

Spider-Man 241

Chapter 241: Tony's Time Out

"How is this possible?" Steve walked up to the big screen and stared fixedly at Bucky, who remained asleep in his cell. "I saw him fall. He died..."

"Oh, he's going to be dead alright." Tony mutters as he stood beside Steve to get a better look at the man that supposedly killed his mother and father. "I'm going to blow his f*cking head off..."

"No, you won't!" Steve turns a warning glare toward Tony. "I don't know what's happening, but that's my best friend in there. Nobody is touching him."

Instantly, a dangerous air formed in the room as both Iron Man and Captain America were a pin drop away from pouncing on one another.

"Let's all just calm down." Peter says as he snaps his fingers.

Before either of them knew what was happening, both men were pushed off of their feet and into chairs, which strapped them down tightly.

"!?" Both of them jolted in shock as they found themselves restrained.

Of course, each of them is a super soldier, so they both pulled against the chair with all of their might, yet they didn't budge a single inch.

Fury watched on with an impressed look, vowing to himself to look into this magic business, as it seemed like a useful skill to have in his arsenal.

Even if he couldn't perform magic himself, maybe a few agents who could do so would come in handy in the future...

"Now that we're all seated and relaxed, I can finish explaining what I've found out about the Winter Soldier or rather, Bucky Barnes." Peter says as everyone turns their attention back to him.

"You know using magic is unfair..." Tony says as he gives up on breaking free and glares at Peter.

"Thank you for restraining him, but I don't see why I should be bound as well." Steve asks as he never wanted to fight in the first place.

"Is this necessary?" Peggy asks as she didn't like seeing Steve restrained.

He only wanted to protect his best friend.

"Because, If I only tie up Tony, he'll complain about it nonstop for the next week." Peter explained with a roll of his eyes. "I'd rather just restrain you both and avoid Tony's whining as much as possible."

"Hey!" Tony shouts indignantly.

"I'm enjoying this..." Fury comments from the side.

"Shut up, baldy." Tony replied like a child.

"Okay, can I continue explaining what I know, or should I just leave you guys here for a while and come back later?" Peter asks as he wanted to get this over with so he could sleep a bit more.

After all, he only slept for a few hours before Grace's protection spell went off, waking him to her peril.

"I like that idea. Let's leave Stark here for the rest of the night. It'll help clear his mind." Fury agrees with a smirk.

"Don't you dare!" Tony yells.

"Please continue." Steve looks at Peter. "What happened to Bucky?"

"Well, to be clear, I didn't know that the Winter Soldier was Bucky until I saw him today." Peter lies with a shrug. "I only knew that the Winter Soldier was from your time, Steve."

"He had a mask on when you saw him earlier." Fury says doubtfully.

"Yes, but X-ray vision spells are rather easy." Peter explained, though he wasn't lying.

Spells to see through objects are child's play for a Sorcerer of Peter's skill. He could cast them in his sleep if he had to.

"You have to teach me that one." Tony says with a perverted smirk on his face.

"So, what do you know?" Steve ignores Tony's outburst and asks.

"The Winter Soldier is a Hydra-made super soldier, who was brainwashed into following every order no matter the difficulty. He is periodically frozen, like you were, so that his service to Hydra can be prolonged for as long as possible. They only let him out when it's time for a mission." Peter explains.

"How do you know this?" Peggy asks, as information like this is heavily guarded.

"I have my ways." Peter says vaguely.

"What's his mission?" Steve asks.

"To kill me." Fury admits, drawing everyone's attention.

"Pierce did say he would take care of you, didn't he?" Tony comments as he recalled the recording that Peter showed them.

Of course, the recording was fake but Peter knew Hydra would target Fury sooner or later, so it seems like his prediction was correct.

"This doesn't change anything..." Tony says as he turns to glare at the screen. "He killed my mother. I loved my father, but he was a d*ck. My mother on the other hand is a very different story. I will kill him."

...

The room went silent as everyone looked at Tony with a mix of both pity and sympathy.

"Okay, then you won't be leaving that chair for a while." Peter says as he waves his hand and released Steve.

"Hey! You can't just keep me as a prisoner in my own building!" Tony yelled in anger as Fury chuckled from the side.

"Yes, I can. Although Bucky killed your parents, he wasn't the one responsible." Peter states as he turns to Steve. "As for you, feel free to visit the prisoner, though he probably won't remember you."

"Thank you..." Steve says as he rushes out of the door before anyone could speak further.

"I'll go with him." Peggy says as she walks off.

"Peggy." Peter calls, stopping her in her tracks. "Just remind Steve that Bucky is to remain in his cell. We will try to find a way to fix the brainwashing, but he needs to be here for that to happen."

"Yes, sir." Peggy nods as she turns to rush after her boyfriend.

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As Peter and Fury were about to leave the room, Tony spoke up with a reluctant look on his face.

"Fine, I won't kill him. Just let me go already." Tony pleads unconvincingly.

"No, you're too emotional right now." Peter says as he knew Tony was lying. "Once you calm down and fully understand the situation, I'll let you go."

If not for Peter's actions, Tony would most likely follow in his movie counterpart's footsteps and go after Bucky, which would drag Steve and Peggy into the situation as well.

"You can't just drop the news that my parents were killed, show me the killer, and then say I can't do anything about it!" Tony yells furiously.

"As I said, you're too emotional right now, Tony." Peter says as he waves his hand. "I'll come to talk to you in a bit."

Instantly, Tony and the chair that he was strapped to were swallowed up by a golden portal.

"F*ck you!" Tony screamed as the portal closed.

"First I find out your real identity and now Tony is in a magical time out." Fury smirks at Peter and lets out a small laugh. "Could my day get any better?"

tap tap tap

Steve stood outside of Bucky's cell, tapping the glass with his knuckles.

"You may want to visit another time." Blonsky said as he leans against the wall of his cell. "I've been calling to him for a while now, but he just won't wake up."

"Bucky!" Steve yelled as he kept tapping the glass, ignoring the other prisoner's words.

Sadly, Bucky didn't budge a single inch.

"I told you. It's like he's in a coma or-" Blonsky said though he was cut off by the press of a button.

"That's better." Peggy commented as she used the control panel to mute Blonsky and fog up the glass of his cell. "Now we can have our privacy."

"Thanks." Steve says as he keeps his eyes locked on his best friend. "It's true. He's actually alive..."

"He's been through a lot." Peggy says as she walks over. "I don't remember the metal arm."

"He had two arms when I last saw him." Steve replies sadly.

"Don't sound so gloomy, soldier." Peggy says as she grasps Steve's arm and holds it close. "This is a cause for celebration. Bucky is alive and well. We just need to break his brainwashing and he'll be back to normal."

"How do we even go about-" Steve spoke though he stopped as he saw some movement in the cell.

"Is he awake?" Peggy asks as Bucky's eyes snap open and he sits up like the Undertaker. "Okay, that was creepy."

"?" Bucky looked around in confusion as his eyes landed on Steve and Peggy. "Where am I?"

"A cell in the Avengers Tower." Steve answers as he looks his old friend straight in the eyes. "Do you remember who I am?"

"..." Bucky didn't reply as he stared at Steve for a moment.

After the small staring context concluded, Bucky stood up, walked to the glass, and started pounding on it with his metal arm.

bang bang bang...

Each hit didn't even rattle the cell, let alone damage the glass, which stayed in pristine condition throughout every strike.

"Bucky, stop! It's pointless." Steve calls out as he moved to stand in front of his friend, hoping to somehow make him remember.

"Who's Bucky?"

Chapter 242: Stark Deaths

After almost an hour of talking to Bucky, who didn't seem to recognize his own name, let alone his best friend who was almost like a brother to him, Peggy dragged Steve away from the cell.

"I'm not done..." Steve complained as he was pulled into the elevator.

"He won't remember this way." Peggy takes hold of Steve's head and looks him in the eyes. "We need to fix whatever Hydra did to him first."

"How are we supposed to do that?" Steve asks as he truly had no idea what to do.

"I don't know, but Spider-Man probably does."

After sending Tony somewhere nice to spend the night, so that he could hopefully clear his mind, Peter returned home to get some sleep.

But sadly, the sleep would never come.

"You told some crazy gunman to shoot my mother?!" MJ yelled through the phone.

'I shouldn't have answered the phone...' Peter thought as he lay in bed while getting an earful from his beautiful yet angry girlfriend.

MJ isn't someone who's easily angered, though when she does get angry, which is extremely rare, it takes a while for her to cool down.

By the time Peter got off the phone, the sun had risen and it was almost time to start the Hydra cleaning operation.

"I'll sleep when I'm dead..." Peter thought as he hopped out of bed and got ready for the day ahead.

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Arriving at the Tower in his suit, Peter first opened a portal that deposited a sleeping Tony Stark into his office.

"Huh?!" Tony jolted awake as the chair he was strapped to hit the ground with a loud thud. "What the..."

"Good morning, sunshine." Peter says with a smirk under his mask.

"F*ck you..." Tony curses as he groggily stares at Peter.

"Should I send you back to time out?" Peter asks pointedly.

"..." Tony keeps his mouth shut though his glare intensifies.

"Have you calmed down enough to talk?" Peter asks as he takes a seat in front of him. "Because we're taking down Hydra today and I thought you'd want a shot at the real people responsible for your parent's deaths."

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Silence filled the room as Tony seemed to contemplate within himself.

"Fine, he wasn't in control." Tony grudgingly admits. "But I don't want to see him anywhere near me or Pepper."

"Hmm, I actually believe you this time." Peter says as he snaps his fingers.

Instantly, the chair and the restraints disappear and Tony is released.

"So, who gave him the order?" Tony asks as he stretches his stiff limbs.

"I don't know yet, but we'll find out." Peter says reassuringly.

"When we do, leave them to me." Tony says dangerously as he heads for the door, but stops to turn back before leaving. "One more thing."

"Yeah?" Peter nods.

"I want the video that Fury talked about." Tony demands.

Of course, he means the surveillance footage of his parents' deaths.

"Are you sure?" Peter asks reluctantly. "It's hard to watch..."

"Yes." Tony nods with a determined look in his eyes.

"Okay, give me a second." Peter says as he starts typing away on his PC.

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Tapping into the Shield database with the many backdoors that he's crafted throughout the years, Peter quickly found the surveillance footage in question.

"Come here." Peter says as he puts the video in full screen and hits play.

Together, Peter and Tony watch as a car crashes into a telephone pole and a man that looked a lot like Howard Stark tumbled out of the drivers seat.

He looked badly hurt as he crawled in the dirt, as if he were deliriously running from something chasing him.

Meanwhile, through the passenger side window of the car, the figure of a woman could be seen breathing heavily and holding her head in pain.

Seconds later, a man on a motorcycle appeared wearing the same mask that Bucky wore last night.

At first, it looked like he might be there to help, but that idea was completely thrown away when he grabbed Tony's dad by the hair and lifted him up.

After staring him straight in the eyes for a few seconds, Bucky winds back his free arm and starts bashing Howard's head in with a single fist.

Thanks to his super strength, it only took a few hits for Howard's head skull cave in.

Although Howard wasn't dead yet, Bucky knew he would die soon enough, so he dragged him by his hair and placed him in the driver seat, where limply he fell onto the steering wheel and lay unmoving.

Once the first target was taken care of, like an uncaring robot, The Winter Soldier walked around to the passenger side of the car and reached his hand inside of the window.

The view from the security camera wasn't the greatest, but they could see enough to know what was happening.

Bucky wrapped his metal hand around Tony's mother's neck and squeezed, slowly choking her to death without an ounce of remorse.

Tears fell from Tony's eyes as he watched his mother flail around, grasping at Bucky's natal arm to set her free.

Sadly, she would died scared and confused.

After both Starks were dead, Bucky searched the car, grabbed something from the backseat, and left as if nothing happened.

"I still can't kill him?" Tony asks as his hands grip into tight fists.

"Think of him as a brainless robot, Tony." Peter tried to reason with his very distraught friend.
"Someone programmed him to do that, and when we find them, I'll gladly help you torture them to death."

"Call me when we start." Tony nods as he heads for the door. "I'll be in my workshop."

Almost an hour after Tony was released, Peter called in every member of the Avengers.

It was finally time to take down Hydra.

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Of course, whenever you call a meeting with so many people, it always takes time for all of them to arrive.

A lot of them show up on time, but theirs always a few stragglers in every organization.

Though surprisingly, Tony showed up only a minute after the message was sent, showing how serious he was about Hydra and avenging his parents.

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Soon enough, one of the main meeting halls was filled with people, who were all wondering what the hell was going on.

"Alright, listen up!" Peter yelled as he gave a quick explanation of what the mission was. "Once the buildings are locked down, all of you will split up into teams and I will portal you inside each base one by one. Remember to only kill if necessary. I don't want any Innocent Shield Agents getting killed by mistake. Any questions?"

"How do we tell Shield and Hydra Agents apart?" Nightcrawler asks.

"You don't." Peter shakes his head. "Capture them all. Anyone else?"

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"Alright, everyone suit up and get your weapons. We'll get everything started while your gone." Peter says as everyone rushes to get ready, leaving only the Avengers Council members behind.

"I'm ready when you are." Fury says as he pulls out his phone.

"Hang on, let me just see where they are" Peter says as he closes his eyes, feeling the tracking spells he placed a couple of days ago. "Okay, I got it."

With a wave of his hand, six golden portals opened on the ceiling and some very familiar people fell from each of them.

[Insert pictures of all six members of the World Security Council here.]

"Ahh!" They all exclaimed as the ground opened up under their feet.

As the six of them hit the hard floor, the six portals snapped shut as swiftly as possible.

"Call it in." Peter says as Fury hits a button on his phone and holds it to his ear.

"What the hell is going-" A woman in a blue suit asks as she picks herself up off the ground, though she soon found that her voice was taken away from her.

Peter merely waved in their direction and all six of them suddenly found it impossible to utter a single word.

"Shhh..." Peter shushed them as he pointed to Fury.

"This is Director Fury. Authorization Alpha-17025621-Beta4." Fury says as he puts the phone on speaker.

"Authorization confirmed." A woman on the other end replied. "How can I help you, Director?"

"Initiate Alert Level Five and call in all agents." Fury orders as he turns to look at their six new guests. "The World Security Council is missing and believed to be captured."

As he said this, each member of the World Security Council looked between one another in both confusion and fright.

"Y-Yes, sir..." The woman on the other end answered in shock. "Initiating Alert Level Five. Please give me the authorization code."

"Tartarus-116832902-A." Fury answers with ease.

"A-Authorization confirmed..." She stutters as she didn't expect this to actually happen.

"Good, I'll relay more orders soon, but for now I want every agent called into work. We need all the help we can get." Fury says as he hangs up the phone.

"How long should I wait?" Peter asks as he ignores the captives in the room.

"Give it about half an hour and lock everything down. We'll start cleaning house after that."

Chapter 243: Commence Operation

"What the hell do you think you're doing!" Alexander Pierce exclaimed in both anger and confusion.

He, like his fellow members of the World Security Council, was simply going about his day when the ground opened up and dumped him here.

After listening to Fury call in their disappearance as if he wasn't a part of it, they all knew that the Avengers were up to something.

"Cleaning house." Fury answers as he glared at his former employers.

"Cleaning house of what?" Pamela Hawley, the only female member of the World Security Council asked.

"Of Hydra." Peter revealed as he watched a few of their guests reach for something in their pockets. "Are you looking for these?"

As Peter spoke, everything from wallets, Keys, and phones appeared in front of him, floating for everyone to see.

Seeing this, each of the captives found their belongings gone, leaving only the clothes on their back and the shoes on their feet.

"You can't just hold us captive for no reason..." Alexander Pierce spoke up for the group. "Besides, Hydra has long been dead. I don't know what you're planning, but it won't end well for you."

"This motherf*cker is good!" Fury says with a laugh.

"Isn't he?" Peter agreed with a chuckle of his own.

"What's so funny?" Chao Yen, the only Asian member of the World Security Council asks in confusion.

"Because out of all of you that could have said that it had to be the one we have actual evidence on." Tony says as he turns to glare at Pierce. "Did you have my parents killed?"

"What are you talking about, Stark?" Pierce continues to play it off pretty well, though that would soon change.

"Jarvis, play the recording." Tony calls out and the recording of the conversation between Pierce and Zola started to play.

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Hearing how casually and gleefully they talked about Project Insights death toll and how it would rise to over 20 million people, most members of the World Security Council were utterly shocked, though the real surprise came at the end.

"Hail Hydra..." "Hail Hydra..." The two said their parting words and the recording came to an end.

Instantly, all eyes were on Pierce, who was barely keeping it together at this point.

"Well... that's obviously fake." He looks around the room for some support, but no one offered any help. "I never had that conversation!"

"We've had the recording put through multiple checks. It's legit." Fury vouches for its legitimacy.

'Thank god for the Reality Stone...' Peter thought as Tony took a step forward and stood face to face with Pierce.

"I'll ask again. Did you order the deaths of my parents?" Tony was deadly serious as he spoke.

"No." Pierce answered back with a glare of his own.

"..." Tony remained in his face, staring like an angry predator.

"Tony, we can question them all later and find out, but now isn't the time." Peter spoke up, as he could see that Tony was close to getting violent.

"Fine, stick them in a cell." Tony says as he reluctantly turns away from his most likely suspect.

"Wait!" Jakuna Singh, an Indian member of the World Security Council yelled. "Why are we all being detained? If Alexander is a Hydra operative, then arrest him and send us on our way. I don't have time to be imprisoned and I've done nothing wrong."

"Maybe." Peter says with a shrug. "Maybe not. We'll find out the truth in time."

As he finished speaking, Peter waved his hand and six portals swallowed up the captives, sending each of them to their own personal cell.

Truthfully, Peter couldn't recall whether there were more than two Hydra agents in the World Security Council.

Alexander Pierce and Gideon Malick are definitely Hydra, but he wasn't sure about the rest...

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Shortly after the Captives were sent away, the geared-up Avengers started trickling in, looking like they're ready for war.

"Lock it all down." Fury says to Peter, as he was paying attention to the time.

"Alright, give me a minute." Peter says as he gets to work.

"?" Every Avenger who just arrived watched curiously as two very complicated spell circles drew themselves in the air in front of Peter.

'Hopefully, this works...' Peter thought as he grasped the center of both spells and twisted them clockwise.

Seconds later, a locking sound was heard as each spell shot up out of the building and disappeared into the sky.

"What was that?!" Sabertooth exclaimed in awe.

"Magic."

As Peter sent the two spell circles flying, all around the world golden strands of light came crashing down onto all sorts of buildings and bunkers.

As the light hit each location, a golden shield-like barrier would cover the outer walls of the buildings, drawing curious looks from anyone passing by.

Inside these structures, it didn't take long for people to realize that their windows were glowing like giant neon lights.

Especially after they saw how the barrier blocked all communications from leaving the building, stranding the inside without a way to call for help.

After some panic, many tried to escape and soon found that they were completely sealed inside the building.

Even underground tunnels and rooftop helicopters were inaccessible, as the golden light surrounded everything.

In some places, all sorts of firepower was employed to hopefully break their way out, from simple bullets to high-grade explosives, yet none could shake the unbreakable barrier.

"Did it work?" Fury asks but his phone started ringing like crazy, as hundreds of calls came in at the same exact time. "I'll take that as a yes..."

Of course, he simply turned his phone on do not disturb, as he would all be busy soon enough.

"Yeah, each barrier is up, though I wasn't able to hide them from the public." Peter explains, as deploying so many barriers at the same exact time all across the world was already hard enough.

"No problem, I'm sure that we can spin a story for the media later on." Magneto says as he floats off of the ground, ready to head out. "How should we split everyone up?"

Magneto may not show it, but he and every other meta-human are very eager to head out.

Hydra, and Shield by extension, has kidnapped and experimented on meta-humans for a long time, so this cleanup is something that they've always wanted to do.

Even Charles looked excited to head out, and he despises conflict.

"Myself, Erik, Charles, and Tony will work alone." Peter says as they were all strong enough to do so. "Fury, Steve, Peggy, Storm, and Wolverine will be team leaders. Pick whoever you feel most comfortable working with."

Peter would have allowed Silk to have her own team as well, but MJ was sticking close to her mother after the Bucky incident, so she wouldn't be attending this mission.

Listening to Peter's orders, everyone formed teams fairly quickly.

"Alright, remember to detain everyone. We'll worry about where to imprison them afterward." Peter says as he opens nine portals, leading to the lobbies of separate Shield bases.

Since Peter would have to act as the portal b*tch, due to the fact that he was the one that could, he had to work quickly so he can be ready to shuttle the teams to their next locations.

In order to work quickly, Peter tried the diplomatic approach first.

Stepping out of a portal and into the main lobby of what appeared to be a government building, Peter was welcomed by some armed men and women, who seemed to be testing the barrier before his arrival.

"Spider-Man?" A few of them muttered as they lowered their weapons.

"In the flesh." Peter says as the portal snaps shut behind him.

"Spider-Man, sir." A respectful woman with a pistol in hand walks up to Peter. "We seem to be trapped inside the building. Are you here to help?"

"No, I'm the one that put up the barrier." Peter admits as a few agents point their guns in his direction once again.

"Umm... why?" She asked in confusion.

"Because everyone in this building is being detained by order of your Director and the Avengers." Peter says, shocking everyone into a stupor. "I'm going to need each of you to place your weapons on the ground and stand aside."

"Why, have we done something wrong?" She asks as a few agents start getting antsy.

"Not you particularly." Peter says with a shake of his head. "Now put the guns down and surrender. The faster you give up, the faster you can be proven innocent... or guilty."

"Guilty of what?" A man in the back asks as a few agents have already dropped their weapons.

"Guilty of treason as a Hydra agent." Peter says and instantly half of the people in the room took aim and fired in his direction, including the respectful woman who was asking him questions.

Chapter 244: Grrrr

As the bullets came his way, Peter smirked under his mask and stood unmoving.

With a simple thought, every solid metal bullet was instantly changed into a foam nerf dart, which fell short of its target and hit the floor at Peter's feet.

"?" Each Hydra Agent that just fired their weapons at Peter were utterly confused.

"That wasn't very nice, but thanks for outing yourselves. It makes my job a bit easier." Peter says as they try to shoot again...

Pulling their triggers, each Hydra operative watched with shock filled eyes as nothing but a weak stream of water shot from the barrel of their guns.

"Alright, enough fun and games. You're making a mess." Peter says as he gestures to the wet floor. "Now line up against the wall like good little children."

Everyone was completely dumbfounded by what just happened that a good portion of people actually followed his instruction and stood by the wall.

Suddenly, almost all of the ousted Hydra agents bit down on something in their mouths.

"Nope." Peter uttered as each of their cheeks expanded until confetti came flying out of their mouths. "Suicide is never an option."

All of them broke a fake tooth, which held enough cyanide to kill them in seconds, as all Hydra agents are brainwashed into doing when captured.

Sadly, Peter noticed and immediately used the Aether to turn the toxin into confetti, which they would spit out, saving their lives.

"Now against the wall, please. I don't have all day." Peter says as he motions toward the others.

"Y-Yes, sir..." Someone stuttered as everyone followed Peter's orders this time.

"Good." Peter says as he webbed each of them against the wall. "I'll be back."

"Umm, sir?!" The woman from earlier calls out.

"What?" Peter asks as he turns back.

"I'm in charge of this base." She says nervously. "If you want everyone to listen to you, I can help..."

"Sure." Peter shrugs as the web holding her against the wall disappeared, sending the nervous Hydra agent/base commander tumbling to the floor. "Keep up."

Scrambling to get to her feet, the woman rushed to catch up to Peter, who was already at the other end of the hallway.

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With the base commanders help, Peter was able to capture everyone in around 20 minutes, saving him a lot of time.

If anyone was able to enter the building, they would find it littered with webbed-up Shield and Hydra personnel plastered on the walls.

As Peter finished up, he heard a voice in his ear.

"This is Charles. I've finished with my first location, though I may need assistance." Professor Xavier called.

"I'm on the way."

-Flashback-

-Charles POV-

Of course, Peter wasn't the only one who tried the diplomatic approach, though he had much more success than Charles.

"He's on the first floor! Go go go!" Armed agents were notified as they rushed to Charles' location with assault rifles in hand.

Upon his arrival at this dimly lit underground bunker, Charles tried to explain just like Peter did, but they wouldn't even give him a chance to talk before getting violent.

Of course, as the Professor didn't like violence, he simply put them to sleep with thought and continued forward, hoping that the next group would listen.

Sadly, his actions were caught by the surveillance cameras, which started the situation he currently found himself in.

"He's around the corner." Agents matched one Charles' location, ready to pump the unknown intruder full of lead.

Luckily, Charles could feel the presence of his enemies with ease as he casually walked through the underground hallways.

The second these armed Shield/Hydra agents turned the corner, ready to fire in the Professor's direction, each of them collapsed into a pile, leaving just enough room for Charles to pass by.

After repeating this over and over, Charles found himself in front of a locked metal door, which needed both a badge and facial scan to get through.

"Sigh..." Charles let out an annoyed breath as he lifted a nearby unconscious agent with his mind and slapped his face against the scanner.

[Access Denied]

The screen turned red as a robotic voice spoke negatively.

Tossing the man aside with a single thought, Charles levitated another limp body and planted their face against the scanner.

[Access Denied]

...

After four failures in a row, Charles found the right man and was able to open the door, though he didn't like what he found on the other side.

Once all of the guards behind the door were sent to sleep, Charles walked in and found a long hallway filled with cells on either side.

In these cells were men, women, and children, though mainly children.

It didn't take Charles long to realize what these people were.

Meta-Humans.

Seeing the horrible living conditions as well as the haggard and beaten states of some of them, Charles felt both pity and disgust.

Pity for the poor people who were subject to this and disgust toward those who held them here against their will.

'No matter how much good the Avengers do, it feels like there will always be places like this...'
Charles thought dishearteningly.

Knowing that this was the last room in the bunker, Charles tapped a device in his ear and spoke.

"This is Charles. I've finished with my first location, though I may need assistance." Professor Xavier spoke.

"I'm on the way." Peter's voice replied.

-Flashback End-

Seconds after his reply, a portal opened up next to the Professor, and out came Spider-Man.

As Peter came walking in, everyone cowered at the back of their cells, while only one child held the bars of her cage and looked forward with eyes resembling a predator.

She looked to be around 8 or 9 years old with black hair and dark brown eyes. Although she could be seen as a cute kid, the deadly glare and killer aura that radiated off of her was covering that up very well.

[Insert picture of Laura Kinney/X-23 here]

'She looks familiar...' Peter thought as he realized why Charles needed help. "Are they all Meta-humans?"

"I think so..." Charles answers with a sad sigh.

"Alright, I'll get them out of here." Peter said as he opened another portal. "You can go to the next location."

"Okay..." Charles sends one more sympathetic look toward his captured people before walking into the portal, which snapped shut soon after.

"Listen up!" Peter exclaims, getting everyone's attention.

"Grrrrr..." The little predator at the bars started growling softly in his direction.

"Relax, I'm here to help." Peter says as he walks over and yanks the door to her cell off with ease. "I'll take you-"

Just as Peter was trying to explain that he would take them to the Professor's school, where they could be treated for any injuries, the rabid little girl launched out of her cell and jumped in his direction.

Watching her in amusement, Peter saw two bony claws extend from each fist before they came swiping in his direction.

'Is she Wolverine's daughter?' Peter wondered as he caught her outstretched wrist, stopping her attack with ease. "Being aggressive and defensive is good, as it can keep you alive, but I'm not here to hurt you. Calm down."

The little girl in his grasp seemed to relax for a moment, though it didn't last long.

Hoping to throw off her enemy, the young girl pretended to listen to Peter before using her free hand to stab her long claws into his stomach.

As the pointed tips of her claws made contact with Peter, the young girl smirked thinking she had won.

Sadly, unlike Wolverines, her claws were made of just bone. Sharp and pointy bone but bone nonetheless.

"Feel better?" Peter asks as he releases her wrists, allowing the girl to fall to her feet.

Thanks to the enchantments on his clothes, the girl's claws couldn't even cut a single thread from his suit, let alone penetrate past it and into his stomach.

"Agggghh!" Angered by her failure, the animalistic girl starts slashing her claws at Peter's stomach and legs.

...

After allowing her to tire herself out, as her body wasn't in the best condition, to begin with, Peter patted the angry child's head as she panted to catch her breath.

"It's okay. I'm not going to hurt you." Peter reassured her as she looked up at him for a moment, studying his nonexistent facial features to see if he was lying.

As if confirming his words, the girl gave him a small nod before falling unconscious and crashing to the floor.

Of course, Peter caught her before she could get hurt and held her like a princess.

"Kids shouldn't have to be like this..." Peter muttered as he turned to see all of the other meta-human children, cowering in their cages.

Chapter 245: Laura Kinney

-Flashback-

-X-23's POV-

Ever since X-23 was born, she lived underground, kept like a caged animal as all sorts of tests and experiments were performed on her.

Using the DNA of Wolverine, Dr. Martin Sutter headed the project to implant X-23's mother with a meta-human child, though she never met her mother.

X-23's earliest memory is the day that one of the female scientists unlocked her cell and rushed her out of the facility under the cover of darkness.

She could still remember how infinitely excited she was to see the outside world for the first time. The sky, trees, dirt, grass, and the smell of fresh air were an absolute shock to someone who lived their entire life trapped in a windowless bunker.

Sadly, their little trip outside of the facility didn't last long, as seconds after their departure, alarms sounded and men with guns came chasing after them.

As they drove down the dirt path away from the bunker, two blacked-out Escalades blocked the path and before X-23 knew what was happening, an expertly shot bullet tore through the windshield and hit the scientist in the chest.

Instantly, the woman lost control of the car and crashed into some nearby bushes.

After the crash, X-23 turned to see the scientist coughing blood and looking in her direction with feelings of both regret and love.

"Your name... is Laura Kinney..." The woman coughed out as she smiled weakly. "I'm so sorry-"

Before she could finish talking, a man in uniform walked up to the driver's side window, pulled out his pistol, and put a single bullet in her head.

As X-23 watched this happen, she noticed a badge on the woman's white lab coat with a name labeled under her smiling picture.

[Sarah Kinney]

"Mom?" X-23 muttered in disbelief as she looked up to see the life drain from her bloody mother's face.

...

After that day, the security around X-23 was upgraded, though that wasn't all.

The experiments that she was forced to undergo turned much crueler as well.

It was as if her mother's presence kept the more sadistic scientists at bay, and without her there, they started to run wild.

They did everything from cutting her skin and beating her black and blue, to making her drink acid and infecting her with horrible diseases, all in hopes of finding the secret of her immense regeneration ability.

Of course, as she was a subject of the Weapon X program, they also began her training as a killer, hoping to turn her into a beast that would slaughter anyone at the slightest instruction.

...

Four years passed since the death of her mother, and X-23's life has been nothing but loneliness and pain.

One day, while Laura, as she liked to call herself in private, was sitting alone in her dark cell, alarms started to sound as men and woman rushed back and forth in the hallway.

Seconds after the alarm went off, Laura was dragged from her cell in a hurry and thrown into a car.

Although she had no idea what was happening, the gunfire and explosions that filled the air told her something big was going down.

Though thanks to her increased security and a secret backdoor exit, Laura was evacuated before any intruders could get to her.

This would be the second time that she saw the outside world...

Using this as an opportunity, Laura put all of the skills her captors taught her to use and killed every guard that left with her, including Dr. Sutter, who took the same evacuation path.

Luckily, they left so quickly that no one remembered to restrain her in any way whatsoever.

It was the first time that Laura wet her claws with blood, killing for the very first time.

She was 8 years old at the time, though she didn't cry or even think on it much.

With her newfound freedom, Laura rushed into the forest and ran until her legs couldn't run anymore.

Laura had no idea where to go, but she knew that she needed to get as far away as possible if she wanted to keep her newfound freedom

...

Two weeks passed as Laura lived in the forest like an animal, using her claws to hunt for food, which she would eat raw, and drink from a clean stream that she found on her second day in the wilderness.

As the days passed, Laura soon found that she enjoyed the life of an animal far more than life in a cage, living at the whims of others.

She could eat and drink whenever she wanted. Go wherever she pleased. Sleep whenever the need arises, and even use the bathroom without anyone watching.

Life was good...

Though it didn't last very long.

Sadly, freedom isn't easily obtained but it is easily taken away.

Near the end of her third week in the wild, a man with a metal arm and face mask appeared.

At first, she could smell and hear his arrival, though since it was only one person, Laura decided to simply kill him.

After all, he entered her territory.

Of course, when this plan was put into action, Laura instantly found out that her visitor wasn't some normal human.

No, this was the Winter Soldier.

After a short fight, Laura was beaten unconscious and her coveted freedom was stripped from her yet again.

When she woke up on the following day, what greeted her was nothing but metal bars and men in lab coats.

Instantly, she broke down into tears.

'Why can't they just leave me alone...' Laura thought sadly.

...

Just like before, the experiments started up again, though it was like these people didn't know much about her, so they repeated almost every experiment she ever went through at the old bunker.

Of course, Laura didn't make it easy for them.

Acting like a wild tiger, she would pounce and kill anyone that tried to approach her cage.

In the months she stayed at this new prison, Laura killed a total of 7 people.

3 guards and 4 scientists.

It got so bad that they had to put up a sign to make sure everyone knew not to approach her cell, and use tranquilizer darts every time she was needed in the lab.

Though one day, a bald man with a shiny head arrived, knocking every one of her captors down with a single glance.

Though that wasn't all.

Seconds later, a big golden portal opened up and a masked man in a spidery costume stepped out.

They talked for a moment before another portal opened out of nowhere.

"Alright, I'll get them out of here." The spidery man said. "You can go to the next location..."

As the bald man left through the portal, the masked spider guy said some words before ripping open her cell door like it was made of paper.

Feeling threatened, Laura pounced out of her open cage and slashed her bony claws at him, as she did whenever anyone came near her.

As if he were dealing with a toddler, the masked guy countered her attack with ease and stood there as she screamed and clawed at him, not doing a single speck of damage in the process.

"It's okay, I'm not going to hurt you." He said reassuringly as she came to realize how futile her struggle was and gave up.

'Compared to this guy, the metal arm idiot was a pushover...' Laura thought as her built-up adrenaline disappeared and she toppled over.

The last thing that Laura could remember was the smell of the invincible man, who took her into his arms before she could hit the floor.

-Flashback End-

-Peter's POV-

After dropping off all of the meta-humans at Xaviers School for gifted children, Peter returned to the mission at hand.

'I wonder how Hydra got their hands on X-23?' Peter thought.

Peter knew that Wolverine's daughter was created in an attempt to redo the Weapon X program, which Wolverine escaped from.

'Was Hydra involved with that program as well?' Peter questioned as he worked his way through a hostile Shield base. 'Or did my involvement with Meta-humans somehow change her life's trajectory?'

Saving these questions for later, Peter concentrated on the problem in front of him.

Shield.

One by one, Peter captured base after base, while simultaneously shuttling Avengers back and forth over and over.

Some bases surrendered easily after either a brief conversation or a show of force, and others went into full battle mode.

Peter found it amusing how the people you wouldn't expect always wound up being Hydra agents.

In one building, Peter found a sweet old librarian, who kept track of some physical records for that base.

At first, she seemed about as kind and loving as a grandmother could get, though the second she realized what Peter was there for, she pulled out an assault rifle from behind her desk and started spraying.

'Hydra really is everywhere...'

Of course, not all bases were as simple as capturing everyone inside.

Some of them needed a bit of extra care, like the base he found X-23 in.

Out of the 93 bases, around 20 of them held some sort of captives, which weren't approved by Fury.

Meta-human or otherwise, though they were mostly meta-humans, who seemed to be used for experimentation and possible indoctrination into Hydra.

Speaking of meta-human indoctrination...

"Hail Hydra!" A man whose body was covered in flames screamed fanatically as he jutted his hand forward, shooting beams of fire in Peter's direction.

Chapter 246: Hydra Metas

"Hail Hydra!" A man whose body was covered in flames screamed fanatically as he jutted both of his hands forward, shooting beams of fire in Peter's direction.

'This is a first...' Peter casually thought as he dodged the horizontal pillars of fire, which destroyed the walls behind him, drilling fiery holes, which spread up the walls and filled the area with black smoke.

Peter has never had a run-in with a hostile meta-human before.

Yeah, he had to beat Wolverine and his brother a few times, but that doesn't really count.

Even his run-in with Magneto and the Brotherhood of Mutants was solved through communication, which lead to a fruitful partnership.

Even after Peter found out meta-humans were in this world, they haven't popped up on his radar ever since.

'Maybe Charles and Erik have been handling it?' Peter thought as he rushed forward, whilst still dodging all sorts of fire attacks.

That made the most sense, as the cooperation between Erik and Charles is likely a huge nightmare for all villainous Meta-humans and anti-meta-human factions as well.

After all, you have Charles who is constantly recruiting young meta-human students to his school, making it hard for anyone to snatch up any super-powered children.

Then you have Erik, who literally made it his life's mission to hunt down anyone who would kidnap or hurt his people.

Truthfully, it's hard out there for an evildoer, especially in the United States, where the Avenger's power is centralized.

Out of the 20 bases that held meta-humans inside, the large majority of them were outside of the United States of America, showing just how hard it is to operate there.

Even Hydra, who has access to all of the resources and personnel of Shield, didn't seem to have many meta-human agents.

'This is the first I've seen...' Peter thought as he appeared behind the fiery meta and clocked him in the back of the head. "Huh?"

Peter grunted in shock as he watched his fist phase through the blazing man's head, as if he were a drunkard, trying to fight a fire with his fists.

"That's an interesting ability." Peter muttered as he watched his attacker's head morph back to normal once he pulled his hand back.

"Haha!" The burning meta-human laughed like a victorious villain. "You may be strong Spider-Man, but since you can't touch me, you'll burn soon enough. They always do..."

"Love the evil monologue, but I have like 30 more Shield bases to raid, so let's get the show on the road, shall we?" Peter said as he strolled over to the nearby fire alarm and pulled it.

Instantly, the sound of a warning bell filled the building, as countless small sprinklers on the ceiling started showering out water, which covered everything.

"Aaagghhh?!" The fiery meta-human screamed in horrendous pain as the water poured all over his body.

"Water beats fire." Peter commented as he watched the man, who was just cackling like a dark lord a moment ago, crumble to the ground and huddle into a ball. "Pokémon logic always prevails."

Once the guy was thoroughly soaked and weakened, Peter dumped him in a cell back at the Tower via a portal and flipped the fire alarm back up, turning off the sprinklers.

Searching the rest of the building, Peter found a group of captured meta-humans, similar to the group from his meeting with X-23, so he moved them to Xavier's school as well.

After he dropped them off, Peter received a call from Fury's team.

"Hey, we could use some help here!" Clint exclaimed over the radio, followed by what sounded like an explosion.

"On the way." Peter answered as he stepped through a portal to find Fury, Clint, Natasha, Daredevil, Loki, and Jessica being manhandled by a giant meta-human, who seemed to be made out of a copper-colored metal. "Seriously, you guys can't beat some metal guy?"

Taking a closer look at the giant's facial expressions, Peter assumed that he was most likely brainwashed.

His eyes were dull and even in a stressful situation like this, he didn't seem the least bit worried or surprised by their arrival.

'Either this guy has some serious emotional issues, or he's a puppet like Bucky...' Just as Peter thought this, the copper meta-human looked towards him and shot a bright beam of yellow light from his eyes, though Peter simply sidestepped it as he studied the ability with interest.

As the beams passed him, Peter watched as they bore two tiny holes in the wall, which continued unimpeded all the way to his barrier before coming to a halt.

"He can do that too!" Clint called out as he nocked an arrow and let it loose.

With the aim of a legendary marksman, the arrow flew across the room and struck the laser-shooting meta-human right in the forehead, blowing up on impact.

Although the arrow and the explosion did absolutely no damage to the assailant, the shockwave managed to knock him off of his feet, stopping him from continuing the deadly laser attack.

"He's also invulnerable to every attack we throw at him." Natasha explains as Jessica rushes forward and kicks his downed form, sending the meta-human flying into the wall at breakneck speed.

Anyone would think that the fight was over or at least close to its end, but that wasn't the case at all.

As the dust cleared, the copper Hydra agent could be seen standing beside a broken wall, as if nothing happened whatsoever.

He was still in pristine condition without even looking the slightest bit tired or hurt.

"Okay, I can see why this would be a bit challenging for you guys, but it really shouldn't be that hard..." Peter says as he gets a glare from Fury's entire team.

"We're not all monsters like you!" Jessica yelled in frustration as she dodged another laser beam.

"Well, how about I give you a hint?" Peter says as he had no intention of stepping in unless they really needed it. "In Pokémon metal types are weak to fire."

Although they're probably the weakest team of them all, due to Loki, Clint, Natasha, and Daredevil, who have little to no superpowers, that doesn't mean they couldn't win on their own.

They just have to use their brains a bit.

"What the hell does a children's game have to do with this!" Jessica yelled as she glared in Peter's direction.

"Do you want another hint?" Peter asks as he walks to the side and leans against a wall, enjoying the annoyed glares of his fellow Avengers. "If Pokémon isn't your forte, then how about this? Metal conducts electricity."

"I'll handle it! Keep him busy." Loki said as he ran out of the room.

Although Loki wasn't an actual member of the Avengers, he acts as Jessica's assistant and uses that as an excuse to tag along throughout every mission.

Of course, Peter allows it as he hopes to one day recruit the former villain, though time would tell whether he truly changes enough to become a hero or not.

After watching the group fight and distract the copper meta-human for a while, Peter watched as Loki came running in with a bundle of long-cut wires.

"Attach the ends of these to your arrows and aim where they'll stick." Loki orders Clint as he starts plugging the wires into a nearby outlet.

"He's solid metal... where will they stick?" Clint asked in confusion.

"I don't know. Figure it out!" Loki yelled back.

"Fine..." Clint muttered as he attached the wires and took aim.

Waiting for the perfect shot, Clint fired as soon as Jessica managed to knock the guy off of his feet once again.

Just as the copper meta-human hit the ground, an arrow grazed his side and pierced into the ground, though what followed was nothing but excruciatingly painful.

"Aaaaaahhh!" The silent metal man screamed as the electrically charged arrow remained in constant contact with his body, sending a powerful current through him.

Though that wasn't the end.

Clint continued to fire and each new arrow introduced more electricity to the man's metal body, which was currently spasming in the ground uncontrollably.

"See, I said you could do it." Peter said happily as a portal opened up below the shaking meta-human, depositing him in his own cell in the Avengers tower.

"You could have just done that from the beginning..." Jessica says with a huff.

"Yes, but If I do everything for you, then what's the purpose of having you around?" Peter says with a shrug.

Jessica merely rolled her eyes at him as she stomped her foot in frustration, cracking the ground with relative ease.

"Remind me not to make her angry..." Clint whispers to Loki, who nodded in agreement as he felt her anger before and would much rather stay on Jessica's good side.

Chapter 247: Zola

After helping Fury's team with their meta-human problem, Peter received a bunch of other calls, informing him of similar situations for the other teams as well.

Of course, the other groups were able to handle their problems alone, so Peter only had to portal the beaten Hydra Metas into their new cells.

Once everyone was finished with their work, Peter counted exactly 9 Hydra Metas, who were now permanent residents of the Avenger Tower detainment floor.

Some had great powers, like the metal guy who had Superman laser beam eyes, and others were a bit of a letdown, to say the least.

Like one man, who had the power to fart a deadly toxic gas...

'The X-Gene is truly random...' Peter thought as he remembered the looks on Storms face when he arrived to portal the guy away.

Luckily, Peter wasn't there to witness the fight, but Storm described it well enough.

"We walked in and this pervert pulled down his pants, turned around, and..." Peter couldn't hold back his laughter as he heard what happened.

The poor guy got the worst roll imaginable when it came to superpowers. He couldn't even attack with his clothes on and face his enemies head on.

'Unlucky...' Peter thought with a shake of his head.

...

With every base captured, Peter brought all of the teams together so that they could organize how to deal with the huge number of prisoners.

"Everyone go and take a 30-minute break, while we talk." Peter shooed the lower ranks away, leaving only his fellow council members, Steve, and Peggy behind.

"Sir, the media is in a frenzy with the barriers appearing all around the world, and the president has called multiple times, asking if the Avengers are involved." Jarvis spoke up as the room emptied.

"You couldn't have made the barriers invisible?" Tony turns to Peter and asks.

"No, it would have complicated the spell even more than it already was." Peter answers with a shrug as he whips out his phone. "I'll text Barrack and let him know it's us."

"What about the media, sir?" Jarvis asks as the TV on the wall brightens, revealing an image of a building surrounded by a golden barrier.

Thankfully, Jarvis muted it so they didn't have to listen to news casters argue over whether this was the work of aliens or some crazy phenomenon that couldn't be explained.

"I'll tweet-" Peter stopped speaking as he saw the reply he got from the president. "Forget it, Barrack said he would hold a state of address and explain that it's us. Let's just let him handle it."

Throughout his time as an Avenger, building this place from the ground up, Peter has learned the ebbs and flows of the political world.

The president would stand to gain a lot of backing if he is the one to explain what's going on, as it would show that he has a good grip on the situation as well as a working relationship with the Avengers.

And lucky for him, Peter has a good opinion of Barrack, or else he would simply write a tweet and be done with it.

Of course, most people in the room understood this and agreed with his decision.

It's best to keep the politicians and world leaders happy. At least, for now.

"There are a lot of prisoners and not enough cells." Charles changes the subject as he knew this would be a headache.

"Yes, which is why we should start screening each person, so the real Shield Agents can assist us." Peter says, receiving nods of agreement all around.

"How though?" Tony asks as he flops down into a seat. "We can't just read their minds and..."

Instantly, all eyes turned to Charles, who shook his head instantly.

"No, I don't like invading people's privacy, Nazis or not." Charles vehemently declined.

"We aren't asking you to mind r*pe them." Peter says, both happy and annoyed at Xavier's answer.

On one hand, if he was more willing, then this entire situation would be sorted in a day or two.

On the other hand, thankfully, Charles isn't a mind r*pist, who would break anyone's trust and privacy at the drop of a hat.

'Either way, my mind has been protected for a while now...' Peter thought in relief, though he suddenly remembered something. 'MJ doesn't have her mind protected and she's met Charles a few times already...'

Although Peter didn't think that Professor Xavier read her mind, he now has to fortify the mind of everyone who knows his real identity...

'I should have done this earlier...' Peter reprimanded himself.

Saving these thoughts for later, Peter finished speaking.

"We'll bring them into a room one by one and ask if they're Hydra, and all that you have to do is skim their surface thought to see if they're lying about their answer." Peter explains, hoping to sway him into accepting the plan.

...

The whole room descended into discussion and sometimes arguments, as everyone spoke their part, adding ideas and disagreements.

Though when it was all said and done, Peter's plan rose to the top as the clear winner.

The Professor didn't look very happy with his part in this, but in the end, he reluctantly agreed to do the job.

Soon enough, everyone returned from their short break and was ready to get back to work.

"Alright, here's what's happening..." Peter explained the plan to everyone who wasn't there for its formation. "Since we only have one mind reading Professor, we'll have to go through each captured base one by one."

With the plan explained, Peter opened a portal and sent them on their way.

"Tony stay behind." Peter calls out, stopping his friend from following the group.

"You two aren't coming?" Steve asks as he and Peggy hang back.

"No, we have a Nazi computer to shut down." Peter shook his head.

"You're going after Zola?" Peggy asks.

"Yup, as the oldest living member of Hydra, I thought it best to ask if he knows who ordered the deaths of Tony's parents." Peter revealed his plans.

Upon hearing this, Tony, who was originally reluctant to lag behind, was instantly on board with Peter's idea.

"Let us come with you." Steve says as he points at the open portal behind him. "Besides, they have more than enough man power to go around."

"Fine, but there probably won't be much fighting..." Peter agrees with a shrug as he closed one portal and opened another.

Stewing in his terminal command center from the 1970s, Armin Zola was currently confused beyond belief.

[Insert picture of Armin Zola's Computer body/room here]

Hours ago, a golden barrier covered the entirety of Camp Lehigh, which included the room which houses this machinery, which in turn houses the brilliant mind of Nazi scientist Armin Zola.

In the early '70s, Zola received a terminal diagnosis.

Realizing that he didn't have much time left to live, Zola concluded that science couldn't save his body's dying body but it could save his mind, literally.

Without wasting time, Zola got to work constructing a supercomputer, dubbed his greatest masterpiece, to synthesize and emulate his own brain through one hundred billion neurons that he re-created and replicated with microprocessors of his design.

All of this left him trapped in the basement of the main building of Camp Lehigh, a former United States Army base, which was later turned into Shield's first base of operations.

Of course, as the barrier appeared around his home, Zola sent many of his flesh-bodied lackeys to collect data on the odd occurrence, finding the whole phenomenon both intriguing and worrisome.

'Someone wants me trapped in here...' He thought as he order his men to use everything they could to break the barrier so that he could send out a distress signal.

...

As the hours passed, Zola became even more fearful.

No amount of force, finesse, or firepower worked against the indomitable forcefield.

Just as the last lackey left after giving him another disappointing status update, Zola watched in realization as a golden portal opened appeared in the center of his room.

'Yes, the colors do match...' Zola thought as he stared at the golden portal through the many cameras in the room. "Spider-Man, I should have known that it was you."

Zola welcomed Peter as he stepped into the room, followed by Steve, Peggy, and Tony.

"Yup, we decided that Shield needed some cleaning up and you're last on the list." Peter says as the portal closed behind him.

"Zola, is that really you?" Steve asks as he remembered the man from his fight against Hydra during the war.

"Oh, if it isn't the star-spangled man with a plan." Zola says with a cybernetic laugh. "You haven't aged a single day, have you? Incredible."

"And you're looking very... computery?" Steve replied as he stared into the monitor, which showed a black and green face that looked slightly like the original Zola.

"Truly a master of the English language." Zola says with a laugh. "Have you seen Bucky yet?"

Instantly, the mood changed as Steve's face hardened into a glare.

"If I'm the last stop, then you must have found him." Zola speaks as if he were gleefully poking a bear with a stick. "I put in a lot of work to mold him into the man he is today. Countless days went into programming Sergeant Barnes into a good little boy. In the beginning, he begged and pleaded for you to come save him, but you never showed up."

Just as Steve was about to lose his mind and start breaking things, the image of Zola's face turned to Tony.

"Speaking of, how have you been Mr. Stark?" Zola sounded very amused with himself as he spoke. "Losing your parents so early must have been hard. Sadly, they met an unfortunate accident, didn't they?"

"Okay, let's calm down for a second..." Peter could see what Zola was doing and tried to put a stop to it but...

"You..." Tony uttered in furious anger as his Iron Man suit formed along his body in an instant.

"Oh, sh*t..."

Chapter 248: Death by C-4

"Oh, sh*t..." Peter muttered as he knew what Zola was trying to do.

In the movie, Zola locked the Avengers that found him inside the room and called in an air strike, hoping to kill his enemies alongside himself.

Of course, he did that in order to stop them from revealing what they knew about Project Insight, though that wasn't the only reason.

As a living supercomputer, Zola is a literal databank of everything related to Hydra going all the way back to World War 2.

He was one of the main people who spearheaded the rebuilding of Hydra after being recruited into the United States during Operation Paperclip.

If he were to be captured, then every bit of information he knew would be in the hands of his captors.

Names, addresses, plans, and so much more were locked up inside his metal brain, waiting to be harvested.

On top of that, unlike a normal human, Zola is unable to forget anything, making him a treasure trove of information.

He isn't even human anymore, making the information readily available to anyone who could hack into his mind.

'He wants to commit suicide...' Peter thought as soon as the provoking words started flying.

After all, without the ability to call in an air strike, since Peter's barriers were blocking all communications, Zola was left extremely vulnerable.

Before Peter could reveal what was happening, Tony launched forward, propelled by the thrusters on his hands and feet.

Crash!

Smashing his metal fist into the monitor that showed Zola's face, Tony watched in satisfaction as the glass fell to the floor with small clinks.

"You really should be thanking me, Mr. Stark." Zola says as his smiling image appears on every other monitor around the room. "Didn't you hate your father? I thought you'd be happy that I had him killed. After all, you inherited his kingdom, did you not?"

"F*ck my dad. He was almost as smart as me, so he could take care of himself." Tony says as his palm thrusters start pulsing dangerously. "You had that piece of sh*t strangle my innocent mother to death."

Boom!

Tony held up both hands and fired his thrusters, simultaneously destroying two other monitors.

"Ahh, yes." Zola says in amusement as his remaining images smirk toward Tony. "Sweet Maria Stark... You know, I once bumped into her before changing bodies to this machine. I instantly knew why Howard was so infatuated. After all, anyone would be smitten with an a*s like that-"

Boom boom boom...

Unable to listen any further, Tony starts repeatedly firing his palm thrusters, destroying every monitor in the room but one.

"Alright, Tony." Peter says as he snaps his fingers. "That's enough."

With the snap of Peter's fingers, Tony's suit turned into LEGO's, which fell off of his body and created a pile on the floor.

"What?!" Tony turns to his friend in extreme irritation. "Are you going to tell me that this one is a mind-controlled puppet as well?"

"No, in fact, you can kill him in a moment." Peter says as he walks up to Zola's remaining monitor. "Nice try, but you have a lot of information to hand over before dying."

"Then I better start erasing everything, shouldn't I?" Zola said as his image disappears and a progress bar with a trash can icon took his place, filling at a snail's pace.

"I don't think so." Peter says as he gets to work.

Not bothering with the outdated control panel, which was probably a decoy that didn't actually connect to Zola whatsoever, Peter studied the room for a moment.

"This should be it..." Peter muttered as he tore a panel off a wall and found tons of wires and old-school processors on the other side.

"Have you given up?" Zola asks mockingly. "Go ahead. Tear me apart!"

"No, I'm just going to rip out your processors until your about as smart as a baby with Down Syndrome." Peter says as he turns to Tony. "You want to do the honors?"

"..." Tony smirked as he walked up and grasped the first processor.

"No! Don't touch that!" Zola yelled as Tony ripped it out and tossed it over his shoulder before grabbing another and another and another. "S-Stop!"

One by one, Tony ripped them out over and over, as Peter tore the walls down and revealed even more processors.

"P-Please, stop..." Zola stuttered and started talking slower, showing the immense impact that their actions were having on his mind. "I... I... I can't... think..."

As if Zola forgot or didn't have enough processing power to continue, the deletion bar, which was slowly filling up to 2% only a moment ago had completely disappeared.

"Isn't this better than simply killing him?" Peter says as he turns to Tony. "After all, for a genius like Zola, the only thing he fears more than death is losing his brilliant mind."

Tony silently agreed as he took great pleasure in scrambling the brains of the man who ordered the deaths of his parents.

"This is kind of sad..." Peggy muttered as she watch Zola whimper and beg, growing stupider and stupider with every second that passes.

Steve nodded in agreement, though his body refused to move, unwilling to help the man that hurt his best friend.

...

"I think that's enough..." Peter muttered as he looked at the image of Zola, which stared forward with a blank look.

"Arnim, can you hear me?" Peter calls out as if he were talking to a young child.

"Y-Yes..." He replied meekly, sounding like a stuttering idiot. "Do... Do you know where my... mommy is?"

Although he spoke like a child, his voice hadn't changed, creating a weird atmosphere in the room.

"We may have taken out one too many processors..." Peter muttered as he walked up to the remaining monitor. "Yeah, she just needs you to do something before she gets here."

"O-Okay..." Zola replied readily.

"Good, where do you keep your memories?" Peter asked.

"In my head, idiot." Zola answered with a stupid laugh.

"And where is that?" Peter asks, ignoring his childlike response.

...

This form of questioning continued until Peter got a good enough answer.

"Found it!" Peter called out as he crawled through a vented panel and found a hidden room filled with giant old-school hard drives, which looked to have been upgraded to a certain extent. 'Let's see...'

Getting to work, Peter hard-wired his ghost laptop in and started downloading every bit of information.

Of course, he made sure to isolate everything that was being downloaded, leaving it in a heavily secured portion of his laptop, which didn't have any access to the internet, just in case Zola tried anything funny.

'I'll have to be careful later on.' Peter thought as he finished the download.

Before leaving the secret room, Peter used the Aether to create countless bricks of C-4 explosives, as well as a detonator.

Leaving the bricks behind, Peter crawled back out and handed Tony the detonator.

"Come on. Let's leave the room so you can blow it up." Peter says as he walks toward the door.

"Are you leaving?" Zola asks like a lonely child.

"..." A wavering look appeared on Tony's face. "I don't think that I can do it with him like this..."

"Hmm..." Peter turns to look over his shoulder and snaps his fingers.

Instantly, the processors that were on the floor flew back into place, fixing themselves in a matter of seconds.

"There, better now?" Peter asks as the screeching voice of Zola fills the room.

"You won't get away with this!" He screams angrily, sounding just like before the processors were removed. "Cut off one head and two more shall rise to take its place!"

"Yeah yeah, whatever." Peter muttered as he left the room, followed by everyone else.

"Go ahead." Peter nods toward Tony as a barrier appears, which surrounded the room in order to contain the coming explosion.

"..." Staring down at the detonator, Tony took a deep breath before giving it a squeeze.

"Hail Hydra!" Zola fanatically yelled his last words.

BOOM!

Instantly, everything on the other side of the barrier was covered in fire and smoke, turning the entire room into nothing but rubble.

"Today marks the end of the brilliant Arnim Zola." Peter said uncaringly.

'I'm sorry that it took me this long to avenge you...' Tony thought of his parents as he turned his head away from the destruction.

"Hands in the air, now!" Marching footsteps were heard as a group of armed 'Shield' agents came rushing down the hall.

"Okay, you guys deal with capturing this base." Peter says as he opens a portal and steps through. "I have to go and shuttle the others around."

"Wait!" Steve called out, ignoring the armed gunmen. "Did you get any information on what he did to Bucky?"

"I don't know yet." Peter turns and shrugs. "Deal with what's in front of you for now. We'll fix up Bucky soon enough."

Chapter 249: Poetic Justice?

After the death of Armin Zola, Peter focused his complete attention on helping Charles speed along the screening of every captured agent.

By the time Peter showed up, Charles was done with the first base that he sent them to.

Fury was already leading his cleared Shield subordinates in imprisoning those who failed the screening.

Once the trusted Shield Agents were released and vindicated of any treasonous activity, they were put right back to work under Fury, who thankfully had their full cooperation.

After all, he is their director.

Some agents were skeptical of what was happening, as many of the proven Hydra agents were friends of theirs.

Everything happened far too suddenly, making it hard for them to believe anything just yet.

Especially since they weren't allowed to see any of the proof against their coworkers.

All they knew was that they were brought into a room one by one, and asked a simple question.

"Are you a member of Hydra?"

Those that came out unrestrained were good and those that didn't were bad.

Simple as that.

Then they were asked to treat the people they worked with and trusted their backs to like prisoners, which was an odd situation for them.

Thankfully, Shield Agents are trained to follow orders, so the large majority of them stepped in line and didn't cause any problems.

However, those who did cause trouble were instantly jailed as well.

Of course, they were separated from the Hydra plants, as it would be extremely idiotic to put them in a situation where they can be turned to the other side.

All that it would take is a few comforting words from trusted friends and Hydra could have a few more operatives on their side, or at least some sympathizers, which wouldn't be good either.

...

By the next morning, Peter watched as Charles cleared the last remaining Shield base, finishing off the long operation, which Peter liked to call 'Operation Housekeeping'.

"I'm so glad that we're finally done..." Tony said as he flopped down into a comfy chair.

"Technically we aren't done." Peter says as he turns to Fury. "Fury has to change all sorts of protocols, passwords, safe houses, and a million other things."

"Uh... Don't make me think about that right now." Fury groaned as he prepared himself for the nightmare that was to come.

Due to the fact that Hydra had infiltrated Shield to such a crazy degree, Fury now had to change all of the locks, so to speak.

It was like breaking up with a psycho ex. Either you change the locks or they'll come knocking soon enough.

Or just move altogether if they're crazy enough and Hydra certainly fits that description.

Who knows how much of Hydra still remains in the shadows, waiting to rebuild once again?

Speaking of the remaining Hydra bases and Agents, Peter then turned to Steve and Peggy.

"We'll also need people to work with the new Shield and hunt down the remnants of Hydra that are still out there." Peter says and receives a nod from both of them. "Good, but other than that, yeah we're done."

"What about Project Insight?" Erik asks, as he stares out of a nearby window.

On the other side of the window is a huge hangar with one of the giant Helicarriers, which was still being built for the project that started all of this.

"Should we destroy them?" Charles asks tiredly.

After all, he did most of the work near the end of Operation Housekeeping.

"No, that's a waste of a bada*s airship." Tony disagreed instantly. "Especially since they all belong to us now."

"I see no problem with keeping the Helicarriers." Peter agreed with a shrug. "The only problem is Zola's algorithm."

"Shouldn't we use the algorithm?" Erik speaks his mind.

"No, it's an extreme invasion of privacy." Charles swiftly disagreed.

"But we may be able to use it to help locate our people." Magneto argues. "It might even be able to find children before they fully develop their X-Gene."

"It could also help locate high-level criminals. Meta-human or otherwise." Fury says, knowing this could make his job easier. "We could also employ it to find any remaining Hydra Agents."

"..." instantly, everyone who disagreed in the beginning turned deathly silent.

"If the public were to find out about this, I don't think they'll be very happy, even if Spider-Man was involved." Tony says, knowing how much people like their privacy, especially in the United States of America. "Whether we do it with good intentions or not, we would still be spying on the entire world."

Thankfully, everyone but the Avengers Council, Steve, and Peggy was privy to this conversation, as everyone else left to get some sleep after a long mission.

After all, this is a conversation that may end up being a heavily kept secret.

"If we were to do this..." Peter starts to speak. "We would have to be extremely careful and make sure that our intentions are always good."

Instantly, the room descended into ideas and arguments, as everyone had something to say about the current topic.

Meanwhile, Peter remained quiet while listening to everyone speak. He wasn't exactly for or against using Project insight and would simply let everyone else decide the fate of Zola's algorithm.

...

After an hour of deliberation, no official decision was made, though it looked like everyone was on board with using the Algorithm against the remnants of Hydra.

Truly, it was poetic justice.

Hydra builds an AI to find and kill their enemies, but their enemies steal it and turn it against them.

Not one person in the room had an argument against that.

Meanwhile, every other idea was still up in the air.

As everyone knew that a decision wouldn't be made today, all parties went their separate ways, as none of them have slept since the beginning of Operation Housekeeping.

Peter wanted to go home and sleep as well, though he had a friend to look out for before any of that could happen.

-Los Angeles-

Opening a portal, Peter stepped out into a sunny cemetery, filled with well-kept tombstones, freshly mowed grass, and flowers, which were placed at almost every grave in sight.

"Hey..." Peter makes his presence known as he walks up and stood behind Tony, who was staring down at a single large gravestone.

[Howard and Maria Stark]

"You know, the last thing that I told my dad before he died was that I hated him. Really and truly hated him, but that isn't my worst regret from that day." Tony spoke, keeping his back turned to Peter. "We fought over something insignificant as always, and my mother did her best to mediate both sides, but I didn't see it that way. I saw her as taking my father's side yet again and told her to go f*ck herself before storming out of the house."

Tony wiped a stray tear from his eye, making sure to keep his back turned.

"I never spoke to my mother like that before yet those were the last words she heard from her son." Tony snuffles, though he held himself together. "I haven't told that to anyone. Not even Jarvis."

"We all say crazy things when we're arguing." Peter says as he reaches out and places a hand on his friend's shoulder. "Especially when it comes to those we love, but we never actually mean them. I'm sure that she knew that."

"Maybe..." Tony says unconvinced by Peter's words.

"..." Peter opted to simply remain quiet for a while and just be there for his friend.

After a few minutes of silence passed, Tony turned to Peter with a serious look on his face.

"I need to talk to Bucky." Tony says as his face hardened.

"Why?" Peter asks in confusion.

"He killed my parents and if you don't want me to kill him too, then we need to settle our problems." Tony says as his hands gripped into fists. "I know I said that I wouldn't kill him, but I've already come up with 50 ways to get my revenge. One of which is by simply sucking the air from his cell and watching him suffocate like a fish out of water."

Peter was a bit shocked by Tony's admission.

"Okay, but maybe you should wait until we fix the brainwashing that was done to him." Peter reluctantly agrees. "He's only going to either stay silent or antagonize you right now."

"Fine, but when he's all fixed up, I want to meet him in his cell... alone." Tony says as he stares Peter in the eyes.

"I don't think that's a very good idea..." Peter knew that wouldn't turn out well.

"It's either that, or I plot his death behind your back." Tony gives Peter an ultimatum. "You may be able to protect him for a while, but sooner or later you'll miss something. Whether it be a bullet to the head or a drop of poison in his food, Bucky will die unless you give us some alone time to work things out."

"...Fine." Peter says after a moment of silent staring. 'I'll have to keep a close eye on their conversation...'

Chapter 250: Star Boy

Once Peter got home after dropping Tony off with Pepper, he found the place completely empty.

Lily and MJ were at school and May was at work, Leaving him all alone for the time being.

"I need a shower and a long nap..." Peter muttered as he turned on the shower.

...

Once he was clean and comfortable in bed, Peter was about to fall asleep when he caught a glimpse of his Ghost laptop sitting on his desk.

'...' Peter tried to ignore it, but his curiosity far outweighed his tired body.

Pulling the laptop over with a quick web shot, Peter opened it up and got to work.

The complete contents of Zola's database were downloaded and locked behind a million failsafes, just in case the Nazi Scientist had a backup plan to escape death once again.

Due to the fact that accessing the downloaded data may set off a trap laid by Zola, Peter started working on a way to scan through it and find any red flags.

Like a supercharged virus scanner, which could then be used to remove and delete any found 'virus'.

"This is going to take a while..." Peter muttered as he whipped out his phone and ordered some food.

After all, he hasn't eaten in a while either.

...

By the time Lily and MJ got home, Peter was still crafting his ultimate virus detection program, though he decided to take a break when he heard them talking downstairs.

"Mom, I want sushi..." Lily whined as she held her growling stomach.

"Didn't you eat lunch at school?" MJ asks as they both flop down on the couch together.

"No, school lunch is disgusting." Lily said as she stuck her tongue out. "Today was hotdogs and I swear they make them with some type of rubber. This one girl dropped hers and it bounced four feet off of the ground."

"Four feet?" Peter asked incredulously as he walked down the steps. "Ned and I set a record of 3 and a half feet when we were in middle school."

"Dad!" Lily leaped out of her seat and rushed over to hug Peter. "You're back."

"Sorry, it took so long." Peter says as he wraps her in his arms. "It was a lot more work than I thought it would be."

"Is my mom still in danger?" MJ asks worriedly.

"She shouldn't be, but maybe it would be best if she moved in with us." Peter offers, knowing it would be much safer at his house. "At least for the time being."

"Okay, I'll text her." MJ nods in agreement and takes out her phone.

"Grandma is moving in with us?!" Lily practically squealed. "I'll go get her room ready!"

Without another word, Lily rushed passed Peter and up the stairs to prepare everything.

...

After portaling Grace over as well as some of her belongings, Peter spent a bit of time with his family before heading back to his room, where he would continue working on the super virus detection and deletions program.

'I need to come up with a better name for it.' Peter thought as he typed away in bed.

While working into the night, Peter felt a pulse of magic run through his body, signaling him to a certain event taking place...

'I might as well have a look.' Peter thought as he opened a portal and stepped through, leaving his sleeping girlfriend behind.

-Morag-

Whilst Peter was working in his bedroom, another Peter in a metal mask with glowing red eyes trudged through the hellish planet of Morag, dodging gushing geysers that shot out chemical waters.

[Insert picture of masked Star Lord here]

Taking out a handheld device from his pocket, the man in the mask hit it against his palm a few times before it lit up, projecting a holographic image of what Morag once looked like.

Adults rushed around, children played, large buildings created an alien-like skyline, and greenery was mixed in at every possible location, showing a healthy and thriving society.

Comparing it to the watery wasteland that it is today was like night and day, making anyone wonder what could have happened to cause such a catastrophic change.

Following the holograms, the masked man arrived at a crumbling temple, ravaged by the harsh waters of the toxic planet.

Stepping into the temple, the man pressed a button on the side of his mask, which caused it to collapse backward and disappear, revealing his face.

[Insert picture of Chris Pratt here]

After admiring the temple ruins for a moment, the man pulls out an old cassette player from Earth.

Donning his headphones, the odd yet handsome man pressed play on the cassette player and started dancing his way through the temple, as if he were in some sort of musical.

"... Come and get your love... Come and get your love... Come and get your love..." He sang loudly and out of tune as he made his way to a broken doorway in the back of the temple.

Eyeing the destroyed door for a moment, the man shrugged and continue dancing his way inside, where he found a vault with a single pillar in the center of the room.

In the middle of the pillar was a glowing forcefield-like cage, which held a metal ball about the size of a softball.

Pulling a white glowing orb from his pocket, the man places it on the floor in order to light up the room, revealing the odd alien symbols that covered the vaults walls.

"Found you..." He muttered as he removed his headphones and got to work.

Placing a triangular device close to the central pillar, he watched as the metal ball was sucked out of the forcefield and magnetized to the device.

Picking up the freed ball with ease, the man turns to find a group of heavily armed Chitauri soldiers blocking his exit.

"Oh, sh*t!" He exclaims as he throws his hands in the air. "Let's all just calm down, okay? I'm Peter Quill. Just your average junker."

The only reply he received was some bug-like clicking sounds as well as an angry shriek from the monster-looking leader of the group.

"Oh, hang on. I have a translator here somewhere..." Quill reaches into his pocket, but he soon learned that, that was a horrible idea.

Shriek!

Instantly, the Chitauri soldiers released a high pitch scream and fired their weapons.

"F*ck!" Quill blurts out as he dropped to the ground, letting the energy bolts fly past him and into the wall, knocking it down and revealing the harsh wasteland outside.

Tapping a button behind his ear, Quill's mask reforms, and his boots light up, shooting him across the floor and out of the destroyed wall.

'There he goes.' Peter watched in amusement as Star-Lord flew out of the temple and ran for his life with the empty Orb in hand.

Of course, he doesn't know that it's empty.

No one does except for him and the Ancient One.

Following the Chitauri soldiers, who chased Quill all the way back to his ship, Peter enjoyed the show as an unseen voyeur.

'It was smart of me to place that notification and tracking enchantments on the orb.' Peter thought as he felt excited about meeting the Guardians of the Galaxy.

Especially, Groot and Rocket.

'Maybe I should become a member of the Guardians?' Peter thought as he smirked under his mask. 'After all, with Ronan dead Thanos will probably send out one of his best enforcers to acquire the Orb...'

The Guardians will most likely need all the help they can get...

Although Seeing Quill run around like a madman with hundreds of Chitauri chasing after him was entertaining, Peter started to wonder whether he would have to come to his rescue or not.

'Are these guys stormtroopers?' Peter wondered, as not a single energy bolt has managed to so much as graze Quills clothing.

Soon enough, the great Star Lord escaped into his ship and flew off, leaving the Chitauri behind as he blasted off.

As the ship flew away, Peter ignored the remaining Chitauri and opened a portal.

Heavy Breathing

Peter Quill caught his breath as he sat on the floor of his ship, processing the entire ordeal that he just went through.

"That was impressive." An unfamiliar voice filled the ship. "Sloppy but impressive."

"What the-" Quill yelled in surprise as he scrambled to a nearby table and picked up a blaster pistol.
"Where are you..."

The great Star Lord spun around, looking for whoever stowed away on his ship, but found nothing but open air.

"Oh, sorry. I forgot that I was invisible." The voice says again as a man in a blue and red spider costume appears out of nowhere.

"How did you do that?" Quill asks in shock as he keeps a distance and points his pistol toward the intruder.

"Magic." Peter says as he always does. "I'm Spider-Man by the way. Nice to meet you."