

Chapter 94

The jet should be louder than what it is as it tears across the night. I almost forget I'm high above the clouds, and it's almost as though my problems have been le far below. I'm sitting, alone, in my regular spot, staring out of the window, trying to recognize the stars dotted on the sky. They seem so far away, and make me feel so

inconsequential. Nothing I do matters. Well, except for when I went back in time and fucked everything up. But I'm almost able to forget that, like it's all a bright, looking at the sky. I stare at the stars, wondering what their names are and how they came to be. Unfortunately for me, I am and always have been shit at recognizing anything in the sky except for the moon, so my pondering is not particularly fruitful.

The plane is almost deadily silent in the wake of the hungry engines. Natasha and Steve are in the cockpit, Yelena and Darcy le me a while ago to go play chess, apparently, and Wanda and Vision are in the front of the cabin, but I'm facing the opposite way, so I can't see them. What a shame. I'm all alone as usual.

As I watch the sky and the hundreds of di erent bright, twinkling lights, I suddenly remember the old, battered iPhone I've been given by Darcy as she deems my old information compromised and I agree, knowing full well how easily the FBI would be able to track me should I use any of my old tech. My fingers fumble in the sadly empty du el bag by my feet until I close my fist around something cold and metal. I pull out the iPhone and tap it, watching the screen come alive with the lock screen I haven't bothered to customize. With a sharp pain in my chest, I briefly remember my old phone with the image of my niece and me at the beach a long time ago. I sigh heavily, pushing away my old life that doesn't exist anymore. I can push it all aside, let it all go. There's no use in letting something that doesn't exist, exist in my head, either. It's a could-have. Not a will have.

I unlock the phone silently and scroll through the couple apps on there, feeling oddly empty. It's rather pitiful. I quickly find what I was looking for. I tap on the app and point my phone at the window as it opens the camera, quickly calibrating and then showing me the names of the little white dots in the sky. I let myself be childishly entertained by the phone for a little while all the while I have a sad feeling in my chest.

"What are you doing?" I jump slightly, quickly turning to my side as her familiar raspy voice reaches my ears, her accent always dististinguishable.

I'm met with the sight of Wanda, who's hugging herself as she looks at me through eyes that resemble huge, green mirrors. I'm not fond of what they reflect. She gives me a little half-smile as she cautiously sits down on the free seat in front of me. She looks slightly concerned, watching me closely, as if I might break. I glance around, noting how everyone else is not in immediate proximity. Yelena's and Darcy's voices are muted. I turn back to Wanda, who looks at me so patiently. A warmth fills my chest at her expression, which is no longer entirely cold as she regards me. There's a small shi in her.

"What are you doing?" I shoot back at her, using her words, and she wets her lips with her tongue, not looking away from me as she smiles nervously. She looks so... so approachable, her cardigan wrapped around her, sleeves pulled down low, her jeans worn and her hair slightly tousled and so. Her round eyes are, as usual, as expressive as always.

"I'm... Wanda wants to hate it's been my agent Darcy. So I... She passes in costume before, a small furrow on her eyebrows as she watches me closely. "You felt sad."

"Oh..." I all reply with, wondering if she felt my emotions as was thinking about my old life, and that's why she came over. Would that imply that despite not really knowing me, or remembering me, she still cares, subconsciously? Stop dreaming. Live the annoying voice of my consciousness chastises my thoughts.

"I'm okay." I lie. I pause, then continue, wanting to make her stop looking at me with that expression on her features.

"I'm stargazing." I give her a wonky smile, li ing the phone up and shaking it slightly in front of me to show her.

Wanda looks confused at my redirection, her eyes watch my phone as her eyebrows pull together into a small frown. She looks rather adorable and I try to not stare at her like some freak, selfishly enjoying every single ounce of attention I can get from her.

"Stargazing?" She so ly mouths, almost to herself. I note how she must be tired as her Sokovian accent pushes through. I gently stronger than usual the way it does when she's tired or stressed. I secretly wish she let it through more. It's kind of ho... oh my god, Liv, stop! shake my head, trying to regain control of my thoughts.

My lips pull into a wide smile despite my protests as I watch her. She looks up at me with a face that tells me she assumes I'm pulling a prank on her. She fiddles calmly with the hem of her maroon cardigan, her slender fingers pulling at the threads. I resist the urge to lean forward and grab her hands just to still them.

"Look, you try it. Point it out at the window." I say instead, reaching over towards her, the distance between us diminishing as I hand her the phone.

Our fingers briefly make contact as she takes the device from me. I try to ignore the jolt in my chest and try to push away the feeling of her skin. What is going on with me? shake my head imperceptibly, trying to gather myself. I made my decision.

Wanda's eyes are on me for a second, before she quickly looks down at the phone in her hand, her cheeks turning a deeper shade of red. I let myself wonder if she felt the same as me. On my god, Stop.

I nod as she looks at me for confirmation before she points the phone at the window. The warmth in my chest spreads with a rush through my veins as she makes a cute expression of awe, her mouth going round in a silent wow her eyes growing slightly on her face as she stares. She looks like a child, almost though the weight from her shoulders has disappeared. For a moment, we are allowed to exist in the space, without our past or future catching up to us. She looks ador-

"What is this?" She whispers to me, her voice light, not having it in her to tear her eyes of the screen.

"It's an app that shows you the names of each star in the sky." I explain so ly, the smile on my face not wanting to fade. "Look, point it anywhere."

"Anywhere?"

"Yeah, here, point it at me. So, what does it say?" I prompt her and she looks at me, entertained.

She moves the phone to point it at my face, looking slightly awkward with the phone, as if she's not used to holding one. A thought flashes through my brain: wonder if she's ever had a phone. Why would she have? Who would she call?

"So?" I ask her again, my voice low. "What can you see?"

Wanda looks at the screen, blushing as a so laugh escapes her lips and my insides do a somersault at the rare sound and I instantly miss it as she tries to pull a straight face.

"Uranus." I let out a laugh at her as she grins at me with rosy cheeks.

"Mature, Wanda." I roll my eyes at her.

"Hey, no, I swear!" Wanda laughs breathily again as she tries to keep her voice low so as to not disturb the others. "Look!"

She leans in to show me the screen, but naturally, as I move the phone, so does the map of the stars and she hu s, annoyed. I grin and lean in regardless, humoring her and looking down at the screen she now has pointed at our feet. We look at the screen in-between us for a moment in silence. The air between us is thick. I feel my heart beat loudly in my chest. I try to keep my focus on the silly app and not on her, so close, so-

"What stars are on me?" She asks me so ly, her voice low, sending shivers through my body, her face so close to mine her breath caresses my face.

"Let me see." I carefully take the phone from her hands, letting our fingers graze each other once more. I feel Wanda's eye on me and hear her breath hitch at the contact.

I lean back, pointing the phone at her. She mirrors my movement, leaning back in her seat too, bringing her knees up to her chest as she wraps her arms around her legs, watching me with childlike curiosity as she bites her lower lip. She looks adorable. I wish I could - oh my god, stop it, Liv.

"So? What does it say, Liv. O- Olivia?" Wanda stutters, looking slightly awkward, trying to cover the slip-up by clearing her throat and looking out of the window, her cheeks blushing.

"Hm... The International Space Station's right next to your right ear." I proclaim, squinting at the screen, ignoring the way she just almost used my nickname. Just almost. "Nothing else I recognize."

I click on the side button, watching the screen go black as I place the phone back into the bag, aware of Wanda's eyes upon me once again. When I straighten up though, she's looking out of the window again as if she never was looking at me in the first place. I observe her profile for a moment, wondering how her features, each individually so distinct, work together so well. My eyes slowly find themselves gazing at her so lips, and without realizing it, I'm reminiscing about holding her and feeling her lips on mine.

Wanda clears her throat so ly without looking at me and I quickly look down at my hands in my lap, embarrassment overcoming me as I feel my face heat up. Why can't I stop thinking of her like that? Not only that, but if she just read my mind-

Wanda exhales slightly at finding her stupid lips which kept getting my lashes, mortified at finding her stupid lips which kept getting me into trouble turned up into a small smile. Fuck sake.

"You're silent. What are you thinking of?" Wanda's husky voice reaches me and I want to melt into my seat. She knows.

"Nothing." I reply, just a little too quickly for my own liking.

"Nothing?" Wanda copies my tone in a slightly mocking voice and I pull a face.

"I do not sound like that." I whisper defensively.

"You do when you lie." Wanda deadpans, looking at me with a content smirk on her lips. She tilts her head slightly as we both notice my treacherous eyes on her lips again.

"I'm- I- I'm not lying." I awkwardly stammer, feeling my face heat up more under her emerald gaze. "You promised you wouldn't read my mind."

"And I'm not." Wanda calmly promises, still looking rather accomplished.

"But you..."

"I swear to you, I'm not reading your mind. I'm just..." She pauses, narrowing her eyes in slight contempt. "Your thoughts just calm me down. The sound of them- I mean, not your actual thoughts. I bet they're stupid."

Wanda quickly backtracks, flashing me a small smile before she looks down at her hands which begin to fiddle again. I breathe out in relief.

"Oh, okay, that's... that's good. Wait. Stupid?"

"Mmh-hmm. Probably." Wanda smiles widely into her lap, her teeth shining white against her lips. "Why are you so nervous? Are you hiding something from me?" She looks up at me with a slightly wonky grin that makes something deep down in me twist.

"No. What would I be hiding?" I grimace inelegantly and she chuckles.

"I don't know. Your unconfessed love."

"My... what?" I stare at her, feeling my stomach drop.

"For Yelena." She smiles sweetly, and I realize she's toying with me. Not only that, but we both know my love isn't unconfessed.

"You're awful." I hu and she snickers. I pretend to be mad, but her laugh makes it impossible.

"You know..." Wanda breaks the silence, her tone slightly uncertain, which makes me look at her with interest. She squanches up her nose slightly as she searches for the right words. I can't help but melt at her mannerisms.

"The more time I spend with you..." She pauses again, watching me intently, her lips pouting slightly. "I don't know."

"What?" I frown, wanting to know more, and she exhales, her chest falling.

"I don't know. It's like... like the fog I told you about, before? Like small rays of sunshine poke through. I remember little... little things. Little moments. Of you."

I bite the inside of my cheek at her revelation, trying not to get my hopes up. Even if she suddenly regained all her memories, what would it change? I didn't base my decision to stay away from her because she couldn't remember. I try to remind myself of every reason why I shouldn't let myself fall for her again entirely as I look into her warm green eyes so filled with conflicting emotions I cannot begin to untangle.

"I'm really sorry, Oliea." Wanda breaks the silence, her voice thick. "I really am. I dragged you into all of this, and you don't deserve any of this. Once Hydra is gone, I'll make everything right. I promise."

I open my mouth to reply, but I don't know what to say to her. She bats her eyes, trying to clear the tears that have energied and are threatening to spill over. I close my mouth again. I don't know what to make of her words. I don't know what to make of her. She was so cold to me at first, and then she swings back and forth like a pendulum, and now... now she's being awfully nice to me. Well, ever since her talk with Vision, I remind myself. I wonder what they talked about, and what he told her. Almost more importantly, I wonder when she'll bounce back to not liking me again.

"It's okay, Wanda, really. I'm trying to make everything right, too." I tell her heavily, not knowing if I have the bandwidth for another heavy conversation.

Luckily though, it seems as though Wanda is just as exhausted as I am as she doesn't reply. We look at each other, sharing small smiles before both of us look out of the window again, the silence stretching out between us once more. But it's not awkward, or tense. It's comfortable, albeit slightly jittery. I try to stop overthinking my decision to join me here, and every single moment that happened since she sat down. I can't help but look at her hands in her lap, wondering what it might feel to be able to hold them again. As much as I miss her proximity, though, I have to stop going down this route. If she can't remember me, Vision's always going to have her heart. Even when she could remember me, he ultimately had her heart. Just like moments do, they come and they go. And I need to realize so has our moment come and gone. I tear my eyes o her hands and look back out over the night sky as we speed past the darkness below, unstopable.

"Olivia?" I open my heavy eyelids, not realizing I must have started to doze o. I'm so exhausted, my entire body feels like lead.

"Hm?" I look at Wanda, who looks slightly nervous and wide awake in front of me. She opens her mouth, then closes it again.

"You're going to have to use your voice, darling. I can't read minds." I tease her tiredly, not realizing the tired of endearment that slipped past my foggy walls of defense in my tired mind.

"Oh, Liv..." Wanda bites her lip as she watches me, thinking. "Would you mind if... if I sat next to you?"

I raise my eyebrows at her in question and she shakes her head quickly.

"Just cause - well, we're still a couple of hours out and you seem to make me - well I can't sleep, this chair is uncomfortable." She pauses.

"Oh, the chair's uncomfortable?" I grin lazily and her cheeks flush again.

"Yes. Can I use you as a pillow? That's all. I don't want to make you uncomfortable."

"Hm..." I hum, satisfied with her awkwardness, but on the inside, however, I feel like I might faint. I feel so light headed. "If you must..."

"Thank you." She mutters, trying to look annoyed, as she stands and comes to sit in the open seat next to me, letting her body fall down heavily.

I shu le slightly so she has more space. She looks at me and smiles a small, timid smile which I return, acutely aware of her thigh brushing against mine. She doesn't say anything, but instead slowly lowers her head towards me until it rests upon my shoulder. The weight of it grounds me and it fits so well in the crook of my neck. I'm surprised my heart is still functioning, despite my brain trying to tell it to calm the fuck down. We're not doing this anymore apparently a memo it still receiving. Wanda's red hair tickles my cheek slightly and my entire body wants to melt into her, but I resist. I do, regardless of the battlefield between my heart and head, and lean my head on top of hers, turning to look out of the window once more, my eyes unfocused on the stars outside as all I can think of is her smile as she pointed the phone at me.

Wanda lets out an almost unnoticable hum and I can't help the grin that spreads upon my face. I'm such a fucking pushover. I know that I can try to argue sense into myself however much I want, but one look into those eyes of hers and I lose all common sense. I'm royally screwed.

"Okay, team, listen up." Steve's voice wakes me up from my restless slumber, feeling momentarily groggy and confused as to what is going on and where I am. For a moment, I think I'm back in my Hydra cell, tortured by moments I could not remember.

I am very quickly pulled back into the present moment as I realize I've been sleeping next to Wanda, whose head is still on my shoulder and now apparently our hands are intertwined too. I am startled by this revelation.

"Shit." I mutter, disentangling myself from her as she starts stirring, coming to.

She quickly sits up, looking at me with wide, still sleep-filled green eyes, her cheeks rosy. I quickly look away from her and up at where Steve's voice is resonating from.

"Wanda? Olivia? Where are you guys?"

"Er, we're just, er..."

"We're stargazing." Wanda finishes for me, subtly turning her head to smirk at me. I pull a face and she chuckles.

"You're star- what?" Steve sounds perplexed. "Come here."

We stand and I get up and walk towards the front of the jet where the rest of the group is congregated. The jet must be flying on autopilot as both Steve and Natasha are standing in the aisle, looking a little too much like parents waiting for their kids to arrive for them to be scolded. Vision seems to have been busy examining the chessboard as he straightens up to quickly meet Wanda's eyes before quickly looking away again. That was weird. Darcy and Yelena look at Wanda and me smugly, like the older siblings who can do no wrong and know everything. Yelena winks at me as our eyes meet and at the same time, I hear Wanda hu , irritated.

"So, er, what's up?" I stutter awkwardly, not knowing why I feel like I've done something wrong.

"We're nearing the base I've tracked Hydra activity to." Steve explains, instantly taking on the role of a leader. I notice it suits him with a small pinch in my chest. I haven't gotten to catch up with him yet. I feel guilty, looking at him. The same, yet a changed man.

"That means our stealth mode is activated. We don't want them to know we're coming. This will be a quick, small and e cient outing, understood?" We all nod silently, not daring to interrupt his flow.

"I want only me, Nat, and Olivia for this one." As soon as he finishes talking, I know he won't get away so easily with this one.

"Uh, absolutely NOT?" Yelena squeals, before Wanda pipes up.

"I am not waiting here. I am coming." Wanda declares flatly.

"No, fire, people is too many." Steve tries to air him his plan once again, but fails.

"Why can't sh go?" Yelena points at Natasha. "The only thing she is better at is being older than me!"

"Because I know the case!" Natasha pointedly tells her sister, who hu s.

"So? Tell me now and I'll know it too."

"No, Yelena..."

"Well, I am coming, and you can't stop me. Remember our last fight?" Yelena's tone goes slightly mocking as she crosses her arms over her chest, clearly victorious in her own mind.

"I remember letting you win so you wouldn't feel too bad about losing twice before then." Natasha grumbles, crossing her arms identically to Yelena.

"You're unbelievable!" Yelena's voice is close to yell in loudness now and she looks like she's not joking the slightest anymore.

"I think you mean unbeatable." Natasha murmurs with a cheeky grin on her face.

"I swear..." Yelena begins but Steve quickly realizes it's now or never to interrupt.

"Yelena, it's just too risky. You know how to pilot the jet, so if anything..."

"He can figure it out, no? He's basically fluent in machine." Yelena points her thumb at Vision who momentarily looks confused.

"He'll be here too, as backup," Steve nods. "And Darcy, we've gone over the computer... stu..., right?"

"Yes, the computer stu is my bien-...?" Darcy grins, showing two thumbs up.

"Amazing, and..."

"And me? What am I supposed to do?" Wanda now speaks up, making everyone turn to look at her.

"Wanda, well, you..." Steve trails o uncertainly as Natasha rolls her eyes at him.

"You're staying here." Natasha looks at Wanda with an expression that screams trying me.

"If Liv- Olivia is going, so am I." Wanda stubbornly fights without looking at me once. Still, my insides feel all mushy.

"No, you're not. It's you they..."

"Want? Didn't you just say they want her, too? What are you just going to bring her right to them?" Wanda tilts her head slightly and I am glad I'm not on the receiving end of her anger right now.

"This is a good point the witchy makes!" Yelena points at Wanda triumphantly, maybe agreeing with her for the first time ever. "Olivia will need backup, so I will go, I volunteer!"

"No volunteer!" Steve sighs, looking defeated.

"No volunteer, I am actually more than capable of defending myself. I do have training." I feel like I need to stand up for my years of rigorous FBI training which is really brushed under the rug here, in my rigorous exactly entirely helpless.

"Yeah, b... that? No good." Yelena shakes her head and laughs. "I could take you on with one arm tied behind my back."

"Excuse me, have you ever broken someone out of the Ra ?" I ask her and she rolls her eyes.

"No, but if I wanted to..."

"Oh shut up, you two." Natasha sighs, rubbing her hands over her face.

"Yes, shut up Olivia. Oh, that is good, then, I am coming. What is next, Mr. America dude?" Yelena smiles, content with herself, looking up at Steve who rolls her eyes.

"Stop calling me that. You know it's Captain..."

"This is boring..."

"Okay, well, the plan is, me, Nat and Olivia..."

"And me..."

"No, the three of us sneak into the facility with Darcy's help, we try to locate the files they have on Wanda, get them and erase them all, then get back to the jet. That should be it."

"Well, that sounds too simple to be li..." I narrow my eyes at Steve, feeling Wanda's eyes on me.

"Well, that's the rough outline..."

"Why do you want me to come in with you?" I ask the pair of them in front of me, obviously wanting to join them, but not understanding why me, specifically.

"You know exactly what those files physically look like, don't you? You were with Hydra, and you helped them get them." Natasha tells me, her tone not sounding accusing at all, but I can't help but feel my stomach sink.

I want to argue, to defend myself, but she's right. I did help Hydra, whether voluntarily or not. Another cross to add to my list. I keep screwing Wanda over, and it's not the kind I wish I were. Oh my god, what's wrong with me?

"Right." Is all I can hear myself reply.

"I know what they look like too." Wanda says, looking at me with an odd expression.

"Wanda, please let's not argue about this. You're not coming. You need to stay out of the way, just in..."

"In case you get caught? So they won't have me?" Wanda finishes Natasha's sentence snappily, li ing her hand in front of her face. I suddenly bursts into vivid, crackling scarlet magic, which dances around her skin, glowing hotly. "Do you forget I have my scarlet?"

"Your scarlet is the problem, Wanda." Steve sighs, looking slightly on edge from Wanda's display.

"Why? You say that, but you never say why." Wanda bites back, letting her frown drop, and the scarlet disappears.

"I think I can answer that." Darcy speaks up in a weird voice. I turn to look at her, surprised. She looks slightly guilty, a one-sided smile on her face. "Well, you remember the cu s and the collar you were made to wear?"

Wanda narrows her eyes suspiciously, but nods slowly. I don't think I'll be able to forget the sight of Wanda having to wear those cu s anytime soon. I look from Darcy to Wanda again, not liking Darcy's body language right in this instance. Whatever she's about to tell us is not anything great.

"Well, according to our intel... Hydra... they've made some... adjustments to them."

"What adjustments?" I ask her and Wanda looks at me briefly, our gazes connecting for a second.

"It seems as though they... using Stark's research on Wanda's magic, and my invention of the magic-cracking technology and I believe something else but I can't crack through those files quite yet, they've created a way to, how do I say this? Siphon? Yeah? Siphon Wanda's magic." Darcy goes silent, looking from Wanda to me as though she's waiting for us to start yelling and screaming at her. We don't.

"Siphon? What do you mean?" Wanda's voice is quiet.

"I think I might be wrong here, but from what I gather, they know how to gather your magic every time you use it."

"Gather?" Wanda repeats incredulously, her accent making her slightly roll her y's.

"Yes, now I don't know how long they can bottle it up for, and if when they do, you'll have less of it, but that's essentially it." Darcy lets her shoulders li in a half shrug, not able to meet Wanda's eyes.

"They want my scarlet." Wanda murmurs to herself, and I can hear the slight tremor in her voice. She's scared. My heart pulls for her slightly, but I don't move from my spot next to her.

"Do you understand now why we can't risk you coming with us?" Steve so ly asks her, treading carefully.

Wanda stays silent but I imagine her mind is anything but. I cast a glance at Vision, who I've noticed has been uncharacteristically quiet during the entire conversation, and has refused to even look at Wanda. Now, however, he is stealing subtle glances at her.

"Wanda?" Natasha quietly says, making Wanda look at her with glossy eyes. "Please trust us on this."

I high five Wanda carefully, my skills at analyzing behavior kicking into high gear as my gaze grazes over her body language. I note the way she's shallowly breathing, the way her fingers fiddle with with her rings, and the way she subtly frowns.

"Okay..." She sighs and she turns her head slightly to look at me. I give her a supportive smile, which I hope shows her that I'm all good. That she'll be all good.

"Great, well..." Yelena loudly says, but Natasha cuts her o quickly.

"Fantastic, that's settled." She loudly states with a plastic smile.

"Steve, how far away are we?"

Steve hums and turns around to peek into the cockpit, before turning back around to face us with a grim expression.

A/N: Hello beautiful people. Hope this chapter can take your minds o how horrible this world is for however long it took you to read this. I know I need to escape every once in a while x

I also know say it's going to kick o every chapter, but then these lovely little characters decide to have long-as convos as I write. I hope you don't mind, but it seems to really love to explore relationships using dialogue. Oh well, you've managed it this far, you can hang in there!

Based on everything you've read so far, can you take a gander at how Wanda and Liv's relationship is going to end? I'm very curious to see if anyone can guess...

However, it IS really kicking o in the next chapter. Oh oh. See you in the comments friends ehehe

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