# Whose Fault is it Anyway?

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## Whose Fault is it Anyway?

by *reeby10*

### Summary

Tony touches an alien artifact and it has some unexpected side effects.

“Tony, don’t touch th-”

There was a blinding white flash. When Rhodey blinked the afterimage from his eyes, he saw that Tony was lying on his back a few feet away and the alien object he’d just touched was nowhere to be seen. He rushed over, relief filling him as he saw that Tony was alive and well.

Or as well as he could be with a mild (“So mild it’s barely there, Rhodey!”) concussion. Not like it hadn’t happened dozens of times before and likely would again. Rhodey sighed, knowing that Tony would go out and do dumb shit no matter what he said. That was just part of who he was and while Rhodey might not like it, he was used to it. Sort of.

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Four months later, the incident was practically forgotten. It was just another blip on the weirdness radar, what with all the other Avengers related stuff they had going on. Disappearing alien tech that wasn’t obviously hostile barely registered for any of them anymore, and wasn’t that just something? Rhodey probably would have forgotten it entirely if it weren’t for one surprising... side effect.
Tony called Rhodey down to the lab in the middle of the morning one day. He sounded odd even for him, so Rhodey figured he’d done something he knew Rhodey wouldn’t approve of and needed help sorting it out. It wasn’t the first time that something like that had happened. Wasn’t even the first time that week, honestly.

“What did you do this time?” Rhodey asked as he stepped into the lab. He was a little surprised that nothing seemed to be on fire, or even out of order in any sort of noticeable way. That, somehow, just made him more worried.

“This time it’s your fault too,” Tony replied. He was standing in front of a screen with a strange grayscale image on it, blocking it just enough that Rhodey couldn’t tell what it was. It didn’t look like a blueprint or anything that he normally saw in Tony’s lab though. “I mean, it’s mostly my fault, I admit. But you’ve got to take at least like fifteen percent of the blame.”

Rhodey crossed his arms over his chest, unimpressed. “And how is whatever it is my fault?”

“Well, it’s got your DNA at least. So. Your fault somehow.”

For a moment, Rhodey just stared at Tony. His DNA? What in the world? But Tony didn’t seem like he’d be very forthcoming with more information at the moment. He was twitchy in that way that meant he was nervous about something but trying incredibly hard not to show it. That never boded well in Rhodey’s opinion.

“Ok, I’ll bite,” Rhodey said at last. “What has my DNA? Did you build a cyborg with my DNA or something? Because I have to say, I’m pretty sure that’s illegal. And immoral seeing as I didn’t consent.”

Tony muttered something that sounded suspiciously like “if only” and shook his head. He stepped to the side, allowing Rhodey to see the image behind him. Rhodey frowned and looked closer. It looked suspiciously like…

“Is that a baby?” Rhodey asked, hoping that this was some sort of joke. There was no other explanation for why he was looking at a sonogram.

“You’re so smart. See, this is why I keep you around.” Tony smirked, but there was an edge to it, like he was about to fall apart at any moment and his sarcastic mask was the only thing keeping him together. “It is indeed a baby. Our baby. The baby growing in my belly, where it very much is not supposed to be.”

Well. That was not what Rhodey was expecting to be hearing today. Or ever, if he was honest. Though he probably should have been, what with all the other weird shit they’d seen.

Still twitching nervously and trying to sound nonchalant about the whole thing, Tony explained. Something to do with the alien artifact Rhodey barely remembered and some associated biological changes that Tony had only found out the cause of that morning after spending half an hour puking into the lab toilet.

Apparently that part had been very concerning, according to JARVIS, but Tony tried to brush it off. Vomiting into toilets was something he was very familiar with from his rowdier party days. Rhodey, unfortunately, could verify that.

“Well,” Rhodey said, at a loss once Tony finished. “Shit.”

Which seemed to be the exact wrong thing to say, because Tony’s face crumpled and Rhodey was suddenly afraid he’d start crying. He’d dealt with Tony Stark in a lot of situations, but he wasn’t sure
he could deal with a crying Tony Stark. That just somehow wasn’t right.

“Fuck, Tony, what’s wrong?” he asked, rushing over to put an arm around Tony’s shoulders.

Tony looked up at him with wide, lost eyes. Rhodey didn’t think he’d ever seen him so vulnerable, and he’d seen after Afghanistan. This was something else entirely.

“I can’t do this, Rhodey. I can’t,” he said, voice fragile. “I’m going to be a terrible dad. I don’t… I don’t know how to be a good one. I don’t think I can be.”

“Of course you can,” Rhodey replied before he could even think about it. But he certainly wasn’t going to take it back. Because if there was one thing he was sure of, it was that Tony could be a good anything if he put his mind to it. “You’re going to be an amazing father. And I’m going to be with you all the way.”

Tony let out a long breath. “You don’t have to.”

“Tony, you know me better than that. There is no way I’m letting you do this alone.” Rhodey smiled, hoping for a little levity. “We’ll be great parents even if it turns out to be all alien.”

“But we’re not… like that,” Tony said, probably for the first time in his life ignoring the chance to joke around. He was dead serious. But Rhodey knew exactly what he meant by “like that” and he was also very sure in that moment that that wouldn’t be an issue. “You’ve never- We’ve never-”

Rhodey cut him off with a sharp shake of his head. “That doesn’t matter,” he said, hoping that the conviction in his voice would be enough to convince Tony. “We’ve always been in this together. This is just a little… more than before.”

“That’s one way to put it,” Tony said with a snort.

But he was smiling now too, so Rhodey thought that was ok. They’d be ok. Somehow. The two of them. The three of them now, which was incredible to think about. He placed a hand on Tony’s cheek and took a deep, steadying breath before leaning in to press a soft kiss to his lips.

“Hey,” he said softly as he pulled back. “We’ve got this.”