

## [extra] peter goes slow

"**HOW DO YOU DO IT?**" Peter complained, lying on Nova's bed with his broken leg propped up on the covers.

"Do what?" Nova asked, looking up from her book.

She was floating cross-legged in the air, her book open in her lap, reading quite happily to herself as Peter did his best to entertain himself. At her question in response to his question, he looked up at her. "How do you handle being so slow all the time?"

"How do I handle it?" Nova asked, rolling forwards so she was lying on her stomach six feet above the carpet. "I've never known any different and it's not my fault you're freakishly fast."

"Hey, everyone else is just slow" Peter replied.

"You really know how to charm a girl," Nova laughed.

Peter let his head fall back on Nova's pillows. "I feel so useless and everything hurts."

"Everything does not hurt you, Peter," Nova said. "Stop being a baby."

"I'm not a baby."

"He says, as he pouts like a child," Nova replied, grinning at Peter.

"But seriously, how's life in the slow lane?"

"Boring," Peter said. "And painful."

"Well, if you'd just take the pain medication the doctor told you to take, then you wouldn't be in pain," Nova reminded him.

"But it makes me sleepy," Peter argued.

"What else are you going to do all day if not sleep?" Nova asked.

"I can't sleep," Peter said. "Not very well, anyway."

"And why's that?" Nova asked.

"Because you're not there," Peter replied.

Nova made an 'aww' sound. "That's actually really sweet. Cute, but disgustingly so."

"Hey, I try," Peter shrugged. "Hey, I'm feeling a bit sick."

"You're not sick, Peter, you've got a broken—"

"Can you make me chicken noodle soup?"

Nova rolled her eyes. Peter was so used to living life in the fast lane (literally), that being forced to slam on his brakes and come to a grinding halt was not sitting well with him. Confined to bed for the majority of the time, he was restless and eager to get back out into the world. Hank had already suggested that Peter's injury may heal quicker than most people's, but given the nature of the break, none of them were very willing to let him test that theory for a while.

"Hey, have you fallen asleep?" Peter's voice asked, interrupting her thoughts. "You can't go to sleep. Not if I'm not sleeping, then I'll have nobody to talk to and just die of boredom."

"What were you saying?" Nova asked.

"I said can you make me chicken noodle soup because I'm sick," Peter said. "Pretty please."

"You've got a broken leg, Peter, not a cold," Nova replied.

"Please," Peter begged. "I know you're good at cooking."

It was true. Of the few things Nova was exceptionally good at, cooking was one of them. She could whip up a great meal when she wanted to, having been the main cook in the years that it had just been her, her father and Hank at the house. She was also rather good at baking, and the kids marvelled at her baked goods whenever they smelled the familiar scents wafting from the kitchen.

"Peter, you'll probably be fine in a week," Nova pointed out. "And I really don't want to have to go all the way to the store to buy the stuff I'll need for chicken noodle soup."

"Fine, can I have a Twinkie?" Peter asked. "There's a box on your desk."

Nova flicked her finger, sending the box shooting across the room and into Peter's lap. He grinned. "Thanks. I love you."

"I love you too," Nova replied.

"I was talking to the Twinkie."

"Charming," Nova scoffed.

"I'm kidding," Peter laughed, holding out his arms and making grabby-hands. "Come over here."

"Why?" Nova asked.

"Because I'm having withdrawal symptoms because you're so far away and I want you to cuddle me," Peter replied.

"God, who knew having a broken leg would turn you into such a softie," Nova laughed, floating across the room to where Peter lay before she dropped down onto the bed.

"You can't tell anyone," Peter replied. "It's a secret."

"Your secret's safe with me," Nova promised. "Although there's no promises that Jean won't look in my head and see this entire thing."

"Goddamn mind readers," Peter muttered. "But on the other chance that she doesn't look inside that cute little head of yours, let's keep this between us."

Nova curled up against Peter's side, her head resting on his chest. "Keep what to ourselves? The fact that you're a huge softie who just wants cuddles from his girlfriend?"

"Yes," Peter replied. "I have a reputation to maintain, thank you very much."

"And what reputation is that?" Nova asked.

"The one where I'm cooler than Scott."

"Oh, right," Nova said sarcastically. "Completely forgot about that one."

"Yeah," Peter nodded. "Although I automatically win coolness points."

"Why's that?"

"Because I have the cutest girlfriend on the planet," Peter replied.

"Hmm, I don't know," Nova said. "Scott and Jean seem to be getting pretty close."

"Do they?" Peter asked. "I hadn't noticed."

Nova laughed. "You're so cute when you're oblivious."

"I'm not oblivious," Peter replied. "I just tend not to care about things that are going on in Scott's life."

"That's mean," Nova said. "He's supposed to be your friend."

"He is my friend," Peter said. "But I just want everyone to know I'm cooler than him. Me, the guy that took on Apocalypse single-handedly."

"And got his leg broken in the process."

"But it makes for a cool story."

Nova rolled her eyes. "You're such a dork."

"And yet somehow I still managed to get you to fall wildly in love with me," Peter said, kissing the top of Nova's head.

"What can I say, I'm a sucker for cute guys that are also heroes," Nova replied, tilting her head to grin up at Peter.

"Oh, I'm a hero now?"

"Don't let it get to your head, Speedy."

"Wouldn't dream of it."

Nova laughed as Peter tickled her hip gently. "Stop it."

"What? I've got to entertain myself somehow," he replied with a grin.

"You know, you could just fly us out of here with your magical gravity powers and we could go on an adventure."

"No," Nova replied. "I want you to get better."

"I will get better," Peter said. "Just keep cuddling me. That's all the medicine I need."

Nova pretended to gag. "That's cute, but disgusting."

"You're cute but disgusting," Peter shot back.

"How on Earth am I—"

"Have you seen the hair in your shower drain?" Peter asked.

"Goddamn, woman, you can manipulate gravity, surely you can stop your hair from clogging your drain."

"Why were you in my shower?" Nova asked.

"You have better water pressure," Peter shrugged. "Although that's not the point. The point is: cute but disgusting."

"If it bothers you that much, clean it," Nova said with a laugh. "More importantly, why were you looking in the drain?"

"Because it wasn't draining so I figured there must have been something wrong," Peter replied.

"Since when were you a plumber?" Nova asked.

"Since I realised that your hair clogs up the drain," Peter replied.

"Hey, don't blame my hair."

"It literally is your hair's fault."

Nova rolled her eyes and groaned. "You've spent way too much time sitting down. We're arguing about hair in a shower drain."

"I told you," Peter said. "Bored"

Nova shook her head. "What can I do to make you less bored?"

"Read to me?" Peter requested.

"Why on Earth would you want me to—"

"Because I like the sound of your voice," Peter replied. "Come on, what's your favourite book of all time?"

Nova held out her hand and a book flew off her shelf and into her hand. She showed Peter the cover. "This one."

"Dickens?" Peter asked. "Never read any of his books."

Nova rolled her eyes. "Of course you haven't," she sat up and leaned against the headboard, leaving Peter to awkwardly shuffle so that his head was resting on her chest. She looked down at him. "If you make one boob joke I swear to God I'll—"

"I wasn't going to," Peter said. "But now that you mention it, this is actually quite comfortable. Why have I never done this before?"

"Because you're such a tough guy and you don't cuddle," Nova replied. "Or, at least, everyone thinks you don't cuddle."

"And it's going to stay that way," Peter replied, holding his finger up to Nova's nose pointedly. "Understood?"

"Sir, yes sir," Nova mumbled.

Peter pinched her cheek teasingly. "That's my girl."

"Stop distracting me. Do you want me to read to you or not?"

"Yes."

"Then let me read to you."

In the end, Nova didn't get much reading done, because Peter asked too many questions as she was reading and she had to stop and answer them each time or he would just continue asking the same question over and over again. She didn't mind though, because she was getting to spend some downtime with Peter without worrying about when he would be speeding off back to his own home.

For those few hours that they laid there on Nova's bed, Peter's head on her chest, fingers tracing patterns on her stomach as she read to him, he realised that maybe it wasn't a bad thing to just slow down sometimes and appreciate the moment while you were living it.

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