

[four] the kleptomaniac

"**THE ROOM THEY'RE HOLDING HIM IN** was built during the Second World War," Hank explained. "When there was a shortage of steel, so the foundation is pure concrete and sand."

"No metal," Nova said.

"He's being held a hundred floors beneath the most heavily guarded building on the planet," Charles said.

"Why is he in there?" Logan asked.

Nova, Charles and Hank shared glances as Charles asked, "What, he forgot to mention?"

He laughed and Nova said, "Uh, JFK," shifting her weight from one foot to the other awkwardly.

"He killed..." Logan began.

"What else explains a bullet miraculously curving through the air?" Charles asked. "Erik's always had a way with guns. You sure you want to carry on with this?"

"This is your plan, not mine," Logan said.

"We don't have any resources to get us in," Hank said.

"Or out," Charles added. "It's just me and Hank."

"And me," Nova said.

"No, we are not having this discussion," Charles said. "You're not coming, end of."

"Uh, yes I am," Nova replied. "You said it yourself, you don't have the resources, so any help is going to be needed. I'm coming. End of"

"No, not end of," Charles retorted. "You're seventeen. You can't come with us."

"Sure she can," Logan said, speaking in favour of Nova. Again, he smiled at her. "You should see her in the future."

Charles looked to Hank for support. "Hank?"

"Uh, I'm not getting involved," Hank replied. Nova stood on his foot and he coughed to mask his groan of pain. "But, uh, if I waste pitch my vote, I'd say we let her come."

Nova smiled smugly at Charles. "See, three to one."

Charles sighed. "Fine, but you do everything we say, okay?"

Nova nodded. "Yes, boss."

"But even with Nova, three of us isn't going to be enough," Hank said. "I mean, this is the Pentagon we're talking about."

Logan's expression clouded over. "I know a guy. Yeah, he'd be a young man now. Grew up outside of DC," he chuckled. "He could get into anywhere. I just don't know how the hell we're gonna find him."

"Is Cerebro out of the question?" Hank asked.

Charles looked uncomfortable, so Nova interjected and said, "We have a phone book."

"Yeah, that's, uh, a good idea," Hank said. "I'll be right back."

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They tracked down their mystery man, and Nova looked at the name which corresponded with the details in the phonebook. "Peter Maximo?"

"Yeah," Logan replied. "Let's go."

"We don't have a car," Hank said.

"I got that covered," Logan said.

"Can I drive?" Nova asked.

"No!"

All three men were in agreement on that one, so Nova found herself in the backseat with Hank. It was a painfully long drive from New York to Washington, but Nova passed the time by reading. Charles had recommended the book 'The Once and Future King' to her, and as she found his old copy, he had lent it to her. Nova found out while reading that he had scribbled notes in the margins, and every time she saw his familiar scrawl, she ran her fingers over the words, reminded that the Charles Xavier she remembered was still inside that shell of a broken man, waiting to be saved.

Not much conversation was had between the car's other three occupants, but Nova was too engrossed in her novel to care about the awkward silences. She had her feet propped up on the back of Logan's seat, slouched down as her book was propped open on her knees. It wasn't exactly the most suitable position, but she was comfortable. When Logan's voice interrupted the quiet, Nova jumped.

"Here, here, here," he instructed.

"Where?" Charles asked.

"Just up here," Logan instructed.

"Alright, alright, alright, alright," Charles said, pulling over towards a house.

"Next time I'm driving," Logan said, as Charles stopped the car.

"Alright? Don't get used to it."

Nova put her book down. "We're here?"

"We're here," Charles confirmed.

Getting out of the car, Nova stretched and sighed. "Man, that feels good."

Walking up to the door, Nova stood behind Logan as he knocked. He paused for a moment before knocking again, impatiently. Nova pulled a face. "Jesus, impatient much?"

A woman unlocked the door and opened it, and when she saw the four of them standing on her doorstep, she sighed.

"What's he done now?" she asked, and from the tone of her voice, Nova guessed that it wasn't the first time she had visitors show up unannounced. "I'll just write you a check for whatever he took."

"We just need to talk to him," Logan said.

The woman seemed relieved, stepping back to let them in. "Peter! The cops are here! Again."

As Nova walked over the threshold, she couldn't help but notice the scorch marks on the welcome mat, puzzling over why they were there as she followed Hank into the house, finding a similar trail on the hallway floor.

A little girl was watching them, wearing a princess dress and waving a plastic wand. She looked up at Logan, a tiara perched on her head.

"I'm a princess. What are you?"

Logan removed his sunglasses. "I'm the Wolverine. Where's your brother?"

The girl pointed them in the direction of a set of stairs and Nova led the way. They headed down to the basement, and Nova was greeted with a sight that explained the scorch marks on the welcome mat.

There was a blur of silver moving back and forth between each side of a ping-pong table, sending the ball back and forth to himself.

"What do you guys want?" the blur asked. "I didn't do anything. I've been here all day."

Something zipped past Nova and she jumped in surprise, turning to find the boy now situated on the couch behind her. Logan stepped forwards. "Just relax, Peter. We're not cops."

"Of course you're not cops," Peter said. "If you were cops, you wouldn't be driving a rental car."

"How'd you know we've got a rental car?" Charles asked.

"I checked your registration when you were walking to the door," Peter replied. "I also had some time to kill, so I went through your rental agreement and saw you're from out of town," he moved again, this time appearing behind Charles with his wallet in hand. "Nope, you're not cops. Hey, what's with this weird youngsters place?"

"That's an... old card," Charles replied, picking up his wallet from where Peter dropped it as he sped away.

"Well, he's fascinating," Hank said, a smile on his face.

"He's a pain in the arse," Charles said dryly.

"What, a teleporter?" Hank asked.

"No, he's just fast," Logan replied. "And when I knew him, he wasn't so... young."

"Young?" Peter asked from behind them. "You're just old," he pointed at Nova. "Except for you. You're cute."

Charles rolled his eyes.

"So you're not afraid to show your powers," Hank said, as Nova blushed slightly.

"Powers? What powers?" Peter asked. "What are you talking about? Do you see something strange here? Nothing anybody would believe if you told them," he disappeared from the couch and reappeared at the arcade game across the room. "So who are you and what do you want?"

"We need your help, Peter," Logan said.

"With what?"

"To break into a highly secured facility and to get someone out," Logan explained.

"Prison break?" Peter asked. "That's illegal, you know."

"Uh... well, only if you get caught," Nova shrugged.

"So what's in it for me?" Peter asked.

"You, you kleptomaniac, get to break into the Pentagon," Charles replied.

Peter stopped playing his game and turned to them, his interest clearly piqued. "How do I know I can trust you?"

"Cause we're just like you," Logan replied.

"Show him," Charles said.

From his knuckles, Logan's claws protruded from between his knuckles, twelve inches of wicked sharp bone. Peter grimaced.

"That's cool, but it's disgusting," he looked at Nova. "What do you do?"

"Control gravity," Nova replied, closing her eyes for a moment and letting her powers take over.

When she opened her eyes, Logan, Charles, Hank and Peter were floating just above the ground, the gravity around them having shifted. Charles folded his arms and cleared his throat. "Um, Nova?"

His tone clearly said, Put me down right now and Nova grinned.

"Right," she said, dropping them back onto the ground.

"That's awesome," Peter commented.

"So are you in?" Nova asked.

"That depends," he replied.

"Depends on what?" Charles asked.

"On whether she's coming or not," Peter replied, pointing at Nova.

Charles choked on his own air as Nova smiled. "Yeah, I'm coming."

"Then I'm in."

i wrote a peter maximo fic so long ago and never published it so i figured it was time to do this

also i'm in the process of rewatching all the x-men films and can i just say the continuity is SO out of whack but i will never not like watching those films

Continue reading next part