



xxviii. History Repeats

"Oh," Auralie repeated, "I'm gonna need a more thoughtful answer than "oh". I'm trying to sort out the details of my past and my future. If you want a place in that future, you have to earn it."

↵

"Ali..... what I did all those years ago was wrong. I was a stupid kid, trying to survive in a world that seemed too big and scary for me. I prioritized my own survival over everyone else's, including yours," Lucian said.

Auralie sighed, "well, that's ironic. You were afraid to die, I was afraid to live, for the longest time."

"Really..... but you seem so in tune with everything, so wise," Lucian commented, "it's surprising that you would be afraid of it."

"Ignorance is bliss," Auralie said, "the more you see of the world, the scarier it becomes. I was afraid to get close to people because I thought that someday I would lose them in one way or another. I wanted to support my friends, but I didn't want to face my own demons. I would run o a er Steve or Nat and help them on an adventure, but I questioned why I would, why I cared so much about the world."

The shadow manipulator continued, "It was hard to trust, and harder to love. Lucky for me, Shield and later the Avengers always understood and gave me my barriers. But I didn't really start working through it until I met Wanda and started to teach her about life. I was really teaching myself."

"I used to be so scared to live my own story because I thought it would only end in death and ruin for everyone I allowed myself to care about that. And what you did, it helped encourage that fear. But I'm trying to work through it, to work through my pain. I want to forgive you, I really do. But it's hard," Auralie finished, wiping at her eyes.

↵

Lucian reached out and tentatively put a hand on Auralie's shoulder, "wow Ali, I guess I've never realized how much I hurt you. I'm so so sorry. I want to make it right. I want to be a better man. You don't have to forgive me. But, if there's any advice, for how I can get over being so selfish....."

"Take care of yourself Lucian, but don't treat your life as though it's more valuable than everyone else's," Auralie said, "that's the closest thing to balance I can come up with."

"Huh.... interesting. Well, thank you, sis. I meant what I said. We were a team. I want to be like that again," Lucian nodded solemnly.

"I think you mean that. I don't think you realize how hard it will be," Auralie observed.

"Maybe," Lucian acknowledged.

Auralie couldn't shake the feeling of how similar this was to the last time they were together. The twins, alone. Auralie had thought she had lost her twin and here he was again. Lucian saying he missed her. That he wanted them to be a team. Elory and her secret lair, somehow thrown into the mix. It was all familiar. She had been here before.

She had been so very young then. It had been ten years ago. In the ten years that had passed, she had become stronger, smarter, wiser. She didn't need her brother, she had come to let other people into her heart. But it was hard to grasp on that decade of memories. She felt like she was all the way back at the very start.

↵

Though Auralie had grown up and had learned so much since then, she missed the girl she had once been. Innocence was so o en ignored until it was lost. She missed it. She missed having faith in the world, not having to look over her shoulder. Auralie missed the seven-year-old who thought nothing could rip her family apart. The seven-year-old who was shy and innocent and wholly unbroken. The girl who did not know the pain of losing her heart.

Though Auralie would never trade the friends she had made and the love she had found, she couldn't help but wonder, especially on a night like tonight, which brought her back to the start of her journey.

"History repeats itself," Auralie whispered.

"What," Lucian asked, as they walked along, their feet leaving prints in the ashes.

"Nothing," Auralie lied. She thought of another thing about history. It was written by the winners. Only her or Elory could win the coming fight. What would history say if she lost? Would anyone even remember her? She didn't want to be lost to the world. Not when she felt she had so much le to give. That, she thought, was why she had survived when she was seven, and again when she was thirteen. She simply wasn't ready to say goodbye.

She still wasn't, but she had a feeling that would not be enough this time.

Auralie was feeling unsteady on her feet. Just like she had ten years ago. The parallels were unnerving. Was her brother going to betray her again? She just couldn't tell. That scared her. She usually had good instincts. She liked to know what was going on. Situations in which she didn't were frightening.

Unlike last time, Lucian was not the friendly brother he had acted as. This time, he knew that there were boundaries. Auralie hated that for so many years her heart had been broken and her dreams nothing but nightmares because of him. But his betrayal had made her stronger. She was an Avenger now. She was no longer innocent, however blissful that had been.

At least, Auralie hoped that she was more in control than last time. She wasn't sure. At heart, she felt like that child again, except this time she was waiting to be betrayed. It was not a good feeling, and no matter how hard she tried to calm her nervous heart, it did not work.

"Lucian, how much longer until we find Elory?" She asked, hating how small her voice sounded.

Lucian sighed, "I'm not sure Ali. The smoke makes the walk seem longer than it is. It shouldn't be too long."

"No, not long at all," a light, cold voice laced with venom said from right in front of them. There, in the smoke, where no one had been before, was Elory, looking no di erent than when Auralie had first seen her ten years ago.

↵

"No," Auralie whispered. This couldn't be. How could she have known? Lucian. Of course. This was nothing but a cruel joke of the worlds.

"Yes," Elory's lips curled upward into the most sinister of smiles.

History did repeat itself alright, sometimes in the worst way possible. ↵

A/N: Two chapters! On a school night! Wow, I must have been inspired. Well, this chapter was intense and had a cliff hanger ending. Forgive me. The next chapter will be up soon so you shouldn't have to wait too long to hear what happens to Auralie. I just have to write what happens to Auralie.

[Continue reading next part](#) □