mistake-” Peter continued with strained politeness through gritted teeth, clearly frustrated and mad, only to be cut off again.

“Mistake?” Ock laughed as if it was the most absurd thing on earth “let me tell you, I’m less likely to make a mistake than a simple overachieving petulant child.” he said condescendingly. Peter gripped his pencil so hard there was a slight crack in it, Ock didn’t notice that though.

“Then tell me;” he said through gritted teeth “how would you account for the motion projectile graphics as a direct affect on the main object?” Peter phrases it as a question, even though it wasn’t one. “I put it in this formula,” he showed Ock the paper, who took one glance at it and scoffed “but kept coming up wrong according to the key. Maybe you could-“ Peter continued and then got cut off by an enraged teacher.

“You think you know better than me?” Ock seethed, getting in Peter’s face, making his yellow teeth known as Peter leaned back in his seat.

“I don’t, I was just confused. If I got it wrong then tell me how to fix it.” Peter said back in the most polite tone he could probably muster with his insufferable teacher.

“Let me tell you, Mr.Parker.” Ock continued as if Peter didn’t say anything. “Your accomplishments no matter how big they may be right now, will never be acknowledged. You are a student that had to work their way to the top, you were never born there. You are not and never will be meant to be there no matter how much you pretend.” Ock seethed and Peter leaned back as the yellow teeth showed. He didn’t seemed daunted but his face became expressionless. “So I suggest you know your place.” he whispered closer to Peter. Peter didn’t move.

“Yes, sir.” Peter said toneless, Ock nodded in satisfaction as he turned to leave.

“What an ass.” Tony mumbled, seething at the man. Even if he wasn’t a supervillain, Tony knows that he’d hate the man. Judging by the looks of everyone else, they thought the same.

“You know we kinda did the same thing, just not in that bad of a context.” Clint mumbled earning grumbles of begrudging agreement from everyone in the room. “But that’s basically what we did.” he scowled, having contempt with himself and shame in the way he had acted. They all did.

“Don’t listen to him Pete.” Harry said, making himself known and Peter hummed as he started to work on a different equation. “He just has an ego too big for his head.” Harry said and Peter huffed.

“Yeah…” Peter said, looking up with half hollow eyes, like he didn’t believe what Harry was saying, but didn’t want to talk about it right now. “I know, it doesn’t matter.” he said tonelessly.

“He got a better defence mechanism for it.” Sam responded dully.

“You mean his snark and sass instead of strained politeness?” Steve said more than asked.

“Either way, he’s pretending it doesn’t affect him. It’s harder to tell when he’s being a little shit though.” Tony said casually. “It’s easier to justify our actions, because we can just chalk it up as him being a teenager.” he said. It wasn’t an excuse, there was no excuse for what they did. They were jerks, worse than jerks in fact. There wasn’t a word vulgar or hypocritical for the way they acted. They were supposed to be heroes, people look up to them, and then they take this kid and shit on him. This already broken child and just feed him to the sharks, yell at him and use him as their proverbial punching bag. Get their frustration out on him.

The worst part is: Parker lets them do it. Because he understands it’s not for him.
*Camera cuts to Peter in school clothes, in the robotics lab. He was sparking together a few things that looked like the skeleton of his iconic spider drone that was often seen with him for recon and scanning certain things and structures. There were blueprints and scraps and small tools littered on the desk and a computer opened, a chord connecting to the main circuitry of the drone.*

Fri. November 23, 2018-12:56:34

“Whatcha makin Pete?” Ned asked chipperly from behind the camera.

“A recon drone.” Peter said without looking up, seemingly in complete focus with it.

“What for?” Ned asked and behind the camera and it shifted a bit to prop it up so he was half in the frame as he sat next to Peter to potentially help him. Peter shrugged noncommentarily and looked at computer in front of him and furrowed his brow. “What’s wrong?” Ned asked, not in any particular tone of concern.

“Hey can you check my code?” He asked as he pushed the computer to Ned “I wanted to catalog the data it scans into long term storage, but it’s only cataloging for short term.” He explained with a frustrated sigh. Ned hummed and started to type on the computer. After a bit of clicking he turned the screen back to Peter who immediately started to review the code.

“Okay, that should fix it and I also made a system so when you are trying to find something specific you don’t have to dig too far, just hook it up to its mainframe.” Ned said casually and Peter smiled at the boy as he looked up from the screen.

“Thanks dude. You’re the best.” Peter said sincerely and Ned shrugged indifferently.

“What’s it for?” Ned asked instead and Peter just shrugged with a knowing, teasing smile as he went back to his work.

“You’ll see.” Peter said with anticipation and screwed some things together “hopefully.” He muttered under his breath, more to himself.

“Wait, does that mean he was planning on telling young Leeds about his Spidering Habits?” Thor asked confused no one answered because at this point, you can never be sure with Peter Parker. As he was growing up he was becoming more and more complex; everything wasn’t just black and white. They were slowly watching Peter’s (not so) childish view on life become more and more grey as good and bad fused together. As his defenses got stronger. As he got smarter.

He was on the fast track to growing up, and there was no way to stop it.

*camera cuts to Wade pulling back a beat up shopping cart with Matt in it and there was two bungee cords suspending it at the top of a nearly deserted road. They were in their super hero suits, masks and everything. There were a few empty beer bottles in the cart and Matt was guzzling a bottle of cheap, crappy off-brand champaign and muttering incoherently as Wade was shouting nonsense*

Thurs. December 27, 2018- 01:32:17

“Are they..? I think they’re drunk.” Clint mumbled almost in disbelief. He wasn’t too sure why he was so surprised, it made sense for them to be.

“We’re gonna fly Sedrick.” Matt muttered to the nearly finished alcohol bottle and hugged it close to his chest, as Peter got closer with the camera.
“Hell yeah we are.” Wade pumped one fist as the other loosely grabbed the bungee powered shopping cart’s broken handle. “We’re gonna fuckin half pipe this shit.” Wade cursed and Matt gasped in a dramatic way as he tried to glare at Wade but missed miserably.

“Not in front of the children!” He said caressing his bottle “Sedrick is an infant.” he cooed at the bottle.

“Y’all are gonna throw up.” Peter said from behind the camera, he sounded amused at this.

“Are you gonna stop us? Because we’ve done worse things tonight Petey.” Wade said to him, he was only slightly less drunk than Matt, but definitely more aware.

“Nope, just stating facts.” Peter hummed “We also do a lot of illegal things when you two aren’t drunk.” He pointed out with a shrug.

“I’m not as think as you drunk I am.” Matt sang in an off key tone. Wade grinned under his mask and hung on to the rails as he released the lever and they shot off at a blazing speed down the road.

“And we all fell down when the sun came up!” Wade belted loudly as he went off, his voice getting further quickly.

“I think we’ve had enough.” Peter said under his breath and shot out a web, there was a smile in him tone.

This is why the Avengers don’t try to understand Team Red.

*camera cuts to Peter and Gwen, with lab coats over their school clothes and goggles on as they were mixing a rather complex batch of compounds together in the dimly lit Chem lab. It was raining outside the window, not letting much sunlight through and only one light on in the front of the room near the white board. Stacy was pouring chemicals as Peter was scribbling something on a piece of paper.*

Mon. January 14, 2019-12:14:56

“Add Boron to it.” Gwen said more than suggested “It’ll make it more fluid.” She said and Peter shook his head politely and put down his pencil.

“Silicon will make it less flaky and last longer.” He said and poured that chemical in and mixed rapidly. “Adding Boron will make it unstable.” he said and held up the web fluid, Stacy looked on in awe for a second.

“Wait, so Stacy knew?” Sam asked, brow furrowed. Why wouldn’t he tell MJ and Ned then? They were his friends longer.

“Guess so.” Bruce shrugged, seeming to have the same thoughts.

“Wait how? That shouldn’t-“ Gwen said incredulously, Peter smiled broadly as he slid the paper he had been previously writing on to the girl and she looked at it almost astounded as she reviewed it. “Peter Parker you’re a genius.” She beamed up at him. Peter laughed nervously, cheeks tinting red.

“Yeah, now if we could only make a breakthrough on Harry’s cure then we’d be really geniuses.” Peter mutter the smile slipping off his face, being replaced by a darker look. Gwen’s eyes went a bit sad as she put a hand on his shoulder in comfort.

“It’s a genetic disease. You can’t do anything about it.” she said softly, as if she was reminding
him and Peter squeezed his eyes shut.

“Yeah but so was my asthma, and the spider bite took that away.” Peter murmured with furrow of his brows “if I just—” Gwen took his shoulders and looked at him directly in the eye cutting him off, he looked at her with wide, curious eyes.

“Wait, you used to have asthma?” She asked seriously. He nodded automatically, not seeing where this was going as a smile spread across her lips.

“Yeah but—” he started.

“That’s great!” She said happily, her smile going full blown and released him to turn to her spiral and started writing vigorously in her book, her mind working at a million miles an hour.

“W-why is that great?” He asked nervously trying to peak over her shoulder to get a look at what she was working on.

“If you had asthma and it was cured by the bite then Harry’s illness should be cured by your blood!” She said excitedly and Peter went rigid.

“I’m not so sure.” Peter said apprehensively and Gwen turned to look at him with innocent and slightly hurt question in her eyes.

“You were a normal kid before, but then the spider made your healing factor accelerate. Think about it Peter.” She said and smiled reassuringly “unless you weren’t normal before.” She joked with a mischievous look before turning back to her book, missing Peter stiffen. Everybody stiffened as well.

“That’s how…” Natasha muttered with a furrow in her brow. “That’s how the goblin…” she connected the dots and Wanda put a hand to her mouth as it clicked for her too. Hurt and surprise and remorse coming into her brown eyes, Natasha was better at masking her’s.

“They gave him the blood.” Tony muttered, with a furrowed brow. As a man of science, he understood that that wasn’t a good idea. Even if Peter had been normal, but clearly he wasn’t. Theoretically, a normal person would’ve died from that much radiation being directly injected in their system.

“I don’t understand, why didn’t it work then?” Thor asked and Bruce sighed, understanding how Tony did as well.

“They experimented on him when he was a kid. He wasn’t normal even if he didn’t look it.” Bucky answered instead. That would make sense, considering where he was and who he was born to. A child of two enhanced humans. The perfect weapon who just needed to be molded into an even more perfect one. A weapon with killer instincts, lightning reflexes, extreme precision, vast intelligence, flawless tactics. But he also had to be physically capable of everything. Peter uses his mind more than his muscles when it came to fighting, even when he got super strength. Even when he became the perfect weapon.

It was inevitable.

“The old serums must’ve awakened and saved him from dying from the spider bite.” Bruce answered Thor “but it also made his blood toxic. Radioactive.” He said in a darker tone “it made him into something else.” he said remorsefully. Peter couldn’t distribute or recieve a different kind of blood, because there was no one like him. It’d make him sick or could even kill him. Not even Steve (whom could receive and give blood with Bucky) could handle the toxic chemical in Peter’s
“No, I was normal.” Peter said and hung his head a little as the unassuming girl smiled broadly, but never looked up from her work to see Peter’s single tear rolling down his hung head.

*camera cuts to Peter, MJ, Ned, Harry and Gwen all in the lunch room in their school clothes. Peter was in his open dark blue flannel that went over his hands and jeans with a white shirt that said ‘4. Find x’ and had a picture of a triangle and the x on one side circled in red that had an arrow pointed to it saying ‘found it’. MJ was in a fading grey Woman’s Rising shirt and black jeans, Peter’s green flannel tied around her waist. Ned was wearing an Aliens shirt and jeans. Harry was wearing a blue sweater over a collared white shirt and khakis. And Gwen was wearing a yellow collared shirt tucked into a white skater skirt that went down to a little below her mid thigh and he hair was adorned with a pastel purple hard headband. They were just chatting like normal kids at a lunch table.*

Wed. February 20, 2019- 12:37:59

“How are you feelin’ today Harry?” Ned asked with a bit of concern, but mostly for conversation. Harry just shrugged noncommentaly.

“Alright enough to come to school.” he said casually with a bit of a sour look. Gwen chuckled lightly at the expression.

“Well you’ll be feeling like that a lot now that we have a breakthrough in your cure.” Gwen nudged the boy playfully with a knowing smile and Harry allowed a small smirk as Peter stiffened a bit.

“I really appreciate it guys.” he said in an oddly sincere tone as he looked at Peter directly in the eye. Peter didn’t seem to know how to respond for a second.

“Even if we’re high school students?” Peter joked nervously, rubbing the back of his neck nervously.

“Wouldn’t have it any other way, Pete.” Harry smirked at him and chomped into a carrot and Peter smiled a bit. “But I do hate that I still have Mr.Tallin’s test to do next period.” Harry groaned as he swallowed the orange vegetable.

“Physics not your thing?” Ned laughed playfully.

“School isn’t his thing.” MJ snorted and Harry pointed to her.

“10 points to MJ.” Harry said and MJ rolled her eyes at her friend’s antics, but didn’t have a displeased look on her face.

“I dunno, it’s just logic.” Peter said with a shrug as he stabbed into his school lunch and ate a forkful of rubbery pasta.

“You don’t get to say that.” MJ and Ned said at the same time in the same bland tone. Peter looked at them with an offended look.

“Wha-” Peter opened his mouth indigently to defend himself.

“They’re right Pete.” Gwen giggled “You’re too smart to gauge what’s easy and what’s not.” she smirked and he turned to Harry who just shrugged in agreement with the rest of the group and Peter slumped in disappointment his stool, stabbing his pasta again but not eating it.
“You’re all the worst.” he muttered darkly.

“It’s almost like he’s a normal kid.” Steve said in a remorseful tone, knowing that this wouldn’t last for Peter Parker.

“Yeah, it’s always like that in little moments like these.” Wanda said with a small smile adorning her face, it was a little sad as she knew that it was going to be ripped away harshly and these good moments would torment him of what he used to have. Of what he was forced to give up.

“It’s about to go to shit.” Bucky muttered and they all were silent, because they knew it was true.

*Camera cuts to Peter and Ned in school clothes, in the library. It was raining outside one of the windows, thunderstorming in fact. Peter reading a titleless book with a hollow look in his eyes, clearly he wasn’t actually retaining any information from it and Ned looking at him with worry in his own.*

Tues. March 25, 2019- 12:08:19

“Peter wanna build lego tonight?” Ned asked a little too chipper and hopeful, it was clearly more forced than genuine. Peter didn’t move or answer or even seem to hear what his friend had said and MJ scoffed the lack of response.

“Dude, it’s literally been two days.” she said to the Philepino boy who just glared slightly at her “I’m surprised he even showed up to school at all.” MJ muttered, more to herself, from behind the camera. Ned’s glare intensified slightly.

“Yeah, but we’re his friends. We should be supportive of him.” Ned retorted.

“Just saying, he might want some space.” MJ defended herself. “It’s been a wild few years.” she commented.

“Exactly, so he needs time to process-” Ned started and Peter breathed in a little too loudly. Seemingly frustrated with the conversation happening around him, and showing that he was indeed listening.

“I’m right here.” he muttered as he blew out a breath.

“He lives!” MJ announced and Ned shot a venomous glare to her lack of compassion and empathy. “Oh come on, it’s not like he was the only one who was friends with Stacy and Osborn.” MJ commented sarcastically and the glare he gave her was so intense and full of anger and regret that it made her breath hitch and even took the Avengers by surprise. Even when shielded by a screen, Peter Parker’s rage was the most intimidating thing they’ve ever witness.

“Yeah, but I was probably the only one who could’ve helped Harry.” Peter sneered at her “And if I did, then Gwen wouldn’t have died.” he said and Ned didn’t seem to know how to respond to that for a second as his figure was frozen in fear, but MJ did.

“Yeah? You’re smart Parker, but being crazy was in Harry’s genes. He was gonna die either way.” MJ said back blandly, if not with a little bit of passion of her own and Peter growled at her like an animal. It was enough for Ned to get up and take a step away from his friend, Peter didn’t seem to mind it.

“Yeah? And was dying in Gwen’s genes too?” he spat back venomously. No one responded and Peter got up and grabbed his bag harshly and left.
“Should we..?” Ned asked hesitantly.

“No...give him some time.” MJ said back.

“Wait...what happened?” Sam asked and Tony sighed.

“Osborn’s illness was enhanced by the spider blood and he became the Goblin. Then while Goblin and Spidey were fighting, Gwen became a casualty.” he answered “Probably a hostage.” he shrugged.

“How do you know that?” Natasha asked with a quirked brow.

“Filled in the gaps. I do follow Spiderman, believe it or not. Like to keep tabs on him and the works, even before we knew he was a fetus.” Tony shrugged casually.

“So this is the reason he ditched his friends?” Sam asked, but he already knew the answer.

“This was just the breaking point. Every other mental illness that Parker has: paranoia, anxiety, even his little ‘Spider Sense’ might be feeding into this.” Tony said casually “It’s been feeding for years, I guess he finally just snapped” Tony shrugged, but there was a sad tint in his tone.

“He thinks it’s too good to be true.” Natasha muttered “He thinks that they will die because of him too.” she said in a sadder tone, she looked to Wanda before watching the younger woman nod.

Bullseye.

*Camera cuts to Peter, Matt and Wade, all in civilian clothes, in a beat up car. Wade was in the back while Peter was in the front seat and Matt was oddly driving. Peter was playing a gaming device and Wade was laying down*

Sat. April 06, 2019- 20:29:03

“Isn’t Murdock blind?” Sam asked and Tony nodded in confirmation “Then why the hell is he driving a fucking car?!” Sam gestured to the TV with his whole hand. Tony shrugged, no one else questioned or commented. Matt seemed capable enough, no one was dead yet.

“Why do I have to be in the back?” Wade whined as he laid across the seats, he didn’t seem very upset by that fact though.

“Because last time you were in the front, you nearly gave that old woman a heart attack.” Peter commented casually, not looking up from his gaming device.

“It’s her fucking fault for looking in the car.” Wade accused and Matt rolled his unseeing eyes. No one was questioning the fact that Matt was driving. That is until they heard police sirens. And Matt pulled over.

“License and Registration, sir.” the police asked and Matt looked up at the officer innocently.

“I’m sorry sir, what did I do wrong?” he asked and the officer huffed out a breath.

“We believe you are blind sir.” the officer said and Matt was about to defend himself but Peter spoke up first.

“That’s not the question.” Peter cut off, snapping his gaming device shut and looking up at the officer with an icy look in his eyes, the officer turned his attention to him.
“I’m sorry kid, but it’s illegal to-” the officer began in a condescending tone, and Peter swiftly cut him off.

“He didn’t do anything illegal.” Peter said back in a firmer tone, his voice wasn’t even a negotiating one. It was like he was stating facts.

“No, but it is a hazard to have-” the police was cut off again by the boy’s indifferent tone.

“Hazard, but not illegal.” Peter said to him in a more matter of fact tone with cold underlayers. “So therefore you have no right to pull us over.” the policeman huffed out a frustrated sigh.

“Yes but he has to have certain-” he tried again, but it was futile.

“Permission? He does. Who are you to assume that? He was driving normally, so technically he has the right to sue you for abuse of power because he did nothing illegal.” Peter stated and the officer shut his mouth promptly.

“Damn.” Clint whistled impressed at the boy’s negotiating skills.

“Uhh” Matt started “Can I go now?” he asked after a bit and the officer stepped away, allowing them to go.

“Thanks!” Peter chirped happily to the baffled officer as they drove off. Matt smirked as Wade stared at Peter who went back to mindlessly playing his game.

“You’ve been spending way too much time with Red.” he said dully and Matt barked out a laugh and Peter smirked to himself a bit.

“Can we get ice cream?” Peter asked indifferently, not looking up.

“Hell yeah.” Wade pumped his fist, and Matt smirked as he turned the signal on. “Do you even have that permission thingy Red?” Wade asked innocently and Matt snorted.

“Bitch, I don’t even have a license.” Matt laughed and Peter smile grew a little, but he never brought his head up.

“No wonder the cops hate dealing with them.” Sam grumbled “They’re complete nutcases.” he breathed incredulously.

“Hey, one of those ‘nutcases’ is my son.” Natasha glared slightly at the man, Bucky’s own intensifying the affect and Sam shrugged, ineffective regardless because they both didn’t mean malintent behind the scowls.

“Doesn’t mean he’s not all sorts of messed up.” Sam said and Natasha sighed.

“True.” she conceded quietly, ignoring Sam’s triumphant smirk.

*Camera cuts to Matt slowly backing away from a dog while Peter was laughing in the background. It sounded like it was trying to be cheery but not quite there. As if it was fake and forced.*


“Peter..!” Matt dodged the mutt that was jumping after him happily “When Karen told me to cheer you up, I thought we’d would take down some drug dealers. Not fucking around with hybrids.” Matt said in a shaky voice and Peter laughed again.
“Well, I’m entertained.” he said in a thoughtful tone. “And you made me go to mass today. I’m not religious and if I was I’d be Jewish, so you owe me this.” Peter puffed, and Matt grumbled his defeat.

“Damn you.” Matt muttered as a Great Dane snuck up and pounced on him. “What the-!” he exclaimed as the dog slobbered on him and Peter laughed, it still wasn’t quite right.

“Shh, don’t curse in front of the little angels.” Peter said in a teasing tone and Matt glared.

“Little devils, more like it.” Matt muttered darkly.

“You’d know.” Peter said in a knowing tone as Matt struggled to wrestle the dog without giving his cover away and Peter chuckled the same forced hollow chuckle. “I thought you liked dogs.” Peter said wistfully.

“Small dogs.” Matt corrected “Small puppies who can’t over power me theoretically.” Matt said in a matter of fact tone.

“These are not puppies.” Peter noted thoughtfully.

“These are not puppies.” Matt confirmed with a firm nod.

* the camera cut to Peter in an oversized hoodie with a black backpack on, walking down the dimly lit streets of New York. The sidewalk was mostly abandoned with the odd pedestrian or car passing occasionally. He looked tired as fuck (for lack of better explanation) and tried to smile, but seemed too exhausted to put in his full effort.*


“Okay, hey guys.” Peter says to the camera, not caring as a man that walked past him looked at him oddly, as he walked and looked at the camera for a second before looking away slightly as if to gather his thoughts. “So, I know I’m supposed to film happy things here, but honestly my life hasn’t been so happy lately and I kinda need to vent. My life just went to hell...again, I guess. Like shit hit the fan hard.” Peter said, trying to remain in a joking tone, but it was falling out quickly

“This was the day before out first mission with him.” Steve realized suddenly checking the date again with wide eyes. No one said anything else about it.

“So since I haven’t done this kind of thing in a while, lemme just tell you what happened this past week.” He breathed in and out before continuing “Okay, so my current status is friendless and homeless. I have relized, on the account of my Aunt commiting suicide, that I cannot keep defensless, normal people close to me period. Even without them knowing about who I really am. They are just not safe around me in general. And I can’t tell them cause that will put them in danger and due to my status of homeless, that should give you an idea of where my financial and resource situations are. So I can’t protect them.” Peter huffed out a breath. “I know it seems like running away, that’s because it fucking is.” Peter admitted and shut his eyes for a second before breathing again, trying not to get too worked up “But let’s look on the bright side here.” he tried to smile, but it came out as a grimace.

“How could he possibly try to be optimistic in a situation like this?” Bruce asked incrediously.

“Maybe a shred of hope?” Clint said with his own tint of hopefulness in his voice.

“ I graduated high school. So no more school. Yay, I guess. Even if I can’t afford college, I don’t think I’d go. It’s anxiety boy hours to the max, or so I’ve heard. Uhm… oh! The Director of
SHIELD came by my house, Nick, he’s a hard case. I’ll work with him on it. But tomorrow I have my first mission with the Avengers!” he said with a small smile sorta real (more real than it had been in the past few scenes) as if he was trying to be hopeful.

The colour drained from everyone’s faces. Here it came.

“Hopefully, they won’t be super duper hard on me. I’ve never really done this whole ‘saving people thing like, you know, professionally. God, I hope it isn’t like special forces. They made me do all their evil bidding there, it was hell. But that shouldn’t be a problem, they’re the Avengers, and yeah I might sound overly hopeful right now. But at least they won’t scream at me for stupid things like saving people.” Peter said like it was obvious.

“He had just lost his aunt.” Thor mumbled remorsefully.

“And maybe they’ll be nice to me. I mean, I won’t get too close, but at least if I do they can protect themselves right?” Peter’s face fell “I shouldn’t be thinking like this so soon after May died, but it kinda hurts… and… I don’t have a distraction this time…” he said and his voice momentarily dipped into a darker tone.

“He’s lost everything before.” Tony reminded them.

“I mean, I know I have to follow orders. But I hope they understand when I just... can’t...and hey, maybe they’ll understand what I’m going through? Maybe they’ll help me see MJ and Ned again. Maybe they can get all this shit that I’ve been wired to do out of my mind! I know it’s far fetched but like...ugh who even says farfetched anymore, am I right? But seriously, maybe they can help me…” he said hopefully.

“He needed help…” Natasha’s voice cracked in an almost sob.

“Anyways, here’s to hoping they won’t be complete assholes.” Peter gave the camera one last hopeful, somewhat genuine smile.

“And we cast him out.”

The screen cut to black.

OoOoO

Technically, he was expected to be there.

Fury said he was only dispatching the Avengers for Uber emergencies until this little ‘situation’ blew over (that’s what he called it, Peter called it a crisis, but those were the little details).

Apparently a city wide invasion of plant zombies (which was nothing like the game plants vs zombies or the Danny Phantom plant zombie episode, this was much more gross and worse, to his utter dismay) was a super emergency, which Peter totally got.

He didn’t even know how these came to be (although that would make sense, since he hasn’t really been active as Spiderman for the past week or so. Time doesn’t really matter when you’re homeless and partially jobless- aka when your job doesn’t give a shit on when you come in because it’s a clock in/clock out system and you’re also a part time mercenary who does lowkey jobs). And he would’ve hung back and watched - honestly that was preferred - except that little voice in his head and his senses told him he’d been hanging back enough as is. He was inactive and getting a bit jittery for some adrenaline, that was always in constant supply for him so he never knew what it was like without it. He hadn’t even responded to Wade’s text for an MLP marathon,
his money stash was getting low, but that was because rent on his apartment was leeching his income and he needed to get back to work faster. He knew the Avengers could handle this, but he wasn’t about to let 167th street be torn up by giant gardenias that looked and smelled like they’d been sitting in the trash for a few hundred years and died in soiled milk.

“You’d think these zombies would smell better.” Peter grumbled as he swung in and turned around to see Iron Man about to be hit by a spiky leaf that was sure to be lethal. He hit a button on his ear to activate his com that was radioed in to the Avenger’s private channel “Iron Man watch your 6!” he told him and Tony turned around to blast the oncoming barrage of leaf daggers being thrown at him.

“Thanks kid.” Stark said almost breathlessly, as if he couldn’t believe what or who he was hearing. That made sense, they probably didn’t expect him to show up for another few months, or like ever. But like most things in his life as the Amazing Peter Parker, plans went to shit pretty quickly.

“Parker? What are you doing here?” Wilson asked and Peter rolled his eyes as if it wasn’t obvious. To fight the fucking tulip of the undead, duh.

“I thought you were ghosting for a few more weeks.” Barton questioned not unkindly though, which was odd. He expected them to be a little more apprehensive at his arrival, but they were weirdly - dare Peter think it - welcoming.

“Yes no, I’m back bitches.” Peter announced in, what he hoped, was his usual tone of sarcasm and wittiness, and was met with a series of good natured remarks that made him smile dubiously beneath the mask. They didn’t need to know that though, because it was an uncontrolled action, as in not voluntary.

“We could use some help on 7th, if you’re close.” Steve admitted and Peter was grateful they didn’t have to go through the whole soldier spiel nor did they have to go through the ‘where the hell were you? Tell me now because I’m an even bigger entitled prick than before’ spiel either.

“On my way!” Peter affirmed and swung up did a trick - god how he missed this - and flew towards the location where a bunch of walking discoloured marigolds were attacking rather viciously the duo of Black Widow and Winter Soldier, who were using their long range weapons. ‘Of course’ he thought to himself as he webbed toward a building and swung around and corralled a bunch of the plant zombies in a web while Winter Soldier blasted their legs to hell and Black Widow sliced off their tops evenly all at once. ‘Nice.’

“Hey kid.” she responded as he landed next to her on the dead peteled streets. He only sense a tad bit of awkwardness in her tone, but a lot in Barnes’ posture. Oh right, he wasn’t the only one who could be awkward. Well you have to get it from somewhere.

“Uh, hey...hi uhm...nice move?” he said puffing his chest out a bit and trying to maintain professionalism. Peter almost wanted to laugh, because that’s exactly what he was gonna probably say. Oh, the irony. He may just really be his father’s son. He’d like to think that his badassness was his own, but maybe - and this was a strong maybe - it was inherited. Just a little.

“Not bad yourself.” Peter responded and Natasha migrated over to them slowly, but in a fast attentive pace.

“Is there anything else?” Barnes asked her of them and she shook her head but then Peter felt his Spidey Sense go off and pushed Barnes down as a razor leaf shot over both their heads. It was awkward because now he was on top of his fucking father. Too intimate, too fast. He was glad he was wearing a mask.
“Woah, razor leaf! Like in pokemon.” he said under his breath, mostly to dispel tension and awkwardness, as he got off Barnes who nodded in a curt gesture of thanks and they went it battle the water lilies that looked like they were drowned in radioactive waste then half dried in the Sahara.

They weren’t his parents and he wasn’t their kid. Not out here. Not right now. They could forget about all the drama stewing in their family for now.

Right now, they had a wanna be Leafeon to take down.

OoOoO

He wasn’t sure how this was gonna work now that they were actually here.

Out of all the situations he could’ve imagined, none of them seemed realistic at all. The police forcing Peter to live with them was one, but if the police could catch Peter, the name Spiderman wouldn’t be known. Another was Peter coming of his own free will, telling them that he wanted a family quietly and then his parents envelop him in a hug and happily ever after. That was probably the most unrealistic thing he’d ever thought of. The most realistic was Wade Wilson to show up on their doorstep with Peter held in his hand by the scruff of his neck like a kitten and demanding that the took the kid, but even that was bullshit.

One thing he was sure of was that this was going to be odd considering this was Peter Parker they were dealing with (or the fact of the matter was, any situation even remotely involving Peter Parker would be not what anyone was expecting in the least, but they should know this by now).

Still he wasn’t quite sure what to make of this situation now that they were actually here. Not that he was expecting anything in particular, he just wasn’t sure this was how it was supposed to go traditionally.

But he supposed traditional flew out the window as soon as Parker entered the briefing room with an old wooden baseball bat.

“Rules?” Bucky asked incredulous, because that’s supposed to technically be the parents line. Peter swing the bat around casually in one hand, but his eyes were darting everywhere but Bucky and Natasha. Bucky and Natasha’s eyes however, stayed trained on their son.

“I’m tired of just wandering around the city doing nothing, so I came up with something that we can probably both agree on.” Peter shrugged like it wasn’t a big deal, but Tony could tell that this had been affecting him a lot more than he let on. Bucky and Natasha quickly nodded, eager to hear the proposal. Peter shifted a little nervously. “I’m not good at taking situations like these seriously.” Peter admitted. Bucky deadpanned. Cause yeah, they all knew that as well as they knew the back of their hand. Weather it was Peter Parker or Spiderman, Peter had somehow created a defense mechanism of pure snarky/witty remarks, a shark like smile and a dash assholishness. Mix that in with his genetically inherited badassness and his natural genius, he was unbeatable. No, not unbeatable.

He was basically a fucking god.

Minus the fact that he was still a kid. But by this point that fact really didn’t matter like it used to. They could say Peter had the potential to change the world in the future all they wanted, but the fact was Peter was already changing the world for the better. Just in his own Peter like way.

“You mean situations that change your life drastically?” Bucky asked in a blunt tone. Peter perked
“Exactly!” Peter said delighted that someone understood. Tony would’ve called him insane if not for the fact that a.) they all were and b.) the nervousness that was wound up tight in the kid’s shoulders.

“This needs to be serious Peter.” Natasha furrowed her brow, trying not to get mad at him, but her tone left no room for argument. Peter sighed “you can’t make this into a game.” she insisted.

“Well, that’s the only way I can look at it without throwing myself out of a window and never turning back.” Peter snapped back slightly and Natasha sighed as she silently conceded. “Can I explain my...uhm game?” Peter asked tentatively and that was a loophole, because Peter Parker never asked for anything. And that meant anything. Not praise, not a thanks, not any toys, or compassion. Absolutely nothing. The kid was completely 100 percent independent and self thinking by this point in his life.

“Fine.” Natasha said breathlessly. She knew the score too. Peter smiled softly, but only for a split second.

“Great!” Peter said with fake happiness in his tone. “So I don’t deal with things that make me uncomfortable in a normal way. I just hit it. So I get the bat. When you make me uncomfortable I’ll hit you, with exceptions of course. But- wait let me finish- I can’t bale out of this little... arangement.” Peter made a triangle with his hands between the three of them “You can though. If you want out, I’ll leave. No kicking, no crying. Just pack up and go.” Peter finished and looked to his mother and father (how weird was that) Natasha and Bucky were considering it. “wanna back out?” Peter asked, only a tinge of nervousness in his tone. Natasha had a glint in her eye, Tony couldn’t help but feel it was similar to Peter’s when he was challenged.

“We’ve looked for you for too long to let a stupid bat get in the way.” Natasha said with a devious smile. Peter looked at her and blinked. “But you can’t be unreasonable with the bat.” Natasha told him sternly, snapping Peter out of his slight daze.

“You afraid I won’t eat my vegetables?” Peter quipped, same glint as Natasha’s in his eyes “I’ve taken care of myself for this long, I promise I know what I need and what I can handle.” Peter said nonchalantly.

“What are the terms and exceptions of the bat?” Bucky asked.

“Well if I told you, it would ruin the fun.” Peter said with a doopy smirk, that reminded Tony of the videos. “Plus I can’t really explain it.” Peter shrugged.

“How long will this happen for?” Natasha asked and Peter shifted.

“For as long as it’s necessary.” Peter said seriously and Natasha nodded. “I’ll cut down on patrols, but I get no curfew...” Peter continued, he was oddly good at compromising.

“Sounds fair, but it has to be reasonable.” Natasha said thoughtfully. Peter nodded.

“Matt said he can make special papers, but it wouldn’t put it in the system til tomorrow, but I gotta take care of some stuff until then anyway.” Peter said and averted his eyes a bit and Bucky and Natasha nodded.

“Okay. We’ll see you tomorrow.” Natasha said, with a small smile toward Peter who stiffened but nodded. And hopped up on the windowsill.
“Remember you can back out whenever. Even now.” Peter reminded as he turned back slightly. “I won’t be offended, up until like a week ago I didn’t think you’d know about this so soon.” Peter tried to smile, it came out as a grimace.

“But we do. And we aren’t going to let you live on the streets. This isn’t a tough decision for us, Petya.” Peter stiffened at the name. But nodded once and left.

Out the window of course.

Chapter End Notes

Update notice: Sept. 01, 2019

hopefully earlier, but no promises.

Okay, small vent: those little blogs (and I'm not complaining - but low-key high-key kinda am) were a fucking PAIN IN THE ASS!! I've been writing them since fucking beginning of June and let me just say, those were the reasons this chapter came out so late. I had to write at least one blog for each month for roughly 6-7 years!! I counted, there were 85 months I had to write for (but I only wrote for 83 oops) Buts seriously, that's 83 individual ideas that correspond to a major plot that I had preplanned (and yes, I have preplanned a fic where it's the in between when Peter gets his powers to the beginning of this fic, I was bored one night and the outline took me forEVER -read 3 hours- (It will not be posted anytime soon, but I do hope to write and post it eventually)). I'm sorry, that's kinda a lot, but it is a major reason that this came out -4 days early. But you guys were insanely understanding about it, and my cousin came over and I haven't seen her in 5 years and I was writing in my room for 6 hours every day last week and she kept coming in asking to hang out with me, and I snapped at my family more than a few times due to stress (of not only this chapter but I'm also applying to colleges soon so I'm kinda freaked out and stressed because my portfolio is barley acceptable (at least to me))

Anyways, that was a lot. Thank you all so much, you don't even know how great it is to have you as reader! :)

Thank you all I love you guys 3000 <3
Something Powerful

Chapter Notes

This is early!!! WOW!

Not that good, but the next chapter is going to be better. This is really short (in comparison to my other one), but I forgot how easy it was to write when I'm not stressing. Classes started up again for me, but usually this would mean I'm not updating as often it actually means I'm updating MORE often! Kinda!

tw: some child abuse, a little bit of graphic depictions of violence and yeah all that mental illness stuff (it's gonna be a lot of that from here on out I think)

This chapter is kinda going by fast, I did that on purpose and you'll see why in the next chapter, so this is supposed to be choppy, but that's because I didn't want to spoil and/or be repetitive for the next chapter. This chapter IS important though!

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 11-Something Powerful

Word travels fast, especially in The Underground.

There was barely anything that could escape Weasel’s ears. He knew of every single rumor, whisper in the wind, hook up and break up, you name it around. It came with the territory of being the owner of New York’s unofficial number one Merc Bar (read: Vigilante hang out, don’t ask him how he got here. He was upset about it too). It came with the territory of being a distributor, not of drugs per say (he kept that shit for himself), but for things, locations, gossip. It didn’t come cheap, but at one point Weasel had to wonder when words had become so lucrative; then he’d forget about it because he was getting paid anyway.

The only thing that trumped him in knowing information was Peter Parker, who didn’t count because that kid was smart as a whip and Weasel was pretty sure those dimples did not come built in. The kid was terrifying and underwhelming and completely off his radar (no one knew anything about him, not even Wade and he’s known him the longest.) The only person who knew about Peter was Peter, and sometimes weasel wasn’t even sure of that. The kid was deceivingly smart and innocently manipulative at the same time and Weasel needed to know how to weaponize it (although when he told Peter that he ended up half dead in the pear).

The kid came in for work or a job, but never a big one. Usually the jobs only pertain to cases he
was working, or criminals or gangs he was tracking down. He was really lowkey about it, and only did certain ones (Wade says he has a system, but did not care to disclose it).

Peter Parker could do whatever the fuck he wanted - it was weird though because he didn’t. He didn’t do what was right, but also he didn’t do anything that was wrong. There was a little grey area and he was seated solidly in that. He didn’t do anything without a reason (that he deemed good enough) for doing it though. Everyone knew he killed, but no one’s ever seen it (well except for Wade, but that was only in special forces, so it doesn’t count - or at least that what he says). Everybody had a signature and Peter could copy just about every single one of them (Wade got creative, so he probably used that more often than not. The kid had offhandedly mentioned that it was kinda fun to mimik, and how a kid could find a light in an act so dark as asking someone’s life was messed up, but Peter didn’t enjoy killing, so there was some hope). Peter’s signature was that he had none. All of his victims vanish off the face of the universe. He never does anyone big enough for it to be noticed. He leaves no evidence behind, but anyone who knows anything knows it’s him. If someone vanished, no one questioned it because no one cared. If some one vanished with absolutely no traces whatsoever and no evidence left behind, no one questioned it because they didn’t want to be next.

Peter also had a habit of not showing up for weeks or even months at a time and then just strolling in like nothing happened (no one questioned that either). But when he came in after a week (of Wade bitching about missing his ‘little dumplin’) Weasel almost choked. It was just a week, but Weasel somehow knew that this little leave of absence was because shit hit the fan hard (which happened a lot with Peter Parker actually). The kid paid no mind to the silence that had befallen his bar as he strode up to the counter and looked him directly in the eye with a blank expression that sent chills up Weasel’s spine.

“I’m gonna be changing shifts.” Peter said bluntly and Weasel nearly fell over. The kid never asked to change shifts, he just came in and out whenever he wanted (which Weasel stopped bitching about when the kid was like 12 or something). Even when his life went to shit, he showed up at the same times (except he made more of a habit of not showing up, if people thought that he was gonna question Peter’s whereabouts they didn’t know him, because he - contrary to popular belief, including his own - did not have a death wish, thank you very much ).

“Wh-why?” Weasel stuttered out and that wasn’t the smartest thing to ask. Peter’s eyes went icy cold. See this is why he didn’t question Peter Parker, it just... wasn’t done. You just do what he says, because its the least stupid thing to do and probably won’t get you killed (not by him at least) “To when?” he quickly corrected, Peter didn’t change his expression but somehow the air became less tense.

“To whenever the hell I show up.” Peter growled through gritted teeth, he usually never used his intimidation as such an upfront mechanism for manipulation. He usually was very passive aggressive about it, or used his innocent charm.
“Okay.” Weasel said and Peter just turned and left, no nods, or goodbyes, he just walked away. Weasel didn’t dare call him out on why he was being so damn courteous as to give him a heads up. He never followed a schedule anyway, so this visit seemed very unnecessary. But again, Peter didn’t waste time with things he didn’t need to do.

“Tell Cable I’m not moving out.” he added, not even pausing, before the heavy door swung closed with a thud (the softest sound it could make, Peter was never one for dramatics - unless he was mocking someone). Something was up. Peter only used Cable’s apartment if he needed somewhere to stay that wasn’t Matt or Wade’s house (and sometimes the couch in Weasel’s back room, but let’s face it the kid has Weasel’s entire bar under his thumb at this point). Somewhere no one would dare enter because they knew if they did, they’d vanish without a trace. Weasel didn’t even know where it was, and he sure as hell didn’t want to find out.

Word may travel fast through his bar, but not once has word ever travelled about Peter Parker.

OoO

Wade Wilson expected it to be a few more weeks.

Peter didn’t get in a depressive state where he did nothing, like ever. Not even when he lost all his friends and life. Somehow he still looked like shit all the same.

But one thing remained the same no matter how you swung it: Peter was still super high strung. Even with all his knowledge on the ever mysterious spider child, Wade still couldn’t place a time where Peter ever did things quite like this. It was different and too fast paced. A plan that was sloppily thrown together, and Peter was most likely winging it. The kid had a messed up min, but in no way did it ever present itself like this. The kid was a mess (even more so than usual because he wasn’t even attempting to look like he has his shit together, he looked too lost and just ...hollow. Like nothing even matter anymore. And Wade was all for that, but letting the wind carry him through his shit life was more of his thing and most certainly not Peter’s - Matt was an unhealthy mix of both).

But kudos to the Avengers and all for speeding the process of ‘Peter Parker’s isolation/ghosting’ cycle. But at the same time he knew Parker’s reason for letting them do it.

“You came to a compromise fast.” He told the boy who was shoving various T-shirts and sweatshirts and small possessions (read: books and weapons) that he had stashed around the Wilson -singular- household into a bag. Wade leaned against the door frame overlooking the living room, arms crossed and waiting for an answer.
“Yeah well… they’re my parents and-“ Peter started, he was distracted, not focusing, avoiding something. He was doing a shit job of hiding it too.

“You don’t have a plan.” He told him bluntly, because Peter might not know that (his plans were always long term, but it was clear that Peter didn’t have anything, no contingencies, no original plan no nothing. It’s like he just got tired of trying) and Peter shrunk in on himself a bit.

Bingo.

“I have a plan.” He defended weakly, but even he knew that wasn’t true “I called Matt and made some legal documents and I have a way to skirt court out of it and he can-“ Peter started again, and he wasn’t really saying these words with much integrity. Sure, he’d called Matt, but that wasn’t a plan, that wasn’t a step-by-step, it wasn’t a contingency. Peter was nosediving here and Wade wasn’t sure he knew how to stop that. How do you even have a plan for living with your parents that want you to live with them? That was a tricky one, and he was hoping Peter would figure it out (because he kinda needed to).

“You called Matt at 11ish last night and you told the Avengers before you told Matt.” Wade said, Parker wasn’t easy to read, unless he was caught off guard (and he was never caught off guard so this was a treat and a concern at the same time. This is why Wade never enjoys messing with him, because it made him feel all the negative, iky things too). Peter didn’t answer “Why are you trying to rush this?” Wade asked, in the same tone. Parker didn’t respond to coddling. Peter gripped the bat, that had been clutched in his hand like it was life line since he came, a little tighter.

“I wanted...a-a f-f.... I wanted-“ Peter was stuttering. Wade rolled his eyes. The kid was reverting. Wade liked him because the kid didn’t act like a kid and now he was and it’s fucking annoying. It’s not even the cute kind where he got all embarrassed and stuff and turned red. It was the kind where he was gonna cry for no reason and be annoying and throw a tantrum (which Wade is only mildly interested in seeing and 100 percent not interested in dealing with. It wasn’t worth it.)

“A family?” Wade didn’t ask as much as he stated with a quirked brow. Peter visibly flinched back and Wade rolled his eyes again, “You can’t even hear the word, kid.” He sighed. Peter turned to him, anger flaming in his eyes in a weird show of genuine emotion, which was unusual for him. Had this thing really got Peter so turned around? He looked mad and scared and confused all at the same time, but right now he was fake mad - the kind of mad that make him thinks he’s mad but he’s not actually mad, yeah that mad.

“Maybe if I had one, I could.” Peter snapped with all anger and no heat. There were no other emotions behind it, so Peter was somewhat conscious of what he was saying, or how he was saying
“Maybe if you had one, they’d get off your back.” Wade said back and Peter glared but it looked more like a pout. He was on fire today. “that’s what it’s about. You just wanna get it over with.” Wade said with a little smile in satisfaction that he’d successfully read Peter ‘motherfucking unreadable’ Parker. It was an accomplishment goddamnit. Even if it was a bit sad.

“It’s inevitable.” Peter grumbled out and turned pointedly away from Wade to aggressively shove oversized clothes into a backpack and Wade leaned in closer as if to inspect the boy.

“Not if you don’t want it to be.” He emphasized and Peter swatted him away half heartedly. It was true though, they both knew it, so did Matt and Fury and basically anyone else who gave two shits about this boy on this motherfucking shithole called earth. If Peter Parker didn’t want something to happen, it won’t (except when it came to Parker luck then he adapted, which happened more often than not. Okay, so this was a special situation where Parker could control weather or not he wanted to even be there. It mostly happened in small technical things after -read: not before- shit hit the fan, which happened a lot for him. It was also unexpected for all parties. Okay, so it was a complicated messed up system where Peter basically had a weird sort of control, but his life was shit anyway because he had no control).

“Well maybe I want it to be!” Peter snapped back and okay, that wasn’t the answer Wade was expecting -even if Parker wasn’t in his right mind- but then again he was just trying to get a rise out of him, not trying to be real. But here they were. Now Peter was looking away and being all embarrassed, and that was adorable.

“Yeah, kid but like this is exactly like every single movie, where they only have 15 minutes of runtime to solve a big ass issue that can’t be resolved realistically with the kind of shit they pull and it all happened because the creator was stupid and made a problem too big for the character to handel with ‘the power of friendship’ but it worked anyway.” Wade rambled on in a voice that was kinda a whine, but not quite there yet, and the way he said it was mock sympathetic, but he knew what he was saying was complete bullshit. It’s how he communicated, and Peter understood him perfectly.

“But it works.” he mumbled in a little hopeful tone that reminded him of when the kid was 9, and that kinda pulled a heartstring there for a second.

“Yeah, but baby boy.” Wade said gently, but not too gently - he didn’t wanna scare the kid off “This is real life shit, the creator actually planned this out right and has no obligation to make this a happy ending. You aren’t gonna resolve this with a hug and ‘I love you’. It’s a slow burn baby, and your in for the long run weather you like it or not.” Wade told him and creeped over to the boy slowly, who didn’t move but that hollow look that Wade would kill someone just to whip it off of
Peter’s face (which actually makes it worse, so don’t do that) for started to bud in his eyes.

“I want to do this.” he forced through gritted teeth and Peter doing this was just as forced. But once his mind was set on something, there was no going back - no matter how stupid it was (and for a smart kid, his mind has been set on pretty stupid things. But this by far was the least and simoltaniously most stupid thing he’s ever done). That was just the way Peter Parker did things, he didn’t quit.

“You don’t have plot armor baby boy.” he said again, his voice going a little harder. More serious. Peter could get really hurt like this and not the type that shows. Wade didn’t care, he’s been in denial since 2012, but he didn’t want to watch this kid get fucked up even more - it was getting old. Wade could live in his delusion because he didn’t have a fucking conciousnce. Peter did, and one hell of a moral compass to boot. Wade might not have those things, but he sure as hell wasn’t gonna let Peter go through with this without making sure that the kid knew (no matter how many times he played along with Wade) that this wasn’t a fucking movie. It was real life.

And Peter’s real life was messed up as fuck.

“I don’t need it.” Peter said. “Because I want this and they do too.” he said in a voice of wavering determination and broken hope - the light in his eyes was fake and cracked, a hollow impersonation. There was some truth behind that. Peter did want this, but he also...really didn’t. And yeah, Wade knew the Avengers wanted this.

But did Peter?

OoO

Matt Murdock could think of many things he could be doing at 5:47am.

Meeting Peter Parker to discuss government loopholes within custody cases was not one of them (but at this point it probably should’ve been).

Then again, ever since meeting Peter Parker, nothing had really been predictable. It must’ve been exhausting actually being the poor kid. He never could catch a break. And now he was getting a - sorta - shot at a -kinda - real family. Peter deserved that, and Matt knew it too. It’s why he was cool with Wade giving Romanov and Barnes the tapes to watch. So they could understand Peter better and they wouldn’t be complete assholes when he came to live with them (Wade had told
Matt the plan after the fact, and Matt had to admit, for once Wade didn’t come up with a completely awful idea. He was impressed, and that didn’t happen often).

So Matt bucked up and chugged his second cup of black coffee (it tasted like dumpster juice because he had gotten it from that rat infested coffee shop that's open 24/7) while he waited for the boy to crawl through his window (he’d never use the door, Matt knew this by now). He straightened the papers that would properly accommodate this little ‘game’ Peter was playing (although Matt had said over the phone that Peter shouldn’t screw this up, because this was his shot at a normal family. But...you know… in more Matt like terms.)

“Hey.” Peter said, Matt couldn’t see him -as usual- but he didn’t have to to know that the boy was exhausted. He sounded like he hadn’t slept since he called him (which was yesterday about an hour or two after that plant zombie invasion cleared up) and he smelled like he hadn’t slept in a week. He heard the rustle of a trash bag, which must’ve contained Peter’s belongings that he had to move to the tower.

Matt was pretty surprised when the kid told him of the plan. He’d been radio silent for nearly a week, him coming out, let alone making a decision like this was too fast paced. He was going to screw it up and everybody knew it. Something was going to go wrong. It always did. Things were never straight and easy for Peter Parker. He had to work for every single scrap, and that’s the way the stone is written (or something like that, Matt didn’t know the exact metaphor, but whatever).

“Good to see you, Spidey. You’ve been quiet.” Matt said and Peter rolled his eyes at the man as Matt smirked, trying to contain their usual interaction. Something was off about the kid though. He seemed… far away. Like he wasn’t fully tethered to the ground and was floating away, but not giving a single shit about it.

“Ha ha. Thanks for clearing the Ross case for me, and this.” he gestured to the papers in Matt’s hands, which Matt was actually quite apprehensive about giving to the boy. He didn’t seem to be in a correct state of mind to be making decisions like this (and normally a kid wouldn’t even touch an issue like this, but Peter wasn’t a normal kid. He was sensible and reasonable like an adult, and understood these concepts. He could usually take care of himself and make -slightly, it depended on the day- rational decisions on his own) “And also picking up my slack while I was…” he trailed off, and his voice was still hollow.

“Yes...I mean yes?” Peter huffed out a breath and Matt could feel Peter’s face heat up in a blush. That made a ghost of a smile appear on Matt's face, so he wasn’t all gone.

“Sulking?” Matt responded with a slight smirk, he could feel Peter’s face heat up in a blush. That made a ghost of a smile appear on Matt's face, so he wasn’t all gone.

“N-No...I mean yes?” Peter huffed out a breath and Matt could feel his lungs expanding a bit “I was taking a break.” he said defensively, and then he let go of the breath and his posture fell as he slouched forward.
“Which you don’t normally do when the fallout isn’t dealt with.” Matt responded easily, Peter never left a job unfinished... ever “And it’s still not dealt with yet Parker. You missed the prime time, now they’ll be expecting you and ready for you.” Matt said seriously and Peter sighed. He knew that, it was another thing to add onto his plate, and Matt didn’t like it as much as he did. But this was important, Peter couldn’t forget to deal with this and he had to deal with it soon. It would be harder now that he missed his window of opportunity, but it wasn’t impossible. Nothing was impossible for his kid.

So why was Matt having such a hard time believing that now.

“I know that… and I’m still not in the right mind or place to deal with that fallout.” Peter sighed and Matt knew that, Peter was always out of his element, and that’s probably when he did his most impressive work. Peter Parker adapted, he had done it his whole life, and that was something that he’d carried over into his vigilante life. But there was something different about this time. Peter held out his hands to get the paper and Matt hesitated.

“Are you sure you wanna do this?” Matt asked, almost hesitantly. Peter knew the score, he’d be giving up some of his freedom, but some was better than all of it. The government would force him to live with the Avengers and if he didn’t do it on his terms, then he’d be stuck with something he’d hate. Again. He’d be right back to where he started. The kid grabbed the papers from Matt’s slack hand.

“Thanks.” was all he answered with and took off.

That kid could go places, if only someone would give him a real chance. No strings attached, and not completely but slightly messed up. Someone that truly believed and understood him. Sure he was okay now, but he could be so much more.

If only he believed that he was worth the chance.

OoOoO

Unknown: You wanna back out? Last chance before this becomes real.

The text came in at 11:13 in the next morning. Natasha showed it to Bucky, she also kicked herself for not saving -or knowing- Peters number even though they’ve been on a team for the past year
and a half. What the hell kind of teammate was she? What if Peter had actually been in trouble? At the time she didn’t give two shits about the kid when he wasn’t in direct view, but what the hell kind of teammate does that? Nevermind parent. She wasn’t cut out to be a parent.

She quickly saved the number under Petya. Bucky saved it too.

**Natasha**: Yes

It took thirty minutes for a reply to come through.

**Petya**: On my way

Natasha and Bucky were basically scrambling to get their floor ready for a spider teenager. They had asked Tony what he liked, but Stark proved useless when he said just to ask Peter himself. They had the guest room on their floor set up to be Peter’s and their floor was like a slightly bigger apartment. They stocked up on snack foods that Harley liked, because again even Harley didn’t know what Peter liked (did that kid like anything? No of course he did, he was a kid. He just hadn’t told any of them before because he had no point in doing it before). Pepper said that they should have a family dinner, that sounded like a good idea. Maybe they could talk and they could figure out how not to get whacked, do some icebreakers and stuff. The rest of the time was planning a game play for how they were going to handle this, but they ended up with nothing because Parker - no Petya - was such a wild card.

When Peter actually showed up at 2:05 - a whole five minutes after he was supposed to originally arrive, they counted the seconds and it was exact- he knocked on the door. When Natasha opened it, he seemed nervous and fidgety, not looking her in the eye but at the floor between his shoes. Along with his black backpack, which was even more stuffed than usual, there was a black trash bag that was only half way filled with possessions. He was also carrying the duck taped wooden bat in his other hand in a tight grip that almost made his knuckles white.

Natasha breathed in and out.

**Here goes nothing.**

Natasha sucked in a breath, and adopted a blank face (there was no point in faking any happy emotions, but she didn’t want Peter to know how nervous she was. It was almost like this wasn’t even real. That was *their kid* and he was alive and here and within reach) and gestured Peter to
come in, opening the door wider as a signal of invitation. He shuffled in and Natasha lead him to the couch where Bucky already was fidgeting nervously, not really caring how he looked to Parker like his partner did.

There was an awkward silence as they all sat in their places and Peter was looking anywhere but Natasha and Bucky, his body tense and tapping his knee. He was stiff and sitting as if he was afraid of sitting too deep into the couch. Natasha watched him fidget slightly a little longer before she got this started.

“So we live here, this is our floor. Here let me show you.” She said as she got up and Peter got up to follow her, and she gestured for him to drop his stuff. He did so by placing the bags gently down in a neat little pile but kept the bat tightly secured in his right hand. Bucky followed behind him quietly, with light footsteps. None of their steps could be heard, Natasha smirked internally at that.

*Guess some things are hereditary.*

They walked into the kitchen where there was a counter stretched before the stove and fridge and cabenits in wrapping along the wall to the back and small dining table set for four just to the side where a long one way window stretch from floor to ceiling on two sides. The apartment was an open concept except for the two bedrooms, they could easily see the small living area just a step away. “So we were just in the living room, this is the kitchen. If you’re hungry you can grab anything from here anytime, if you want something that’s not here then tell FRIDAY or us it’ll come by the next day, and that works for any items not just food.” Natasha explained and Peter nodded silently along with Bucky who already knew this, but still acted as if he didn’t. Natasha shook her head fondly at him and smiled softly to Peter, who went a bit stiffer - which she didn’t think was possible but here they were. They moved to their rooms and the common bathroom then his room. Peter’s was smaller, like a normal sized bedroom, and Natasha thinks he appreciated that by the silent breath of relief he gave when he saw it. Their room wasn’t much bigger but each room did have its own bathroom. The apartment was just like a small one one could rent in New York for a small family of 2-3. It was perfect and not too overwhelming. Natasha and Bucky has requested it that way when Bucky moves into the tower.

“You can get settled. And uhm, we’re going to have dinner at 5.” Bucky said awkwardly and Peter turned to him and looked up but not in the eye and nodded.

“Alright, I’ll go um, get my stuff.” He said quietly as he averted his eyes and tentatively pushed through them to walk the short way to get his bags and came back with his head ducked. Bucky and Natasha left the door a creak open and two minutes later they heard it softly shut completely.

They both let out a breath they hadn’t known they’d been holding and collapsed on the couch, suddenly seemingly snapped of all strength. That was probably the most stressful 15 minutes of
their lives.

Peter did the same in his room. He sat at the foot of his bed on the floor and looked at his cracked old phone (sure Stark offered him a new one, but Peter modifies this one so that it was just as high tech as a new Stark phone and since it was an older model it was hard to track) He had a little less than 3 hours before dinner. He leaned his head back against the back board (this bed had an actual frame! What the fuck?!) He should unpack, But he didn’t have that much to unpack. His tooth brush and some cloths, he kept some at Wades and Matt’s places just in case. Also his self built laptop and some charging plugs. And some books and tools. He didn’t have much to unpack, so he did so slowly.

*What the fuck are you doing?!*

He entered his bathroom - Yeah he had his own bathroom!- it was easily twice the size of the master one at his old apartment. He put his tooth brush on the sink counter along with bubblegum tooth paste that Wade bought him (what it tasted better). He looked in the shower and found Shampoo and Conditionar and soap. That was good, he didn’t have those anyway and his hair was kinda crusty too.

*You don’t have a fucking plan! Get out!*

He came out of the bathroom and brought the cloths out of the bag. When he went to the drawer he hesitated before opening it. He looked back to the clothes in his backpack.

*What if they changed their minds?*

*What if they kicked him out?*

*You need a plan! Make a plan!*

He transferred all of the cloths to the trash bag and shoved it in the drawer. He’d grab some grocery bags and sort through his stuff more throughly later later. The tools he put in his backpack along with the books. He took out his laptop and plugged it in to the charger near the desk and put his bag on the chair.

He then went over to the wall and put his ear against it. When he didn’t hear anything he let out a
sigh and locked his door. The walls must be sound proof (of course they were, the apartment may look like a normal one but this was still Stark Tower- he was living in fucking *Stark Tower!* What the fuck!).

*You’re an idiot! You’ll be caught off guard!*

He walked over to the bathroom and picked out a different set of cloths to take a shower. He locked his bathroom door too.

*Just in case.*

*Make a plan!*

“Fine, lemme think.” He grumbled to the voice shouting in his head since he had come to this place. He felt so out of place here. Like he was a stain, an intruder. He wasn’t supposed to *be* here. He breathed in and out to calm himself. The voice, Wade and Matt were right.

He needed a plan.

When he came out of the shower 20 minutes later - he took a long one this time- he still had time. He still didn’t have a fucking plan. For right now, He didn’t really want to leave the room, in case Bucky and Natasha were in the other room and wanted to know where he was going. He looked at the bat.

Whatever made him uncomfortable, he had to hit.

That was the plan.

*But what makes you uncomfortable?*

That was a valid question. Probably treating him like crap and making him do all the work in paying rent and for food and making him miss school (well that couldn’t really happen anymore). Well that more annoyed him, not really inspired discomfort.
...whatever, this wasn’t gonna be the same as his other house. He had the control to make the rules, that’s what the bat was for.

*And they wouldn’t do that anyway. You don’t go to school anymore. They don’t have to pay rent or for food. Those problems aren’t even valid anymore.*

That was true. So he would have to come up with other reasons to hit them, it couldn’t be all that perfect here. In fact, it already felt far from perfect. But really what had he expected?

*Yeah, but they’re gonna yell at you, like on missions. You’re still the same you, they just know something about you. It won’t change anything.*

But his situation changed.

*It doesn’t matter. Your situation changes all the time. There is no reason that this won’t be as shitty as the others.*

They won’t hurt him. They’ll take care of him. They’ve wanted this.

...right?

*You can take care of yourself. Don’t forget that. You’re not a baby. You can be on his own. They know that.*

Just like Peter always has been.

*They know they can kick you out. You gave them the option to reject you.*

Thank you voices, for giving him no say, but there was one thing it was right about. He *can* take care of himself. He didn’t want to be babied or doted on. He wasn’t sure what exactly he wanted out of this, maybe his brain hit fuck it again and he just didn’t get the memo, or maybe he just finally decided not to care where he ended up, because any situation would defiantly have some
He didn’t want to be *parented*. Being rocked to bed and told a story. Giving him advise about jobs. Telling old stories that relate to his problems. Dealing with them telling him to finish his food. Being talked to gently when he was sad or upset and watching old movies on the hallmark channel.

Those thoughts made him feel something fuzzy and longing. He didn’t like it. Those thoughts seemed desperate. He didn’t want to be desperate right now.

Maybe one day though…

*So basically you don’t want them, your parents, to actually parent you.*

Yeah...he didn’t want to be parented.

Okay, there was the not so much of a plan plan. He’ll work on it when he gets a better grasp of what was going on in his mind, but for now...

The clock hit 5 and he didn’t even notice it. He walked out of the room two minutes later to gather his bearings. Natasha was coming out of her room and Bucky was in the kitchen. He and Natasha looked at each other for a bit and then looked away as they made their way to the kitchen. Natasha sat down at the table that looked like it was meant for four people.

“Sit down.” Bucky didn’t mean for it to sound like an order and Peter gripped his baseball bat harder and did sit down. Bucky eyed the bat as he scooped pasta into the plates, but Peter didn’t raise it.

*Not yet.*

Barnes put a plate of food infront of each of them and a bowl of pasta in the middle, in case they wanted seconds. He then sat down in his own chair.

They started the dinner off in silence for the first ten minutes, cutlery clanking softly and then
eating in Inaudible chews. Peters bat leaning against the table as he ate, his elbow just ghosting it, but it was fast enough for him to hit either of them in less than 2 seconds. He realized that it was probably rude to bring a bat to dinner, but no one said anything about it.

*Good.*

“So…” Bucky said trying to start off the conversation. Peter looked at him and analyzed him with narrowed eyes, like he was trying to dissect him. He looked like he wanted to say something, no ask something, but he didn’t know how to phrase it. Natasha was giving peter the same analytical stare, and he tried to break down what they were going to ask before they asked it. Given the situation it could be about him, the rules, or what was going to happen next. But it was a question so the latter was ruled out, unless it was about what Peter was planning to do - which he didn’t have a fucking plan yet. But that was fast paced and they weren’t stupid, given how this day was going they were trying to take it slow, find middle ground. So rules or himself. But he’d been pretty clear on the rules and the fact he couldn’t tell them what got them whacked. Plus as far as he knew, they knew nothing about him. And this is dinner and he hasn’t ever been in a family dinner, but he knows they talk about their day or some other bullshit like that. So...

“Y’all don’t know that much about me.” he said conversationally. Bucky stiffened and Natasha flinched a little, Peter tried not to smirk.

*Bingo*.

“Well Yeah... we don’t…” Bucky stuttered, trying to collect his thoughts and Natasha sighed. Was Peter that daunting to the man? That was gonna be something he could use.

“And we should.” She said in a matter of fact tone that caught Peter slightly off guard “know more, but we don’t. That’s on us.” She said in an almost apologetic tone. It really wasn’t. Peter was acting more like an ass than a teammate back then too. He didn’t want to get close to the Avengers. Now he had to, until they kicked him out at least.

“Not really. I’m not that cut out to be in a team with people who aren’t explicitly ridiculously emotionally disordered assholes.” Peter shrugged casually, not really acknowledging that what he said was *technically* a compliment. Bucky crinkled his nose at the profanity though, Peter suppressed the urge to roll his eyes. Barnes will just have to suck it up, because Peter communicates in mainly CQS -curses, quips, and sarcasm. Sometimes Science, but that’s just Peter being himself - well his *old* self, he hasn’t quite broken the habit but he can’t help it sometimes. It made it hard to have conversations with him if you weren’t already his friend and it also made people not want to be his friend. Which worked, when he didn’t need to necessarily have them...
“Still, you’re a ki-” It happened so fast that Bucky didn’t have time to react, Peter barley realized what was going on until he was placing the bat back next to his elbow. Huh, Guess it was an impulse. That made his job easier. “What the hell?” Bucky muttered as he rubbed his head looking confused. Natasha snickered into her hand a bit and it seemed nice for a second; Peter even had a ghost of a smile on his face for a split second.

Okay, strike one. Let’s see if we can strike out before dinner. Was that how baseball worked? Peter didn’t know. He didn’t follow sports but he knows that it was five strikes before your out.... or was it six..?

Whatever, game on.

“So let’s get to know each other now...even it’s a bit late.” Natasha said with a shrug when the initial shock calmed down and Peter shrugged in indifferent compliance.

“What do you want to know?” He asked and Bucky and Natasha pauses for a second. Not quite sure what to say.

“What’s your favorite color?” Bucky blurted. Natasha looked at him like he was the biggest idiot in the world and Peter looked at him, not quite sure what to say for a minute before he burst out into a fit of giggles and tried to hide them behind his hand and turning away slightly.

“Seriously? Uhm Red, or Blue. Kinda a tie.” Peter answered with a rie smile, like he couldn’t believe this was happening and Bucky’s tense features softened into a small smile as Natasha’s glare turned to slight awe and she tried.

“Was that obvious?” Bucky asked in a joking manner, but somehow it was gentle too, Peter almost blushed a bit.

“Kinda.” Peter quirked his lips a little and then cleared his throat and looked at his food very intensely.

“What’s your favorite animal?” Natasha asked seriously, like she was testing if this would actually work and Peter couldn’t believe how professionally she asked that question. Was this really what they really wanted to know?
“Uhm... any animal? Probably a velociraptor, but if it’s modern a dog or a cat... or a bird or... any domesticated animal really. And if it’s an insect probably a praying mantis, since spiders aren’t bugs, I like the wolf spider or a Black Widow... but the electro magnetisis is pretty cool too. Did you know they don’t bite? Their fangs are actually electrically static that fuses with their venom and paralyses any region of skin it touches based on the-” Peter cut off his rambling to looked at them shyly, not realizing he was actually going off about spiders in front of literal superheroes (who were his parents what the fuck. He doesn’t think he’ll ever get used to that). But they were invested and had small, almost adoring smiles on their faces and he knew he promised himself that he wouldn’t let them do that, but somehow it seemed right. Somehow he was okay with it “Sorry... that’s not what you asked...” he apologized kind of under his breath in an embarrassed manner.

“It’s fine.” Natasha reassures and she got a whack to the head for that. There was silence for a moment and Peter thought that was the end of it before she continued on with her train of thought, reevaluating what she needed to say. “Alright, game on Parker.” She said with a devious smile. Peter smiled back just the same.

“What is your favorite subject in school?” Bucky asked, less urgently but still somewhat so, and then he seemed to mentally kick himself with realizing something. “You don’t go to school do you?” He asked a bit more tentatively. Natasha looked at him for a minute, calculating and she knew what he was thinking of.

“I don’t need to go to school.” Peter said flippantly. They both opened their mouths to protest before he continued “I already graduated early remember?” He reminded, in a somewhat urgent voice that he tried to make sound casual. They still looked oppressive and he rolled his eyes “and tested out of college, so I have a few associates degrees, five bachelors and 2 PhDs...” Peter blushed as they stared at him. He never did like listing off his achievements. He wasn’t trying to impress him, only try to get them off his back “Fury said that...that I couldn’t get a PhD and bet me that if I got it through SHIELD I could have ice cream... so...” Peter tried to explain as if it wasn’t a big deal. Trying to play it off he shrugged and shifted “but I like science...and math... more specifically mechanics and Astro and aero physics. But I like chemistry the most. Mr.Stark and Dr.Banner only let me help them out when Harley is at school because of that reason...” goddamit why couldn’t he stop talking? Was he that nervous? Was it showing? He couldn’t let them win. Bucky smiles and then there was silence for a bit before Natasha spoke.

“What flavor?” Natasha asked and Peter looked confused for a second, just coming back from his mini break down “you said you did it for ice cream. What flavor do you like? brand inclusive.” Natasha clarified professionally and the Spiderling thinks that only Black Widow (his fucking mom!?) had the air of authority to ask that question with such professionalism. Peter smiles. Just a little.

“I like getting strawberry and chocolate... together... from Ben and Jerry’s. It tastes like chocolate strawberries. They should really make it a real flavor. I liked the mint chocolate chip one before the bite, but I get sick when I eat a lot of minty stuff, which sucks because I can only have like two thin mint cookies a day and like they are sooo good.” Peter said with a huff. Why was he rambling
so much? Well that was easy, because it was an interrogation tactic. Give them loads of information that meant nothing. But did this really mean nothing? Was he giving them what they wanted to know, or was this some ploy to get something more out of him? Did he even want to give the information he was giving out to them right now. Theoretically, this is exactly what parents want to know. But didn’t he want this?

“You’re allergic to mint?” Natasha asked with a raised brow. Wait, was that too much information?

*That’s a weakness idiot!*


Shit.

“More like an intolerance... like it won’t kill me, I just have a real bad stomach ache.” Peter said with a shrug, trying to play off his internal panic and he could tell they both were putting that this but if information away for later. Shitshitshit shit. “But did you know Ben and Jerry’s names flavors after superhero’s. There’s like Hulk a Bunch of something and Stark raving mad.” Peter diverted to switch the conversation. “Haven’t had most of them before, but Red says Starks is too chalky. They even have ‘Black Cherry’ Widow and Winter ‘White Chocolate’ Soldier. It’s really cool. They have a Captain America flavor and it’s like called American Dream or something.” Peter said and Bucky smiled again, wasn’t that supposed be getting creepy by now? Why wasn’t it? It was kind of…. No!

“Do they have a Spiderman flavor?” Bucky asked, like they were taking turns. Peter stopped to think about it.

“There’s one in Midtown, I think, that sells team Red flavored ones. Red was Devilberry which is just raspberry and Deadpool’s is Melonpool, but he got mad because he hates watermelon and wanted his to be Deadcandy, you know the cotton candy flavor. Mine is hard to say, Spidey Swingin’ Slingin’ Strawberry, witch is like strawberry but with chocolate chunks instead of strawberry chunks... I think they only sell those in NewYork though.” Peter ranted and Natasha and Bucky smiled again. Peter thought it should’ve been creepy with how much they were smiling, but it wasn’t. He liked it.

*No!*

The voices were going to go off on him tonight.
“That’s nice. Do you have any favorite foods, like not junk?” Bucky asked, Peter hummed, they were asking all the questions but the problem was he had none for them. He knew virtually everything about them already, but that was because they were public figures. Besides, he owed them this much for hiding and lying to them about himself. Right?

He wasn’t enjoying this.

“Uhm, I’ve never really have had meals explicitly. I just ate when I was hungry. I like fruits though, like strawberry’s and raspberries and blueberries and black berries.” Peter was cut off.

“Oh my.” Natasha drawled with a smirk and Peter nervously chuckled.

“Yeah, heh. Just like any type of berry, I guess. But other than fruits, no ones ever you know.” Peter gestured to the table and his half finished spaghetti that he couldn’t finish. He was pushing it with even eating half the plate. His stomach felt almost uncomfortably full.

“Made you food?” Natasha asked with a questioning brow and Peter nodded.

“May was a terrible cook, she tried a few times but just ended up getting take out...” Peter didn’t mention that she also didn’t do it often because she was high most of the time, but that was too much information. Bad information. Important information. “It was funny to watch her though.” Peter shrugged and didn’t look up. She at least tried. He thought bitterly.

Natasha gave a sad smile and Peter was hesitant to grab the bat, hand hovering near it a little closer. He ended up not having to as Natasha switched the subject.

She’s learning too quick.

“So you have no specific preference for any homemade dinner foods.” She asked and Peter shrugged noncomentaly.

“It’s good. I didn’t know you could cook, but it’s not that surprising.” Peter said, Natasha quirked a brow. “You’re good at everything.” Natasha let herself smile again and Bucky snorted.
“Hell Yeah She is.” Natasha glared at him a little at the profanity but didn’t say anything. “But cooking isn’t her strong suit.” He said coyly looking at Natasha who looked indifferently back.

“What?” Peer cocked his head, looking down at the plate.

“Bucky made the meal.” Natasha grumbled with her arms crossed and Bucky smirked at her. Peter looked between the two before laughing a little facepalming.

“Oh sorry my bad, I just assumed because you put the plate...sorry.” Peter nervously chuckled.

“You don’t need to apologize for that.” Natasha told him flippently. Peter hummed.

“I don’t know much about y’all either I guess...” Peter muttered “like favorite colors and animals. I know...all the other stuff.” Peter felt like that was a whack to his own head. It wasn’t fair that he couldn’t but they could kick him out if they didn’t like that question. So even game. Right?

“Well, we don’t really have those first two, although I do enjoy Dark Chocolate ice cream.” Natasha smiles and Bucky perked up a bit.

“And Science is pretty cool too. I went to the Stark expo back when Starks old man ran the show. He made a flying car back then, it was so amazing.” Bucky said, Peter swore there was stars in his eyes and Natasha shook her head in amusement. Peter’s eyes lit up a little too, he couldn’t help it. Science is kinda his thing.

“They had those back then?” Peter asked giddily, stars defiantly in his eyes, but he didn’t really care. It’s not everyday that you got to meet a primary source for a war that happened over 70 years ago. Bucky nodded and his smile turned fond.

“It wasn’t perfect, but it was impressive.” Bucky said with a shrug and Peter smiled largely - and it was only partially fake. It probably wasn’t, because even though Howard Stark was working on things, there were somethings that just weren’t advanced enough for him to make much progress. It was still pretty impressive, especially from a mechanical standpoint.

“That’s so cool! Did he add the thrusters to the same engine or was it another engine altogether? I would’ve tied it to the engine, it would be more controlled that way and easier to fix, but like it would bust the engine if it failed so—” Peter shut himself up at them staring again. He was doing it
again. Why did he keep doing that? For some reason they looked more sad when he shut up than when he hit them.

“I wish I coulda worked with Stark. It would’ve been sweet. But Steve got that as soon as he joined. Lucky bastard.” Bucky grumbled to pick the conversation back up. “And you work with a Stark too.” He said with a slightly curious tint in his tone. Peter ducks and blushes.

“Just until Harley comes back. I think Mr.Stark likes someone to boss around even though he’s not the boss.” Peter smiled a little at the modest description of his job.

“Yeah, but Pepper is much more capable in running SI.” Natasha pointed out with an affirmative nod and Peter nodded in agreement.

“They work together sometimes. Mr.Stark makes every model for the Stark phone himself. But he’s real lucky to have Pepper, she’s awesome.” Peter said and he seemed to be happy about that.

“Yeah She is.” Natasha smiled.

And for a second everything seemed okay.

OoO

“How did it go?”

Stark was sitting on the couch along with the other Avengers. They could tell they were waiting for them to come back with the mission report - not really a mission but at some points it felt like they were interrogating the kid (which, in a real interrogation, they could tell he’d easily kill in).

“Surprisingly well, but you already knew that.” Natasha said with a quick glare and no heat. Gesturing to the stark pad everyone was conspicuously huddled around (seriously, it was like they were amateurs). “Bucky got whacked a few times, he whacked me once.” she said with pride and Bucky seemed to sulk a bit.

“Twice. I still can’t believe he had the balls to do it to you.” Bucky muttered, he crossed his arms
in an almost pout.

“I can’t believe he had the balls to even hit you Barnes.” Sam said in a slightly surprised tone, it wasn’t that surprising though. Parker had the balls to do a lot more than just whack the Winter Soldier and Black Widow over the bat with a baseball bat. He was Spiderman for Thor’s sake.

“Parker doesn’t disappoint.” Natasha shrugged, and smirked a bit and Stark laughed.

“What did you talk about?” Steve asked, wanting to get down to the real meat of the conversation. Anticipation getting the better of him.

“Barnes asked him what his favorite color was.” Natasha snorted, and smirked coyly in her partner’s direction.

“You asked him what his favorite animal was.” Bucky indignantly retorted with a huff.

“At least that got more of a reaction out of him.” Natasha shot back and Stark looked offended for a minute.

“Hold up. You literally have the youngest most academically achieved chemist, physicists, mechanic and roboticist living with you and you could have asked him anything you wanted, and you asked him about colors?” Stark seemed astonished at their stupidity. Like seriously? They even knew he was a genius too.

“Is he that smart.” Steve looked to them in a surprised tone. He knew Parker was smart, but to be called a genius by Tony Stark - a man who’s ego was bigger than the world itself - was a whole other level that Steve couldn’t even hope to imagine. He and Banner nodded vigorously in response.

“Seriously, he disproved half of my theories and a quarter of Banners and by default disproving Einstein and the greats and my dad. I don’t know why we keep him around, he just says something in the lab casually like it’s common sense and I feel like an idiot.” Stark said with a huff, he really should move that kid to the R&D idiots, he’d whip their egos into shape in a snap. Natasha and Bucky didn’t know how to feel, somewhere between proud and incredulous. Mostly proud though.

“He’s a delight.” Banner says quickly with a nervous smile “he doesn’t know he’s offending us by
saying things we’ve never thought of. But when we say he’s wrong, he just goes on proving he’s right with equations that we literally have never thought of before. He’s just thinking on a different level.” Banner reassured and coupled it with a nervous laugh.

“Bullshit!” Stark said and everyone looked at him with a raised, slightly exasperated brow “I mean your right about him thinking on a different level and shit, but Parker knows exactly what he’s doing. He knows we won’t kick him out because he literally has taken over the lab.” Stark said in a flippant gesture, but his ego was clearly wounded by a mere child. Bucky laughed, the great Tony Stark was taken down academically by his child (He had a fucking kid, he still couldn’t believe it) “don’t encourage him Barnes. I blame you and Romanov for bringing that smart ass heathen into this world.” Stark accused with no heat and Natasha rolled her eyes at him.

“ He hasn’t even been with us for 24 hours and I’m so proud of him.” Natasha said with a smile and smug tone. “Don’t tell him I said that, he’ll hit me on the head with that stupid bat.” she said in a more serious one.

“What has he hit you for?” Steve asked, not really approving of the method, but that wasn’t up to him. At least the terms seemed fair, or somewhat fair. Parker had an odd mindset to come up with this little compromise/agreement.

“Using the fact that he’s a kid as an excuse, for anything. He doesn’t mind us calling him a kid though. Also he doesn’t like it when we reassure him something is fine. He doesn’t like it when we show pride in him outwardly or in any obvious way.” Bucky listed off as if it were a report. The Avengers were drinking it in. The sooner they learned the terms, the easier it would be to interact with Peter. They could actually get to know the kid a bit better than those outdated (but still immensely helpful) videos.

“Sounds self depreciating.” Steve furrowed his brows. Stark merely scoffed at that.

“Sounds like Parker.” Stark snorted and sipped his drink “he doesn’t like it when people compliment him. I don’t think he knows how to respond. So you’ll have to find a subtle way of you know, rewarding him or something. But don’t let him catch on.” Stark said with a wave of his hand. Romanov and Barnes weren’t dumb, they’d figure some sort of point system shit out with Parker.

“Easier said then done.” Bucky grumbled “kids perceptive.” he grumbled, and while it made sense for Peter to be knowledgeable about everything and aware, it made it damn hard for them to connect with him.
“Oh hell yeah, I just give him extra resin, and if he figured it out he doesn’t care.” Stark said with a shrug. “That’s my thing don’t you dare take it.” He warned and everybody visibly deflated.

“We could just get him ice cream.” Natasha suggested “he likes that.” she smiled a little at the memory.

“Really, what kind I’ll order it for your kitchen.” Stark said pulling out his phone, probably to order it for their apartment/room/floor thingy that they lived in.

“He says he likes chocolate strawberry mix.” Bucky said:From Ben and Jerry’s” he added. Stark pauses and looked at Bucky seriously.

“That kid is a fucking genius.”

OoOoO

Clint didn’t want to come off as a ‘try hard’ (as the kids say it).

He knew he wasn’t very present with the Avengers (secret families are hard work) especially not since baby Nathaniel came into the mix. He’s been pretty in and out, doing enough of his job to provide for them and make sure money isn’t a problem for his family, but not he was present enough to make an impact enough with the Avengers publicly. No doubt he could be considered a superhero, he was there for the big things (which he did do for free, he wasn’t corrupt, but he did get compensated by SHIELD for most of his missions just not the immediate world saving ones). But he was a more faded part of the team (so was Natasha, but that’s because she was a spy. Having a lot of PR was bad for that reputation, but she made it work- because she was Natasha).

So with the treatment of Peter Parker he was scarcely there. He never interacted with the kid much before. He gave curt orders and teased him a bit, but never anything like everyone else. He belittled him but never scolded him like Cap or Thor. He was a more laid back part of the harsh treatment they gave him. He considered himself a not so innocent bystander who put in a comment every now and then.

That in no way made what he did okay, but it did make it easier for him (in comparison to everyone but Stark and Wanda who had been moderately nice to him before) to get close to the kid. Theoretically, at least.
Now it was only a matter of him wanting to be there.

Why wouldn’t he want to? This wasn’t just for Nat, who knew his kids and was basically a second mother to him. To them, she was Auntie Nat and when she told Clint about her long lost son, maybe he’d be Uncle Clint. Maybe. But that wasn’t his first thought. He wanted to give to Natasha’s broken family like she gave to his family. He wanted to be as present as she was in his kids lives, in this kids life.

But then that kid turned out to be the one that he’s made a scarce impression on, and that scarce impression was bad. But it was still scarce.

He should’ve known it wouldn’t be so easy. Even if he wasn’t terrible to the kid like the others, it was still Nat and Barnes kid. That meant that paranoia was defiantly gonna be an issue.

He was just too stupid to realize that sooner.

“Why are you watching me?” Clint nearly fell out of the vent at the curious but amused voice behind him. He had been in the vents, watching Peter go through his routines in the lab when he was alone (which was mostly Peter immersing with something that was metal and had wires, Clint was never tech savvy) the kid had stepped out for a minute and Clint assumed it was the bathroom, it looked so casual. Turns out he was just as sneaky as his mother, because now he was smirking at him in a cross legged position in the oversized ducts while Clint was going through cardiac arrest.

“You nearly gave me a heart attack.” he whispered seethingly, but with no heat behind it and the kid gave him a wide, slightly proud smile.

“Why are we whispering?” he asked in an exaggerated whisper voice too and Clint rolled his eyes to cover his blush and embarrassment, he was glad that Stark hadn’t installed those vent lights because Peter couldn’t see it as clear (or maybe he could, he did have enhanced eyesight).

“Because, I was spying on you.” he whispered back like it was obvious. There was no point in hiding it because Peter obviously figured it out.

“Not very well.” Peter whispered with a smug tint in his tone and crossed arms “You forgot about blocking out the draft.” he said casually.
“Blocking the what?” Clint asked and Peter rolled his eyes. Why were they still whispering?

“The draft.” he gestured to the closed vent opening “These vents are too big, they make a big draft everywhere when they blew out. It’s why the tower is so cold all the time.” he said with a quirked brow at Clint’s slightly ajar jaw. He forgot that the kid, on top of being the lead for Spy Kids, was also a super genius. Talk about overpowered characters. “You didn’t know? it’s basic architectural mechanics.” he said coyly with a light snicker that reminded him too much of Natasha.

“I knew you were smart, but where the fuck did you learn structural mechanics?” he asked, it was a dumb question. The kid was a genius, but as soon as he asked it the kid’s eyes went a bit dark and shrouded with something that seemed too far away to reach. A memory that wouldn’t be forgotten.

‘He was in the army?’

‘No, Special Forces.’

“Books.” the kid lied and tried to shrug off. Clint waited 12 whole seconds for him to change the answer but Peter didn’t say anything else, just averted his half hollowed eyes.

“Or Special Forces.” Clint said bluntly, internally freaking out. He should not have said that, Peter had averted his eyes and pressed his lips in a thin line. He wasn’t talking, but he looked like he was thinking not good thoughts. Why had he said that? He wanted this kid to like him. He was such an idiot. Dragging up bad memories and calling him out wasn’t changing anything. “I mean… I did a little digging on your-” Clint started to stumble over his words and he should really just stop talking because he was making this worse.

“Wade gave you those videos.” Peter said finally, it was like he was just realizing it for the first time. He looked so sure of himself that Clint assumed he knew.

“Yeah, but you know-” Clint tried to explain, suddenly feeling guilty for invading such a personal part of Peters life. It was Peter with no walls and they had seen the full extent of it without his permission. Now he felt wrong for doing it, even though no one had said no (but who would say no to the Avengers? They could do what ever the fuck they wanted within government restriction. They were the heroes, denying them anything would seem ungrateful).

“That idiot.” he grumbled in a seething voice with only a little hate to it “He had no right.” he said more to himself. His eyes were flaring a little with anger. So they really shouldn’t have watched
“Hey,” Clint said gentler, scooting closer, Peter shuffled back twice the distance. Clint didn’t advance anymore, but continued “I’m sorry, we watched them and…” Clint didn’t know what else to say. ‘Sorry for watching you when you were a kid and doing dumb shit. But you were cute.’ Didn’t seem to cut it.

“It’s not your fault, he told you to and you were trying to look for me. Any information would be invaluable, I would’ve watched them too.” Peter said waving him off, but there was still something angry in his tone - probably at Wilson. He wasn’t mad at the Avengers, he was mad at Wade. And he knew not to direct that anger to him. Control. He knows how to control himself. “Good job for getting it out of him, he’s a tough nut to crack.” he praised blandly, like he didn’t really mean it (almost like a teenager but more like a dismissive adult. Wonder where he learned that.) Clint would avoid saying that Wade had just handed it to them, for the other man’s sake (even if he was Deadpool, this was the smartest kid on earth and Spiderman, he probably had a thousand ways to kill Deadpool). There was a long moment of silence.

“You know, I was in the special forces unit too.” Clint admitted, not really knowing where this was going himself “before SHIELD. Which if you think about it is-” Clint was cut off by Peters bland voice.

“You don’t have to do that.” Peter said, cutting him off in a slightly icy tone. Clint took a second before laughing nervously. That tone was way too intimidating for a fucking 16 year old to be using.

“Do what?” He knew exactly what he was doing and Peter knew it too and gave him a blank, bemused look for it. But instead of saying what Clint expected, Peter just sighed.

“What did I expect?” He laughed humorlessly “of course y’all are trying to suck up with the poor lost son, especially after those dumb videos.” Peter said looking regretful. He didn’t sound too dramatic about it though. “It’s like something out of a fucking terminal illness novel.” He scoffed and Clint bristled a bit at the accusation.

“They were nice.” Clint said, talking about the videos.

“Their depressing.” Peter snorted, with a flippant attitude.
“You seemed pretty happy in them.” Clint furrowed his brow. Peter looked at him straight in the eye and Clint couldn’t help but freeze. The look he was giving the man was so hallow.

“I didn’t mean back then.” Peter said back in a softer tone and Clint clicked his mouth shut. Peter sighed again “it’s nothing. That time is better forgotten.” He shrugged, his flippant demeanor returning. Clint felt something sad swell up in his lungs.

‘He wanted to forget, but he didn’t.’

‘I don’t want to forget the good things.’

“You don’t mean that.” Clint said darkly and Peter looked up at him, looking slightly offended in the serious accusation. “I saw those videos. When you spent your summers in Special Forces I could tell the only thing getting you through that was Wade and the fact that you were going to see your friends for nine months.” Clint said and Peter paused looking at him in something akin to awe before scoffing again.

“Wade was an asshole. Those videos only showed you the good parts.” Peter muttered more to himself “and some good my friends did me. It was only something to lose.” Peter said and he could hear the teenager in that. Clint could barely believe what he was hearing. He knew that Peter was saying that about his situation. He knew Peter didn’t mean that and he knew Peter knew he didn’t mean it either. That came from a place of hurt and loss. Somewhere deeper and darker than Clint could even imagine. But Clint couldn’t help that his anger still spiked a bit when he said it.

“You know you don’t believe that. You’re just hurting cause you lost it.” Clint said darkly, more accusingly and Peter shrunk away a little but kept the neutral look on his face. He felt guilty. Clint sighed “I was the same, going on missions before the Avengers was hell because I was killing people and my kids didn’t know that. But ultimately, even if I couldn’t tell them, the thing that got me through it was my family.” He said in a gentler tone and looked at Peter, trying to catch his eyes and finally finding them, a guilty, regretful look shining in it, saying that he thought this was all his fault in the first place, and it was making his eyes go a little soft.

“Good things don’t happen without a reason.” Peter mumbled as he shook his head and his eyes went blank again and he dropped out of the vents before Clint could respond. Clint didn’t know what to say anyway, he thought he was getting through to Peter. Apparently too close too fast.

This was gonna be harder than he thought.
Wanda’s gap under her bed was very spacious.

It was made with a big gap between the floor and actual bed for storing large bins easily - but Wanda had no bins to store (she didn’t have much growing up and she wasn’t allowed to bring anything to Hydra anyway). It was enough to allow her to comfortably get under it without any trouble moving around. It wasn’t cramped at all.

Peter was the one to discover this, not her.

Something about Peter was that he liked to think and be in odd places. Weather it be on the ceiling or on the ground, starfishes across the floor, or sitting on the back of the couch in a crouch position. He never could sit like a normal human, and Wanda wasn’t sure if it was a spider trait or not.

Peter and her laying under her bed, with the lights off had become somewhat of a common thing among the two of them. He was the one who first initiated it, by crawling under her bed and laying on his back and she thought it was weird at first ( like most things Peter did often were), but he never said anything about it and she’d get back to working on whatever she was working on or doing. Eventually, she came down to see what he was up to. But he’d never say anything as she crawled in to lay next to him. She came to understand that whenever Peter was there he was thinking and nothing else.

And she went down to think with him. It had become an unspoken rule that phones were not allowed. Sometimes she’d talk, sometimes he’d talk, sometimes they’d just stay silent. No yelling. It was never planned but it always started in silence and ended that way too, when Peter would sneak out silently and she’d pretend not to notice as she crawled out after he’d left out the window or through the vent- he’d never use the door but that was a thing that would never change. And like many things that happened with Peter Parker, it became her safe space.

“I’m sorry.” He said this time, it was spoken in a whisper to the bars and matted springs that were only two inches from his nose. Wanda waited for 15 seconds before speaking her turn, just to make sure he didn’t have anything to add - because sometimes that happened, when they couldn’t phrase something they’d just say how it was in their mind.

“What happened?” She asked quietly and he waited 23 seconds before responding.
“The trial.” He said in an even quieter voice. She stiffened for a second, not really sure what to think. The trial was a broad topic, but somehow she knew exactly what he was talking about.

“You weren’t just doing it for me. You were doing it for more than me, I understand that.” She said in understanding. Peter had a reason to do what he did, even if Wanda wasn’t necessarily ready, she wasn’t the only person on his priority list. He had forwarded her and apologized to her beforehand. And then the numerous time after and even during it. Never leaving her side and she wasn’t sure if it was for his or her comfort but she’d like to think it was both.

“Dragging you in.” He continued in a slightly baited breath and choppy sentence. He was thinking about something else entirely.

“What happened at the trial was my decision, you didn’t force me to do any of it.” She reassured firmly, but gently. It was true. Peter didn’t push her to say anything. He didn’t expect her to do anything - and she wasn’t sure if she should be offended or touched by that. She did what she did of her own freewill and she’d do it again. He knew that too.

It was something else that was bothering him.

“The Avengers.” He said just the same way, that was harder to pinpoint. There was a lot of things going on with the Avengers and Peter but he said that he was sorry to her.

“You weren’t even there for that. It wasn’t your fault.” She said, almost astounded that Peter would apologize for something that happened before he was even in high school. He shifted his body so that he was turned to her and she turned to him the same way so they were looking directly into each others eyes. His were blank and unresponsive. He wasn’t completely present. Did he even realize what he was apologizing for? Something broke in Wanda.

This wasn’t a good idea.

_He wasn’t ready._

“My parents.” He said and she could see the guilt shining behind his eyes, but his voice remained unemotional. His eyes were a dam to every emotion inside him, waiting to burst “I didn’t tell you.” He said sadly. Wanda touched her fingers to the back of his hand and he turned it around in permission for her to grab it. He was more present, but still not all there.
“I get why.” She said softly. Tears were shining in hers and she’s sure he noticed it because yes, she was a little hurt that he hadn’t told her. That he blocked that part of his mind from her. He thought they were completely open with each other, but if she was honest she wasn’t completely open either. She had suppressed the feelings of her brother from him.

Now she knew -almost - everything and he didn’t know about Pietro. Not fully. She wasn’t forced to say anything, and it wasn’t fair that he was

“I never told you…” she whispered “you remind me of my brother.” She started and his breath caught. She got why, she barely ever said or showed anything about him to the boy in front of her. A flash of fear and panic came across his eyes. Wanda was only half aware of it.

“You don’t have to-“ Peter started softly.

“I’m not doing this because I have to.” She reassured, although she didn’t feel that way. He shook his head. He knew. He wasn’t supposed to know.

“You aren’t ready. Not completely.” He said in a gentle tone “I wasn’t ready.” He whispered and she smiled a sad watery smile. He smiled back, but it was hollow.

“You’re right.” She confirmed quietly but not unkindly and he smiled a sad smile. “You’re a good person.” She said, and she’s never believed anything more in her life. He shifted so he was laying on his back again but squeezed her hand tighter.

He never agreed with her on that.

OoOoO

Confronting young Parker was more daunting than fighting Surter in his cave of lizard beasts.

It was a silly fear, considering that he was a god and everything, but as his father had said: it takes a lot of courage to own up to your mistakes (he paraphrased that of course, he said it in a much more flamboyant way, but he got the idea).
As a hero of Earth and King of Asgard, this wouldn’t be his first time. He was an Avenger but he made mistakes. Not taking in and caring for Young Parker was one of them, even if he wasn’t Lady Romanov’s son, his duty was to protect the innocent. He had only served in harming a child with his negligence and insults. A fellow warrior who protected his city everyday and Thor had treated him with the disrespect of a prisoner. Worse than one, in fact, because young Parker was a child.

The fact was that this conflict had been going on for a year, and while that was a meager period compared to his own age, it was a long time in terms of humans of earth. A lot has happened within the past year, and it took being slammed with the information and the boy’s heritage to make him (and the rest of the team) realize their mistake.

It was shameful.

It was embarrassing.

And above all, it was regretful.

They called themselves heroes, but they were so exclusive that they couldn’t even see a child suffering before their very eyes. That’s what this all boiled down to in the end. Strip the titles and the achievements and the neglect of a broken boy was all that remained.

What’s worse is that Young Parker had held out so much hope in the beginning. Hope that they would notice and aid him in his dire time of need. When he was grieving over his lost life that was torn away from him by his enemies. Hope that they’d help get it back, help him have the people he loved being alive and healthy with him.

And instead they gave him a reason for things to remain the way they were displayed. They had abandoned him.

And they had smashed his last sliver of hope into itty bitty pieces and he suffered alone for months as a result. Suffered and was ridiculed by the so called ‘protectors of the earth’. They had scorned the name in every right, abused their power and hurt the innocent without a second glance. And it took all their mistakes to be shoved in their faces for them to even realize it.

So Thor has to make this right. It wasn’t just an obligation anymore (as a hero or potential uncle). It was now his sworn duty - he made it so, as the ruler of Asgard - to protect and love this child
(although it didn’t seem like he needed much protection, young Parker was quite independent). But first to pay for his sins and attempt to correct what he had wronged.

That would not prove to be easy, as he still saw Parker as somewhat of a nuisance. That became abundantly clear when they stepped on the ship for a mission and Young Parker did not break his old habit of isolating himself from the group of heroes who chatted and prepared for battle.

It served as a reminder to both what he had done and why he had done it.

Parker was snarky, sarcastic and sometimes even cold. He was blunt and didn’t take to following orders. It is why Thor despised (that was a strong word but true) him in the first place.

Even then, Thor could see through his pettiness of the past and strode up to where Parker has placed himself while reading a complex book - or so Stark says. The boy looked up and raised a brow at Thor’s bright, slightly fake demeanor. He could tell it was fake, somehow without indicated it at all, Peter had communicated that to him. Fascinating.

“Hello.” Thor said in his booming cheerful voice he used for fans. Parker was by no means a fan, Thor would not blame him for being the opposite - Barton call them ‘haters’. So the boy would probably not appreciate this, but the young boy actually seemed to be a bit amused if not slightly irritated in probably being interrupted in the middle of his reading.

“Hey?” He said more as a question than as a response. Thor had his interest peaked, so he could not waste this opportunity - Parker had a rather short attention span “I didn’t do something wrong already, did I?” Peter asked and Thor was quick to reassure, not even taking the time to decide if that was a joke or not.

“No, not at all! You have done nothing to be irksome or hindrance to-“ Thor started but then Peter started to laugh and Thor was confused. This child confused him more often than he didn’t.

“I’m kidding. I know that.” He said with a slightly fake smile. The sad part is, that was the most real smile Thor had ever been given by the boy. He was determined to change that. It’d be slow and Thor was never one for waiting, but it would be fruitful if he was successful.

“Ah, you only jest.” Thor said with a nod and nervous chuckle. Peter nodded back and looked forward at the same time he did. There was an awkward silence in the air where neither of them looked at each other. He then took the time to sit himself in the spot next to the wide, puppy eyed
boy, who cocked his head in confusion, but didn’t ask him to leave. He blew out a breath awkwardly as he started to bounce his leg. “So,” he begun again in nervous conversation, Parker seemed to be perfectly calm with everything that was happening currently “you like spiders.” He said with a note of interest that obviously wasn’t really real, and wanted to slap himself because that was probably the stupidest thing to say. Peter huffed out a laugh though.

“And I thought I was bad at confrontation.” He mumbled and looked at Thor through a sideways glance, as the god hummed to indicate for him to speak up “uhh, I mean, it must run in the family. Spiders, I mean. Because you know uhm, she’s black widow is kinda my uhm... yeah you know.” Peter stuttered out nervously, he seemed to not like where this conversation had led. Then closed his eyes as he cursed himself for being so awkward or bringing up the obvious reason why he was here. He missed the soft look Thor had for him.

“Your mother.” He said a little too bluntly and Peter looked up at him confused.

“Huh?” He asked and Thor sighed.

“She is your mother, Young hero.” Thor said gently. Peter nearly choked at Thor’s soothing affirmation. Or at least it was supposed to be soothing. He was prepared to hear the excuses that translated into ‘she’s my mom but it’s awkward to say so please don’t say it, because I’m still not ready and-’

“I’m not a hero.” He quickly said, catching Thor off guard “I mean you guys...you’re all heroes... I could never...” He trailed off. Is that what they made him think? Was that what was going through his head already and they had cemented that by belittling him? Thor wasn’t sure which one was worse.

“Be like us?” Thor was almost afraid to ask and the child nodded in an agreeing manner and Thor felt his stomach drop. Even after all this time, everything they’ve done, they were still his ‘superhero’ standards, and he wasn’t good enough for it. At least that’s what they made him believe. He had to stop that line of thinking, immediately. “No. You can never be like us.” He said and ignored Peter wilting only a little, the boy already thought he wasn’t a hero, but Thor thinks he can get through to him on this. Becoming a hero was one of self discovery, Thor could only guide him partially there. He was young and intelligent, Peter would figure it out soon. Thor put a hand on his shoulder. “What ails you in becoming their known son?” He asked gently instead.

“Nothing.” Peter said a little defensively, Thor didn’t believe that for a second.

“You are worried about the expectations.” Thor answered for him and Peter squeezed his eyes and
blew out a breath. Thor knew he had been correct. “You think if you are their son, you’d be given high expectations.” he said when Peter didn’t say anything. After a moment the boy sighed.

“I don’t want those, I’m not good at those.” He confessed quietly and Thor’s eyes softened.

“You know my mother said that we always fail at who we are expected to be.” Thor said and nodded quickly to get the tears out of his eyes. “She said that we will never be anyone but ourselves.” He said tearfully and Peter didn’t answer for a minute, Thor took the time to recompose himself, talking about his late mother always made him a bit sad. Peter just stared up at him while he tried not to cry. He was a god for Asgard's sake, he shouldn’t be crying. But it was good for him. Built emotional pillars.

“She was a wise woman.” He said to him wisely, almost quietly. Thor nodded more in firm agreement.

“She was.” he said and then smiled and chuckled nervously “she’s dead. Obviously, because we used the past tense.” He said in a tone that clearly tried to mask his pain and Peter smiles awkwardly to that.

“She’d be proud of you.” He said and he’d heard that being said so emptily, but when Peter said it, somehow he knew it was true. “I mean who you are a hero of an entire planet and ruler of another.” He said somewhat sadly, but mostly comforting.

“I was terrible to you.” He nearly whispered and Peter looked up at him with a confused look “you may not be a ruler or considered a hero in the public eyes. But you are someone who makes a big difference. You save people and you never forget about the smaller ones.” Thor smiles a little and Peter returned with a stunned look. It was working. “It is something to admire in you. No matter how many times you fall or are ridiculed or shut down, you always get up and keep going. You find a way to continue, further more a purpose. Not all warriors are that strong of heart.” Thor said with a proud smile and nudged Peter.

“Strong of heart?” Peter asked with wide eyes that reminded Thor of a child’s admiration, being praised by their hero.

“Of course!” Thor confirmed like it was obvious “it is the most important quality a warrior can have. Even if it doesn’t feel like it.” He said reassuringly.
“You’re bullshitting me.” Peter said blandly, more like the teenager he was. Thor was losing him “it’s so cheesy.” He muttered in a tone like he seemed like he didn’t want to believe it, but he really did want to believe it at the same time.

“I’ve seen men as big a Bilgorphs fall at the slightest insult.” Thor said “because their own ego was their downfall.” Thor said, and he was referencing himself on this a little. Because his moral standard had fallen as soon as he cast out a child in need. His ego was his downfall, not in battle, but in his personal life.

“Bilgorphs?” Peter oddly perked up at the mention of the mythical creature “like the rat bulls from Norse mythology?” He said almost excitedly. Thor was shocked by his enthusiasm, no one on earth understood his references to Asgardian things (not even Steve who was so called ‘old’ and ‘out of his time’) he must’ve taken too long to respond because peter shrunk in on himself in an act of introvercy “sorry-“ he started to recede and Thor was quick to stop him before he went back into his metaphorical shell.

“Yes!” He said happily and slung an arm around the boys very diminutive figure (they needed to feed him more so that he could stand tall like the warrior he was) “you have battled one?” He said happily and Peter blushed a bit.

“Only briefly through a dimensional barrier when I was helping Doctor Strange banishing some...thing? It was cool to see one though, hybrid of animals on earth don’t end up... well alive.” Peter chuckled a little more darkly than the conversation entailed.

“Wonderful!” Thor smiles, encouraged to connect with the child over something they were both excitable about. “You know I-“ he was swiftly cut off by Romanov’s icy, no nonsense tone

“Wheels up in ten. Suit up.” Natasha said curtly as she past by to go to the landing hall and Peter looked nervous all of a sudden. Smile whipped from his face and he was biting his lip as an unsure look entered his eyes.

“You’ll do fine.” Thor reassured with a clap to the young boys scrawny shoulder. He seemed to choke a bit in shock as he stumbled forward.

“Thank you..?” he whispered and started to the back of the aircraft to prepare for the battle ahead.

Everything would turn out fine.
So, this was a disaster.

Disaster wasn’t even the right word to describe what this was. This was supposed to be... *not* whatever *this* was.

This was supposed to be good. A battle that he could prove himself with (but he never felt that need before). Now that he was living in Avengers Tower for nearly a week and stepping on eggshells around the heroes who were still trying to get a grip on apologizing to him and ‘make a connection’ with him or whatever, he felt like he owed them for giving him a home even though their payment was him not just leaving and never coming back. He was obviously nervous about how the dynamic would change on the battlefield as well. After the little talk with Thor, he thought it would be okay though.

This was not supposed to be the time where he didn’t follow orders, but then again neither were any of the other times he fought with the Avengers. The ‘just suck it up for this battle and fucking *listen*’ mindset didn’t work before and he didn’t know why he’d think it would work now.

Stupid. He was so **stupid**. Why did he think anything would change?

“Spiderman! I said get on Iron Mans six!” Rogers yelled in the coms. It was back to this, where everyone was telling him to do a million things at once but this time the voices were screaming “*expectations!*” and that all he could think about. How he was letting everybody down because *everybody knows and they want you to do something!* *They want you to listen, conform, obey!*... And that was fine, if he hadn’t been yelling the same thing for the past ten minutes “Communicate! What’s your status!” the man ordered and if Peter wasn’t imagining things he almost sounded like he was talking to a child. That made Peters temper flare a bit.

“No need to yell, not all of us are old enough to be naturally deaf yet.” Peter mumbled through the filter which got a nasty chuckle from Sam “I’m busy.” Peter reported before Steve could comment and yell at him for his ‘attitude’. He didn’t understand why everyone else got to say those comments to each other but him. Maybe because he was a kid or maybe because he wasn’t a real Avenger. He didn’t feel like one right now. He felt like he was letting someone down.

*Expectations!*
“We need you here!” Tony was now yelling and there were too many blasts, noises, voices and maybe he wasn’t cut out to be on a team or a superhero (he had said that. Hadn’t he?). He was good when he was just looking out for himself. When he was by himself, he didn’t need anyone shouting orders or telling him what to do. He was fine when he was in charge of himself.

*Report!* 

“I need to focus here.” Peter grumbled, more to himself, because his thoughts were too loud and he had to save people. He had a fucking job to do.

*Change!*

“Are you in danger?” Barnes asked and Peter rolled his eyes.

*Adapt!*

“We’re all in danger.” He snapped back shortly.

*Follow!*

“Don’t give him attitude. He’s looking out for you.” Steve jumped in, like it was any of his damn bussiness.

*Conform!*

“I don’t need any of you to look out for me.” Peter grumbled a little louder, it was getting harder to breathe.

*Listen!*

“He’s making sure you don’t need back up.” Sam agreed and Peter could practically hear the
furrow in his brows. They were mad at him again. He couldn’t take that. He couldn’t face that. Not now. Why not now? What’s so different? You’re still you!

Obey!

“You never did before!” Peter practically screamed, everyone went dead silent.

I can’t do this!

“You never cared before! You just know something knew about me, I’m still the same me! You expect me to change for you, but I’ve known longer than you. How shallow is that!?!” He could barely breathe. He said the wrong thing. No one was responding. He couldn’t take this. He turned off his com, fought his sector and left.

He couldn’t take this. Why did he think he could do this?

Why did he think things could ever be easy for him?

OoOoO

Easy? What a joke.

Peter scoffed to himself as he sores over the night sky. He found it funny that no matter how many times he did it, it seemed he wasn’t even there. As if New York has gotten so used to a person swing from building to building that it became as natural as a flock of birds to them. He guessed, for New York, this was natural to see him swinging by.

He landed in front of a warehouse. As Red had said, there was still clean up from the trial that he had to mop up. It was his mess, even though it didn’t benefit him in any way, but that wasn’t the point. He enjoyed fucking with people, he had to remember that. He had left it unattended for too long, or at least that’s what he told himself (he would never admit that the real reason he was so focused on this was because he didn’t want to think about the Avengers right now).

Peter stayed low and took out the meager amount of guards, that were guarding the warehouse,
swiftly and quietly. It was a piece of cake to him.

What wasn’t, was the fact that he was he was terrible at assimilating.

Everyone said that they had been trying. And they had. But they had been trying too hard, and what did he expect really. Any effort the Avengers could give him in being nice was trying too hard for him. Like they were obligated to do so. Sucking up to him because he was some poor kid from Queens with a past in HYDRA. He didn’t want to be the Avengers little pet project. He didn’t want to be coddled. He didn’t need to be. 16 years on his own proved that.

He was Spiderman. He was Peter Parker. The genius orphan who could take over the world if he really wanted to. The kid with the entire universe set against him since birth. He could do whatever the fuck he wanted to (well within reason, he wasn’t a corrupt dictator that would abuse his power).

“So why do I feel so trapped?” He asked the guy who he had been punching, not really expecting an answer. “I have no idea what I’m doing wrong.” He sighed.

“Maybe you’re not doing anything wrong.” The guy said wisely and Peter looked at him. His face was punched in, mouth all bloody with a bruise that was forming across both eyes. His right cheek was swollen and nose broken.

“Huh,” he shrugged, oddly surprised by the easy answer. But it made sense “Maybe I’m not.” Peter said, the man nodded and gave him a bloody smile and Peter punched him out, quickly “sorry dude.” he mumbled. “Still a criminal.” he breathed out and shook his head a bit.

He continued meticulously shifting through the entire warehouse just like that, punch a few guys, knock em out, web em up, the usual routine until he got to a dark room.

There was no gaurds, no lights, just the strong smell of blood in the air. Young blood. His eyes adjusted and he stepped inside, but it landed on something. He looked down to see a small, thin arm, hanging lifelessly from a child’s body. It was a boy, he couldn’t be more than 9 years old, his eyes were still open but they were staring dead ahead in his lifeless eyesockets. Peter looked to the rest of the floor with kids bodies were everywhere, unmoving, covered in blood, torn up rags and nothing else.

Then sound registered and he heard a sound in the far corner where there were wooden crates stack
up and moved closer to it. He peered around into a little space between the wall and the heavy crates, and he saw the outline of a child, shaking and ducking with their hands over their head.

“Hey.” He said gently, moving the crates so he could crouch down to her level. He could now see that she was a girl. She whimpered and shrunk more into herself. Peter ripped open his backpack and got out an oversized shirt and offered it to her.

“Please don’t hurt me.” She flinched back at the approaching hand and Peter shushed her gently, not advancing anymore.

“No, no I’m here to help.” He said quietly.

“That’s what he said.” She nearly spat back in fear, still not looking at him and shaking.

“I’m not like him see.” He took off his mask “I’m a kid too. I’m Peter. I’ll take you somewhere safe. I promise.” He said and the girl looked up at him. He shook the tshirt and she grabbed it and put it on. “See.” he said as he leaned back to sit on the filthy floor to look at her tiredly “just here to help.” he breathed out and the girl suddenly ran to him and sobbed into his chest. Peter was shocked at first before going more limp and allowing it. He was exhausted.

“Really?” She whispered in disbelief. “Can you take me home?” She asked brokenly. Peter breathes in and out. Because he knows it’s not that simple. He knows that her family could be dead, or maybe even sold her out in the first place. He knows her family couldn’t have seen her in years or even remember her. He knows that she could be rejected by them or cast out or treated poorly again. He knew that happy endings weren’t ever the case, because even if she did have a good family she’d have to deal with all the problems that messed her up. The things in her head that she could never forget and that would hinder her from moving on. The voices, demons and monsters that lurked in every dark shadow of her life, telling her she has no home, not really.

“Of course.” He half lies instead “What’s your name kiddo?” Peter asked gently. She sniffs and rubbed her eyes to look up at him.

“Abby Keener.”
UPDATE NOTICE: Sept. 5

I kinda realized that I forgot to add that big 'saving' moment that launches the beginning of Peter's trust for the Avengers, you know what I mean? But I wanted to make it rushed and forced kinda into this position and Peter trying to adapt too quickly. I'm not sure if I pulled that off right.

Anyway, always love all of y'all's support and I hope Sony gives back Spidey or else Tony Stark died for nothing (my cat is very upset about it)

See y'all next time!!

PS when did 'short' become 16,000 words?? wild dude
Okay, I think it should be more smooth sailing from now on. Cuz like, all my classes are kinda sort of easy??
I don't really have much to say today, but I might later. This chapter is kind of the kick off for the next one, so excuse me if it's a little boring. And goes a little too fast (it's kind of the point, but you'll see).

Also I have a little poll for all of you. I asked this on tumblr, but since more of my readers don't go on tumblr I'll ask this here too. In the oneshot collection that will follow this (and yes, I am confirming that there will be a oneshot collection to follow this) do you all wanna see a small subplot of Young Avengers.
My Young Avenger line up is:
Lila Barton (aka Hawkeye - kind of like Kate Bishop but not really)
Cassie Lang (aka Stinger)
Shuri (aka Shuri, cuz she's a badass)
Harley Keener (aka Titanium, I know that's a villian but like it's so much cooler than Iron lad)
There might be a miles moralas, I don't know how to fit him in though and I don't want this to seem forced, so yeah. Peter will also not be apart of it, for reasons you will soon see (because spoilers aren't my thing). But he would be a huge part in the creation. Anyway, I'll check out your responses and see, I have like a skeleton of a skeleton of where I'd take it and it will very much be a slow burn (this is about Peter, not quite about the Young Avengers so it will be gradual).
Note I might do it anyway?? I dunno, you guys can submit prompt ideas and stuff, and I'll totally take that into account.

tw: Mentions of child sexual assault and neglect. Also Child abandonment. (this isn't a very heavy chapter)

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Chapter 12-For my family**

“What the *fuck* Rogers?”

Steve couldn’t care less of what his teammates were saying. He did care about the situation - that was mostly his fault and his teammates probably had it up to the moon with his shit - though, but only one thing was running through his mind for the past hour or so.
The kid had only made it a week.

In all honesty, what was he even expecting? This was all his fault - well mostly his fault, but this particular instance was most definitely on him. He should’ve kept his big mouth shut; stayed out of it because he had no right to butt into that (he does it a lot though, and he should probably work on that to avoid situations like these).

Bucky and Natasha telling him off made sense. They’d been making progress slowly (incredibly slowly) and now he had ruined it. All for what? To be right all the time? To establish authority to someone who probably knew better than him to began with. They wanted to slowly assimilate Peter into their little broken family, but Steve had screwed it up.

And now they may not even get another chance.

“I know. I screwed up.” Steve admitted in shame, hanging his head a bit. Saying it didn’t do him any justice. It didn’t make it better. It didn’t bring Peter back. What would they even do or say if he did? Would they ignore it and move on? They had to talk about it, didn’t they?

Peter was, by no means, perfect either. But the difference between them was that Peter knew when he wasn’t right. He knew how to put his head down and knew when to admit he was wrong. He tried to be better. Steve didn’t try to change at all, he was stuck in a loop and would never make any progress if he didn’t change something.

“Ya think?” Tony grumbled, even if he wasn’t the best himself during that particular battle, Steve didn’t say anything. He had done more for that kid than any of the rest of them had, certainly more than he had. Natasha still shot a glare and the man retreated in his approach.

“I didn’t need you or Sam butting in.” Bucky glared at the other man who shrunk a little in embarrassment as well. He knew it was mostly for him though. He felt something squeeze in his chest at that, because yes, that was Bucky’s problem, but for the first time, it was only Bucky’s problem. They’ve always solved things together with no matter how small, now it would be different. Now Steve would have to stand back and let Bucky deal with certain things of parenting alone. And that sort of scared Steve.

“He shouldn’t have snapped at you,” Steve said in half-hearted weak defense. He knew he was in the wrong. Why was that so hard for him to admit?
“Because I’m his elder or his dad?” Bucky asked blandly, crossing his arms at his friend. It wasn’t a question, more of a statement and one that hit hard. From Peter’s point of view, your age, gender, social status, mental status, or otherwise did not matter. If you had a good idea, he’d follow through. If you had a bad idea, he wouldn’t. It was simple, probably a way that they should look at things. He didn’t care about money or power. He didn’t do things to please people, but also not to please himself. He didn’t need authority. He did what needed to be done and sometimes Steve was envious of that. He hated how he had built his reputation up so much that it got to his head and it bit him in the butt now.

“Because you were trying to help him,” Steve said back and Bucky sighed, he seemed so done and tired. It wasn’t fair to him nor Natasha. It wasn’t fair that they had to wait for the son that they’d lost. They were so close to losing him again, and this time if they didn’t handle this right, they’d lose him for good. All that work, effort and anxiety was all for nothing.

“Yeah, but he didn’t need that.” Bucky sighed and deflated “I don’t know, I just kind of...I don’t know. I shouldn’t have done that, to begin with.” Bucky sagged his shoulders in defeat and Steve furrowed his brows. This wasn’t his fault. How could he possibly think this was his fault. This was Steve’s fault and Steve’s mistake, not Bucky’s. But now his best friend is paying the price and that just wasn’t fair.

“Life’s not fair” Peter’s voice echoed in his head “It’s better to learn it sooner rather than later.”

Bullshit. All of this was utter bullshit. Peter had a simple view and complex solutions. He didn’t make any sense, and it wasn’t the age gap that was to blame this time. No one understood him and it was complete and utter bullshit.

“I don’t get it. You were just being a good teammate and he had been vague in his status report.” Steve said in confusion, that was a simple fact. The bare truth and nothing more. This kid was too confusing. He had to break it down, he didn’t have a big brain like Stark and Banner. To get better he had to understand what he did wrong.

“I think he didn’t want this affect the way we were in battle.” Bruce cut in smoothly. He looked like he was thinking about it, almost as if it boggles him a bit too (that gave Steve a bit more comfort) “like our dynamic. It worked before, it’s something he didn’t want to change.” Bruce said, he didn’t sound completely sure, but it made sense. Acclimating was better when it was slow and not all at once.

“But we were the same. I gave him orders and he didn’t follow just the same.” Steve grumbled a bit, still hanging into straggling feelings of annoyance at that. It still irked him when someone
blatantly disobeyed and didn’t say why. At first, Steve thought it was out of disrespect; he ignored the fact that the situation was better handled Peter’s way.

“But when have we ever asked if he was hurt?” Natasha put in with a cross of her arms. Steve pauses at that, he knew they were bad teammates (even if Peter wasn’t technically apart of the team, he was still a good ally).

“Are we really that bad?” He asked with the hope that it wasn’t true in his voice. He knew better though. And the worst part was that she was sugarcoating it. Natasha nodded solemnly.

“We scold him, yell at him, belittle him.” She listed off and with each one, Steve felt smaller and smaller. Then he was reminded that he was a *kid*. A kid who knew a lot and was incredibly intelligent but still a kid. He was still learning, and he was all broken. He had no one he could depend on, not really. He had to hide away so many parts of himself from so many people and he could never just be himself. They humiliated him and he needed help. They weren’t heroes, they were petty bullies who’re egos were too big to see the real problem.

“But why wouldn’t he want that to change. It’s awful.” Steve said back in a quiet tone and Sam answered this time.

“Actually it makes sense.” He said in a dawning tone “Peter put himself in an entirely new environment and situation. Being in the tower and being surrounded by all of us all the time isn’t something he’s used to and I don’t think he was completely ready for. He probably wasn’t ready for it to affect this aspect either.” Sam shrugged but there was a sad look on his face. Yeah, no duh. Nobody was ready for it. But at least they had each other to get through it. Peter probably felt like an outsider because of that. They didn’t even think of it.

“So he didn’t put two and two together?” Tony snorted in disbelief. When he said it like that it was doubtful. Peter usually didn’t let feelings and bias cloud his logic. “have you ever met the kid?” He asked rhetorically and Sam rolled his eyes.

“Yeah, but this isn’t a logical situation it’s a mental one. He probably did know but it didn’t actually click until it happened.” Sam glared at the man. Steve didn’t really understand the views. “He doesn’t want his status to change how he’s treated. He’s the same person, just with a new label.” Sam clarifies and Steve hummed in understanding.

“And he really doesn’t give a shit about labels,” Bruce mumbled. Yeah, everyone was just...people. There were no heroes or villains with him. Just people doing things to help or harm others. Steve wondered how hard it was to maintain that mentality.
“Peter doesn’t let his emotions dictate rational reason. It’s why he’s the smartest person I know.” Tony announces, ignoring Bruce and Sam as he slammed his hands in the coffee table.

“He’s still a goddamn kid, Stark!” Sam yelled back. Steve was torn between the two. The kid was intelligent beyond anyone’s expectations, he had surpassed them in every way. But the fact remained, he was still a kid. Peter might not care about that fact but to everyone else it still mattered. There was no going around that. That was probably the main obstacle.

“Sam.” Steve reprimanded him on his volume, once the man stood down he sighed “Tony is right and wrong. It’s not like Peter to let his emotions overwhelm him.” Steve said reasonably. He might not have any right to talk (he felt like he didn’t have the right to talk) but he was still the leader of this team.

“Ever think that maybe that’s what he wants you to think?” Sam asked rhetorically, Steve wasn’t sure if he was joking or not for a second. He wasn’t. “it’s a fucking defense mechanism. He usually has a break in between seeing us but now that he’s just constantly dealing with us his emotions build-up and he has no viable outlet. That’s why he has the bat, it’s a physical representation of dealing with all these new things.” Sam said and made a wide gesture as if he just dropped the mic. He kind of did, that was a very therapeutic way to put it (sometimes he forgets Sam is an actual therapist, given that he has to deal with the same shit they did now).

“Did you just Psychoanalyse my kid, Wilson?” Bucky asked with a raised brow. Sam huffed proudly.

“Hell yeah, I did. It took one and a half fucking years and I finally did it.” Sam said proudly. Bucky and Natasha rolled him their eyes and Steve held back the urge to applaud. That was a big feat.

“So him snapping at us and running is…” Steve started, as he slowly put the pieces together.

“On mostly you, but also his pent up emotions that he apparently suppressed,” Tony said with a shrug, immediately getting it like he was one step ahead of them. He always was. “who knew that actions have consequences? Learn something new every day, Cap.” He drawled sarcastically, Steve surprises the urge to scold him.

“Buck...I’m sorry.” Steve turned to his friend. He was genuine, Bucky knew that. He was honestly sorry, but he also knew sorry wasn’t enough. Sorry, wouldn’t bring Peter back. It was an empty word that he wished had meaning. The look his best friend gave him was heartbreaking.
“I just got him, Steve.” He said in a sad tone, his eyes were guarded and they never were guarded with Steve before “and you’ve had a lot of chances with him, I know you have. You should know better by now.” Bucky said and Steve was right. Parker has given him -all of them actually- plenty of chances to fix what he did and he should know that the kid was already under a lot of stress, even before. He shouldn’t have been adding to it and expecting another chance.

He royally screwed up.

OoOoO

Getting Abby Keener to listen was too easy.

Unlike her brother who was a free spirit, Abby just did whatever she was told with stiff movements and monotones mumbles. Then again, it had only been 43 minutes since he had met her, she was probably still in shock and all that fun stuff that made it seem like you were kind of on drugs but not having a good time (Peter knew the feeling well). Still, though, he expected her to be more...lively? Apprehensive? He kind of expected her to run away (he kind of wanted her to run just so he could chase her down to stall the inevitable).

Peter only had to pick her up and take her out and onto a roof. He called the police as the girl shivered in the giant oversized T-shirt but ultimately didn’t move from the spot he had placed her. When that was done, he turned back to the girl and told her he was going to change. He went behind a vent into torn skinny jeans and a greasy T-shirt that went to his elbows and exposed the scars on his forearms. He went over to where the girl hadn’t even turned around and gently placed a hand on her shoulder. She flinched violently while turning 180 degrees as he took a step back. He then extended the hoodie and a pair of mostly clean boxers, that he was supposed to wear (he was still wearing boxers, just the same ones he had been wearing his Spidey suit) to the girl. It was a chilly night and he’d rather wear dirty boxers and be a little cold so she didn’t feel so exposed - she had already been through enough, he did his time. She put them on shakily, but he knew she wouldn’t accept his help.

All of this was done in silence and Peter took a minute to look over the girl properly.

So this was the scarcely mentioned Abby Keener. The supposed sister of Harley Keener, who had abandoned Harley (although probably not by choice) with their mother. She had greasy light brown hair that was overgrown and tangled. Her face was dirty, smeared with dry blood and dirt, but Peter could still tell she had the same nose and mouth as Harley. If she wasn’t covered in filth she would look like a normal 11-year-old - just a bit skinnier than an average one.
“Abby.” He said in a soft tone, trying the name on his tongue for the first time. He sat down with his back leaning against a warm vent heavily with one leg stretching out and the other bent, god he was so **exhausted**. She shifted in front of him a little, but didn’t move or sit “I’m not gonna hurt you.” He told her again. He knew she didn’t believe him, not entirely. He saw the look in her eyes when he had first found her, those were the distrustful eyes that he had at the same age, although for different reasons. “But you don’t know that yet.” He hummed in an indifferent tone. He sounded borderline insane, but then again he probably was.

“That’s what Ma said Carl would do.” She whispered after a moment and Peter cracked open a mildly curious eye. She bit her lip before continuing “He helped us and then he…” She started to cry softly again “I’ve got no one. I don’t have-“ Abby started to go into hysterics and Peter really didn’t have the energy to deal with any sort of raw emotion or dramatics right now.

“You got a brother.” He drawled. Her head snapped up, tears freezing in her wide brown eyes and **dammit** she still had innocence. That made things so much harder. Usually, he’d be relieved because innocence means that all hope wasn’t lost, but now it was just...tiring to try to keep it.

“How did you know that?” She asked in awe and a bit of fear, there was also a hint of demanding in her tone that reminded him of Harley a bit. He suppressed a smirk, cause that would be inappropriate right now (though he would tease both of them about this later if he wasn’t maimed and/or locked away forever never to see the light of day again by his own parents, that is).

“Because we’re...I know him.” Peter blushed a bit, but couldn’t find it in himself to be so bashful. Were they really friends? It was kinda an on and off relationship type thing. They’d have a deep talk, then a fun talk, then Peter would screw something up with Avengers and they wouldn’t talk and then Peter somehow managed to fix his screw up and they’d talk again and delve into the deepest secrets, and then Harley would screw up, and they’d not talk, and then the problem would fix itself, and then they’d build something in the lab together and...well the process would repeat, and Peter isn’t sure how he’s not tired of it by now. “Harley Keener, right?” He said tiredly, even though he knew the answer. He leaned his head back and closed his eyes as he heard Abby nodded slowly (Special shout out to Matthew Murdock for teaching him to be so in tune with his extended senses! You're the best, man).

“How do you know him?” She asked suspiciously, eyes narrowing and he hummed but didn’t open his eyes.

“My boss adopted him.” He didn’t lie, he didn’t have the energy to lie and it was pointless anyway. “He didn’t talk about you often though, I just did my research after the fact.” He shrugged and her face fell a bit. Was he too blunt? He was usually better at comforting people.
“That makes sense.” She said in a defeated voice as her form slumped over a bit “Ma never wanted a boy.” She said in distaste, her nose scrunching in disgust. Peter looked at her for a moment. She didn’t agree with her mom about the decision to abandon Harley. To be fair, she probably had no control over the entire situation.

“What happened then? How did you end up where you were?” He asked, sitting up a bit and looking at her critically. “I can try to find your mother and-“ he was cut off by her monotoned voice.

“Ma’s dead.” She cut off in a tone a child shouldn’t be able to use. It was so blunt and emotionless. One would think she almost didn’t care. Peter knew better though, she was confused about it. She was her mom, yes, but she also abandoned her sibling and threw the kid to the wolves. Who knows what she did to Abby herself. “Carl killed her before he sold me.” She continued in the same tone. Peter breathes in.

Of course.

“Carl?” He asked maintaining a steady voice even though he felt shaken to his core. He always did when it was like this. No matter how many times it happened.

“Yeah, Ma’s boyfriend.” She informed in a slightly shaken tone. She’ll get better at hiding it. “or ex, I gander. They started datin’ last year in the beginning of the hot months. He was nice to us. Ma trusted him so I did too.” She said in a watery, regretful voice, Peter didn’t say anything so she could continue at her own pace and didn’t feel rushed. He had all the time in the world -hopefully “but then he ‘n Ma got into a fight. He got mad n’ … he-he k-k- killed Ma.” Her breathing hitched a bit “C-cut her clean across the throat w-with metal rope.” She said angrily. Twine. Peters mind supplies automatically, he doesn’t say it, he knew the exact technique that the man used because he sounded like an amateur. It wasn’t an impulse though. The man was planning on selling Abby, her mom too most likely. Her mom was probably defending them. “He-he t-took me and went n’ s-sold m-me on them-market. And then…” Abby started to sound hollow. She was getting progressively quieter and she was getting too far away. Peter had to pull her back before she was gone for god knows how long.

“When did that happen?” Peter prompted and it only took her out of the daze a little but enough for Peter not to worry - too much at least.

“Six months ago.” She told him in a quieter tone “not as long as the other kids.” She said like he didn’t already know. It was almost like a sucker punch because he’d be nearly done whipping this mess up if he just got his fucking shit together “everything was… really bad b-but you get used to it, I guess.” She shrugged, her tone growing steadier but still wary. Yeah, you do get used to it, but never over it. He thought bitterly “I don’t remember much but feelin’ hurt… b-But then two weeks
ago the bad men started shootin’ up kids randomly, sayin’ things about getting rid of the evidence.” She muttered trying to figure it out, it didn't make sense to her, why would it? She probably hadn’t seen the sun in six months. It felt like a punch to the gut for Peter. Two weeks ago was the trial.

You could’ve saved them -her- if you just got your head out of your ass for one second. You could’ve saved them but now they’re dead. It’s all your fault.

“How did you…” he swallowed, almost afraid to ask. His voice was more shaken than he wanted it to be if she noticed she didn’t comment. “how did you survive?” He asked in a quiet tone. He didn’t need to know this, why had he asked that? Hadn’t he done enough to this girl? To those kids? He was just dragging up bad memories, for her. He didn’t want to know. This was a lose-lose question. It would just make him feel worse.

But you deserve that. You deserve to suffer. You aren’t good enough to feel anything else. It’s why those kids are dead. It’s why you ran away. It’s why your life is shit. You aren’t worth anything. You just mess everything up and can’t even clean up after yourself. You deserve to suffer for a lifetime. Death would be too merciful.

“I shot him.” her voice wobbled and then she sobbed and fell to her knees, hands covering her mouth “I killed him.” She said in a horrified tone, her eyes blown wide and scared. She wasn’t scared of him or the pedophiles that kept her. She was scared of herself. Scared of what she was capable of. Scared that she had taken a life.

He related too much to this kid.

“Hey,” he shifted a bit, an impulse to go comfort her and she flinched so he stopped “it’s fine.” He said in a not so reassuring but still firm tone.

“You don’t get it! I-I don’t even know… I just feel…” she shook her head and was still shaking, tears streaming through her dirt covered face, leaving light trails down her cheeks. “you don’t understand! You won’t understand! I feel like a monster!” She yelled furiously, gripping her knotted hair in frustration “how could a person do that to…” She started to break down as the rest of her sentence got cut into incoherency. He got what she was saying.

How can a person do that and not feel anything?
“Hey…” He said because he knew exactly how she felt. He knew this feeling, even if he didn’t know how to cope with it, he understood her and maybe that would be enough for her right now - until she could get proper help at least “your 11, right?” That was rhetorical, he knew how old she was. She nodded faintly, it served as a confirmation that she could still hear him “well I first killed at 5.” He said nonchalantly and she looked at him through her tears but said nothing, her sobs stopped but her breath hitched occasionally. He didn’t look her in the eye, but instead to the scene of the city behind her. It all seemed so far away “unlike you, I did it because someone told me it was the right thing to do.” He told her in a tone of disinterest. He used to feel like nothing when he did it, but then as he grew up he started to feel like a monster, killer, murderer. Over time, he had accepted it. It was a part of who he was.

But it wasn’t apart of who Abby was. Abby wasn’t a killer. Abby was a victim, who did what she had to do to survive.

“But it’s not right.” Abby insisted through her tears. She was better than him. He had accepted that people die eventually and sometimes other people are the cause of that. There were no good or bad guys in this world, just... people. The most complex and yet simple-minded beings on this earth. Fueled by greed and desperation. They were all the same, no one was above anyone else, not really.

“No, you’re not.” He drawled in an uninterested tone “you’re not because you didn’t want to do it.” He insisted in a quieter voice, she had heard. For a while, he just heard sirens and her soft hiccuping sobs.

“D-did you-you w-want t-ta do it?” She asked in a shaking voice after a minute. Peter didn’t know.

“I don’t know. I just did it.” He shrugged. He didn’t like killing people. He also didn’t hate it. He still did it. Just less and on his own terms. He didn’t know if that was worse than being ordered to kill someone though.

“People who can take other people’s lives are bad people.” She said quietly. Peter looked at her as she hung her head in shame and he sighed. Was he this dramatic at 11? He had a feeling everyone he used to know would say yes, but Peter could stay in denial about that for a bit longer.

“Well, am I a bad person?” He asked lightly. He didn’t need to know the answer. It didn’t really matter if he was good or bad. He wasn’t a hero and he wasn’t a villain. He hurt people to help others. That was his job description in a nutshell. No matter how anyone cut it, that’s all it boiled down to.
“...I don’t know yet.” She whispered and okay, fair. He was a random stranger in a mask that plucked her up from a hell that she had lived in for half a year and swung her onto a random roof to talk to her and give her oversized clothes at like 2 in the morning.

“Fair.” He breathes out a tired laugh. “But you know how I know you’re not a bad person?” He asked and she shook her head “because you are feeling the way you are.” He said and there was another pause. He looked her in the eye and she stared for a minute before turning her eyes down.

“I don’t like the way I feel.” She admitted softly, almost unheard with the wind taking her words with it.

_Me too._

OoOoO

He felt like he had failed.

This kid was here trying to get adjusted to something he knew nothing about, all for his parents to finally be with him. He had been put into crappy situations and had learned certain things from them. He had to essentially throw out every instinct he had to make this work and he was _trying_. Or at least, he seemed like he was. Just being here was probably a struggle for him, much less living with the people who tormented him for the past year and a half.

Clint didn’t even want to imagine how Natasha was feeling right now.

Technically, he hadn’t done anything, but that’s just the thing _he hadn’t done anything_. He was just sitting ideally by while the kid had a tsunami of stress pour over him the past week. Clint didn’t really know how he would’ve handled Peter if he were to do something though. It would probably end up like Cap if he had tried to help.

The kid had gone out for patrols before dinner and came back by breakfast end. He’d only eat lunch like he usually would with Bruce and Tony, he hadn’t stopped going to the lab and it was probably good for him to have something familiar. Clint would have invited him for some sort of meal or something. But he just didn’t want to seem like a try-hard. Maybe that wouldn’t have been so bad. At least he wouldn’t feel so useless.
“I’m sorry.” He apologized to Natasha when she had come into the common kitchen. It was only the two of them now, everyone had gone to bed to not sleep because even without being here Peter was keeping them up. Amazing how that kid made an impact so fast and he wasn’t even present for most of the time.

“It’s more Rogers fault.” Natasha shrugged, not getting what he meant. She hid it well, but it was only the two of them and he could see that she was rattled and distraught about this. They were like siblings, Natasha trusted him with her life and he trusted him with his. Not just literally, in all aspects. His family, his missions, his job. Everything. She trusted him with her secrets and emotions. And he felt like he betrayed her in taking away one of the things she loved the most. “We’ll figure it out.” She said in a bland tone and Clint sighed.

“No, I mean I’m sorry I didn’t do anything.” Clint said she cocked her head, she wasn’t one for reassurance “You know all my kids. Like personally. Gotten them a present on every one of their birthdays, never forgot a recital, you didn’t even let Cooper get bullied for more than a day because you caught it before I did.” He said in a borderline frustrated tone and Natasha adopted a solemn look, she knew where this conversation was headed “but I don’t know anything about yours. He’s smart and a good fighter but I don’t even know his birthday.” Clint said guiltily and Natasha smirked a bit.

“To be fair, neither does he.” Natasha drawled with a knowing look in her eye and Clint gave her a deadpanned look.

“Have you told him that?” He asked blandly and she shrugged noncommittally.

“He doesn’t really care. I mean it’s not a big deal.” She said with a shrug and then looked unsure for a split second “or is it?” She asked a bit self consciously. Clint held back a smirk.

“Nah, I don’t think Parker cares much for his birthday. But you know what I mean.” He said getting back on the topic quickly, she usually appreciated that when she was doubting herself. She adopted a stony face.

“Okay, but Clint I don’t know him well either.” She said slowly “I met your kids at a young age. You can’t compare Peter to them, he wasn’t raised to be a trusting person.” Natasha reassured. “And he’s a teenager.” She tacked on to the end. And yeah, that was a valid reason if he had ever heard one.

“You know, he didn’t seem like an interesting kid before,” Clint admitted.
“But you’re wrong,” Natasha said back easily and he nodded.

“I was wrong.” Clint quirked his lips up “he’s actually a pretty interesting person. He knows about the structural architecture of the ventilation system.” Clint said and that sounded a bit lame now that he was saying it out loud. Was that the only personal thing he knew about that kid? To be fair, probably no one else knew that about him.

“You were spying on him weren’t you.” She quirked a brow. She didn’t sound accusing or offended. Just unimpressed.

“Irrelevant.” He waved off easily. It was always easy to talk to Natasha. And if it wasn’t, she made it easy.

“Out of all the things to know about my kid.” Natasha blew out a laugh and crossed her arms, slightly amused.

“Yeah, but I feel like I could do better at trying to get to know him.” Clint groaned. Natasha hummed.

“You didn’t do anything wrong ,” Natasha told him in a blunt tone.

“I didn’t do anything at all.” Clint gritted out and hung his hand as he pressed his palms into the table. Natasha merely shrugged before heading out of the room.

“Then do something.”

OoOoO

Wade kind of saw this coming.

Scratch that, he definitely saw this coming. He expected Parker to be in the apartment by day 3, he was actually mildly impressed that he had made it through a whole week.
Yes, he expected Peter to break into his house to crash. But what he hadn’t expected was for him to half-asleep 11 year old girl and go straight to the bedroom to put her down and closed the door. Somehow, he wasn’t surprised though.

“What the fuck Parker?” He whispered through gritted teeth and Peter just shrugged him off to go to the living room.

“Don’t go in there.” He ordered breezily, brushing him off. Wade was slightly irritated They saved kids, yes, but they never brought them home.

“Goddamit Parker.” He grumbled But didn’t ask anything, because Peter didn’t seem like he was in any mood for questions. Wade trusted him enough to not ask. He sighed and followed the kid into the living room and sat on the couch.

So that’s how he found himself watching Spiderman pacing back and forth in His living room at 4:35 in the morning.

“I think I screwed up.” Peter breathes in and out too quickly for Wade’s liking. Yeah, no duh. Why else would he be here?

“What gave it away? The fact that you ran away from a fight? Or the kid sleeping in the other room.” Wade drawled, picking at his nails and usually that works and Peter would just laugh or just roll his eyes. Not this time. He groaned and clutches his hair in his hands in frustration and continued to pace quicker.

“Fuck.” He cursed.

“That sums this up beautifully.” Wade said with a slightly amused tone. Peter shot him a quick glare. No one appreciated his craft anymore. “So you finally decided to get real, and now that you’ve lived the cushy life you can’t handle the job anymore. Quit while you’re ahead kid.” He shrugged and Peter stopped for a second and slowly turned to him.

“I’ve only been gone a week.” He quirked his brow. Wade wanted to laugh.
“Yeah, but a week ago, you wouldn’t have brought a kid into my home.” Wade said in a knowing tone and Peter looked like he could kill him. Damn, the kid was stressed.

“This is different. That’s Harley Keener’s fucking sister.” Peter nearly spat and okay… Uhm shit.

“Fuck.” It really did sum it up the best. Clean, concise. To the point. Peter really knew how to describe a word.

“Exactly.” Peter sighed and fell back onto the floor staring up at the ceiling. “And I have to take her back to the tower.” He mumbled and put his hand over his face. *Okay, fuck.*

“Okay, you swing by all the time.” Wade knew it wasn’t that simple. It was way more complicated. Because this was Peter fucking Parker. Nothing was ever simple with this kid(Oh wait, we summed that up last chapter. Idiot, get with the program).

“I can’t just *swing by.*” Peter groaned “I don’t get another chance at this. This could be.. I couldn’t screw this up. This is the only chance I’ve family that isn’t *that* screwed up and I couldn’t make mistakes and-“ Peter was freaking out. “You and Matt told me not to rush it and I did and-“ He was near a panic and it was too fucking early in the morning to deal with this (he wasn’t even going to sleep in his own bed apparently). Wade’s blunt voice cut through the ramble.

“If you couldn’t mess up, then it just sounds like all the other shit families you used to have.” Wade said dully and Peter paused and looked at him with wide eyes from the floor. Ones that needed guidance and reminded Wade that *shit* this was a kid he was talking to. What kind of motherfucker gave this kid a shit life? He’d gladly kick their ass.

“It’s just...” Peter mumbled and looked away “so different. The tower and the Avengers...I just felt...out of place I guess..” Peter said and buried into the hoodie he had stolen in shame. Wade hates how the kid used the past tense. As if this was over. It wasn’t. He wasn’t just gonna fuck off the face of the earth because he pissed some people off. That’s not what Peter Parker does. Goddamn, these people really screwed him up bad. Was this what it was like to have and lose hope? If so, He is sure as hell glad he’s got none left.

Wade had thought giving those tapes to the Avengers would make it easier for Peter to assimilate. Figure out the puzzle, or put it together better at least. Wade looked at Peter for a whole second before it clicked for him.
“Just wait a damn second.” He said storming through his house, ripping up every little junk drawer and closet hole until he found what he was looking for. Peter watched on curiously as Wade came back with a beaten up, cheaply made, only slightly ripped shark stuffed animal and held it out to Peter who’s eyes had gone wide instantly. It was a cheap stuffed toy, the fuzz was matted and it was a bit dirty. Peters eyes shone with innocence - Wade wasn’t even sure it was possible for the kid to have any left - as he looked into the black beads of the monstrosity’s eyes.

“Snips?” He whispered disbelievingly and touched the literal two dollar toy like it was the most precious thing on earth. Then Peter quickly snatched it out of his hands and glared at Wade “you were keeping him hostage!” He accused as he childishly hugged it too close to his chest.

“I did not!” Wade balked. God the kid could have more appreciation for the guy, he was trying to help. He looked at Peter as he held the shark so tight he didn’t think it was possible for him to ever let it go, then he thought about it for a minute. “I’m surprised you managed to function without that thing.” He grumbled, remembering the little eight year old boy who dragged the animal with him all around a fucking military base.

“Shut the fuck up, Snips is my best friend.” He snapped and started to struck the stalky fuzz. Wade rolls his eyes at the kids dramatics. He was the only one allowed to be so dramatic.

“You left your ‘best friend’ in the bottom of my future body closet.” Wade said back unamused. Why were they getting so heated about this? It wasn’t a big deal. It was just a toy. He didn’t even know why he kept that thing, it was literal trash. Peter glared And didn’t say anything until Wade did. “Why’s it so special to you anyway? You never used to let go of it I never understood why.” Wade asked, a long standing unasked question.

“I thought it was unspoken.” Peter said with a light glare toward the man, before continuing to look at the shark in wonder, just like when he was little. Wade felt a pang if something in his chest and didn’t like how it made him feel all warm. He hates how the kid can do that without even trying.

“I never asked before.” Wade prompted and Peter sighed, and took a second to formulate his thoughts.

“He’s ...like you remember that guy... you gave me this on our first undercover op after… at the aquarium in Paris..” he said as if Wade could forget. He’d never forget the kid staring down a fucking shark into doing his bidding.

“Oh yeah. The one where the shark ate the guy. We had to convince Cotnet you couldn’t speak to sharks for like a week.” Wade said as if just remembering. That had been one hell of a week, where
Peter spotlighted as Aqualad. It was actually kind of funny.

“He was a pain in the ass.” Peter grumbled, unsettled by the mention of his demons in the closet. Oops, Wade forgot that the kid had shot him through the skull.

“I blame the shark.” Wade shrugs. Peter looked at him with so much intensity that he physically almost fell off the couch.

“I will personally smash every plant you have if you ever put the blame on Snips.” He said darkly and Wade was appalled. The nerve of this child was untamed.

“You’re right. It was your fault because you shouldn’t have wondered into the unfinished Shark area anyway.” Wade easily diverted. Peter was more likely to blame himself anyway and Peter shrugged.

“I was curious.” Peter said innocently. Wade gave him a deadpanned look. He could see past the kids facade.

“Uh huh.” Wade hummed bemusedly and waved randomly. “Anyways, I have to go off. I don’t have any sentimental advice for you.” Peter smiles despite what he said. He walked over to the door “Don’t wreck my place.” He said unconcerned as he opened the door to leave. Peter smiled sincerely.

“Thank you Wade.” Peter said sincerely. Wade turned back to the kid hugging the animal close to his chest.

He thinks he knows why he kept that shark around after all.

OoOoO

Thor thought he had been doing okay.

Well not completely fine yet (he had only one decent conversation with the boy, and even still he does not know if it had went well. It had gotten a bit emotional on his part) but still getting the ball
rolling was a start. Right? And he He didn’t include himself in any of the orders or commands that were being given to young Parker in battle; but he couldn’t tell if that was part of why Parker had left or not. Son of Wilson had said it was because he wanted nothing to change, but that is what Thor was perplexed on.

They had treated him so awfully. Why wouldn’t he want anything to change? Did he want to be treated like a child who knew nothing about the dangers of this world? Did he want to be yelled at and humiliated? Did he want to be treated as dirt?

It made absolutely no sense to Thor, which is why he went to the one person who this all probably made sense to.

Banner.

It seemed like the most obvious choice to ask him (it always has been) since Stark could sometimes be a bit vague when giving an answer or just plain rude. But Banner was polite and patient and always explained things to Thor as many times as the rather daft god needed. Thor appreciates that.

Furthermore, the Hulk and Spiderman got along amazingly within battle (or so he witnessed) even before the Avengers would decide to change their ways toward the young (not) hero (he was still formulating a way to understand Peter’s opinion about his own status in society when he put on the mask). Spiderman used to stick (no pun intended...okay kind of intended) close to the Hulk in battles and the green beast always seemed to be less happy when the small spider wasn’t around for a fight. It was almost as if they were friends, they got along swimmingly.

So this was supposed to go better than what it had been so far.

“The Hulk and I don’t share a full mind.” Bruce said with a sigh, making Thor furrow his brow in question. He knew that, Banner was a genius, with 7 of those PhD thingys he never could use in battle (even though Hulk fought most of the physical battles). The Hulk...well he was more of a fuller light (not even able to speak in full sentences) “I mean yes, I retain his memories and I’m sure he gets mine somehow, or at least important ones, but we feel... very differently about the same things.” he explained a little bit irritated and exasperated, but that was the way Banner got when he talked about the Hulk (Thor only felt a little bad about asking him of this, but his curiosity won out among courtesy). “It’s like he has a whole new perspective.” he said.

“Yes, and what is his perspective of Peter leaving yesterday? Does he know what we’re trying to do or what’s going on currently.” Thor asked with a hopeful smile and Banner sighed again, he
seemed to be doing a lot of that, and Thor couldn’t help but feel a little like a nuisance.

“I’m not sure.” Bruce said with a wary look as Thor deflated a little. “But all I know is that he’s angry. We drove off possibly his only friend.” Bruce said in almost a sad tone. That made Thor furrow his brows a little more. What did Banner mean by ‘only friend’?

“Are the Avengers not his friends? We are a team.” Thor said with a bit of defense in his tone and Bruce sighed again. The Hulk was an amazing comrade yes, but only in arms he supposed. He was too dangerous to constantly be in society and the other Avengers did tend to stay away from him, but the beast did understand how much they appreciated him, no? He supposed that isolating him, even in arms, wasn’t a very amiable gesture, the only one who stayed intentionally close to him was...Spiderman…

Oh.

“Yes, but you tend to stay away from him in battle. Only interacting when necessary. He thinks of you as Teammates.” Bruce said but he sounded a little unsure of himself, saying what Thor was already thinking “But Spiderman tends to... migrate toward Hulk. Like They play smashing games together. I can tell he’s in a better mood after a battle with Peter than without. Less... angry.” Bruce said a bit sadly and also with a bit of awe. It was quite a feat, to calm the Hulk even a little. Make him feel something besides unending anger. Oh, what have they done to this pure sunshine child. He didn’t deserve any of the strife that had been dealt to him. Especially by the Avengers.

“He is a good soul.” Thor said solemnly. Bruce nodded in agreement. “Do you think he can control the Hulk?” Thor asked curiously, a tad off topic but still a valid question. Bruce looked stunned for a second, before contemplating about it.

“Well…” He said slowly, carefully choosing the right words “I think he holds Peter to a higher level of respect. so theoretically yes, I think that Peter could control the Hulk and tell him what to do.” Bruce said and then paused “But I don’t think he would.” he added in a quieter tone.

“Why do you say that?” Thor asked with a cock of his head. Bruce looked at him with oddly serious eyes.

“Because Peter wouldn’t order the Hulk around for anything” Bruce said a low tone “and I think the Hulk somehow knows that. That’s why the Hulk might listen if he did, because he’d only do it if it was really important.” Bruce said almost astonished, as if this was some great discovery. “Now that I think of it, Peter does that a lot.” He said in the same awed tone. Thor thought about it for a second before realizing it was true. Peter never said anything that suggested ordering unless he
deemed it strictly necessary (which he never did, at least not with the Avengers).

“Yes, he never requests or orders. I had assumed it was because he at least knew better than to defy or hold himself above a more experienced warrior,” admitted honestly and Bruce hummed “but now I have reason believe it is because he thinks he does not deserve to hold any authority.” Thor informed with a knitted brow, remembering what Peter had said to him on the flying carrier. He had said that he did not hold himself to the standard of which the Avengers held themselves, because he believed he would never achieve what they had (and that was partially their fault for putting silly notions like that into his head) “Which is prosperous.” Thor added incredulously, with a huff. He believed that Peter had far exceeded any expectation that had been previously given to him and likely any future opinions about him would be denied. He had a way of keeping them on their toes.

“That may be one reason, but I think another is that reason too.” Bruce notes with a thoughtful gesture and small smile “If he doesn’t say anything when it doesn’t matter that much all the time, when he finally says something, it’s like that is so much more meaningful than before. It amplifies almost the effect.” Bruce said almost astonished with a wide gesture. Thor nodded frantically in agreement, that’s what he was trying to say too, but he supposed that Banner only has half the information he does, for the good doctor did not have any presence in the conversation held previously with the boy.

Peter was really something to behold.

OoOoO

Sometimes Peter just didn’t want to move in the morning.

It wasn’t that he was feeling particularly down or negative. He never got much sleep, much less on a real bed (or soft surface). Not that he had gotten sleep last night but still. There was something peaceful about just laying in bed and thinking of nothing and everything at the same time. It was like time didn’t even exist in the moment, like it was going too quickly but slowly at the same time. But he couldn’t bring himself to care.

Peter stared up at Wade’s ceiling until the sun was well over the horizon, not sleeping a wink but at the same time he couldn’t remember what he was thinking about. He vaguely remembered listening to all the drips of the rusty sink pipes and the light slowly filtering in from the linen currents in the living room. He wasn’t thinking about his parents or Abby or anything. He was too spent from last night to care about much right now. His bed was clear but stuffy at the same time, it was weird and exactly what Peter was used to after having a meltdown.
He got no sleep at all, Wade had left to do a job what felt like a million years ago, and seconds at the same time. It was better that way, because Abby hadn’t really seen the scarred man the night before and Peter didn’t think she’d take too well to a big man that she didn’t know in close proximity (and to be completely honest Wade wasn’t the ...nicest looking man even if he wouldn’t hurt a hair on Abby’s head). Peter thinks Abby took a better liking to him because he was so skinny and unthreatening without his mask (which wasn’t so threatening in the first place, he wasn’t sure if designed it like that or not but right now he couldn’t careless).

He was a kid just like her. In more ways than he was comfortable with.

He sluggishly started to think about all the things he should’ve done and should still do. This past week has just been him with a choked feeling in his lungs that he couldn’t get out, even while on patrol. The notion of going back to the tower made it hard to breathe. The fact that he couldn’t escape or run away because he made a deal (that was stupid of him, but he was sure they’d kick him out within the first hour. Looks like he’s not the only one with tricks up his sleeve).

Well he had broken that deal. He ran away like the coward he was, and he didn’t even want to consider going back. Maybe he should stay off the grid, abandon Spiderman and New York and all his responsibilities here in America and go to Russia in that secluded country town that he told MJ and Ned he was from; the one that he didn’t know the name to and was fake. The one that he imagined to be a one street village and always covered in a soothing blanket of snow and a dreary grey sky hung over constantly with barley any sun peaking through the clouds. The one where everyone knew each other and the houses and shops were all made of wood. The one that was peaceful and quiet and he wished he had actually grown up in. It sounded too perfect to even exist, but he still wanted to run away to it so bad.

But then there was Abby. He hadn’t even been gone for 12 hours when he had found her and he already knew where he had to take her. Not to the police, because he knew where she belonged. Not to a friend, because he had none anymore. Not to Tennessee because she had no one there to take care of her.

He had to take her to her family.

And of course he knew exactly where they were.

And of course it was the one place he didn’t want to go right now.

The thing is, he couldn’t even be apprehensive about taking her, as much as he wanted to be. They had taken in Harley with such ease, he should know, he was sort of there. They’d accept and care
for Abby with, without a doubt, the best care and love in the world. Just like they had Harley.

Because she was normal.

But with him it was so much harder. He was not only their *real* kid (as in biologically, he thinks adoption is just as valid) but a soldier as well. He was a coworker long before he was a kid to them. He was just an ally that they begrudgingly let in only to help them.

This is why Peter hates labels. They categorized a complex individual. No one label was perfect for any person. It tagged them with characteristics that weren’t completely accurate and simplified a reason for them to have it.

They had treated him like shit before they needed him to live with them. He was different because their relationship was a mess that was so big they couldn’t hope to clean up.

He didn’t want to go crawling back, especially not so soon. He needed more time to think and formulate a plan, but everything was just coming at him too fast. He couldn’t keep Abby from her family for that long, not after she had lost everything like she had. Not free he’d given her hope that she could go back to a somewhat normal life with her brother. He couldn’t leave her at the doorstep with no explanation, it wasn’t right. He had to be with her, be a support for just in case reasons. Peter wouldn’t be able to just leave her without knowing she was safe, even if logically he knew she was the most safe with avengers. He was too paranoid for that.

He had to go back for Abby.

But he couldn’t go because of his own stupid reasons.

He couldn’t handle confrontation right now, for running away and not listening to orders. For ditching the Avengers in the middle of a fucking battle (it’s never gotten that bad before). Everything was just too much, and he couldn’t explain that to them. He couldn’t explain that he had jumped into this too fast with no rel plan from the beginning because he was *tired* of running away from this. He was too tired to even think about it.

But he had to go.

Even if he still felt like he couldn’t breathe.
The boy in the Spider mask was odd, in Abby’s opinion.

Abby didn’t trust him that much, but she also didn’t not trust him. He seemed tired most of the time, and often was staring off into something, as if he was too deep in his own thoughts to hear the outside world. His thoughts were too loud and seemed to be screaming at him. She didn’t know much about him, but somehow she related to him well. It was weird, but somehow she knew that he knew what she was going through. She couldn’t explain it in words, but she thinks he understands (even if neither she nor he ever mentioned it).

They had some sort of connection.

Abby woke up at 12:26 am. It was to be expected that the girl would sleep in a bit because she probably hadn’t slept properly in like forever. It was okay, the teenager didn’t seem to sleep at all. It also seemed fine by him, because the teenager seemed to be in no rush (nd she wasn’t really sure what to think of that).

She got up groggily, slowly walking to the kitchen and the teenager raided the fridge for some toaster waffles and the tea he kept. It smelled like cinnamon and comforting and exactly like what Peter needed right now. He had put two waffles in the oven and pours a glass of orange juice as he waits for the tea to soak in an AC/DC ‘back in black’ mug.

He looked Abby briefly in the eye and gestured for her to sit down at the counter and she did so, keeping a wary eye on the boy as he moved about the kitchen at a sluggish pace but was still oddly aware of everything going on.

“I have to go out to run a few errands before I take you to your brother.” He lied. He didn’t seem to care that he was doing it, even as Abby narrowed her eyes into him, but he just went about waiting for the waffles to be done. The toaster beeped, signaling that the waffles were done. He put them both on a plate.

“What’s your name?” She asked him and he eyed her for a second, almost seeming a bit surprised.

“Sorry,” he laughed nervously. “I thought I had more manners than that. My name is Peter Parker.” He said, Abby noticed he said his last name slightly quieter, almost as if unsure. Interesting.
“Okay.” Abby replies as Peter put the toaster waffles and some almost expired orange juice in front of her. She looked at it for a second, not really processing what was in front of her. Of course she knew what it was, but it’s been so long since she ate anything other than unidentifiable slip and dog food. “Thank you.” She said quietly and he slid some off brand syrup toward her.

“It shouldn’t take too long.” Peter says and Abby can hear the disappointment in his voice when he says that. She can’t quite pinpoint what, but something was off about how he was handling this situation. It was like he wanted to take her somewhere (to her brother because he was still alive) but didn’t want to take her there either.

“Who’s house is this?” Abby asks unexpectedly. Peter nearly freezes. She knew it wasn’t his, it didn’t smell like Peter, it only faintly did. And he had used the window instead of the door. He may have broken into someone’s house, but she couldn’t find it in herself to panic about it. She had been panicking for six months straight and she was tired of it.

“A friends.” He says truthfully. Abby hummed around her waffles, taking note of Peter gently sipping his tea and keeping an eye on her, much like she was doing to him except much subtler.

“Where do you live then?” Abby asked with a curious tint in her tone. It was an innocent question, the type of question that Peter seemed a little less wary to answer. He shrugged noncommentaly.

“Here, another’s friends, on a bench, in a bar wherever really.” He nonchalantly. Not seeming to care about the response.

“So you’re homeless.” Abby said in a deadpan. Peter smirked a bit knowingly at her and sipped his tea.

“That would be my current status, yes.” He nodded wisely. She rolled her eyes at him. Then something popped into her mind: wasn’t Peter a kid too? He was a teenager, that meant he had to live with someone, he could just live no where. Right?

“But aren’t you a kid? Where’re your parents?” She asked then blinked and winced, that probably was insensitive. He was like her after all “they’re not alive aren’t they.” She said in a cautious, apologetic tone. Surprisingly, Peter bristled a bit. He seemed like a person who couldn’t be affected by anything, or at least that’s the impression Abby had originally got. She felt oddly bad about hitting a nerve, even if she didn’t know it was one.
“No, th-they’re alive...we’re just...taking a little break.” Peter tried to be Vague as he averted his eyes. Abby cocked her head to the side with questions sparkling in her narrowing eyes. Interesting.

“Taking a break?” She asked “from what?” She said as she watched Peter sip his tea to avoid the question, or at least delay the inevitable answer.

“Just...being a family.” Peter breathes out and looks into his mug. There was a flash of something across his eyes that seemed like regret or guilt “its kind of complicated.” He said sheepishly, rubbing the back of his head with a sweater pawed hand and giving an awkward and nervous smile.

“Sounds complicated, usually parents don’t let you do that.” She said as a light joke. She could sense that he wanted to drop the topic, it seemed like it could get emotional and Abby wasn’t sure if she was ready to help with that right now (she felt bad, but Peter seemed like he could handle himself). Peter smiled appreciatively and blew out a breath.

“Alright, finish those up. I’m gonna shower, you can shower after me and then we’ll go get you some real clothes.” He said quickly walking away, leaving his half finished mug of tea on the counter as he rushed off toward the bathroom, leaving Abby in relative silence and she finished her waffles to the rhythm of distant shower water.

It took another 45 minutes for them to finish getting ready and finally leaving the apartment. Peter had given Abby some of his old shorts that went down to the bottom of her knee and an old slightly ripped band t-shirt that went to her mid thigh. Abby wonders where he got them from, considering that this was his friends apartment and these were obviously children’s cloths. They looked like they’d fit Peter well, but she doesn’t think that these were in his backpack last night. Had he gone to a place to get cloths last night? No, or else he’d get better fitting cloths probably. Oh well, Abby shrugged it off and slipped some slides that Peter gave her on.

First place they went was the thrift store. It’s where Peter said he got all his clothes, even if Mr.Stark had offered him some other cloths.

“Who’s Mr.Stark?” Abby asked and Peter blinked at her like she was crazy.

“You don’t know who Tony Stark is?” He asked with a raised eyebrow and her eyes went wide for a second.
“Sorry! Of course I know who Tony Stark is… it’s just you don’t…” she bit her lip and Peter laughed lightly.

“I don’t seem like I would know him?” He asked with an amused tiny in his tone and she nodded nervously. “Yeah, I don’t seem like it I guess. But you know, your brother was adopted by him.” Abby swears he said it casually to throw her off.

“No way!” She said in disbelief and he tapped his nose and threw her another t-shirt with a weird pun on it. She rolled her eyes and grabbed a pastel piece of clothing.

They got Abby some better fitting clothes. She was underweight as hell, but that was to be expected. Peter said that Stark and Pepper would get her back up to an acceptable weight in time. These were just so she had at least something, in case things got too hectic to get her clothes right away. And she kinda needed real shoes anyways. He didn’t make her get those at a thrift store though, he did go to an actual shoe store. It relieved her that he had some standards (she was kind of worried considering the pieces of material that were taped together to form something that vaguely resembled a shoe on his foot).

Abby was now wearing an pastel green shirt with some white cargo pants and light pink converse. She looked like a normal kid, the clothes were only a little baggy, but Peter forgot how small children were to begin with. It was kind of cute how tiny the clothes were. He commented on it teasingly as they waited for their food to be ready at a cafe and she just glared at him but didn’t say anything about it. She was grateful that he was doing this for her, he could’ve just taken her in the clothes she’d been wearing yesterday, which was nothing.

She was starting to actually worry about her new home. What if they cast her out? After all they were rich and Stark was not only rich but he was a superhero. What if they didn’t deem her worthy to live with her brother? What if Harley didn’t want to live with her? What if Harley was mad at her and didn’t want to see her? Cast her out the same way their mother cast him out. Watched as Stark rejected her just as she had watched their own mothers reject him because of his gender. What if they thought she was disgusting? Dirty and used and just a broken tool that couldn’t ever be fixed. What if Stark was mad at her and sent her away? What if they put her on the streets? What if she was put back in the trafficking system? Would Peter allow that? Would he abandon her if they did? Peter didn’t seem like the type to do that. But what if she was wrong. Looks were deceiving after all, Carl had been nice the first few months; even more so Peter had abandoned his family. What kind of person ‘needs a break’ from their family. SHe got cousins and annoying siblings, but parents? And furthermore what kind of parent lets their child just leave? What kind of parent lets their child go into combat? Peter was clearly not stable, this entire situation should have tipped her off. What if he took her back to another trafficking ring?

“You good?” Peter asked with a raised brow from across the booth that they had ducked into. She only fidgeted with the hem of her shirt and bit her lip nervously, not looking up at him but seeing in
the corner of her eye that he was looking intently at her with a bit of concern on his mostly neutral face.

“What do you want?” She asked quietly, almost in a whisper and it took the teenager a second to get what she was saying. He blinked once and then sighed. He probably kind of saw this coming. Nothing she said seemed to catch him off guard that much. Maybe to a normal person they would, but he wasn’t exactly a *normal* person.

“Nothing from you.” He said to her honestly. Something about the answer had her look up with questions spelling in her eyes. She knew he saw them, but he had decided not to answer them so Abby huffed and said it verbally.

“Then what do you want?” She asked, not accusingly. Peter just shrugged and looked out the window.

“I dunno, depends I guess.” He said, if he was impressed by her awareness, he didn’t show it. He turned to her with an unreadable look in his eyes “What do you want?” He asked with mild interest. She shrugged.

“I don’t know. It’s hard to want something after so long of...” she trailed off and Peters eyes softened. She thought she wanted something in that place.

“Waiting?” He asked knowing that it was the answer and she nodded. A bed, better treatment, better food (read: actual food), her family, to see daylight again, to not be chained up, for everything to just stop. Her wants slowly changed, instead of a bed she wanted to sleep, instead of food she wanted to eat, instead of her family she wanted to just *get out*. “I get that.” He said casually. Now that she could sleep and eat, now that she had gotten *out*, she didn’t know what she wanted anymore. Her mind had been put into survival mode for so long she didn’t know what it was like to want anything else (and truthfully sometimes she hadn’t even wanted to survive).

“Were you like me?” Abby asked. She needed the tangible confirmation even though she already knew. She already knew that Peter understood, because Peter didn’t ask any stupid questions. He didn’t ask any questions, just let Abby do the asking, while he sought her approval on their next activity.

“It was a bit different for me, but yeah.” Peter said back with ease. Abby wondered how he managed it. Was he ever a mess of nerves like her? How did he stay so calm and level headed all the time? Abby was known for her passion on certain things. Could she ever be as tranquil and accepting as Peter was?
“I can tell.” She said simply instead of voicing all her questions that he knew she was silently asking.

“I know.” Peter responded back in a neutral tone. “I kind of hate it.” He said with a playful smile and she smiled warily back. See? He wasn’t all bland and disinterested. He wasn’t all depressed and emo. He had a sense of humor, even after experiencing something like she had (even if they weren’t exactly the same). He had moved on - or at least that’s what it looked like. Abby couldn’t even fathom moving on from something as traumatic as this, she didn't think it was even possible. But evidently, it was. But did she really have the will power to do that? Was she as strong as Peter?

“It never gets better, does it?” Abby whispered, hoping he’d say no.

“No.” Peter said lowly, and she felt a huge wave of relief wash over her “it’s doesn’t.” he said in a quieter tone, almost to himself. Abby ignored it. She knew he hadn’t meant that last part for her.

“Am I...” She didn’t finish her sentence and tears welled in her eyes. She didn’t even know why, or what she was going to say. Broken? Shattered? No words described how she felt. Peter knew what she meant though.

“I don’t like saying broken, it’s a bit too dramatic for me.” Peter responded flippantly, she looked at him through tears. “But yeah, we are. I’m sorry, and it sucks that’s all I can say about it.” Peter said and looked a little apprehensive as if he wondered if that was a too harsh way to put it.

Abby took no offense to it though, and Peter looked at her for a minute. He looked at her and thought of the resilience she had. He thought of the help he’d never get or have. He thought of the support team that she didn’t know she had yet.

He’d look at her and knew she’d be okay.

OoOoO

Peter’s life was officially an entire fuck up.
It’s not even like god had abandoned him. No, god loved to fucking mess with him, like his misery was some sort of entertainment. This is why he didn’t believe in him/her/it/whatever-gender-god-fucking-was. Because they pulled this kind of bullshit on him.

Hadn’t he been spending that last -nearly- 24 hours freaking out over not having enough time? How this was too rushed for him to keep up. How he needed a plan. How he wasn’t ready for even the Avengers, nor was he ready for Abby. He wasn’t ready for confrontation.

So which motherfucker thought it’d be funny to put him in this goddamned situation:

So he’d gotten to Avengers tower when it turned dark, right. He couldn’t keep the already anxious, paranoid girl from her real (biological aka Harley K. Keener) family any longer without getting even more suspicious than she already was (probably, he thinks she’s warming up to him honestly).

So yeah, he walked into the tower and everyone was closing up for the night - or finishing that process. He slinked over towards the huge elevators, trying not to draw much attention, but then again he was already suspicious enough to Abby as it was (Saying Tony Stark will take you in no prob, was very unconvincing in that aspect. But he wasn’t lying. Stark would most likely - like 99.99 percent sure - take her in. And if he didn’t, Pepper would whack some sense into him and she’d get a home either way. And if that doesn’t work - and it might not because these plans were based on the hearts and souls of other people - he’d just run away with Abby himself and they’d both run away to that small town in Russia from his fairy tales. So he had a foolproof plan, simple). FRIDAY had let him in and obviously alerted the Avengers (even if she didn’t say it) he didn’t even need to be in the common room to know that. Abby looked anxious as they were riding up the elevators. Peter sideways glanced at her and sighed.

“Hey.” He nudged her a little, she flinched a bit, getting caught out her daze. He looked at her as she didn’t turn to him, ringing her clammy hands on her new(ish, not really) shirt. He wouldn’t tell her he was just as nervous as she was, but for completely different reasons. He couldn’t help but feel a mild tingle in the back of his head, but he figured his spider sense was alerting him that he wasn’t ready for confrontation (which he already knew, thank you very much), so he ignored that and tried to figure out what to say, but his mind kept drawing a blank. Oh well, he’ll just let them yell at him and embarrass him in front of Abby. He hoped plan A and B worked in that case.

“Are you sure this is where my brother lives?” Abby asked unsurly and Peter hummed in affirmation. He so desperately wanted to say no, and hit a floor below to swing out the window and never confront this situation. Abby would like Russia right? It was nice and cold there and you never sweated too much. You could always make a fire if it got too chilly and everybody would know each other in that village that was only in Peter’s imagination. She’d love it there. There was no intimidating cities, no bright lights, no big crowds. No strangers. He could teach her things they’d learn in school. It was much more appealing than confront responsibility. You know, just
until he was ready. A few years max. No one would find them and it would be peaceful.

“He lucked out.” Peter said instead and fake smiled a bit, but even that he couldn’t muster fully. Abby only nodded and shifted a bit, she hadn’t seen his fake happiness fail. He sighed, he knew he had to get her to calm down, because he wasn’t quite sure if he’d freak out upon seeing everyone “Hey, don’t worry. These people that he lives with, they are good people.” Peter said gently, making sure not to touch her, he stepped back a bit though, back leaning against the elevator’s metal interior casually.

“How would you know that?” Abby glared defensivly into the mirrored doors at him, not missing his carefully impassive eyes. Peter blew out a breath.

“Because they’re literal superheroes.” He mumbled and shrugged and before Abby could respond the door dinged open.

_Here they go..._

Now, Peter didn’t want to say that he was being dramatic, he wasn’t a very dramatic person to be completely honest (or at least in his opinion). But the scene that he found himself in was probably the most horrifying, shocking thing he’s ever had the chance of being apart of (and he’d fought zombie plants about a week ago).

Everyone looked to the elevator at once and everything just froze. The Avengers were scattered around the common room, finishing what seemed to be pizza (probably for dinner but it didn’t matter anymore since it was to be abandoned). Harley was in the kitchen and turned from the people he was talking to to stare at the elevator and promptly went white upon seeing the little girl in front of the spider teen. Abby looked at her brother with shock and fright, apprehensiveness clear in her features, she didn’t move towards or away from him though. She just stood in the same spot, zeroing in and never taking her eyes off him.

As much as he wanted to see the faithful reunion of the siblings, Peter was not looking at the duo, instead she was staring at the two figures in the kitchen, a big-boned phillipino boy and a tall girl with curly wild hair that were about his age, straight in the eye like a deer in headlights as they stared back with disbelieving ones.

_Of fucking course._
“Abby?” Harley choked out, cutting through the heavy tension in the air a little and the Avengers weren’t sure what reunion they should focus on. Their eyes were darting back and forth or was split between the two separate groups.

“Harley...” Abby nearly whispered with a cautious tone. Harley seemed speechless. Tony moved somewhere, as did Pepper (probably addressing that situation). Peter couldn’t help but not care, however, as he looked at his former friends and Abby looked up at him with a bit of concern as she was pulled away and Harley attention was diverted to him at his sister’s attention and then he glanced back as if realizing something.

Then something snapped in the air and there was movement Peter wasn’t ready for yet.

_He wasn't fucking ready for any of this bullshit yet._

“Peter?!”

Chapter End Notes

**UPDATE NOTICE- Sept. 20, 2019**

Fast and short chapter I know, but the next one is going to be longer I promise. It was supposed to be fast, and I don't know if explaining this dampens the affect, but I'll explain anyway (at least the best I can):
Okay so this was supposed to be fast paced because everything is supposed to crash and rush into Peter all at once. His parents, his friends, Abby, Spiderman, Everything is just a big trainwreck and he currently doesn't know how to solve the problems because he doesn't know which one he has to resolve first. Peter may be a genius, but he's still a kid and this kind of shows how he needs help (also it sets the Avengers up for an opportunity to help him :) ) I hope I didn't disappoint you, but the next chapter will be much slower, I promise.

Thank you so much! I love all of you!

Until next time <3
Try to Balance Life and my Sanity

Chapter Notes

So this is super duper early, wow. I had a lot of free time this week that I didn't expect.

This is like the second to last real chapter of this fic, because I have three parts to my epilogue that will hopefully clear the air, but man what a ride. I loved writing this chapter and literally was so excited to get y'all to see it. Hope you're all ready for it (you're definitely not, because I put in some twisty twists).

tw: mentions of child abuse and abandonment, mental health issues and there is a lot of crying that I held off for the next chapter owo

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 13-Try to balance life and my sanity

He’d been pacing for 4463 seconds in a janitor's closet before someone came in.

“You’re a mess.” Harley’s bland voice. That was the understatement of the year. His mind was on overdrive mode and doing a million things at once. He was freaking out about everything from the Avengers to Abby and now his friends that knew he was alive. His parents and to the mess he had to still clean up with the fallout of the trial (the Abby situation really reeled his head. It was a harsh reality check). He was thinking about he lab hours that he hadn’t clocked in (even though he hadn’t missed anything since when he left but it feels like forever ago since he had seen the Avengers). How much he owed Matt for the trial and -kinda- adoption papers. The fact that he abandoned a fucking battle (just like Thor said he would, goddamnit). He was thinking of all these things while simultaneously counting the seconds. If he had anymore energy he would think Harley’s tone vaguely reminded him of MJ. And yeah, he was now thinking about it.

“Correction: my life is a mess.” he mumbled hurriedly, trying to get out the response quickly so he could sort through his mind and make a fucking plan, but everything was too jumbled. Harley rolled his eyes as they followed his pacing path.

“Yeah, and you’re a mess.” he stated with a shrug and sat down and Peter couldn’t help but agree. Peter swerved to him and looked at him with a panicked look.

“Do you ever just wanna, I dunno, throw yourself out of a window?” Peter asked swinging his
hand in a broad motion and Harley snorted.

“Yeah, you do it all the time.” he said with his arms crossed. Peter blew out a breath and leaned back on the opposite wall to Harley

“Bad analogy, but you know what I mean.” Peter said as he slid down the wall, he was hyperventilating a little now. This was too much. First the Avengers thing, then the parents thing, then the mission thing, then the trial thing, then the Abby thing and now the ex-friends-that-you-kinda-ditched-for-a-year-and-half thing. And then all the little things in between. Yeah, Harley was right, he was a mess.

He didn’t even need the voices to tell him that.

“Yeah…” Harley said and he watched Peter breathe from the other end of the room with a look of mild concern. It stayed like that for a few more minutes.

“How’s Abby?” Peter finally choked out when the smell of cleaning supplies became less of a distraction and more of a problem, but didn’t lift his head from where it was resting on his knees and Harley’s face made an unreadable look.

“Pepper took her. She didn’t respond well to Tony…” he responded and that was kind of thing he was sort of expecting “or me.” Harley whispered, that came as more of a surprise, but not totally unexpected. Harley was bigger than Peter in height and muscle (even if Peter was stronger he was still malnourished making his body a weird mix of skin and bones with hard muscles lining his stomach and limbs. But hey, he still had abs -even if he couldn’t take off his shirt without people ogling the scars).

“That makes sense.” Peter huffed out a humorless laugh. “I only found her yesterday. She’s very stubborn.” Peter told him. *You shouldn’t have left her you coward. You ran away again.* He closed his eyes and breathed. In and out.

“Do you know what..?” Harley was hesitant to ask his question and Peter shook his head understanding. He wouldn’t give out Abby’s information. That was Abby’s story to tell when she was ready. They wouldn’t push her, he knew. She was different.

“Can’t tell you.” He said shortly, to tired to care about the phrasing. He was just tired in general. He hadn’t done anything particularly taxing, but all these events and changes that he knew were
gona happen was just happening too fast and stressing him out far too much. It was getting kind of hard to breathe. Was he hyperventilating? It didn’t feel like he was. He was panicking but this felt kinda different. It hurt more, like he’d been punched in the gut.

He had to deal with his parents and Avengers. Finish off the aftermath of the trial. Be Spiderman. Work in the lab with Bruce and Tony. Deal with this Abby situation. And now he had to figure out how to confront his friends that he had abandoned.

Disappearing in Russia suddenly seemed far more appealing.

“Parker!” Harley snapped in his face and Peter Whipped his head up, coughing with movement (coughing? Why was he cough?). He hadn’t noticed he was spacing out or breaking something or… what was he doing that got Harley so riled up? He looked around for any clue but his brain was too foggy to process anything in particular. Nothing stood out. “Shit.” He heard Harley mumble and the boy reached over him to grab a roll of paper towels from the supply cart next to him. He ripped out towels frantically and pushed it up into Peter’s face. Peter blinked before he sluggishly grabbed it and pulled it and Harley’s hand away to see blood.

“But… I’m not hurt…” he mumbled dumbly and Harley rolled his eyes and looked worried at the same time as he pushed his hand back onto Peter’s face. Peter shook his head to shake the boy off him.

“I think...you had an ulcer.” He sounded just as surprised as Peter was to hear it. For the amount of times Wade and Matt said that he’d give himself or them one, he could never actually imagine it.

“What?” He said dumbly, as if this wasn’t really real. His wide eyes met Harley’s and the other boy bit his lip, looking nervous. How could he possibly believe Harley, he didn’t feel any pain. That probably could be because he was in a haze when it had happened or was it still happening? How did ulcers work again? He vaguely remembers reading a medical book with an excerpt about it (he’d have to remedy that. After all, if this was gonna become a thing he had to research it so he could figure out a loophole).

“Are you deaf? You fucking spit out blood Parker.” Harley said again, this time a little more panicked that irritated or shocked.

“But I’m not hurt.” He said in a daze. He wasn’t high was he? He didn’t feel high, he felt horrible. Harley’s expression began to morph from an almost concerned to a more irritated one.
“Yes, you told me. But I’m starting to think that you’re lying.” Harley said in an irked tone. But Peter wasn’t lying. Was he? Wait what if he did actually get hurt. But he didn’t remember getting hurt.

“Possibly.” Peter hummed thoughtfully.

“Parker.” Harley groaned as he facepalmed “We need to take you to Bruce.” He said, going to stand up.

“No!” Peter blurted and dragged him back down as Harley made a surprised noise and crashed to the ground.

“What the fuck, Parker!” He yelped.

“I’m not ready yet!” Peter explained, Harley looked at him like he was crazy. He probably was. After all he just had an ulcer and elicited to not see a doctor (but since when does Peter need doctors? Psh, what a joke, it’s nothing he can’t fix in a public restroom ...err janitors closet. It’s called being resourceful).

“I don’t think you were ready when you started either.” Harley reminded warily, trying to disguise it behind a scoff. That’s true… . No! He wasn’t going out there. Not with all those confrontations he had to deal with.

“I don’t wanna!” Peter said in a tone that sounded more like a whine then a grumble. How pathetic did he look right about now? Probably a lot. Also childish, he was being very childish right now. Does he regress in years when he panics? That’s...both annoying and odd he should stop doing that.

“You need a doctor.” Harley insisted.

“I also need a therapist, and I still don’t have one of those.” Peter shot back with a serious glare that Harley probably didn’t take seriously because he rolled his eyes. “I’m not going out there.” Peter huffed and crossed his arms best he could in the awkward position he and Harley were on the floor.

“They’re gone.” Harley rolled his eyes and Peter swallowed, oh now he tasted the copper. That probably wasn’t a good sign, but it did ground him a bit more.
“How did they…” Peter said quietly, not really sure if he wanted to know the answer.

“MJ started to interrogate me. Ned was frozen for like a good 5 minutes before he said ‘fuck’ and walked out.” Harley chuckled “I expected it to be the opposite way around.” He said honestly and Peter - his mind was still a bit foggy - couldn’t understand why. That sounded like exactly what they’d do.

“No.” Peter hummed “That sounds right.” he smiled fondly for a second, random images running through his mind before they left as quickly as they came “Did you know they were my friends before?” Peter quirked a brow toward Harley. He was sure Harley had told him about it before, he just was blanking right now.

“Yeah, I did. But I guess you’d know them better.” Harley shrugged and leaned back a bit so he could support himself with his arms “It took me a while to figure out you guys knew each other further than high school. That’s actually pretty cool dude.” he said gently but more thoughtful. Peter closed his eyes and leaned his head back against the wall.

“Yeah, they’re little shits sometimes though.” Peter grumbled, ignoring the small smile that threatened to sprout in his face “Insufferable.” He added in a fond huff.

“You still love em’. ” Harley stated blandly, a hint of teasing in his tone “I know you do, because you had this reaction.” He gesture to Peter quickly before re supporting himself.

“Then that means I care about a lot of other things too.” Peter scoffed. You do.

“You know what Parker? I think you do.” Harley said in a matter of fact tone. Peter cracked open and eye and raised a brow at him. “You care about more things than you want to. I heard Tony talking about it, Pepper too.” He mentioned lightly. Peter blinked for a second. He wanted to divert the conversation, it was getting too comforting for his liking.

What got a rep to keep? Yeah right, even if he had a reputation to keep, he probably threw it out the window long ago.

“Imagine calling your parents by their real names.” he mumbled instead and Harley looked at him insufferably.
“Peter, I’m serious.” he said in a slightly chastising tone and Peter smirked, he could take Harley seriously right now. He couldn’t take anything seriously anymore. His mind was still running at a million miles (or 1609344 kilometers in the rest of the world’s case) per hour but he now that something was out of him, he couldn’t be bothered with real life things right now “God, it’s at times like these that I think you really are younger than me.” Harley grumbled. Had he said that out loud? He doesn’t think he did.

“I am younger.” He says instead of asking if he said that stuff out loud. If Harley heard then whatever, as he mentioned he couldn’t be bothered right now.

“I forget that! You’ve been through so much and you carry it like, I dunno, Natasha and Steve and all the Avengers. Hell, you carry it better than them. You don’t act out, or cause a fuss or feel intitled or any of that shit. You just...move on. It’s so baffling how you can do that.” Harley said as if he just couldn’t grasp it. He sounded astonished and Peter raised a brow.

“It’s not hard.” Peter said with a shrug “I mean, I’ve had to do it for a while.” He said honestly. It was true, if he acted out or complained when he was younger (basically act his age), he’d be punished. He guessed when he finally was free it just stuck because that’s all he knew. It was that simple.

Nurture over nature at its finest, everybody.

“You’ve had to do it all your life.” Harley said warily again, but this time it sounded more sad, not quite pitying though, but it was toeing that line. Peter sighed before giving a dry chuckle.

“Am I that exposed?” he muttered sarcastically.

“No,” Harley leaned forward, serious look on his face “but you’re more exposed than what you’re used to being.” Harley said. “You just have to adapt. I’m not all that sure anyone can help you do that but you in the end.” Peter looked at the older boy for a second.

“When’d you become the wise one Keener?” Peter asked with a slightly crooked smile. Harley smirked down to himself.

“Since you became the idiot, Parker.”
It took longer than usual for Peter to fall into a new routine.

If it was like walking on eggshells before, it was like they were trying to avoid sand on a beach now. Peter hadn’t said anything to them, but to be fair it had only been about a day so far. He mostly hung around Abby, she didn’t even have to request his presence, Peter’s default seemed to be set to Abby (which Stark seemed grateful for, but wouldn’t say anything out loud).

Watching his boy talk in quiet tones to the small girl as they ate, watched videos together, played video games that he’d let her win, and read - doing normal kid stuff, he was pretty sure Peter broke out a colouring book at one point, even if Abby was 11. Abby only ate a quarter of her lunch on the first day, and Peter would reassure her she could save it for later before Steve even had the chance to speak up about it. He proceeded to death gore the man for his gaze lingering too long, which was making Abby seemingly paranoid (like he dared Captain America to defy him on it. To be fair, Steve didn’t and respected his boundaries).

He also far more present in the tower than he had been, but at the same time seemed to do an impeccable job of avoiding any unnecessary confrontation (so like all confrontation because they didn’t know how to say anything to him either). Like, he had actually gone to breakfast that morning, but only for Abby’s sake, and he had went on patrol briefly before returning back for dinner after his lab time (which Abby sat in on because Pepper was doing some important documents for the custody of the girl- not that anyone would reject Pepper Potts but it was still a lot of work) and went out again after the meal.

The sad part was, he wasn’t making an effort for the Avengers. He wasn’t here because of his parents and to make amends and try again. He was making an effort for Abby and Abby alone. Or at least that’s what it seemed like. Bucky knew- they all did actually - that if Peter had it his way, they wouldn’t see him for at least a month if not ever.

So sue him for being surprised when the kid was waiting at the ‘edge’ of their living room (he was standing just before the large grey, fluffy, ‘aesthetically pleasing’ rug ended) shifting his body weight after putting Abby to bed (he didn’t need to say that he was doing it because it was kind of a given). He was in a pair of forest green pajama pants that were a size too big and an oversized sweatshirt. His normal attire, he didn’t seem to have any clothes that fit him properly but Bucky assumes that was on purpose. He was also holding that god forsaken bat in a death grip but Bucky tried to ignore it best he could. He had a nervous look on his face, eyes darting everywhere but the soldier, and Bucky looked at him dumbly for a whole 39 seconds before he snapped out of it.
“Hey, дитя.” Bucky said softly and Peter stilled at the Russian nickname, seemingly taken off guard. Bucky internally cringed, should he not use nicknames. Was it too soon? Did Peter even remember his Russian? Shit.

“Uhm...could I...talk to you?” Peter asked hesitantly and Bucky tried to ignore the spike of his heart rate. What? Was he serious? What did he want to talk about.

“Yeah,” He said breathlessly, not believing this was happening and gestured for Peter to come sit, so he did, but in the opposite chair. He looked to be in deep thought, as if formulating his words weren’t as easy as they usually were, Bucky felt a bit more anxious as the seconds ticked by. Finally Peter just sighed, seemingly giving up tact.

“I had an ulcer yesterday.” He said in an unconcerned tone, glancing at his father briefly to see a reaction. Bucky immediately sat straight up. Looking at Peter for any indication of lies or injury. To his mild surprise he found neither, how could he? He hadn’t seen anything so far and he’d been watching Peter like a hawk every chance he got.

“Do you have a ...condition?” Bucky asked dumbly and Peter snorted. Was that really all he could come up with?

Come on Barnes, get it together.

“No.” Peter blew out a laugh that was clearly more forced than genuine. Trying to respell the severity of the situation “Well yeah, but it probably has nothing to do with it.” Peter rephrased with a shrug and Bucky wasn’t sure weather to be relieved or not “it was a stress ulcer.” Oh ...that was...he wasn’t sure how to feel about that. Worried would probably be the most expected reaction, but he couldn’t help feeling guilty. What did he do? Should he tell Natasha? Should he tell Bruce? Should he tell Sam? Was it serious? Was this normal for Peter? He seemed awfully calm about it. But if this was normal, he wouldn’t’ve noticed something right? Peter wouldn’t come to him if this was normal. What even was an ulcer? He knew it was bad, but like what happened when someone got one? Was it normal for kids to get them? Was it a mutant thing? He decided his best course of action was to get more information. Or at least tried.

You caused that.

“Do you get those often?” Bucky asked in a lower, hesitant tone, trying to block out the voice that was hissing at the back of his mind. Peter shook his head. Great.
“First time. Harley was with me. It happened in a janitor closet. I think it was triggered because of stress but also it probably was building up over my...uhm more concerning habits.” Peter said too casually, but there was still a bit of sheepishness in his voice. He still didn’t look at Bucky “I promised Harley I’d tell someone.” He shrugged trying to seem casual about this.

“And you chose me?” Bucky raised a brow, internally slapping himself (he thinks that it was called facepalming now). Really? Was he really questioning this? This was an opportunity to start making amends with his son (amends he wanted to make. Amends he practically begged for) and he was questioning it. No wonder Peter didn’t come to anyone for advice.

“You seemed like you’d make the least amount of noise about it.” Peter said and Bucky wasn’t sure whether to be offended or complimented.

“Oh…” Bucky couldn’t help but say. He had no words to this. “Uhm… I’m sorry?” Bucky asked and wanted to shoot himself there and then because that’s definitely not how he was supposed to respond.

“It wasn’t your fault, not completely.” Peter waved off and it was maybe an attempt at being reassuring but Bucky wasn’t quite sure.

“Do you uhm… wanna talk about it?” Bucky asked awkwardly and Peter looked bewildered for a moment.

“I am talking about it.” He said clearly confused. Bucky sighed.

“N-no I mean…” He stiffened and blew out a breath “like do you wanna talk about why?” Bucky asked and Peter studied for a second.

“You’re not gonna ask if I need a Doctor?” Peters voice was unreadable, his face gave nothing away and Bucky couldn’t tell if he was offended or not. He was probably more surprised.

“Do you want a Doctor?” Bucky questioned “because if you did you wouldn’t have come to me. At least that’s the assumption was under.” He said honestly and Peters lips quirked up for a second.

“I guess not” He laughed a bit, this time a little more genuine. Bucky has a ghost of a smile on his
own face as Peter took a moment longer to formulate his thoughts “I think...I think the breaking point was my Uhm… seeing my ...seeing my friends again.” Peter ducked his head in embarrassment and looked a tad ashamed. Like he didn’t deserve to call them his friends and oh, he wanted advice. This wasn’t a confession. Was this Peters attempt at making it better? Well he had to say, the kid wasn’t botching it at all, it was Bucky who was royally screwing up.

What the hell did he even know about MJ and Ned? He cursed himself for not paying more attention to them, goddammit. They were an essential part of Peter's life, he should’ve done more research on them. Natasha probably did, he’d consult her notes but he couldn’t do that right now. He had one shot at this and he was shooting in the dark.

“Well, why were you stressed about seeing them?” Bucky asked stupidly and Peter gave him a deadpanned look “okay, okay. Yeah, I get it. You wanted to protect them and that’s why you left. I sort of did the same thing for a bit.” That seemed to peak the boys interest.

“You did?” He asked with a raised brow. This was his chance.

“Yeah, it was a year or two ago.” He wasn’t sure if he should be telling Peter this, but it was his only chance “I felt unstable so I left so I wouldn’t hurt Steve or Tasha.” Bucky watched as Peter stiffened a little at the nickname (maybe the kid just had a thing against nicknames? Or maybe it was the way he had such casual familiarity with someone that he naturally uses a nickname in a serious conversation because it calms him down... Wow, that was oddly specific)“but then they dragged my ass back and gave me a truck load of lectures and took me to therapy and Wakanda to recover and I’m a little better now.” He summed up quickly, if he noticed that he’d rushed the teen didn’t mention it. Peter’s eyes went glassy.

“You felt better?” Peter asked in an almost far away voice, as if he were in a dream. Bucky could detect a tint of hope in it.

“Yeah.” He nodded, watching the boy carefully. “Not completely there yet though. But if you get help, it gets better.” Bucky said in a slightly suggestive tone. Peter got what he was trying to say - that he need to get help- but instead of agreeing the teenager seemed to deflate a little.

“What if you can’t get help?” He asked in a small voice. Bucky looked at him for a second before it clicked and he was gonna literally jump out that window, because who the fuck says that to a kid who’s been through what Peter has. Of course Peter knew he needed help, but he’s never been able to get it. And Bucky has just thrown in his face. What kind of a father - what kind of person - does that?
“We can help you Peter...you just gotta give us a chance.” Bucky said gently and Peter averted his eyes “Okay, another chance.” He chuckled nervously and Peter but his lip. Bucky felt anxiety build in his chest.

“I didn’t really give you a real shot to begin with.” Peter confesses in a mumble. Bucky looked at him with a questioning glance and Peter glances up guiltily for a second before gripping his bat a bit harder, knuckles turning white.

“But enough of a chance that we still screwed It up.” Bucky said back, he wouldn’t let Peter take the blame. Not for something that wasn’t his fault “this isn’t all on you-“ He was then whacked by a bat, and was caught completely off guard “What the fuck?” He flinched back in shock.

“Rules of the game.” Peter shrugged and Bucky glared at the bat that had somehow evaded his memory before. It had been so dormant that Bucky has forgotten about it completely.

“Where the fuck did that even come from?” Bucky grumbled as he rubbed his head and Peter just laughed good naturedly, but still a little strained and got up a little too quickly and went back to the edge of the rug before pausing.

“Thanks.” He turned his head a bit to Bucky could see half his expression “This Uhm...this really helped.” He smiled shyly and Bucky didn’t even know what he did. Didn’t he do something wrong? Oh, he most certainly had. He must have to get a swing of that menace of a bat, but even without it he knows he botched that entirely.

What exactly did he do right?

OoOoO

Pepper Potts did not expect to see Peter Parker at 12:47am.

Sure, he was being more of a presence around the tower, especially with Abby coming into their home. Pepper wasn’t stupid, she could put together the pieces of some of what happened, and she knew better than to ask Abby certain questions.

The facts she knew were that Peter had run away and came back a little under 24 hours later with a malnourished and skittish 11 year old that looked exactly like Harley Keener. That's where she
deducted that Peter had come back with a traumatized Abby Keener.

Pepper was well aware of what Peter did at night. It wasn’t as simple as saving kittens from trees, when the moon came out, Peter dealt with the darker parts of New York. That’s how Pepper deducted that Abby was an orphan who need a home and therapy.

Peter was there to fill in all the gaps and for that she was immensely grateful. Especially with her getting more paperwork done for Abby’s guardianship situation (she didn’t even need to consult Tony, this was a dead given). She had been busier, but with the worst of that monster done, now she could focus on the more personal problems that came with adopting a traumatized kid.

She forgot there were a multitude of them for a second, but then again she hadn’t slept since Abby had arrived 2 days ago.

The teenager was poised to knock on her door when she had exited the elevator to their floor. He whirled around to her upon hearing the ding with wide eyes.

“S-sorry.” He stuttered nervously, blushing as if he’d been caught in a shameful act “FRIDAY said I could come in…” he mumbled and shifted as she waved it off and opened the door to lead him in. She sat down heavily with a sigh on the couch, closing her eyes briefly in a bit of peace before she cracked them open to see Peter awkwardly and patiently standing three steps into their mini apartment (and by their she meant her and Tony’s, Harley and Abby had their own rooms). She raised a brow and gestured for him to sit down on the couch in their very aesthetic ‘living room’.

Unlike Peter, Harley and Abby has their own room that wasn’t connected by a shared living room that their parents had. Pepper initially felt bad about it, but she thinks that Peter is easier to assimilate if he has something small that they can easily expand on if he wishes (but she doesn’t think he’d ask that of them. She doesn’t know Peter we’ll, but she does know that he doesn’t like asking for things. Tony called it a character trait, Pepper called it independence on steroids).

“How can I help you hon.” She said kindly, sitting opposite from him and watched as he wringed the fabric of his oversized sweatshirt in his hands nervously, eyes darting skittishly every which way. Sitting on the very edge of the chair, to make his escape, should he need it, easier.

“How can I help you hon.” She began, he was always polite with her. Always had a decent amount of respect toward adults - as far as she’s seen. She could never quite imagine him as the Avengers used to say he was. He just didn’t seem like the type of person to be obnoxiously rude or disrespectful or purposely disobedient. He looked like the epitome of innocence (even if she knew he wasn’t).
“It’s no problem.” She said easily “I’ve been meaning to thank you actually.” She huffed a laugh as Peter looked at her with questions in his eyes. God, this kid was adorably idiotic for how smart he was. “For Abby. Finding her and helping out with her. Especially when you have all those other things going on.” She decided to get the ball rolling and Peter blushed a bit. She was never one to beat around the bush.

“It was no problem.” He mumbled humbly, ducking his head a bit. “How is she doing, by the way?” He asked. Pepper blew out a breath.

“She’s...Adjusting” Pepper said honestly with a sigh “we all are. I mean first you moving in and then Abby. Not that it’s any trouble honey, but it does unpack a lot of emotions that we have to deal with. You understand that, I think.” Pepper said politely, Peter nodded and didn’t take offense to it. She was stating facts and she thinks he appreciates that more than any sort of empty comforts she could give him. He was a trouble to deal with but it was still a lot of work to sort through traumatic events. Especially the amount he has been through. The ideas and morals he had, his opinion and perspective, they all had to be accounted for and accepted. It took a lot of courage to initiate change in one’s lifestyle and it’s one of the reasons Pepper would be patient with not only him but Abby too. It was humbling to see these kids pick their way through progress, even if it had just started.

“Yes. Brings in a lot of issues too.” He lightly joked and Pepper sighed.

“Nothing we cant handle.” She shot back with a knowing smile and he smiled. “The guardianship papers are getting approved though, so that’s one part that’s out of the way.” Pepper said in a more relieved than happy tone.

“Now you got the hard part.” Peter reminds her. Pepper didn’t deter.

“We’ll manage.” She said coyly. Her confidence in her theories made him smile. “Whatever it takes.” She nodded.

“I’m glad she’ll be getting help.” He said with a shy smile, there was something more personal behind the words but it wasn’t Peppers place to analyze that “If you hit a snag in the paperwork, I can have Matt do something about it.” He told her, and Pepper smiled back, remembering the blind lawyer from a few weeks ago. Funny how that felt like an eternity ago and now it’s just barely been month since then.
“Thank you. I’ll keep that in mind.” Pepper said with a nod. Murdock was a good lawyer, but she’d rather not overuse him. He doesn’t think Peter would want to either “oh and good job with that court trial. You handled that PR well, I’ll have to consult you about that. Trade tactics.” She smirked, he had a sheepish smile now.

“Oh,” he blushed and brought his head between his shoulders “I usually am on the bad end of that, but can get my way around it when I need to.” He shrugged, trying not to make a big deal about it. “In the end, it wasn’t for me anyways. Those kids deserve to be with their families. Abby got caught up in the fallout and I was too caught up with other things to deal with that. I wish I could’ve found her sooner but I’m glad she has you now.” Peter said honestly. Pepper felt humbled. For an untrusting person to trust her with this was almost an honor. She didn’t know when Peter Parker had become one of her priorities much less an inspiration, but she didn’t mind it at all.

“Thank you. I won’t let you down.” She reassured with a firm nod and he did the same.

“I know.” He said easily, as if there was no doubt in his mind. Then his eyes went a bit nervous “actually I came here to talk about... something else.” He said a little cautiously. Pepper gave him a curious look as he continued. “about your intern...Michelle Jones.” He said with a hopeful tint in his tone. Pepper almost smirked.

“Ah, yes Michelle.” She sat back with a knowing smile spreading across her face “but you have the pleasure of calling her ‘MJ’, no?” She asked rhetorically and Peter blushed and ducked.

“I’m sure my rights are revoked to that name.” He tried to joke, but there was something sad in his tone “but i think you have a right to it.” He smiled at her a little and she smiled fondly back.

“she’s very perceptive. Strong willed. Could take this company one day.” Pepper nodded with an approving nod. She knew how to control the room and manage any and every situation that Pepper has thrown at her. She could most definitely run a world changing company with ease with a little bit of cleaning up around the edges.

“And that’d be her step one.” Peter grumbled with a wistful smile he was trying to hide. Pepper wanted to laugh because yeah, it probably was. “I was wondering if you had...any advice on how to approach her?” Peter asked tentatively and Pepper blinked once, not quite understanding the question at first.

“Correct me if I’m wrong,” she started “but weren’t you her friend for over 8 years?” She asked innocently and Peter blushed a bit more.
“9 years...10 if you include this past year, which I don’t.” He mumbled and Pepper hummed. That was just solidifying her point.

“So you should know how to talk to her.” Pepper said firmly and Peter squirmed a bit.

“Yeah but...you know...she’s...” Peter trailed off uncertainty.

“MJ?” Pepper asked in an amused tone. Crossing her arms and legs and leaning back comfortably to watch Peter squirm a bit.

“Exactly.” He deflated in defeat.

“I’m sure you’ll figure it out.” Pepper reassured in a not unkind tone.

Peter, in some regards, was like Tony. Except without all the ego and alcohol (it’s what she loved about the kid. He was almost like the perfect version of Tony, smart, hard working and has a good heart). He’d find a way to make whatever he had done wrong right eventually.

He just needed to really think about it.

OoOoO

Bucky has no idea why he was even considering this.

Stark has hated his guts since day one and Bucky sort of hated his. Stark was rude, condescending and a know it all. Bucky found it ironic that he loved working with his dad (who was arguably just as, if not worse, bad as his son in all regards) but couldn’t stand even being in the same room as his son.

It might’ve been the guilt of -accidentally?- killing his parents, he wouldn’t admit to that though.
Stark was arrogant and egotistical but it was undeniable that he knew how to be a dad. The position was an unexpected one for him but still fit like a glove.

He took Harley in and the kid practically worshiped him. Whenever Harley was out of line he knew how to handle that. He knew how to give him affection and how to talk and comfort him.

He knew that he couldn’t compare Harley’s situation to Peters. It was so much different than it should be. But bottom line, they were both abandoned kids that Stark knew how to talk and connect to (as much as Bucky resented him for it, he could admit that the man was better with Petya than he’d ever be).

Stark obviously cared for his kid and he hoped that would be enough for him to help Bucky.

“How do you know you’re not screwing up?” Bucky asked out of the blue and Tony looked at him inquisitively, looking up from his coffee mug that he was pouring. They were both in the common room, just the two of them.

“You don’t.” He shrugged, despite having no context he knew what Bucky was talking about.

Bucky deflates a bit, that wasn’t the answer Bucky was looking for nor that was the one he didn’t want to hear.

“How do you...like discipline him?” Bucky asked and Tony raised a brow.

“A little over head there Barnes? Why would you want to discipline him?” Tony asked and Bucky sighed, he knows the timing wasn’t right to ask that question, but he wasn’t about to admit to Tony Stark that he’d botched his first real serious conversation with the kid.

“I mean he has the rules we agreed to, sure but don’t we have them too, right?” Bucky hater how he had asked that instead of stated it. He hated that he needed to ask Stark for help, but his options were limited - Peter didn’t trust a lot of people, why he even put the little faith he had in Stark was beyond him. Tony seemed to hum in thinking about this answer.

“I mean yeah, but usually rules are so your kids don’t get hurt or do anything dumb. But Peter is a bit different I guess.” Tony said he was trying to solve an equation.

“I know he’s different.” Bucky huffed. If the spandex and spider abilities didn’t give it away, then
his personality did. His son was an odd one. “But like I still want him to be safe.” Bucky said to the counter and he felt Tony’s gaze on him. “What do I-"

“Okay, let’s do it this way.” Stark obnoxiously cut him off, Bucky was a little irritated by his tone too. “Parker is way different from a regular kid. How? He’s smart as fuck, he’s a super powered individual, he’s Spiderman and he’s taken care of himself essentially forever. You don’t need to put many rules down, the only thing you really need to do is give him something he’s never had.” Tony shrugged as if it were a simple solution and Bucky knew what Tony was entailing, he just didn’t want to say it because that was cheesy and Tony Stark doesn't do cheesy.

Peter needed Parental love. But what if he screwed that up too.

“How do I do that?” Bucky asked and Tony shrugged. “Well how did you do it?” He asked a bit irked. Tony didn’t mind it.

“I dunno I just did it.” Tony shrugged. Before inspecting him, as if trying to figure out if he should say the next thing. “If I’m gonna be completly honest,” he started slowly “I always feel like I’m a shit dad.” He said and leaned on the counter sipping his mug and looking away from Bucky “Theoretically I should be, but hey he hasn’t died yet. He doesn’t seem to hate me. I’m fine with that.” Tony shrugged “ but kids surprise and terrify you at the same time. I wanna be apart of his life but I don’t wanna mess him up. I don’t want him to become me but they hold all this admiration for you.” Tony made a suffocating gesture. Yeah, that sounded terrifying. He didn’t want Peter to end up like him either.

“So how do you avoid it?” He asked cautiously. Tony blew out a breath.

“Don’t got a clue.” He said in clueless tone. Bucky watched him as he watched the younger Stark sip his mug.

“I gotta admit Stark, you’re good with my kid.” He said honestly. Tony looked at him with a raised brow.

“You better not be pushing him to me Barnes, or you will be kicked out.” Tony promised, Bucky believed him.

“Wouldn’t dream of it.” He said blandly “but I knew your dad before…” he watched as Tony stiffened before continuing “I don’t think he could do what you do.” He said in a softer tone. There
was silence for a bit, and Tony sniffed before sipping his coffee. He was sure Stark was gonna yell at him.

“Try your best, I guess.” He said instead and sipped at his mug instead of looking at Bucky “it’ll come to you when it happens, trust me.” He said in flippant reassurance.

“Thanks Stark.” He said sincerely with a small smile.

Maybe the man wasn’t all that bad after all.

OoOoO

This wasn’t creepy.

It looked creepy and to anyone who was walking by it would be considered suspicious. It wasn’t creepy though, it would be if it were anyone else but it wasn’t. So it wasn’t creepy.

*That’s what some doing something creepy would say.*

He shook his head, not even bothering with the voice in his head hissing insecurities at the back of his mind. He blew out a breath.

He had been standing outside on the fire escape on MJ’s building that opened directly into her room since sunset. She hadn’t come in yet, but she kept the blinds partially open so he could see into her room. It hadn’t changed much except for some books on the shelf and some other clutter and papers she must have collected at school in the year he’s been gone. But there was still sweatshirts and jackets (some of which were compiled of some of Ned and Harley’s and even some of his sweatshirts that he’d left with her on accident. It’s okay, he still had her Hershey Kiss sweatshirt -that was cut for a girl but he didn’t care it was soft- that Ned had gotten her when he went to Hershey park with his family when he was 11. He had gotten him a Red KitKat sweatshirt but had wrapped the gifts wrong and switched them. MJ and Peter just needed up exchanging the hoodies whenever they felt like it, so technically it was both of theirs. He saw the Red sweatshirt laying near the top meaning it was worn recently) piled up on the desk chair where she never sat. There was still a pile of books on her nightstand. Her laptop was still at the foot of her bed with the headphones plugged in.
It was mostly the same.

Mostly.

She had a few new jackets mixed in her hoodie pile (probably Harley’s). The titles of the books had changed (but they did every week) and she had added new stickers to her laptop (he knew that she hadn’t stuck the Reddit sticker on her laptop willingly).

She was MJ but she wouldn’t be the one he remembered. Not exactly anyway. He if he were being honest with himself, he wasn’t ready.

But ready or not, he had to do this. He had so many opportunities to just leave, she wasn’t even here. But he wasn’t running away from this. Not anymore.

Now the moon was high in the sky and the clouds and smog of the cities pollution were blocking out most of the stars - which he resented but okay whatever, that was just New York. That was when MJ entered her room, turning on lamps because she didn’t have an overhead light (neither did Peter, they bought the lamps together at a pawn shop when they were nine).

He waited a few minutes, watching MJ drop her bag near her bed and slip on a big hoodie from her pile - it was Neds Darth Vader one- and sitting in a crossed position on her bed to reach for a laptop and leaned down to unzip her bag and bring out a folder, notebook and pencil- probably her homework, it was a Thursday night.

That’s when he decided to knock.

She jumped a little at the unexpected noise and looked to the window as Peter sheepishly waved his hand which was covered mostly by the sleeve of his black hoodie that he had pulled over his head. It was chilly but he was warm enough.

Her face morphed into one of shock as She opened the window in almost a daze. Like she couldn’t believe what was happening. As soon as it was fully opened however, her face morphed back into her usual indifference. He smiled fondly to himself.

Classic MJ.
“You got quieter.” She commented blandly as she crawled out. They seemed to share a mind as they both moved to sit on the edge of the fire escape. Peter sat on the railing, his legs dangling off the ledge as he swung them lazily and MJ sat on one of the rusty stairs, looking at him through the gaps between the stairs. Her hood had gone up much like his as she stared intently at him, as if analyzing him. They’d fallen into their old routine so easily, Peter could almost pretend like he’d never left in the first place. Almost.

A normal person would say sorry right about now.

“I’m not apologizing.” He said instead, he had too many little things he wanted to apologize for. But he didn’t regret what he did. He needed to figure things out on his own for a while, and if that meant cutting off his friends then so be it. He’d just lost virtually over half his life, it seemed like the most logical reason at the time. Everyone had been dying around him at that time and he didn’t think he could afford to lose anyone else. He knew it was a silly notion but at the time it made things easier. It started with distancing and turned into flat out disappearing. He didn’t expect or mean for it to go this far or last this long.

It was ironic. He didn’t want to lose his friends and he lost them anyway.

“Good.” MJ said and Peter quirked a brow at her.

“You’re not mad?” He asked unsurprised and she shrugged.

“I was, then I figured it was pointless. You’d come back when you were ready.” She said and then smirked “you always do, Parker.” She said teasingly. Peter rolled his eyes at her and his gaze landed on the city scape stretch out in front of them.

“Yeah, whatever.” He conceded in a slight pout. She basked in her triumph for a bit before asking the next question in a serious tone.

“Were you ready?” She asked in a lower tone. Peter presses his lips in a thin line. It wasn’t funny though, she didn’t laugh (but then again MJ rarely laughed at anything but others misery). He heard her cock her head in confusion. “Did Harley not tell you?” He asked in almost a scoff. He was sure the other boy would. Peter had learned that the ‘mysterious’ part of Harley Keener was mostly just a front. He was really
bad at keeping secrets, especially his (but that’s probably because it was particularly rare and tempting to know his secrets).

“It’s not his information to tell.” MJ responded easily.

“He’s getting better at that then.” Peter said idly and didn’t elaborate.

“You were training him?” She snorts “no wonder he’s bad at it.” She said more to herself.

“I tricked you didn’t I?” He said and wondered if it was too soon to be joking about this. MJ scoffed.

“That an accomplishment?” She asked and Peter puffed his chest out.

“Yes, it is actually” He said proudly and MJ snorted. “You haven’t changed much.” He says under his breath with fond exasperation.

“Neither have you.” She responded without hesitating. And then looked at him a little closer “have you?” She asked suspiciously. Peter tried not to wilt under her gaze.

“Not much.” He said thoughtfully “still the same me, just my situation has changed...a lot.” He said with a shrug.

“What else is new?” She said sarcastically.

“It’s different this time.” Peter admitted, only letting his voice go a little quieter. MJ definitely noticed it but she didn’t mention it. Like usual.

“You’ll get through it.” She said as more of a statement than reassurance.

“Everyone always says that.” Peter grumbled a little put out. He’d think MJ of all people would be more original. He was as to say he was a bit disappointed.
“Yeah, maybe cuz’ it’s true, loser.” MJ said in a deadpan and Peter had to suppress a smile at the old nickname (even if it was unoriginal and made next to no sense considering the context she put it in when she first started to call him and Ned that).

“I should probably listen then.” He responded wistfully and she kicked him playfully and he laughed a bit as she rolled her eyes and smiled. There was then a stretch of silence for a long time. Funny, he’d think that they had a lot to catch up on. They still couldn’t say anything to each other.

They never had before. And they didn’t have to now. They just...understood each other’s silence.

It’s one thing he used to live about his relationship with MJ. He didn’t have to say anything and she’d somehow understand him anyway. And vis versa. It was like they had a mental link or something. He’s glad it didn’t break when he left.

“So,” She blew out a breath dispelling the silence that hung in the air “What have you been up to?” She asked uninterestedly and Peter didn’t even have to look at her.

“Ask me what you really want to know.” He said in a nearly disinterested voice. MJ wasn’t one to beat around the bush except for special situations. He hated those situations and now that she had, it was a wake up call. He’d left her and hadn’t planned on coming back. No matter how strong their friendship was, there was no ignoring that. You don’t just forget that.

“You’re Spiderman.” She said more than asked. Somehow he wasn’t surprised or panicked (well maybe a little panicked as a girl with blonde hair falling off of a clock tower flashed behind his eyes). She expected her to figure it out long before he left. He was surprised that she hadn’t actually.

“And how did you come to that eloquent conclusion?” Peter asked in mild interest. She hadn’t seen him in the suit and he doesn’t think she had time to talk to any of the Avengers or Harley about it.

“Are you confirming this?” She asked with mild interest. Oh, he was most definitely confirming this. He just used the word ‘eloquent’ unironically.

“I’m not denying it.” He answered vaguely and looked her directly in the eye with a smirk. Her eyes glittered with amusement and flickering, distant city lights. But then her eyes dulled and she furrowed her brows and looked away slightly, Peter was oddly disappointed.
“Is that why you left?” She said in a near whisper. She knew the answer. Peter stiffened and she peaked at his form through a sideways glance, mildly curious, somewhat concerned but mostly neutral.

“Gwen Stacy.” He said and it clicked together for her instantly “and Harry Osborn.” He chokes out more harshly. Her face dipped as an unreadable look came into her eye. Peter gave her a minute to process this new information. He could see out of the corner of his eye as the cogs turned in her head, mind quickly putting together the story and truth.

“How many people have said that it wasn’t your fault already?” MJ asked in a lower tone.

“You’d be the first.” Peter told her lightly, trying to remain nonchalant and somewhat failing. “That is, if you actually said it.” He looks at her and she scoffed. He doesn’t expect her to say it anyway.

“Would you even believe me, if I did?” She asked knowingly with a raised brow. He’d consider it, but it wasn’t true. He could lie to himself all he wanted, it would just be that. A lie.

*Your whole life is a lie.*

“Probably not.” He responded easily “because it *was* my fault.” He said in a quieter but still light tone. MJ rolled her eyes.

“Why her?” She asked in a curt tone and Peter cocked a head at her in confusion “why did you tell her first?” She elaborated. If he was someone else he’d wonder how MJ kept drawing such accurate conclusions out of nowhere but vague names weren’t nothing. They had a meaning and MJ understood that concept better than most. But MJ was smart and knew how to read him better than anyone else did. It was hard for him to hide most things from her.

“It wouldn't have been my *first* choice.” He answered honestly, nudging her “she found out and then we proceeded to use my blood for Harry’s cure.” He scrunched up his nose at the memory. He didn’t want to think about this. “It didn’t work.” He said bitterly. MJ snorted. She was never one for sympathy.

“Yeah, that ended beautifully.” She said sarcastically - again not one for sympathy, it had to be appreciated though “Their want for a cure was both their diseases. How poetic.” She mumbled.
Peter allowed his lips to quirk for just a second. *He missed this.*

“I’m not sorry I didn’t tell you.” He said “I’m not sorry I left.” He looked at her and she stared vacantly back “but I did miss you, Em.” He said genuinely looking her directly in the eye. She stared at him with an unreadable look for a few moments, too many emotions flashing behind her eyes too fast to identify any of them. She looked back out to the cityscape and so did he.

“I missed you too, Parker.”

OoOoO

Natasha felt like she wasn’t even parenting correctly.

Usually when your child runs away and then comes back, you hug and then scold them and then tell them that you love them and to never do that again.

There should be tears and babbled apologies. Hugs and kisses and love. Happiness, relief and scared all running through your veins at the same time as you want to keep your child close and safe in your arms for forever and never let them go. You surround them with warmth and live so they’ll be safe right next you.

When Peter ran away and came back he hid in a closet for nearly three hours. To be fair, that was probably due to the fact that he didn’t expect to see his former friends (she would’ve warned him, except she didn’t know he was dropping by). Still, Natasha couldn’t help but feel like she wasn’t doing whatever she was supposed to be doing as a mother correctly.

There were no tears or hugs or kisses. Just curt nods and 1-3 word answers. They were waking on glass around each other and Natasha had yet to hear a full sentence from her son in a week.

And the worst part is, she knew Peter was going to run away. And not just this once. Peter was going to run away again. The break he had gotten wasn’t sufficient enough and he was bound to crack again sooner rather than later.

And Natasha, for the life of her, didn’t know how to stop it.
She couldn’t baby him, but she couldn’t be strict with him. Not too strict at least but she was trying to cut back a bit. Bucky has called it the ‘honeymoon’ phase, where everyone was nice and tiptoed around each other. Some honeymoon phase, huh. They’d lost their kid within the first week, that had to be some kind of record.

Natasha was not a good mother. She wasn’t cut out to be one, as much as she wanted to be. She knew that since before Petya was even conceived. She had told Bucky -or Krasnaya at the time- that it was a fantasy for them to have a fantasy. She was right and she was foolish to have hope in the first place.

How had she gotten this delusional?

She didn’t know how to cook anything more than some disgusting - but theoretically healthy - smoothies (according to Bruce she couldn’t even brew tea correctly except for some sort of raspberry spice tea, and that was supposed to taste bitter). She only knew how to do laundry in a vague sense of pushing the wash button and not make a mess because she was shit at cleaning (not that she even had to clean much, Stark had like robots for that since no one trusted maids with their highly lethal weapons and classified files lying everywhere).

Yes, Natasha was a shit house wife. She knew how to interrogate and torture someone until they spilled every last bit of information they had. She knew how to kill someone and leave no evidence or trace of their existence behind. She knew how to blend into any and every environment and she could play any part she so chose. But being genuinely domestic? Forget it.

That wasn’t who she was and she couldn’t pretend to be.

She didn’t know how to be genuinely caring or affectionate to another person like other people were (she had her own brand of affection that people just had to... get). She didn’t know what she had to teach her kid. She didn’t know what she could even offer to Peter that he couldn’t get anywhere else and probably better too. She didn’t know how to make eggs for breakfast or any other meal beside microwave dinners and take out. She didn’t know what Peter needed.

Hell, She didn’t even know why she went to Bruce for advice. Well, probably because he was the only one in the common room.

“How do you a spider mutant who’s raised himself his whole life?” She sighed into her coffee and Bruce looked at her in concern. She wasn’t sure if she was talking to him or not.
“You good Nat?” He asked, concern edging in his already gentle voice (it was boggling that this man turns into a literal monster when he’s mad).

“Am I in over my head?” She asked, ignoring his question, because no, she wasn’t okay. She was a fucking mess. When he didn’t answer she looked up, signaling that the question wasn’t rhetorical. “With Peter.” She added for clarification.

“How so?” He asked, knitting his brows in thought.

“I’m not…mother material.” She averted her eyes for a second before slowly rounding them back to Bruce “am I?” She asked and Bruce looked astonished for a second.

“Well, uhm…” Bruce stammered and Natasha sent him a glare that only dared him to lie to make her feel better. “No.” He sighed.

“Figures.” Natasha mumbled. She knew the answer, she expected that answer, hell she even wanted him to say just to confirm that she was right in her ‘genius hypothesis’. It still disappointed her to hear it though. “The one thing he wants I can’t be.” She grumbled self deprecatingly.

“No one asked you to be anyone else.” Bruce said quickly and Natasha looked at him with a leveled gaze “Sorry, But I don’t think Peter really... wants a mother.” Bruce said tentatively. Natasha raised a brow at him and he cleared his throat nervously. “I mean he doesn’t really seem too...familiar with the uhm.. ‘family’ type of dynamic.” Bruce clarifies in a squeak.

“‘Familiar ’?” She asked in a slightly amused tone and he groaned a bit in frustration.

“You know what I mean.” He said with a roll of his eyes. “He’s never been apart of like a real family.” Bruce explains and then seems like he wants to smack himself “I mean-“ he tries to correct himself.

“Yeah, I got that.” Natasha smirks with a fond roll of her eyes. Bruce sagged his shoulders in mostly irritation.

“Then why’d you ask.” He nearly whined. Natasha only allowed herself five seconds of amusement before switching back to her serious, impassive face.
“What do you think a ‘real family’ is like?” She asked in the same tone. Bruce breathes out a breath before answering.

“I dunno. Family dinners?” He asked more than answered.

“We already do that. It’s not working well enough. It’s like he’s forced to be there and only for Abby.” Natasha said, dismissing it. It was working and she knew progress would be slow, they definitely weren’t hindering them, but they didn’t seem to make as big of an impact as she would’ve liked. She needed something subtle but defining.

“Going to baseball games?” The man tried. Natasha scoffed. Peter hates sports, he may be athletically inclined but not in the entertaining sort of way.

“He doesn’t even know what football is.” She snorted. Banner furrowed his brow. It was strange, she had to admit but she was sort of glad. She wasn’t particularly interested in that sort of stuff and Bucky would be if it hadn’t changed so much from his time. They were both glad that Peter liked to have a more scientific interests because that couldn’t change much from time to time and seemed much more useful in life.

“Family road trip?” He suggested. Natasha raised a brow at him. Peter hates small spaces, or at least being involuntarily stuck in one. They could barely keep him contained in a quinjet for missions.

“Do I even need to tell you how that can go wrong?” She asked and he huffed. She had a fucking list for it.

“Yeah, that’d be a disaster.” He sighed “Uhm… how about a movie night?” He asked one last time. Natasha was about to open her mouth to defy that but stopped and then perked up a bit.

“That’s…not bad.” She said mildly impressed “I know he likes old sci-fi and action films.” She said and started to think. He made so many old movie references in his quips and when he speaks and explains things. He loved action films and constantly slips old quotes from mostly Star Wars, Jurassic Park and some 80s movies. They could all watch a movie with blankets and popcorn and yes that might actually work.

“See. Being a mother isn’t that hard.” He smiled, reassuringly. Natasha’s head shot up in alert.
“I thought he didn’t want a mother.” Natasha snapped back to him with a wide eyed glare. Bruce faltered.

“But you want to be his mother.” He said in a slightly confused tone. She leaned forward with a narrow glare boring into the man.

“I am his mother.” She said and now Bruce looked boggled. God, she thought with 7 PhDs he’d be smarter. Disappointing really, but what did she expect? Not even she could wrap her mind around family dynamics.

“What-he’s-“ Bruce was cut off. She stopped him with a leveled gaze.

“He’s raised himself his whole life, Banner. How am I supposed to step in when he won’t listen to rules?” Natasha said more than asked, Bruce began to wilt a bit in defeat.

“He listens to rules if they’re reasonable.” Bruce said a bit weakly as he furrowed his brow. It didn’t convince her enough to believe it, come on Banner at least try.

“Yes, but he determines what is considered reasonable in his own mind.” Natasha pointed out. “That creates a loophole and he loves loopholes.” She pointed out, it was the first thing the boy had made known to any of them was that very fact.

“I’d agree with you under normal circumstances, but to be fair he’s a pretty reasonable kid. By any standards.” Bruce said to her in a matter of fact tone. It was true, Peter wouldn’t make any big decisions based on petty beliefs or quarrels. But he does seem to at least operate a little emotionally, if these past few weeks were anything to go by.

“Not by our standards.” Natasha emphasized “We always thought he was disobeying orders.” Natasha but her lip and Bruce pauses. She knows she’s given too much away.

“Is that what this is about?” He asked quietly. Natasha knew he knew the answer.

“Of course it is goddammit!” She slams her hands on the table palms down, making the doctor flinch back. Of course he noticed it before her, that’s probably what made her more irritated than
she would’ve been. “It’s the main reason he can’t trust us.” She grumbled, ducking her head so Bruce didn’t see her worrying lip tremble.

“No, he’s always had trust issues.” Bruce said slowly, carefully as to not set her off. She was about to anyway, she was pushed to the very brink and the slightest breeze could push her over the edge.

“We could’ve helped.” She said back and glared at the man “you can’t just stand there and honestly tell me that you don’t feel any guilt for what we did to him.” She spat out and Bruce pauses. Of course he felt guilt, Natasha knew that. But she was just so mad and frustrated and confused right now. She had to let it out and for some reason Bruce had become her outlet (probably not the wisest decision in the world, but hey he was here. Everyone else was dealing with their own shit about this right now).

“Nat…” He said slowly “you’re losing it.” He told her calmly and yeah, no shit she was losing it. Her kid - that she had been searching for for nearly 13 years - fucking hates her to the core and she couldn’t do anything about it. He was having fucking ulcers and couldn’t even be bothered to tell her about it himself. She had to get it from Bucky, who’d he been apparently comfortable to go to (and she knew she should be happy about that, she really did. She understood it was a breakthrough for their family. It was just the fact that she was apart of it in only a second hand sort of way. She didn’t get to have an opinion on it because it was a fact that she couldn’t change or do anything about it).

“Well what else am I supposed to do?” She sighed in the most helpless tone she ever remembers having.

Bruce didn’t have an answer for her this time.

OoOoO

Harley Keener was not surprised to see Peter Parker hanging out in his room.

Literally, hanging, as in upside down suspended from the goddamn ceiling, in the middle of the room on one of his webs reading a book about propaganda or something (he never noticed the similarities in taste he had with MJ before, Peter read books like that all the time. MJ always read similar books around the same time as he did. It was boggling that they didn’t have to talk to each other to do that).
“To what do I owe the pleasure?” He asked amused as he walked across his room. Though he wasn’t surprised, this was mildly unexpected. Peter never showed up in his room, he had some semblance of privacy that didn’t allow him to be anywhere where he was told he could be (even if he wasn’t told and it was more unspoken, he never went anywhere in the tower without permission). Peter didn’t put down his book as he answered.

“How’s Abby?” He asked and Harley blew out a breath. That was a broad question. Physically, she seemed to be doing great. Emotionally… well let’s just say she’s a bit…closed off (but that would be putting it very lightly).

“She’s...adjusting.” Harley admitted in slight defeat and Peter hummed seemingly unconcerned “I don’t suppose you have any advice about that.” He asked slightly hopeful. Peter clicked his tongue in thought.

“Nope.” Peter chirped unhelpfully, popping the ‘p’ and Harley groaned as he flopped back in his beanbag, throwing his backpack next to him on the ground and lolling his head back dramatically.

“Ugh, Seriously?” He said in an incredulous tone. He’d figure since Peter seemed so good with her, he’d have some tips on how to interact with her (but she’s his sister. Shouldn’t he already know this?) “Don’t you like, I dunno specialize in this sort of thing?” Harley asked. Peter has done this before, dealt with traumatized kids. Hell, he is a traumatized kid. He could relate to them, Harley couldn’t. Maybe that was the dividing factor.

“I don’t have a degree in it.” He scrunched his nose a bit in response.

“But you have a PhD.” Harley rolled his eyes. Peter glances up from his book to meet Harley’s eyes briefly.

“In Physics not Child Trauma.” Peter shot back before returning to his book and flipping a page. Harley rolled his eyes again.

“Whatever.” He grumbled and crossed his arms. He wasn’t looking at Peter but he could feel his gaze analyzing him from behind book that obscured his face.

“What happened?” Peter asked after a minute or two in almost a cautious tone. Harley sighed.
“Nothing.” He huffed a bit with Peters dubious gaze “literally nothing.” He said seriously with a wide gesture, “like she can barely say two words to me at the time, she avoids me like the plague, and every time I try to talk to her about anything she can’t even look me in the eye.” Harley listed a bit frustrated and blew out a loud breath “I know she’s been through a lot, and I know it hasn’t even been a week. I know she’s still trying to figure this out but she’s my…” Harley trailed off averting his gaze.

“Sister?” Peter answered with a quirked brow and bland tone “you can never make any progress if you can’t even say that much. That’s what she is Harley, she’s your sister.” Peter emphasizes looking over the book.

“You should take your own advice.” Harley grumbled. Peter looked at him bemusedly.

“She’s been in a difficult situation Harley. She needs support.” Peter said, ignoring his implication and inappropriate snipe about his own family situation. Harley sighed because he knew Peter was right.

He had to not just know Abby was his sister he had to understand it too.

“You know I’m asking you this because I thought you wouldn’t give a generic answer but a solution that’s maybe crazy and would probably work.” Harley said in a bland voice, avoiding the conversation he’d so stupidly placed himself into.

“That is my specialty.” Peter hummed as he went back to the book. This was his out of the discussion, but he felt like a chicken for even considering it. He had to look at this as an opportunity not an action of judgement.

“She clings onto you and Pepper more than me. If neither of you are in the room, she’ll be like a caged animal.” Harley breathes out.

“That makes sense, most of her handlers were men.” Peter hummed.

“‘Handler’?” Harley repeated in an incredulous tone. That was such a… inhumane way to say it, but it did put the situation into perspective. It showed just how serious this was, even if it happened a lot, Peter didn’t lose the sense of value this kind of thing had on another person. Harley doesn’t think he could do that, probably because he hadn’t lived it like Peter had.
“It’s what I said.” Peter said back unbothered.

“That’s so…” Harley was too shocked to even come up with the right word. Peter didn’t.

“Inhumane? Dehumanizing?” Peter supplied “I know.” He said in a darker tone, that Harley wasn’t really was meant for him. The smaller boy gripped his book a bit tighter.

“Yeah.” He breathes out “but wait, if she doesn’t trust men, why does she trust you?” Harley asked and immediatly thought it was stupid. Peter had saved her, protected her. Peter brought her to a family that fed her. Peter takes care of her. Peter understands her. Harley shook his head.

“**She doesn’t trust me.**” Peter said easily, catching Harley off guard a bit. **Could’ve fooled him.** “She just knows I get what she’s going through.” Peter shrugged, confirming Harley belief. He thinks Peter did that on purpose. The older boy furrowed his brows a bit.

“I’m **trying** to get it,” Harley huffed our “but she won’t open up.” He finished crossing his arms. Peter looked at him warily over the cover.

“That’s not what I meant.” Peter said apologetically. Harley knew what he meant. Peter understood Abby on a level no one can or will ever understand; not unless they were in that situation too. She didn’t have to ‘open up’ for him to know exactly what was going on in her head. To him, this was a natural understanding that Harley could never grasp. He envies Peter for that. “She feels bad you know.” Peter said suddenly, snapping Harley out of his trance. He had gone back to ‘reading’ his book (he probably was, Peter had an amazing ability to multitask). “About abandoning you.” He clarifies still not looking up. Harley was taken a back a bit.

What?

“She said that?” Harley asked incredulously, not really sure how to feel about that. **Of course**, he didn’t blame Abby for that at all, never even considered it. It wasn’t her fault. That wasn’t even an option to put that on her. It was their mom and her dumb idles. Sure, he was angry and upset and confused. Heartbroken. Why wouldn’t he be? His family eft and didn’t turn back for him. But he never blamed Abby for that. She had just as much control over the entire thing as he did - which was none. Kids don’t have much a choice of anything that goes on in their lives, that he could relate to with Peter. Sometimes he did feel like the adult were pushing them every which way, and
it was frustrating, but he could blame Abby for none of it.

“She doesn’t say anything.” Peter shook his head, Harley deflated “What did you expect? That’s literally what you were just complaining about.” Peter deadpanned, glancing up with a bemused look before looking back at his book, Harley huffed “but she implied it.” He continued and flipped the page. Harley was a bit astonished.

“But it wasn’t her fault.” He said breathlessly “it was Ma’s and-“ he was started.

“Don’t tell me.” Peter cut off uninterestedly and Harley has half a mind to be offended, but he’s more shocked. Peter never cut anyone off when they were venting, he always tried to encourage that. He said it was good for the soul, despite him never doing it (that kid really should take his own advice).

“What? But you-“ He stammered. Peter looked up with a leveled look that should look weird upside down but it didn’t. He looked a little irritated.

“You want my advice? Don’t tell me what you were just about to say.” He said ominously and went back to his book and Harley was shocked still before understanding what Peter was implying. He quirked his mouth up a bit, this is the kind of advice he was looking for. He doesn’t disappoint.

“So why’d you come here?” Harley asked this time, leaning back in his bean bag. Peter hunched a bit into his book with embarrassment or guilt, Harley couldn’t quite tell from this angle. “because last I checked, you didn’t know I needed advice on Abby.” Harley said, no one did, at least as far as he knew (but now that he was thinking about it, people might. He did live with the greatest spies in the world - including Peter, even if the kid wasn’t professional spy per say- after all).

“No, I knew since the closet. I just never said anything.” Peter said flippantly, turning the page again. Harley shivered remembering what he dubbed the ‘closet incident’ -at least in his mind, he hadn’t said anything because Peter promised he would but he was wondering if the brunette really did or just said that to get him off his back, he’d have to find a sneaky way to confirm that Peter did. He hoped Peter made good on his promise, if not for his health then for Harley’s peace of mind.

“And you didn’t say anything?” Harley asked incredulous.
“I wanted to see how far you get.” Peter responded lightly with a smirk. Harley huffed in irritation.

“I hate it when you do that.” He grumbled and crosses his arms, not unlike a child “and did you even tell Bruce or Dr. Cho about your little episode? I mean seriously dude, ulcers are nothing to joke about. You could seriously-“

“I talked to MJ.” He said suddenly, cutting Harley off and looking up a bit to see the reaction before averting his eyes back to his page. Harley raised a brow and kept his face carefully passive. Masking the shock, he wasn’t sure if it was effective or not.

“And?” He encouraged when Peter didn’t seem to say anything more. Peter sighed and finally closed his book and leveled a look with his gaze - which still looked weird because he was upside down but that didn’t seem to dampen the effect.

“I need to talk to Ned.” He sighed. Harley scoffed.

“I thought you would ask advice to talk to MJ.” Harley said with a smirk. Although, to be honest, Harley didn’t think he was qualified for that. She was a very intimidating person, even he has trouble having a normal conversation with her and he didn’t even need to confront her seriously yet.

“I did.” Peter admitted.

“So you finally asked for help.” Harley smirked, impressed and mildly proud. Peter was making progress after all.

“Shut up.” Peter blushed. Harley laughed and smiled. “Just tell me what to do.” he grumbled, and that was not a thing Peter Parker said often. He usually knew what to do or say, but he was human - or at least partially so, enough to feel human emotions so that made him human in Harley’s book.

He knew exactly what to say. Ned wasn’t a person that could hold onto a grudge. He was a literal teddy bear that couldn’t stay mad at anyone for too long without exploding with guilt and apology. It was more likely that he’d already forgiven Peter.
The boy looked at him intently, awaiting the answer that his fate seemed to ride on (or at least that’s how Peter dramaticized this situation, it probably wasn’t far off though).

“Just be present.”

OoOoO

Bruce was surprised that he noticed it first.

Tony was usually a little more aware about things that pertained to Peter - or their interns in general, he seemed to have that kind of presence in their lives that Bruce was only a little envious of. Of course he gave wary glances over to the boy as he quietly worked on his small projects, who had been opting to stay hunched over his tech and be an introverted teen with his ear buds in blocking out all his other surroundings (although Bruce knew he was still very aware of them).

The skittishness and paranoia were expected. But it was Bruce who first noticed the newly constant presence of the dreaded bat.

The duct taped piece of wood was innocently leaning against the table within the boys reach, just barley grazing his elbow, and Bruce was worried about even breathing wrong when it was in the room. It was like the bat had an intimidation of its own, one that Peter had implanted in it on the first day of him officially staying at the tower.

Peter had came in and out like he would any other time. 7-3, like clockwork. What was different was that in the past week he’s come in, he wasn’t his usual bright self. He never said anything or did anything that he normally wouldn’t do, but usually when he came in his presence was brighter. He was visibly happy and it was contagious to the other biologically based beings in the lab. He was excitable and ready to ramble about science and new innovative ideas that had popped into his head over the time he wasn’t in the lab. They understood that part of him hear, and he wouldn’t be shut down by insolence. Bruce felt like it was a sanctuary for that particular outlet and he feels like Peter thinks the same.

...Or at least it used to feel that way.

Now it was like the kid was walking into a dreary prison. Here to serve his sentence and then leave as soon as he could. His presence was small and dull, like all the life was sucked out of him. Tony had tried to get him to go off on his normal rants, but every time he’d either ignore him or look up
with a slightly guilty look that had Tony stop trying to get the boy to socialize with them altogether. It was suffocating, the constant presence of something unsaid and unidentifiable hanging in the air.

At 3 exactly he went scurrying off out of the lab with a mumbled thank you and went to disappear until dinner...again.

“Peter Parker everyone.” Tony said sarcastically as the kid left. The spider teen was only a few paces out the door and Tony was on the far end of the lab, but the kid still hunched in on himself and Tony winced a bit. Bruce glared at him and slapped his arm “ow! I was kidding!” Tony complained. Bruce sighed.

“He needs to talk to someone.” He mumbled, massaging his temples to stifle the oncoming headache. This whole family thing wasn’t working out and it was clearly the communication that was hindering them. None of them knew how to interact with each other (except for Bucky and Nat, but even their relationship seemed a bit strained the past week).

“He did. He talked to Pep and Harley.” Tony said looking to his wires again. Bruce gave him a look, he knew Tony could see him out of the corner of his eye.

“That’s not what I meant.” Bruce said and Tony scoffed knowingly.

“You think Barnes is gonna say anything? He freaked out when the kid wanted to have a normal conversation with him.” Tony snorted and Bruce sighed remember how Natasha wouldn’t even confront him and take initiative in the matter, which was unusual for her. Guess they were all in an unhealthy type of denial.

“I’m starting to think that Peter isn’t the only one who needs therapy about this.” Bruce sighed in a tired tone.

“Ya think?” Tony said sarcastically “Apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.” He snorted to himself as he jammed two wires together.

“I think they all need a lesson in communication.” Bruce said “I’ll ask Sam about family therapy sessions.” He said thoughtfully. Tony paused and turned to him slowly, looking at him like he was insane.
“So you have something against Sam now?” Tony asked “or are you just suicidal? I’d like to know now because then I can be prepared to replace you as founding science bro.” Tony said and Bruce rolled his eyes but didn’t say anything “no seriously Banner, never say that out loud again unless you wanna get killed within the next 7.2 hours.” Tony said in a nearly serious tone.

“They’re not here.” Bruce waves off casually, Tony made an indgent noise.

“Have you forgotten that this is the Black Widow you are talking about? Greatest Spy in the KGB? Winter Soldier? Greatest Hydra Asset? Ringing any bells here? Let’s not forget their very perceptive and paranoid spider teen with super hearing. They probably all bugged the place individually a million years ago.” Tony said, looking around his lab for any evidence of such an act. Bruce rolled his eyes at his friend’s dramatic.

_He has a point though._

“You’d know.” Bruce deadpanned.

“No I wouldn’t! You know why? Because their a family of fucking super genius spies. Spies I’d rather not piss off thank you very much.” Tony scoffed and crossed his arms “you can be suicidal all you want but don’t make me your accomplice.” he waved a finger at the other man and Bruce snorted softly.

“It’s just therapy. I’m not even making them go! I didn’t even ask Sam yet.” Bruce said incredulously. They wouldn’t actually take that much offense to a mere suggestion ...would they?

‘Yet’, as in soon to be. It was nice knowing you Banner.” Tony gave a mock salute as he turned back to his wires.

“Stop being so dramatic.” Bruce rolled his eyes and went back to his own papers.

“I’m being realistic.” Tony said back with a furrow of his brows. In some regards, Bruce knew he was. As much as Tony had dramatized it, the Barnes/Romanov/Parker family wouldn’t take too kindly to his suggestion. Barnes hated people in his head, Nat didn’t open up easily with anyone without scaring them off first, and Peter had no interest whatsoever in going to therapy - even calling a ‘sinful word’ at one point and hurrying out of the room as quickly as he could.
“Are you really that scared of them?” Bruce asked under his breath and Tony stilled.

“I am.” he said quietly, honestly. “And you should be too” Bruce looked astonished.

“They’re your teammates.” he said in a scolding tone. Are you scared of me too? He thought. Logically, it made sense. Tony was normal, the only one on the team. Nat and Clint were super spies, Thor was a god, Cap was a supersoldier and Bruce was the hulk. All the ‘auxilerly’ members of the Avengers had either a military esque background or freaky powers. Tony was by no means ‘normal’ but he was more human than anyone else on the team. Sometimes they forgot that.

“I’m not afraid of you Banner.” he sighed, as if he knew what Bruce was thinking. “But them? Barnes was brainwashed by HYDRA and killed my parents, and yeah I’ve moved on but I can’t ever let go of that.” Bruce stiffened as Tony continued “Nat was apart of the KGB, enough said about that, for all we know she could still be with them. She is a spy after all.” Tony raised a hand as Bruce opened his mouth to retort “It’s silly, I know. But she infiltrated my own company before the Avengers, so anything is not off the table with her. At least not for me” Tony said with a leveled look before he continued” And Peter? He’s the unknown entity. Not even Fury knows anything about him. Nothing about his background or upbringing, everything we thought we knew about him was a lie and everything we do know about him is too vague.” Tony said and sighed “So yeah, I am afraid of them. They’re too... unknown, unpredictable.” Tony finished and Bruce let it sink in for a second.

“But, Peter is the sweetest kid ever. And a kid. Natasha would do anything for the team. Hell, Barnes brought home a box of kittens once because it was raining outside and didn’t want them to get sick!” Bruce emphasizes his point with a wide gesture.

“So that’s where the kid gets it from.” Tony grumbled and crossed his arms. “And they could still kill you without even blinking.” Tony revised his point.

“Yet they can’t figure out how to communicate with each other.” Bruce said back slyly, and then sighed as Tony raised a brow.

“Yeah.” Tony sighed. “They can be pretty stupid.” he mumbled thoughtfully.

“Even Parker?” Bruce asked coyly and Tony rolled his eyes.

“Especially Parker.” He huffed then shook his head and turned back to his project “Whatever, let’s
just hope they figure it out soon. I was my lab assistant back.”

So did Bruce.

OoOoO

Contrary to popular belief, Peter actually did plan for this to happen.

He knew that Ned would be coming in at 4 for his shift at the lab since it was his one of his scheduled lab days (Peter may or may not have interrogated Harley for that information, but he didn’t tell Harley exactly why he needed it. He exited the situation when that particular question came up). Usually Peter was allowed to go free at 3, but today he had come in an hour late on purpose and ‘lost track of time’ so that he stayed til’ 4. So what if he was cut out an hour for patrol, it wasn’t gonna be a daily thing. That’s what he assured the more anxious part of himself (which was amplified due to what he was about to do) at least.

He knows that he really needed to do this, that it was long overdue. And although he wasn’t ready for it, Peter knew life wouldn’t wait for him to be (besides he didn’t think he’d ever be ready for this. At least not completely. He hates confrontation).

The conversation he had with MJ went amazingly well, better than he could’ve hoped for (although he knows there would be lingering questions soon, he’d rather get this out of the way first so he didn’t have to repeat himself. Even after this confrontation, this situation would be far from over.) and Ned was much more forgiving than MJ by default. This should be easy, it was his best friend after all.

Somehow, he forgot to counter for Ned’s lack of perceptiveness.

That was his downfall.

“What are you doing here?” Ned asked, almost shocked but his tone was more accusing. Peter winced a little. Okay not so easy. Peter notes Mr. Stark eavesdropping on their conversation from across the room, but paid no mind to it. He turned to Ned, his stiff only half shoved into his bag.

“I work here.” Peter replies simply, a bit nervous, but he tried not to show it. He wasn’t sure how well it worked.
“Since when?” Ned scrunched his nose up and Peter couldn’t tell if it was in disbelief or disgust - maybe his mind was playing tricks on him to psyche him out.

He won’t forgive you.

“Since Mr. Stark needed a lab assignment from 7-3.” Peter answers, pushing down the voice. Ned huffed.

“It’s 4.” He said in a bland tone, Peter deflated a bit. That wasn’t the answer he was trying to get.

“I was a bit late today.” He answered tentatively. Ned looked at him with an unnerving look. There was a long stretch of awkward silence before Peter decided to break it. “Hey, Ned, look man I’m-” he started.

“No.” Ned cut off a little bit harshly and Peter blinked in surprise. Ned was nearly never harsh, and usually when he was it was an accident. Not this time though. “You don’t get to say that you’re sorry. It’s not enough.” Ned bit out in a low poisonous tone. Peter’s eyes widened a bit, he could feel Mr. Stark’s surprise too.

“I know.” Peter said in a defeated voice and sagged his shoulders to make himself smaller.

See? Why would he ever forgive you? You were horrible to him when he gave you nothing but affection. You threw it in his face and walked away. You don’t deserve him.

“Do you?” Ned asked in an almost mocking tone, like he thought Peter didn’t understand the weight of the situation. Peter was starting to doubt that he did “Do you really? You distanced yourself after Gwen and Harry’s death, which is understandable. But then when we try to help you, you snap at us? They weren’t just your friends you know?” He vented and Peter hunched on himself in shame and slight embarrassment.

“I know.” Peter said in a quieter tone laced with guilt and regret.

“And then you avoid us for the rest of the year. And then one day you just... disappear?! You vanish and we don’t know where you went. We don’t know where your aunt went. You didn’t
even call to tell us you were okay!” Ned went on with a wide gesture.

“I know.” He said even quieter. Ned still didn’t seem to hear him.

“Do you know what that did to me? Do you know what that did to MJ? 8 years of being best friends and you can abandon that so easily?” Ned emphasized, emotions thick in his voice, making Peter want to cry. He could feel his tears burning behind his eyes, but didn’t let them out. He didn’t deserve to cry “It’s like you didn’t even care! MJ didn’t eat properly for weeks! I started to fall behind on grades because I was so depressed! The only thing that got me out of it was working here! Did you know that?!” Ned ranted on and Peter looked up in surprise. Mouth opening but closing as he had nothing to say. Ned did though “so no, you don’t get to just show up after a year and a half of nothing. It’s long past late to say sorry.” he glared with venom “You just...left and couldn’t be bothered to even say goodbye. It like we never even matter to you.” He sucked in a rapid breath and Peter could see he was holding back tears “so you don’t get to say sorry. It won’t fix everything you’ve done.” He finished with a low dark tone and Peter waited to see if he’d say anything more. He didn’t.

“I wasn’t gonna say sorry.” Peter said in a near emotionless tone. Life being sucked out of him at hearing everything he had put his friends through. He thought that they’d just be sad not… well he wasn’t sure just not that “because I’m not sorry.” Peter said, not paying attention to what he was saying. Ned looked shocked for a second.

“Parker, what the fuck.” He heard Tony whisper with his super hearing. He was glad that the man didn’t interfere otherwise though.

“But I... I didn’t not care about you and MJ...I did it to...” to protect you. Ned looked at him expectantly. “Get away.” He breathed out. Everything was screaming at him to get out. Too much was crashing around him and he had to regroup by himself. But how did he tell Ned that.

“Get away?” Ned said with offense thick in his tone. Peter’s eyes widened.

Yes.

“No, wait! That didn’t come out right!” Peter panicked, waving his hands in front of himself. He could just hear the voices laughing at him, but he couldn’t bring himself to care about that right now. “I just meant...” he trailed off.
“Meant what?” Ned persisted.

You even suck at apologies.

“This isn’t an apology!” He screamed at it.

“Yeah I got that.” Ned scoffed with a hurt look on his face as he crossed his arms and looked away a bit to hide the tears in his eyes. *Shit*.

You did that.

“No, not you. I mean, yes you, I mean...” Peter sighed and breathed in and out and ran a hand through his hair anxiously “Jesus, this was so much easier with MJ.” He mumbled to himself, unfortunately Ned heard.

“Well I’m not MJ.” Ned said, more hurt shining through his voice, “I’m sorry if I don’t share a mind like you two do.” He said and turned a bit more away and Peter came a step closer, his instincts telling him to comfort his friend.

You hurt everyone you love.

“Ned~”

“No, Peter this conversation is done. Just...go.” Ned whispered, taking a step back from him. Peter is pretty sure that he had no authority to do that but he didn’t think he could salvage this.

They’ll all leave you eventually.

Ned was afraid of him. Afraid that’d he’d hurt him not physically but emotionally. And he didn’t even know Peter could kill people as easily as he could. He was a monster. A monster that hurt the people who’d done nothing but love him. So he picked up his backpack and silently left.

So why do you keep trying?
“Well that was dramatic.”

Ned hadn’t even said hello to him after had Peter left 30 minutes ago - will 31 minutes and 13 seconds but who was counting (answer: Tony Stark). The boy had just gone to his work station and opened his laptop and plugged in a device he was in the process of coding. He didn’t even look up. Tony vaguely remembered that’s exactly what he had done when he first came and now it was much more clear as to why. He was gonna give Parker what was coming to him, that was for fucking sure.

“He’s changed.” Ned mumbled more to himself than to Tony.

“People tend to do that in a year and a half.” Tony nodded in agreement and wheeled over. “Give him time, you’ll see he’s still him.” he reassured.

“No-“ Ned cut off his frustration and breathes to calm himself, “You didn’t know him before.” He shook his head and went back to his computer. Tony narrowed his eyes in contemplation.

“Yeah, I know.” Tony said wheeling closer to the boy “but as far as apologies go, that wasn’t the best.” He said across the table. Ned slowly stopped typing and blankly stared at the screen.

“Do you...” he said after a minute “do you think I was...I dunno too...” he trailed off.

“Harsh?” Tony asked “Nope. This is 100 percent on Parker. You had a right to be mad.” Tony said and Ned looked unsure.

“Nothing is 100 percent on any one person.” Ned said softly. “He might’ve had a good reason to do what he did. He always does and -” Ned started to ramble.

“Yeah, but Peter didn’t even have an excuse nor an apology.” Tony cut off swiftly “He just, how did you put it? ‘Left’.” Tony quoted and Ned cringed a bit. “Well he did.” Tony said in a firmer voice and Ned winced as he averted his eyes.
“I know... but I feel like I could’ve... I dunno...tried harder to understand him.” Ned sighed.

“What do mean ‘tried harder’?” Tony asked incredulously “he didn’t even explain himself. Didn’t defend himself. You don’t have all the facts.” Tony said.

“I mean MJ got it apparently.” Ned grumbled as he rolled his eyes “and I didn’t have all the facts. I never did with Peter. He’s always been shit at explaining things. But MJ? She always understands him. He doesn’t have to talk with her, she just...understands...or accepts it. Without question.” Ned deflated in self depreciation and Tony looked at the hurt boy for a second. *Oh Parker was not surviving tonight, that was for certain.*

“Do you want to forgive him?” Tony asked and Ned looked at him with broken tear filled eyes that broke Tony’s heart and a cracked voice.

“I just want my best friend back.”

OoOoO

Harley has never felt more anxious in his entire life.

He was currently in the hallway on the Stark’s floor. Unlike Peter’s floor, they had their own separate room/mini apartments. Well Pepper and Tony’s were like that, Harley’s was like the master of all master bedrooms. It was pretty sweet. When Abby moves in (or came, he guessed, because she had nothing to exactly ‘move in’ per say) she got a similar room as him. Spacious and large and while his felt lived in with the clutter, Abby’s was bare (for now, he was sure that would change overtime).

And now, he was currently in front of her door, waiting to knock. He knew she was behind the door, but he couldn’t seem to get himself to knock because he didn’t seem to have the nerves to.

He hadn’t had the nerves to even talk to her since Peter had given him that advice. He hadn’t seen him since the morning so he could keep walking to ask about it again. It took him two days since their conversation to get even this far. He knew what to do and now he didn’t want to mess it up.
Harley sucked a breath in and knocked on the door. It took a few moments, but the door finally opened with a soft click and Abby poked her head out to see her visitor. When she saw him her eyes went wide and she instinctively made herself smaller - Harley tried not to take it personally, but he felt like it was.

“Harley?” She asked as if she couldn’t believe he was there. Her voice was quiet and her posture curled into herself defensively as she hid a little more behind the door. Harley’s heart cracked a bit; she was scared of him.

‘Her handlers were mostly big men.’

“Just came to say good night.” He smiled at her but it was strained and a bit unconvincing. “I’d do it every night but you seem to hate me.” It just came out, he hadn’t meant to phrase it like that. Shit.

“Why is tonight any different?” She asked in a slightly sarcastic tone with a quirked brow and he huffed out a breath and smiled a bit.

“Dunno.” He shrugged “Cuz’ I was trying to give you some space but I’m not very good at that. Sorry.” He said unapologetically and Abby looked at him for a moment, Harley thought that she’d close the door on him for a second. She looks like she was contemplating it.

“I don’t hate you.” She said instead, in a firmer but still quiet voice than she had been using. SHe looked down instead of at him as he stared at her.

“That’s good.” He nodded, snapping out of whatever he was in for a second “I don’t hate you either.” He added quickly and she stiffened. Was that the wrong thing to say?

“You should.” She whispered as she averted her eyes, emotions slowly trickling into her tone.

“Why would I?” He asked blandly “You’re my sister, I don’t think you could do anything to make me hate you. Piss me off, sure but you haven’t so far.” He said and he should really stop talking because he was messing this up so bad.
“Did you hate Ma?” She asked her voice thick with tears as she stared up at him with huge watery brown eyes. Harley blinked as his brain blanked. That came out of nowhere - but it was the reaction he was hoping for but still he was unprepared for the emotions to be this heavy. But wait, is that what Peter meant by Abby thinking he hated her? She thought he was mad at her for abandoning him? She thought that he thought she got what she deserved by living through hell? No one deserved to live through that, much less his baby sister.

Especially his baby sister.

“Is that what this is about?” He asked gesturing vaguely “this whole avoiding thing?” He clarified in a gentle tone. Abby ducked her head a bit and he had his answer. He got down to his knee and his eyes were on her level and curled his index finger under her chin and gently pushed her head up to meet his eyes fully. “Listen here bean sprout.” His country accent took control, he remembers vaguely calling her that back in Tennessee, when they laughed and played in the watering hole and walked on the prairie way after dark to look at the stars and pick out constellations. “you didn’t do nothing to me. Ya hear? Not one thing. It was all Ma.” Harley said seriously and tears started to shine in Abby’s eyes as her lip quivered.

“It wasn’t Ma.” She choked out, holding back tears, “it was her boyfriend, Carl.” The tears slowly started to track down her eyes as Harley’s went wide “he didn’t want a boy because you could fight back. He made Ma abandon you. She was- she was so good to me, but she always-always cried ‘bout you Harls. She-she wanted to see you grow up an-and go to the prom and college and stuff. She-she loved ya so-so much Harley, you don’t even know.” She sobbed and threw herself into Harley’s arms. Harley’s wise eyes started to let tears in and he didn’t know came until they fell. “She missed ya so much and she never got to-ta tell ya that! She was so-so sorry.” she choked out “ I missed you so much.” She finished and buried her face into his chest as he slowly hugged her back.

“I missed you too bean sprout.” He whispered and if they just stayed like that for eternity, that was okay with him. Because everything was okay right now. It didn’t matter what the rest of the world was doing. Everything was okay with Abby right here, with him, safe and content. Free and protected. Right where she should be with Harley. Where she wanted to be. Where Harley wanted to be.

For the first time since moving to the city, Harley felt completely at home.

OoOoO

Peter rarely ever used the common room windows to enter.
He did that to most likely avoid walking into a fight or something that he didn’t want to be apart of, but the balcony was so much more accessible than every other entrance and Peter would be damned if he ever used a door again (they let him have this he is still a kid after all. Even if he wasn’t too keen on doors to begin with). After a long patrol that ran from 4pm to 2am with no breaks, he was probably fucking tired.

He didn’t probably expect anyone to be awake, much less Tony Stark to be sitting in the dark, alone, awaiting his arrival.

“Mr. Parker.” He piped up making Peter jump as he whirled to the man and Tony would be amused if it wasn’t for the severity of the situation that they were about to discuss - he wouldn’t let Peter divert it this time “We missed you at dinner.” Tony commented casually. Peter seemed to sag a bit in slight relief.

“You scared the shit out of me.” Peter hisses, Tony raises a brow “what are you doing here?” he narrows his cross gaze toward the man.

“A good question. What are you doing?” Tony insinuated as he leaned forward in his chair and propped his elbows on his knees and rested his chin in his hands, serious look never leaving his face. Peter raised a brow at that.

“What are you talking about?” Peter asks exasperatedly. He was too tired for this shit right now. Tony didn’t really care, because he wasn’t letting this shit go on for one second longer than it had to; it had gone on long enough as it is.

“I’m gonna put it simply.” Tony clapped his hands together and stood up “you butchered it.” He put simply, and Peter wrinkled his nose a bit.

“Butchered what?” He asked again and Tony sighed. This kid.

“Your little reunion/apology or whatever you call that thing you did with Ned.” Tony answered and Peter stiffened and rolled his eyes at the same time, Tony wasn’t sure how he managed that exactly but he did. “this is serious.” Tony scolded at the action “do you even care about what you did to them?” Tony asked almost incredulously - he knows he did - but expect Peter to snort though.

“Yeah, it’s almost like negligence has consequences after all.” Peter sniped. Tony flared a little.
Was the kid seriously bringing that up? Right now? When Peter was clearly in the wrong? Distantly he wondered if this was all part of the coping process Peter was currently in, after all he goes through things like this strictly alone up until now, but currently he was in a bit of a weird place where he didn’t exactly have the option of being alone. Tony couldn’t find it in himself to do more than acknowledge these facts briefly (later he’d realize that this was one of the only times Peter ever acted like an irrational teenager, but not right now).

“Oh no, You don’t get to turn this on me. That’s not how this works.” He said back with a pointed voice, and Peter stepped forward a bit. The kid had some balls after all.

“Oh no, You don’t get to turn this on me. That’s not how this works.” He said back with a pointed voice, and Peter stepped forward a bit. The kid had some balls after all.

“Then tell me, how does this work?” He asked mockingly, as if he were so inclined as to having the right opinion all the fucking time that he’d never had the wrong one. Well, he’d straighten this out and put the brat’s head on straight again. Tony was about to answer before shaking his head.

This is what Peter wanted. He was manipulating him into a different conversation. Well it wouldn’t work, Tony wouldn’t let it.

“No, nope. You’re diverting. I caught it.” Tony said in a scolding but slightly triumphant tone. Peter didn’t seem to share his glory as he rolled his eyes and crossed his arms.

“Congrats.” He said sarcastically. Tony couldn’t help but be a little shocked. Sure Peter acted like a little shit all the time during battles, but usually when he was out of the suit he was quite passive. Only getting sarcastic when he was with someone he really didn’t like, like Ross or some other general trying to put him down. But Tony was just trying to set him straight, it didn’t occur to him that he’d react the same way he did when Cap scolded him for no reason.

“What’s gotten into you?” Tony asked incredulously, breathlessly. Peter ducked into himself a bit as he leaned back.

“Nothing.” He mumbled. “I’m tired.” He partially lies. He did look tired, but that’s not what was up. “Leave me alone.” he went to turn away “You’re not my fucking parent.” he grumbled. Tony doesn’t think he was meant to hear that but he did. And that made him mad. He was doing this because his fucking parents didn’t want to, even though they needed to. It was the rough part about parenthood and they needed to fucking realize it. But Tony would step in, just this once.

“Oh no, you wanna play hardball.” he grabbed Peter’s shoulder and whirled him around, a flash of something like fear ran across Peter’s eyes, but it disappeared as fast as it appeared, replaced by a defensive look. “You aren’t gonna get out of this so easily.” he said in a low tone.
“Why? Cause you're an adult?” he said mockingly glared at him. They had a stare down for a second, Peter would’ve won on any other night. But not today, Tony wouldn’t let this slide.

“That has nothing to do with it. I’m right this time.” Tony leaned forward to get in Peter’s face as the boy leaned back “So answer the question: why have you decided to flip your teenage edgelord switch now?” Peter scrunched his nose at the wording.

“Piss off.” Peter grumbled and averted his eyes as he half heartedly wiggled his arm, Tony kept a firmer grip - he knew if Peter didn’t want to be he wouldn’t even be touching him, but he chose not to think about that right now. Tony’s anger flared a bit more at the edgy answer.

“No seriously.” Tony continued on “I wanna know so I can know how far The restraining order that Ned Leeds should have on you should go.” Tony’s threats were empty (he’d never put a restraining order on any kid, especially this one) it was just to give him a little scare (but he’d still never let anyone, not even Peter, hurt a hair on Ned Leed’s head so long as he lived). It worked too well apparently because, Peter, to his surprise, fucking growled at him. Not even exaggerating, like a fucking animal.

“Stay the fuck out of it.” He snarled in almost a feral way and brought his head closer to Tony’s to get in the man’s face this time and he had to lean back a bit, because he didn’t expect Peter to get this angry about it (he distantly remembers Sam saying that Peter was the type to bottle up certain emotions until they explode. Evidently, anger, seems to be one of them) “it’s none of your fucking business.” He bit out and Tony recovered from his shock quickly.

“I became my business when it makes my best intern relapse into depression episodes.” He bit back, making Peter flinch at the blatant mention of it. Soft spot? Oh yeah, now they were getting somewhere. “What the hell is your problem? You don’t think that he or MJ deserve an apology? After all you fucking put them through? I thought you were supposed to be a superhero.” Tony continued, he knows how Peter views himself. He knows how to get under his skin. Peter wrenched his arm away and stumbled back two steps.

“Well I’m not!” Peter nearly yelled at him “and they do deserve an apology. Just not for that.” he said in a quieter voice.

“For what?” Tony presses on, leaning forward but not advancing “The fact that you left? Their mental illnesses? Dealing with your fucking attitude?” He said condescendingly and Peter hisses a little and inches back a bit more “Which one is it Spiderman?” He said the name mockingly and Peter made a choked snarling noise that he tried to smother. What the hell was that?
“You’re trying to piss me off.” Peter growled lowly, his voice deep and guttural.

“And it’s working.” He said with a hint of pleasure. Peter looked like he wanted to lunge at Tony, but he somehow barely managed to hold himself back from it. He stepped away from Tony five more paces.

“You’re becoming just as bad as you used to be! You’re not making any progress!” Peter spat at him, looking more at the floor than at him.

“Oh at least I made progress. What did you do? Run away again?” Tony asked in a fake innocent tone that grated on Peter’s nerves. He hit a sore spot, he could just see every emotion battling their way out in Peter’s posture and eyes. Tony was breaking down the walls, and Peter was crumbling every bit of the way.

“You don’t understand.” He bit out and turned around to the elevator. “Stop acting like you do.” his voice was starting to become shaky, and Tony had to admit, it wasn’t like when he was scolding Harley. Peter was much more resilient, but that’s probably because he was better at keeping his emotions in check.

“You’re right, I don’t understand what’s going on in that twisted little mind of yours. Tony said snidely. “But you know what I think? I think you don’t know what goes on there either. You’ve got no control over it and you know it.” Tony didn’t know if he was hitting anything until peter literally tripped back, everything seeming to crash around him, and Tony could see it in his eyes that he’d gotten the nose right on the head.

And that, that right there, was very, very concerning.

“Is this your way of getting me to go to a fucking therapist?” He asked incredulously, breathlessly as if he were going to have a panic attack “cause it’s not working.” he spat out.

“At least I’m trying to help you!” Tony told him, moving a step forward and Peter moved three steps away from him.

“How is insulting me, helping?” Peter said shaking his head and stepping away again.
“Cause it’s the only way you’ll listen!” Tony nearly yelled at him, his voice has become a little desperate and there was silence as Peter blinked at him twice then let out a low growl before stalking the rest of the way to the elevator.

The doors shut and left nothing but silence for a while.

“I’m just telling you what you need to hear, Pete.” Tony said quietly to the empty room. “I’m sorry you had to get it this way.” He whispered.

For the record, he really meant it.

OoOoO

Peter stalked up to the door of his parents ‘apartment’.

Stark has no fucking right to put that kind of input on his life. Not after everything he’s been through. Not with everything he’s still going through.

Peter didn’t want to admit that he was afraid, even to himself (especially to himself, the voice would definitely use it against him in some way). The scary part was, he was trying to piss him off and the it had worked. Stark had knew exactly what to say to get under his skin, to make his walls crumble; he had reverted to a fucking animal.

Peter wondered how long Stark knew about all his insecurities and fears. He wondered if anyone else knew about them too. Maybe he wasn’t as resilient as he had thought. His life had been falling apart for as long as he could remember, maybe they found a way in ages ago and used just now to strike him when he’s already at a weak point. When he was still adjusting to a new life.

He stopped his thoughts when he heard voices speaking behind the door, pausing in his movements and his hand was barely ghosting the handle.

“He didn’t even come to dinner today” he heard Bucky say “He’ll have no explanation. He comes back too late all the time. What kind of parents are we for allowing this in the first place? He puts his life on the line every night and no one seems to give a shit about it.” Bucky ranted and Peter blinked. Were they talking about...making him stop patrol?
They’re gonna hold you back!

“You heard what Sam said. He needs to slowly acclimate. Too much change will set him off.” He heard Natasha come in, but her voice was slightly on edge. “It’ll take a little more time for him to change his habits.” she said and Peter’s heart froze. They were talking about Spiderman. But Spiderman wasn’t Peter’s ‘habit’, it was apart of who Peter was.

They don’t want you!

“Do you really think he’ll do that willingly? He’s doesn’t do things for other people’s sake.” he heard Barnes say. What did they mean by that? Other people? He didn’t do it for himself either. “Can he really just settle down and just be our son?” he sighed. ‘Be their son’? But this was who their son was. This was who is.

They only want a piece of you.

“No, that won’t ever get him to settle in comfortably with us.” Natasha sighed “I’m losing it Kras.” she admitted. Kras? She only used that name when they were talking private or she was stressed. Peter had stressed them out.

She’s done with you. He took a step back.

“I know but, we’ll figure this out Natalia.” Bucky said gently. “I promise.” he nearly whispered, and if Peter didn’t have super hearing he’d never hear it.

He’s done with you. He took another step back.

“What if we don’t?” She asked worriedly “I don’t know how much more I can take.” She admitted softly and Peter stepped away from the door one more time, shaking his head.

They don’t want you anymore!
They were finally gonna do it. They were gonna kick him out for good. No one could stand him today, could they?

He would leave, he said he wouldn’t make a fuss, so he might as well just leave without even saying anything. He’d come back for his shit when he was in the right state of mind to infiltrate the tower. He couldn’t go back through the elevators. Not with the possibility that Stark was still upstairs.

Windows were better exits than doors anyway.

Chapter End Notes

UPDATE NOTICE: October 05, 2019 (will most likely be sooner, but no promises)

Okay, y'all... Tony. I know you have some opinions about him after that chapter, but my blood get pumped when I write him and Peter having an argument, I just love it so much. Hopefully, Peter will come to his senses and everything will get clears up. (I say as if I don't know).

Hope you enjoyed watching Peter crumble into little ity bity pieces, now let's try to put him back together (with a lot of glue). Or will I? You know what, I'll just leave it up to you!
If you have a suggestion for the upcoming oneshot collection please, please comment them so I can get started. I have some vague ideas of what I wanna do and already have some amazing mini prompts, but not enough to make a whole oneshot out of, so pwease send me ideas I can use!! I'll try to feature them, but I probably won't follow them generically if you aren't specific about what you wanna see (just a forewarning)

Thank you all for reading!! I love you and have a nice (insert time of day here)!
A Different Side of Humanity

Chapter Notes

M'kayyyy.
So this is incredibly early. I had this whole spiel but I don't have it anymore. I was
gonna give warning on tumblr, but it didn't go through. Anyway, this is the last official
chapter until the three part epilogue and then some prequel and sequel oneshot and
probably a proper prequel to this fic with Peter getting his powers( I have to go over
the outline again cause it's been so long, but I hope to get that out soon)
I was just wondering, do y'all want all three epilouges to come at once (which will take
slightly longer for me to update) or do you want them one at a time (shorter chapters
but shorter updates). Tell me in the comments or on tumblr or whereever you can
reach me.

Anyway! Time to fix some shit!

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 14- A Different side of Humanity

Peter punched the guy a bit too hard for things to be ‘totally fine’.

That’s what he said to Matt when the man had asked him if he was okay for doing a job. He had
said it through gritted teeth in a strained voice and Matt could tell the kid was pissed off.

So he finally reached the breaking point. Good it was about time.

They were just doing their standard take down of a warehouse, the fact that it was one of Ross’s
old places that hadn’t gotten the memo to go underground was probably the reason Peter wasn’t
complaining about whatever was on his mind. Matt knew he appreciated his and Wade’s help with
the clean up, but they let Peter do most of the work on this. It was his case after all and Peter didn’t
like feeling that he needs to owe someone something.

But Matt wasn’t doing this for Peter persay. Fisk was trying to scramble for control over the
remains of Ross’s mess and that’s what Matt was here for. Usually he wouldn’t ask Peter for help
on any of Fisk’s cases, that was his problem, but Ross was Peters and he had to tell him. This
wasn’t because they were friends or teammates, this was for his own benefit. It just so happened to
work in Peters favor.
That happened a lot out here. They were always benefiting each other. The vigilante population couldn’t stand each other or if they could, they didn’t really give a shit about the others lives and needs. But usually they could suck it up and work together if they had to. They worked best solo mostly. Why change a good thing? That’s the way it was supposed to go. That’s how it started at least.

But sometimes they got a little too personal.

So there was only one reason that Peter could be punching a downed enemy into the ground like he was.

“That bad?” He asked, stopping Peter just short of killing the guy. Peter froze his fist raised just about to punch again, but he changed his mind at the last minute and threw the man into a bunch of crates and they crashed down on top of him. Matt didn’t bother to check if he was alive, he’d be surprised if he was though. Peter had accidentally killed people before when he was pissed, but that was only at one period of time over a year and a half ago.

“They kicked me out.” He grumbled and turned away and Matt raised a brow that Peter couldn’t see. It’s not like he could exactly hide from Matt, even if there was nothing to see with his mask and his turned away face it didn’t really matter to Matt. He could nearly taste the salty unshed tears and feel the heat up of Peters face, and hear his heartbeat racing. He was upset, and it was showing.

“Wasn’t that the deal?” Matt asked blandly, unimpressed. Peter was usually more reasonable than this. “You got the stick and they got the choice to keep it around or not?” Matt asked, knowing full well of the agreement. He’s the one who wrote it up after all. He was right, Peter wasn’t ready for this and it seemed neither were his parents. When shit got tough they choked and that’s the real test. Maybe there was no hope for them to begin with but Matt still stood by his silent opinion that if they had just waited for a second and thought about this rationally, maybe it wouldn’t have turned out so bad.

Maybe.

“Yeah,” Peter sagged and sounded a bit disappointed in himself mostly, but a little at the situation.

“Then why are you acting like a brat that didn’t get their way.” He said more than asked blandly and Peter blanched. Matt suppressed a smirk.
“I am not!” He said indignantly and Matt raised a brow and ‘looked’ at all the punches in skulls and ribs of the people that Peter was taking care of. Peter looked at them too and Matt felt Peter’s face heat up in embarrassment and then he actually smirked.

“Yeah, you are.” Matt said smugly, this was a serious situation but he had to say it was rare for Peter to throw a tantrum like this. Matt barely had to do any work this time, Peter seemed happy to tear into what ever he could. Usually he was the rational one, Matt could begrudgingly admit he loses control more often than Peter does. “I get that your mad, but why are you mad?” He said leaning forward.

“I dunno. It just got a lot.” Peter mumbled. Matt hummed. That made sense, everything had been building for a while. Peter seemed to think that pushing it down and releasing all that raw emotion at once was the way to go, Matt had to admit though, this could’ve gone a lot worse. If he really wanted to, Matt knew Peter didn’t have to listen to the man. He got easily overpower him and outsmart him. Matt was just glad he wasn’t a super villain or else he’d set the world on fire in two seconds.

“Liar.” Matt called out easily. Peter tried to give himself an uncaring air but it wasn’t working at all.

“I seriously don’t know.” Peter insisted through gritted teeth. His fists clenching in a death grip on itself.

“That’s bullshit.” Matt said again in the same voice as Peter huffed.

“But I-“ tried to make his bullshit point again, Matt didn’t want to hear it again. He wanted to hear the truth. Even if he had a pretty good idea as to what it was.

“What did you wanna get out of it?” Matt asked instead. Did he really have to spell it out for the kid? Wasn’t Peter supposed to be a genius or something? “Why’d you do it in The first place?” He asked.

“Cause I had to-“ Peter tried to start and that was the biggest lie in the world. Peter didn’t have to do shit for anyone much less the Avengers . The government couldn’t control him as Spider-Man, they couldn’t even front til him when he was working for them. Peter did his own thing and as long as the ends meet the requirements it didn’t matter how he got there, at least not to him. But it had to be like within his moral obligation. Obviously.
“Bullshit. You can do whatever the fuck you want, and we all know it too.” Matt said, no one questioned what Peter did they only said that he couldn’t do it (he did it anyway because they never gave him a good reason *why* he couldn’t do it) “*why’d* you give this a shot?” He asked in a slightly gentler tone, still stern though. Peter shifted a little and bit his lip.

“Because…” Peter trailed off, trying to find the answer weather he was going to lie or not Matt had no idea “I…I *wanted* to give it a shot.” Peter whispered almost to himself. As if this was a realization. Matt needed to drive this point home. He was no therapist (god forbid he would be one of those sinful creatures) but he did know that this was what was considered a ‘dawning point’ or progress. Ugh, he hated therapy.

“Give what a shot?” Matt asked, in almost an exasperated tone. Thinking about therapy was exasperating he didn’t know why Foggy kept bringing it up. He’d never go. Ever.

“I *wanted* to have a real family for once!” Peter blurted out with no heat in his anger. He wasn’t mad at Matt. He wasn’t mad at anyone but himself for letting this go. The *one thing* he wanted and he let it slip right through his fingers. “is that so bad? I just wanted to see what it was like to be *normal* for once!” He huffed and turned away embarrassed. That wasn’t anything to be embarrassed about. Yeah sure, if Matt could go back he wouldn’t change being Daredevil, but everyday he longed for a normal life. With his friends and dad and yeah, maybe even a family. Being a normal lawyer without any of the life and death dramatics would be nice too. But he helped people like this, sure he helped people in his day job, but this was special. This was the type of help only Matt could breed.

And he knew Peter felt the same way too. Sure the kid could probably help people with his science, but this kind of help - being Spider-Man - it was raw and just them stripped down to what they knew how to do best. Break shit.

“There isn’t anything wrong with that Pete. No one will think of you any less for wanting a family.” Matt said. *For wanting to be normal*. Was left unsaid. The thing is, ‘normal’ wasn’t an option in their job description. Having a family… wasn’t recommended but it wasn’t forbidden.

“Yeah, but they will because I’m going soft.” Peter grumbled. Ah, reputation in the underground. Something Peter had no trouble with before because of his generally-don’t-give-a-shit-about-what people-think-and-do-it-my-way attitude. When had that changed?

“Since when did you care what other people think?” Matt asked and Peter paused. As if to consider that. He didn’t know himself.
“It doesn’t matter.” He ignored the question but Matt knew it was stewing in his mind. “They didn’t want me anymore anyway. I screwed it up.” He said with disappointment. So now Peter was willing to give them a chance and they wouldn’t take it. Or at least that’s what he thought. Ugh, is this what teenagers had to deal with these days? How exhausting.

Matt wasn’t sure if he could do anymore than this anyways. Peter didn’t expect him to though.

He never did.

OoOoO

*The night before...

Natasha and Bucky needed to talk.

They didn’t say anything to plan it with each other. They were both staying up, but didn’t acknowledge it was for Peter But around 2am Bucky spoke up. She was on the couch reading a novel with a blank cover and he was cleaning off some weapons in preparation for their next mission. They did their activities silently, an occasional flip of the page or tiny clink of putting a part down on the glass table could be heard but other than that it was a somewhat comfortable but somewhat stifling silence between them.

“I’m sorry Peter didn’t come to you.” He said apologetically, he hadn’t even known he was saying it. But when Natasha looked up from her book he put down his weapon and padded over to her. When he sat down she leaned into him, marking her page with her thumb as he put his metal arm around her. It was this softened and warmth that they only saved for comforting moments like this, when they were both alone and no one was watching. A private moment he cherished only while it was happening.

“Its not your fault.” Natasha said in a quiet tone, as to not break the somewhat peaceful air in the room and closed her eyes.

“We should put down some rules for him…” Bucky started in a breath and felt Natasha stiffen against him.

“Bucky…” She said softly, as if she wasn’t sure. This was a time where she allowed herself to be vulnerable, otherwise she would outright deny him. He could tell she knew he was right but something was holding her back from following through with agreeing. He knew what it was.
“I know.” He said with a placating gesture of rubbing his metal arm up and down her toned but still lean arm “But we can’t just…turn him loose Nat. He didn’t even come to dinner today, that was part of the agreement.” he heard Bucky say “and you know He’ll have no explanation. He comes back too late all the time. What kind of parents are we for allowing this in the first place? He puts his life on the line every night and no one seems to give a shit about it.” Bucky ranted on his voice raising slightly before he toned it down. Natasha sighed next to him.

“You heard what Sam said. He needs to slowly acclimate. Too much change will set him off.” Natasha said gently, but her voice was slightly on edge. She didn’t want him to get away with what he was doing either “It’ll take a little more time for him to change his habits.” she said begrudgingly and Bucky knew she was right. Peter would resist them every step of the way if they suffocated him too much he might just leave.

“Do you really think he’ll do that willingly? He’s doesn’t do things for other people’s sake.” he said back. Peter wasn’t a selfish boy, but he wasn’t exactly the perfect definition of *selfless* either. He protects and saves and helps people sure, but he did it on his terms. Maybe that was a better way to put it, but Natasha knew what he meant “Can he really just settle down and *just* be our son?” he asked in a daze. He knew that would never happen in a million years, he could never ask Peter to do that for them. Still, It was a nice thought though.

“No, that won’t ever get him to settle in comfortably with us.” Natasha sighed, bringing him back to reality “I’m losing it Kras.” she admitted softly and Bucky was a little shocked that she admired it out loud. Natasha was so poised, Bucky didn’t even notice. Maybe their communication slipped in the time Peter was here but that wasn’t good. This is where they needed to be a team more than ever.

“I know but, we’ll figure this out Natalia.” Bucky said gently. They always do “I promise.” he nearly whispered into her hair. She had grown out the blonde and her fiery red was back within the year that they’d been pardoned. It was now half way blonde but she looked good with it. She could pull off any look in Buckys eyes.

“What if we don’t?” She asked worriedly, softly, insecure, unsure. Bucky wrapper her tighter in his protective arms “I don’t know how much more I can take.” She admitted softly.

“Don’t say that.” Bucky said quietly to her, squeezing her tighter in reassurance. He’d be with her every step of the way. They were in this together. “We can’t think like that. We’ve gotta be here for him. We aren’t losing that easily.” He whispered and smiled down at her lightly, she looked up smiled back and then She smirked softly.
“You know, you’re actually right for once.”

OoOoO

Present…

It was pouring rain when Ned heard frantic tapping on his window. Never mind that it was 2:00am (he was playing beast slayers and forgot the time, cause he told his mom he’d be done in ‘15 minutes’) it was raining cats and dogs outside and storming. Who was crazy enough to be outside? Was his first thought.

His second thought was more of a reaction as he was freaking out because a random stranger was at his window and for all he knew they probably had a gun or weapon or something that could harm or kill him.

It took a minute for Neds eyes to adjust to the window but he made out a slim figure clad in...a Spider-Man suit? Except the mask wasn’t one, he squinted his eyes and then widened them as he frantically unlocked the window.

“Peter?!” He asked confused beyond all belief. Why was Peter out in the rain? Why was he here? Why was he wearing a Spider-Man suit? None of his questions were voiced as Peter came vaulting in and gave Ned a crushing, soaking hug and buried his face into the older teens shoulder. Ned was too shocked to move for a second, what had he just seen? Not really believing his friend was there and dripping onto his floor with rain water in the fucking Spiderman suit.

He didn’t understand. Peter wanted nothing to do with him for a year and a half and now he came in at 2 in the fucking morning to hug him and... wait...

Peter was shaking, Ned noticed it before but paid no mind as to think Peter was cold from the rain. But then Peter sucked in a ragged, hitched breath and Ned soon realized he was crying. Why was Peter crying? Great now Ned was crying too (it’s been a tick with them ever since they met. Peter never cries, so when he does Ned knows something bad happened. By default Ned cries whenever Peter cries. MJ has made fun of them for it sometimes. Guess the year and half they had been apart didn’t change that). Why were they crying?

“Peter-“ Ned started in the most stable voice he could manage. Ned was a loud crier, Peter wasn’t. Only to be cut off.
“The winter Soldier and black widow are my biological parents.” He blurted out, squeezing Ned tighter. Ned’s brain short circuited.

*What the fuck?*

“Wha-“ Ned asked in disbelief not quite processing it fully.

“Their my parents.” He said again this time a little louder “and I’m Spider-Man.” He continued in frantic breaths and a rushed voice “I got bit by a spider in eighth grade on that stupid Oscorp field trip and became super strong and sticky and have this weird sixth sense. I found the guy who killed my uncle and took him to jail and then couldn’t stop being Spider-Man.” He took a rapid breath and before Ned could get a work in he continued “I beat up professor octavious and then accidentally turned Doctor Conners into a lizard and then he tried to take over the city but I stopped him.” He was a bit hesitant to say the next thing and he held onto Ned tighter “an-And then Gwen found out and then Harry found out and they took my blood to try and make a cure for Harry’s disease but it backfired really bad and turned Harry into the goblin then he killed Gwen and then I got mad at you and MJ and everyone and then May commutes suicide and I left cuz I didn’t want to lose you too.” Before Ned could say that that was the stupidest thing he’d ever heard Peter continued in an. Even more hurried voice “and then I joined the Avengers on missions but they were jerks and then after a year I found out Black widow and winter soldier were my fucking parents and then they found out and they’re trying to make it work but it’s just not working and I don’t know what to do!” He finished in a rabid breath and if Ned wasn’t so good at following Peters freak outs he wouldn’t know a word of what he was saying. He let Peter breathe a few times as he slowly returned the hug. There was more silence as the silent tears soaked into his shirt and dropped into a curly bed of messy brow hair. He’d gotten Skinnier, Ned noticed.

“Is that all?” He said in a light voice that was still strained and Peter huffed out a laugh. Of course he would.

“For now yeah.” He played along “I’m sorry.” He almost whispered and Ned felt more tears pouring out.

“Me too.” He said and closed his eyes. God, he was such a bad friend. Of course Peter had a lot He was going through and the one time he needed him to be there (well admittedly it was probably more than this once) he had literally asked him to leave and never come back.

“I don’t know what to do Ned.” Peter said in a hoarse voice that sounded so lost and out of place in his words. “They don’t... expect anything of me but I also feel like I have to live up to something I just know I can’t.” He admitted. That was the stupidest shit Ned had ever heard. Peter was a fucking genius, proved everyone wrong. It was what he did. He defyed everything possible long before he was Spiderman or knew the Avengers.Its why Ned admited him so much.
“Since when have you ever cared about expectations?” Ned asked and for some reason Peter laughed.

“Red said the same thing.” Peter breathes out and laughs humorlessly. Ned wasn’t gonna ask who ‘Red’ was just yet. Probably a Spiderman thing and what the fuck his friend was a fucking superhero! Who crazy was that? “maybe MJ was wrong. Maybe I have changed.” He said sadly and softly. Nope, Ned wasn’t gonna let that thinking fly for another second.

_Not anymore_.

“No,” Ned said idly, it was watery as they were still crying “you’re still a dumbass.” He said and smiled down at Peter as he playfully glared up. His eyes went watery again.

“Can I stay here tonight?” It was almost like he was afraid to ask “I’ll leave before your mom checks on you.” He promised. Ned snorted.

“When has she ever rejected you?” He asked rhetorically. His mom loved Peter And was heartbroken when he disappeared. She’d be asthetic when she saw he had came back. Peter smiled up at him.

“Wanna pirate Empire Strikes back?”

For the first time in a long time, Ned felt familiarity.

OoOoO

Peter hadn’t come back last night or the night before.

Natasha hadn’t seen her son in two whole days and then some, and now they were having a meeting about it. She knew this was going to happen, but she’d think it would be for a reason. Maybe there was one, maybe she was missing something. Maybe she had been too caught up in her own head to realize that Peter was having trouble.
They had run him off. Again.

“Where could he have gone?” Bruce asked as his brows scrunched in confusion. It was a good question but still a stupid one. If they knew, they’d be there and not here.

“He does this a lot. Fury says he always disappears.” Clint waved off casually. “Says that he’s next to impossible to find, but he’ll come back. He always does.” Clint informed and Natasha grunted. She remembered Michelle’s words ‘Peter never does anything for no reason’. In a way, no one does anything for no reason. Not really anyway.

“But he wouldn’t do that right now. He made a deal that he wouldn’t.” Natasha said with furrowed brows remembering the deal they had made. Peter couldn’t run away so long as he had that bat and they could kick him out any time. He didn’t seem like the type to break a deal even if he was trapped while doing it. Even if he could just...leave. Steve nodded.

“Yeah, He said he’d regulate his patrolling hours.” Steve said Natasha grunted in affirmation. “Did you follow him up on what those were, maybe we could start there.” He said looking to the two. They had said that it had to be reasonable but they never actually defined what ‘reasonable’ was, they blindly trusted Peter to just cut down on hours, and he hadn’t even done that sometimes being out for an entire night and coming back without sleeping. They looked a little bashful, Natasha felt so embarrassed. She hadn’t, she was was better than this.

“Unbelievable.” Tony grunted under his breath rolled his eyes as he sat a little straighter in his chair. “This is why he thinks he can get away with things like this.” He said and Sam huffed.

“They’re doing their best.” Sam furrowed his brows as he defended them. Natasha didn’t need that, Stark was right. And they all knew it. “We didn’t want to make this place like a prison for the kid.” Sam huffed and Stark snorted.

“Imprisonment and restrictions are very different, Wilson. I thought you of all people would know that.” He huffed out and Sam sagged his shoulders in defeat.

First order of business when they found Peter: define the rules clearly.

“Well, you were the last to see him Stark. What did he say before he left the lab?” Sam asked instead.
“Actually, he did come back at 2am yesterday.” Tony said with a shrug and Natasha and Bucky sat up straighter “we had a little...chat.” He ended on an unhopeful tone, that had something sinking in Natasha’s stomach.

“And you didn’t bother to tell us this sooner?” Steve asked with an irritated brow and Tony shrugged nonchalantly.

“He went down to your apartment when it was over.” Tony said with gesture to Bucky.

“‘It’?” She asked with a raised brow “What exactly did you two talk about?” Natasha silently commanded Stark to answer and he blew out a breath

“Well, I wouldn’t exactly call it ‘talking’, “ Stark said in an exasperated tone “He was being an idiot when apologizing to his friends and I told him that and then he got a bit...defensive.” Tony averted his eyes a bit. Natasha leaned in a bit as Steve shot up.

“Did he...?” Steve asked cautiously. Stark didn’t get like this unless something bad happened, like really bad. She knew what Steve was insinuating, Peter could easily hurt Stark even if he didn’t mean to. Peter had an unnaturally good control of his powers for his age, but he’s still a kid. If he was upset or angry, which he wasn’t often (probably for this exact reason), he could easily hurt someone he didn’t mean to hurt.

“No, but he did finally snap.” Tony said with another shrug, but this one Natasha could tell was less confident and more guilty “It was like he reverted into some sort of... animal for a second.” He said more to himself. “Started to even growl at me at one point. I thought he was gonna fucking tear into me, at least that was the impression I got.” Natasha sighed. Peter probably was about to tear into him. If Stark was really trying to piss Peter off, he probably could especially at that time.

“Why would you yell at him?” Bucky asked a bit angry but mostly incredulous. She understood why, they shouldn’t have other people scold their kid. It was embarrassing and shameful, but most of all it was their job, not anyone else’s.

Only theirs.

“It’s called the ‘dark side of parenting’ Barnes. No one wants to do it, but you gotta.” Tony retorted with a glare at the man “It keeps them in line.” Tony said “And I’m not fucking doing it again, especially not to Parker. That was fucking terrifying.” He grumbled and crossed his arms. Natasha
was sure it was, Steve or Bucky could probably restrain him if need be but Stark? He’d rip the guy to shreds even with the Iron Man suit on.

“That’s exactly what Peter doesn’t want.” Bruce sighed and sagged his shoulders.

“No one wants it, Banner.” Tony scoffed, he turned to Natasha and Bucky and leveled them with a rare, serious look. “But you can’t just let him completely loose, he needs to be kept in check. That’s your fucking job, take it or leave it.” Tony said with a narrow glare at Natasha. She sighed.

“You’re right.” she grumbled. She didn’t want Stark to hear it but she had to accept it.

“Wait what?” Tony said a little astonished and a whole lot of amusement in his tone that grinded Natasha gears “Do my ears deceive me?” He asked insufferably and Natasha rolled her eyes and kicked him sharply as he let out a yelp.

“Shut up Stark.” she snarled lowly. “But we were too lenient.” She admitted as she looked at Steve who gave her a serious look.

“Way too lenient.” Bucky grunted in agreement and stiffly nodded. Steve nodded back.

“This is on us.” Natasha continued “we need to communicate better.” She said and looked at Bucky as understanding flashed between the two. It was their kid and they were going to deal with this. Together.

“Yes, next time we’ll all be on the same page when it comes to Peter.” Steve pointedly looked at Tony who rolled his eyes.

“He’s a person, Rogers not an Avengers assignment.” He rolled his eyes at the man “he’ll make connections as he so pleases.” Once again the man was correct. Man, it was so weird for her to even think that.

“I never said he couldn’t Tony.” Steve sighed “I’m saying we need to handle this as a team though.” Natasha cut in before it could get any further.
This was their problem to handle.

“This shouldn’t be an Avenger matter.” Natasha said and they all looked to her in slight shock, or everyone except Bucky and Tony. “We’ve been treating it like it’s one for too long. This is something me and Barnes should do. We’ll handle it personally because that’s the way it should’ve been from the beginning.” Natasha said and looked at Tony who stiffly nodded his approval. She smiled a bit.

“We’ll be here for support if you need it.” he said with a small smile. He wasn’t doing their job, but they were still friends. They all were. Somehow that had slipped their minds for a second but it was back now and that’s all that mattered.

They were a team, a support system. They were a family.

Maybe everything would turn out okay after all.

OoOoO

“Where are we going Parker?”

MJ didn’t really seem too keen on following Peter through the darker parts of New York City, especially at night. Peter was currently leading her the bar that they had frequented as children and where he worked (that’s sort of weird because they are still both under 21).

MJ said she hadn’t gone since he had disappeared, he was sort of glad for it because it was dangerous without him (she could take care of herself and had her own rep in the underground, but both of them together had a more intimidating presence) to protect her. Or maybe for her to protect him, even if he’s the one with more combat training by a long run. They both knew it was for his piece of mind though. Peter had to come to the dark parts of the city to work. He lived there too. MJ just came because she was friends with Peter, in a way he dragged her down with him but at least she could get out. MJ didn’t have to be here, but Peter never reminded her of that.

“I want you to meet someone.” He said and MJ gave him a look of disinterested questioning that only she could do flawlessly “one of my...uhm teammates…” he answered the unasked question and averted his eyes a bit as she rolled hers.
“I already know Wade is Deapool.” She said blandly. Peter would’ve blanched if he was surprised.

“Of course you do.” He breathes as she smirked in her triumph “but I’m taking you to meet the other one.” He smirked at her as she stiffened a bit.

“You mean…” she started off a tad unsurly. Peter suppressed a wicked grin.

“Yes, the Devil himself.” He smirked at her and she paled for a minute before regaining her composure.

“There’s a reason they call him that Peter.” She said a bit insecurely but mostly impassive and Peter grinned a sharky smile he’d learned from Matt.

“I know.” He said and pulled her into the heavy door way into Saint Margarets. The dingy bar was lovely before some choice heads looked at them and promptly stared as the two teenagers made their way to the crowd. It was the group that frequented before and it seems like they haven’t forgotten the terrifying presence of Michelle Jones.

Matt was sitting at the bar, sipping his beer, in his lawyer cloths. They were supposed to have a little chat about Fisk and go out tonight since it was a little early. He made a beeline for the man and dragged MJ along who was using her garage strides to keep up at a steady pace (she had always been taller than him and never failed to remind him in the most subtle ways possible).

“Hey Red!” He smiled to him and MJ and to her credit, she only looked shocked for a second.

“You’re a lawyer.” She said blandly. Matt chuckled gruffly and ignored Peters greeting, which rude but okay whatever.

“And you’re a menace.” He said back to her and she crossed her arms in a defensive power pose (as Wade had called them. He also called her a little deva and promptly shut his trap for the rest of the night and never called her that again) “or so I’ve heard.” He ‘looked’ to Peter. MJ raised her brow.

“He’s blind.” She said blandly and turned to Peter. She wasn’t asking for an explanation, Peter shrugged.
“That a problem.” Matt raised a brow.

“No,” MJ turned back to Matt slowly “just an observation.” She said smoothly. Matt snorted, Peter could tell he was listening for any sign of lying. He wouldn’t get any though. MJ didn’t give a single shit if your hair was rainbow, she might make fun of you if you looked stupid enough but she would judge you, not in anyway that really matter at least.

“You were not exaggerating when you say she wouldn’t make a big deal.” He said in a slightly amused tone. Peter huffed.

“When do I ever?” He said indigently. Matt shrugged.


“I like her.” And with that one phrase, Peter knew: he fucked up.

“Having you two meet was probably a mistake.” Peter grumbled a sinking feeling in his stomach as he thought of all the ways Matt and MJ could make his life a living hell. Oh god, they could go and get coffee and exchange stories of what a stupid shit he was. Dammit, this was a very very bad idea.

“probably.” The girl said with him. They ‘looked’ at each other before he smirked at her and he could tell she was doing the same. Shit.

“Oh god. What have I done.” Peter whispered in horror. They were gonna get coffee, Peter already knew it.

“So you really aren’t shocked that I’m blind?” Matt raised a brow, it must have been a first for him.

“Do you want me to be?” She mirrored his image.

“Nah, But usually people question the authenticity of it.” Matt gestured in a way that referred to
people who knew he was Daredevil as well, with a shrug.

“In this city? Who knows.” She gestures to Peter casually. Peter wanted to resent that, but to be honest he was the perfect example.

“Touché.” Matt hummed in slight delight. this is why Peter hates sensory types, because they could hear his emotions even if he didn’t want them to.

Before they could talk anymore Weasel came out and promptly dropped the six pack he had been carrying out as his mouth hung open and MJ turned to raise a brow at him “no way.” He breathes, frozen looking at MJ as she smirked.

“Sup dickhat.” She nodded toward him with a smirk and Weasel developed a rye smile at the old nickname. He’s always had a soft spot for her and her blunt personality.

“So Parker finally managed to find his balls.” Weasel said with a smirk and Peter huffed as they took a seat at the counter, Peter in the middle of MJ and Matt.

“Something like that.” MJ shrugged vaguely “so who won the bet?” She asked and Peter was a little confused before he caught on.

“Me.” He smirked and Peter couldn’t even find it in himself to be surprised about them betting on him and his friends. They did it all the time when they were younger. But he’s sort of disappointed in himself for not realizing it sooner. “Wade said to give it a few more months.” Weasel said in triumph. And it probably would’ve been, if not for his genuine stupidity.

“It probably would’ve been but life has a funny way of screwing him over.” MJ smirked to Peter and then turned to Weasel as they started to chat. Peter turned them out as Matt started to talk to him.

“People are talking.” Matt said to him lowly so MJ couldn’t hear, not looking at him. He didn’t look at the man either “about you and the Avengers.” He said suggestively, Peter furrowed his brow.

“Do they know?” Peter asked in the same tone. He wasn’t about to show Matt that he was freaking out. But the last thing he needed was for everyone to know about his heritage crisis.
“No, it’s not that obvious. I’m assuming that was on you but now Barnes and Romanov are scouring the streets.” He said “just Barnes and Romanov.” He came closer as he said it and Peter kept staring forward not wanting to look at the unseeing man who had turned to him.

“You don’t think they’re actually looking for me.” Peter grumbled in a bit of disbelief as his shoulders hunched. *That’s exactly what their doing. Why else would they leave the tower*

“That depends.” Matt hummed in a way that only dared Peter to lie “did they kick you out or did you run away before they could?” He asked and Peter bit his lip. Matt turned back to his drink, his emotions unreadable.

Peter hadn’t said anything, Matt already knew the answer anyway.

OoOoO

Riding around on a military grade motorcycle at 2am isn’t what *normal* parents do to find their runaway children.

They usually call the police.

Natasha gave about two seconds to consider both those things before scoffing and throwing them out of the window. It was that kind of thinking made Peter runaway in the first place. It was that kind of thinking that was blocking them from being a family.

They *aren’t* normal and that’s just the way it was.

“Got anything?” She asked in her com. She was riding a cool ass motorcycle but somehow she had managed to stay discreet, not drawing any attention of the crowds around her. Peter wouldn’t appreciate if they made a big deal and ruined his rep out here (and it wasn’t an ego thing or a pride thing. It was dangerous if they compromised him out here, Natasha knew all too well). But they also didn’t want to give Peter the chance to run again. No doubt he already knew they were out here looking for him. No matter how discreet, the Black Widow and Winter Soldier being out for multiple consecutive hours, especially at night, would raise some more perceptive brows (sometimes she hated the status she had as an Avenger, because it was harder to go undercover when people recognized you from every angle. Bucky didn’t have that problem as much, due to the fact that he wasn’t a founding member. But a good eye could pick him out in a crowd). Word
travels fast in this world but even faster in the underworld. You had to know how to navigate it or you’d be fish food.

“Nothing in Manhattan, I’m going to Bronx.” He said and Natasha scoffed. Bronx was probably the last place he’d be in the city. They knew he was still in the city, he hadn’t left and Natasha doesn’t think he would for a while. He was still cleaning up the aftermath of the Ross trial and it was taking him longer because of all the other shit he had to deal with, but she was well aware of the promise he made Wanda. He’d get all the kids out no matter what, or as many as he possibly could.

“It’s rare for him to be there,” Natasha said “even to hide out.” Peter never gave any thought to Bronx, none of the vigilantes did. Out of all the burrows it was the most maintained, probably because it was the most suburban area in the city and things were a bit more spaced out there.

“Yeah, but it’s worth a shot.” Bucky said with a grunt. Natasha wasn’t even sure Bucky knew how to navigate New York anymore but she’d let him figure it out when it came to that.

“Alright, I’m checking the docks again.” Natasha said. It was 2am after all, Peter was more likely to be out especially at docks. She may not be a vigilante but she does know this was the main place where illegal transactions occurred, and if she had learned anything in her time with Peter it was that Spiderman got cats out of trees and helped old ladies cross the street in the daytime, and yes he did partake in stopping mugging and robberies and even participated in the occasional car chase into the evening hours. What she wouldn’t guess from the start was that he stayed up into the late hours where it was rare for even a mugging to happen but more likely for drug deals and trafficking to occur. This was when the dark part of New York was most active and where sinister organizations did their best dirty work.

Crime really doesn’t sleep she guessed.

She got off her bike as she parked it in a dank, narrow area between crates that the shadows cast over the vehicle to make it virtually impossible to see (and even if someone found it, they couldn’t steal it, it was Stark tech after all and Tony designed that one personally for the members of the team who knew how to operate a bike to use).

She went out and strutted but not noticeably, it was just if anyone did notice they’d know not to mess with her. A Pre-defense mechanism. Smart move on the streets that she picked up easily.

She walked a bit down the dock, looking not lost but not exactly like she knew where she was going (because that’s exactly what she was). It was near bare, with only a few sailors and drunks
mulling around. She paid them no mind.

She didn’t know if she actually expected to see Deadpool finishing off his most recent kill - or kills. But she wasn’t surprised, more like mildly disappointed.

_Wade Wilson_ , her mind supplies.

Yes, this was Deadpool she remembered from the video and Matt Murdock was Peter's other ‘teammate’ or at least on the dubbed ‘team red’, she wasn’t sure if they were a really team persay. They seemed to work together enough to be one though. It was of a more unsaid thing, and Peter seemed to hangout with them enough in civilian lifestyle. He guessed that’s what separates them from everyone else. Vigilantes generally hated or didn’t care about each other, but sometimes it was interesting when they teamed up. Their dynamics and personalities clashed so much that it should be impossible for the to work together but somehow every single one of them seems to be able to perfectly syncrnnize on the dime when they have to. It was mind boggling.

The man was singing badly to a Nickleback song, and he seemed so full of energy. A stark contrast to the tired middle aged scarred veteran that had opened the door and gave them the tapes all those weeks ago.

“I'm gonna trade this life. For fortune and fame. I'd even cut my-“ he was singing and then turned to Natasha “oh?” He said in a childish voice, sounding not surprised at all. Natasha scrunched her face “Huh, guess there are a lot of Spiders running around tonight.” He smiled, she couldn’t see it because of the mask but his giddy voice gave it away that he was. Natasha hadn’t even had a full conversation and the man had already turned insufferable in her eyes.

_Do all vigilantes have different personalities when they put on a mask?_

“Have you seen him?” Natasha asked blandly, crossing her arms over her chest. She wasn’t in the mood to beat around the bush.

“You misplace him a lot.” He said rocking from his toes to his heels, not answering her question.

“We’re working out the kinks.” She said blandly and his whole demeanor seemed to literally _light up_.

“Kinky.” Wade giggled. She was starting to regret not just walking away. She didn’t expect Wade to be this different as Deadpool, but then again she expected Deadpool to be this way. It was like they were completely different people.

*Just like Spider-Man and Peter.*

You can’t just flip a switch and act like someone you’re not though. Especially the opposite of who you really are. At least you can’t *act* like it *this* flawlessly. Some part of you had to be genuine about it...or maybe...maybe *all* of it was genuine.

*Fuck.*

Natasha felt like an idiot. *Of course* Peter couldn’t give up Spider-Man, sure he wore a mask but it was like how she was the Black Widow. She was brought up to be that way, it wasn’t just a superhero name or persona for the cameras, it was who she was doing what she does best and Spider-Man… Spider-Man was just raw Peter. It was who he was without filters and he was doing what he knew how to do naturally.

How could she ask him to give that up? How could she have even considered him to ask him to do that? It was like she’d be asking him to become a hollow version of himself that couldn’t express how he feels with no fakeness or acting. It was who he was and as his mother she needed to accept that. Or else this wouldn’t work.

“I need to find him.” She said more to herself. She needed to apologize for not getting this sooner. For not understanding. He was right, they *don’t* understand Peter because they never bothered to understand any of his other titles. They never bothered to understand Peter Parker, the kid who had lost everything before, they hadn’t bothered to understand Spiderman, they didn’t even questioned why he did it. They just labelled him a menace and went on with treating him as such. They only understood the parts he wanted them to see, not every other part of him.

“Then find him.” Wade shrugged and if she were honest she forgot he was even there “but warning you, he’s been a busy bug.” He sing songed.

“Spiders are arachnids.” She found herself repeating Peter.

“Oh my god! You two *are* related, he says that all the time!” Wade pointed dramatically at her and she rolled her eyes and tilted her stance.
“What has he been doing then?” She asked well more like demanded.

“Last I saw, throwing crates at Kingpen, who’s apparently trying to take control of some organization he shut down, you know the common recognition of evil organization takeover spiel.” Wade waved off “now? I dunno. He’s pretty erratic.” He shrugged.

“Kingpin?” She hummed. She had heard that name before. It was an underground tyrant who ruled with an iron fist and controlled some of the public’s, especially criminals, thinking. Manipulating and rich as fuck. “That’s more Daredevils ally though.” She said thoughtfully. She didn’t know much but she knew that Spidey didn’t fuck with Kingpen, just like DareDevil didn’t fuck with the Juggernout and Deadpool didn’t fuck with the sinister six. They all seemed to have divided their bad guys and let each other deals ith the problems that came with them. That was smart and idiotic but then again they weren’t a team, they were solo acts that came together sometimes to kick someone’s ass.

“Yeah Red called dibs on him but it’s Spidey’s sitch. That’s why they’ve been hanging out together so often lately.” Wade said and crossed his arms in a pout “and they didn’t even invite me, like rude.” He huffed. “Ungrateful brats.” He grumbled. She rolled her eyes and walked away.

So she had to find Daredevil now.

OoO

Turns out Bucky found Daredevil first.

He had somehow wandered into Hell’s Kitchen instead of going to Bronx, and he was upset because he was just a little off. He had climbed up to a random roof and looked around for something, any defining sirens or even a person flinging themselves in the air on spindly webs (because that was a common sight now, or so he’s heard). He found nothing but the usual distant wails, city lights, and cars honking.

“Barnes.” He heard a voice behind him and he jumped and turned around, whipping out a gun on instinct and pointing it at the supposed offender.

The ‘offender’ was wearing a Red Kevlar suit and the helmet covered all but his mouth and had little horns sticking out. He hadn’t gotten into a defensive pose, meaning he probably wasn’t here
to fight. But then again you never knew with Vigilantes, they seemed to flip a switch so easy.

*You're son is one of them idiot.*

He sighed. He looked at the man again and tried to find a name to him. He knows this one was important. Devil horns...red...

*Daredevil.*

Aka Matt Murdock.

Aka Peters lawyer friend.

*What are the odds.*

“Daredevil.” He tried, he knew Peter didn’t like to be called his real name in the mask. He supposed Murdock wouldn’t either. He put his guns back but still kept his guard up. Matt may have been a friendly when Peter was around, but Peter *wasn’t* around now. Bucky wasn’t taking any chances.

Again, unpredictable. It doesn’t if his son was put into the same class as them, that’s what they were and it wouldn’t do him any favors to think of them any differently than what they were (he thinks they actually *like* how they’re labeled, at least Peter doesn’t seem upset when they say it to him. He actually seemed a bit pleased when they called him unpredictable and wreckless).

“I appreciate you not using my name, but what the hell are you doing on my fucking roof.” He said in a decidedly *not* lawyer voice. *What?* He sounded hostile but he didn’t *seem* hostile.

“This is you’re apartment?” He asked with a raised brow. Daredevil seemed to take offense to that because he recoiled not unlike a cat would.

“Rephrasing. What the hell are you doing on my turf.” He nearly growled out. Was this elementary school? *His* Turf? Did Peter have turf? Was this a vigilante thing? If it was he’d probably have to understand considering his son didn’t seem to be keen on giving this lifestyle up anytime soon.
Maybe it’s a phase? He looked at the grown adult in front of him and sighed in disappointment. It’s a nice thought.

“Turf?” He asked with a cross of his arms and Matt growled defensively at his condescending voice.

“Hells Kitchen.” He informed curtly. Okay, so they didn’t like to be questioned or having to explain their odd ways. Understandable.

“Just passing through.” He hummed in an answer to the man’s question.

“Well get out.” The man said and Bucky nearly balked.

“I’m looking for Spider-Man.” He said in a bland defense.

“Yeah, I know. He’s not here.” He said impatiently. Man he really wanted him out of his ‘turf’. It didn’t come as a surprise that he knew about that though, he and Spiderman were on the same team after all.

“Then do you know where he is?” Bucky asked, impatience in his own voice as well. This was becoming insufferable.

“I know where he was.” Matt said “I was beating up some of Kingpin’s men with him, he’s probably following the lead we found.” He shrugged and Bucky sighed.

“You didn’t go with him?” Bucky asked with a raised brow and bit of anger. This man had left a kid to fend for himself against armed dealers. His kid. Logically he knew Peter could defend himself, better than anyone else could at least. But still, it was the action that counted.

“Has nothing to do with me anymore. At least not for now.” Matt shrugged, these people really did have a simple mindset didn’t they? He supposed that’s the difference between being a Vigilante and a superhero. It was less complicated structure but complex ideals and MO while being a superhero was just the opposite. “Spidey can handle himself.” The man smirked wickedly and it was such a contrast from how he was formally speaking to him that Bucky almost got whiplash.
“Where did it lead to?” Bucky asked pushing away his confusion. There was silence for a while and Bucky wasn’t sure if the man would answer him. When it didn’t seem like he would he turned away to get back to his motorcycle.

“Pier 34 in the abandoned harbor on the far side of Brooklyn.” Murdock said and Bucky nodded briefly to the man ingratitude and jumped off the roof and landed in a crouch in the nearly empty street, walking up to his bike. He pressed his comm in his ear with Natasha on the other line.

“I got a lead.”

OoOoO

Peter actually felt like he had this pretty well handled.

He was swinging through Brooklyn, following the lead that he and Matt had found to a separate base. It wasn’t one of Fisk’s and Matt had to go to court in the morning so he turned in for the night and headed back to Hell’s Kitchen. Peter didn’t want his silent scrutiny anyways, he felt like he’d somehow disappointed Matt in running away and being upset about being - not - ‘kicked out’. He must’ve seemed like such a coward.

*Because you are a coward. It doesn’t matter that you put yourself in front of danger for other people. When it really counts you run and that’s all that matters. Who’d wanna chase after that?*

He pushed that thought away as he landed on a bunch of crates just out of sight from the ordeal that was happening. They were loading crates from armored trucks to ships. This one though, wasn’t a human trafficking so much as drug trafficking. Oops. Another dead end. Oh well, might as well stop them. He was here after all.

There were a little more people packing the drugs into a ship than usual. Peter let out an explosive to one of the full trucks and that got their attention as they all pointed their guns at him. He easily swooped over them and into the middle of the crowd as they clumsily tried to follow his fast movements with their bulky guns.

*How inconvenient.*
“You know, I’d just immediately fire.” They did so and he flipped up and laughed at them as they managed to shot each other and tried to follow him with their rapid fire “I mean odds are, when someone sends out an explosive they’re probably hostile.” He giggled a bit as he dropped down on the other side of the foreign squad and kicked some men into each other, toppling two moreover and the men that kept shooting shot some of their own men.

*Idiots.*

“Is that common sense or just me?” He asked as he flipped back and drop kicked another man “cause I feel like it’s just me lately.” Peter sniped the guy next to him with a web shooter without looking at them. He looked over to a few barrels of gasoline and then the packed boat crates that had yet to be loaded.

“Oh this’ll be fun.” He smiled a wicked smile under his mask and webbed up the tanks and put them on each of the storage crates. He shot off an electro web to the furthest and it sparked the first explosion then the next and the next and he smiled broadly as he jumped off the crates and whooped as he swung over to a pile of unscarred crates, looking at his explosive results.

He heard movement and looked over to the armored trucks. The men he’d let skitter around him took the cargo they had already packed in the trucks and revved ups their engines as they sped off in a stupid attempt at a getaway. Seriously? It was like they forgot that he could websling.

Great now he had to do a fucking car chase.

OoOoO

So it turns out they didn’t need to go all the way to the other side of Brooklyn.

In a weird way Peter had met them in the middle, but more literally than figuratively and more unwillingly and unknowingly as he was riding on the top of one of three speeding armored trucks most likly trying to stop the driver.

Bucky and Natasha didn’t even need to look at each other as they started speeding off after them. Bucky going a bit further back to snipe the wheels with a snazzy rifle and Natasha jumping off her motorcycle which crashed into a speeding armored truck in front of them but didn’t stop but did explode the one she would’ve been on if she hadn’t grappled onto the third one, aka the one Peter currently was on. Men started shooting them from outside the windows in a sloppy manuvers.
"I can handle this." He said tersely, he probably could. These guys didn’t hold a candle to him. They were amateurs and made stupid mistakes. Panicked too much and acted on first instinct. Peter was way more level headed than them.

“So I’m just supposed to sit out?” She smirked as he grumbled in his easy defeat. They didn’t have time to argue, or maybe they did and Peter didn’t want to anymore.

“Fine.” He coneded and if Natasha didn’t know better it almost sounded like he wasn’t fine with it. He didn’t give her any orders as he flipped to the other running car. He trusted her to stop this one or he had a plan that he wasn’t disclosing. Probably a bit of both. He was a more sporadic superhero. Making calculated decisions on the fly.

He kicked in the drivers window and the car swerved as he overpowered the driver and took the wheel. The passenger started to shoot at him but he disarmed the gun and knocked the guy out. The passenger window on her car rolled down and a gun stuck out but before it could shoot at him she Widow bit the weapon and naturalized it. The man looked up clumsily and she smirked at him.

“Holy shit it’s Black Widow!” The man said in shock and she smirked at him before kicking him into unconsciousness.

“Civilians!” She heard Peter yell at her from the other truck, he didn’t have a com and she looked up ahead at the cross walk of frozen people.

“Barnes.” She said in her earpiece.

“I got it.” Bucky muttered into his com as he zoomed past the trucks and went to deal with them. She went back to taking over the wheel of the car and swerved into a different street like Peter and the cars stopped abruptly as police sirens got closer.

“Leave a note. Gotta jet.” He said quickly scrawling out one of his infamous Spiderman notes and sticking it to a webbed unconscious criminal. “Thanks.” He mumbled and nodded curtly as he swung off.

Natasha watched him go as Bucky rolled up behind her.
“Where is he going?” Bucky asked a bit frantically as he jumped off his bike and jogged to her. Natasha narrowed her eyes at the sky where he had swung off.

She knew where.

He knew she knew.

This was an invitation. Or was it a test? Maybe it was a bit of both.

Either way, that’s how they found themselves looking at Peters back as he stared off a roof, far enough so that police didn’t see him but close enough to see what was going on and so he could probably swoop in for backup just in case. He was wearing a black hoodie over his Spider-Man suit and the hood was pulled up.

It was just like the first time she had asked him to help her find her son in the day. It was like the time after that where she asked about the trial at sunset. Now, it was a test to see if they’d actually cared about him all along at night. Where emotions could be masked by the darkness but never forgotten.

“You’re hard to find when you wanna be kid.” Bucky said in a strained light voice. Peter didn’t answer and Bucky’s nervous laughs died off. Natasha narrowed her eyes, trying to analyze the situation. He then turned to them but didn’t say anything, just looked down at his shoes. Mask on and black hoodie up. Even so they could still sense the emotions through his posture and the slight movement of the intuitive white eyes.

“Why did you leave?” She whispered, not demanded and Peters shoulders bunches up at his ears as he kept looking at his shoes. She gave him a minute. “Petya.” She said softly, she wasn’t begging but at the same time she kind of was. He seemed to respond to his given name.

“I was just... cutting out the middle man.” he said and his voice got quieter as he did. Something clicked for Natasha.

“You heard our conversation.” She stayed more than asked. He made a small noise, that sounded like it was supposed to be humorous but didn’t quite reach that point.

“Not all of it apparently.” He let out a watery laugh she stepped forward gently and carefully
slipped off the mask. He smiled apologetically, painfully briefly, before looking up a big with reddish eyes that were illuminated by the flashing police lights, red and blue casting across hollow cheeks and haunted eyes “because you’re here now.” He said and bit his lip and looked back down.

“We may not be the most experienced parents…” Bucky grumbled, and smiled softly as he walked over “but we’ll try to be here for you.” He said coming behind her and Peter looked like he didn’t know how to feel about that.

He unexpectedly let out a quiet hitch of his breath and Natasha didn’t think. just one minute she was looking at her son and then the next she was wrapping her arms around him. He let out a quiet sob into her chest and she brought him closer.

“s-извините “( s-sorry.) he stuttered out in watery Russian, his voice sounded so childlike and lost that Natasha’s heart broke. She was reminded of when he was younger and spoke the exact same way, Russian slurs and all “Мне жаль, я сбежал. Я прошу прощения за боль. Я такой беспорядок. Мне так жаль “ (I’m Sorry I ran away. I’m sorry for being a pain. I’m such a-a mess. I’m so so sorry.) he blubbered tearfully and Bucky calmly wrapped both of them in a protective, warm hug. They were both smaller than him by at least a foot and a half, hopefully he didn’t inherit her shortness but due to his acrobatics and unhealthy lifestyle his growth might’ve been stunted. Maybe they could get him on track quick enough, he’d hit a growth spurt. Somewhere in the back of her mind she knew this could have all been avoided if she had fought harder to keep him in the first place.

“все нормально петя. Мы все в беспорядке, и это нормально.” (it’s okay Petya. We’re all a mess, and that okay.) she said gently, tears coming into her own eyes as she silently let them slip into Peters hair. The He has grip that tightened around her clothing made her aware that he knew she was crying too. She didn’t mind, she had to be open with him if she wanted the same results. “это нормально, быть таким. Мы все по-своему. И мы будем здесь, чтобы помочь друг другу в этом. Я обещаю с этого момента.” (it’s okay to be like this. We all are in our own way. And we’ll be here to help each other through it. I promise from now on.) she kept reassuring, rubbing his slightly shaking back soothingly. making sure the promises she was making weren’t empty, and they weren’t she meant every single word. She wasn’t planning on them to be fake anyway. She wasn’t going to lie or push him away.

Not anymore.

“Я не хочу больше убегать” (I don’t wanna keep running away anymore.) he admitted softly, he wasn’t blubering but she could still feel him crying into her shirt, his hand desperately trying to clutch the fabric as if she’d disappear. He sounded too broken and tired for it to be fake. She believed him regardless. He’d been running away for his whole life some an evil that threatened to consume him. A dark shadow that lingered in every shady corner, following him and slowly trying
to break him. She’d be tired too, if that’s all she knew. But someone, people, taught her how to face it and fight it and helped her through it. And she would do the same for him.

*They would fight this together.*

“Мы дадим вам причину остаться.” *(we’ll give you a reason for you to stay.)* Bucky grunted out softly as he tightened his bear hug, shielding them for all the evils and the cool chilling wind that was whipping their tears. He was crying too, it was only given away in the slight shakiness of his voice. He didn’t care though, he never did “Я обещаю, детка. Вы не можете избавиться от нас так легко. Мы всегда будем бежать за вами, независимо от того, как далеко вы зашли.” *(I promise kiddo. You can’t get rid of us that easily. We’ll always run after you, no matter how far you go.)* he waterily reassured, trying to make a light joke but Natasha knew he wasn’t planning on breaking that promise either.

*They were in this together.*

Peter didn’t seem to know what to say but he only held on tighter. He wasn’t letting go. He wanted this and Natasha almost cried out in joy because he was gonna accept this family. Her son would finally be happy and they’d make sure he was. They wouldn’t fail him.

*Not this time.*

“мы не отпустим, Петя. Никогда не.” *(we won’t let go, Petya. Not ever.)* she cooed soothingly.

She meant it.

“Я тоже не буду” he faintly whispered.

Because he never really had before.
UPDATE: TBD

I love Nat and Buck and Pete.
The last thing that was said was "I'll never let go either" or something like that just in
case any of you were wondering.
Man it's been long wild ride, but it's not over yet! We'll have some pretty angsty and
pretty fluffy oneshots lined up for y'all but the main part is done. In my opinion the
main part is just the set up for all my oneshots, so this is only the beginning. Actually
I've been working a oneshot that might just make an appearance before the epilouges,
but now I can start oneshots, so I'm excited. Don't be surprised if y'all get those before
the actual epilogue, I'm just so excited.
TBH there is more Nat, Buck, Pete bonding in the oneshots but whatever, let them be
them and shit like that.

Thank you all for hanging in there and reading this bullshit. I love you all!

DON'T FORGET TO SEND PROMPTS!!! I WILL TRY TO INCORPORATE THEM
(in the way I determine, it might be superficial it might be totally obscure, either way
they will be featured, I'll try my best) SO long as y'all give me prompts, I'll keep
writing this, so it's up to you (and me, because sometimes I get mini plot ideas off of
them) when this story really ends!!

I love you 3000!

Now time for some redemption

End Notes

I love you all 3000 <3

If you guys have any questions don't hesitate to comment! I'm always open to criticism. I
know my writing can be a bit hard to read. :(

Also if you wanna chat or something more personally (about this fic or just other fandom
stuff or just stuff in general) hit me up on my Tumblr(https://starrykitty013.tumblr.com)
@StarryKitty013!! I post about Spidey stuff and also mini updates on this and other fics I'm
working on!! (like how the next chapter is progressing or just things I'm generally excited
for you to see or even sneak peaks) I try to check it a lot (cuz I'm a dumby and still trying to
figure things out.

See y'all next time :3

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