



## xiv. Brought Together

Auralie and Steve exited the helicopter and found Natasha Romano waiting for them. She had a small smile on her face, and Auralie smiled back at her friend as Phil went to check in with Fury. The younger girl had heard from Phil about how Natasha had taken on several armed and dangerous men while tied to a chair. Natasha was awesome.

Auralie gestured for Steve to follow her, which he did. They went over to Natasha, who Auralie could tell was tense. Clint was family to Nat, the closest thing to a brother she would ever have and Auralie knew that every moment Clint was under Loki's control was a moment that Natasha would worry.

"Captain Rogers," Auralie introduced them, "this is Natasha Romano."

Natasha gave him a small smirk, "It was a big thing when we found you in the ice. I thought Coulson was gonna swoon. Did he ask you to sign his Captain America trading cards yet?"

"Trading cards?" Steve asked, both amused and confused. Auralie laughed, knowing exactly what her friend was talking about.

Nat replied, "they're vintage. He's very proud. So, this must all seem really weird to you."

Steve turned to look at a group of agents training by running the length of the ship while a more senior agent commanded them. He smiled, "actually, it's kind of familiar."

Natasha lead the two blondes over to a curly haired brunette man who was standing there, looking at the sea. Auralie assumed that this was the famous scientist Dr. Banner and her guess was proven correct when Nat said, "Dr. Banner, this is Captain Rogers and Agent Shadow."

Dr. Banner turned and shook hands with Steve, then Auralie, while saying, "call me Bruce."

Steve said, "Dr. the word is you can find the cube."

"Is that the only word on me," Bruce asked.

Steve answered with, "the only word I care about."

Auralie added, "I think Fury called in Tony Stark, so you'll have another genius to pal around with. In the mean time, try and explain things slow. I'm more of a fantasy person than a scientifically person."

Bruce gave her a small smile, "thanks, I'll do my best."

Natasha then added, "boys, you might want to step inside. It's gonna get a little hard to breath." Auralie grinned, knowing and loving what was about to happen.

"This thing's a submarine," Steve said in awe.

Bruce laughed, "really, they want me in a pressurized metal container?"

The helicarrier pulled out of the water, it's engines propelling it into the sky. The wind whipped at Auralie's hair, and she laughed a bit. The adrenaline was kicking in, and overwhelming the insanity of the situation.

Bruce turned to his new teammates, "oh, this is much worse!"

The four of them went inside, and Steve promptly went over to Fury, and gave him ten dollars. Nat and Auralie exchanged secret smiles at that, as Steve went to watch out the window.

Fury walked over to Banner and shook his hand, "Dr. Banner, thank you for coming."

"Thank's for asking nicely," Bruce replied, "so how long will I be here?"

Fury answered, "once we find the cube, you're free to go."

"Alright," Bruce said, getting down to business, "how many spectrometers do you guys have?"

Fury shrugged, "how many are there?"

"Call every lab you know and tell them to put the spectrometers on the roof and calibrate them for gamma rays," Bruce instructed, "do you have a place for me to work?"

"We do," Fury answered, "Agent Romano, show Dr. Banner to his lab."

Natasha strode by them, motioning for the scientist to follow and calling, "you're gonna love it doc. You have all the toys."

Auralie chuckled, the adrenaline from the takeo still wearing out, when she turned and saw Maria. The teen ran to her sister's side, and Maria automatically embraced her.

"Did you find him yet," Auralie asked.

Maria shook her head, "nope. We thought we might have when we had a 20% match in England and almost sent troops in, but it turned out to be an actor. I'm glad we realized our mistake, can you imagine how surprised that guy would be?"

Auralie laughed, "that would have been a colossal screw up. Did Coulson tell you about his adventure at Stark Tower?"

"Yeah," Maria grinned, "Tony Stark seems like a handful. Pepper Potts must have the most patience ever to put up with him."

"That woman seems incredibly competent," Auralie agreed.

The sisters fell into a comfortable silence, but Auralie felt worry creeping into her head. She was worried about what would happen to Clint and to the world. She was unnerved by the tesseract and the scepter, both of which seemed to radiate an unearthly energy that she found disturbing, but no one else seemed to be panicking about.

Maria noticed the furrow of worry on her sister's face and asked, "what's wrong?"

Auralie sighed, "everything is spiraling out of control, and this team is supposed to be the solution. What happens if we fail?"

Maria placed a hand on the younger girl's shoulder, "Ali, you're 16 years old. I know you have powers and want to make a difference, but don't forget, you don't have to have all the answers. I don't. It's ok to figure things out as you go."

"It wouldn't be right to have these powers and not try and help others with them," Auralie replied.

"But you need to think about your own health. If this is ever too much for you, or if you want something else, don't be afraid to say something," Maria said.

Auralie let out a deep breath, "I can handle it. I'm just scared."

"It's ok to be scared," Maria smiled, "I get scared. A god with glowing magical rocks is nothing to sneeze at."

"I'm not scared of Loki, I'm scared of what will happen to the world if we fail to stop him. I just don't want to fail," Auralie explained.

Maria pulled her sister into a hug, "don't worry Ali, I'll be here for you even if you do fail. You know I won't ever abandon you."

Auralie relaxed into the older woman's arms, "thanks. I do know that."

Then Fury came over and barked at them, "Hill, I need you back on duty. Shadow, get ready. You're going with Captain Rogers and Agent Romano to Stuttgart Germany. We have conformation that Loki is there."

**A/N: I just want to take a moment for all of us to acknowledge the amazing creator of Marvel and all the joy he has brought us through the years. I wrote a lengthier thing in my Marvel One Shots book, I wanted to mention something here. Everyone take a second to appreciate all the happiness Stan Lee brought us, and appreciate him as a person. Please just take a single second to remember Stan Lee.**

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