People are afraid of what they don't understand. Team SHIELD, once solid and secure, is beginning to fracture in the wake of Trip's death and the changes happening to Skye, and their loyalty and devotion to one another will be sorely tested in the days coming ahead.

Notes

Spoilers for the most recently aired episode, S2E11 Aftershocks. This scene takes place with most of the team together in the break area, much like the scene in episode 11 when they're remembering Trip. There are no direct spoilers for anything ahead, but I think we all know there are going to be some shifting loyalties and surprises in the future as Skye's true nature and destiny is revealed. This little piece speaks to that, with my interpretation of how it might go down.

I hope you enjoy!

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May had been taught how to read body language and tone of voice and had been a prize student. She could already feel the tension before she entered the room, and visuals confirmed it as soon as she did.
This was about to get ugly.

The look on Skye’s face was one she’d never seen on the younger woman before. Abject fear mixed with misery and self-loathing. Nonetheless, it was one May was well-acquainted with.

“What is going on here?” she demanded, striding into the room confidently.

“We’re just having a little talk, is all.” Hunter shrugged his shoulders nonchalantly. He was a better actor than she’d previously given him credit for, though the lie was apparent to her.

“Bullshit.”

He blinked at her. “Excuse me?”

“You heard me.”

Mack turned on her and for a moment she was almost afraid at the look in his eyes. “What gives you the right to come in here and jump all over us?”

“I outrank you, that’s what gives me the right. And you’re turning on one of my people. I won’t have that.”

“Your people?” Bobbi questioned. “Is it us against you now?”

“You tell me. I thought we were a team. All working together toward the same goal.”

Hunter stood. “We were, then one of us was infected by alien biological … stuff and became dangerous.”

“She’s not dangerous,” Fitz said quietly.

“She’s sitting right here,” Skye grumbled, turning to face him. “Thanks, Fitz.”

He gave her a small nod.

“We don’t know that,” Simmons protested. “We don’t understand the alien artifact, we don’t know what caused the tunnels to collapse, what really happened down there, or whether or not she had something to do with Trip being turned into dust.” Her voice quivered on the last few words.

Skye rose in indignation and opened her mouth to speak.

May held up a hand for silence, and mercifully, they all obeyed. “What would you have us do?” she asked Simmons carefully.

“I’m just saying maybe she should stay in isolation a while longer, or maybe one of the cells down below. For her own good,” she hastened to add as the colour drained from Skye’s face. “So she doesn’t hurt anyone or herself inadvertently.”

Anger coloured May’s cheeks. “And if she does? You’d have us put her down like you want us to do to Raina?”

“I’m not saying that - “

“Of course she is,” Hunter interrupted. “Gifteds are unpredictable and dangerous. Every one we’ve encountered has killed people and left destruction in their wake. Including her.” He took a step towards Skye but May stepped deftly between them.
“Stand. Down. Now.” She bit out each word slowly and clearly. “I’m drawing the line right here, right now. Any of you want to cross it and come for Skye you’re welcome to but you’re going to have to go through me. Are we clear?”

Her grim face brooked no argument and they all backed away silently and one by one left the room until none were left but her and Skye. She turned. “I guess they’re not ready for a fight yet,” she said lightly.

Skye crossed her arms over her chest. “Thanks.”

May watched her keenly, reading her eyes and body language. “I won’t let them take you,” she said softly. “You don’t need to be locked up.”

“What if I do?” She hugged herself tightly. “What if I am dangerous and I hurt people? They’re not wrong you know.”

“No they’re not.” May’s voice was gentle now, gentler than she’d ever heard it. “But they’re not right either. Something happened to you Skye, through no fault of your own. We don’t know what it was, why you survived and Trip didn’t, and we don’t know yet whether that experience has changed you and if so, in what ways. I’m not willing to take drastic measures on what ifs and maybes.”

They shared a quiet moment, eyes locked. Skye shifted her weight back and forth restlessly. “Thank you for standing for me.”

May just nodded.

“I’m going to head back to my room.”

She nodded again and watched the girl leave.

“I owe you thanks as well.”

She turned at Coulson’s voice behind her as he slid out of the shadows. “For - “

“Standing up for Skye.”

“I didn’t do it for you.”

“I know. But I appreciate that you did it.”

May looked him up and down. “She’s scared and blaming herself for what happened to Trip.” At his lifted eyebrow she continued. “Whether or not she’s responsible, she needs support and understanding and help to figure out what’s going on. Fitz said she’s fine - her blood scans match previous ones, but I can see it in her eyes. She knows she’s different and she’s afraid of what she might be becoming.”

“I agree.”

She cocked her head slightly. “You sound surprised. You shouldn’t be.”

“No I shouldn’t. Having been through a somewhat similar experience lately I know how important it is to have support and understanding. Yours in particular.”

“I’ve been with her long enough now to know she’s a good person through and through, just like you are. What’s happening to her is beyond her control and we can’t blame her or lock her up because of it. Worse, we can’t let her blame herself. I know all-too well where that road leads.”
“I know.” His blue eyes, icy during the confrontation with the others earlier, were warm now. He took one step forward. “I know you won’t let her go there. Neither will I.”

Memories of what had happened in Bahrain and after it ran through her mind. She could see in his sad smile that he too remembered it well.

“You’d best go to her,” she murmured. “I can and will stand between her and anyone who tries to hurt her, but you’re the one she needs for emotional support. You know better than any of us how it feels to be going through changes you don’t understand and can’t control. She needs you Phil.”

“And we both need you.”

A small smile ghosted across her lips as she began to walk away. “I’ll be here. Where else would I be?”

~ fin ~

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