



vii. The Farm

A/N: Ok, so right now this is #1 in Wanda Maximo , #1 in Natasha Romano , #1 in Maria Hill and that's really cool!

"The news is loving you guys," Maria reported through the communications device, "no one else is."

"The Stark Relief Foundation?" Tony asked.

"Already on sight," Maria replied, "there's been no official call for Banner's arrest, but it's only a matter of time."

"Right," Tony sighed, hanging up. How he had created such a huge mess, he wasn't sure. But now he had a broken team, an evil robot on the loose, and a whole lot of trouble. He looked around. Steve was sitting in the back, staring at that compass of his. Natasha was huddled up, looking afraid. Thor was sitting there, blank-eyed and frightened. Bruce was on the floor, wrapped in a blanket, attempting to drown out the noise. Clint was flying, and that left Tony and Auralie to deal with things like contacting Maria.

"Hey, you want me or Ali to take the wheel?" Tony asked Clint.

Clint shook his head, "Nah, we're only a few hours out."

Tony questioned, "from where?"

Auralie met Clint's eyes and she felt a spark of hope in the otherwise dark times. Clint said, "a safe house."

Auralie managed a tiny smile.

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The quinjet landed in a peaceful field outside of a large farmhouse. Four of the Avengers had never seen or heard of it before. Two knew it rather well. One called it home.

The heroes made their way to the door, which Clint pushed open. He stepped inside calling, "Honey, I'm home!"

A brunette woman, Clint's wife Laura, came out, a smile on her face as she saw her husband. Clint smiled apologetically, "Company, sorry I didn't call ahead."

"Hey," Laura smiled, waving as Clint gave her a quick kiss on the cheek.

Tony shook his head, "this is an agent of some kind." Auralie jabbed him lightly in the ribs.

"This is Laura," Clint introduced his wife.

Laura gave them an awkward glance, "I know all of your names." Auralie giggled. Laura was a great woman, but having all of these crazy costumed people in her house had to be a little much. Everyone looked at her awkwardly as they heard two sets of footsteps running down the stairs.

"Incoming," Clint called as two children ran in, a girl and a boy. They were small and Clint's whole face lit up when he saw them. Auralie and Nat exchanged grins. The girl lept into Clint's arms, and he kissed her on the cheek while reaching out to rule the boy's hair. This was Cooper and Lila, and the two of them were Clint's pride and joy.

"These are smaller agents," Tony declared. Auralie jabbed him in the ribs again.

"Did you bring Auntie Nat and Cousin Ali?" Lila asked.

"Why don't you come hug us and find out," Natasha called.

As the little girl came up to hug them, Auralie and Natasha both smiled. They had both been through a lot, but for a second, everything felt alright.

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A little later, Steve and Tony were chopping wood, while Auralie watched them, amused, and sometimes took pity on Tony, whose pile was significantly smaller.

"I don't trust a guy without a dark side," Tony was saying to Steve as he remarked that Steve did not seem affected by what he saw.

"Tony," Auralie warned, trying to convince him to stop talking. She could tell that Steve wasn't doing very well, but he was trying to be a strong leader and keep it together.

Steve shrugged, "maybe you just haven't seen it yet."

Laura approached the three superheroes, a timid look on her face as she asked, "excuse me, Mr. Stark, our tractor hasn't been working. Clint said you wouldn't mind taking a look at it."

"Yeah, sure," Tony said.

"I'll come with you," Auralie fell into step with him.

Tony looked back at Steve and called, "Don't take from my pile!" Steve and Auralie both looked at Tony's tiny pile of wood. Somehow, Auralie thought, Steve stealing wood wouldn't be an issue.

Auralie and Tony headed for the barn. Auralie sighed, "Tony, he'll talk when he's ready. Just give it time. We're all dealing with it in our own way."

"I know," Tony sighed, "I'm just not doing well Ali, I feel like it's all my fault. I'm gonna lead us to ruin. I can't take it."

Auralie slipped her hand into his and gave it a reassuring squeeze, "I know. And I'm here for you. I'm always here for any of you."

"How're you doing with the witch's memories?" Tony asked, "have you told anyone else about them, or just me?"

"I haven't had the chance, otherwise I'd talk to Steve and Nat," Auralie admitted, "and I'm still confused about a lot of her reasoning and such, but I think I get why she feels the way that she does. As we stop Ultron, I want to help her and her twin. I think they could be good people if they had good influences to show them the way."

"Alright then," he said. They fell into a comfortable silence as they went into the barn. Tony crouched down beside the tractor and muttered, "hello deer. What seems to be the trouble?"

"Try not to bring it to life," the sardonic voice of Nick Fury echoed as he stepped out of the shadows. Auralie just rolled her eyes. Her former boss could be so dramatic.

"Why are you here?" Tony asked, "oh, I get it, Maria Hill called you."

"Careful Tony," Auralie warned, "You're my friend, but Maria is my sister."

"Noted," Tony acknowledged.

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"Well that's all well and good boss, but I was hoping you'd have a bit more for us," Natasha said. All the Avengers (except Thor) were gathered around, looking at Fury.

"Look," Fury replied, "a little while ago, I would have. You kids had all the tech you could ever dream of. But now we're back on Earth, with nothing but our wit and our will to save the world."

"So what do you want us to do?" Bruce asked.

Fury looked at them, fire in his one good eye, "stand and fight. Outwit the platinum bastard."

"Steve doesn't like that kind of talk," Natasha said.

Steve glared at her from in the doorway, "you know what Romano," Natasha smirked and playfully raised an eyebrow.

As a quick conversation about how someone was blocking Ultron from getting nuclear codes, Tony made plans to go see who it was. Before he left, Fury asked, "can I borrow Agent Hill?"

"Sure," Tony replied, "apparently she's been working for you anyways."

"Let it go, Tony," Auralie sighed.

"What're you gonna do?" Steve asked.

"I dunno." Fury answered, "something dramatic, I hope."

The former director of Shield left, and they launched into a discussion about what Ultron could be using the vibranium for. They talked about how he was trying to evolve and build bodies.

"Wow, when you guys designed him to defend the world, you spectacularly failed," Natasha said to Tony and Bruce. The two scientists ignored her and kept brainstorming.

"He could use it to create some sort of almost human android," Tony cried.

"An android designed by a robot," Steve frowned, "I really miss the days when the weirdest thing science created was me."

"But how could he do that?" Auralie asked.

This spurred a whole new discussion, which only ended when Bruce came to a realization and asked, "has anyone been in contact with Helen Cho?"

A/N: Guess who forgot half the dialogue in this scene and improvised?

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