No Comments From the Peanut Gallery

by duskblue

Summary

Peter's already having a bad day when Flash steals his phone. But don't worry. Tony will get it back for him.

Irondad bingo prompt: Bullying

Notes

Two more left for a bingo!! Stay tuned! Or bother me on tumblr: duskblue-art

Peter’s head hurts. He had been up till two the night before, and now, over halfway through the school day, he realizes it’s not going to get any better until he gets some rest. At first, he thought maybe he would feel better if he ate something, but then when lunch came around, the smell of cafeteria food almost sent him running to the bathroom. He ended up eating some Cheez-its and drinking a can of Coke. Still, his headache rages on beneath his brows.

His last class of the day is thankfully study hall, so he’s spending the period with his head down on the desk, his arms wrapped around it, trying desperately to block out the sound of his classmates
chatting with one another.

This is perhaps the reason why he doesn’t realize that something bad is about to happen.

“Yoink!” Flash’s voice rings in his ears, and he sits up in his desk just in time to blink blearily and see that Flash is holding his brand new Stark phone in his hand. Conveniently, the teacher has stepped out of the room. “Guess you won’t be needing this.”

“Give that back!” Ned yells from beside Peter, just loud enough that Peter has to cover his ears.

Flash is taking careful backward steps while he pretends to consider the matter. “No, I don’t think so. Besides, if Peter is a Stark intern, then he can just get a new one easy, right?”

Ned folds his arms over his chest. “Good luck unlocking it,” he says.

Flash stops stepping away from them and takes a few steps forward. “That’s going to be really easy because Penis here is about to tell me what his password is.”

“Give it back, Flash!” Ned tries again. By then, the rest of the room has looked up from whatever they’re working on to watch what’s happening. A few kids stand up like they want to do something, but it seems like almost everyone is afraid to go against Flash.

Flash ignores Ned and makes his way back to Peter while he slides the phone into his back pocket. “So. What’s your password?”

Peter thinks it will serve Flash right if he throws up on him right then and there, but fortunately or unfortunately, Peter isn’t quite at that point. “Why would I tell you my password?” Actually, giving Flash his password would probably be about the worst thing. Because even though the files are locked per Avenger protocol, Peter definitely has secret stuff in there that he didn’t want Flash to get his hands on. It would make things really, really bad.

Flash just grins a toothy grin and leans closer to Peter like he already knows the answer. “Because if you don’t, I’m going to post all over facebook about how your dear aunt is looking for a good time. I mean, she must be after your uncle kicked the bucket.”

Peter was not expecting him to say that, so he stands there for a moment, his sore head attempting to process the words. And then his head is pounding so hard, he can barely see. He could throw Flash across the room in an instant. He could hit him so hard, Flash would be seeing stars for months. But he doesn’t. Not only can he not let Flash know about Spider-Man, but he can’t let Flash post anything bad about Aunt May. So he squeezes his fists until his nails poke into his palms and does his best to swallow his rage.

“Fine,” he says through clenched teeth after the pounding quiets to a dull roar. Then he scribbles his password on the corner of his notebook and tears it off, thrusting it into Flash’s hands. “Happy?”

Flash looks down at word and laughs. “Now I know who your crush is. Classic!”

Even though Peter’s head is hurting worse than ever, he can’t help but chuckle. “That would be really weird if that were true.” Being that his password is ‘spiderman,’ it would, indeed, be very awkward.

“Oh?” Flash looks up at him with a pointed expression. “And why is that?”

Peter shrugs. “Confidential SI information. You wouldn’t understand, anyway.”
Flash’s expression turns from triumphant, to interested, to enraged in just a few short seconds. He looks like he’s fumbling for the right words, but he just ends up backing away and glaring at Peter, his hand protectively over the pocket he has slipped Peter’s phone into. “If there’s any confidential SI information on this phone, which I highly doubt there is,” he finally says, “then I will turn it over to SI and be sure to let them know that their intern is irresponsible and leaves his phone laying around.”

Before Peter can reply, the teacher walks back into the room and orders Flash to return to his seat. Peter is stunned at the recent turn of events, and he feels a little naked without his phone, but at least Happy is picking him up after school for the weekend, so he figures he can talk to Mr Stark about it when he gets to the compound. That is if he can make it there. Right now he feels like he wants to die. So he puts his head back on his desk and tries not to groan while Ned pats his back a few times.

~*~

Tony Stark has been running on coffee all day. By noon, he’s a mixture of wired and ready to collapse, so Pepper lets him out of his afternoon meetings. In turn, he decides to drive with Happy to go pick up Peter for the weekend. They’re about thirty minutes out, and Tony is falling asleep in the back seat when he feels his phone vibrate in his hand, so he opens his eyes to look at the message.

Peter: Who is this?

Tony: Who do you think it is? Did you change my name to something stupid in your phone again and then forget what it was? Or am I some stupid emoji now?

Peter: Are you really Tony Stark?

Tony holds his phone out and stares at it, confused. Why would Peter be asking if he’s really Tony Stark? Who else would he be?

Tony: As far as I know, no one has taken my phone. Are you in your last class? I’m actually on my way to pick you up. I got the afternoon off.

Peter: Who are you picking up??

Tony: Like there’s any other kid I would pick up from school. Is this some stupid thing your nerdy friend dared you to do? Because you know how much I hate that.

Peter: Are you picking me up for my Stark Internship?

Tony blinks at his phone. What is wrong with the kid? Did he hit his head or something? “Hey, Happy,” he says, leaning forward to knock on the edge of the divider. “Step on it, will you? The kid’s acting strange.”

“What?” Happy says, glancing back at him. “Strange how?”

“I don’t know. He’s asking me weird questions.” Tony looks back at his phone to formulate some sort of reply.

Tony: Pete. You are coming to the compound for the weekend. Did you miss the memo?

Peter: THE AVENGERS COMPOUND???

Tony: Do you know of any other compound? Seriously kid, what is wrong with you? You’re making me nervous.
There’s no reply for a good minute, so Tony looks out the window to see how close they are before he holds his watch to up to speak into it. “FRIDAY, track Peter’s phone.”

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To Peter, every minute of sitting in the stuffy classroom seems like hours. All he wants is to lie down and close his eyes, but Ned keeps poking him in the shoulder and suggesting different ways he could get his phone back. It’s only when Peter finally tells him his head is about to explode, that Ned quiets down. He’s just drifting off when the classroom door swings open so hard, it hits the wall. And then none other than Tony Stark is standing there looking like he’s out for blood. Peter’s head is pounding so hard, but he definitely notices how Mr Stark relaxes a little when their eyes meet.

“Excuse me!” the teacher says, getting up from her desk and taking a few steps towards Mr Stark. “You can’t just come bursting in—” Then she sees who it is standing there, and she freezes, mid-sentence. “Um, M-Mr Stark! What are you doing here?”

Mr Stark turns his head slightly so he can look at the teacher briefly before turning back to the room, looking around at each and every kid, sizing them up. “One of your students took something that doesn’t belong to them. I want to know which one.”

Peter glances over at Flash, whose forehead is covered in tiny droplets of sweat. Uh oh. This is going to get bad really quickly. He almost feels sorry for Flash.

“Does anyone want to fess up? I believe the item is newest edition Stark Phone.” Mr Stark steps forward and slaps an empty desk at the front of the room, causing everyone to jump. “If you give it to me right now, I won’t press charges.”

Most of the class is absolutely stunned that Tony Stark is standing before him and are staring at him in open mouthed awe. Flash, however, is practically shaking in his seat.

Mr Stark figures him out pretty quickly because all of a sudden, his focus is on none other than Flash. “I’m waiting. Hurry up, kid. I’m a busy man.”

Flash shakily gets up from his seat and then hurriedly makes his way to the front of the room before holding the phone out to him.

“Nuh uh,” Mr Stark says, pointing to the desk. “Set it here.”

Flash almost throws the phone on the desk and then makes a turn to walk away, but Mr Stark taps him on the arm.

“Hey,” he says and waits until Flash turns to look at him from over his shoulder. “If I catch you taking anything from Peter again, you don’t even want to know what I’ll do.”

“Mr Stark!” the teacher exclaims. “You can’t threaten a child!”

Mr Stark turns slightly to look at her. “This child just stole my kid’s phone. I’m talking about pressing charges for property theft, which I believe is my legal right. Since he gave it back, I won’t have to, but if it happens again—” he looks at Flash who is now cowering in his seat. “I won’t be so forgiving.”

Now Peter is sweating. Did Mr Stark just call him his kid? While he’s glad to get his phone back, he’s a little embarrassed. Hopefully everyone who’s in his study hall will forget what happened over the weekend, but he somehow doubts that.
“You coming?” Mr Stark nods at him just before the bell goes off. “Grab your things.” He nods at the phone. “Especially that.”

The rest of the class, who would have normally rushed up at the sound of the bell, wait for Peter to collect his things and say goodbye to Ned. They all watch him grab the phone and leave out the classroom door with Mr Stark. When the door shuts, Peter can hear them all talking excitedly. Great.

“You okay?” Mr Stark says once they’re making their way down the hall. “You look a little green around the gills.”

Peter rubs at the side of his head. “Headache, I guess. Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry about the headache. You can rest in the car.” Mr Stark puts his arm around him to give him a little support. “What I’m upset about is why you would ever let that punk take your phone. And how did he get your password?”

Peter stares straight ahead, trying to ignore all the kids in the hallway who are staring at them. “How did you even know he had it? He literally took it from me like thirty minutes ago.”

“Stupid kid was texting me trying to find out if I was the real Tony Stark,” Mr Stark replies while holding the door open so Peter can exit before him. “Which brings me back to wondering how the hell he got your password. Don’t tell me it’s something stupid like ‘spiderman,’ and he guessed it.”

Peter pauses and feels his cheeks flush. “Actually, he kind of threatened me so I gave it to him.” There is no need for Mr Stark to know what his password is anyway. And besides, that’s the truth anyway. “He said he would post bad things about my aunt on facebook. I couldn’t let him do that. And I knew Happy was coming to get me after school anyway, so I figured I’d talk to you about it when I got to the compound.”

“Okay, so you sort of had it under control,” Mr Stark says, putting his hand on Peter’s shoulder and guiding him into the backseat of the car. “But I think you’re in desperate need of some better security features though. But that’s okay. Gives us something to work on this weekend. After you’re feeling better of course.”

Peter ducks inside the car, where Happy has already had the AC blasting for quite some time. He already feels a little better and sets his backpack on the floor between his shoes, leaning back against the seat and waiting for Mr Stark gets in after him so he can lean against the man’s shoulder. “That’s probably a good idea,” he says, closing his eyes when Happy starts driving. “I was worried he’d have access to Avengers stuff or confidential SI things.”

“That’s not the only reason,” Mr Stark says, adjusting so that his arm is around Peter. “That punk took away your communication device. If something went wrong, you’d have no way to alert me. Especially today with this headache? That’s completely unacceptable. You could have been really sick, kid. But don’t worry. I have several ideas to fix that.”

“Sounds to me like you’re going soft,” Happy says from the front seat.

Mr Stark presses the button to close the divider. “No comments from the peanut gallery,” he says while it’s closing.

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