Whom Gods Destroy
by ready3x

Summary

After fighting an crazed Dr. Cyber, Wonder Woman and Steve Trevor encounter a strange tank with a human body, which emanates a strong dark aura. Is it friend or foe, how is it connected to their previous adventures, and why does the fate of the universe depend on out two heroes? Horrifying and miraculous adventures await them, taking them to the very edge of the universe.
Chapter 1

“DIE, HUMAN SCUM! I'LL KILL YOU!!”

Steve Trevor, top agent of the Department of Extranormal Operations secret service under Director Amanda Waller, took full cover. A millisecond later, Dr. Cyber opened fire, and the DEO spy dodged electromagnetic beams that could stun a mammoth. Wonder Woman jumped in front of him, deflected the beams with her bracelets and retorted: “Then come and get me first!”

Steve jumped to safety while his fiancée stood strong. Even after witnessing it so often, he just stared at the strong, fearsome warrior with red armor, blue skirt and golden lasso, who parried the lighting bolts with superhuman speed and dodged punches that could crush a tank. Dr. Cyber swore: “HOW DID YOU FIND ME, PATHETIC HUMANS?”

“We had some help,” Steve muttered under his breath, and muttered into his super secured microphone: “How long does it take, Lonnie? It’s getting kind of hot in here!”

“I am hacking into Dr. Cyber’s network nodes, just tell Wonder Woman to buy me some time!” DEO superhacker Lonnie Machin a.k.a. Anarky a.k.a. Moneyspider replied. From his secret mainframe, he watched every move through the cameras in Steve's combat goggles.

“Yeah, why don't I do that?” Steve mumbled. His fiancée whipped out her lasso, snared the android's wrist and snapped: “Your crimes end here! You have impersonated Veronica Cale long enough, Adrianna!”

“ADRIANNA IS DEAD! THERE IS ONLY DOCTOR CYBER, THE MISTRESS OF MANIPULATION!!” the android once known as CaleTech hacker Adrianna Anderson shrieked. Steve cringed at Dr. Cyber's searing, high pitched voice, but Wonder Woman punched out her crystal eye and retorted: “You are just a thief, Adrianna. You stole Veronica Cale's identity, her daughter, and her life!”

“BECAUSE I AM AT BEING BETTER VERONICA CALE THAN HER!” Dr. Cyber retorted, using her holographic powers to make herself look like her former friend. The resemblance was so uncanny that even Wonder Woman flinched, and the android threw the stunned Amazon into the wall.

“Diana!” Steve hollered. He whipped out his pistol, loaded with Anarky's bluescreen cartridges, and fired three slugs at Dr. Cyber. The android dodged the shots with incredible reflexes, returned fire with her terrible beams and screamed: “DIE, HUMAN SCUM! MANKIND IS SOFT, ROTTEN AND CORRUPT, IT NEEDS NEW LEADERSHIP!”

“That's why you founded CaleNews, the #1 far right news network, and use Veronica’s disabled daughter Isabel like a shield? You weren't always like this, Adrianna, what caused it?” Wonder Woman retorted, snared a piece of debris with her lasso and smashed it into her side. The android shrugged it off and snapped: “I SAW THE LIGHT! THIS WORLD MUST BE DESTROYED AND REBUILT, THAT'S WHAT IT TOLD ME!”

“You're crazy!”

“YOU'RE WEAK!”

Dr. Cyber was so strong and quick that she wrestled Wonder Woman to a standstill. She tried to crush the Amazon in her metal grip and gloated: “YOU CANNOT WIN, WITCH! I AM NO
“I know the gods, Adrianna, and you aren't one!” Wonder Woman snapped, dove under Dr. Cyber's armbar and tried to disable her wrist beams. Steve whipped out his pistol, loaded with Anarky's bluescreen cartridges, and fired three slugs directly into Dr. Cyber's metal skull. They exploded like three small suns, and the static made the android cross her eyes. But just a heartbeat later, Dr. Cyber smashed her forehead into Diana's face and pinned her down. Steve croaked into his microphone: “I fired all your slugs into her skull, Lonnie, and nothing happened!”

“Nothing happened YET, Steve! I can now hack into her vital systems, just give me a few seconds!”

Steve watched in horror when Dr. Cyber smashed his fiancée against the wall and aimed her beams at her, but suddenly her eyes flickered. The android grabbed her head, which was enveloped in static, and let out an inhuman scream. She stumbled out and croaked: “STEALTH MODE!”

Dr. Cyber disappeared, and when Wonder Woman threw her lasso into the space she just occupied, she hit nothing but air. Lonnie's voice crackled in Steve's headphones: “Yes! Thanks to your headshots, I hacked into her systems!”

“Thanks, but next time, could you please do it before I almost break my nose?” Diana muttered, while Steve carefully wiped the blood trickling out of her nostrils.

“Either good nose with a failed hack, or vice versa. It was a purely rational decision, princess,” he retorted, finishing off his vegan milkshake with a loud slurp. Steve rolled his eyes and snapped: “Lonnie, we are not done yet! Dr. Cyber made herself invisible, what can we do now?”

“Oh, yes. Adrianna dumped part of her systems before I could fully hack her. However, she is very vulnerable now, one more slug can finish her off!”

Suddenly, an invisible force hit Wonder Woman with the force of a sledgehammer. With inhuman reflexes, she parried the blow of the invisible Dr. Cyber with her bracelets, but the impact took her off her feet and smashed her through the next wall.

“DIANA!!” Steve screamed. Blinded by a billowing cloud of dust, he could only hear rumbling combat noises, with Dr. Cyber and Wonder Woman exchanging blows, kicks and insults. The fog was so thick that even his hi tech goggles couldn't penetrate it, and he could only take cover.

“What is this 'light' you talk about? Maybe I can learn something,” Wonder Woman snapped, finding herself in a server room. She ripped a massive mainframe of the size of a small car off the ground and hurled it at her opponent.

“IT IS BEYOND YOUR PUNY MIND, WITCH! BEFORE, I MERELY EXISTED, NOW I TRULY LIVE. IT IS A BLACK VOID WHICH CLEANSES BODY AND SOUL, LEAVING NOTHING BUT BRIGHT LIGHT!” Dr. Cyber shrieked, smashing it with a single punch and opening fire on the Amazon.

Now that's not helpful, Diana thought, parrying the EM bolts with her bracelets. The shock wave set several mainframes aflame, and she went into counter attack. Steve heard that the fighting spilled over into the next rooms, and after a couple of smashed walls later, everything went silent. Suddenly, Wonder Woman came around the corner, cracked her knuckles and greeted: “Oh, there you are, Steve! Let's regroup and track down Dr. Cyber together.”
“That won’t be a problem, angel,” Steve whispered, reloaded his pistol and casually blew her brains out. While Diana slumped to the floor, Lonnie screamed: “Are you crazy?! You just killed Wonder Woman!!”

“No, I didn’t,” Steve grinned, and suddenly, her silhouette began to flicker. The holographic camouflage wore off, revealing Dr. Cyber's smoldering robotic body. Lonnie muttered: “Okay, Steve, I reluctantly admit that I am impressed. How did you know she was fake?”

“Trade secret,” Steve grinned, glancing at his engagement ring. On queue, his real fiancée darted around the corner, stared at the smoking Dr. Cyber and grinned: “I feared that damn android could hurt you, but I was wrong.”

“Thank you, angel, but you did all the heavy lifting. I cannot break metal limbs or deflect EM blasts.”

“Or hack into a level 8 AI network,” Lonnie crowed, but Wonder Woman smiled: “It was good teamwork!”

“Princess, tell your scruffy friend that I deserve a new mainframe, or at least a raise.”

“Hey!” Steve exclaimed, defiantly stroking his beard. The hacker ignored him, finished off his vegan milkshake by gurgling his straw, but suddenly muttered: “Heads up, you two, I am picking up strange readings!”

Wonder Woman and Steve immediately stiffened, and he continued: “It's a biosignature, seemingly human, but the data is very confusing. I am sending the coordinates to your HUD, Steve.”

A moment later, a yellow arrow flashed inside Steve's goggles, and he whispered: “Diana, you stay here and watch Dr. Cyber. I'll track it down, it's not far.”

“I should be near you, Steve, it's dangerous.”

“Angel, I am the top agent of the DEO. I already busted black sites before I was allowed to drink.”

“Okay, but be careful,” she whispered. Outwardly, her demeanor was calm, not betraying her true feelings for Steve in front of Lonnie, but Steve was touched how concerned she was. Like a shadow, he sneaked through the destroyed server room, and stumbled upon a large hole in the ground.

“It's right down there,” Lonnie whispered, and Steve carefully peeked down. Suddenly, he blurted out: “There is a tank down there, and somebody is floating inside of it!”

Steve grappled down and saw a massive stasis tank, not unlike the ones ARGUS used, but much larger and with an insane amount of strange plating. There was a male body standing inside, and its cold, dark aura made Steve's hair stand on end. He forced himself to focus and noticed a small sign on the tank, which said: “SUBJECT SCOFREE”

“Are you seeing this, Lonnie?”

“Yes, and the strange readings come from here. I think that the guy is still alive, but the plating is scrambling my readings. Do you know… Scofree?”

“No, let alone if he is friend or foe.”
“Knowing Dr. Cyber, she didn't lock him in because he was our enemy!”

“Firstly, I don't take any chances, and secondly, a botched opening could accidentally kill him. Let our tech guys do it, we are done here. Now we can call Director Waller, secure the area and let ARGUS do its job.”

Lonnie muttered something unintelligible with “don't” and “trust Waller”, but didn't protest.

*Whoever you are, Scofree, I'll find out if you are friend or foe, Steve swore.*

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After completing the mission rapport, Diana and Steve returned to their shared apartment in Boston. The Amazon ripped off her office garb, threw it into the corner and flopped on the couch, revealing the dirty, banged up Wonder Woman corsage underneath. She was so tired that she didn’t bother removing it. Steve cracked open two beers, took a long slip, let out a deep sigh of relief and grinned: “Angel, beating Dr. Cyber is a victory in more ways than one. We took out a dangerous impersonator and hate preacher, who held a disabled child hostage to prevent retaliation. Now, we can regain control of CaleTech, and send poor Isabel Cale to an institution which can treat her special needs.”

“What will happen to CaleTech? It's a billion dollar holding, and we'll have a hard time selling the truth what really happened to Veronica Cale,” Diana asked, knowing that Cale was in reality the sorceress Circe, who now resided with her lover Ares, and their stepsons Phobos and Deimos in Aphrodites's prison underneath Themyscira.

“I don't exactly know, but ARGUS probably has some Plan B up its sleeve. Director Waller was always pretty good in realpolitik. I am also curious what she will to with Scofree,” he replied, not feeling entirely comfortable. Diana shared the sentiment, but then took a long sip herself and smiled: “You really came through when Dr. Cyber impersonated me. How did you know she wasn't me?”

“Her disguise was almost perfect. But ever since No Man's Land, you wear my old army watch underneath your left bracelet. When it was missing, I knew it.”

“True,” his fiancée smiled, stroking the watch on her slender left wrist.

“Also, the real Wonder Woman can deflect a point blank shot with her eyes closed.”

“Also true!”

“Let alone that she is my fiancée, and I would never fail recognize her,” he purred and kissed her crimson lips. Diana eagerly responded, wrapped her arms around her fiancée and repeated: “Also true, darling.”

“Diana, I have seen Aphrodite herself. She is beauty incarnate, but I still rather have you.”

“Aww,” she purred, giggling at his sincere admiration. He reluctantly let go, summoned his courage and muttered: “Diana, can I ask you something personal?”

“Sure!”

“C-Can I to introduce you to my parents? I want them to know who their son wants to marry.”
Diana’s eyes grew large, and then she grinned from ear to ear and exclaimed: “Of course, Steve! Of course I want to meet my future parents-in-law!”

Her fiancé also smiled, but she was too happy to notice how strained it looked. He replied: “I'm happy to hear that, Diana. We can do it next weekend, I presume. We don't need to really travel far, light luggage will do.”

“I will be on my best behavior”, Diana beamed and kissed her fiancé again. He noticed her slight hesitation and correctly deduced: “Lonnie called me 'scruffy'. Why doesn't anyone like my beard?”

“I come from an island without males, facial hair seems so odd. But that doesn't change my love, darling.”

“Okay, you dislike it, too,” he pouted, but Diana knew how to cheer him up. Feigning innocence, she asked her fiancé: “Steve, may I kiss your stomach?”

“Oh… sure?” he stammered, and she dropped to her knees. Suddenly, he screamed: “That is not my stomach!”

“Do you want me to stop?”

“No, NO!!”

Without breaking eye contact, Diana calmly continued her sweet torture. When he could not take it anymore, she eagerly pulled him into the bedroom and made sure they ended the day on a happy note.
The next day, DEO Corporal Etta Candy greeted her two favorite colleagues in their joint office. Diana was grinning from ear to ear, while Steve walked funny and wore a dazed, stupid grin, as if he suffered from acute sensory overload.

“Hello, Colonel Trevor, and hi, Lieutenant Prince! I heard that your raid on Dr. Cyber’s HQ went well, and that you got some assistance from our favorite Amazon princess!” their rotund red haired friend smiled, winking at Diana. Steve muttered: “Thank you, Corporal, and I confirm that Wonder Woman was very helpful. Lieutenant Prince, please start filing the mission report.”

“Yes, Sir!” she beamed.

“For science, I also request a post mission report,” Etta grinned with a knowing smile. Diana giggled, and Steve cringed: “You are merciless, Etta!”

“That’s punishment for wearing that horrible beard,” she teased. Her round face became serious, and she handed him a confidential file and explained: “Director Waller just left this for you. Dr. Cyber is being imprisoned in a special digital holding cell, and apparently, our engineers managed to open the tank. They are trying to find out the identity of ‘Subject Scofree’.”

“Oh, great news!”

“Normally, yes, but we could not identify him. We cross referenced his fingerprints on every database known to man, but we could not find a match.”

Steve raised his eyebrows and muttered: “That’s impossible. The DEO has fingerprints of every human, mammal and spore on this planet!”

“I am only reciting facts,” Etta shrugged, “anyway, Director Waller plans to temporarily replace the missing Veronica Cale with a life model decoy, designed by Professor Will Magnus. ‘Cale’ will announce a sabbatical to spend more time with her mentally disabled daughter Isabel, and gradually fade out of the public eye. CaleTech will quietly change hands, with no jobs lost and no hassle for anyone.”

“It sounds convenient, but unethical. How about telling the truth?” Diana complained, but Etta retorted: “How many people would believe that Veronica Cale is really Circe, an ancient Greek sorceress from the Odyssey, was imprisoned in a magical realm, and was replaced by a shapeshifting hacker-turned-robot?”

“Nobody,” she admitted, and Etta moved close to Steve and her and whispered: “As far as I know, Director Waller assumes that Dr. Cyber was Veronica Cale all along. I don’t advise talking it out of her.”

“I concur,” Steve mumbled. Diana sighed, adjusted her glasses and began filing the report. With pulled back hair, birth control glasses, dark secretary costume with square shoulders, white blouse, pencil skirt and black sandals, she fulfilled every cliché of the shy, meek secretary. It pushed all of Steve’s buttons, and he admired how cute she looked.

_The best thing is, I am engaged to her. She proposed to me, and I want to make her happy for the rest of my life_, he swore, smiling at his engagement ring.

Suddenly, he heard steps. Ignoring the “Please Knock” sign on his office door, Lonnie Machin entered. Without removing his headphones, the averaged built, averaged faced, red clad teenager
prodigy went straight to him and exclaimed: “Hey, Steve, I am running some deep scans on Dr. Cyber.”

“Did you get authorization?”

“Of course not!” he retorted, biting into his apple. While Steve rolled his eyes, he continued: “I analyzed the neural patterns of our dear enemy Adrianna Anderson, trying to understand how a shy, meek programmer became such a racist psycho. The accident that destroyed her body and fused her mind into a mainframe AI wasn't helpful, but I may have found what really sent her over the edge.”

“I am listening.”

Finally taken serious, Lonnie dropped his attitude and continued: “A few weeks ago, she seems to have received a massive data spike. From an unknown source, Dr. Cyber downloaded 1,8 billion quads of highly encrypted data.”

When everybody looked at him blankly, Steve whispered: “Lonnie, uh, for the less educated, how much are 1,8 billion quads of data?”

“She basically downloaded the entire Internet 70 times, and more oddly, only in about 12 minutes.”

“I would kill for such an Internet connection,” Etta muttered, while he munched his apple and continued: “Receiving such a data spike is virtual epilepsy. That alone could drive you insane, and I am curious what the data actually is. I'll keep you informed, Steve, even a guy with an 200-plus IQ needs a small amount of time.”

“Suit yourself, Lonnie, and good work. That being said, you could tone down that lone wolf gimmick of yours.”

“I am not an authority guy, Steve. I prefer working alone,” Lonnie politely but firmly replied.

“Yet you give Wonder Woman and me invaluable help against Dr. Cyber. We would never have beaten her if you hadn't found out where her HQ was,” he retorted, and Diana tacitly nodded.

“I only helped because I can play with some cool million dollar DEO mainframes, and hunting Dr. Cyber posed an intellectual challenge. I get bored so easily.”

“Perhaps you help because you actually love working with us,” Steve smiled.

Lonnie raised his eyebrows and retorted: “Love is just a chemical in your brain, Steve. As a rational person, I refuse to give in to something irrational. Humans consist of Superego, Ego and Id, and I firmly keep my Id in check. My mind belongs to me, not to some hormones.”

“You miss out on a lot of fun, Lonnie!” Etta replied.

“Ms. Candy, I have a 200-plus IQ and read enough books to know how shallow love is. It's only a trick nature pulls on us to create children.”

“Mr. Machin, reading a book about a subject doesn't equal to knowing it,” Diana replied, ruefully thinking of her own experiences with the 12 love books of Cleo.

“I know enough, Ms. Prince. I monitored Steve's eye movements during the Dr. Cyber mission. I am concerned how much he was staring at Wonder Woman's boobs.”
Diana and Etta raised their eyebrows, and Steve blushed so hard that he nearly got a nosebleed. Lonnie snapped: “Steve, as your friend, keep your dam Id in check. You should decide if you love Ms. Prince, your fiancée, or your ex, Wonder Woman!”

The awkwardness was physical, but while Steve wished to disappear in a deep hole, Diana and Etta hugely amused themselves. He finally stammered: “I-I'll t-think about it.”

“Do that, Steve, I'll bust an online drug cartel now and keep your updated on Dr. Cyber. The proceedings will go to the Gotham orphan charity of my choice, and if I am lucky that smarmy billionaire Bruce Wayne didn't destroy it yet.”

Lonnie finished his apple, threw it into the trash with astonishing accuracy, left the office and hollered: "By the way, Steve, that beard looks dreadful!"

Steve just shook his head. Etta wondered: "What's up with that guy? He's like a real life version of Good Will Hunting.”

“He is super odd, but also intelligent.”

“He is a teenager. He knows so little about life that he thinks he knows a lot,” she retorted. Steve shrugged, but then, Diana stood up, went to his desk and purred: “Colonel, is there something about staring at Wonder Woman's chest that you want to tell me?”

“What are you talking about?”

“Lonnie is right, Steve. You really should be ashamed, you double dater,” Etta snapped, and he sputtered: “Cannot I ogle my own fiancée?”

“You are engaged to me, not to Wonder Woman,” Diana snapped with well feigned scorn, “I'm not angry, Colonel, but I am very disappointed!”

The two women exploded into huge gusts of laughter, making him cringe in shame. But Etta patted his head and grinned: “Poor Steve, torn between his love for Diana and his lust for Wonder Woman… or is it the other way around?”

“Given his enthusiasm last night, the latter”, Diana grinned. Both women laughed, and he buried his face in his hands and muttered: “You are so awful.”

“You are so cute,” his fiancée purred and kissed his cheek. Etta let him squirm for another few moments, before she sighed: “Enough banter for now, in five minutes, I am having lunch with Professor Helena Sandsmark and her daughter Cassie.”

“Professor Sandsmark? The famous archaeologist, and the curator of the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece?” Diana exclaimed. When Etta nodded, she asked: “That's nice! How do you know her?”

“We're neighbors, and I babysat Cassie for a decade. By the way… next week, the museum is going to celebrate their 100 year anniversary with a posh dinner party. Do you want to tag along? She gave me free tickets!”

“Meh,” Steve muttered, and Etta threw in: “Hey, they have a nice dinner buffet!”

“Meh,” he repeated, but Diana muttered: “I would love to see some ancient Greek artifacts. It reminds me of home.”

Diana made puppy eyes, and Steve heroically resisted until he blurted out: “Okay, you win! We'll
“Oh, thank you!” she exclaimed and wrapped her arms around him, overlooking that he smiled as if suffering from severe toothache.

There was a knock on the door, and a small brunette with sharp, clever eyes and large square spectacles appeared. Etta greeted: “Hello, Helena, I’ll be ready in a sec! Meet my boss, Colonel Steve Trevor, and my fellow secretary, Lieutenant Diana Prince!”

“Hello there, Professor Sandsmark,” Steve smiled, receiving a small hand, but a firm handshake. She was accompanied by a tall teenage girl wearing a hoodie, jeans and a knitted cap, out of which long blond hair streamed.

“Nice to meet you, Colonel, this is my daughter Cassandra,” she greeted him.

“It’s ’Cassie’”, she muttered grumpily.

“I knew you would say that, Cassie,” Etta grinned, while Diana looked strangely at her. Finally, Etta smiled at her two friends: “See you after lunch, you two!”

While the three women left the office, Lonnie darted in and exclaimed: “Hey, Steve, did I leave my USB stick in here? I was positive that I…”

All color drained out of his face, and he was frozen in place. Steve clicked his fingers in front of his face and muttered: “Hello? Earth to Lonnie?”

The hacker never heard him. Steve thought he had suffered a stroke, but then, he noticed him staring after the three woman. Finally, he stammered: “W-Who was that?”

“That was Etta’s friend, Professor Helena Sandsmark.”

“No, Steve! The girl!”

“That was her daughter Cassie.”

“Where are they going?”

“Why don't you ask them yourself?” Steve asked, heroically suppressing a grin. Lonnie's face took on the same color as his crimson jacket, and he muttered: “I—I have to go back to my place.”

He abruptly stormed out of the office, and Steve teased: “Fight the tyranny of your Id!”

Lonnie never heard him. With a knowing grin, Steve giggled: “He is going to cross reference every database known to man to find out who she is, where she lives, and what ice cream flavor she likes.”

“Cassie sure looks strong, smart and pretty enough for his taste. She looks almost Amazonian.”

Steve didn't notice the puzzled tone of Diana's voice, and instead stroked her cheek, purring: “In that case, he has a good taste in women.”

Diana stood up, wrapped her hand around his wrist like a vise and snapped: “Colonel, you owe me an apology about staring at Wonder Woman's boobs.”

Her grip make him cringe, and even through her birth control glasses, her gaze was so piercing that he mumbled: “Lieutenant, I apologize, it won't happen again.”
In a low, dangerous voice, she whispered: “Colonel, do you know what the real offense is? That you never give me those looks.”

“Lieutenant, maybe you should come to office wearing a red swimsuit, a blue miniskirt, a tiara and a lasso.”

“You are really tempting fate, aren't you?”

He looked straight in her steel blue eyes and replied: “Lieutenant, I want you to know something.”

“What?”

Steve took her wrists, gently pinned her to the wall and kissed her. At first, she was staggered, then she eagerly savored the taste of his sweet tongue. He confessed: “Lonnie was right, Lieutenant, I cannot stop staring at Wonder Woman. If that makes me less of a man, I'll accept it. When my plane crashed, she saved my life, and I will be always smitten with her.”

Diana was touched by his sincerity, adjusted her birth control glasses and whispered: “Colonel, at least you are honest about it. But maybe, your poor secretary wants a little bit of appreciation, too.”

“Was that a reproach, Lieutenant?” he muttered, but she smiled: “Consider it a proposal, Colonel.”

Steve gently locked the door, sat Diana in his lap and made out with her. It felt odd, but incredibly romantic, caressing her in her frumpy, chaste office costume, as if she was an ugly duckling waiting to be kissed into a beautiful swan.

“I love you, Lieutenant.”

“I love you, too, Colonel.”

The formal tone only heightened the romantic tension. He kissed her until the eyes behind the birth control glasses glazed over, the frumpy jacket slipped off her shoulders, and sweat beads appeared on her neck. Finally, she reluctantly broke their embrace, whispering: “I am hearing steps, Colonel. I don’t want us to get in trouble.”

“What can happen if they catch us? We are engaged!”

“What if it is Wonder Woman?”

The two laughed, and he grinned: “I'll risk her wrath, Lieutenant. You are the love of my life, after all, and... I also want to tell you how much I enjoyed what you did last night.”

Diana giggled when she saw how deeply he blushed, and purred: “I enjoyed it, too, Colonel.”

"I just want you to know. I took you for granted the first time we were together. I will never make that mistake again."

"Oh, you are so adorable, Colonel. I allow you to ogle Wonder Woman as long as you like. I love you, with or without that beard."

He just groaned, but then marveled: Diana has the cutest smile in the world. He giggled at her sense of humor and returned to his desk – but not after kissing her red lips one last time. Then, he sighed, studied the little information available on Subject Scofree and slowly focused on a less pleasant part of his near future, namely introducing Diana to his parents.
“Darling, are you sure that traveling by car is the best alternative? I have an invisible jet that is much faster,” Diana asked.

“Yes, angel, but it would raise unnecessary questions if we don't use a car, or at least buy public transport tickets. The last thing I want to do is to bust your secret identity,” her fiancé answered.

“Fair point,” she sighed, finishing off her ice cream cone. Then, she asked: “Can you tell me more about your parents, Ann and Howard?”

“You saw the pictures, Diana, they are a typical Air Force couple. I moved like 15 times in just as many years.”

“I was happy to see them on your photo album. You don't keep their pictures on your wall at home.”

“I don't have too much space, angel.”

Diana eyed him, but then continued: “Pity that I couldn't talk to them on the phone. But unluckily, Wonder Woman had to beat up Sinestro while you made that call.”

“They were surprised and happy, I guess, I usually only see them on Thanksgiving… at best.”

Diana eyed him again, and finally replied: “I am looking forward to meet your parents! I am so curious about meeting a father, the concept of fatherhood is so odd on Themyscira. I hope that my bouquet of roses will make them happy!”

“It will be fine, angel.”

Diana noted how flat and generic his answers sounded, but said nothing. Finally, they arrived at a small town in Vermont and held in front of a nondescript house at Marston Street 41. With a pounding heart, Diana grabbed her rose bouquet, not noticing how cramped Steve's body language was. Her fiancée rang the bell, and finally, a gray, ragged man in jeans, shirt and a loose fitting blazer appeared. Even through his thick spectacles, Diana realized that he had Steve's eyes and nose, and she thought: So, this is Steve’s father, Howard!

“Hello, dad, how are you doing?” Steve muttered.

“F-fine,” he sputtered, but his eyes looked glassy. All alarms inside Diana went off, and when he wavered, his son asked: “Can we help you, dad?”

“No, I-it's fine.”

Howard Trevor's body language told something entirely different. He gazed at Steve, then at Diana, and then cried: “Son, something terrible happened. Ann has just left me!”

He threw his arms around his son and had a complete breakdown.
“Okay, dad, let's try to relax, and you tell us what happened,” Steve awkwardly suggested. He laid him on the couch and patted his hand, while Diana prepared tea.

“It's all my fault, it's all my fault,” Howard muttered, rocking back and forth. With trembling hands, he emptied the tea cup Diana gave him, and blurted out: “I cannot live with this, I am such a failure.”

“What happened?”

“I cheated on Ann.”

Diana and Steve stared in utter shock.

“It just happened. I was sick and lonely, went into a bar and had a one night stand with some unknown lady. Ann found out and left,” he blurted out. Every word was agony, but he seemed relieved to get it out of his system.

“It's all my fault! How can I ever look anyone in the eye again?” he cried. Steve looked at him in complete disgust, but Diana whispered: “Mr. Trevor, can I have a look at your face, please?”

She gently took off the spectacles off the sobbing man, and revealed an ugly blue eye. Diana gasped: “Did the unknown lady have an angry husband, Mr. Trevor?”

“No, no!”

“It looks nasty. How did it happen then?”

Howard just shook his head, but Diana implored: “Please let me treat it, Mr. Trevor, before it gets infected!”

She dodged empty liquor bottles, which were strewn throughout the shoddy looking interior, before carefully disinfecting, cleaning and bandaging the eye. Slowly but surely, Howard calmed down, but he looked so guilty.

“I am so sorry, son, and if you leave right now, it's my fault. I have shamed you in front of your fiancée.”

Steve clenched his jaw, looking murderous, but Diana whispered: “We will work it out, Mr. Trevor.”

Her firm, but gentle voice soothed him, and for the first time, he looked at her with clearly and muttered: “You must be Diana, Steve told me a lot about you.”

“Yes, Mr. Trevor, my name is Diana Prince. Like Steve, I am a Lieutenant for the DEO,” she smiled.

“Ah, my boy is engaged to a woman that is made of the same stuff as him. I knew it, I got Ann the same way,” he smiled ruefully.

“Thank you, Mr. Trevor, this is for you,” Diana replied and handed him the rose bouquet. He muttered: “Oh, such nice flowers! I am so sorry. You expected some nice small talk, but now I ruined everything. Ms. Prince, don't judge my son by his father, he is a much better man than me.”
There was an awkward silence, and finally, Steve replied: “There is only one thing left that I can ask you, dad. Do you know where mom is?”

Howard shook his head, and looked so dejected that any further conversation was futile. Finally, Diana ended the misery, tactfully said goodbye, and they went out. Steve heroically made it into an alley, before he broke down in shame and sobbed: “Angel, I am so sorry. Why must my crappy parents always ruin everything?!?”

He smashed his head against the wall and cried with long, gut wrenching sobs. Steve blurted out: “M-mom and d-dad were always fighting, that's why I left home w-when I was 14. W-without real education, I was prepared to f-flip burgers for the rest of my l-life. S-somehow, the US Navy saw something in me they d-didn't. I became a N-Navy SEAL, and volunteered for the most dangerous missions. On one, I w-was shot down, and without you, would have died as a worthless piece of c-crap, just like them!”

Diana's heart ached with sympathy, and she could do nothing but wrap her arms around her distraught fiancé. Finally, she whispered: “I am so sorry, I didn't know that.”

“I n-never told you,” he sobbed, crying in her shoulder. The woman which had spoiled her fiancé with her passion now was his pillar of strength. She patiently hugged until he calmed himself. Steve sobbed: “P-Please don't leave me, Diana. I l-love you more than anything else. I c-could not bear to lose you again.”

“I am not going anywhere, Steve.”

Suddenly, Steve looked past Diana, pinched her shoulder and muttered: “What is going on in that shop?”

His fiancée turned around, and with her hawk eyes, she saw a gang of robbers holding up the shopkeeper. Scared customers cowered on the ground, and while the frightened man handed over the cash, she whispered: “I got this, darling. You just stay here and be safe.”

“I'm coming with you, angel. I could arrest those losers with my eyes closed!”

“Steve, you are in no mental shape to fight,” Diana warmly, but firmly denied. She lifted her arms, spun around and disappeared in a flash of light. When he opened his eyes again, his fiancée had transformed into the strong, majestic Wonder Woman.

“Darling, just stay here and watch the fireworks,” the Amazon princess smiled, kissed him on the cheek, whipped out her lasso and flew to the shop. Inside, the gang leader pointed a gun at the shopkeeper and snapped: “Faster, idiot, or I'll put a hole through your head!”

A golden flash streaked through the air, snared his wrist and smashed him into the wall.

“Just what I needed, some random robbers to beat up,” Wonder Woman spat out, charging at full speed at them. They gagged: “Wonder Woman! In Vermont?!”

“TAKE THAT BITCH DOWN!!” their leader screamed. His colleagues opened fire, but their bullets were deflected by a pair of indestructible bracelets. She punched out the first, threw the second through a book stand and snared the third. When the leader jumped forward and tried to grab his gun, she casually stepped on his hand, raised her fist and purred: “Sweet dreams, male.”

After punching his lights out, she snared the four gangsters with her lasso and exclaimed: “Everything is fine now. Could somebody call the police?”
The shopkeeper and the customers applauded and cheered: “Of course, Wonder Woman! You saved us all! We love you!”

With her trademark smile, she patiently signed autographs and posed for selfies until the police arrived. But when she walked out of the store, a sinewy shrew with screaming red hair, a black leather jacket and piercing green eyes snapped: “That was only luck, Wonder Witch! You superheroes only seem all high and mighty, but in the end, you are just as bad as the villains!”

“What are you talking about?”

“Look at yourself, you slut! You show more skin than a stripper. You are a disgrace for all women. Do you know how much of your fat ass spills out of your miniskirt?”

The onlookers glared at the woman. But instead of becoming angry, Wonder Woman wrapped her strong, warm arms around the woman and purred: “It's fine, sister. It will be okay if you stop now.”

“What are you talking about?!”

Wonder Woman looked at her with her piercing blue eyes and whispered: “You know exactly what.”

The woman violently pushed her away and screeched: “F4(& OFF!! You don't know anything, witch!”

Before Diana could reply, she ran into an alley and was gone. Wonder Woman shrugged, flew back to Steve, changed back into Diana Prince and saluted: “Mission accomplished!”

“Thank you. Now, let's get the heck out here.”

It was already night when they arrived back in their Boston apartment. The trip back had been somber, but after arriving, Steve opened the freezer and asked: “Can I interest you in some late night ice cream, angel?”

“Sure!” she beamed, rubbing her hands. Steve scooped her favorite strawberry cream while choosing a banana split for himself. After the first spoons, both smiled.

“Ah, this tastes so good. Fighting crime makes me hungry,” Diana beamed, satisfying her sweet tooth.

“It's the least I can do after today's debacle. Maybe I should have never taken you to my parents.”

“No, Steve, you acted in good faith. I would have been sad if we got married without meeting them.”

“It still hurts.”

“You did it because you are honest, and I love you because of it,” Diana reassured him, took his hand, and kissed the engagement ring she had given him. Steve sighed: “I want you to know how much I appreciate it, Diana. If you had flown away in disgust, I would have understood it.”

“I am not going away, Steve. You are my fiancé.”

“Thank you, but I just feel like the weak idiot you dumped for Superman years ago.”
“You are strong, Steve. Before, you would have swallowed down your pain and poisoned our relationship, but now, you share it with me, and we both profit.”

“I love you, angel.”

“I love you, too, darling.”

Steve bowed over the table and gave her a long, loving kiss. Both giggled when they exchanged banana and strawberry flavors, and Steve longingly gazed at her and whispered: “Diana… can I just cuddle you a bit?”

“Certainly, darling,” she smiled, sat in his lap, and wrapped her arms around her fiancée. Steve lovingly fed her ice cream scoops, while nibbling the soft skin of her neck. After finishing off their bowls, Diana sighed: “I'll take a shower now. Fighting baddies makes you all sweaty.”

Suddenly, she noticed how hotly he shifted in his seat, and she purred: “What's the matter, Steve?”

He blurted out: “D-Diana… I am embarrassed to ask, b-but… can we make l-love there?”

His shame for such a lowbrow request was evident. But Diana beamed: *I'll do anything to cheer you up.*

“Come here, stud!” she grinned, whipped her lasso out, snared his wrist and dragged Steve into the bathroom. Clothes were flying, and she pulled him in the shower, opened the faucet and soaped him up. In return, Diana deliciously shuddered under the caresses of his strong, warm hands. Wanting to play dirty, she offered him the perfect peach of her bottom, where the muscles jutted out in way impossible for a mortal woman. She wiggled it and teased: “Show Wonder Woman what a real man feels like!”

Anything to make you feel better, my love, Diana smiled, planted her hands against the tiles and eagerly let him feast on her body. Steve was not in greatest shape, but she was very appreciative, vocally encouraged him and made sure that both ended their lovemaking successfully.

When they snuggled up in bed, a lovestruck Steve kissed his fiancée and whispered: “I am so happy to have you. One day, I will find out what a bona fide goddess sees in me.”

“You are honest, strong and smart, especially when the chips are down. You see me as what I am, not as what I seem,” she purred, remembering when he protected her from Veronica Cale a.k.a. Circe after she lost her sanity.

“Shouldn't that be normal, angel?”

“Unfortunately, no. After I beat up those robbers today, I met a sinewy woman who said unflattering things about my body, especially my buttocks.”

When Steve looked in disbelief, she grinned: “Yeah, I did what I had to do.”

“Punch her in the face? Good!”

“I gave her a sisterly hug.”

“What?!”

“I am a truth goddess. I wanted her to see that her true issues don't lie with me, but with herself. But she ran away before she could reflect on herself.”
He scratched his head and muttered: “You are a better person than me, angel.”

“I could see that she had some issues. Her hair contained really cheap red dye, that black leather jacket reeked of dead cows, and those odd green eyes had as much piercing power than a STAR Labs laser.”

Suddenly, Steve sat straight up.

“You were screamed at by a sinewy woman with fiery dyed hair, black leather jacket and laser green eyes?”

“Yes, do you know her?”

Steve went deathly pale, then beet red. Finally, he muttered: “Diana, I think you just met my mother Ann.”
“Still no change with Subject Scofree, Colonel Trevor,” Dr. Caitlyn Snow shook her head. She
gazed at the comatose male, who was lying in the DEO medical capsule in front of her, stared in
disbelief at his odd readings and muttered: “We ran every test on him, and we still know nothing.”

“We can confirm it, boss. We are guarding him since he came here, and he is like a living
mummy,” Sameer muttered, and his Oddfellow colleagues Charlie and Chief nodded.

“Yes, and it puzzles me. His life signs do not make any sense,” Dr. Snow mumbled.

“In what way, Doctor?” Steve asked, exchanging concerned glances with Diana.

“We confirm that he has metabolism and brain activity, but that's all. Although he is comatose, his
body is at peak level, and his blood values are off the charts.”

“Is Scofree a human, Doctor, or maybe a kind of… Superman?” Steve asked. His three
oddfellows noticed how he cringed at the name of his mortal frenemy.

“It seems metahuman, Colonel, but we cannot verify it. After checking fingerprints, retinas and
everything else, I get no matches. I am not even sure he was born on Earth. Should we ask our
metahuman expert, Dr. Light?”

“Not, no yet,” Steve muttered, not willing to work with his shady colleague yet, “thank you, Dr.
Snow, and keep me informed. Maybe if we analyze Dr. Cyber's databases, we could get more
info.”

“Certainly, Colonel Trevor.”

“Thank you, Doctor, and keep an eye on that guy, you three,” Steve concluded.

“Sure, boss!” Sameer, Charlie and Chief replied, and Diana gave them an encouraging smile.
They left the DEO Intensive Care Unit, and after arriving back at their office, he asked his fiancée:
“Did your superhuman senses tell you more about Subject Scofree, angel?”

“No, I am just as puzzled as you, Steve. The Justice League has no records of him either,” she
muttered, pinching her nose and adjusting her birth control glasses. The door swung open, and
Etta and Lonnie came in.

“Hello, Colonel Trevor, good to see you here. Mr. Machin has some news for you!”

“Thank you, Corporal Candy. What's up, Lonnie?”

The red haired youth popped a big bubblegum bubble and replied: “Hey, Steve, I made some
progress with Dr. Cyber. After semi-decrypting her memory vaults, I get a hunch why that
Scofree guy was there.”

“I am listening.”

“Remember that massive the massive data spike she received several weeks ago, Steve?
Apparently, she got the information to track down Scofree, incapacitate him, and pry something
from him.”

“Do you know what it is? Is he some spy or smuggler?” Diana asked, and Lonnie replied: “I have
no idea. But he seems to possess some kind of technology, a device which she, or rather, her mysterious sender is after.”

“Lonnie, do you think that not she, but the person who sent that data spike is behind this?”

“Maybe, Steve, because I am like 99% sure that the data spike is of extraterrestrial origin.”

Steve raised his eyebrows and replied: “Can you pinpoint it further? Could it be Oa, Thanagar, Daxam or something else?”

Steve found aliens creepy. As often he told himself that it was hating minorities, he couldn't shake it off. That he once lost Diana to Superman didn't help.

“I am still processing the data, but as far as I know, the energy signatures do not match anything related to Green Lantern, Hawkman or Mon-El. But interestingly, I could still read excerpts, as if the language was universal.”

“That's news, what does it tell?”

Suddenly, Lonnie's usually detached expression became concerned, and he muttered: “The contents are pretty explicit. It's HATE, Steve. It's hate speech in its purest form, a collection of algorithms to incite maximum hate in sentient beings, and destroy their free will.”

“In short, a normal day on Friendbook?’” Etta grinned, but her smile vanished when he mumbled: “It is bad, and was enough to fully corrupt Dr. Cyber. Before the download, she was just a petty impersonator, but it turned into a raving Pol Pot wannabe. The content is explicitly 'anti-love' or 'anti-life', I don't know the exact translation, but it even makes my numb, corrupted Gotham mind tremble. It is like reading a manifest of the god of hate himself.”

Steve and Diana exchanged concerned glances, and he con cluded: “That's all for now, I'll keep you updated.”

“Thank you, Lonnie, good work!”

“'Good', Steve? Nobody could have done it better, even that creep Batman! You owe me a favor!”

Steve sighed, rolled his eyes and muttered: “Do you want a new mainframe again?”

“I want a ticket for the 100th anniversary dinner of the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece!”

“Oh, are you interested in Greek culture?” Diana beamed, and he replied: “The rare Tablet of Hades is on display that evening. I want to see that!”

“Lonnie, your sudden interest in Greek archeology has nothing to do with Cassie Sandsmark, does it?” Etta grinned. Lonnie's face became as crimson as his hoodie, and he retorted: “Of course not!”

Steve grinned: “Okay, Lonnie, I'll pull some strings. But in return, please remember that this is a formal dinner, your usual garb of hoodie, jeans and sneakers will get you bounced out.”

“Eff the establishment,” he snapped, but then muttered: “Steve, just hypothetically, if you had to introduce yourself to your future wife, how would you do it?”

Steve heroically suppressed a grin, cuddled Diana and smiled: “Just be yourself. Say hello, engage in some small talk, and be a good listener.”
“Are you sure? For research, I read about 10k pages on female psychology this weekend, and I estimate it's only accurate in 62.3% of all cases, give or take 5%.”

The hacker achieved with Diana what Steve never did, namely making her stare blankly.

“Lonnie, reading a book about women is not like actually knowing women!” Etta grinned, but he retorted: “You are disrespecting hard data!”

“Think of it as a field study. Even the most reliable study can be improved by new empirical data,” Steve smiled, stroking Diana's hands.

“Steve, for a borderline idiot, you are remarkably innovative. I'll apply this strategy. I think you know a lot about women, Steve!”

He stormed out and slammed the door, leaving a nonplussed Steve. Diana and Etta heroically kept a straight face, until they dissolved in huge gusts of female laughter.

“I have been accused of many falsehoods, but that is by far the biggest one,” Steve mumbled, and Etta giggled: “At least you are honest about it!”

“Let him off the hook, Etta, he is doing just fine,” Diana smiled and kissed her beet red fiancé on the cheek. She passed him a file and smiled: “By the way, here is the full report on the Dr. Cyber fight.”

“Please note Wonder Woman's account, Steve, it's quite detailed,” Etta grinned.

“I will, Corporal,” he smiled and flipped through the pages. Steve noted the neat layout, the concise wording and precise tagging, and smiled: “This report is exemplary, Lieutenant, you are really making progress as a secretary. Your work with Etta is paying off, angel!”

“Really?”

“Seriously! I could not have written it better.”

Diana stared at him with puppy eyes and beamed: “Oh, thank you, Colonel! I want to be your perfect secretary!”

She proudly wrapped his arms around him, but he mumbled: “Angel, you don't need to be my secretary. I should be taking orders from you, not the other way around!”

“We already talked this over, darling. Firstly, your rank as Colonel is earned, my rank as Lieutenant is only given. Secondly, I want to help you as much as you help Wonder Woman. Thirdly, I know you as a man of character, and I trust your orders.”

“You are hardly objective. You are my fiancée.”

“Etta, Sameer, Charlie, Chief, Lonnie and me are totally different characters, yet, everybody respects you.”

“Etta jokes about my love life, Sameer about my poor poker skills, Charlie about my bad hair, Chief about my non existent inner peace, and Lonnie about my IQ.”

“Yet, everybody obeys you!” Diana smiled.

“Reluctantly, but yes,” Etta sighed.
“You can lead, Steve, and that's a quality I truly appreciate. I am comfortable being your subordinate, and as a leader of the Justice League, I am happy to leave the reigns to a trusted ally for a change.”

“I just want you to feel comfortable, angel. I took you for granted once, I want you to be happy.”

“I am, darling,” Diana beamed, and tried not to think about the problems his parents had. She had a hunch what was troubling them, and telling him the sad truth was a challenge that even Wonder Woman found tough.
Next Saturday evening, Steve was sighing. Instead of cracking open a beer and watching the Red Sox, as he loved to do, he prepared for his night at the museum. Steve put on his best tuxedo and adjusted his tie, while hearing the famous voice of Lois Lane on the radio, who greeted: “Hello Metropolis, this is the Daily Planet News with Lois Lane! Breaking News: Veronica Cale, billionaire CEO of CaleTech has announced to take a sabbatical. She cites personal reasons, such as wanting to spend more time with her disabled daughter...”

Suddenly, Steve's secret Wonder Woman communicator went off. He tapped his earpiece and replied: “Angel, what's up?”

“I'm sorry, darling, but I'm in Metropolis at the moment. I'll arrive late to Professor Sandsmark's dinner.”

“Oh, that's awkward, what's up?”

“Red Tornado, Stargirl and me are dealing with some minor disturbance.”

Steve froze when he heard lighting bolts, and sickening crunchs when they were deflected by Wonder Woman's bracelets. He muttered: “Um, are y-you sure?”

“Black Adam isn't THAT tough, darling.”

There were loud battle noises, with Red Tornado whirring like a cyclone and Stargirl shooting the villain with her cosmic rod. Nevertheless, Black Adam seemed to hold his ground, and a couple of lightning bolts and pained screams later, Wonder Woman concluded: “Great Hera! It's kind of getting hot here. I'll meet you later in the museum, and I'm looking forward to look at that Tablet of Hades!”

Steve sighed in exasperation when Diana hung up. Sometimes, being her fiancé was flat out insane.

An hour later, a slightly flustered looking Steve arrived at the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece. After passing the majestic gate with the massive, ivy covered stone pillars, he passed larger than life Greek statues that seemed to be filled with a life of their own.

“Hey, Steve! I thought you were watching baseball in jeans and undershirt!” a familiar voice teased. Etta was waving, dressed in a red dress which brought out her ample curves and the rich tints of her fiery hair.

“No baseball tonight, Etta. You look great!”

“Look who's talking, Steve. That tux really makes you shine, even with that horrible beard!”

“Hey!”

When Etta saw he was alone, she whispered knowingly: “Oh, Diana is busy again?”

“She's battling Black Adam. Only she can call fighting an evil Egyptian demigod 'a minor disturbance'.”

Etta put her round arm around him and assured him: “She punched Doomsday to Kingdom Come,
don't worry. If a goddess fights a demigod, I pity the demigod!”

“I'll keep my fingers crossed.”

“Cheer up, Steve, let's go to Professor Sandsmark. As her good friend, I got us a really nice table!”

Etta led Steve through bustling corridors full of smartly dressed visitors, who were surrounded by cabinets of ancient Greek statues, vases, and weapons. They finally entered the dinner hall, where white gloved waiters offered champagne glasses on trays. After helping themselves, the two walked to the table of Professor Helena Sandsmark.

“Good evening, Helena, I am so glad to see you!” Etta exclaimed, wrapping her round arm around her friend.

“You're welcome, Etta, and hello, Colonel Trevor!” she greeted Steve. When he noticed her gaze, he whispered: “Diana comes later, she needs to finish some late work.”

“Ah, what a pity, but the DEO never sleeps,” Professor Sandsmark sighed, then took the hand of her daughter and smiled: “Cassandra, say hello to Aunt Etta and her friend, Colonel Trevor!”

Steve put up his most fatherly smile, but the blond girl crossed her arms and muttered: “Hi.”

His tongue dried up, and she was so tall that her eyes met and glared at him at eye level. Steve's insides withered, but Etta whispered: “Don't take it personal, Steve, Cassie is super nice if you know her better!”

Steve was not entirely convinced. Suddenly, he noticed a dark shadow darting around their table. With the experience of a DEO super spy, he sneaked to the shady person, snatched his shoulder and turned him around. Steve stared into the bespectacled eyes of a nerdy, but oddly smart looking young man in a red blazer, yellow shirt, crimson jeans and fiery sneakers. He cried out: “Steve, what the heck? I nearly got a heart attack!”

“Lonnie, is that you? I hardly recognized you!” Steve blurted out in disbelief, looked him up and down and complimented him: “Hey, you look very good!”

“I look very stupid. I am a bourgeois sell out.”

“In that case, I should consider selling my soul, too,” Steve grinned encouragingly. Lonnie snapped: “Steve, I want to be seated at your table, too!”

“The seats are already taken.”

“Steve, after all I have done for you? I didn't come here just to be denied from meeting...”

Lonnie abruptly stopped. Using all his willpower not to burst out laughing, Steve knowingly continued: “… Professor Sandsmark, I presume.”

“O-oh yes, P-Professor Sandsmark. I always w-wanted to ask how she retrieved the T-Tablet of Hades,” he retorted and gazed in her direction. Lonnie technically looked at her, but Steve knew too well that he actually was staring at her daughter Cassie, who was sitting behind her and looked bored to death. Steve let him squirm and finally smiled: “Well, Diana isn't here yet, so maybe you can fill in for a second. Come to our table, Lonnie.”

“I almost consider thanking you, Steve. I may overlook the next time you drool at Wonder Woman.”
“You're almost welcome, Lonnie,” he retorted, looked at the waiters, who were offering champagne glasses on trays, and asked: “Can I offer you a glass of champagne, Lonnie?”

“No thanks. Firstly, I am not 21 yet, and secondly, I am straight edge!”

“Fair point,” Steve replied, walked to Professor Sandsmark and introduced him: “Professor. I would like you to meet my freelance IT specialist, Mr. Lonnie Machin.”

“Good evening, Mr. Machin, are you interested in Ancient Greek culture, too?”

Steve cringed, but instead of saying something crass, Lonnie replied: “Hi, Ms. Sandsmark, computers are logic, and logic is an Ancient Greek invention. I read Aristotle's body of work, my favorite parts are on logics and ethics.”

“What a pleasant surprise! I am always happy to talk about Ancient Greece without people dozing off on me.”

“That is unfortunate. I especially want to see the Tablet of Hades, which is on display for the first time.”

“That is correct, Mr. Machin! It is a tablet from about 2000 BC, I personally unearthed it in my last expeditions. It is an archaeological sensation, because despite its age, the engravings are proto Greek, yet already describe a Hades cult which is based on life, death and rebirth.”

“Really? I thought old gods are more like 'kill all your enemies before I kill you',' Lonnie the atheist muttered.

“Yes, the cyclical nature is odd for an Occidental belief. It focuses more on general values like loving and living than to obliterate your enemies. That's why I am so excited about it. Maybe, it's a dud, but maybe it is the next Rosetta Stone!”

“I am looking forward to see it!”

“It will be unveiled after my opening speech, Mr. Machin,” Professor Sandsmark smiled, surprised and pleased at his sincere interest, “by the way, can I introduce you to my daughter Cassandra?”

Lonnie’s perpetually haughty smirk turned into a stupid, happy grin. Her bored daughter glared at her, tossed her long blond tresses and snapped: “Mom, it's 'Cassie'!”

She stood up, towering over the averaged sized Lonnie with her tall frame and heels, put her hands on her hips and hissed: “Hello there!”

Lonnie just stared at her. Steve knew that expression. When he first saw Diana, he had just looked as dumb and idiotic as he did now.

“Are you just going to stand there all night?” she snapped, while Lonnie just stared. Etta jumped in between and saved him: “Hi, Cassie, this is our IT specialist Lonnie Machin. Lonnie, this is Cassie!”

Etta grabbed his wrist so so hard that he snapped out of it and blurted out: “H-hi, C-Cassie!”

“Hi.”

“Interested in Ancient Greece?”

“No.”
“Interested in museums?”

“No.”

“Interested in, uh, anything?”

“No.”

There was an awkward silence, until Lonnie muttered: “Fair enough.”

Steve cringed, and watched him slink away. He mumbled to Etta: “Ouch, Cassie just gave him serious burn.”

“I knew her since she was a toddler, Steve. She always was blunt and strong willed, and she HATES being inside.”

“I bet she is a handful at home.”

“Actually, once you let her outside, Cassie is very nice. She is a total tomboy.”

“I’ll take your word for it,” Steve mumbled. He went for a stroll, sipping his champagne with a sigh. Steve passed through throngs of people, feeling out of place without his lovely fiancée. He was worried. Maybe Diana was hurt? Maybe she preferred hanging out with Stargirl? Maybe she just invented the fight to get rid of him??

Suddenly, he was snared from behind by two strong arms, his eyes were covered by two slender hands, and a dark, erotic voice purred: “Good evening, scruffy!”

Steve’s knees grew weak, and when he removed the hands and turned around, he gazed at Diana. She wore a sparkling silver dress that highlighted her Amazonian figure, showing off her slender, powerful arms, and had traded her birth control glasses for elegant rimless ones.

“Hello, Steve, sorry I am late.”

He stared at her in awe and blurted out: “No problem, angel. You look stunning!”

“Why, thank you,” she smiled. Diana noticed how he surreptitiously traced her back, and grinned: “No, Steve, no Godkiller Swords in the back of my dress tonight.”

“I have to make sure,” he grinned. Suddenly, Steve took her hand, pulled her behind a corner and passionately made out with her. At first, Diana gasped in surprise, then she melted in his arms and eagerly responded. Finally, she giggled: “Great Hera, Steve, what did I do to deserve this?”

“You risk life and limb fighting baddies, and I never relax until you return safely.”

“Be worried about my enemies instead, darling. Black Adam will remember that dent I put on his skull!”

“I can’t help it, angel, you are my fiancée. Also, that dress looks so hot on you,” he whispered, taking in her sweet perfume. She kissed him on the cheek and smiled: “I was waiting for an opportunity to show it off!”

“I will spend all night drooling at you.”

“Sorry, Colonel, but I cannot wear my plain secretary dress forever,” she giggled, and he replied: “I am a bad host, Lieutenant, I forgot to lead you to our table!”
“No problem, Colonel!”

Diana took his arm, kissed his cheek and dissolved his doubt of self pity. With every step, her engagement ring sparkled, but it was nothing compared to the glow of a happy woman grateful to spend quality time with her fiancé. Diana beamed at the Greek artifacts, taking a moment to take in their magic. Suddenly, she pulled Steve to a sculpture of a goddess tackling a man beneath a waterfall.

“You know what this statue represents?” Diana asked, and when he shook his head, she grinned: “It shows my namesake Diana, the goddess of the hunt, bathing naked and getting surprised by a hunter. She turns him into a stag, and he gets eaten by his own hounds.”

“Is this some kind of message?” Steve muttered nervously, and she purred: “If you cheat on me, yes.”

Diana giggled, knowing Steve hadn't given Aphrodite herself a second glance. When they arrived, Etta hugged her and grinned: “Hi, Diana, we're glad you made it here. I hope you didn't get too… worked up?”

“Slight discomfort in left leg, but I'll be fine,” she replied, went to Professor Sandsmark and greeted: “Good evening, Professor Sandsmark, thank you for inviting me. I am sorry about the slight delay.”

“You're welcome, Lieutenant Prince, Etta's friends are my friends, too!”

“Thank you! I have Greek roots myself, so I am happy to see some of the artifacts of my people.”

“In that case, be my guest, I'll be happy to lead you around once I am finished with the formal stuff here. Being a curator can be stressful.”

“I would be glad, and call me Diana.”

“You're welcome, my name is Helena,” the owl eyed professor smiled, “hello, Cassie, meet Etta's friend Diana!”

“Hi,” her tall blond daughter muttered. But instead of being offended, Diana smiled at her and replied: “Good evening, Cassie, nice to see you!”

“Meh.”

Her mother sighed, but Diana whispered knowingly: “Oh, I know that expression. You would rather be outside, ride a horse, and camp below the starry skies, hm?”

Cassie didn't reply. With a rueful smile, the Princess of Themyscira sighed: “Yes, it's hard to follow protocol, but that's what a daughter of a famous mom has to do.”

For the first time, Cassie's blue eyes came alive. She turned around and muttered: “Yeah, I love my mom and all, but museums are so boring!”

“What do you like instead?”

“I want to be outside and ride my horse.”

“Oh, I like horse riding, too! I like cross country.”

“I especially like rodeo! For some reason, horses and lassos come easy for me.”
Diana looked at her with rising interest and asked: “Cassie, where did you get your muscles? You are ripped!”

“I do MMA, I like fighting!” She suddenly covered up her mouth and muttered: “Sorry, that sounded odd.”

“No problem, Cassie, as a DEO agent, I have some experience in hand-to-hand combat, too!”

Steve was surprised at the sudden chemistry between Diana and Cassie. The two women chatted for a couple of minutes, until Professor Sandsmark smiled: “Cassie, come up to the stage! I will hold my 100th anniversary speech, and you can talk to Ms. Prince afterwards.”

“Okay, mom,” she muttered, as both women climbed up the stage. Professor Sandsmark walked behind the microphone and greeted the audience: “Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to the 100th anniversary dinner of the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece! As the curator, I am so honored to see you here...”

Diana's eyes rested on Cassie, who stood behind her mother, trying not to look bored. Steve's fiancée smiled: “What a nice young girl!”

He mumbled: “You really have rare charm, angel. She treated everybody else like grumpy cat, poor Lonnie!”

“Ah, she blew him off?!” she muttered, staring in sympathy at the dejected looking hacker. “Cassie is very blunt, but very nice if you get to know her better.”

Etta whispered: “Professor Sandsmark is raising Cassie alone, kids from single parents tend to be like that. I know nothing about her dad, it seems touchy.”

Diana looked as if she wanted to say something, but bit her lip at the last second. Steve muttered: “Maybe.”

She read his reaction correctly, took his wrist and whispered: “You are thinking of your own parents, aren’t you? Don't blame yourself, it’s okay.”

“I never talked to them much, and thought it was an unique chance to rebuild some bridges. Instead, my dad cheats on my mom, and my mom disses you!”

“Actually, I wanted to talk to you about it. It's an awkward moment, but I cannot remain silent anymore,” Diana muttered, grabbed his hand and continued: “Steve, do you know why your father cheated on your mother?”

“No, but I bet is has a lot to do with some male urge to put something where it doesn't belong.”

“It's not wrong, and I am the last person to approve, but do you remember the black eye of your dad?”

“I do! The woman's husband or boyfriend probably decked him,” he replied bitterly, but she replied: “No, I didn't get that vibe.”

“Did you use your magic lasso on him?”

“I don’t need a lasso to read body language. He felt very guilty, but not because of that. Do you remember the booze at your parents' home?”

“It's all a blur to me.”
“Well, I do, and I don't think your father is hooked on the bottle.”

“Me neither, I would have smelled it on him.”

“But if not him, who drinks all the liquor?”

Steve just stared at her, and she whispered: “Steve, is it possible that your mother has been hitting the bottle, and is mistreating your father?”

Steve jumped up in his chair. He was choking up, but at the same time, Professor Sandsmark concluded her speech: “… I now come to the moment you have all been waiting for! I present to you, the TABLET OF HADES!”

She pointed at a big cabinet, which was covered by a satin curtain. With a dramatic gesture, she pulled it back, revealing a massive slab of granite with eon old etchings. The audience gasped, captivated by the ageless majesty of the tablet. Diana was mesmerized, and even Steve, who thought of himself as a philistine, gazed in awe.

“We are still deciphering the Tablet of Hades, but it focuses on the everlasting cycle of life, death and rebirth. The power which drives it is love, described as the force so powerful that it can save even those whom gods destroy!”

The audience burst into applause. Steve was still staring at Diana, but suddenly, his DEO headset was buzzing.

“Colonel Trevor here, what's up?”

“Here is Sameer!” an familiar voice gasped. “Red alert, boss! Subject Scofree just broke out of prison, overwhelmed us, and is heading straight for your museum!!”

To be continued...
“What are you saying, Sameer?!”

“Boss, Scofree woke up, and overpowered Charlie, Chief and me with superhuman force. He somehow opened a gap in space, and before he stepped through, he shouted: ‘I must get the Tablet of Hades!’”

BOOM.

With a loud detonation, a giant vortex opened up on stage. The audience screamed in horror as Subject Scofree hovered out on two flying discs. Out of nowhere, a cube of immeasurable power became visible, and he covered his chiseled body up in red and yellow combat armor with a flowing green cape. He towered over the terrified Professor Sandsmark like a god, pointed to the Tablet of Hades and shouted: “THIS TABLET BELONGS TO ME!!”

When the security guards opened fire, he aimed the cube at them, and the bullets dissolved in mid-air. While they stared, he swung around, became a blur and knocked them out.

Everybody screamed. Diana dove under the table and escaped around the next corner. Scofree let his cube glow, and the bulletproof glass of the cabinet shattered like ice. When he hovered to the Tablet of Hades, the etchings glowed magically, and he took it and boomed: “I MUST TAKE IT BEFORE THE DESTROYER DOES!”

“That's what you think, thief!”

His wrist was snared by a golden lasso, and Wonder Woman jumped in, karate kicked his side and smashed her fist into his chin. He cried out in pain, and the heavy tablet flew high through the air.

“Hey! It's Wonder Woman!!” Cassie exclaimed. Scofree stared at the falling tablet and swore: “What are you doing, you idiot?!”

“The tablet! Do not destroy the tablet!!” Professor Sandsmark screamed in horror. With incredible dexterity, Scofree freed himself out of the snare and somehow contorted his body to catch it an inch above the ground. He lay it on the ground with surprising care, while Wonder Woman fumed: “We rescued you from Dr. Cyber, and you attack us?”

“You don't know what's at stake!” Scofree shouted, while she wraped her arms around him, knocked the cube out of his hand and wrestled him down. It was an Amazonian hold that Steve found unbreakable, but with incredible dexterity, he twisted out and punched her in the face.

“No!” Steve screamed as his fiancée reeled, both from the blow and from the surprise that he had broken her grip. He drew his gun and fired at Scofree's knee, but he dodged it with incredible speed, picked up his cube and taunted: “Primitive caveman!!”

*When even villains rag your beard, it must be bad,* Steve muttered inwardly. Scofree cradled the magically glowing Tablet of Hades and let the cube in his right hand glow. The space opened up behind him, but suddenly, he was hit by a Molotov cocktail. The improvised grenade shattered, burst out in flames, and covered him with burning liquor.

“I embrace foreign cultures, but I gladly make an exception for you!” Lonnie snapped. Scofree lost his focus, the vortex collapsed, and he had to extinguish himself.
“YOU DARE!!” he screamed, charging right at him, grabbed him by the collar and smashed him into the wall like a sack of potatoes.

“Lonnie!” Cassie blurted out in horror, grabbed Etta's arm and shrieked: “We'll get killed! Where is Ms. Prince?!"

“S-she p-probably fled,” she stammered, hugging the frightened teen and pulling her beneath the table. Throwing her tiara like a boomerang, Wonder Woman knocked the cube out of Scofree’s hand, and snagged both out of the air. She jumped between him and the reeling hacker, and hissed: “You are staying here, thief!”

“Give my mother box back! The tablet is a terrible danger! If I don't teleport it away, the enemy finds it!”

“Tell that to your mom!” Wonder Woman taunted.

BOOM.

With a loud detonation, a second vortex appeared. A seven foot female fury appeared in front of the audience, clad in blue and yellow body armor. Holding a cube like Scofree, she towered over him like the goddess of war herself, making Wonder Woman look insignificant, and wielded a sizzling energy rod that hummed with sadistic pleasure.

*Oh no, he got reinforcements,* Steve cringed, but then, the warrior woman glared at Scofree and gloated: “THERE YOU ARE, MISTER MIRACLE! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FOREVER, TRAITOR!!”

“Back off, Barda! These people are innocent!” he screamed. She hit him with her rod, and the shockwave of the impact sent him flying into the next wall.

“Wait a second, they are... enemies?!” Steve croaked. Wonder Woman stared nonplussed as she simply wiped the floor with Scofree. Rationally speaking, they should have been happy, but her mere presence filled everybody with terror. Bleeding and battered after yet another blow, Scofree croaked: “Help! She's... killing... me...!”

Barda kicked her reeling opponent so hard that he flew against the wall and crumpled into a smoking heap. Barda boomed: “Mister Miracle is a traitor to the New Gods, and he will meet a fitting fate!”

Suddenly, her nostrils flared, and she slavered: “I sense the spawn of a god! It is my duty to kill off the pathetic old gods and their kin!”

Steve stared in horror at Wonder Woman, and she grimly crossed her bracelets, feeling the blood of Zeus pulsating through her veins. But instead, the female fury turned in the opposite direction and attacked Cassie.

“THERE YOU ARE, OLD GOD SPAWN!”

“CASSIE!!” Professor Sandsmark screamed.

“What the heck?!” her daughter cried out in horror. If Etta hadn't pulled her away, Barda's blow would have decapitated her. The female fury charged again, but this time, her rod was parried by Wonder Woman.

“Pick on someone your own size!” she spat out.
“Oh, another old god spawn! I'll eradicate you, too!” Barda taunted, wrestling her with terrible force. Steve repeated in disbelief: “‘Another’… child of a god?!”

Wonder Woman and Barda grappled each other, and to his horror, the female fury bent her like a straw. She taunted: “I'll break you into little pieces, weakling!”

“You have power, but no control!” Wonder Woman hissed. With incredible dexterity, she twisted her into an armbar and simply snapped her elbow. While Barda screamed in pain, she grinned: “Amazon 101: the enemy is only as strong as its weakest point!”

“Just wait, thin blooded scum!” the female fury hissed, let her cube glow and healed her arm within seconds. She somersaulted away, looked at the Tablet of Hades and slavered: “Hail Chaos, is that the writing of the death god? Our triumph is complete!”

“Sorry, but that belongs to my people!” Wonder Woman spat out and tried to punch her, but she dodged again, jumping straight on the Tablet of Hades.

SNAP.

A large crack appeared, and a magic flash erupted out of the ageless stone. Professor Sandsmark screamed: “NOOO!!”

“Hey, the rat is leaving the sinking ship,” Etta snarled, pointing at a battered Scofree a.k.a. Mister Miracle, who opened a vortex and teleported away.

“Let him go, we have more pressing matters,” Steve muttered. His fiancée tried to snare Barda, but the hulking warrior evaded it with lightning reflexes. The female fury feinted an attack to Wonder Woman, but grabbed Cassie instead and gloated: “I'll cull the small spawn first, and save the big one for last!”

The audience screamed as Barda slammed her rod down. The blow would have shattered concrete, but in utter desperation, Cassie crossed her arms above her head and somehow parried the blow with her bangles. They shattered into a million fragments, but Cassie was unharmed. Professor Sandsmark was frozen, and Steve's mind raced: That's 100% an Amazonian move, but how did she learn it?!

Judging from Cassie's utter bewilderment, she didn't know it either. Barda stared at her in disbelief, and Wonder Woman used her confusion to charge her, and lift her up in the air. She struggled and clawed, screaming: “Let go, you pathetic scum!!”

“As you wish.”

At the highest point, Wonder Woman let go of the struggling fury, and with a giant bang, she landed in the middle of a Spartan armor collection and smashed a half dozen glass cabinets. Even a New God hurt when millions of shards perforated her body. She spat out and healed herself with her cube, but suddenly, a vortex opened up behind her. Mister Miracle stepped out, and at his side floated the stasis tank Dr. Cyber had imprisoned him in.

“Sorry, Barda. Being trapped inside of this was hell, but you leave me no choice,” he croaked. With blinding speed, he pulled her into the stasis tank and slammed the door shut. The female fury screamed, banging against the door like a madwoman, but even she couldn't break the plating. Finally, the stasis fields overpowered her, and she became comatose at last. When Wonder Woman charged him, he let himself get snared by her magic lasso, dropped his cube, and calmly stated: “I judged you unfairly, Wonder Woman, you are a great warrior. My mother box is yours. I surrender.”
“Who are you, Scofree?!”

Under the influence of the Lasso of Truth, he replied: “My Terran name is not Scofree, but 'Scott Free', my real name is Mister Miracle. I am a New God from the paradise planet of New Genesis. After cracking the Tablet of Hades, I fear that Darkseid the Destroyer, the twisted Godking of the hell planet Apokolips, will obliterate your world now.”
“Ok, 'Mister Miracle', you have a lot of questions to answer,” Wonder Woman snapped, her lasso wrapped around him in a tight, unbreakable snare. He calmly replied: “Yes.”

Just minutes after the fight, Steve and her interrogated Mister Miracle in the cellar of the museum. Etta bandaged Lonnie's concussed skull, and Professor Sandsmark tightly hugged her sobbing, frightened daughter. Burly DEO agents secured the area, tended after the horrified guests, and took the stasis tank with Barda away.

“Who are you, and what is your mission?”

Ensnared in Wonder Woman's lasso, he truthfully replied: “As I already said, my name is Mister Miracle, and I go by the Terran alias of Scott Free. I am a New God, the son of Izaya, the Highfather of the paradise planet New Genesis. My mission is to retrieve the Tablet of Hades, but the android you call 'Dr. Cyber' took me captive.”

“Why is that tablet so important?”

“Darkseid, the twisted Godking of the hell planet Apokolips and the mortal enemy of New Genesis, needs it to complete the so called 'Anti-Life Equation'."

“What is that?” Wonder Woman snapped, and he responded: “In very simple terms, it 'proves' to all sentient beings that life is futile. If Darkseid completes it, he can subjugate anyone and anything into giving up free will and individual identity.”

His casual delivery made Etta and Steve freeze, but Diana snapped: “Nonsense! Ares himself tried to convince us that life is futile, and he failed!”

“Ah, 'Ares'… he is violent, but primitive. He only destroys free will, he doesn't control it. With the Anti-Life Equation, Darkseid would master the sanity of every sentient being. Have you ever lost it?”

Wonder Woman stared at him, recalling the nameless void when she lost her mind on the fake Themyscira. Without Steve, she would have perished without ever knowing it.

“If I upset you, Wonder Woman, I apologize. You are powerful, like any kin of the old gods, but not indestructible,” he replied, looked at the trembling Cassie and continued: “I didn't expect to see two godchildren!”

The blond teenager stared at him, then grabbed her mother and cried out: “Mom, what is he talking about?”

Professor Sandsmark violently shook her head, and Diana implored: “Professor, sorry if I am rude, but your child nearly got killed. Who is Cassie's father?”

“W-Wonder Woman, I d-don't know! I was on C-Crete, drinking after a long, dreary dig, when I see a gorgeous man in this bar. I was sure I was p-protected, but nine months after that fling, I give birth to C-Cassandra!” she blurted out with a red face. Diana's gut curled, and she finally mumbled: “Professor, that reeks of my father Zeus.”

Cassie and her mother froze in shock.

“I-is that t-true, m-mom? M-my dad is Z-ZEUS?!”
“As a New God, I am 99.9% sure,” Mister Miracle responded, “we can sense old gods and their kin, and I get the same paternal biosignatures from Wonder Woman and you.”

Diana glared at him, but with a wide eyed stare, Cassie blurted out: “Everything… everything makes sense now. I always knew I was different, that I never fit in, and that I always felt cooped up at home.”

“Cassie, I am so sorry! You are my child, I love you more than my life, and I will never give you up!” her mother sobbed, tightly wrapping her arms around her daughter.

Wait a second! If Cassie is Zeus's kid, it means that Diana is her older half sister, Steve concluded. Seeing the staggered expression on his fiancée’s face, he knew that she was realizing it, too. Forcing herself to stay calm, Diana continued: “Can't we just destroy the tablet to be safe? It's cracked anyway, isn't it unintelligible now?”

“Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. The true content doesn't lie in the stone, but in the magic. The tablet actually SEALS the arcane forces, destroying it would make the contests even easier to read for the magical eye.”

Diana and Steve stared at each other. Mister Miracle ruefully grinned: “If you love revelations, Darkseid enlisted a few of your petty criminals to do his dirty work. Are you familiar with the names Circe and Dr. Cyber?”

“Wait, they work for him?!”

“The Anti-Life Equation consists of three parts, scattered in the world of the New Gods, the world of the old gods, and here, the world of humanity. Darkseid found the one on the Fourth World himself, then enlisted Circe to steal it from your old gods, and contacted Dr. Cyber for the third one. He corrupted them with delusions of grandeur.”

“Wait a second! Lonnie told us of those 1.8 teraquad's of hate speech, that was him!” Steve blurted out in shock.

“Yes, and Darkseid gave her precise instructions how to beat and imprison me if I ever reached Earth,” he nodded, and Wonder Woman asked: “How did you actually come here?”

Mister Miracle pointed at the cube, which Wonder Woman had taken from him, and answered: “That is a mother box. It links me to the Source itself, the center of all being. Among others, it allows me to disintegrate matter, heal injuries, and open worm holes known as 'Boom Tubes’.”

“That sounds like a super Tricorder”, Etta muttered. The New God continued: “I used my mother box to boom tube myself to Earth. Unluckily, I got intercepted by Dr. Cyber, only the last of Darkseid's many henchmen – and therefore, also one of your enemies, Wonder Woman. Darkseid hates truths, and that's why he went after you, too! Do you think Cheetah alone was clever enough to steal that girdle? Do you think that Circe recruited Phobos and Deimos herself, let alone built the Genocide monster? Do you think Dr. Cyber was cunning enough to impersonate Veronica Cale? No, Darkseid all inspired them!”

Wonder Woman stared at him in horror, staggered by the scope of his revelations. Each fight passed before her inner eye, each more terrible than the next, and she blurted out: “It all makes sense! If he is the god of lies, his natural enemy is a goddess of truth! But Mister Miracle, if you knew all this, why did you attack us?!”

“Because you have no idea against who you are fighting against. This is no battle for a primitive civilization like yours. By the way, Wonder Woman, did you know that a tomato consists of 95%
“Why are you telling me that?!”

“Because I need to stall you until I get free”, Mister Miracle grinned and held up the loose end of her lasso. Diana just stared when he broke her unbreakable snare, punched her in the face, ripped the mother box out of her hand and disintegrated Steve's gun with it. The New God jumped to the Tablet of Hades, picked the slab up like a book and spat out: “I am the Master of Escape, these pathetic bonds can't hold me. Darkseid is no match for bearded cavemen like you, he can destroy gods!”

*If my beard gets dissed one more time, I am going to scream*, Steve swore, while the New God concluded: "I am taking the tablet with me. One day, you'll thank me!"

His mother box glowed, and a vortex appeared behind him. Wonder Woman jumped up, snared her lasso around his wrist with the mother box and shouted: “Oh no, you are not going to escape again!”

She tackled him in mid-movement, and he screamed: “Are you insane?! You are messing up my boom tube!!”

The vortex flickered, and both toppled at the edge of it, wrestling for control. A arc light shot out of his mother box, shot through several walls and engulfed the one in Barda's stasis cell. The DEO agents stared in horror.

“Angel!!” Steve blurted out and tried to pull his fiancée back. But Mister Miracle fell into the void, dragging both Wonder Woman and Steve with him. With one earth shattering BOOM, all three plus Barda vanished from the sight of the the horrified Etta, Lonnie and the Sandsmarks.
Chapter 8

Steve was a fighter pilot, used to dizzying tail spins. But he could hardly stomach the giant vortex he was falling through. It was a maelstrom of chaos, a tear in reality that was impossible to put in human words.

Mister Miracle’s mother box engulfed his mind, pulling random images out of his soul. Steve relived the crash on Themyscira… the rescue by an angel called Diana… coming together, breaking up, and coming together again with her… and finally, the unhappy reunion with his father. Steve heard himself scream into the void, but finally, space returned. With a reassuringly painful thud, he landed back in the real world.

“Praise Hera, you are alright!” Wonder Woman exclaimed, tightly hugging her dazed fiancé.

“By the beard of the Highfather, where are we?!” Mister Miracle cried out. Steve squinted, and his jaw dropped to the floor when he realized where they had reappeared. He stared at a small nameless town with small nameless houses lined by small nameless roads. It was midnight, so the street lights illuminated nothing but random trees.

“Are we back in Vermont, in my dad's street?!” he blurted out in disbelief. The New God snapped: “Do you recognize this pathetic human settlement?”

“Of course I do! My parents live here!”

“Oh no! Instead of obeying my will, my mother box latched to your primitive primate brain! How did you do it, you hirsute fiend?!” he hissed, put the Tablet of Hades to the ground and grabbed Steve by his collar. Steve gagged and swore: *If he disses my beard again, I am going to use his balls for kicking practice.*

“I have no idea how your contraption works, but your cube preferred Colonel Trevor's 'primitive primate brain' over yours. I know the gods themselves, and you aren't one, impostor!” Wonder Woman snapped. She kicked his shins so hard that he howled in pain and let go of Steve.

“Are you insane?! We got to find Barda before she kills someone!” Mister Miracle shouted. He hovered on his energy discs, but suddenly froze and muttered: “Is someone crying?”

“Don't distract me, you fake deity!” Diana snapped, lifting her fist. But Steve held her back and mumbled: “No, he is right, angel. Someone is crying!”

Wonder Woman reluctantly listened, and finally heard it itself. It was a low, incoherent sobbing, roughly coming from the direction of the house where Steve's parents lived. Suddenly, he grew rigid. He sprinted into a nearby alley, dodged several overturned garbage cans and pulled a frail, shivering woman out of the corner. She had blood shot eyes, wore tattered clothes, and smelled like dead rats.

“Great Hera!” Wonder Woman blurted out, her eyes widening in shock. It was the same red headed woman with laser green eyes and black leather jacket that had heckled her in her last visit.

“Go away, you idiot!” she hissed at Steve, grabbed her moonshine bottle and would have struck him down, but at the last second, Wonder Woman deflected it with her bracelets.

“You again, Wonder Bitch?!” she spat at her. But before she could take another swing, Steve held her wrists and blurted out in horror: “Mom? Is that really you, mother? What happened to you?!”
Wonder Woman awkwardly stood back, not daring to state the obvious. Without recognizing her son, Ann Trevor spat in his face and hissed: “Get away from me, moron!”

Her stench was revolting. Steve gagged, desperately trying to calm down his incoherent mother, but much worse than the odor was the corruption of her soul. Diana would have rather fought a hundred super villains than this diabolical fiend.

“My mother box tells me that wretched person is suffering of acute alcohol poisoning, compounded by a severe, recently acquired addiction,” Mister Miracle reported. When she glared at him, he muttered: “What?”

“Come on, mom! Snap out of it!” Steve begged, shaking his mother like a ragdoll. When she resisted, Wonder Woman had enough, opened up a hydrant, bent the nozzle with super strength and drenched her with ice cold water.

“AARGGHH!!” Ann screamed, raised her fists, and suddenly went limp. The manic energy left her, and she broke down sobbing. Steve got his mother in a fireman's lift and blurted out: “Get her back home! Dad will take care!”

Wonder Woman wasn't sure, but did not dare to disagree. They ignored Mister Miracle, who carried the Tablet of Hades and muttered: “If Barda appears right now, she’ll hack our heads off and serve them Darkseid pickled and stewed.”

While Steve carried his distraught mother, Wonder Woman rang the bell. She was surprised that the door almost immediately opened. Howard Trevor blurted out: “Finally, Ann! I hoped you would come back— wait!!”

He stared in horror at Ann, then at Steve, and cried out: “W-Why are you here, S-Steve? W-Why did you bring W-Wonder Woman? W-what happened?!”

With a shaken, but determined expression, his son retorted: “Dad, we really need to talk.”

Howard Trevor looked mortified and relieved at the same time. He remained silent as his son lay his wife on the sofa, hardly daring to gaze at Wonder Woman. With a reluctant smile, Steve again observed that no mortal made the connection between shy, meek Diana Prince, and the strong, majestic Wonder Woman. *If Superman can pull that stunt off, my angel can do it, too!*

Ann Trevor turned around, cramped up and retched all over Wonder Woman's boots. Howard became pale, Steve beet red, and even Mister Miracle averted his gaze.

“Angel, I am so sorry,” her fiancé muttered, holding back tears of shame.

“It's okay, Steve,” she whispered, gently nudging him to take care of his mother rather than her boots. Diana desperately wanted to hug him, but having to guard her secret identity, she didn't dare express her true feelings.

Suddenly, her boots glowed, and a moment later, the vomit had disappeared. Mister Miracle lowered his mother box and commented: “Removing human feces isn't the most glamorous power, but I just want to help.”

“Thanks, and now, please go away. My parents' house will not be desecrated by a thief and a backstabber!” Steve hissed, but he replied: “I am a New God from New Genesis, I protect sentient life.”

“Yeah, beating us up sure showed it!”
“Do you really think I do this for fun, Steve Trevor? You have no idea against what you are fighting. Darkseid is the destroyer god himself, and you just witnessed how terrible his right hand Barda is!”

“I have no idea who you are, what you are, and why you do the things you do! All I know is that my mother is gravely ill, and until that changes, your Darkseid can go suck my d--”

“Point taken, Colonel,” Wonder Woman interrupted him and mumbled: “Steve, this is no coincidence. When your mother heckled me last weekend, she was liquored up.”

“Oh my God! You stopped those robbers last week, Wonder Woman… and you ran into Ann?” Howard Trevor blurted out, burying his head in his hands.

“Dad, what is going on?” Steve hoarsely asked, grabbed his shoulders and pleaded: “Dad, what is going on?”

When he avoided his gaze and didn't answer, he snapped: “Father, you are hiding something, I can feel it! You owe me the truth, and you don't respond, I'll get Wonder Woman's lasso and pull it out of you regardless!”

Diana cringed at this thought, but if Steve had bluffed, it mercifully worked. Howard Trevor cleared his throat and muttered: “Okay, I'll talk, son!”

Steve reluctantly let go, and his father sat down and confessed: “Things haven't gone well for Ann and me lately. You know how she had to end her Air Force career?”

“Yeah, mom survived a nasty accident that permanently damaged her inner ear.”

“Ann got a good payout, and got a job manning rescue helicopters. We thought that the Lexcodin prescribed by the doctors would do the trick.”

“Lexcodin? The LexCorp drug that was deemed unsafe after a decade of legal fights?”

“Yes, that drug,” he muttered, “Ann became unstable, tried to kick it, but hit the bottle instead. I tried to talk her out of it, but she became violent.”

Steve just stared when his father held his black eye and sputtered on: “Both Ann and me worked at the Air Force. But your mom was a warrior, and she was always stronger than me, the bookkeeper. I soon hit the pubs to get away from home, and in a weak moment, I had a one night stand with a woman I hardly knew. When Ann found out, she smashed my eye with her bottle, and you know the rest.”

His father slumped down, pained but happy to have gotten it out of his system. While Steve was frozen in shock, Wonder Woman gazed at his father. Howard Trevor backed away in fear, but she whispered: “You spoke the truth, and that was very brave of you, Mr. Trevor. Now we can finally solve the problems at hand.”

“I don't want to press on, but the main problems are Darkseid and Barda,” Mister Miracle muttered. Everybody ignored him, and Howard Trevor stared at Wonder Woman and whispered: “W-wait, you a-are not g-going to punish me?”

“Why should I?”

“I betrayed my wife!”

“You did, and you will be judged, but you feel very sorry about it. It's complicated loving a
woman who acts like this,” she replied, pointing at Ann. Steve was constantly checking pulse and breath of his sick, convulsing mother, muttering: “Mom needs medical attention. We should really get her to the hospital.”

“That won't be necessary, I can heal her illness in a second,” Mister Miracle offered.

“We don't need your hi tech mumbo jumbo, creep!”

The New God sighed, switched on his mother box and engulfed Ann Trevor in a soothing bright light. Suddenly, her seizures vanished, color poured back into her face, and she opened her eyes and blurted out: “W-where am I?!”

“Ann, you are alive!” her husband blurted out, awkwardly hugging her. She fended him off and sputtered out: “Howard? What am I doing in our house?!”

“You should be asking us, not the other way around,” Steve snapped. Ann Trevor stared at her son in disbelief and blurted out: “Steve is that you? What are WONDER WOMAN and that other costumed freak doing here?!”

“Saving you from possible death of intoxication, dehydration and exposure,” he retorted, gazed at Mister Miracle and mumbled: “What did you do?”

“To a certain degree, my mother box can heal illnesses. I eradicated the toxic imbalances in her metabolism, but her addiction is too far advanced for a quick fix. That 'Lexcodin' drug impaired her neural receptors,” the New God whispered. Suddenly, something resembling human anger crept into Mister Miracle's haughty features.

“Liar!” Ann Trevor hissed, but Wonder Woman gently held back her wrists and whispered: “Lie down, sister, you are very weak.”

“Get your dirty hands off me, bitch!”

“Mom, you are not going to badmouth Wonder Woman in front of me!” Steve snapped.

“What do you see in that stripper in a swimsuit who cheated on you with that idiot Superman? Superheroes don't care about us, they fight aliens instead of that monster Lex Luthor! Why did you never call us?”

“Firstly, Luthor is our mortal enemy, too, secondly you two were always fighting, and thirdly, maybe you love that bottle more than me!”

“I am not an addict!”

“100% wrong, but addiction can alter your perception,” Mister Miracle retorted. Steve shook his mother's shoulders and hissed: “How can you down a bottle of moonshine without throwing up, mom? Next time, you could DIE!”

“Please, Ann, come to your senses! I was so worried when they brought you in!” her husband pleaded and muttered: “I am a very impolite person, I haven't thanked you yet. You just saved my wife!”

“You're welcome,” Wonder Woman smiled, and he continued: “Steve, is there a reason why you are here? I see you on TV with Wonder Woman a lot, but I cannot place that odd man in the body armor with that strange tablet.”

“To make a long story short, we are on a mission, dad, but we are always happy to help people in
need.”

“Thank you, son,” he smiled wryly, put his hand on his shoulder and whispered: “Steve, I just want you to know how ashamed I am for messing up your visit. I hardly got to know your fiancée, but I think Diana is a strong, soft hearted person. I would be very proud to meet her again, and don't make the mistakes I did.”

“I will, dad,” Steve replied in a determined voice, and Diana hid a loving smile. But suddenly, the wall behind them simply exploded, smashed by a giant rod. Barda jumped into the living room and snatched Steve like a sack of potatoes.

“Give me the tablet, or this man will DIE!!” Barda screamed, ready to twist off Steve's head like a bottlecap.
Chapter 9

“STEVE!!”

Both Ann and Howard Trevor went chalk white when their son was taken hostage by the towering female fury. Wonder Woman jumped in front of them and pleaded to Barda: “Okay, okay! Don't do anything rash!”

She forced herself to remain calm, not daring to give her true feelings for her fiancé away. Steve was no weakling, but he got crushed by Barda's gauntlet.

“Surrender and give me the tablet, or this pathetic male dies!” she screamed, ready to smash his skull with her golden rod. Mister Miracle cradled the Tablet of Hades and retorted: “Forget it, Barda! Good will prevail, you will never complete the Anti-Life Equation!”

“There is neither good nor bad. There is only power, and the greatest power lies in the fires of Apokolips!”

“Darkseid has brainwashed you well! Once you return, you can to back to your perch, parrot!”

Barda nearly crushed Steve in her gauntlet and retorted: “You are not worthy to say his name, traitor! Once I imprison you, I will regain my honor!”

Steve felt his body snap, but suddenly, his mind raced: **Wait a second, why is she calling him “traitor”?**

“Darkseid and Granny Goodness made your their slave, Barda, I told you many times. If you catch me, your only reward will be the torture rack. Renounce them, and we both are free!”

For a moment, Barda's gaze flickered, but in the next moment, hellfire shot out of her crimson eyes. She screamed: “You lie, weasel! I'll smash you with my mega rod!”

Her hate overwhelmed her, and in this split second, Wonder Woman threw her tiara, and smacked the giant rod out of her hand.

“Thanks, I'll take it from here!” Mister Miracle screamed, turned on the flying discs on his feet and jumped the female fury. He swung at her face, but instead of dodging, Barda turned her chin directly into his fist. Steve heard a sickening crunch, and the New God yelled in pain when he got nothing but cracked fingers.

“Pathetic, you little contortionist!” Barda taunted. Without letting Steve go, she grabbed Mister Miracle's wrist and threw him against Wonder Woman. Both smacked into the wall and writhed in pain. Steve had no chance breaking her vise like grip, but suddenly, she was hit by gunshots.

“Stay away from my son, bitch!!” Ann Trevor cried out, emptying her pistol at the female fury. Her husband screamed: “What are you doing? Run away!!”

Ann was no longer the filthy drifter, but a tiger mother protecting her child. Bleeding from numerous holes, Barda spat out, let her mother box glow, and her wounds closed within seconds. With superhuman speed, she grabbed Ann Trevor by her collar and hissed: “You are weak and dirty, you tramp! You are an addict, and I will remind you!”

Barda's mother box engulfed her in a evil glare, and Ann Trevor's eyes bulged. Her brain was flooded with alcohol, but instead of sweet oblivion, she felt violent nausea. She seized up, broke
on all fours, and vomited. Barda stepped on her hand and taunted: “How does it feel to be such a worthless crap?”

“No, NO! That is not me!!” Ann Trevor blurted out, while Steve and Howard stared at her in horror.

“Yes, you are! You are a slave of the bottle!”

Ann shook her head in denial, and Barda planted her giant boot on her chest and gloated: “Oh, yes, you are! If you die, you die as nothing!”

Ann struggled, choking under Barda's boots. She vomited, soiling herself, and suddenly, she broke.

“Yes, it's true! I am a dirty addict, and I am nothing!” she loudly cried out, breaking into long, gut wrenching sobs. The female fury laughed, gloating at her humiliation, but then, Wonder Woman broke through the window behind her. She hit Barda with a flying kick, and with a precise lasso throw, she snared her fiancé in mid air and swung him to safety.

“Are you okay?” she blurted out, her voice calm, but her eyes brimming with worry. He went on all fours and coughed blood, but snapped: “Go get her, angel!”

She nodded and attacked Barda. The female fury dodged, snatched her mega rod and swung at her. It missed Wonder Woman by an inch and shattered the concrete wall to rubble.

“Our house!!” Howard Trevor wailed. When his wife stormed up the stairs, he muttered: “Good idea!”

Wonder Woman and Barda traded devastating blows, and were stunningly even. Steve thought that he would never see another warrior with so much skill and power, but the female fury fought her toe to toe.

“Great Hera, where did you learn to fight??” his fiancée blurted out, and her enemy retorted: “In the deepest pits of Apokolips, where only the strong survive!”

“You're not strong, you're just a bully!”

“The universe only makes sense if you force it to!”

“Who says that? Your false Darkseid god?” Wonder Woman retorted, parrying her mega rod with her bracelets, and she grinned: “Oh, feisty prey! You are the first warrior in ages to stand up to me. Once I defeat you, you will make a nice addition to my female furies!”

“Are you hitting on me?” Wonder Woman grinned.

“Yes, on your chin!”

“I prefer your lips,” she purred, snared her in her lasso and kissed her. Barda froze and tried to break free, but Wonder Woman didn't let her. Steve stared as his fiancée literally kissed her to a block of ice, allowing Mister Miracle to walk up and punch her senseless. While Barda went down like ninepin, Wonder Woman snared her with her lasso.

“That was one novel tactic, Wonder Woman,” he mumbled. While she took away her mother box, the Amazon grinned: “Villains are all the same. Fight them with hate, and they grow strong. Fight them with love, and they get all mushy.”
I hope Diana doesn't see me as a villain, Steve muttered inwardly. His parents huddled up in fear, and Howard muttered: “Let's call the cops, I guess…?”

“You do that, dear,” his estranged wife replied, broke to her knees and cried in shame. Steve's heart ached, and finally, his father awkwardly put his arm around her. Wonder Woman glared at the female fury and snapped: “Okay, you big blue bruiser, you had your shot at us. My lasso forces you to answer truthfully. Who are you?”

Barda stubbornly resisted, but when the lasso glowed, she blurted out: “My name is Barda! I am a New God from Apokolips, the head of the female furies, and the elite guard of our supreme leader, Darkseid.”

“What do you want from us?”

“Our leader wants the Tablet of Hades! He needs it to complete the Anti-Life Equation. Once it is completed, he will rule supreme, and I will regain my honor!”

Steve furred his brow and muttered: “Wait, what are you talking about?”

Barda glared at Mister Miracle and cried out: “He is a traitor and a thief! We were raised together in the barracks of Granny Goodness, Darkseid's right hand, and he used his… CHARM to steal my mother box and escape from Apokolips!”

Steve was taken aback at the pain she laid in the word “charm”. It made the scars in his heart ache, old wounds Diana had caused long ago when she dumped him for Superman. Wonder Woman stared at Mister Miracle, and he retorted: “Without me, Darkseid would have already found the Anti-Life Equation! The universe would become like Apokolips, and you would do anything to escape from that hell!”

“You betrayed Apokolips! You are nothing but a TRAITOR!! I trusted you, and you repay it by abusing my trust, stealing my mother box, and making me suffer for your treason!”

Wonder Woman's eyes flitted between them, and through gritted teeth, Mister Miracle hissed: “I am sorry how everything went. But Barda, I have no reason to love Apokolips! You were born into Apokolips royalty, but I was raised there as a PRISONER!”

“Wait, are we missing something?” Steve blurted out, staring at Wonder Woman. Mister Miracle snarled: “Since the beginning of time, New Genesis and Apokolips waged a horrible war. To barter a cease fire, my father Izaya, the Highfather of New Genesis, exchanged me for Orion, Darkseids firstborn. Even as a toddler, Granny Goodness tortured and hazed me, trying to mold me into a killing machine. But I swore to remain unbroken until I could flee, and I did!”

“You are still a traitor! You betrayed me!” she cried out and Steve was shocked in how much pain both Barda and Mister Miracle were.

“I don't know much about superheroes, but I sure know the wrath of a scorned woman,” Howard Trevor mumbled. Ann glared at him, but to Steve's surprise, she nodded. Barda screamed: “You ungrateful brat, Darkseid could have broken you anytime he wanted! When you fled, he personally flogged and tortured me, but was given one last chance to redeem myself! I will bring you back to Apokolips, even if it's the last thing I will do!”

Suddenly, everything happened in a blink of an eye. The female fury grinned: “You know, Mister Miracle, that mother box you carry is actually mine. I'm reclaiming it!”

Barda lifted her hand. Mister Miracle screamed as an arclight sprang from her gauntlet to the mother box he was holding. It exploded in a flash of light, blasting him to the ground. The cube
shot into Barda's outstretched hand, and after harnessing its power, she punched Wonder Woman so hard that she smacked against the wall and let go of her lasso.

“Stay down!!” Howard Trevor screamed, shooting at Barda with his wife's gun. But now wielding both mother boxes, she vaporized the bullets in mid air.

“Pathetic homo sapiens, either addicted or weak,” she taunted, grabbed his wrist and crushed the gun into a senseless ball of scrap metal. The female fury grabbed the Tablet of Hades, glared at the shocked Trevors and the two fallen superheroes and snapped: “Now, the tables have turned! I am going to take the Tablet, deliver Mister Miracle to my leader Darkseid, and draft Wonder Woman into my army! Maybe then, I will be redeemed!

She let her mother boxes glow. With one cube, she bound Mister Miracle and Wonder Woman with dark energy, and with the other, she created a vortex in space, a Boom Tube. She stepped through, but just as the portal dissolved, Steve screamed: “Not so fast, you blue bully!”

His parents screamed in horror as their son jumped head first through the dying vortex.
Chapter 10

Again, Steve fell through an endless vortex. Even as a fighter pilot, the maelstrom in the void made him want to throw up. It was like being sensually deprived and overloaded at the same time. With a reassuringly painful thud, he fell back into reality.

Or rather, whatever 'reality' was supposed to be.

Steve felt instantly nauseous. Everything was dark and hazy, and he gagged when he tried to breathe, overwhelmed by a toxic, scorching sensation. *Come on, this isn't worse than the tear gas drills in Navy SEAL training,* Steve coaxed himself, forcing himself to take shallow breaths until he got used to the burn.

“What the heck?” he uttered when he could see again.

He was standing on the top of the most gargantuan skyscraper he had ever seen. It was a bottomless moloch, consisting of nameless gray hives. Everywhere, giant fire pits spewed searing flames into the hot, acrid atmosphere. No sky shimmered above him, only a hard blackness that blotted out all starlight. It dawned on Steve that they were standing right in the middle of a ecunemopolis, a city the size of a planet. This place was the closest thing to hell, and Steve's insides cramped when he realized how little difference there was.

“Welcome to Apokolips, vermin! I will deliver the traitor Mister Miracle back to my lord Darkseid, give him your precious tablet, draft Wonder Woman into my army, and regain my honor!” Big Barda's voice bellowed.

*This is Apokolips? Mister Miracle spent all his youth in this heart of darkness? No wonder 'Scrofree' had such dark aura,* Steve shuddered.

“I'll never submit to you, you bully!”

Steve grew weak when he heard his fiancée's retort, forced himself to remain calm and ducked behind a massive pillar. In his mind, he counted up to 10, then carefully peeked out of his hideout.

Steve saw that he was standing on top of a observation platform, and Barda, Wonder Woman and Mister Miracle were one the floor below him. Because Steve had jumped into the Boom Tube at a different angle, he had exited at another location. Dark energy shot out of the mother boxes of the female fury, and she used it to bind her two enemies. With the Tablet of Hades laying beside her, Barda spoke into her mother box: “Here is Barda! Do you read me, Stompa, Lashina, Mad Harriet and Bernadeth?”

“Yes, my leader! Were you successful?”

“I was! Take a Boom Tube to me already, and I bought some target practice. Hail Darkseid!!”

“Uh oh, those are her henchwomen”, Mister Miracle groaned. Steve's mind raced: *Okay, Steve Trevor, act quickly! Use your brain!*

He looked around, desperate for any help. Suddenly, he noticed that Wonder Woman's tiara was lying in front of him. During the vortex jump, it must have been knocked off his fiancée's head. He picked it up and muttered inwardly: *You often saved my butt with a well placed throw, angel, now it's my time to come through!*

At first, Steve aimed at Barda's head, but then thought: *That fury is seven foot of pure muscle and*
wears a combat helmet. Let's be smarter than that.

He channeled his inner Major League Baseball pitcher, hurled Wonder Woman's tiara, and hit the mother box in Barda's right hand. The female fury stared when the dark energy bonds around Wonder Woman and Mister Miracle dissipated. An instant later, his fiancée whipped out her lasso, snared Barda's wrist and hit her with a flying kick to the chin. The female fury smacked to the ground, and Mister Miracle jumped on her and held her pinned.

“I'll bite your head off, traitor!!” she screamed, trying exactly to do so. The New God evaded her razor sharp teeth and whispered: “Barda, I am sorry I betrayed you.”

“You lie!”

“I often do, yes, but I swear I am not lying now.”

“Enough talking. Let's knock her out, and I know how!” Wonder Woman snapped. She snatched the mega rod out of Barda's belt, swung it high and slammed it on her skull. The blow alone would have shattered concrete, but the power was magnified by the dark energy of her weapon. Instead of just leaving a dent, it knocked her out cold.

“That's what you get for trampling on a helpless human!” Wonder Woman bellowed, snatching her collar and swinging her rod to bash her brains out. But at the last second, someone held her back.

“Angel, don't do it,” Steve implored, just having jumped down from the platform.

“Barda stepped on your mother's throat!”

“Be better than her,” he begged, and she fought the urge to stomp on the female fury. It would make her just as bad as her, but she was oh so tempted.

Suddenly, a vortex opened behind her. Mister Miracle grabbed the Tablet of Hades and screamed: “Oh no, here come Barda's henchwomen! Run!”

“Where to?!” Steve blurted out, but in the next moment, Mister Miracle hovered away and hurled himself into the bowels of the ecumenopolis deep below. Wonder Woman grabbed Steve, flew him into a dark alley and ducked behind a garbage container as four fearsome warriors appeared. The first was a monstrous giantess, the next wielded two venomous lassos, the third wore a hellish blade, and the last was a cackling madwoman with guillotine fingernails. Each looked crueler and nastier than the other.

They looked at their fallen leader. After a moment of surprise, the giantess muttered: “Hey! Where is our booty? I thought she had it all gift wrapped for us!”

The lasso wielding warrior cracked her knuckles and spat out: “Typically Barda! All flash, no substance!”

“Come on, let's revive her,” her colleague with the hellish blade muttered and kneed at her side. A few moments later, Barda jumped up to her feet and blurted out: “Stompa, Lashina, Bernadeth and Mad Harriet! I got ambushed, but the enemies are still near! Let's search them!”

She grabbed her mega rod, ignored the glares of her subordinates, and they spread out. Steve whispered: “They will discover us in an instant! What are we going to do?”

“I got a few tricks of my own, darling,” Wonder Woman smiled. She pinched her five pointed earrings, and out of nowhere, an invisible sphere appeared, just big enough for both of them to
squeeze in. His fiancée pulled him in, closed the hatch and let it hover straight up. When Barda
stared at it, he feared the worst, but then, he realized she gazed right through it. He stammered:
“W-what is this trickery, angel?”

“It's my Invisible Jet, darling… or rather, the baby version of it. This sphere which will exist for
about an hour, until it dissolves. But we are safe for now.”

“If you say so,” Steve muttered, nervously gazing at the female furies who combed the area
below. Suddenly, she wrapped her arms around her fiancé, and grinned: “Thank you for saving
me, darling. You should wear that tiara, you throw it better than me!”

“You are the princess, angel, not me. Also, my throw was like 90 percent luck. You knocked
Barda out, not me!”

“But I never would had the chance if you hadn't freed me. I just counted on you, and as always, I
was right.”

“You… counted on me?”

“Steve, I learned two things. Firstly, Wonder Woman always has a plan, and secondly, she can
always trust Steve Trevor to come through when she needs him the most!”

She wrapped her slender, powerful arms around his shoulders and made out with him. At first,
Steve struggled, shocked how willingly she put her eyes off the enemy, then he let it happen, and
finally, he enjoyed it. The taste of her tongue was sweet as ambrosia, the scent of her hair
overpowering, and the sensation of her chiseled, curvy body utterly intoxicating. Soon, he
wrapped his arms around his stunning, powerful fiancée and greedily locked lips with her until
they reluctantly let go.

“Sorry about just kissing Barda, darling. You know that I only want to lock lips with you,”
Wonder Woman purred, and he smiled: “As long as you save my sorry butt, angel, I'll ignore that
for now.”

He stared outside and muttered: “Apokolips is the most dreary and depressing place I have ever
encountered, angel. It sucks all life out of my bones and numbs my very soul. No wonder Mister
Miracle and Barda became like that. I cannot imagine that love can exist here, Diana.”

“Harsh environment snuffs out shallow loves, but strengthens deep loves, Steve. I'll always love
you, darling, and I am very willing to prove it to you!”

She kissed him again, and then confessed glumly: “In the museum, I wanted to seduce you. I put
on that ridiculous dress to catch your attention, then I wanted to tease you all night until you lose
control and make me yours.”

“That was a spectacular dress, angel. I am still drooling,” he whispered. Steve was touched how
sad she was, stroked her cheek and promised: “If we come home, Diana, I'll make love to you all
day.”

“All day? Have you magically acquired godlike stamina?”

Steve became beet red, but before he could utter an excuse, she kissed him on the lips and giggled:
“I appreciate the effort, darling. If you want to work on your stamina, I'll be a willing sparring
partner.”

Steve flashed a stupid, happy grin that she loved so much. He tenderly reached beneath her blue
skirt and cupped the bulge of her toned, rock hard buttocks. Diana purred approvingly, and
suddenly, Steve understood that in this dreary, lifeless place, not he suffered most, but she, the love goddess. Finally, his fiancée grinned: “Well, there is one precondition. You must fulfill one of my fantasies.”

She cupped her hand to his ear and whispered her request. Steve's eyes grew large, and stared at her in disbelief and muttered: “Angel, are you kidding?!”

“Even Wonder Woman has fantasies, darling.”

Steve wanted to glare at her, but simply melted under her puppy gaze. He put her arm around her waist and mumbled: “Okay, it's a deal. But first work, then play. We have a world to save, after all.”

“You are right, Steve,” Diana nodded, kissed his cheek one last time and became the serious, inscrutable Amazon warrior princess again. They gazed at the female furies, who finally abandoned their search.

“Nothing! Even my mother box says they just disappeared!” Barda screamed, kicking a wall in frustration. “Come on, let's go back to the HQ and report!”

But instead of following, her female furies circled around her and glared at their leader. In a low, evil voice, Stompa the giantess cracked her knuckles and grinned: “Oh no, Barda, you have blundered around enough.”

“We have orders, Big Blue. You either fulfill your mission, or we tow you to Granny Goodness,” Lashina cackled, and Barda's eyes grew wide. She grabbed her mega rod and screamed: “This is treason!”

“Just following orders,” Bernadeth grinned.

“The weak must perish!” Mad Harriet slavered.

Barda jumped back and shouted: “I'll rather die than return to Granny Goodness's torture racks!”

“Good! We'll make sure,” Stompa grinned.

Wonder Woman and Steve just stared when the four female furies beat up their leader. It was a savage, merciless beatdown, explicitly designed to shatter body and soul. Stompa wrestled Barda down, trampling her with her gigantic feet, Lashina's lassos ensnared her like two killer vines, Bernadeth perforated her with her hell blade, and Mad Harriet slashed into her armor.

“Barda is a crook, but she doesn't deserve this!” Steve blurted out, and Wonder Woman was trembling with rage.

“This has no honor, this is just barbaric.”

“C-can we stop this?”

“How? They will just slaughter us!”

The two averted their gaze, praying for a quick, painless mercy kill, but suddenly, a green blaze whirled through the female furies and knocked them on their backs.

“I may be a thief, but I have my principles!” Mister Miracle bellowed, hovering over his enemies with his Aero Discs and raising his mother box.
To be continued...
“MISTER MIRACLE!! I knew you would come back to rescue your big blue squeeze,” Stompa gloated.

Mister Miracle didn't reply in words. He dodged the kick of her gargantuan foot, dove below her giant fist and covered her neck with a flurry of hand chops – which seemingly did exactly nothing.

“Ha, ha! Do you really think your feeble non lethal techniques can stop me?” she gloated, made a step towards him and fainted like an imploding building.

“If my feeble techniques disable your nerve clusters? Anytime, bigfoot,” Mister Miracle taunted, but got snared by Lashina's double lassos.

*That throw was really sick, Steve thought, she could give Wonder Woman a run for her money!* 

“Just give up, traitor!” Bernadeth screamed, trying to cut off Mister Miracle's head with her hell blade. Both female furies just stared when he escaped in the blink of an eye and smashed their heads together.

“Do you think a simple snare can hold me? I am the greatest escape artist ever!” he grinned.

“You'll be the DEADESSST essscape artissst ever!” Mad Harriet cackled, wielding her energy claws.

“Are you hitting on me, Harry Scissorhands?” he retorted, dodging her blades with uncanny reflexes. He swiftly parried her blow, punched her in the face and taunted: “I learned to counter your lame moves when I was in kindergarten, creep!”

His next words were crushed by Stompa's flying kick into his face, who shouted: “You talk too much!”

Spitting out blood, Lashina snared him again, and Bernadeth held her hell blade to his neck and bellowed: “Let's watch you escape if your head isn't on your shoulders anymore, wise guy!”

Horrified, Steve pressed his hand in front of his mouth, but at the last second, Bernadeth's blade was parried the bracelet of an Amazon princess who had jumped down.

“Who are you?!” the female fury cried out.

“Your worst nightmare, false god!” Wonder Woman retorted, punching her lights out. She dodged Stompa's kick, snared Lashina's wrists with her lasso, and ripped her two lassos out of her hands.

“I call dibs on those,” she grinned. However, with a manic cackle, Mad Harriet slashed three claws into her side. Blood gushed out, and from the invisible sphere, Steve cried in horror: “Angel!!”

“Who are you, ssslut? I'll ssslice you into little piecces!” Mad Harriet slavered, snapping her energy claws. She raised her hand, but Mister Miracle lifted her up on his Aero Discs and grinned: “You cannot fly, can you?”

“Of courssse not!!”

“Thanks for the confirmation,” he grinned, flew over a waste disposal silo and dropped her down.
a garbage shaft. He watched Stompa charge towards Wonder Woman like a rhino, ready to run the wounded Amazon over. But before she could reach her, he let his mother box glow, and the ground under the giantess gave way, and she plunged several stories lower.

“NO FAIR!!” Stompa bellowed as she hit the ground.

“Unfair to the floor!” Mister Miracle grinned, knowing she could survive a nuclear blast. When Bernadeth swung at his neck, her blade was parried by Wonder Woman, who snared her wrist and knocked her out with a flying kick. But both Mister Miracle and her stared when Lashina aimed a hellfire spewing energy rifle at them and sneered: “I normally wouldn't stoop to Parademon weapons, but for you, I gladly make an exception!”

“Uh oh,” the New God muttered, but then, Lashina froze in position. From behind, Bernadeth’s hell blade protruded through her chest.

“Not so fast,” Steve muttered, his hands still tingling from gripping that unholy sword. Turning pale, he blurted out in horror: “H-have I k-killed her…?!”

“A New God doesn't die that easily, human,” Mister Miracle laughed derisively, “she'll be alive and killing again in a few minutes. By the way, Wonder Woman, is that your sidekick?”

“Hey!” Steve blurted out, but Wonder Woman just smiled: “Consider Colonel Trevor my secretary, Mister Miracle.”

The New God gazed skeptically at him, but he sputtered: “Y-yes, you heard it, I am her s-secretary!”

Mister Miracle didn't seem entirely convinced, but finally shrugged and continued: “Whatever, but for the love of the Source, please trim your facial hair!”

Okay, that's it. If even aliens make fun of your beard, something must be wrong, Steve muttered inwardly. Suddenly, Mister Miracle's haughty features changed. With unexpected concern, the New God kneeled next to the wounded Barda. She bled profusely, and Steve knew at once that she also suffered serious internal trauma. With unexpected concern, Mister Miracle aimed at her with his mother box, bathed her in sparkling light, and her wounds closed. He muttered: “That's it, my mother box is spent. I hope it helped.”

The female fury slowly got up, her tormented body visibly hurting. She stared at him and croaked: “You came back… but why?”

“I owed you my life. Now, I repaid my debt.”

Barda's face was pale, but she stood tall like a queen. She wiped blood off her chin and croaked: “Is that everything you want to say?”

Mister Miracle avoided her gaze and muttered: “Yes.”

That's such a lie, Steve muttered inwardly, but didn't dare to speak up. The air was thick with unresolved tension, but finally, Barda hissed: “In that case, I will stop my vendetta against you, but I will never forget your treason!”

She spat on his boots, and then disappeared in a dark alley. Steve stared after her and muttered: “She'll attack us within a minute!”

“No, she may be the best assassin I have ever seen, but she has honor. I wish things could have been differently,” Mister Miracle muttered, and he was surprised how pained his voice sounded.
Steve almost considered consoling him, but Wonder Woman cracked her knuckles, picked up the Tablet of Hades and snapped threateningly: “If you don't mind, I'll take this and at least try to save the world!”

Mister Miracle raised his hands and pleaded: “Wonder Woman, you have no reason to trust me, but we really have to work together!”

“Why?”

“Firstly, we have a better chance to survive Apokolips, and secondly, you won't get far without me. Do you know that Earth is a several million light years away right now?”

“Several million light years away?!” Steve blurted out in disbelief. We just demolished mankind's world altitude record. This would be way cool if the fate of the universe didn't depend on our mission.

His fiancée didn't flinch. Instead, she raised her lasso and hissed: “In that case, Mister Miracle, you better start making yourself useful. Where can we escape to?”

“The only way to escape from Apokolips is to New Genesis, the home of my dad, Highfather Izaya. It will be dangerous, but our options are limited.”

“What tells us you won't back stab us again?!’” Steve retorted. Mister Miracle confessed: “Nothing, Colonel Trevor, but the alternative is death for all of us.”

His fiancée and him exchanged wary glances, but finally Wonder Woman muttered: “Very well, Mister Miracle, you lead the way. What is your plan?”

“We need to get to Himon, my secret resistance contact on Apokolips. He is able to smuggle us out. Unfortunately, this means we have to go into the slums of Apokolips, deep into the bowels of this hellish planet.”

Steve was not looking forward to this, but Mister Miracle cracked his knuckles and grinned: “No worries! Escaping has always been my strong point.”

Steve kept his guard up, neither convinced about Mister Miracle's sincerity nor Barda's departure, but said nothing. While struggled not to gag in this noxious atmosphere, Wonder Woman followed the New God, cradled the Tablet of Hades and asked: “Can you tell me more about this world, Apokolips, and its regent, our mortal enemy Darkseid?”

“All you see, Wonder Woman, is a realm we call the 'Fourth World'. We New Gods weren't born divine, like Zeus, the king of the Old Gods, but still live in proximity to the Source, the ultimate center of all being. Its spark, which also powers my mother box, made us immortal and a billion years further evolved than you homo sapiens.”

“Don't flatter yourself,” Steve scoffed, but Mister Miracle retorted: “I am only stating facts. While New Genesis, the home of my ancestors, is comparable to your concepts of 'paradise' or 'Elysia', Apokolips is literally what you call 'hell'. Billions suffer in a brutal caste system which is enforced by Parademons, ensuring a maximum of misery, on which the black heart of Darkseid feasts.”

“Tell us more about him!” Wonder Woman demanded, and Mister Miracle shuddered. His usually haughty voice quivered, as he continued: “Darkseid, real name Uxas, is a being of pure hatred, a merciless tyrant who accepts nothing but total subjugation. Physically, he is a stone faced, twelve foot, thousand pound force of destruction whose gloves have pounded and boots have trampled entire civilizations. He disintegrate anything with his Omega eye beams, which makes the heat vision of your Superman colleague seem like child's play.”
Wonder Woman and Steve exchanged alarmed gazes.

“However, Darkseid isn't interested in fistfights. His sole mission is to find and gain control over the Anti-Life Equation, which would allow him to usurp all free will in the sentient universe. He is obsessed by it.”

Wonder Woman asked: “If Darkseid is so powerful, why doesn't he search for it himself?”

Mister Miracle sighed: “To make a long story short, him staying here is one of the conditions of the ceasefire between New Genesis and Apokolips.”

“Wait a second, there a ceasefire? I thought you being Darkseid's ward was also a condition, but you fled?”

“Again, long story short, I won my freedom with a trial by combat… against Barda.”

“Wait, what?!”

“It was the worst fight of my career. In the months before, I sensed that she… was different than Stompa, Lashina, Bernadeth, Mad Harriet and all the other female furies who mercilessly trampled me. Barda was stronger and softer than them, we developed… chemistry, and when the moment came, I took full advantage.”

Wonder Woman looked him directly in the eye and snapped: “You made her fall in love with you, then chose her for the trial, and beat her because she held back!”

Mister Miracle trembled and blurted out: “Is that what your magic lasso tells you?”

“I don't need my magic lasso to find that out! That's betrayal! No wonder Barda was so angry, and no wonder everybody calls you a traitor!”

“Firstly, I was born a prisoner, I would have given anything for my freedom. Secondly, don't act as if you were immune to matters of the heart, Wonder Woman! In my short time on Terra, I discovered what a harlot you are. Kissing Superman in front of your boyfriend is just as low. I bet Colonel Trevor's heart hurt for a long while until he discovered his nice fiancée, Diana Prince!”

Wonder Woman became chalk white, then beet red. She cringed, preferring to preserve her secret identity and getting called out than confessing she was Diana Prince and giving it all away. Steve finally saved her by snapping: “Our private lives are off limits to you, Mister Miracle!”

“In that case, mine is, too!”

“Fair enough,” he snapped, but suddenly thought: Great Guns, he really felt something for Barda! Did he betray her to gain his freedom, and hated himself ever since?

Not taking his eyes off him, he continued: “Anyway, back to Darkseid. So, because of the ceasefire conditions, he cannot leave Apokolips?”

“You are right, Colonel Trevor. He found the first third of the Anti-Life Equation here, but there were two more elsewhere: in Olympus, the world of the Old Gods, and Terra, the world of Gateways.”

“Gateways? Since when is Earth known for gateways?” Steve muttered, and Mister Miracle explained: “From the beginning of the universe, Terra shares an uncanny connection to the Source, which defies time and space. It is a gateway to everything, is the shortest path between the
New Gods and the old gods, and it is fitting that humanity represents the best and worst the universe has to offer.”

“I am not protesting,” he muttered.

“Because Darkseid was bound to Apokolips, he could not retrieve the other two pieces of the Anti-Life Equation himself. So, he infected petty criminals on Olympus and Terra with his message of hate to become his lackeys. He recruited Circe to get the next part on Olympus, and Dr. Cyber to track down the part on Earth, the Tablet of Hades. When she got knocked out, Darkseid unleashed Barda on us, making use of her burning desire to take revenge on me. You know the rest.”

“Whatsoever you say, Mister Miracle. I only hope this Himon guy has a nice ride home,” Steve muttered. He glanced to Wonder Woman and suddenly muttered: “Angel, why is your hair streaming upwards?”

She furred her brow, then stroked her Medusa like scalp and muttered: “Great Hera, what is happening?”

A moment later, the Tablet of Hades began to glow evilly. A spark of astral energy sprang from the crack, and Mister Miracle jumped up in fear. He screamed: “TAKE COVER!! WE HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED!!”

Before Wonder Woman and Steve could react, a giant vortex opened up in space. Both looked in horror at the stone faced, twelve foot, thousand pound force of destruction who appeared in front of them, holding himself with the posture of a god king. His gloves and boots had destroyed entire civilizations, but the true power lay in his fiery red eyes, which burnt like the deepest pits of hell. Its gaze could disintegrate anything, including the courage of the strongest Amazon princess that ever lived.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO ME, he bellowed in a voice that made the fabric of reality shudder, and pointed at the pulsating Tablet of Hades.

He was Uxas, Darkseid The Destroyer himself.
Chapter 12

Wonder Woman, Mister Miracle and Steve stared in horror at the tyrant of Apokolips. The New God air dashed on his Aero Discs and screamed: “Whatever you do, Darkseid mustn't get the Tablet of Hades!”

The godking of the hell planet stood before them like a wolf in front of three sheep. One twitch of his cannon ball muscles crushed steel, one gaze disintegrated soul and spirit, and the shadow of his gargantuan body seemingly eclipsed the entire universe. He pointed with his gigantic gauntlet at the Tablet of Hades in Wonder Woman's arm and boomed: “I'LL TAKE THAT!!”

Darkseid clenched his giant jaw, and deadly Omega Beams shot out of his eyes.

“Oww!!” Wonder Woman cried, let go of the Tablet of Hades and deflected them with her bracelets. The impact blasted her backward, and her armbands began to glow red. She resisted with all her might, but the shockwaves made her slide backwards, away from the glowing stone tablet. It was as if Darkseid's proximity was infecting it.

“Angel!” Steve cried out, but the searing heat of Darkseid's Omega Beams forced him to take cover behind a stone pillar. He drew his pistol, but immediately knew that bullets were useless against this enemy.

“THE TABLET OF HADES! THE LAST PART OF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION!!” Darkseid bellowed, his eyes blazing with greed. In defiance of his seemingly massive body, he flew up high in the air and reached for the tablet with his massive gauntlet. But at the last moment, Mister Miracle swooped in on his Aero Discs, snatched it away and snapped: “Sorry, you are not going to annihilate free will just yet.”

Darkseid's massive gray skull turned around. He shot at him his Omega Beams and gloated: “MY TRAITORIOUS WARD!!”

“I was never your ward! I was always your prisoner, but never a traitor! I won my freedom in a fair duel!” he screamed, dodging the deadly blasts.

“YOU WILL BE MY FIRST SUBJECT FOR THE TEST OF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION!” Darkseid retorted. Every word shook the earth, and Steve's eardrums nearly burst. He drew his pistol and tried to shoot Darkseid, but Wonder Woman pushed him behind a pillar and muttered: “Bullets won't help us here. Just stay down and don't do anything stupid!”

“But--”

“We'll manage, darling,” she insisted, quickly wrapped her arms around him and gave him a wet, passionate kiss. For a moment, everything stopped around him, and all the chaos was blotted out by the sweet ambrosia of her tongue.

“I promise you get more of them later,” his fiancée finally smiled, and he finally relented. Steve's skin burnt where she had kissed him, and lowering his gun, he pleaded inwardly: Please don't lie to me, angel!

Darkseid charged at Mister Miracle, flying after him with terrifying force. What he lacked in quickness he made up with power. Darkseid became a heat seeking missile trailing a tiny fly, targeting him with a hailstorm of deadly Omega Beams. On his Aero Discs, Mister Miracle dodged all beams with uncanny precision, but he couldn't shake him off. It was obvious that the
Tablet of Hades was slowing him down, and Darkseid was closing in.

“Throw the tablet to me!” Wonder Woman shouted.

“Good idea!” Mister Miracle blurted out, hurling the glowing artifact to her. At the same time, an Omega Beam shattered a pillar above him. The debris hit him in the head, and he smashed into the next wall.

“DIE, TRAITOR!!” Darkseid bellowed, bunching his gigantic fists and tried to pound his former ward into oblivion. But at the last second, Wonder Woman swooped in, crossing her bracelets over her head and parrying the gigantic double fisted blow. It nearly crushed her, but she didn't go down.

“WHO ARE YOU, INSECT?!”

“Your death, fake god!” Wonder Woman sneered, her slender, chiseled arms quivering under the strain. Darkseid pounded her again and again, but summoning all her might, she refused to go down.

“I AM THE GOD KING OF APOKOLIPS! NOBODY CAN WITHSTAND ME!” he screamed. Wonder Woman's eardrums nearly got blown out, but she glared at him and snapped: “I know the gods myself! You are no god, you are just a bully!”

With a warrior scream, she freed herself, charged at Darkseid, whirled her lasso around and snared his wrist. Burnt by the holy fabric, he cried out in pain and screamed: “I AM GOING TO KILL YOU!!”

“What a surprising confession,” she retorted, but choked when he pulled the rope with terrifying force and smashed her into the ground. The impact was so hard that the massive gray concrete shattered. He smashed her body so hard that she flew through the air like a ragdoll.

“ANGEL!!” Steve screamed in horror, as Darkseid picked her up with his gigantic war gauntlet. His horrible crimson eyes flared up, and Mister Miracle croaked: “No!”

Just as the two men thought Darkseid was going to vaporize her with his Omega Beams, the god king of Apokolips suddenly grinned. He licked his lipless mouth and slavered: “WHAT SPLENDOR DO WE HAVE HERE? YIELD, AND YOU WILL BECOME DARKSEID'S MISTRESS!”

Wonder Woman had never heard a more vile request. She taunted: “You are not man enough for me!”

She grabbed her razor sharp tiara and smashed it into his blue loincloth. Darkseid screamed with such unmistakably masculine pain that even Steve cringed. Wonder Woman dodged his blind punches, flew away with the Tablet of Hades and shouted to Mister Miracle: “Let's escape while we can!”

“Good idea!” the New God replied, picked up Steve and wanted to dash away on his Aero Discs. An apoplectic Darkseid jumped up, grabbed his ankle and threw him into the flying Wonder Woman. Both smacked against the next wall and crashed to the ground, with Mister Miracle cradling Steve to soften the impact.

“GIVE ME THAT TABLET!!” Darkseid screamed, firing Omega Beams at his enemies. Wonder Woman dropped the tablet and deflected the bolts with her bracelets. When Darkseid charged ahead, she tried to snare him with her lasso. But he dodged the rope and punched her through the wall. She let go of her lasso, and Darkseid mercilessly pummeled her. Siding backwards with
every blow, she spat blood and croaked: “I cannot hold up much longer! Fire your mother box!”

“I can’t! It's empty!” Mister Miracle cried out. When he tried to take the Tablet of Hades, Darkseid bearhugged him and taunted: “TRY TO FLEE NOW, LITTLE ESCAPE ARTIST!!”

The New God twisted and squirmed, but even he could not escape Darkseid's horrible embrace. He looked at the bleeding, battered Wonder Woman and croaked: “I am running out of tricks. If this is our last stand, it was an honor to have spent my last free thoughts at your side!”

Darkseid laughed in sadistic pleasure. But suddenly, Wonder Woman's magic lasso slung itself around his massive body. Wielding his fallen fiancée's weapon, Steve planted his foot on the tablet and snapped: “Not so fast, Darkseid! If you want the Tablet of Hades, come and get it!”

“PATHETIC HUMAN!! ONE GAZE OF MY EYE, AND YOU WILL BE VAPORIZED!!” Darkseid taunted. One slight tug at the rope, and Steve slid like holding a mammoth.

“Steve, no! Run away and save yourself!” Wonder Woman screamed, but he taunted: “You are just a bully, Darkseid! If you want the tablet, pry it from my cold dead hands!”

“SO BE IT!!”

Steve stared as Darkseid's eyes lit up, ready to strike him down with his Omega Beams. He consciously held his gaze, wanting to savor the last moments until the great void.

Suddenly, a golden rod smashed against Darkseid's massive skull. He cried out, firing his Omega Beams into the black sky instead at Steve, and a vortex opened behind Wonder Woman, Mister Miracle and Steve. Out of the shadows, a golden savior appeared, took the Tablet of Hades and shouted: “Come! Jump through my Boom Tube!”

“Is that you, Himon?” Mister Miracle croaked, unable to see his savior in the glare of the vortex. The unknown savior pulled them into the Boom Tube, and again, Steve fell through a reality defying maelstrom. Again, he feared to get stuck in the void forever, but in the end, he fell back into reality again. He hardly dared to open his eyes, but he immediately knew: Great Guns, it worked! I can feel, smell and sense it, we are back home again!

“Praise the Source! We are back in the place you call 'Boston'!” Mister Miracle exclaimed, and Steve could hardly believe his eyes when he opened them.

“Oh my God, that was another tear in space! Is that really them?” Professor Helena Sandsmark blurted out, shielding her daughter Cassie.

“I don't know how or why, but yes!” Sameer exclaimed, while Charlie, Chief and Lonnie stared. Wonder Woman squinted, and finally realized: “We are standing in the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece!”

“Yes, you are, you splendid rascals!” Etta beamed and hugged her Amazonian best friend. One moment later, Ann and Howard Trevor ran forward, embraced their son and cried: “Steve, you are alive! We thought that we would never see you again!”

“Mom? Dad? What are you doing here?”

“When you vanished in front of our eyes, we remembered the number of your best friend Etta. She explained what happened in this museum, and told that Wonder Woman and you often went on dangerous missions, and always returned. We couldn't stay in Vermont, and drove to her as fast as we could! We couldn't sit around while our son was in danger!”
“Thanks, dad,” Steve choked, and hugged his mother. Instead of alcohol, he only smelled tears on her. The vortex vanished in a flash of light, heavily backlighting the person who had opened the Boom Tube and saved Wonder Woman, Mister Miracle and Steve from Darkseid.

“Praise the Source, Himon, that was such a close call! How did you track us down?” the New God sighed.

“I am not him,” the voice retorted, and he furled his brow. Suddenly, everybody froze. Instead of the slender, inscrutable form of Himon, they stared at the seven foot, muscle bound, ferocious figure of Barda. She was holding her mother box in one massive arm, and the Tablet of Hades in the other.

“Didn't we just get rekt by her?!” Lonnie exclaimed in horror. Cassie raised her fists, and Wonder Woman crossed her bracelets. But instead of attacking, Barda dropped her Mega Rod to the floor, took off her helmet and whispered: “I seek asylum in your world.”
Chapter 13

“Is this some Apokolipsian joke?” Steve croaked.

Everybody just stared at the seven foot, muscle bound female fury who had laid down her weapon, her helmet and the Tablet of Hades and kneeled in front of them.

“We'll find out!” Wonder Woman snapped, spat out blood and snared Barda in her Lasso of Truth. The female fury didn't resist, and under its influence, she insisted: “I am seeking asylum on this world! I am serious!”

“After nearly killing my daughter?!” Professor Sandsmark screamed.

“After stomping my wife?!” Howard Trevor yelled.

“After smashing my skull?!” Wonder Woman snapped.

“I did terrible things, and I want to repent. I will accept any punishment, if it means I am spared of returning to Apokolips.”

“What is 'Apokolips'?” Etta spat out, and Steve muttered: “It's literally what you would call 'hell', Etta. We just escaped from there.”

Mister Miracle added: “Without Barda, none of us would be standing here. She teleported us out with her mother box and saved us from getting killed by Darkseid. Our survival was a matter of quick thinking!”

He took her mother box and explained: “An unprogrammed Mother Box can teleport its user to any place in the universe… as long as the user knows that place. The museum was the one place on Terra that Barda visited before. Otherwise, we would be lost forever in the void.”

“How nice of her! First of all, I barely survived her attack, and secondly, you belong in a prison, too, thief!” Cassie screamed, bunching her fists.

“Cassie, be quiet!” her mother pleaded, but she shot back: “Mom, I am the daughter of Zeus! If that loser attacks me, I will twist his head off!”

“I'll twist his head off first!” Lonnie spat out, grabbing a bottle, ready to smash it.

“I'll help you,” Etta added, cracking her knuckles, and Sameer, Charlie and Chief snapped: “We call dibs, we were punched by him first!”

Mister Miracle stared nervously at this tidal wave of justified anger, but Steve went in between and replied: “Take a deep breath, people! Yes, he is a thief, but he only stole the Tablet of Hades to prevent Darkseid, the god king of the hell planet Apokolips, from completing the Anti-Life Equation. Barda was his right hand, but after getting betrayed by his henchmen, she saved us from him and safely teleported us back.”

Etta's eyes grew large, and she muttered: “Wait a second, you escaped right in front of Darkseid's nose, and expect him not to follow you here?!”

“Darkseid can't follow us here. To make a long story short, he is bound by his word to stay on Apokolips,” Mister Miracle replied matter-of-factly, and Barda nodded. Etta eyed them warily, and Wonder Woman finally hissed: “Okay, then, let's wrap things up here. Steve, can you--”
Her next words were obliterated by the gigantic Boom Tube that ripped open the fabric of reality. All looked in horror at the stone faced, twelve foot, thousand pound force of destruction who appeared in front of them, holding himself with the posture of a god king. His gloves and boots had destroyed entire civilizations, but the true power lay in his fiery red eyes, which burnt like the deepest pits of hell. Its gaze could disintegrate anything, including the courage of everybody that ever lived.

“DARKSEID!!” Steve cried out in horror.

“H-how can that be?!” Barda blurted out.

“Darkseid, you broke the ceasefire! New Genesis will discover your betrayal, and the Golden Army of Izaya Highfather will kill you!!” Mister Miracle cried out.

“THERE WILL BE NO NEW GENESIS AFTER I ERADICATE IT WITH THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION!!” Darkseid boomed, nearly bursting the eardrums of all onlookers. Sameer, Charlie and Chief ducked behind a table, while Etta ran behind a pillar, dragging Professor Sandsmark with her. Swatting Lonnie aside like an insect, Darkseid lunged at the Tablet of Hades, but Wonder Woman deflected his attack with her bracelets, snared the artifact with her lasso and hissed: “You have to pry it from my cold dead hands!”

“SO BE IT, WENCH!!” he taunted, flexed his gigantic fists and wound up for the biggest punch in the history of Western civilization. Darkseid struck Wonder Woman with the force of a supersonic missile, blasted her backwards through the massive wall and sent her flying onto the street outside the museum. With every bounce, sparks flew from her armor, and her blood splattered all over her face.

“ANGEL!!” Steve cried out, as the onlookers screamed and ran away in horror. Darkseid flew high in the air and wanted to stomp on her chest, but Mister Miracle intercepted him in mid air, diverted his trajectory and made him crash into a warehouse full of old pottery.

“No! My amphorae!” Professor Sandsmark groaned. Darkseid grabbed Mister Miracle by the wrist and slammed him into the ground. When he wanted to finish him off, Barda swooped in and smacked his massive arm with her Mega Rod.

“You will die for your treachery, Barda!!” the tyrant of Apokolips boomed, but she retorted: “I wanted to be your general, Darkseid! But instead of giving me gratitude, you sentenced me to death!”

“BECAUSE YOU WERE WEAK,” he spat out and punched her through the wall. He grabbed Mister Miracle and her by the throat, smashed their heads together and grinned when both went down unconscious. When Darkseid glared at the prone Wonder Woman, he was covered by triple machine gun fire.

“Get away from her!” cried Sameer.

“Eat lead!” Charlie spat out.

“Die, you death spirit!” Chief hissed.

“PATHETIC!” Darkseid scoffed, swatting the machine gun bullets away like flies. His hellish eyes flared up, and after a single gaze, the three elite soldiers froze to ice, dropped their weapons and ran away in panic. Steve’s mind raced: *How powerful must Darkseid be, that a single look*
Darkseid turned around and shot Omega Beams at Wonder Woman. The bleeding Amazon deflected them with her bracelets, but the shockwave took her off her feet and made her smack against a parking lorry. The impact would have shaken Superman to the bone, but Wonder Woman just wiped blood off her nose and grinned: “Is that all you got?”

Darkseid screamed in rage and pummeled her with his gigantic fists. With uncanny reflexes, Wonder Woman dodged his attacks, but her punches and kicks lacked commitment. Steve pleaded: Why aren’t you fighting back harder, angel?

“You fight like a baby!” she taunted. Darkseid’s huge nostrils flailed with rage, and he landed another devastating blast. Wonder Woman got smashed high up in the air, soaring miles through the air like a piece of debris. Steve looked at her in horror, until he suddenly realized: “W-Wonder Woman just crashed into the condo where I live!”

Etta muttered: “Wait a second… did she want to get punched there?”

Darkseid glared into the horizon, and cracked his enormous knuckles. On cue, an Invisible Jet soared right at him, and its pilot snapped: “Just die, fake god!”

Darkseid just stared as Wonder Woman steered her magic plane right into his bowels. The tyrant of Apokolips got blasted off his gigantic boots and was dragged along for hundred yards until Wonder Woman jumped out, and he was pinned against the museum walls by the biggest skewer ever.

“Everybody alright?” Wonder Woman asked, cradling the Tablet of Hades. Steve nervously replied: “I hate to say it, angel, but Darkseid isn’t done yet!”

With a scream full of elemental rage, the tyrant of Apokolips freed himself from the Invisible Jet. Everybody stared when the plane shaped hole in his giant chest closed within seconds, and all his bruises healed up.

“YOU FIGHT WELL, WONDER WOMAN! YOU WILL MAKE A SPLENDID MATE! I WILL STRIKE AT YOUR WEAKEST POINT,” Darkseid slavered, snapped with his fingers and focused on the aura of someone cowering inside the museum. A panicked scream later, Cassie Sandsmark hovered out, gripped by a ruthless, invisible fist.

“CASSIE! NO!!” Professor Sandsmark screamed, but that was nothing against the horror in Wonder Woman’s and Lonnie’s eyes. Darkseid crushed her neck with his gauntlet and slavered: “THIS IS YOUR KID SISTER, ISN’T SHE? GIVE ME THE TABLET OF HADES, AND I WILL SPARE HER!”

Wonder Woman froze. Being at Darkseid’s mercy would have reduced anyone to a sniveling coward, but Cassie screamed: “By the love of our dad, don’t do it! If you give in, I’ll kick your ass into Styx myself!”

I don’t know about her skills, but her guts are Amazonian for sure, her older half sister thought, and snapped: “You are taking a hostage? That’s what bullies and liars do, talk big to hide their hands!”

Suddenly, Darkseid lunged forward like a cobra. She barely managed to keep the Tablet of Hades away, but he ripped her lasso right out of her hands. Darkseid took in its magic, suddenly laughed maniacally and gloated: “I SEE THE TRUTH! YOU LIVE A LIE YOURSELF, WENCH!!”

He usurped its power and engulfed Wonder Woman in a flash of evil light. Suddenly, the
Amazonian princess vanished, replaced by the shy, meek Diana Prince, complete with pencil skirt, pulled back hair and clunky glasses.

“Steve, why has Wonder Woman just turned into your fiancée?” Howard Trevor blurted out. Etta, Sameer, Charlie and Chief cringed, while Professor Sandsmark, Cassie and Lonnie just stared. Steve stammered: “A-Angel, w-what am I supposed to say?”

Wonder Woman – or rather, Diana Prince – turned around, defiantly met their gazes and exclaimed: “Tell them the truth, Steve, they deserve it. Yes, I am Wonder Woman, and if we survive, I will explain everything afterwards!”

Lonnie’s jaw was on the floor. Ann Trevor was frozen, and finally blurted out: “Wonder Woman. My son is dating Wonder Woman, and I spat in her face...!”

Darkseid fired another volley of his Omega Beams at Diana Prince. She deflected them with her bracelets, but the heat singed her office costume. When Darkseid swung at her, her pencil skirt hindered her parade, causing her to stumble. The tyrant of Apokolips used this to land several horrible punches at her.

**BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.**

Diana’s head whipped around like a ragdoll’s. Blood splattered from her face, and Darkseid trampled her. Etta screamed as her best friend was stomped like a cigarette butt. Darkseid grabbed her by the throat and raised his fist to finish her off, but at the last moment, someone ripped the magic lasso out of his hands and snared his wrist.

“I may not be Wonder Woman, but I can throw a lasso, too!” Steve screamed. Darkseid laughed into his face, but when he wanted to rip it out of his pathetic mortal hands, he simply couldn’t. For an insane second, Steve thought he had developed super strength, but suddenly, he saw that Cassie was pulling behind him. She was possessed by a superhuman force she never knew she had.

“Leave my big sister alone!!” Cassie screamed. Suddenly, Lonnie jumped out, and joined in the tug of war. Darkseid sent a jolt of negative energy through the lasso, nearly overwhelming their minds with pain and despair. But while Steve and Cassie reeled, Lonnie spat out, looked Darkseid directly into the eye and sneered: “You want to destroy free will, your entire existence offends me. My anarchist spirit will delight in deleting you!”

At first, Darkseid seemed offended by this physical and psychic resistance, but finally, he laughed: “DEFIANT UNTIL THE END! YOU WILL MAKE GOOD SLAVES!”

He bear hugged the three humans, smashed them into the ground and gloated at their helplessness. Darkseid looked around, saw nothing but defeated enemies, and finally reached for the Tablet of Hades.

In that moment, two things happened. Diana Prince jumped up, ripped her Godkiller Sword out of the back of her dress and stabbed his heart. At the same time, Darkseid unleashed his Omega Beams and blew her chest out.

An inhuman sound came out of Steve’s throat, a scream which bore no resemblance to any human uttering. He ignored the disintegrating Darkseid, kneed at his fallen fiancée and implored: “D-Diana, stay down! H-help is on the way!”

“What did I... g-get... him?”

“Yes, you did.”
“Good… I needed my sword beneath my pillow… I'll always remember you… checking my dress for it,” she grinned weakly. Diana tried to feel her stomach, but there was none. Her chest simply didn't exist anymore.

“Angel...” Steve sobbed.

“It's alright, darling. I… I wished I would have survived long enough to live out my fantasy,” Diana whispered, before she vomited blood, went limp and died.

Steve's universe imploded.

It couldn't be.

It was impossible.

Yet his strong, beautiful fiancée was dead.

“No. NO. NOO!!!” he cried, had a nervous breakdown and completely lost it. Etta kneed next to him, sobbing over Diana's corpse, while Darkseid's remains simply dissipated.

Suddenly, Professor Sandsmark cleared her throat. Summoning all her courage, she bellowed: “There is still a way to save Wonder Woman!”
Chapter 14

Everybody went silent. Steve glared at her, extremely offended that she interrupted his mourning, but she continued: “On Themyscira, there is an old legend that describes a Purple Ray. It is a divine device that can bring the champion of Themyscira back to life.”

Steve laughed bitterly: “Great! Nobody knows where Themyscira is, not even Wonder Woman herself.”

“But you crash landed there, didn't you?”

“I only told that a million times.”

With impressive force, she ripped Barda's mother box out of her hand and continued: “Colonel, your 'Mister Miracle' just explained that an unprogrammed 'Mother Box' can teleport its user to any place in the universe… as long as the user knows that place! Take that cube and teleport to Themyscira, you visited it before!”

“I visited it a decade ago! I hardly remember it!”

“The alternative is Wonder Woman's certain death.”

Steve froze, but finally, Barda pressed her mother box into his hand and snapped: “She killed Darkseid and saved the universe. If you don't try to save her, I will personally tow your sorry butt to Apokolips!”

Steve nervously took her mother box in one hand, cradled the dead Diana in the other arm, and desperately tried to think of Themyscira. He tried to remember the sun, the ocean, the coast… but the cube hardly flickered. Then, he reminded himself of the Amazons… General Antiope, who terrified him… Queen Hippolyta, who mesmerized him… and of course, Princess Diana, who stole his heart.

The cube began to glimmer. He latched on to the earliest memories… the contest, after which she won the right to return him back to the world of man… the trial in front of Queen Hippolyta, when she interrogated him with the Lasso of Truth… the fight against Ares's demons, in which 16 Amazons gave their lives to save him… and finally…

… the plane crash… he remembered the terrible impact, the maelstrom of chaos… him being sucked down into the deep… his lungs bursting and finally flooding… but at the last moment, him seeing the angel that dove to his side, freed him and saved his life…

DIANA.

“AAGGHHH!!!”

Again, he fell through an endless vortex. Again, he was subjected to a maelstrom of chaos, which simultaneously numbed and overloaded his senses. Again, he feared to lose his way and never resurface again, but finally, he fell back into reality.

With a sickening thud, Steve fell directly into the Throne Room of Themyscira. Queen Hippolyta and all her Amazons stared when they saw the male cradling their dead princess, screaming: “Please help! I am Steve Trevor, the man who crashed on your island! Someone heal Diana with the Purple Ray, whatever it is!”
For several seconds, there was nothing but chaos, but with a single royal gesture, Queen Hippolyta quenched it. As calm as she could, she commanded her head scientist: “Althea, bring my daughter to the Purple Ray chamber.”

Steve was a nervous wreck. All day, he sat in the chamber he had been locked in a decade ago, after he had crash landed on Themyscira. He just stared at the wall and prayed that Diana would somehow pull through.

Finally, Althea came in, and whispered: “Come with me.”

Steve stumbled behind her, and finally arrived in a chamber. Diana lay in a sparkling white bed, clothed in a virgin white robe. For a horrible moment, he thought he was looking at a corpse. But then, he realized that her cheeks looked a bit too rosy for a dead person, her eyelashes fluttered, and her bosom slowly rose and fell.

“S… Steve?” she croaked.

“DIANA!”

Steve sprinted to her, kneed at her side, took her hand and replied: “Yes, it's me, angel!”

Her hand was pale, but warm, and it was the sweetest sensation ever. Diana opened her eyes like a newborn, and beamed when she recognized her fiancé. Tears dropped on her hand, and she whispered: “Stop crying, darling.”

“I must cry, angel. You died in my arms, and now you are talking to me again!” he sobbed, weeping the happiest tears of his life. Diana softly put her arm around him, and finally, they kissed. Steve nearly fainted with joy, greedily enjoying the taste of her sweet tongue. Finally, he beamed: “How are you feeling, angel?”

“The same way you would feel after Darkseid blew out your stomach. The Purple Ray grew me a new set of intestines, but I’m not even near to eating solid food yet. But as they say, you should have seen the other guy!”

“Darkseid simply turned to ash when you stabbed him.”

“Yeah, I deliberately let him blast me to our apartment, so I could retrieve my Godkiller Sword. I hid it in the back of my dress, of course,” she giggled.

“Of course! Is he dead now?”

“Yes, but a god doesn't 'die' like a mortal. I have a suspicion where he is, and I think he is hating every second of it,” Diana grinned.
“WHERE AM I?”

Darkseid opened his eyes and saw nothing but darkness. It was not a mortal darkness, like a shadow, but utter, elemental night, unknown to even the lord of Apokolips. He was floating in a boat on a river he had never seen before.

“WHERE AM I?!?” he screamed again. Out of nowhere, a disembodied voice replied: “You are in the Underworld, the realm of the dead, Uxas.”

“MY NAME IS NOT UXAS! I AM DARKSEID, THE RULER OF APOKOLIPS!!”

“Names are of little significance here.”

“WHO ARE YOU, WHELP?”

The disembodied voice paused, but it was not a fearful pause, but a pause reserved for a teacher about to reproach a disobedient child.

“I am Hades, the God of Death. You are traveling the river Styx on your way to Tartarus, the realm of penance. You have been tried and chosen to serve a long, grim punishment.”

“What did I do, you old god scum?! I did what was best for Apokolips!!”

“Thanks to your treachery, Apokolips has been swiftly conquered by New Genesis. As we speak, Izaya Highfather has proclaimed your estranged son Orion as the new caretaker.”

“This is insanity! I must return to Apokolips!!”

“I fear that is not a viable option.”

“OBEY ME OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES! I AM A GOD!!”

“Me, too. They have a saying that only two things in life are sure, death and taxes. I don't know if there is a Tax God, but if there is, we have the same clients.”

“You are senile, old god scum!! Show yourself, you coward! Fight me!!”

The disembodied voice sighed, and suddenly, the elemental darkness subsided. Darkseid just stared when he saw that he stood inside a gigantic ship, and barely reached up to the ankles of its gargantuan captain.

“W-WHAT IS THIS CHARADE?!” Darkseid screamed in horror, banging against Hades's massive toes. The death god replied: “You are dead, Uxas, physical size doesn't matter. Believe me, the size of your spirit is not impressive.”

“RESTORE ME BACK TO LIFE, PATHETIC OLD GOD, OR I’LL THROW YOU INTO THE DEEPEST PITS OF HELL!!”

“How did Diana put up with you? Speaking of hell, here we are. You will spend a lot of time here.”

“I AM IMPERVIOUS TO PAIN! I THRIVE ON TORTURE! I WILL DESTROY ANY PRISON AND SLAY YOU, PATHETIC OLD GOD!!”

Hades opened up a gate, and instead of the pain, misery and despair Darkseid expected and would
have thrived on, he suddenly found himself as a baby. Warm, merciless hands suffocated him in fresh, scratchy diapers, and a sickeningly sweet voice crooned: “Ahh, there you are, little Uxie! We will have sooo much fun now!”

Darkseid froze in horror when he recognized the features of Granny Goodness. He wanted to scream: “My name is not Uxie, you feeble crone!”

But he could not spit out his pacifier. He tried to punch her, but his baby hands could not even form a fist. Finally, Darkseid wanted to incinerate her with his Omega Beams, but only managed to singe her fingers.

“Bad Uxie! BAD UXIE!!” she retorted, and without stopping to smile, she mercilessly flogged him, ignoring his howling cries. When he finally gave in, she crooned: “Much better, Uxie, now let’s have breakfast!”

She pressed Darkseid against her massive bosom, opened her massive jacket and breast fed him.

“No! NO! NOOO!!” Darkseid wanted to scream, but he only managed senseless baby blubber. He finally gave in, gagged on her milk and seethed with rage.

“Enjoy your sentence, Uxas, I’ll check back in about an eon or so. Remember that ‘Tablet of Hades’ that you wanted to steal? My artifact depicts the eternal cycle of life, death and rebirth, and you must atone for your crimes until you can be reborn. Do you think that you are the only one to pursue the Anti-Life Equation? Ares tried, and he fell flat on his face. No wonder Diana got the better of you two.”

Darkseid wanted to protest, but was quickly shot down by Granny Goodness's swift punch. He was forced to gulp the milk of her saggy, sweaty breast, for now and all eternity. This was truly hell.

“… now that would be really punishment!” Steve mumbled, when Diana told him of her suspicion, shuddering at the mere thought of being a helpless baby until the end of time.

“He deserves it,” she retorted, pulling back the blanket and revealing her injured stomach. Soft baby skin stretched over her mortal wounds, and it even with the Purple Ray, it would take time until her brand new ribs, muscles and intestines would work properly again.

“Oh my goodness, does it hurt?”

“It tickles, but it’s bearable. Better than death.”

Steve bowed down and lovingly kissed her stomach. Diana arched her back and enjoyed the sensation of his warm lips against her soft baby skin. She sharply inhaled when his mouth wandered upwards, nibbling the valley of her bosom. It felt so right, so natural, and a surge of lust went through their bodies. But finally, Diana groaned: “No, Steve, my inner organs would spill out if we do it now.”

“O-of c-course,” he stammered, ashamed at his need, but then, he recognized that she had wanted it even more. Suddenly, something crackled, and Steve heard Mister Miracle's voice: “Sorry to interrupt you, but I just want to tell you how happy we are to hear you two!”
Steve jumped up and pulled out the mother box. He blurted out: “Have you been overhearing us all the time, you little pervert?!”

“Yes, but actually, it was pretty heart warming for all of us here, Colonel Trevor. By the way, that was one of the gutsiest Boom Tube jumps I have ever witnessed. You could have easily ended up in the void, but you pulled through.”

“It was worth it,” Steve replied, kissing Diana, but then, he frowned, “but I am sorry that we are stranded here. As we found out in our previous adventure, the Greek Gods deliberately made travel between Themyscira and Earth impossible. I'll miss Boston.”

“Actually, your Boom Tube actually blasted a nice hole into the magical space-time continuum. To make a long story short, you just created a stable wormhole between Themyscira and Boston. Travel is possible as we speak.”

Steve and Diana stared at each other.

“You mean, I could just step into the Throne Room of Themyscira and jump back to Boston, and vice versa?!”

“Basically yes, only that due to magic, the Boston-to-Themyscira jump is way more complicated than other way round… but you Amazons probably like it that way.”

“I'll be eager to try that out… but not today. Trevor out!” he snapped, deftly dropping the mother box in a keg of water, drowning out visual and acoustic signals.

“What a Peeping Tom,” he muttered, and was shocked to find Diana sobbing. Big, fat tears streamed down her beautiful face, and he blurted out: “W-What's the matter?”

Her entire form quivered, and finally, she croaked: “There are no words, Steve Trevor. You saved my life, brought me back home to Themyscira, and reopened the gates between Themyscira and Earth!”

Diana flung her arms around her fiancé and completely lost it. Her strong, powerful body cramped up, and she cried sweet, happy tears. She sobbed: “Thank you, Steve, just thank you, you are the greatest person I ever met!”

“Y-You're welcome, a-angel, p-please don't kill me!” he wheezed, nearly suffocating under her onslaught. But the longer she wept happy tears, the more it touched him. Steve realized he had given her back her home, something even Wonder Woman could not live without. It was as if the weight of the world has been taken off her shoulders, and he was so grateful to have helped her.

Suddenly, Diana smiled: “Steve, we should make use of our new gateway! Let's finally tie the knot and get married here! Let invite all our friends and trade our nice little engagement rings for two big wedding rings!”

“Angel, you literally just came back from the dead. I don't want you to do something rash.”

“Darling, if today proved anything, it is that either of us can die at any moment. Why wait? Let us get hitched! I want nobody but you, Steve. When I am Wonder Woman, you have my back, and when I am Diana Prince, even more. You stood at my side when I lost my mind, and literally went though hell to save me – TWICE. Steve, you are strong, kind, and smart. For me, you are the only one that counts. I want to be with you forever, and I know you feel the same way, too.”

She gazed at him lovingly, and stroked his hand. He lost himself in the ocean of her steel blue eyes and eagerly confessed: “Yes, I do.”
Diana wrapped her arm around him and passionately made out with him. Steve simply melted in her embrace, and between kisses, she smiled: “Yes, I love everything about you, Steve. Even that odd beard of yours!”

Steve stared, then both dissolved in huge gusts of laughter. He scratched it and muttered: “I can shave it off if you want to, angel.”

“Don't worry, I am starting to get used to it. My father himself has a beard.” She sat up, grinned from ear to ear and beamed: “So, then we are going to get married! We'll just break the news to my mother, and--”

Suddenly, someone behind them cleared her throat. Queen Hippolyta came in, nodded at her daughter and smiled: “I am very glad to see you, Diana, it has been too long!”

“Ten years, my queen,” she smiled, kissed and tightly embraced her mother. Both women blinked away tears, and finally, Queen Hippolyta continued: “Much has happened since then, child. We have a lot to talk about, but I have the notion that my first conversation concerns you two.”

She looked at Diana, then at Steve, and glared at their engagement rings. Queen Hippolyta put her hands on her hips and whispered: “Dear Steve Trevor, I have noticed that you are courting my daughter. Let us take a walk, my bearded friend.”

_That definitely did not sound like a compliment_, Steve cringed.

Diana gave him an encouraging look, and whispered: “You can do it! May your wits be sharp and your tongue silken!”

On his way outside, Steve sensed that he would rather fight Darkseid with his bare hands than ask Queen Hippolyta for permission to marry her daughter.
Chapter 15

It was the most terrifying sunny, idyllic afternoon Steve had ever experienced. Themyscira, Paradise Island, showed itself from its best side, caressing its inhabitants with golden rays, a warm breeze and a calm surf from the splendid blue ocean. But all Steve could think of was getting roasted by Queen Hippolyta.

“Let us talk, Steve Trevor! It has been too long after your plane crash,” the Amazon monarch purred, flanked by General Antiope and General Philippus. Both marshals could slice up a titan, but with her winged helmet, her royal armor and her flowing cape, their queen held more power in a single gaze than them in their entire bodies.

“Have you recovered well since then?”

“Yes, majesty, and thank you,” he muttered, and slowly followed her. Without taking their eyes off Steve, General Antiope and General Philippus trailed behind, just out of earshot. Their wary gazes made his insides knot up.

“Majesty, it is a great pleasure to talk to you,” he muttered, trying to say something polite. Queen Hippolyta glared at him, making him cringe, and she whispered: “Is that really true, Steve Trevor?”

Her gaze was even more powerful than Wonder Woman's Lasso of Truth. He truthfully muttered: “No, majesty, it is not. I apologize for my offense.”

“None taken, at least you are honest.”

“But it is a great honor, majesty. I didn't remember you to be so… beautiful.”

Steve froze the second he confessed it, and Queen Hippolyta's eyes became dangerous slits. But it was true, Diana had truly taken after her mother. Instead of beheading him, she replied: “A rare compliment, Steve Trevor, and it is noted. I grant you the privilege of feeding my griffins.”

She escorted him to a big royal stable, guarded by two more warily looking Amazons. A sickening stench almost blew Steve off his feet, but neither Queen Hippolyta nor her generals flinched. Two gigantic griffins the size of houses screeched, pecking with their razor sharp beaks.

“What is that smell?” Steve croaked. The monarch handed him a wheelbarrow with rotting intestines and retorted: “These are the leftovers of last week's slaughter, left to rot. The griffins are spoiled. They like it that way, and only accept hand feeding. Come on, help me feed them!”

Steve nearly puked when he reached into the cart and fed them the warm, sickening gunk. He nervously eyed their beaks and muttered: “Is this safe, majesty?”

“Yes, but don't look them in the eye, sweat, or make sudden movements. They mate for life,” she replied, patting her griffin on the razor sharp talon.

“Good to know,” he muttered nervously. Queen Hippolyta continued: “Apropos mating, have you already tried to procreate with my daughter?”

Steve jumped up in horror. The griffins violently bucked, struggled against their steel harnesses and shrieked like two banshees. Queen Hippolyta glared at them and shouted: “Back, BACK!! THIS MAN IS NOT FOOD!!”
The huge chimeras reluctantly retreated. The monarch continued shoveling carcasses into their mouths and repeated: “Steve Trevor, did you already mate with her?”

Steve became beet red, hoping to avoid an answer, but Queen Hippolyta just glared at him. Awkwardly feeding the griffins, he replied: “Yes, majesty, it happens... often.”

“Who initiates it?”

“Mostly, she does.”

“Do you enjoy it?”

“Yes, even if...”

He kicked himself for going that way, but finally blurted out: “...Even if I wish I had more stamina.”

“Does she enjoy it?”

“Vocally,” he blurted out, becoming truly scarlet. He nervously gazed at Queen Hippolyta, until she whispered: “Know, Steve Trevor, that this hasn't happened in the last few centuries. I twice had male intercourse, and both times ended poorly. The first time, I laid with Hercules, but he just tried to enslave the Amazons. The second time, Zeus seduced me, but after giving birth to Diana, I realized I was just one of his many conquests. Please understand that I have a certain... prejudice.”

“I won't hold it against you, majesty. I may not be a perfect mate, but I just want to make Diana happy,” he insisted, stuffing offal into his griffin's beak.

“Steve Trevor, it isn't easy. You know nothing about of Amazon culture, our rituals, or our daily life. You would forever be an outsider, the odd male who fell from the sky.”

“I am aware of that, majesty. But Diana can vouch that I am eager to learn, also consider I just spent half a week here in the last decade.”

“I am not concerned about you, but your legacy. When you fornicate, does she ever take off her bracelets?”

“N-no.”

“Are you sure?”

“Absolutely. I regularly scrape my nose on them.”

Queen Hippolyta whispered: “Our bracelets protect us against the sullying of males. We use them to parry attacks, but it also prevents the blooming of male seeds.”

**Great guns, are the bracelets contraceptives?!**

“I didn't know that. I just assumed that she could protect herself at will,” he confessed, and she replied: “Apparently, Diana didn't want to become pregnant... yet. Know that if my daughter bears your children, you will forever be part of the Amazonian bloodline. You an intelligent person, but I don't think you can fully comprehend what it means.”

“I cannot, majesty, and I cannot win you over with words, only with actions. It will be challenging.”
“I agree, but Diana seems to have faith in you. You are wearing her engagement ring. Know that if Diana marries you, you will forever become a part of the Amazon royal family.”

“Does that mean I will be a king?” he nervously muttered, but Queen Hippolyta retorted: “No, but you would be Diana’s consort. You would have no official power, but every Amazon would be bound to defend you with her life. If you are her consort and sire a daughter, she will one day rule over Themyscira.”

Steve trembled, slowly becoming aware of the huge responsibility, and the fact that Queen Hippolyta, the generals and the guards scanned him like an x ray machine. Finally, he whispered: “Majesty, I am neither a superhero, let alone a god. From where I come from, many people are smarter, stronger and more powerful than me. But I love Diana, and swear to do anything to make her happy.”

“Could you protect her, if she needs help?”

“It usually goes the other way around. Physically, I am no match for any supervillain. But I still manage to be useful most of the time, and I literally went to hell and back to save Diana – TWICE.”

“Have you been wed before?”

“No, and I haven’t been… very intimate in my life.”

Queen Hippolyta put her hands on her hips, stared right to the bottom of his soul and whispered: “There is only one more question, Steve Trevor. Do you love Diana? Not as Wonder Woman or as a princess, but as a person?”

He stared at her, and his whole form shook. From the bottom of his heart, he blurted out: “Yes, I do. I love her with all my heart, majesty! I love her, and it shames me, I LUST after her. If this repulses you, I will not blame you. But I will not stand in front of you and lie.”

She let his words starve in the air, and he finally whispered: “Majesty, I know you think that I am not worthy of Diana. You think I don’t belong here, and maybe, you are right. But I cannot not love her, I tried.”

For several moments, Queen Hippolyta didn’t say anything. Steve had the sick, suffocating feeling that he had failed, and didn’t dare to look up. Finally, she replied: “I think nothing of the kind, Steve Trevor. Wash your hands, I want to give you something.”

After rinsing their hands in a water bucket, both went outside again. General Antiope produced a jewel case, and he gasped when he saw two golden bracelets inside.

“These are for you, Steve Trevor, I made them for your hands. Put them on, I hereby officially accept you as the newest member of the Amazons.”

Steve’s mind grew numb as he put on the bracelets. They were heavy, but beautifully balanced, and seemed to provide his hands with a precision that he never thought possible.

“You will need a title and a rank. From now on, I formally call you Guardsman, and your name will be Sir Steve of… what is your hometown?”

“Boston.”

“Sir Steve of Boston it is, then. I hope it is a proud warrior city.”
“I can confirm, majesty,” he smiled, thinking of the Boston Tea Party and its significance for the United States. Queen Hippolyta turned to her two generals and continued: “My marshals have something to say to you, too.”

For a horrible moment, Steve feared that he had to duel them, but both General Antiope and General Philippus crossed their bracelets and swore: “Sir Steve of Boston, with the blood of our lives and that of our sisters, we swear to you that we will protect your body and spirit. You will be not harmed by any quarter, if by means of any measure, including our death, can prevent it”

Steve just stared at the two generals, who just pleaded their eternal loyalty to him.

“I, uh, t-thank you,” he muttered, feeling utterly unworthy, but Queen Hippolyta retorted: “You are an Amazon now, Sir Steve, every sister would give their life for you. Now we go back and tell that I approve of your union.”

Steve was numb. Refusing to let down his guard, he muttered: “Majesty, that's it? I am still expecting a pit of poisonous snakes, a gauntlet full of flaming blades, and a battle to the death versus a super minotaur!”

“Don't flatter yourself,” she replied, and when they entered the healing chambers again, they found Diana bursting with anticipation. Her mother smiled: “You have my blessing, daughter, you may marry him. There is only one last thing I ask from you.”

“What, mother?”

“I want the marriage to take place on Themyscira. But Hera willing, you can invite all your friends!”

“Thank you, my queen!” Diana sobbed, flinging her arms around her mother and kissing Steve. She beamed: “You are wearing bracelets, darling! You are truly one of us now!”

“Yes, angel, and we will never be apart again!” he exclaimed. Grinning like an idiot, he realized: It is really happening. I am going to marry Diana, and Queen Hippolyta will be my mother-in-law!

A few days later, DEO Colonel Steve Trevor concluded his mission report in Director Waller's office.

“… so all in all, my operation ended as a mixed bag. I neither managed to capture Subject Scofree nor his henchwoman Big Barda. But with Wonder Woman's help, I retrieved the Tablet of Hades and returned it the Boston Museum of Ancient Greece.”

His boss skimmed the file Lieutenant Prince and Sergeant Candy had prepared, shifted in her chair and overlooked the slight sweat beads on his forehead.

“Oh well,” she finally concluded, “you cannot ace every mission you go on, Colonel Trevor, but we should all thank Wonder Woman for saving you.”

“I already did, Director. I let Justice League spokesman Bruce Wayne know how grateful I am,” he truthfully replied, trying not to appear too disgusted. Director Waller closed the file and sighed: “Thank you, and dismissed, Colonel. Or do you have something else?”
Steve shifted in his chair, went slightly scarlet and confessed: “Yes, I do, Director. I want to take vacation, because Lieutenant Prince and I want to get married.”

His boss raised her eyebrows, and finally did something truly terrifying: she smiled.

“Oh, what good news!” she exclaimed, wrapping her massive arms around him. “You two are such a nice couple. When is the wedding? Where does it take place?”

“We want to do it this month, at the place of her Greek family. We also want to spend our honeymoon there.”

“That sounds splendid! Of course you can go on vacation, Colonel, it’s the least I can do!”

Steve was relieved for more reasons than one, but dutifully asked: “Thank you, Director Waller! In the meantime, who is going to take my place?”

“Don’t worry, Colonel, I have a young, hungry crackshot eager to prove herself. Her name is Captain Dinah Lance.”

“Oh, the blond MMA master that lives in Star City?”

“No, that’s her sister Sarah. We are going with the one living in Gotham.”

“Sounds good, Director!”

“Thank you, and now, leave. You have punched enough supervillains!”

You have no idea, he grinned on his way out.

After returning to Themyscira, Steve was amazed at which speed the Amazons prepared the marriage of their princess. In dizzying speed, invitations were sent, the Throne Room and the main halls were decorated, and ceremonies, food and drink were being prepared.

In his last evening as a bachelor, Steve left the happy hustle and bustle for something more sobering. He silently walked to the beach where Diana had rescued him from the plane crash a decade ago. Then, he kneeled at the place where 16 Amazon warriors had given their lives to save him from Ares's minions, and said a silent prayer.

Suddenly, he felt somebody behind him. Diana looked at him and whispered: “I knew I would find you here, Steve.”

“I had to go here, angel. I feel guilty for the deaths of your 16 sisters.”

His fiancée gently wrapped her arms around him and whispered: “Don’t blame yourself. I fought at their side, too, and I knew them personally… Oenone, Sofia, Alkmene and my other sisters who were killed. But Ares slayed them, not you. My sisters gave their lives to protect ours, and they did it willingly.”

“I wish they would be there tomorrow.”
“They will be, darling, I am sure. They will be content that they sacrificed themselves for nobody else than Wonder Woman and her husband.”

“Thank you,” he sobbed, and the two just stood there, paying their respects to the fallen warriors. As if they saluted back, a group of shooting stars flashed through the night, and Steve exclaimed: “Make a wish, Diana!”

Both closed their eyes and did so, and when they looked at each other again, they lovingly made out and eagerly prepared themselves for the big day tomorrow.
On this special day, the Throne Room of Themyscira simply sparkled. Amazon banners hung from the ceiling, the full royal guard was present, and every warrior wore her most spectacular outfit. Every Amazon was eager to see the first Themysciran wedding in centuries.

While Queen Hippolyta looked serene, General Antiope and General Philippus warily scanned the crowd. Both bride and groom had brought several odd guests from the world of man, and while some people instinctively seemed dependable, like Etta Candy, Helena Sandsmark or Clark Kent, others like Bruce Wayne or Jefferson Pierce seemed... less.

Steve had looked Ares, Circe and Darkseid in the eye without flinching, but when his mother led him into the Throne Room, he was shaking. Although, or rather, because he was wearing Themysciran cloth fit for a god to wear, he felt nervous and unworthy.

“Look alive, son! You are supposed to support me, not the other way around!” Ann Trevor muttered.

“Sorry, mom,” he replied, smiling awkwardly at the Amazons saluting him, relieved that he smelled no alcohol on her. She noticed and whispered: “No booze for me, son. I have entered a rehab, the St. Cloud Sobriety program, and am actively kicking my Lexcodin addiction.”

“That's great, mom!”

“It's the least I can do for Howard, Diana and you. I am so ashamed to have spat in her face.”

“It's alright now, mom.”

“Maybe, but not for me.”

Her body still seemed hurt and haggard, but the sparkle had returned into her eyes. It was the sparkle of a woman who once had been a crack US Air Force pilot. Feeling proud of his mother, he entered the Throne Room. He looked down the aisle and was greeted by the most terrifying sight of humanity: a gauntlet of fully armed, smiling Amazons. It was like being a bunny entering a pack of beaming wolves.

Steve gazed into the select crowd of wedding guests. He recognized Sameer's, Charlie’s and Chief’s grins, flanked by Helena and Cassie Sandsmark, who was trailed by Lonnie. Steve also spotted a few of Diana's superhero colleagues. Some were in costume, like Green Lantern or Hawkgirl, but some were in civvies, like Clark Kent or Hal Jordan. Steve cringed when he saw the foppish Justice League spokesman Bruce Wayne. At least Batman didn't seem to be there.

Accompanied by wedding organs – traditions seemed to be surprisingly similar – he walked to the altar. Aphrodite herself led the ceremony, proud to marry the couple that had led her husband Ares back into her arms. Steve stared in awe at the goddess, and she smiled back, knowing that Diana and him were truly dedicating this day to her. Finally, Etta, Diana's bridesmaid, greeted him, accompanied by Steve's counterpart, Howard Trevor.

“Here he comes!” Etta purred, smiling from ear to ear, while his father gazed at him in slight bewilderment and muttered: “I still have to pinch myself, son. My kid is marrying Wonder Woman!”

“Thank you, you two. It would have never happened without you!” he smiled.
“You're welcome,” Etta beamed. Howard Trevor looked nice in his tuxedo, but she stole the show with a risqué, but flattering frilly red dress, which she wore with the elegance of a former singer.

But then, the gates opened again, and Diana appeared. There was an audible gasp. Her mother, Queen Hippolyta, was dressed up in her royal evening garb, but she was eclipsed by her beautiful daughter, and she was glad to be. Diana was dressed in her finest Wonder Woman armor, sparkling in red, gold and blue, accompanied by a cape of splendid Amazonian chiffon, and wore her finest tiara. She could have stunned the gods of beauty. But it was not her dress, but her smile that lit up the Throne Hall, the smile of a happy bride who proudly walked up the aisle for her chosen one. Steve stared at her in awe, soaking up every detail of her strong, slender beauty, the beautiful bouquet of crimson roses, and the self assured smile behind her veil.

“Hi there, scruffy!” she teased him, playfully roughing up his beard. Steve grinned: “Hey, I trimmed that!”

“I noticed, it only looks almost decent.”

“Let him off the hook, he looks great!” Etta grinned, and Steve sputtered: “Stop talking about me! I am blinded! The beauty of my bride is blinding me!”

“Quiet, or I'll knock the sight into your head,” she grinned, and the wedding began. Aphrodite herself led the ceremony, and in surprisingly simple, ageless words, she conjured the magic of marriage. Steve stole peeks at his bride, wondering if he was worthy of her, and knowing he would never forgive himself if he wasn't. But then, Diana smiled at him, erasing that doubt. They belonged to each other. From now on, their happiness was in each other's keeping, and both were curious, but unafraid.

Sameer, Charlie and Chief recited their wedding wishes, and after Aphrodite's wedding prayer, which Etta later described as the “most beautiful love letter ever”, Diana and Steve repeated their deathless vows. Everybody was beaming as Diana slid Steve's wedding ring on his finger, and he did the same with her.

“You may kiss now,” Aphrodite beamed.

Diana wrapped her arms around his waist, bent him over and gave him a long, passionate kiss. The entire hall erupted in applause, and both cried sweet, happy tears.

“We did it, Steve. We are married!” she sobbed, and he stammered: “Yes, and I am so happy, angel!”

Aphrodite herself smiled when she carried him all the way back down the aisle. Outside, both were showered with rice, flowers and of lot of congratulations. Away from the sweet insanity, Howard Trevor, took his wife's hand, nervously went to Queen Hippolyta and muttered: “Hello, majesty, we never really get to know each other yet. We are Ann and Howard Trevor, Steve's parents.”

General Antiope glared, because this greeting had violated about 12 rules of royal courtesy, but her older sister crossed her bracelets and replied: “Nice to meet you, my name is Hippolyta.”

The two Trevors jumped, misinterpreting the clanging bracelets as an offense. General Antiope clenched her jaw when they offered their hands, a greeting which in Amazon culture was only reserved for male savages. But Queen Hippolyta shook them and continued: “I am very happy to greet you on my humble island. Feel yourself at home!”

Ann and Howard stared at the gauntlet of Amazons armed to the teeth, who were standing behind
her. Steve’s mother awkwardly muttered: “Thank you, Hippolyta. One question, is Diana’s father attending the wedding?”

General Antiope’s eyes became dangerous slits, but her older sister gracefully replied: “Godking Zeus has tactfully declined, his wife Hera wouldn’t appreciate it.”

Ann Trevor stared, and finally blurted out: “Wait a second! Diana’s was born out of wedl--”

Her husband stepped on her foot, and quickly interrupted her: “Oh, that’s how life plays out. I am sure that we will get along just fine.”

“Certainly! You are my guests of honor. Just wait until you see our Bacchian pig roast with Elysian wine!”

“I am a vegetarian,” Howard Trevor muttered.

“I don’t drink,” Ann Trevor mumbled.

Queen Hippolyta stared at them, and when all color drained from their faces, she smiled: “Oh well, the kitchen will whip up something for you.”

While she escorted them to the Mess Hall, General Antiope muttered to General Philippus: “Suffering Sappho, we got two barbarians-in-law!”

“Give them a break, they seem decent,” the ebony marshal smiled, but her colleague protested: “He holds himself like a rag, and have you seen the horrible tattoos on her flaccid biceps? That’s eye cancer!”

“Says the woman who just witnessed griffin feeding. I was surprised Steve didn’t retch and faint.”

“At least griffins are supposed to be revolting.”

“Let the petty stuff go, Antiope.”

General Antiope was not convinced, but remained silent.

Outside, Diana and Steve were busy hugging, shaking hands and receiving congratulations. Steve’s face was one continuous smile, until he finally got to Clark Kent.

“Hello, Clark,” Steve muttered, trying to smile at his powerful frenemy, “I am glad you made it here.”

“I wouldn’t have missed it for anything, Steve. I am so happy for you two.”

When Steve eyed him, Lois Lane pushed herself between them, patted her bulge and grinned: “No worries, Steve, he is off the market for more reasons than one!”

“Hello, Lois! You look great!”

“Thank you! It’s going to be a boy, and we are going to name him Jonathan,” Lois grinned, patting her stomach. She planted her elbow into her boyfriend’s side and purred: “How about getting hitched ourselves, farmer boy?”

“Please don’t start again, Lois!” Clark muttered, looking hen pecked in more ways than one. Steve carried on and received congratulations from people he loved (Etta), people he respected (General Philippus), he was surprised to see (Supergirl) and never would have expected (Himon).
“Thank you, Mr. Trevor! Thanks to Wonder Woman and you, Darkseid has been defeated, and Apokolips is now under the more benign leadership of Orion, Mister Miracle's foster brother,” the hardnosed New Genesis spy smiled.

“Where are Barda and him now?”

“According to my intel, embarking on a Terran career as escape artists,” Himon answered. He held up a fun fair poster that showed Mister Miracle tied to a rocket, with the caption “MISTER MIRACLE - SUPER ESCAPE ARTIST – THE MAKING OF A LEGEND!”

“Smarmy bastard,” Steve muttered, but Diana sighed: “But at least he was a useful bastard.”

“He also realized that sex sells. Look at that scantily clad sexpot who is his assistant!”

“That's Barda, Mr. Trevor.”

“WHAT!?”

Steve's jaw dropped to the floor. Instead of wearing her fearsome blue and yellow combat armor, she now was clad in a frilled red bikini which brought out her spectacular curves, her chiseled body and her ferocious muscles.

“Yes, that's her, and I didn't recognize her either,” Diana giggled. Steve shook his head and continued greeting the steady steam of well wishers. After a busy afternoon with the obligatory photo sessions, in which the guests happily mingled around, the great wedding dinner began. The royal mess hall was fully decked out, and the long tables squeaked under the onslaught of roasted meat, sauteed vegetables, exotic fruit and exquisite wine.

As usual, Queen Hippolyta sat in the middle, flanked by Diana and Steve. When the guests had sat down, Queen Hippolyta raised her hand, and the musicians began to play a wedding waltz. On queue, Steve led Diana on the dancefloor, mesmerized by his beautiful bride. He definitely was not a great dancer, but with Amazon grace, Diana deftly corrected his mistakes, and made him look like Fred Astaire. During turns, she kissed her husband, stroked his wedding ring and smiled: "We are married now, Steve! Isn't that fantastic?"

“It's starting to sink in, angel,” he beamed, grinning like an idiot. When his hand slid down her back, his wife giggled: “No Godkiller Swords in the back of my dress tonight, darling. We are protected by the entire Amazonian royal guard and dozens of superheroes, I pity the fool who dares to crash our wedding.”

“Fair point, angel,” Steve smiled, as the hardwood slowly filled up with the guests of honor. After the ceremonial dance, Diana and Steve cut the huge wedding cake and opened the buffet, and all lustily dug into the mountains of best Amazonian cuisine.

“That is a really nice cake!” Diana purred, noting the “D+S” motive in red, gold and blue, and Steve grinned: “So creamy! Who made that cake?”

“Me!” Etta smiled from ear to ear. “Only a Candy can bake the perfect wedding cake!”

“Don't forget us! Our muscles are still aching from kneading so much dough!” Sameer quipped, and Charlie and Chief nodded.

“Thank you, it's delicious!” Diana and Steve beamed, while all guests started a two hour onslaught on the food mountains. Diana and Steve were happy that all guests seemed to have a good time, and how naturally Themyscirans and foreigners mingled. The royal musicians played happy tunes, and sword dancers, fire spewers and animal charmers mesmerized the onlookers.
Finally, the speeches came, and Queen Hippolyta was first.

“When Steve Trevor came to Themyscira, he was an outsider. My heart was heavy when Diana followed him to the world of man. But his bravery helped defeat Ares, Circe and Darkseid, and he always came through when my daughter needed him the most. Steve reopened the gates between Themyscira and the world of man, and I very proud to call him my son!”

There was a big round of applause, and Steve mumbled to Diana: “I honestly expected some beard reference.”

“Just be happy she didn’t bring up those old Hercules or Zeus stories!”

Then, Howard Trevor nervously stepped forward. He almost disappeared next to the powerful queen, but in a clear voice, he whispered: “I am a simple man, and I have no idea about gods, titans or superheroes. For me, Wonder Woman is a warrior goddess who walks the earth, but not someone I could ever relate to. However, I know Lieutenant Diana Prince. She is a strong, kind and caring person who picks you up when you are down.”

His voice quivered, and his wife’s eyes were misty.

“I don’t know if I will ever comprehend what Diana truly is, but I know that she is full of love, spirit and compassion. For me, that is enough, and I am proud to call her my daughter.”

Howard Trevor nervously looked into the audience, and was stunned when he heard loud applause. Diana hugged her father-in-law, and Steve smiled: “That was beautiful, dad!”

He turned to Queen Hippolyta and quipped: “Thanks for the very nice speech, majesty!”

“It’s 'Hippolyta', Steve. We are family now!”

She almost crushed him with her hug, and Steve felt like a lamb being accepted into a pack of wolves. He croaked: “Thank you, H-Hippolyta!”

Diana saved him by smiling: “Steve, do you have a sec? I would like to introduce you to some friends of mine.”

Steve expected an array of superheroes, and was surprised to see Lois Lane, who was spearheading a mostly female entourage. Slightly confused, he greeted: “Hello, Ms. Lane, what can I do for you?”

“We are the life partners and spouses of current superheroes. Steve, meet Iris Allen, Carol Ferris, Mera Curry, Sue Dibny, and Peter Spencer!”

Diana smiled as her spouse discovered the significant others of Flash, Green Lantern, Aquaman, Elongated Man and Manhunter – the female human one. Lois explained: “We form the 3S, the Superhero Spouse Support. We help each other in living a happy, fulfilled lives with our metahuman lovers.”

Her words were interrupted by two kids running with blistering speed. A stressed looking blond man chased them down, and Steve concluded: “Let me guess, that is Flash with his two kids?”

A slender brunette wearily grinned: “Those are Dawn and Don, my tornado twins. You have no idea how stressful raising two speed demons is.”

“Or buying clothes for a man who can stretch at will,” Sue Dibny continued, and Peter Spencer added: “Or what to do if you have to bail out your wife in Gotham, while you live in Los
Angeles!"

“That 3S club sounds convenient!”

“We’ll be happy to see you there, Steve… especially me. We need more guys here,” Peter Spencer ruefully confessed.

“But we can discuss details later. This is your wedding, and the first 3S law is: spoil your spouse,” Lois grinned and chaperoned him back to Diana. While she tightly hugged her groom, she happily chatted with her Amazon sisters, superhero friends and actually everybody…

...except the one person who didn't really seem to enjoy himself. Steve excused himself and went to Lonnie. Despite his smart red suit, he was not his sardonic self.

“Hi, Lonnie! What's up?” he asked, and the hacker muttered: “Congratulations, Steve, you really hit the jackpot. I feel happy for Diana, too, she was always so nice to everyone. But I feel pretty stupid now.”

“If we deceived you, I am sorry.”

“No, Steve, Diana's disguise was just airtight. In retrospect, it's touching how faithfully Etta, Sameer, Charlie, Chief and you kept her identity secret. But still, my 300-plus IQ got nicely hoodwinked,” he muttered.

“IQ isn't everything, Lonnie.”

“It isn't, Steve. That encounter versus Darkseid still haunts me. I grew up in the belief that even the most corrupt people, like Lex Luthor, Oswald Cobblepot, or Bruce Wayne, can be beaten rationally. But Darkseid showed me that sometimes, might is right.”

“He was wrong, Diana slew him.”

“Yes, but she is… something bigger than us,” the atheist muttered, avoiding the word 'goddess', “when Cassie, you and me tried to snare Darkseid with her lasso, I felt so powerless. He could have killed me without me noticing.”

“You weren't powerless, Lonnie. Your mind stood up to Darkseid himself! He tried to crush you, and he failed.”

“I would never give up my free will!” he exclaimed, but then mumbled: “Steve, Themyscira isn't for me. I need computers, mainframes, and lots of binary code. I feel out of place here.”

Steve followed Lonnie's gaze and suddenly realized that his eyes were focused on Cassie Sandsmark. The blonde teenager was chatting with her mother and General Antiope, and was apparently having a good time.

“Lonnie, you have been staring at Cassie all day.”

“I have not!” he protested. Suddenly, he slumped forward and muttered: “Yes, I have.”

“Why don't you go over and chat with her?”

“About what, Steve? She froze me out so bad at the museum that I still have frostbite.”

“I remember you tried to talk about museums, Greek culture, and other stuff which Cassie doesn't really appreciate. Start with some small talk!”
“That’s so shallow and stupid.”

“That’s how I got my first date with Diana, and see how far it got me,” Steve smiled, grabbed his wrist and dragged him to the three women.

“Oh, hi, Mr. Trevor!” Professor Sandsmark smiled. “This is a good moment. General Antiope and me were just talking about your sister-in-law!”

“My mom and my aunt just asked me if I could stay here for summer vacation. This will be so much fun! I can finally become an Amazon, and I know I have the right stuff!” Cassie beamed, punching the air in jubilation.

Steve squinted, still not used to the thought that Cassie was Diana’s younger half-sister, his sister-in-law and Queen Hippolyta’s and General Antiope’s niece. She looked at him with puppy eyes and whispered: “If I am very good, do you think I could fight crime as ‘Wonder Girl’?”

“CASSIE!!” her mother blurted out, but he grinned: “First things first, Cassie. Diana had to train with General Antiope for a decade to become Wonder Woman. Just do what your heart tells, the rest comes naturally. By the way, Cassie, Lonnie wants to ask you for a dance!”

“What?!” the red headed teenager screamed in horror, before Steve stepped on his foot. Cassie stared at him in wonder and muttered: “Is that really true?”

“No-I mean-Yes! YES!!” he wheezed.

“Are you joking? All boys I know are afraid of me!”

Lonnie froze, but Steve “accidentally” pushed him into Cassie. She caught him with Amazonian reflexes, and both awkwardly realized they were holding each other.

“Because they are stupid,” Lonnie retorted, and smiled: “Come on, let’s have some fun!”

“I warn you, I cannot dance!”

“I read, uh, a lot of books,” he confessed, as he lead her on the hardwood. Steve watched encouragingly as both hilariously tried to dance. Cassie moved like an elephant on skates, and Lonnie was utterly tone deaf. But for some reason, neither seemed offended. While Professor Sandsmark stared at them with her jaw on the floor, Steve returned to his lovely wife. Diana was preparing for an old tradition, tossing the bouquet. She turned her back to the raucous audience and threw the roses over her shoulder. It bounced off several hands, until Etta snatched it out of the air and cackled: “Hey, if that isn’t a good omen!”

It was way after midnight when the wedding couple retreated to their bridal suite. Again, Diana insisted on carrying him over the porch, and smiled: “Do you recognize this place, Steve?”

His eyes grew large. She had carried him to the hot springs in which he had bathed after the crash. He recognized the ageless cave walls and the hot tubs full of warm, aromatic water.

“Of course I recognize this place! You brought me here after your mother interrogated me. That water soothes pain and heals wounds!”

“It is useful for other great things,” Diana purred. She casually stripped naked, making sure that his eyes feasted on her voluptuous bosom, her chiseled muscles and the perfect peach of her buttocks. With swaying hips, she climbed in the water and smiled at him to do the same. He eagerly threw his clothes in the corner and joined his wife. Diana wrapped her arm around him and smiled: “What do you remember from that evening, darling?”
“I remember standing upright in the basin, and you caught me... with my pants down”, he blushed.

“I asked if you were an average example of a male... and you answered that you were ‘above average’,” she giggled.

“Hey, your wording wasn’t precise!”

“Oh, you know exactly what I was asking,” Diana purred, gently pushed him against the edge and passionately made out with him. Their tongues devoured each other, their bodies heated up, and the salty water stimulated them at all the right places.

“Are you sure, angel? I don't want to hurt you!”

“So sure like never in my life, darling. I am all healed up, so do your worst!”

Diana giggled when he greedily buried his face in the deep, wet valley of her bosom. She purred: “Darling, is there an itch I can scratch? Do you want to relive the night after No Man's Land when you took my virginity?”

“I hope not! I was done within thirty seconds!”

“It was thirty-six, darling.”

Steve buried his face in his hands, but she smiled: “But don't worry, Steve, you were aroused for all the right reasons. I chose the right man to deflower me.”

His wife stood up, fists in her hips and her legs apart, displaying the classic super-hero pose. She was smiling, licking her lips and trembling with desire. Shamelessly exposing her naked, voluptuous body, she purred: "I am Wonder Woman, Steve, and I searched so long for a somebody who can appreciates me like a woman, treats me like a woman, and satisfies me like a woman." Her dreamy, breathy tone could have seduced the god of chastity, and with heaving breasts, she smiled: "Come here, stud, make your wife happy!"

“I-if you say so,” he stammered, flashing the stupid, happy grin that she loved so much.

She kissed her wedding ring, straddled her thighs over his crotch, and let him inside.

“Ahh!” both cried, devouring each other in mutual fulfillment. There was no shame in their movements, their bodies knew each other. Each stroke was accompanied by screams of pure lust. It had been too long since their last lovemaking, and doing it as a married couple supercharged their desire. Diana greedily pounded her husband and wondered how something so carnal could provide such deep fulfillment. In between thrusts, she beamed: “You look so happy, Steve!”

“I am in heaven, angel!”

“Me, too, darling.”

Both were smiling from ear to ear. Diana kissed her husband, accelerated her pace and rode him like a galloping stallion. She used her superpowers to magnify his strokes, driving both insane with lust. When they finally peaked, they screamed each others' name and rode out their ecstasy. For several minutes, both floated in the water, not daring to destroy the magic of the moment.

“Great Hera,” Diana finally whispered.

“Indeed,” Steve mumbled in awe.
“You are a good stud, Steve. I think I'll keep you,” she continued in mock arrogance.

“I told you I am above average!”

She laughed and gave him a long, loving kiss. Steve eagerly responded, gently sat her on a shallow ledge and made out with her. His hand touched her bracelets, and he whispered: “You are still wearing them. Your mother said that your bracelets protect you against unwanted pregnancy.”

“That is correct, Steve.”

“Well you… one day… take them off in bed?”

Steve kicked himself for posing that question, but she beamed: “Not now, darling, but maybe in two or three years. I was the only child of Themyscira, I would love to have a child of my own!”

“I would be honored to raise your kid, angel.”

“Kids, Steve, kids. When I was attacked by the Black Mercy, you found out that I want to have six children!”

Steve groaned at this prospect, but Diana kissed him and purred: “But not now, Steve. The night is still young!”

“Give me a second!” he muttered, but she insisted: “You said you are above average, so prove it!”

“Diana, I have to, uh, recharge!”

“I'll accelerate that by kissing your thumbs,” she retorted. Diana licked his left, then his right thumb, puzzling her husband. Suddenly, she dove between his legs, and he arched his back and screamed: “That is not a thumb!!”

“Oh yes,” she calmly replied, kissing it without breaking eye contact. Steve twisted and moaned, and she purred: “Do you want me to stop?”

“No, NO!!”

“Good stud,” she giggled, noticing how ready he was.

In that night, Diana showed Steve more tricks from the 12 books of Cleo. Aphrodite herself smiled when the lovers finally floated in the water, sleeping soundly after a night of lovemaking.
The next day, Diana and Steve had a scrumptious brunch and said goodbye to their guests. Etta hugged her two best friends and beamed: “I am so happy for you!”

“Thanks, Etta, it wouldn't have happened without you. You played matchmaker for us in more cases than one.”

“You're welcome, Diana,” she smiled, remembering how she help bring them back after Wonder Woman’s fling with Superman, “and you, Steve, look as if you had been mauled by a large animal, and enjoyed every second of it.”

Diana giggled, and he just groaned, avoiding strain on his hips and walking funny.

“He was the first male I ever met, Etta, and after marrying him, I just had to make sure that he was… fully functional,” she smiled evilly, and both women laughed.

“You are so awful,” Steve muttered, but Etta beamed: “You two are so cute. You deserve to be happy forever.”

“We already defeated Ares, Circe and Darkseid together, I am optimistic,” Diana smiled, patting her husband. Next, Queen Hippolyta appeared, and casually asked: “How are you feeling, Diana?”

“Fantastic, mother!”

When she didn’t immediately react, she asked: “Is something wrong, my queen?”

“No, nothing,” her mother finally quipped, kissed her daughter and discreetly left. Steve whispered: “What was that all about?”

Diana replied wearily: “The last two times mother was with a male, one enslaved her, and the other one left without leaving a goodbye note.”

“I promise to be better than that, angel.”

“You already are, darling,” she smiled and kissed him.

After Althea had safely chaperoned the last foreign guest through the portal – with some help of an odd woman called Zatanna – Diana and Steve spent several days at royal palace of Themyscira. Of course, Queen Hippolyta was eager to spend time with her long lost daughter, and listened to her reports of their common adventures. The longer it went, the more wondrous the queen looked at him, as if she thought for the first time that a male could actually be useful. After an equally emotional reunion with General Antiope – who Steve still found extremely intimidating – both embarked on their honeymoon. In the following two weeks, she eagerly showed him all parts of Themyscira and its neighboring island, Bana-Mighdall. All Amazons were curious meeting the first consort, let alone the first male in centuries.

At first, the chauvinist in Steve looked forward seeing a city full of stunning women. But at his first reception, he felt more like a lamb visiting a lion's den. Even the puniest Amazon could have broken him apart in seconds. But with Diana's encouragement, he engaged in polite, then sincerely interested conversation. Of course, he got a lot of questions about his gender. It reminded Steve how old Europeans must have felt when they saw the first black people, with the exception that the Amazons didn't enslave, but embraced him.
Steve was surprised to learn that only a fraction of all Amazons were on active military duty. The great majority lived normal lives as merchants, carpenters, sailors, and many more, and he was charmed to discover that these armored supermodels actually had a sense of humor. He was especially impressed with the Amazons on Bana-Mighdall, who managed to live off the harsh, sun scorched desert island, pioneer-style. Even tiny villages spoiled them, despite or rather because they didn't have much.

With every settlement, landmark and building they visited, Steve got more into his groove, and finally, he enjoyed being on this road trip. But of course, his main attention was on his bride. After a decade of exile, Diana was hungry to rediscover her roots, and eagerly shared her joy with him. Steve had never seen her so happy, and it warmed his heart.

Of course, Diana devoted her nights to him. She was a passionate, hungry lover, and spoiled him with her desire. As usual, he was afraid his mortal strength was not enough to satisfy her. More than once, he misfired, and was tortured by thoughts that Superman would get the job done better. But after making love for the twentieth time in the same week, it dawned on him that she simply didn't care. She wanted him, nobody else, and it wasn't important to be perfect – as long as he had fun, too.

Suddenly, something changed. Like an athlete on training camp, the aching became less, and he developed skill and stamina. More and more, Steve was able to hold his own, which pleased his superhuman wife in more ways than one. When he finally took initiative for the first time, she vocally reacted. Steve was honestly surprised, and learned the sweet paradox that the less he focused on the act, the better it became.

Another thing changed. Before, he thought that he could impress Diana most with big things, like making love, buying her presents or taking her out, but she cherished the little things more, like a smile, a touch or a kiss. It made him appreciate the small things, too, and that made him notice the bittersweet looks of a brunette Amazon during a port visit. She stood so far in the back that even Diana didn't notice her, but Steve excused himself and greeted the woman: “Hello, my name is Sir Steve of Boston. Nice to meet you!”

The brunette looked shocked that he noticed her. When he crossed his Amazon bracelets, she awkwardly followed, and stammered: “Y-you are the consort of the princess, what an honor! M-my name is Kasia, and I am a fisher.”

When Steve heard that name, his eyes grew large, and he exclaimed: “I know you! You were Diana's best friend!”

Her eyes grew sorrowful, and she whispered: “We were more than friends, Sir Steven, we shared... everything. My heart bled when she followed you to the world of man, but she was born to do it.”

_Great Guns, she was Diana's first love!_

“I am sorry, Kasia,” he muttered. He felt a hot surge of jealousy, even worse than with Superman. Both squirmed and avoided each others' gazes. But then, Kasia smiled: “But it was probably for the best, Sir Steve. I always wanted to settle down, but Diana was hungry to discover the outside world. You perfectly fit her mold.”

Suddenly, a tall black Amazon with spectacular dreadlocks appeared, kissed Kasia and asked: “Hello, my love, are we having guests?”

Her eyes grew wide, and she kneed on the ground and blurted out: “Great Hera, it is the royal
“Stand easy, sister,” he smiled, gesturing her to get up again, while Kasia smiled: “Sir Steve, this is my wife Samira. She is a fisher, too.”

“Nice to meet you, Samira. By the way, can I buy some smoked fish here? I am dying of hunger.”

“S-Sure! D-do you want regular, salty or spicy?”

“I like to live dangerously, the spicy one. How much does it cost?”

“It's on the house, Sir Steven,” Kasia smiled.

“Why, thank you!” he replied, biting into the spicy fish. His eyes watered, but at the end, he grinned: “Hey, this is really good!”

“You may appreciate a sip of water,” Samira giggled, handing him a cup which he eagerly drained. They exchanged some small talk, and in the end, Kasia hugged him and whispered: “Hera bless you, Sir Steve. I want you to be just as happy with Diana as I am with Samira.”

“Thank you, Kasia,” he smiled, and when he just wanted to leave, she grabbed his wrist and evilly whispered: “Between us, Sir Steve, there is something Diana really likes in bed. You simply must...”

When Steve heard of her secret, he violently blushed and muttered: “If I try that, she'll punch me!”

“Oh no, she won’t,” she giggled with a knowing grin, and smiled warmly, “use it wisely, and I hope it helps Diana bear some strong daughters.”

“I'll think about it,” he muttered, still scarlet when he returned to his wife. Diana asked: “Who did you talk to, and what is that fish?”

“An old friend,” Steve discreetly smiled, “she gave me some... life advice, also on spicy seafood.”

“Brush your teeth before going to bed, or you'll sleep on the floor,” she retorted, and he just grinned. At night, when they made love again, Steve mustered all his courage, and dove face first between her quivering thighs.

“Oohh!!” Diana moaned when he caressed her down there. He nervously committed to his plan, trying to follow Kasia's devilish advice. Steve was sure he was doing it wrong, but instead, Diana gently grabbed his head, pushed it to the desired spots and whispered in a hoarse, breathy voice: “Slower, slower... deeper, deeper...”

When she finally fell silent, Steve was convinced he had messed it up. But instead, his wife was arching her back, clawed the blankets, and trembled with desire. When went from third base to home, she simply jumped him, driven insane with lust. After some of the most violent, crazed love making he had ever witnessed, she kissed him, drenched in sweat, and wheezed: “Whatever you did, Steve, never stop doing it again!”

“I won't, angel,” he smiled, silently thanking Kasia.
For the last days of their honeymoon, Diana had chosen a small, uninhabited island. Surrounded by coconut palms, powder white sand, and deep blue sea, there was nothing but the two of them. When they reached the sun kissed beach, Diana's first act was to throw her dressing gown into the sand, show off her birthday suit to her husband and grin: “This is all we need, darling!”

With a big laugh, she jumped into the sea, and Steve eagerly ripped his clothes off and tackled his giggling wife. After exchanging wet, longing kisses, they made love on the beach, let the sun caress their bodies and enjoyed the splendid sunset until they devoured each other again.

The island offered so many delicious fruits and sparkling springs that nutrition not a problem. The couple admired majestic parrots, went body surfing with dolphins and played with sea turtles. But of course, Steve mostly stared at his lovely, nude wife. When she became seamlessly bronze, one gaze was enough to make him fully erect. Diana was more than willing to help him out of his misery – that was, until the next time he gazed at her.

“I cannot help it, angel,” he apologized during lovemaking, “but you are so darn HOT!!”

“Don't be sorry, Steve, we have dodged death too often! We deserve this!” she beamed, eagerly going down on him. After rolling away from each other, he whispered: “Diana, if making love is getting on your nerves, just tell me.”

Diana calmly took a massive branch, placed between her thunder thighs and squeezed. With a sickening crunch, it split into two, and she replied: “If I am tired of your wood, Steve, I'll let you know.”

He became deathly pale, then beet red, and muttered: “Please don't castrate me, angel.”

“This is for disgusting males who fantasize about taking me against my will.”

“Like Darkseid!” Steve blurted out, and she nodded grimly: “He wanted to make me his mate, with or without my consent. If he had laid a finger on me, I would have castrated him!”

“I would have given a lot to see that!”

“Because you sincerely care about me, darling,” Diana smiled, and he replied: “Angel, I prefer other means of foreplay anyway.”

He wrapped his arms around her shoulders and eagerly made out with her. Each kiss deliciously sapped her strong, chiseled body, and his strong, warm hands caressed her quivering curves and made her tremble with desire. The Amazon who withstood Darkseid's hardest blows without flinching willingly melted under his soft, loving kisses.

“Come here, stud! I'll give you for free what Darkseid wanted to take with force. I promise I won't castrate you!”

“I sincerely hope so,” he muttered, and she evilly grinned: “By the way, Steve, I cannot unman you. My thighs cannot break your big, strong manhood!”

“You could castrate me like a pair of scissors!” he blurted out, and she teased: “Oh no, you are too hard for that, and you'll prove that right now!”

During their frenzied lovemaking, Darkseid was somewhere howling with horror.
At the end of their honeymoon, Diana and Steve returned to the palace of Queen Hippolyta. For the first time, Steve appeared as an official member of the royal family, and had to get used to the fact that Amazons now saluted him with a bracelet cross instead of ignoring him. In the meantime, Diana and Queen Hippolyta spent some quality time with each other, and the monarch seemed relieved that Steve had neither tried to pull a Hercules nor Zeus on Diana.

Steve was observing General Antiope, who was executing a drill with her royal guard in the courtyard, when Diana kissed him on the cheek and asked: “Do you have a moment? My mother wants us to meet a special guest.”

“Sure!” he replied and followed his wife into the office of her mother. When they entered, he saw Queen Hippolyta and the love goddess herself, Aphrodite.

“Hello, you two! I hope you are enjoying married life,” she greeted them in a low, erotic purr. She was so beautiful that the room seemed strangely airless, but it was a beauty which inspired and awed instead of threatening or hurting.

“We do, great goddess, and thank you so much for marrying us!” Diana smiled.

“It was the least I could do, after you brought back my husband Ares, my twins Phobos and Deimos, and their foster mother Circe. She is also the reason for my visit.”

“In what way?” Diana muttered.

“Circe wants to express remorse for giving part of the Anti-Life Equation to Darkseid. She was seduced by his message of hate, but is too ashamed to apologize in person.”

Queen Hippolyta snapped: “I expect nothing else from that witch! She has been our archenemy forever, she is irredeemably bad.”

“Circe has a lot to atone for, but I wouldn't be that harsh. She has certainly improved during our time together. You Amazons know how powerful loving submission is.”

Neither Queen Hippolyta nor Diana seemed convinced, but Steve looked curious. Aphrodite concluded: “Anyway, I must return home and take care of my cupids. Perhaps I can make someone else as happy as you!”

“I hope so,” Steve smiled, and kissed his wife. When they exited, she muttered: “Even if she reforms, I'll never truly trust Circe.”

“Circe is such a succubus. I can't believe I almost kissed her,” Diana spat out, disgusted with herself. But then, Steve concluded: “She is a succubus, but Aphrodite is the love goddess herself. I was curious how things go between Aphrodite, Ares, and her, but it seems to work. If anyone can build a fulfilling consensual relationship with more than two partners, it's Aphrodite.”

“She is really a better person than me. I would just kick them into Tartarus, but she loves them too much.”
Finally, Diana and Steve had to say goodbye. When they boarded the Invisible Jet (“the Invisible Jet 2.0”, as an excited Diana insisted, after getting numerous upgrades by Althea), General Antiope and the entire royal guard saluted, and the queen tearfully parted from her daughter.

“Visit us often, my princess,” Queen Hippolyta whispered, blinking away tears, “I don't want to lose you again for a decade.”

“Me neither, my queen,” Diana sobbed, waved the crowd goodbye and climbed inside the Invisible Jet. Steve followed and sighed: “I love Boston, angel, but I am sure going to miss this place.”

“You can return anytime, darling. You are an Amazon!”

“Fair point”, he smiled, looked into the sky and asked: “Okay, how does our trip back work now?”

“Thanks to you, darling, Themyscira now has a stable wormhole which leads right to Boston,” Diana smiled, started the Invisible Jet and steered it right into a rift high above the royal palace of Themyscira. There was a big flash of light, and mere seconds later, they resurfaced above Fenway Park, home of the iconic Boston Red Sox.

“Home sweet home,” Steve sighed and kissed his wife.
Chapter 18

Back in their DEO office, Diana happily swapped the sign “Lt. Diana Prince” with the new “Lt. Diana Trevor”. After greeting and hugging her two favorite colleagues, she beamed: “Woo, woo! You two got such a nice tan!”

“Paradise Island lived up to its reputation,” Steve smiled, putting his arm around the waist of his wife. He had squinted the first time Diana put back on her mousy uniform with the pulled back hair and the birth control glasses, but seeing her covered up actually made her look prettier.

“Oh, you go by 'Diana Trevor' now?” Etta asked and giggled: “I would have forced Steve into 'Steve Prince'!”

Diana laughed: “Etta, my real name is 'Princess of Themyscira', 'Prince' means nothing to me. In this world, I rather take on the name of my spouse. Also, Steve's new Amazonian name is now 'Sir Steve of Boston, Prince consort of Themyscira'."

“I am not putting that on your desk,” Etta grinned, and he groaned: “Please don't, I'll never live it down!”

Etta deftly produced two tickets and asked: “Hey, you two, do you want to visit Mister Miracle's escape artist show? He gave Professor Sandsmark and me VIP tickets for everyone!”

Steve glared at her, not eager to see the New God again, but Diana smiled: “I guess that is his way to bury the hatchet. I haven't seen vaudeville in ages.”

Steve rolled his eyes and thought: Okay, I'll be nice. I'll just play 'Justice League Online' on my mobile phone and pretend to be interested.

“OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!!”

A deathly pale Steve pressed his hands in front of his face, as Mister Miracle struggled to escape his shackles. In front of a packed audience, he was hanging from his feet, floating upside down in a canister full of water. Above him, a locomotive weighing megatons was teetering over a cliff. Barda, in her frilly, disturbingly sexy red bikini, crossed her massive arms and glared at her struggling partner.

“Come on, Mister Miracle! You can do it!!” Steve screamed, nearly crushing Diana's wrist. Next to him, Professor Sandsmark and Etta held their breath, flanked by Ann and Howard Trevor to the left and Cassie and Lonnie to the right.

“Why do you look so bored, Lonnie?” Cassie complained.

“It's vaudeville. He'll escape anyway.”

“Are you kidding? He will get crushed!”
“Mister Miracle is a trained professional. He so convincingly pretends he is in grave danger, that he must be 100% sure to escape.”

“You are so wrong!”

“Just stay cool! It's all just a lie.”

Cassie hit Lonnie's head with her program, while Mister Miracle choked, but managed to break one, then two shackles. He finally freed himself from the harness and desperately wriggled his legs, but when he just seemed to complete his escape, the locomotive came down and flattened everything under megatons of cold steel.

“AAHHH!!” Steve screamed. The entire audience cried out in horror, while Barda casually picked up the locomotive and carried it into the corner with swaying hips. The canister was utterly destroyed, but suddenly, a spotlight appeared, and Mister Miracle sped across the air on his Aero Discs and landed with a macho superhero punch.

“YES! YES!!” Etta cheered, punching the air while he took a bow and showed off his strong assistant. The hall erupted in applause, and both Barda and Mister Miracle enjoyed several encores. Cassie giggled when Lonnie was frozen with shock, and gloated: “'Just a lie', eh?!”

“It w-was a very convincing l-lie,” he sputtered. Suddenly, both noticed they had been hugging, blushed, and awkwardly let go of each other.

After the show, the gang went backstage. Mister Miracle had removed his dripping mask, revealing his disturbingly dashing features, and was getting scolded by Barda: “… the next time, you dolt, you don't cut it so close!”

“Hey, I had over a second to spare!”

Barda smacked his head with her mega rod and hissed: “I am the boss here, remember?”

“Okay, okay!” he moaned. When he saw his visitors, he jumped up in his seat and blurted out: “Oh, I didn't notice you came in. Nice to see you all!”

“It was a great show, Mister Miracle! No wonder your social media channel is blowing up,” Steve sputtered, enthusiastically shaking his hand.

“I only take secondary credit. According to the comments, it's more the 'Barda and her costumed sidekick' show,” he responded.

“It's 'costumed numskull',” his towering assistant hissed. Steve had seen steel plates softer than her sixpack. After dodging her blow, Mister Miracle remarked: “Congratulations to getting married, I am sure it was great.

We had some matters to work out.”

“It was fantastic, thank you! What is the deal with you now?” Diana asked, and he replied: “We went to the Justice League Watchtower, turned ourselves in and applied for asylum. Batman was very wary of us, but Superman, bless his heart, vouched for us. We struck a deal with Amanda Waller, and instead of going to prison, we do vaudeville.”

Everybody looked at each other, until Diana muttered: “That sounds… typically Waller.”

“Yeah, my boss never gives anything for free. You could do be forced to do dirty work in her 'Suicide Squad',” Steve muttered, but Barda retorted: “We survived Apokolips, what can
happen?”

“Fair point. On which terms are you two now?”

Barda put her mighty arm around her colleague, nearly choking him, and wolfishly grinned: “We talked things over and agreed to bury the past.”

*For some reason, Mister Miracle seems to enjoy being slapped around by her,* he noticed, and grinned: “Nice to hear. By the way, what happened to your combat armor?”

“Confiscated by Waller. This is actually my underwear, but this planet is so warm that it's enough for me.”

“Are you disturbed by leering males?” Diana a.k.a. Wonder Woman asked, but Barda flexed her gigantic biceps and grinned: “Ah, puny Terran males dream of a woman like me!”

“It’s vaudeville. Come for Barda's bikini, stay for my escapes,” Mister Miracle grinned matter-of-factly. Suddenly, Barda spotted Ann Trevor, and her haughty expression vanished. The towering giantess went to her, and with a quivering voice, asked: “Can I talk to you for a moment?”

Ann Trevor seemed terrified, but it was Barda who was trembling. She pulled her behind a corner, and after a few minutes, both women reemerged, blinking away tears. After Barda excused herself, Howard Trevor whispered: “What did you talk about?”

“She told me how sorry she was about taunting me as a worthless alcoholic and stepping on me. But I confessed she had a point,” she croaked, wiping her face, “but we talked it over, and it’s okay now. Staying sober is really hard, but I will prevail.”

“You are really strong, dear,” Howard Trevor replied, hugged his wife, and Steve gladly joined in. After saying goodbye, the gang had a nice evening walk.

“They'll be a couple soon,” Etta grinned.

“No way! She totally henspecks him,” Steve exclaimed incredulously, but Diana licked her trademark ice cream and smiled: “No, it's just her way of cuddling him, and he loves every second of it.”

“Apokolips must be sooo romantic,” he muttered sarcastically. Changing the topic, Professor Sandsmark smiled at Diana: “It's so nice to see you back again! That was a wonderful marriage, and I saw so many exciting things on Themyscira!”

“You are always welcome, Helena.”

Professor Sandsmark squinted and mumbled: “I still cannot believe that you are… HER, and I cannot imagine how you survived getting your chest blown out by Darkseid.”

“I should thank you, Helena! If you didn't know the the Purple Ray, I would be dead. How did you find out?”

“I didn't. Your evil ex-colleague Dr. Barbara Minerva found out, I just happened to scan her prison files.”

“Great Hera! That means that Cheetah saved me?!”

When Professor Sandsmark nodded, Etta laughed: “That is such an irony, Diana. Your archenemy will be so pissed!”
“She will be even more pissed if she finds out there is another Amazon in town. I am very excited that Cassie will spend her summer on Themyscira!”

“Yeah, that's so cool!” the blond teenager laughed, but suddenly shied away. She nervously glanced at Diana, and she correctly deduced: “Yes, Cassie, us being half sisters is a revelation for me, too.”

When she didn't answer, Diana smiled: “But I'll be so happy to know you better! I was the only child on Themyscira, I always wanted to have a younger sibling.”

“Really?”

“Sure!” Diana ruefully smiled. Cassie nervously flicked a blond strand out of her face and mumbled: “I find it very scary that Wonder Woman is my half sister. But… but it's also very cool! I want to show you something.”

Cassie closed her eyes and concentrated. Suddenly, she hovered an inch off the ground. Her mother gasped, and Diana grinned: “Oh yes, that's Mercury's gift for you. I'll personally make sure you hone that skill. Sparring with Aunt Antiope will be hell, though.”

“Oh, I am sure, but I am so ready for it!” Cassie laughed, and her sincere smile made Diana's heart melt. “One day, I want to fly, have a lasso, and deflect bullets with my bracelets, too! Can I be your sidekick?”

“Cassie!!” her mother cried out.

“Don't get ahead of yourself,” Diana muttered.

“Hey, I am already calling dibs on 'Wonder Girl!'” Cassie grinned, but Lonnie taunted: “Wonder Girl', pshaw! You are about as close to Wonder Woman as Earth is to Pluto! You should call yourself 'Wonder Tot' first!”

“As if 'Moneyspider' and 'Anarky' were better!”

“Wonder Girl', you should wonder why you cannot calculate the square root of four!”

“Because an Amazon doesn't need that nonsense!”

“At least Diana and me can read and write. Your history homework read 'Robert E. Lee went YOLO in Gettysburg, he should have listened to his BAE.’”

“What's wrong about that?!”

“If you want to help the poor and oppressed like me, help them to become smarter, not dumber!”

“I am smart enough to do THIS, you anarchist!”

Cassie took Lonnie down with a judo sweep and locked him in an armbar. He flailed around, and she taunted: “You have no chance, I stood up to Darkseid himself!”

“I did, too, you oaf!” he retorted, but then tapped out and croaked: “Okay, okay, you win!”

“You promised to help me with my stupid maths homework, and don't forget our dance lessons start tomorrow!”

“I actually have brains, so I won't. Be lucky I won't swap your cola with a Molotov cocktail!”
"I'll mix pure milk into your vegan smoothie!"

The two continued catfighting, and Professor Sandsmark scratched her head. Her sullen, bored sulk had turned into a lively, bubbly teenager. Finally, everybody said goodbye, and Diana and Steve went for a nightly beach stroll. The two sat in the sand, cuddled and watched the stars above.

"This is how married life should be, darling. We have breakfast, wake up, read the paper and go to work, get married, make some babies, and grow up together," Diana whispered, and he smiled: "Stop stealing my lines, angel."

"Maybe I copy you because you impress me so much, Steve. You stuck through me in good and bad times, and never ever give up. What makes you do it?"

"Angel, a long time ago, a certain secretary glared at me when I said it was impossible to cross No Man's Land. She turned into a goddess, reduced her enemies to rubble, and made me eat crow until the end of time."

"You just didn't know me yet, darling… and frankly, I didn't either."

Diana kissed him, and giggled at his stupid, dazed smile she loved so much. She stroked his cheek and grinned: "So… how about that fantasy I told you right before I 'died'?"

"Are you serious?!"

"Always!"

"I'll think about it," he muttered.

"Coward," Diana grinned in mock anger. She wrapped her arms around his neck, kissed her wedding ring and made out with her husband. He lovingly responded, and their tongues devoured each other. The breeze caressed them, the waves softly rolled in the background, and the moonlight illuminated two perfectly happy people. Aphrodite herself smiled on them, and blessed both with loving dreams.

"That will do," Professor Sandsmark smiled, when the Tablet of Hades finally returned from repairs and was put back into its rightful museum showcase.

"Looks fine, Helena!" Etta beamed. "Hard to imagine the fate of the universe was depending on it. If Darkseid had completed the Anti-Life Equation, we wouldn't be standing here."

"Yes, but it's an interesting question. The Anti-Life Equation deals with the eternal concepts of life, death, and rebirth, 'proves' that life is futile, and it's better to give up your free will. In that case, you start with the Fourth World fragment, which says that all life is a lie. Next comes the Olympian fragment, that says that death always prevails, and the Terran fragment is last, and says that everything is reborn in endless futility."

"Sounds grim."

"But paradoxically, the exact same fragments can be used to formulate a For-Life Equation. In that case, the Fourth World fragment says that life is a gift, the Olympian fragment says that death is only the beginning, and the Terran fragment says that everything is reborn in endless opportunities. The wording is the same, but instead of saying the glass is half empty, is are now
half full."

"As in many things, it depends on your point of view."

"The Equation isn't good or evil, but it depends very much on the morals of its user. Wonder Woman would probably use it to do good, but I am happy that Darkseid is rotting in hell."

Darkseid cried out during this last sentence.
Epilogue

I cannot do this.

Colonel Steve Trevor, top agent of the DEO, had never been this nervous. He had stared Ares, Circe and Darkseid in the eye, but everything paled against this mission.

Steve entered his office and saw his shy, mousy secretary, Lieutenant Diana Trevor. She was busy typing an email, and trying to sound offhand, he asked: “Do you have a minute, Lieutenant?”

“Certainly, Colonel…?”

Steve melted when she submissively gazed at him through her clunky birth control glasses. Hoping to look macho instead of terrified, he locked the door, gestured her to his table and smiled: “How’s the progress on the Darkseid file, Lieutenant?”

“I am currently processing Wonder Woman’s account. She is quite elusive,” she sighed.

“Don’t feel bad, Colonel, she has a full schedule. Only fate knows where she pops up next,” he shrugged, staring at the TV. A pregnant, but still feisty Lois Lane reported: “… and thanks to Wonder Woman, the plane that threatened to crash into Boston Harbor safely landed!”

Steve stared in awe at the footage, which showed how the strong, beautiful Amazon princess caught the burning plane in mid air and successfully brought it down. In contrast, his secretary squirmed, and suddenly blurted out: “You have feelings for her, Colonel, don’t you?”

“That’s none of your business, Lieutenant!” Steve snapped, and she wilted away and muttered: “Sorry, Colonel, that was very unprofessional.”

His secretary looked so unhappy that he melted, and quipped: “Apology accepted, Lieutenant, but please speak for yourself. I have never seen you with someone.”

His secretary jumped up in her seat, blinked away hot tears, and finally sobbed: “Because the one I love is infatuated with Wonder Woman!”

Steve stared at his lieutenant, who trembling all over her body. He stammered: “I never thought you felt that way!”

“I have always been in love with you! I always pine for you behind my drab, lifeless desk, hoping you would notice me one day!” she cried out, turning scarlet with shame. He was frozen in disbelief, then cried out: “Lieutenant, why did you never tell me?”

“Because you are my best friend, Colonel, and I don’t want to lose you! But your heart belongs to Wonder Woman,” she sobbed. Steve grabbed his secretary by the shoulders and blurted out: “Lieutenant, I let go of Wonder Woman. I love you. Every day, I come early to work just that I can spend more time with you! Lieutenant, I would have made a move years ago if I had known that you had feelings for me.”

“Colonel…” she croaked, throwing herself at him. His heart melted, and finally, he wrapped his strong, warm arms around his secretary and passionately kissed her. The eyes behind the birth control glasses grew wide, and at first, she struggled, thrashing like a fish on dry land, then she let it happen, and finally, she eagerly responded.
“Do you like that, Lieutenant?” he finally smiled, and she stammered: “V-Very much, Colonel!”

He gently lifted her on his table, let her jacket slip off her shoulder and slowly unbuttoned her blouse. Her breathing grew ragged, and he gasped: “Since when do you wear sexy black lingerie?”

“Since forever! I always hoped you noticed one day!”

“I do, now,” he drooled. Enormously turned on, Steve wrapped his arms around his secretary, unbuttoned her blouse, and unhooked her bra. Two big, perfectly shaped breasts spilled out, and he softly blocked her attempts to cover them up.

“They’re beautiful,” he smiled, gently cupped them and reached down to her pencil skirt. Her eyes glazed over when he pulled off the frumpy dress and revealed long, toned legs, covered in fishnet stockings.

“You are so sexy,” he gushed, hungrily stroking her inner thighs. His secretary arched her back, and shuddered with desire when he pulled off her black, lacy panties. He greedily stuffed them into his pocket and parted her legs.

“Oh yes, Colonel!” she cried out, but instead of directly taking her, he dove face first between her thighs. His secretary moaned from the bottom of her heart when he skillfully caressed her. She wanted to tell him how good he was, how fantastic it felt, but she could only helplessly groan. Finally, he pulled off his pants, and her eyes grew wide when he saw his impressive manhood. His shy secretary cried out: “Yes, Colonel, I am ready! I want you!!”

Steve greedily locked lips with her and entered her. His secretary moaned from the bottom of her heart, rolling her eyes and arching her back. She felt so tight and inexperienced that he swore she was a virgin, and he let her settle for a few seconds until he began to pound her. With every thrust, her big bosom jiggled, and she wrapped her long legs around his hips and cried out: “Oh yes, Colonel! You are inside me! It feels so good!!”

Steve suddenly felt the deep urge to lead her, to make her love her first experience. He used every trick in the book to heighten her pleasure. Suddenly, he pulled out, made her stand belly up against his desk and commanded: “Bow down, Lieutenant!”

“I dreamed for years that you bent me over your table,” his secretary confessed, trembling with lust. Steve greedily looked at the perfect peach of her buttocks, whose muscles jutted out in an impossible way. She inhaled sharply when he took her from behind, and clenched her jaw when he slapped her glorious backside.

“You are mine, Lieutenant! Mine! MINE!!”

“Yes, I am, Colonel! Yes! YES!!” she screamed, moaning loudly. He pounded her like a madman, and his hunger was only surpassed by her greed. Finally, they violently climaxed. He fully released into her, and she cramped up, holding him as if she never wanted to let go of him again. He slumped over her trembling, sweat drenched body, and suddenly realized she was crying.

“W-What is wrong?” he blurted out, and she adjusted her birth control glasses and sobbed happily: “I am crying because I am glad, Colonel! You finally saw the woman behind your secretary.”

“I love you, Lieutenant. Become my wife.”
“You cannot, Colonel. You are married.”

“I don’t want to live without you anymore!”

“Colonel, I will always love you. You already gave me the one thing I wanted, and I will not ask for more. Farewell, Mr. Trevor,” she croaked, blinking away tears, unlocking the door and disappearing without a trace.

“L-Lieutenant, c-come back!” Steve yelled in desperation, but to no avail. Feeling incredibly guilty, he left work early, and dreaded meeting the wife he just betrayed. When Steve got out of the car, Wonder Woman greeted him at the door, kissed him and crooned: “So, how was your day, darling?”

“Good, thank you,” he muttered and took off his coat.

“What's wrong with you?”

“Nothing,” he lied and hung up his jacket. Suddenly, his secretary's black lacy panties fell out of the pocket. Wonder Woman stared, put one and one together, snared him with her lasso and screamed: “HOW DARE YOU!!”

His worst nightmare came true. She grabbed his collar, wound up her arm and gave him the…

… sweetest kiss he had ever received.

“Welcome home, you cheating rascal,” Wonder Woman lovingly giggled, putting her arms around her faithful husband. Steve blinked, finally snapping out of it, and muttered: “Angel, that roleplaying was intense!”

“You were fantastic. I never knew you felt that way for your poor, overlooked lieutenant.”

“I always did, angel,” he smiled, kissing his strong, beautiful wife. Then he mumbled: “I would never have guessed that your biggest fantasy is getting seduced as the shy, jealous secretary.”

“It's a guilty pleasure. I spend so much time in your office, pining for a kiss, a hug or a mere touch, while you fawn all over Wonder Woman.”

“Are you jealous when I fawn over her?!”

“I roll my eyes, see your drool and wish I was her.”

"So are awful, Ms. Trevor," he chuckled, kissed her again, then confessed: “It felt so forbidden, angel. You were so shy and meek, pushing all my buttons, and when we made love, I could have sworn I was taking your virginity.”

“I can… contract myself to make you feel that way. If I want my husband to have a one night stand with his own wife, I have to be convincing,” she giggled. Steve blushed, guiltily laughed, produced her panties and offered: “You can have that back, angel.”

“No, keep them. Every time you feel lonely, I want you to sniff them and think of me,” she evilly giggled, stared him in the eye and exclaimed, “I told you I could be shy and submissive!”

“You are as shy and submissive as a pouncing lioness. When I slapped your behind, I was terrified you would punch me into orbit!”

“I would rather have punched you into orbit if you hadn't. Never underestimate the wrath of a
scorned butt.”

He blushed again, and in the mock formal tone she pulled off so well, she grinned: “Colonel, consider going to the bathroom. You have lipstick marks all over your face.”

“Perhaps you should kiss with less enthusiasm, Lieutenant,” he retorted in the same voice. Both laughed, but then, Diana sighed and muttered: “Sorry, Steve, but I have Justice League matters now. That’s why I am already all in costume.”

“That’s alright, angel. Be safe.”

Wonder Woman became serious, looked him in the eye, gave him her wedding ring and whispered: “Steve, I cannot wear this anymore.”

Steve's heart skipped a beat.

“When I saved that plane today, all I could think was not damaging my wedding ring. Take it, I would never forgive myself if it got lost or destroyed,” she sighed.

“No problem, angel. I will guard it with my life, and you are such a hero for saving lives without blinking,” he admired, taking her ring, and she grinned: “But I insist on wearing it when we make love!”

Her thigh rubbed against his crotch, and suddenly, she giggled: “Wait, you are still in need?!?”

“I am not!” he lied, blushing furiously.

“Your voice says no, but your body says yes. Why didn’t you tell me? I was just getting started!”

“No, it's fine!” Steve blurted out, embarrassed by his urge, but she snapped: “Liar! Now, I will punish you!”

Diana hurled her lasso, and the magic rope snaked through the air. Within a single heartbeat, Steve was tied to the chair, and licking her lips, Wonder Woman planted her boot heel into his right shoulder.

“You fulfilled my shameless fantasy, and in return, I will fulfill yours,” Diana grinned, making the chair dangerously lean backwards. She licked her rope, making his blood boil, and whispered: “You are going to experience my loving submission.”

“’Aren’t you supposed to be with your Justice League buddies, angel?’” he drooled, enjoying the close up view of her crotch, and she purred: “Oh, they can wait.”

Diana angled her leg so much that he could see under her skirt, and when he got frisky, she snapped: “Bad boy!”

Wonder Woman kicked him over, but just when he would have smashed his head on the ground, she jerked at the rope. Steve lay on his back, unable to move in his shackles, and then, she planted the sole of her boot on his face and slavered: “Lick it clean, male!”

Steve stared bug eyed at his dominant wife. With holy dedication, he proceeded to lick her boots. He used long, delighted strokes, as if covering the colored leather with saliva was his greatest pleasure ever – and it actually was.

*I'll never understand it, darling, but whatever makes you happy*, Wonder Woman softly smiled. But staying in character, she hissed: “Now pull it off!”
“‘Yes, mistress!’”

Steve bit her boot so hard that she could pull it off without bending, covering himself with drool. She sat on his knees and planted her foot into his face, forcing him to lick each of her toes. But instead of feeling shamed, he eagerly proceeded. Diana felt strangely aroused, and she struggled to keep her cruel facade when he licked her ankles, her heels and her calves. Finally, she sat on his face and hissed: “Now please your mistress, worthless male!”

“‘Yes, I will!’”

Again, Diana deliciously quivered under his skillful caresses. Struggling to stay in character, she demanded: “Faster! Deeper! Better!”

Buried under the perfect peach of her buttocks, he barely heard that her breathing had become ragged. Diana unzipped his crotch and returned his caresses, making him jump and moan from the bottom of his heart. Both spouses greedily spoiled each other, until she finally kicked him back upright, put her wedding ring back on, straddled her thighs and entered her husband from above.

“Aahh!” both grunted, smiling in mutual fulfillment. Taking his wife as Wonder Woman enormously turned Steve on, and her loving bondage supercharged his lust. He enjoyed when she crushed his face into her quivering bosom, and both rode each other to heights unknown. She pounded him so hard that the lasso became undone, got caught in her waist, and ensnared both. Both barely noticed when they fell to the side, and climaxed in sweet entanglement. Compelled to tell the truth, Steve cried: “I love you, angel!”

“‘I love you, too, Steve!’”

”’You can tie me up anytime!’”

”’You can slap my butt as much as you want!’”

After riding out their passion, they cuddled up, holding each other tightly. Finally, Wonder Woman stood up, undid her husband, gave him her wedding ring and smiled: “I’ll be home tomorrow afternoon, darling. Keep it well, I’ll be coming back for it”

“Certainly, Diana,” he beamed, tucking it away in his pocket, and grinned: “Go get ’em, Wonder Woman!”

“Wonder Woman for the world, but Wonder Wife for you,” she laughed, kissed his cheek, crossed her bracelets and flew out of the window, smiling from ear to ear. Steve looked after his wife, sniffed her panties and sighed with starry eyes. Somewhere, Aphrodite beamed at them, and Darkseid cried.

THE END

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