



### xiii. The Captain

Steve was up, chasing away the nightmares by punching a bag that was hanging from the wall. He struck it hard, and it went flying off the chain, and across the room. He was a strong man, but Auralie was more focused on the sadness and confusion that covered his face. He had seemed so peaceful in sleep, but awake he seemed to be in constant turmoil.

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"Can't sleep," Nick called to Steve.

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Steve turned, "I was asleep for 70 years sir."

"Then you should be out," Nick said, "celebrating. Seeing the world."

"When I went under the world was at war," Steve replied, "when I woke up, they say we won. They didn't say what we lost."

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"It changed the world," Auralie agreed, "we still can't figure out if it was for better or worse."

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Steve turned and noticed the small teenager, who was looking at him with an extremely comprehensive look, the kind of someone who had seen some things and was made smarter because of it. Her words struck a cord in him as he thought of all the things he had heard in his brief time out of the ice.

"Did you come with a mission sir," he said, addressing Fury.

"I did," Fury replied.

Steve sighed, "trying to get me back into the world?"

"Trying to save it," Fury answered. He handed the Captain the file on the tesseract, the situation, and the other Avengers. Steve took it and flipped through it, a crease of worry crossing his face. He looked up from scanning the picture of the tesseract, a question in his eyes.

Fury explained, "Howard Stark fixed the tesseract out of the ocean while he was looking for you. He thought what we thought. That it might be the key to unlimited energy."

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"And the guy who took it?" Steve asked, his voice that of a soldier asking for information on the enemy lines.

"He's called Loki," Fury said, "he's not from around here."

Steve looked up and gave Fury a nod, saying that he was willing to help. Fury explained things a bit more in depth to the Captain, before saying, "this is like nothing you've ever faced before. The world is a different place."

"With all due respect sir, I think after everything, nothing can surprise me these days," Steve said with the hint of a smile.

Fury deadpanned, "ten bucks says you're wrong."

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Auralie grinned at the supersoldier, "I'm sure you're a smart man Cap, but making a bet with Fury, well, that's a level of gutsy even Shield agents rarely see. Respect."

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Steve's mouth twitched up into a smile as Nick explained to the supersoldier that she would be escorting him to Shield base (well, Phil was escorting him, but Auralie was catching a ride). Fury walked away, but as he did, he called, "Captain, is there anything we should know about the tesseract?"

Steve called, "you should have left it in the ocean."

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Auralie found herself sitting on a bench waiting for Phil Coulson and the Shield helicopter that would take them to the rest of the Avengers. Steve Rogers was sitting next to her, looking very confused and awkward.

Auralie turned to him with a slight smile, "you can talk to me Steve. What's up?"

Steve mumbled, "I have a question, I've been trying to figure out for a while."

"What?" Auralie asked.

Steve turned tomato red, "how do you work a cell phone? The whole concept of texting is just confusing. How do you do it?"

Auralie grinned, "after this is over, I'll show you how one works. It must be hard adjusting to this time."

Steve nodded, "yeah, it really is. So who else has Fury called in?"

Auralie counted them off, "another Shield agent, Black Widow, AKA Natasha Romano. She's a bad ass. And another assassin, Clint Barton, but we have to get him back from mind control first. Bruce Banner, AKA the Hulk, who is a brilliant scientist coming to track the cube. And Tony Stark, AKA Iron Man, who you've probably heard of, he has a lot of publicity."

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"I have heard of him," the Captain replied.

Auralie sighed, "yeah. And then there's my sister, agent Maria Hill, the assistant director of Shield, who's helping us out on this mission."

Steve smiled, "ok. And what can you do?"

Auralie held out her hand and created a small globe of light, "I manipulate light."

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"That's really cool," Steve said, and then they heard the helicopter.

Soon the two were sitting in the back with Agent Phil Coulson, ultimate Captain America fanboy, and Auralie couldn't help but be amused.

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Steve was looking through more information on his team. He held up an image of the Hulk and asked, "this Dr. Banner, he was trying to recreate the serum?"

Phil replied, "yeah. A lot of people were. Banner thought gamma radiation could be the key. Didn't go so well for him. But when he's not big and green, the guy's like a Stephen Hawking."

Steve shot him a confused look.

"Like a really smart person," Phil explained, "I gotta say, it's an honor to meet you. Officially. I mean I watched you, while you were sleeping. I mean I watched you after they found you in the ice.....while you were defrosting."

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Steve looked taken aback, Phil looked embarrassed, and a small smirk crept on to the teenager's face as she took out a book and decided to read for the rest of the trip.

"You know," Phil said, "We have your uniform waiting for you. I had some design input."

Steve cocked his head, "uniform. Aren't the stars and stripes a little old fashioned?"

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Phil sighed, "with what we're up against. Maybe people could use a little old fashioned."

Auralie looked up, "he could be right Steve. Now, if you people are going to talk the rest of the trip, can I at least hear about the trip to Tony Stark's."

"Oh, well first I have to tell you about calling Natasha," Phil grinned, "but yeah, I'll totally tell you about Tony and how he doesn't like being handed things."

**A/N: Steve and Auralie are going to be such good friends, I mean, I'm adding her to Winter Soldier and all! Also, I've had this chapter in the works for days and I'm so glad I finally got it done.**

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