

Spider-Man 591

Chapter 591: Grandpa Soldier Boy

Soldier Boy, still seething with anger from from last nights lose, and annoyed by Peter's taunting greeting, was on the verge of charging towards him when, in a blink, Peter appeared right in front of him. A hand casually landed on Soldier Boy's shoulder, and a sudden, overwhelming force pressed down on him, threatening to buckle his knees.

His muscles strained against the invisible burden as Soldier Boy found himself frozen in place, powerless to resist the weight that bore down on him. The intense pressure radiated from Peter's touch, leaving Soldier Boy gritting his teeth against the pain.

As Peter's face loomed in front of him, Soldier Boy could see that demonic grin etched across his features. It was a sinister smile that hinted at the agony promised if he dared to challenge the mysterious man before him. Peter leaned in, his voice dripping with a deceptive sweetness, "Best behavior, Soldier Boy, or you might find yourself in the company of Homelander, Translucent, and Stormfront in the afterlife."

Soldier Boy, unable to speak, shot a glare at Peter, his eyes conveying a mixture of defiance and understanding. Peter, satisfied that his point was made, withdrew his hand, relieving Soldier Boy of the crushing force. The worn out superhero slumped against the doorframe, gasping for breath, grateful to be released from Peter's oppressive hold.

Ignoring Soldier Boy's recovery, Peter pivoted and snapped his fingers, a gesture that erased the military-style obstacle course from existence. The backyard transformed, leaving no trace of the challenging trials that had just occupied the space moments ago.

Ryan, still standing beside Black Noir, watched in awe as the backyard returned to its serene state. The magical display left him wondering just how powerful his new teacher really was?

Calling Ryan over, Peter gestured toward Soldier Boy, who was still catching his breath. "Ryan, meet Soldier Boy, your grandfather."

The shock registered on Ryan's face as he stared up at Soldier Boy, realizing exactly who he was. After all, who didn't know the very first American Superhero? "Y-You're my grandpa?!"

Soldier Boy, just as shocked as his grandson, wanted to deny it and push the annoying kid away, but one look from Peter set him straight. "...yeah?" His voice carried a confused and reluctant tilt to it.

Peter, satisfied with Soldier Boy's behavior this far, clapped Ryan on the back. "Go get cleaned up. Your grandpa and I will start on breakfast, so don't take too long or he might eat it all."

"Okay!" Ryan replied happily as he rushed up to Soldier Boy, wrapping him up in a quick hug.

Soldier Boy stood robotically as his 'grandson' suddenly hugged him, a scowl clear to see on his face. However, before he could even think of complaining, Ryan squeezed him a bit harder than he expected. "Ugh!" He groaned under the pressure of Ryan's uncontrolled power.

"See you soon, Grandpa!" Ryan yelled as he released Soldier Boy, rushing off into the house, unaware of the damage he did.

"How strong is that little sh*t?" Soldier Boy groaned as he held his midsection. "He almost broke my ribs..."

"Like I said, he's your grandson. Of course he'll be strong..." Peter said, which actually made Soldier Boy wonder if Ryan was really his Grandson.

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As Ryan dashed inside the house with a newfound enthusiasm, Peter strolled past the confused looking Soldier Boy, headed straight toward the kitchen. Following in Peter's footsteps, Black Noir attempted to walk past Soldier Boy as well, but the seasoned superhero swiftly reached over, blocking the doorway with his arm.

Soldier Boy, his curiosity piqued, turned to Noir. "How the hell were you healed? Because I distinctly remember barbecuing that ugly mug of yours to a nice medium rare."

Noir's glare shot daggers at Soldier Boy, and with a menacing tone, he uttered one word, "Move."

A tense standoff ensued as Soldier Boy and Noir locked eyes, the air thick with unspoken threats. But before the confrontation could escalate, Peter's voice echoed from the kitchen, "Noir! Come set the table!"

Noir responded with a curt "Yes, sir," maintaining his gaze on Soldier Boy, waiting for him to relent. Soldier Boy, sensing the tension and the implied threat in Noir's expression, begrudgingly moved out of the doorway. After all, Peter told him to be on his best behavior, or else...

Seeing Soldier Boy's compliance, Noir smirked, realizing the extent of Soldier Boy's unease in the presence of Peter. Annoyed by the smug look Noir was giving him, Soldier Boy couldn't resist a parting jab. "Get going, Noir. Your new master's calling you."

Suddenly, Peter's voice cut through the tension once more. "Soldier Boy! Help Noir set the table, and wash those dirty hands before touching anything. I don't want you getting anyone sick... Who knows what strange Russian diseases you've brought back with you."

Soldier Boy seethed with rage at being ordered around, but before he could react, Noir walked past him, chuckling as he remarked, "Come on, your new master's calling you."

As Noir headed inside, Soldier Boy reluctantly followed, contemplating whether or not he should just run away. Though something told him that wouldn't be possible.

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In the kitchen, Soldier Boy begrudgingly followed Noir's lead as they set the table under Peter's watchful eye. Scowling, Soldier Boy kept a wary gaze on Peter, determined not to provoke the enigmatic man who had displayed powers beyond his comprehension.

Meanwhile, Peter skillfully worked at the stove, cooking up eggs, bacon, waffles, and much more as the enticing aroma wafted through the kitchen.

As the table was set, Soldier Boy took a seat while Noir stood attentively by Peter's side, ready to assist in any way possible. Ever since Peter healed him the previous night, Noir had become Peter's devoted aide, carrying out tasks without a hint of hesitation.

Gratitude emanated from Noir towards Peter. Loyalty, once dedicated to Vought, had seamlessly shifted to the mysterious man who held power beyond any he had witnessed.

Originally, Noir had contemplated contacting Vought with information about Peter, but after the miraculous healing, his allegiance had shifted, and now he was like a servant, loyal to Peter even in the face of the unknown.

Soldier Boy observed Noir's odd behavior, realizing that Peter must have played a role in Noir's healed face, and ability to speak.

Seated at the table, Soldier Boy found himself with a lot more questions than answers. But sadly, he could not exactly demand answers with Peter around.

Glancing back at Soldier Boy, who was stewing in his seat, Peter took a moment to break the silence. He turned to Soldier Boy, his expression more serious than the usual mischievous grin. "Look, Soldier Boy, I suppose it's time for a little talk."

Soldier Boy eyed Peter cautiously, still wary of what he might do. Peter continued, "Let's start with your new explosive disability. Do you know why you suddenly exploded last night?"

"No..." He answered, his hand gripping into fists. Not only was exploding like that not one of his powers, he also couldn't seem to control it.

Peter nodded, expecting that answer. "Well, when you exploded like a very dangerous firework, I analyzed the energy that you were using. You've got a surplus of radioactive energy inside you, and it seems like your body has changed somehow to keep producing this energy."

As Peter detailed the potential dangers of his newfound ability, Soldier Boy listened, absorbing the information. A realization dawned on him, and he muttered under his breath, "Those damn Russian... they turned me into a walking nuke."

Peter nodded, acknowledging Soldier Boy's understanding. "Exactly. So, keep your emotions in check. Your little meltdown last night triggered the energy overload. As long as you can keep calm, you won't have to worry about exploding. After all, we don't want you going off like a suicide bomber, do we?"

Soldier Boy processed the gravity of the situation, realizing the extent of the experimentation that had been inflicted upon him. The weight of his own existence now felt more burdensome, a ticking time bomb of radioactive energy.

"Can it be fixed?" He suddenly asks.

"What? You don't want the power to blow up anyone who annoys you?" Peter asks back.

"No, I'd rather not risk blowing up in a crowded city..." Soldier Boy replied, frowning at Peter's idiotic question.

Smiling, Peter liked the answer he got. 'I guess he isn't a complete lost cause... At least not yet.' Thinking for a moment, Peter finally answered his question. "Sure, I can help you with the energy, but you're going to have to work for it."

"Fine..." Soldier Boy begrudgingly agreed. "What do you want?"

"You're going to help me train your grandson." Peter states, Hoping to use this opportunity to change Soldier Boy for the better.

Reluctantly agreeing, Soldier Boy ventured to ask another pressing question. "What about that kid? Who is he really?"

Peter's expression shifted, his tone growing somber. "Ryan is Homelander's son. Homelander, being the piece of human trash that he was, raped Ryan's mother, Becca. And nine months later, Ryan was born." He explained before warning. "Of course, Ryan doesn't know who his real father is, so you'll have to keep that to yourself... or else..."

Soldier Boy's face twisted in a mixture of shock and disgust. Even for someone with his dubious past, the idea of raping someone crossed a line he couldn't fathom. "You know, I've done some pretty messed up sh*t in my time, but I've never forced myself on a woman. Even my old man wouldn't have done that, and he was an even bigger asshole than me..."

As Soldier Boy grappled with the disturbing revelation, the kitchen door suddenly swung open. Billy and Becca Butcher entered, their eyes widening as they laid eyes on Soldier Boy and Black Noir.

On pure instinct, Billy stepped in front of Becca, a pistol materializing from his pants. "What the hell are these cunts doing here!?"

Chapter 592: Sentinel Program

In the aftermath of the tense confrontation, Becca's piercing gaze softened as Peter, with a calm demeanor, explained the events of the previous night and the unexpected connection between Soldier Boy and Ryan. Billy, still wary, kept his pistol in hand, but the tension began to dissipate as the truth unfolded.

Of course, that didn't explain Black Noirs presence, so Peter had to go into his reasoning behind sparing him as well, which Billy didn't agree with. But thankfully, he had no say in the matter. After all, Peter already allowed him to avenge his wife and even brought them back together. What more could he possibly ask for?

After everyone settled down, Soldier Boy, Billy, and Becca took their seats at the table alongside MJ, Starlight, and Maeve, who had woken up shortly after them. Once again, Peter was forced to answer all sorts of questions for them as well, especially Maeve, who expected Peter to kill everyone after she betrayed Vought and the Seven.

The atmosphere remained awkward, with everyone casting uneasy glances at each other. Soldier Boy, MJ, and Peter were the first to dig into the delicious spread, seemingly unfazed by the tension.

As the group sat in silence, the clinking of utensils against plates filled the room. Soon, MJ's piercing gaze met Peter's, a subtle acknowledgment passing between them. Peter leaned in for a quick kiss, taking a seat next to MJ. Noir followed, sitting on Peter's left, completing the peculiar arrangement.

The silence lingered until the kitchen door swung open, breaking the awkwardness. Ryan, freshly showered and clad in clean clothes, dashed in with youthful energy. "Teacher!" he exclaimed, addressing Peter with reverence. "I'm starving after all that training. What's for breakfast?"

Ryan noticed his mother, Becca, and a slight smile tugged at his lips as he took a seat beside her, glancing curiously between his new father, Billy, and Soldier Boy, his newfound grandfather.

The atmosphere shifted as the attention turned to Becca. She fixed Peter with a piercing stare, her concern evident. "What training is he talking about?" she demanded, her tone edged with disapproval. "You didn't ask for my permission to train my son."

Contrary to the way she was acting, Becca didn't mind Ryan training and learning how to control his powers. The problem for her was that she didn't want her son to turn out like Homelander. He needed to be treated with care and support.

Peter, maintaining his composure, nodding this head, "You're right, I probably should have asked before training him. Though he needs to be trained." He said before explaining. "While you were all asleep, Ryan had another outburst from his powers. Thankfully, I was here to stop him before it got too bad, but that doesn't change the fact that he needs to learn control, or else he's going to end up hurting either himself or someone else."

Becca, though still displeased, nodded in understanding. "I see..."

Peter continues. "Feel free to ask Ryan about my training. If you or him don't like it, then you can try to find another person to teach him, but I can tell you now that someone else might not be as experienced as I am. And let's not forget that most other people or organizations will probably try to use him for his abilities. I'm merely here to help."

Both Becca and Billy couldn't help but agree with Peter's words. Turning to her son, Becca asked. "Do you like training with Peter?"

"Yeah! It's hard but it's really fun too. Did you know that he can do magic? He made..." Ryan ranted and raved about Peter's abilities as he explained the training he went through.

Becca let out a relieved sigh as she realized that Peter didn't put her son through any crazy training. "Alright, then you can keep training, but I'd like to watch if that's alright with you two..."

"Sure, that's fine." Peter shrugged as he gestured to Soldier Boy, "He'll be assisting me in Ryan's training as well." Soldier Boy, nonchalant and busy stuffing bacon into his mouth, grunted in agreement.

"Grandpa's going to train me too?!" Ryan nearly jumped out of his seat in excitement. Truly, he was having a good couple of days.

First, he meets his father, whom he's been dying to see his entire life. Then he awakens literal superpowers, which any child would dream of. And now, he has a cool and famous grandpa, who will be training with him.

The kid was really living the dream.

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As breakfast drew to a close, Ryan eagerly pulled Soldier Boy and Billy away to showcase his room and his collection of superhero memorabilia. Becca, uncertain about Soldier Boy, promptly followed them, intent on keeping a watchful eye on her son.

Observing the departure, Peter subtly motioned to MJ, silently instructing her to keep an eye on Soldier Boy and ensure he didn't cause any trouble. With a nod of understanding, MJ strolled after the trio, leaving Peter in the kitchen with Noir, Starlight, and Maeve.

Curiosity evident on her face, Maeve turned to Noir and couldn't resist asking about the transformation in his appearance. To her surprise, Noir responded, explaining that Peter had healed him. Shocked by Noir's unexpected answer, Maeve congratulated him, expressing genuine happiness.

Starlight, unfamiliar with Noir's past injuries, joined in the congratulations, pleased to see good things happening for a change.

Maeve shifted her attention to Peter, her expression growing more serious. "What's your plan regarding Vought?" she inquired. "With Homelander and the Seven gone, minus us of course, Vought is vulnerable, but their influence and army of supes still poses a significant threat. The government might try to investigate, but what can they do against superheroes? Vought still has a lot of power behind them..."

Peter smiled, his tone measured. "I've got a meeting with the President today. I plan to level the playing field."

Starlight couldn't help but ask. "Does he know you're coming?"

Peter smirked. "No, it's always more fun to show up unannounced and make an entrance."

After ensuring MJ would keep a watchful eye on Soldier Boy, as he still didn't fully trust him, Peter left the Butcher family home, his thoughts swirling with the weight of the impending meeting. He had a good idea as to how he would even out the odds against Vought. All he needed was the President to agree and work with him.

Stepping through a portal, he emerged in the Oval Office, catching President Robert Schaefer by surprise. "Yo." He waved as the portal snapped shut behind him.

As Peter gracefully took a seat across from the president, introducing himself with a friendly smile, "Hello, I'm Peter. You might recognize me from the recent Vought drama going on."

"Hello, what can I do for you..." The president replied with a fake smile, his hand discreetly moving to hit an emergency button beneath his desk.

A tense moment followed as nothing happened, not a single person came rushing in as they were supposed to. The president kept glancing at the doors, his expression growing more grave by the second.

"If you're waiting for the secret service to come rushing in, then you can stop." Peter leaned back in his chair and explained. "I've already sealed the room so that we can talk without any annoyances, but don't worry. I'm not here to kill you or anything. I'm only here to talk and give you an opportunity..."

Intrigued and wary, President Schaefer spoke. "What opportunity?"

Peter then explained his past few days in this universe. "Well, let me quickly explain what I've been up to recently. First, I've stolen and leaked all of Voughts secrets, which I'm sure you've already seen." The president nods as Peter continues. "Not only that, but I've also killed Homelander and a few other superheroes. Basically, I'm at war with Vought."

"Homelander is dead? You're sure of this?" The president asked, still grappling with the shock.

"Oh yeah, I burned his body myself." Peter nodded.

"Why tell me all this? Are you expecting a medal?" Schaefer asked curiously. "I mean, I wouldn't mind rewarding you, but I doubt that's really what you want."

"I don't want anything, which I'm sure is hard to believe." Peter shook his head, his tone measured. "I'm here to even out the playing field. With Vought's army of heroes, it's likely they'll escape any real consequences. Let's just say I don't want that to happen. Vought and their 'heroes' have gotten away with far more than they should have up until now. And it's about time they got a taste of their own medicine..."

"Go on," Schaefer urged, his interest piqued.

Smirking, Peter began to lay out his plan. "We'll begin what I call 'The Sentinel Program.'"

As Peter met with President Schaefer, Stan Edgar, the shrewd leader of Vought, anxiously awaited news of his rescue team's return in Vought Tower. Expecting Homelander to be brought back after his kidnapping, Stan tried reaching out to his team, only to be met with silence.

Growing uneasy, he realized that his operatives must have either perished or been captured by the formidable force now opposing Vought. Stan, never one to underestimate his adversaries, understood the gravity of the situation. If Homelander was truly incapacitated or gone, it meant that he needed to secure Vought's valuable assets and plan for the future.

One particular asset seized his attention, the son of Homelander. The potential successor to the fallen hero held significant importance. In the world of Vought, new heroes needed to be groomed and controlled. With Homelander out of the picture, the void had to be filled, and Vought needed to maintain its influence.

Stan Edgar, a master tactician, swiftly moved into action, mobilizing resources to ensure the security of Vought's future. The game had changed, and he understood that adapting quickly was Vought's only way of survival.

Chapter 593: Mesmer

Whilst Peter was busy at the White House, Soldier Boy found himself ensnared in an unexpected predicament. The energetic whirlwind named Ryan, his newfound grandson, had taken it upon himself to showcase his collection of superhero action figures.

Soldier Boy, clad in his iconic suit, as he hadn't had the chance to change, felt a mix of awkwardness and irritation as he sat on the floor surrounded by the array of dolls. "Look, Grandpa! This is you!" Ryan exclaimed, holding up a miniaturized version of Soldier Boy.

Soldier Boy resisted the urge to roll his eyes, maintaining a strained smile. "Yeah, kid, real impressive."

As Ryan continued his enthusiastic presentation, Soldier Boy couldn't help but wonder how he ended up in this bizarre situation. He mentally lamented his lack of freedom, yearning for the battlefield over this peculiar family bonding.

The dolls, in his eyes, were a mockery of his past and a waste of his grandsons time. If he could speak freely right now, Soldier Boy would tell Ryan that he shouldn't be playing with dolls, action figures or not. How is he supposed to grow up like a man surrounded by these toys?

'This isn't how my grandson should be raised...' Soldier Boy thought as he thought back in his own childhood, which wasn't nearly as happy and pleasant as Ryan's, but at least it made him into the man he is today.

Though after thinking about it, maybe Ryan shouldn't grow up like him. 'I've made a lot of mistakes in my life...' Soldier Boy's thoughts took a conflicted turn. On one hand, he wanted Ryan to be a strong man, like him, but on the other hand, he had a lot of regrets. 'Maybe my way isn't the best option...'

Despite the inner turmoil, he dared not voice his discontent, especially with MJ's watchful gaze lingering in the background. Peter may have left, but even now Soldier Boy refused to make any moves. Something told him that he wouldn't survive if he did.

After all, Peter has already spared him once. Nothing guarantees that he'd be willing to do so a second time.

Soldier Boy pondered whether this was some twisted form of punishment for his past deeds...

"Grandpa, do you want to play with them?" Ryan's innocent question snapped Soldier Boy back to the present, the request hanging in the air like an unspoken challenge.

Suppressing a sigh, Soldier Boy reluctantly joined in the impromptu action figure battle, trying to act the part of the caring grandfather. Little did he know, each move he made sent shivers of amusement through MJ, who observed the entire charade with a concealed smirk.

Becca and Billy, still uneasy about Soldier Boy's presence, observed their playtime with cautious curiosity. She couldn't deny the surreal nature of it all but found a strange reassurance in the fact that Peter had left MJ behind to keep an eye on them.

Soldier Boy, begrudgingly caught up in the world of superheroes and dolls, felt a strange sense of vulnerability. The battlefield might have been his comfort zone, but navigating the intricate threads of familial interaction proved to be a challenge beyond his accustomed skill set.

As the day unfolded, Soldier Boy's interactions with Ryan became a bit less robotic and forced. He even smiled a few times during their interactions, but he would never admit it. Nor would he ever admit to the small piece of his cold icy heart that seemed to warmed up to his Grandsons presence.

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As Soldier Boy engaged in the makeshift superhero battle with Ryan, the echo of childlike laughter filled the room. Amidst the joyous chaos, a sudden shift occurred. Ryan's innocent question hung in the air. "Grandpa, do you want to watch a movie together? I have a bunch of them about you!"

As Soldier Boy was about to reluctantly agree, seeing as he really had no choice in the matter, suddenly, the distant hum of approaching car engines caught his attention.

Soldier Boy, trained by years of war, stilled as he heard the synchronized roar of multiple cars rolling down the street. His instincts kicked in, and he subtly glanced out the window to witness a convoy of blacked-out SUVs forming a rigid line outside. The ominous sight triggered a familiar tension in his muscles, a sensation he thought he had left behind on the battlefield.

Intrigued, the other heroes in the house, Black Noir, Maeve, and Starlight, joined him by the window. Together, they observed as men and women in black tactical gear disembarking from the vehicles, creating a perimeter around the house with assault rifles at the ready.

MJ, sensing everything with her spider senses, immediately assumed command. "Billy, take Ryan and Becca in the basement."

"What's happening?!" Becca exclaimed as she rushed over to Ryan's and pulled him away from the windows.

Meanwhile, Billy had already pulled out his pistol as he walked over and peaked out of the window, "Fucking cunts!" He cursed as he caught sight of the small army outside.

MJ, seeing that the normal people in the room were getting worked up, reassured them. "You have nothing to worry about. From what I can tell, it's only normal people. I'd already be portaling you away if I thought that you were in any danger. Just go to the basement and wait for us to deal with them."

"Deal with what?" Ryan asked, standing nervously alongside his mother.

"Nothing." MJ says as she walks over bends doing eye level. "Just remember what Peter taught you and stay calm. We'll handle this, okay?"

"O-Okay..." Ryan nodded his head, still confused by what was happening.

But he didn't get to think for too long before Billy came rushing over and picked him up, slinging him over his shoulder as he pulled Becca behind him. "As you said, we'll just leave this to you guys. Don't mind us..." He said as they disappeared into the basement, locking the door behind them.

"What a p*ssy..." Soldier Boy muttered, expecting a lot more from the man who is supposed to be fathering his grandson.

"Don't judge him too soon." MJ replies, recalling everything that Peter told him about Billy Butcher.

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As the tension mounted, the men in black tactical gear outside approached and prepared to knock on the door, unaware of the impending storm about to unleash upon them. When suddenly, the front door exploded off its hinges, propelled by an unseen force, and crashed into the approaching soldiers, sending four of them sprawling to the ground.

Emerging from the newly created entrance, MJ stepped forward, radiating an aura of controlled power. She was followed closely by Black Noir, Soldier Boy, Starlight, and Maeve. The heroes moved with purpose, each possessing their unique set of abilities, ready to face the threat.

The air crackled with energy as the clash began. Gunfire erupted, filling the atmosphere with a constant rhythm of bullets, but the soldiers quickly realized they were outmatched. Soldier Boy moved with the precision of a seasoned warrior, efficiently incapacitating foes with well-timed strikes.

Beside him, Starlight unleashed bursts of blinding light, disorienting the soldiers and leaving them vulnerable. Maeve soared through the air, gracefully dodging bullets while swiftly neutralizing her targets. Black Noir, an enigmatic figure in his dark suit, moved with silent efficiency, leaving nothing but death in his wake.

MJ, however, was the epitome of controlled chaos. She effortlessly weaved through the battlefield, dodging bullets with her enhanced reflexes. Her wrists fired silk strands, ensnaring and immobilizing the armed intruders. The heroes moved in tandem, a seamless dance of power and skill.

Amidst the chaos, Soldier Boy found himself impressed by the coordinated efforts of his newfound allies. 'Not bad...' They seemed to be a lot more trained than his old team, who always slacked off and overly relied on their powers.

The soldiers, now disoriented and overwhelmed, attempted to regroup, but the heroes closed in with relentless determination.

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In one of the blacked-out SUVs, a chubby, bearded, middle-aged man sat nervously, beads of sweat forming on his forehead.

[Insert picture of Mesmer here]

As a supe with telepathic abilities, Mesmer was brought in by Stan Edgar to ensure the safe return of Ryan, Homelander's son, which was a job that he was starting to regret accepting. After all, Stan never mentioned anything about 5 supes being here.

Mesmer anxiously watched as the men accompanying him were swiftly decimated by the formidable heroes.

Summoning the courage, Mesmer finally stepped out of the car, closing his eyes and concentrating. A wave of stillness spread through the chaotic scene as Mesmer took control of everyone's minds, freezing them in place. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead as he strained to manipulate the powerful minds of the five present superheroes, facing a resistance he hadn't anticipated.

Just as Mesmer allowed himself a relieved smile, thinking he had accomplished his task, a voice cut through the silence. "Huh, I thought there wasn't any supes with them?"

Whipping his body around, Mesmer saw MJ leaning casually against the car he had just exited. Mesmer's shock intensified when he realized he couldn't sense MJ's mind whatsoever. It was like she wasn't even there.

MJ, unaffected by Mesmer's telepathic prowess, thanks to Peter's training and enchantments, spoke. "Thanks for ending the fight. I was starting to get bored..." Her nonchalant demeanor unnerved Mesmer as he began to back away, panic setting in.

"P-Please don't kill me! I have a daughter... please..." He pleaded with her, but MJ only sighed in annoyance. Swiftly, she webbed up the frozen soldiers and approached the cowering telepath.

"I'll let my husband decide whether you deserve to live or not. He probably knows more about you than I do..." With a swift and well-aimed boot to the face, MJ knocked Mesmer unconscious. "Goodnight."

As Mesmer lay defeated, the heroes, released from the telepathic hold, began to awaken, disoriented and questioning what had just occurred.

"W-What happened...?" They muttered, their minds still hazy.

As the heroes began to regain their composure, MJ gestured to the defeated soldiers. "Quickly clean this up. We're changing locations as soon as Peter gets back," she ordered as she dragged Mesmer unconscious body into the house.

Soldier Boy grunted in annoyance, unhappy at being ordered around. "Who the f*ck died and put her in charge?"

Chapter 594: Beginnings of a Robot Army

Upon Peter's return, everyone was ready to leave, their bags packed and stacked by the door.

"?" As Peter stepped out of his portal, in a good mood after his successful meeting with the president, he couldn't help but ask. "Huh? What's with the suitcases?"

"Well..." MJ efficiently explained the recent events. Peter listened intently, his gaze shifting from one hero to another as they recounted the encounter with Mesmer and the mysterious attackers.

With the briefing complete, MJ led Peter to the front of the house. There, a neatly arranged pile of deceased and captured soldiers lay restrained, their fate awaiting the inevitable arrival of law enforcement. After all, this is a suburban neighborhood, so someone had to have called the police by now.

MJ gestured toward the subdued group. "Vought sent those guys after Ryan. I read their minds. It seems like Vought is starting to panic now that Homelander is gone, alongside the team that was sent to rescue him."

Peter surveyed the scene, his eyes narrowing in concern. "I guess we shouldn't stay here. I mean, we could stay and just kill anyone who comes next, but..." he said as he turned to Ryan and his mother, who seemed shaken from everything that's happened.

"Yeah, it's probably better if we just change locations." MJ nodded in agreement.

As if on cue, the distant wail of police sirens grew louder, signaling the approaching authorities. Seeing that it was time to leave, Peter waved his hand and conjured a portal, which everyone stepped through, more than ready to avoid the police, as they would be nothing but a headache.

Before leaving, MJ gestured to Mesmer, who was passed out in the floor. "What about him?"

Staring down at the sleeping telepath, Peter recalled his story from the show...

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In the Boys, Mesmer's telepathic superpowers launched him to stardom at a young age allowing him to become a celebrity for Vought. In the 1990s, Mesmer starred in the hit television series The Mesmerizer, where he portrayed a psychic detective.

But unfortunately, just like all child stars, Mesmer's career didn't last long as he succumbed to the temptations of his powers. Engaging in illegal activities, he misused his telepathic abilities for insider trading, resulting in his termination from Vought and subsequent conviction.

Throughout his troubled past, Mesmer had a daughter named Cleo; however, his criminal record and drug abuse led to him losing custody of her. While part of him yearned for a reunion with Cleo, his primary focus shifted towards reclaiming his former fame. Consequently, Mesmer resorted to sustaining himself by attending conventions, where he would sign DVD copies of his old show, a stark reminder of his faded stardom.

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Feeling a small bit of pity for the child star, Peter shook his head. "Let's just leave him here. It's not like he did anything worth killing him over..." He says as he walks over and kneels down beside Mesmer. "But first let's seal his power. After all, he's a little too useful to Vought right now."

After all, Mesmer's mind control could easily be used to help Vought regain some of their lost influence. All he would have to do is mind control the right people to say the right things and boom... problems solved.

MJ shrugged uncaringly as she stepped through the portal. Peter stayed behind long enough to cast a quick enchantment on him, completely sealing his powers before following after her, closing the portal behind them.

As the house emptied, leaving only Mesmer sleeping on the floor, suddenly, a stream of police cars arrived outside, lights and sirens blaring.

Stepping out of the portal, the group found themselves in a vast, windowless room filled with an assortment of machinery, resembling a secret underground workshop or factory.

"Where the hell are we?" Starlight questioned, her gaze sweeping across the unfamiliar setting.

Peter, wearing a confident grin, stepped forward, the portal closing behind him. "This is our new base. A secret underground bunker, known only to the President's closest allies. We'll be safe here."

Billy, ever the skeptic, raised an eyebrow. "And how the bloody hell did you manage that?"

Peter chuckled, his eyes gleaming with mischief. "I made a little deal with the President. Now, let me show you around."

As Peter guided them through the underground facility, Starlight couldn't help but voice her curiosity. "What kind of deal did you make?"

Peter's smirk widened. "I'm going to create an army. An army that will police the supes. Keeping them in check, arresting them, and killing them if need be..."

The room fell silent as the weight of Peter's words sank in. Billy spoke up, "How do you plan on doing that?"

Peter's eyes sparkled with excitement. "You'll see soon enough."

Perplexed, the group exchanged puzzled glances. Without revealing any specifics, Peter's vague assurance left them extremely skeptical. 'Maybe he plans to reproduce Compound V?' They thought, thinking his army would be made up of more super-powered individuals.

Eager for answers, they prodded Peter for details, only to be met with his persistent smirk. "Why don't you guys go find rooms for yourselves and settle in," he said, "I'll start working in the mean time..."

As the group reluctantly walked off, leaving Peter and MJ alone in the work shop, Peter couldn't help but smirk as he turned to his beautiful wife. "You down to help make my first robot army?"

MJ couldn't help but laugh, amused by how excited Peter seemed to be. "Sure, just tell me what to do..."

...

In the dimly lit workshop, Peter stood amidst a sea of holographic blueprints and schematics, his mind consumed by the intricate details of his ambitious plan. MJ approached him with an excited smile. "So, where do we start?"

Peter pointed to the meticulously drawn designs. "Okay, first off, these babies are going to be specifically engineered to hunt down supes. Of course, we'll make it so they don't just indiscriminately kill all of them since there are still many good heroes out there, however little they may be."

MJ raised an eyebrow. "How are they supposed to tell the difference between a normal human and a person with superpowers?"

"Our Sentinels will be outfitted with a compound V detection device which will allow them to target supes by detecting the lingering traces of Compound V in their systems." Peter explained as he pulled out his laptop and showed the ingredients for the serum, which they stole from Vought, but never released. "But I still have to figure out how that's going to work, but it shouldn't take me long. I already know how to make the device, I just don't know how it will detect Compound V yet."

Putting that idea to the side for now, Peter gestured towards the blueprints displaying the colossal Sentinel Mark I model that he designed. "These bad boys will stand 18 feet tall, weigh around 4,800 lbs, and boast energy thrusters on their hands and feet. Imagine Iron Man, just bigger and badder."

MJ looked at Peter curiously. "Are they all getting an arc reactor as well?"

"No, that's a bit too much power, I think." Peter shook his head side to side. "We'll have to make them chargeable, since I'd rather not give this world infinite energy..."

As he spoke, Peter's fingers danced across holographic displays, adjusting specifications and fine-tuning the Sentinel's design. "And of course, turrets for added firepower. No hero will stand a chance, especially now that Homelander is dead."

MJ leaned against a worktable, watching Peter with a mix of admiration and amusement. "So, you're basically building an army of superhero-killing robots." She said, finding their situation quite odd. "You know, if we were still back home, we'd be considered pretty evil for doing something like this..."

Peter grinned, his excitement infectious. "Well, here, we get to be the villains. Isn't it fun?"

MJ's eyes sparkled with mischief. "Maybe a little bit~"

With that, Peter and MJ dove into the nitty-gritty of converting the secret underground bunker into a state-of-the-art Sentinel production facility. They tinkered with machines, programmed assembly lines, and utilized Peter's ingenuity and magic to streamline and quicken the process.

Meanwhile, at Vought Tower, Stan Edgar's normally composed demeanor turned stormy as he received the unsettling news about the failed retrieval of Homelander's son. His eyes narrowed, and he clenched his jaw, displeasure etched across his face.

"What do you mean, he's gone?" Stan barked at his subordinate, who nervously relayed the unfortunate information.

The subordinate stammered, "I-I apologize, sir. But we didn't stand a chance. Soldier Boy, Black Noir, Starlight, and Queen Maeve seem to be protecting him for some reason..."

Stan Edgar sighed deeply, his frustration evident. "Find him. Now. We can't afford any more setbacks, especially with Homelander out of the picture."

As the subordinate hastily left the room to execute Stan's orders, the ominous air in the room thickened. However, Stan's attention was quickly diverted to another troubling matter... Mesmer's sudden loss of his telepathic abilities.

Annoyance and curiosity mingled in Stan's expression. Mesmer, once a valuable asset for Vought, stood nervously in front of Stan's imposing desk, clearly scared and upset. "I don't understand... My powers just vanished. How could they disappear like this?"

Stan studied Mesmer with a calculating gaze. "Useless," he muttered under his breath. "Take him to facility 5722," Stan ordered his subordinates, his tone cold and unforgiving.

Mesmer's eyes widened in fear as realization struck him. "No, please! You can't do this! I've been loyal to Vought!"

Ignoring Mesmer's pleas, Stan motioned to his subordinates. "Thoroughly test him. Find out why his powers are gone, and if there's any way to restore them."

As the subordinates closed in on Mesmer, his attempts at bargaining and pleading fell on deaf ears. "Please! Don't send me there! I'm loyal, I swear! You can't just do this to me!"

But the subordinates, unmoved by Mesmer's desperate words, surrounded him and forcefully dragged him out of Stan's office, his protests echoing through the hallways.

Stan Edgar, left alone in his office, watched the scene unfold with a calculating gaze. Mesmer's unexpected loss of power was both worrying and intriguing. Though he wouldn't know much until they're done dissecting him.

Chapter 595: Sentinel Test: Successful

Days passed within the secret government bunker, and the atmosphere settled into a routine. Ryan and his mother, still adjusting to their new surroundings, eventually found solace in the secure environment. The transition from a normal loving home to a dark and dusty bunker hit Ryan's mother the hardest, her worries etched on her face, but the safety of the bunker eased her anxieties.

Peter and MJ, amidst building the Sentinel production factory, encountered setbacks. Tuning the sensors for the Sentinels required a deep dive into the study of Compound V. But despite a few challenges here and there, the project ultimately progressed smoothly, and the automated factory neared completion.

In the midst of constructing the Sentinels, Peter dedicated significant time to training Ryan. Each day, before breakfast, Peter put Ryan through intense training, honing the young boy's powers little by little. Ryan's mother, ever watchful, supervised the training sessions, ensuring her son's well-being.

As days passed, Ryan's progress became evident. His strength no longer led to accidental destruction, and he gained greater control over his blossoming abilities. The transformation from potential danger to controlled power marked a significant achievement for the young man.

During these training sessions, Soldier Boy, acting as Peter's assistant, played the role of demonstrator and test dummy for Ryan's exercises. Through this position, he became much closer to his grandson, seeing him as his true family. Peter even caught him smiling proudly every time Ryan achieved something in his training, whether that be a new lap record in the obstacle course, or landing a hit in their sparring matches.

However, challenges emerged when Soldier Boy attempted to impart life lessons, inadvertently conveying outdated and scewed beliefs on things like manhood. A conversation with Ryan's mother ensued, urging Soldier Boy to refrain from imposing antiquated notions of masculinity on her son.

Soldier Boy, grappling with the clash of eras, reluctantly decided to keep his mouth shut. He began to realize that he was an old fossil from a distant time, and maybe his and his father's way of parenting weren't the way of this era. Though he retained some traditional values, he recognized the fact that he wasn't Ryan's parent, so his upbringing wasn't his responsibility.

Ryan's mother, wary of Soldier Boy's influence, had a heart-to-heart with her son. She revealed the history of his grandfather, which Peter found in the data stolen from Vought, explaining that he should take Soldier Boys words with a grain of salt.

Although the lessons of the past clashed with the present, eventually, everything smoothed over as everyone came to an understanding.

...

Finally, the anticipated day arrived, the completion of the Sentinel production factory. The vast underground bunker echoed with the hum of machinery, signaling the realization of Peter's ambitious plan.

Gathering everyone together, Peter and MJ unveiled the completed Sentinel production factory. The group, including Becca, Billy, Ryan, Soldier Boy, Black Noir, Starlight, and Maeve, stood in anticipation before the impressive machinery.

"Do we finally get to know what you guys are working on?" Billy asked, annoyed that they were being so tight lipped about their little project.

Smirking, Peter nodded his head. "Oh, yeah, today is the day." He says as his hand hovered over a lever. "I would like to introduce all of you to the Sentinels."

With a dramatic flourish, Peter initiated the assembly line, and before their eyes, the first Sentinel emerged. The automated process began crafting a metal army, each Sentinel taking form with precision and efficiency. The rhythmic hum of machinery filled the cavernous space.

Ryan, wide-eyed with amazement, watched the Sentinels come to life. To him, they were like something out of a cartoon, and the awe on his face mirrored the sentiment of the others. The transformation from an idea to tangible, towering robots unfolded before them.

As the assembly line continued its work, more than ten Sentinels stood in clean rows, a formidable display of technological prowess. They saluted Peter as if acknowledging him as their creator, their metallic bodies gleaming in the artificial light. It was a sight that left everyone, especially Ryan, in a state of shock and awe.

[Insert picture of Sentinels here]

Peter couldn't contain his satisfaction, and a smirk played on his lips. "HehehahaHAHA...!" A maniacal laugh bubbled up, echoing through the underground chamber. He reveled in the realization of his ambitious plan, basking in the success of creating a robot army. However, the reaction from the group was not what he expected.

Wide-eyed stares and exchanged glances met Peter's triumphant laughter. His attempt at a villainous persona left the group bewildered, and it was Ryan who voiced the collective sentiment. "Um, is teacher okay? Did he hit his head or something?"

Before the awkwardness could linger, MJ, with a roll of her eyes, intervened. She delivered a swift smack to the back of Peter's head, her no-nonsense demeanor shining through. "Quit it, Peter. You're scaring Ryan, and everyone else, for that matter. Why do you always have to laugh like a villain at times like this? Can't you be normal for once?"

The laughter subsided as Peter rubbed the back of his head, realizing the unintended effect of his theatrics. "Normal is boring." He couldn't help but smirk. "Besides, if I'm not supposed to laugh like a maniacal villain after creating a robot army, then when am I supposed to?"

MJ just sighed as she asked. "Why do it in the first place?" Though she ultimately gave up, defeated by her husband's idiotic mindset.

The Sentinels, who were constantly growing in number, all stood at attention, adding an eerie ambiance to the bunker. But despite the initial discomfort, the group couldn't deny the impressive sight before them. Before they even knew what happened, almost a hundred Sentinels were created, and that number was rising with every passing minute.

Peter couldn't keep the smirk off of his face. "It's time to show off and test out my baby's..."

Without alerting the president, Peter, accompanied by the first batch of a hundred Sentinels, soared over to the White House. The agreement he made with the president was about to be showcased, and Peter couldn't wait to see the look on his face.

As they approached, Peter surveyed the scene unfolding in the Oval Office. With his enhanced senses he felt and heard everything that was happening inside the Oval Office.

President Shaefer sat surrounded by a few Vought 'superheroes,' who seemed to be trying to intimidate him. The situation looked dire, with the president facing pressure to support Vought during its tumultuous period.

"Why are you making this so hard?!" A man whose hands were covered in fire exclaimed, menacingly staring down at the president. "We're the good guys for f*ck's sake! Just help us out already!"

"No." The president responded resolutely, his suit charred in a few places and his face bruised. All over the floor around them, men in black suits lay either dead or unconscious, showing that this wasn't just some ordinary meeting.

Beside the Vought heroes stood Victor K. Neuman, the vice president and a staunch Vought supporter. His alignment against the president hinted at the internal turmoil within the government.

"You have to give up sometime Robert." The vice president spoke, a smug look on his face. "After all, you have a family at home to worry about. Don't let this put them in danger. Just agree to the deal, and this can all be over..."

"F*ck you, traitor!" The president responded by spitting in his second in commands face.

"Ugh, disgusting..." the vice president muttered as he wiped his face. Turning back to the supes, he yells, "What are you waiting for?! Kick the sh*t out of him!"

Seeing an opportunity to make a grand entrance, Peter grinned. He issued a swift command, and the Sentinels sprang into action. The metallic army descended upon the White House, their imposing figures casting shadows across the grounds.

In the Oval Office, tensions peaked as the Vought superheroes loomed over the vulnerable head of state. The president, unwilling to succumb to Vought's demands, waited for the beating that was to come.

Crash!

Suddenly, the Sentinels burst into the Oval Office, destroying the walls and windows with their metal frames. Without wasting a moment, they swiftly assessed the situation and engaged the Vought superheroes.

The unexpected intrusion shocked everyone in the room. The president and vice president watched in astonishment as the Sentinels efficiently and ruthlessly neutralized the Vought superheroes, turrets appearing on their backs, which unloaded a sea of laser precise bullets.

Before the 'heroes' could even react to the sudden intrusion, a wall of lead came flying their way, ripping through their bodies and killing them in a matter of seconds.

As their bodies fell to the floor, pooling in crimson blood, Peter came walking in behind them, his hands casually in his pockets. "Yo."

As the Sentinels finished executing their task, they seemed to register Peter's presence as they all stood at attention, awaiting further commands. "Good work boys. Now go and secure the perimeter." Peter ordered, his smirk never faded as the Sentinels rushed to fulfill his command.

The president, now realizing where these robots came from, couldn't help but smile. He never thought Peter would actually be able to deliver on his promise, let alone do it so soon, but after witnessing the capabilities of the Sentinels firsthand, he knew that he made the right choice.

The once intimidating Vought superheroes now seemed like nothing compared to the Sentinels, who stood as a symbol of power against those who sought to manipulate the government.

Across the room, the vice president stared at the Sentinels in fear, dropping to his knees and wetting his pants as he muttered. "W-What's happening...?"

With the threat neutralized, the president, still processing the swift turn of events, turned to his former second in command, a triumphant smirk in his face. "Oh, you'll find out soon enough... and so will Vought..."

Chapter 596: The Fall of Vought

In the aftermath of the Sentinel's intervention at the White House, the metallic army efficiently securing the area, Peter sat casually on the Presidents desk. The vice president, still in shock and soaked in his own urine, could do nothing but watch in horror.

Ignoring the trembling figure on the floor, Peter eyed the president, a curious look in his eyes. "Well, care to explain what happened?"

President Shaefer, dusting off his suit as he stood to his feet, began to recount the recent events. "Vought's on the move. They've been deploying all their resources to fight against the evidence you released and clear their name. They're pulling out all the stops, trying to manipulate public opinion, paying off influencers, silencing whistleblowers, you name it. They're desperately trying to salvage whatever they can from the mess you stirred up."

As Peter listened, his eyes flickered with a mix of curiosity and amusement. "And what exactly was that little meeting about?" he asked, gesturing to the bloody remnants of the 'heroes' on the floor.

The president sighed, fatigue evident in his eyes. "Vought wanted me to halt all investigations against them." He revealed as he went in to explain. "Currently, I have around 10 separate investigations underway, all focused on Vought. They must have heard about it from this idiot..."

The president motioned to the vice president, who was still on his knees, attempting to speak but found his voice choked by fear. Peter, glancing over, couldn't resist a taunt. "Dude... did you seriously p*ss yourself? That's just sad..."

The vice president's eyes widened, his trembling form unable to muster any coherent response. "..."

Peter turned back to the president, ignoring the vice president once again. "Well, since you have all of the proof already, how about we go and serve some arrest warrant's?" He asked, gesturing to the metal army outside.

Of course, many of the investigations were already completed. The only thing holding them back from actually punishing Vought and its people were the many superpowered individuals they have on the payroll.

Even without counting supes like Homelander, who's thankfully dead now, Vought has more than 200 heroes under employment. That's more than enough to take over the United States of America. How could the CIA, NSA, FBI, or any other law enforcement agency handle such an army?

But now, they would have the sentinels at their back!

President Shaefer nodded, a smirk forming in his face. "That sounds like a wonderful idea..."

In the heart of Manhattan, within the towering structure of Vought Tower, Stan Edgar found a glimmer of hope amid the chaos he's had to endure recently. The atmosphere in the high-rise building was changing, with assets secured and a steady restoration of Vought's tarnished reputation. Retired heroes and loyal supporters rallied under the rejuvenated banner of Vought, creating a semblance of stability.

As Stan observed the progress from his office, his mind focused on the critical move he had made. Sending a team to influence the president had been a calculated gamble, one that aimed to secure a powerful ally, while also protecting the company and its people from any investigations.

If unsuccessful, the backup plan involved the vice president, a longstanding supporter of Vought, taking the reins after the president's untimely death. Either way, Stan anticipated a favorable outcome.

Just as the executive began to revel in the illusion of control, a sudden disturbance caught his attention. Glancing out of his floor-to-ceiling windows, Stan's eyes widened at the sight of a swarm of metallic robots hovering around Vought Tower. A sense of foreboding crept over him as the robots efficiently secured the perimeter, their presence an unwelcome intrusion.

Walking over to the window, Stan tried to discern the nature of this unexpected development. The sleek, metallic figures moved with precision, encircling the building like bugs. It became apparent to Stan that this was no ordinary security detail. A sense of unease settled in as he realized the gravity of the situation unfolding outside.

As if to strengthen his growing anxiety, the blare of sirens and flashing lights from police cars and blacked-out government vehicles became visible on the streets below. The sound of emergency vehicles converging on Vought Tower created a spectacle that further heightened Stan's apprehension.

A single bead of sweat formed on Stan's forehead as he comprehended the severity of the moment. Instantly, the illusion of Vought's upward trajectory crumbled, replaced by the stark reality that the tides had turned against them.

Just as Stan was about to reach for his phone, a nonchalant voice disrupted his thoughts, asking, "How do you sit in this chair all day? It's not very comfortable, is it?"

Turning around, Stan's eyes barely widened as he found Peter, the orchestrator of this unexpected turmoil, reclining in his chair with a smirk on his face and his feet disrespectfully propped on the desk, tarnishing the paperwork beneath his dirt-covered shoes.

Intrigued, Stan questioned, "This is your doing, I presume? I take it the president is safe?"

Peter, maintaining his casual posture, nodded with a mischievous glint in his eyes. "Oh, he's safe and sound. But sadly, the same can't be said about the team you sent after him. Though they did make good target practice for my Sentinels." He motioned towards the imposing figures surrounding Vought Tower.

Stan, aware of the magnitude of the situation, tried to regain control of the conversation. "Are these Sentinels under your control?"

Peter, with a smirk, confirmed, "Absolutely. Think of them as my superhero police force. A fail-safe for when heroes or companies employing them step out of line. Cool, huh?"

Stan, realizing the power dynamics at play, attempted to negotiate. "Listen, maybe we can work something out. You send these Sentinels away, and Vought can offer you something substantial. Money? Property? Compound V, perhaps?"

Cutting him off, Peter chuckled, "Sorry, Stan, but Vought's a bit too poor to afford my going rate. Plus, I already have the recipe for Compound V, stole it last week. Nice try, though."

As Stan calculated his next move, a sudden amplified voice was echoed from the speakers on every Sentinel in the vicinity. The voice, unmistakably that of the president, declared, "This is President Robert Schaefer! We have a search warrant for this property and arrest warrants for every employee inside! Please surrender peacefully to avoid harming yourselves and any nearby civilians!"

The announcement reverberated through Vought Tower, sending shockwaves through its occupants. But that wasn't all. The message was also heard by everyone within a 6 block radius around the tower.

Stan, now facing the stark reality of the situation, locked eyes with Peter, who wore a confident smirk. "So, what are you going to do? Because I'd really like to test out my Sentinels some more. Though I can tell you right now, the odds of you turning this situation around are slim to none. Even if you have another Homelander or two locked away somewhere, I can just step in and kill them myself. But I would like to see how my Sentinels would fare against him..."

Stan Edgar, the shrewd and logical mastermind behind Vought, couldn't dismiss the undeniable truth presented by Peter. The Sentinels were an overwhelming force, outnumbering Vought's heroes. Assessing the situation, he acknowledged that only about 50 of his heroes were currently in the building, not nearly enough to combat both Peter and the metallic army outside.

Pulling his phone from his pocket, Stan pondered his next move, contemplating the consequences of a futile battle. After a moment's consideration, he dialed a number. As someone on the other end picked up, Stan's authoritative voice issued a directive, "Order everyone to surrender peacefully. There's no use fighting a battle we can't win."

Hanging up the phone, Stan took a seat across from Peter, accepting the inevitability of the situation. The impending arrival of the government and police signaled the end of Vought's unchecked dominance. The atmosphere in the room shifted as both men waited in silence for the inevitable reckoning.

Peter, though seemingly disappointed by the lack of confrontation, shrugged nonchalantly. "Boring choice, but the right one," he remarked, acknowledging the pragmatic decision Stan had made. 'He was always like that in the show too...'

Stan nodded in agreement. "Let's just hope they'll listen to me." He knew the challenging part lay in convincing Vought's arrogant and willful superheroes to surrender peacefully.

As the words left Stan's mouth, the tranquility of the office was shattered by the explosive sound of windows breaking. All across the building, heroes leaped out, unwilling to yield to the approaching authorities. Their defiance echoed through the floors, a symphony of shattering glass followed by lone figures, trying to make a run for it.

Vought's super-powered individuals, aware of their guilt and the insurmountable evidence against them, chose not to face the consequences of their actions. With powers ranging from super strength to telekinesis, they believed they could escape justice. Stan, watching the chaotic exodus, couldn't help but feel a mix of frustration and resignation.

Peter smirked as he glanced down at the fleeing heroes. "Well, at least they're making it interesting." He commented as he watched the swarm of Sentinels begin to move.

The Sentinels, their metallic frames moving with precision, swiftly descended upon the fleeing superheroes. Panic gripped the heroes as they attempted to escape, but the mechanical guardians were relentless, chasing them with a clear speed and numerical advantage.

In the midst of the chaotic scene, some heroes resorted to desperate measures, taking hostages in a futile attempt to shield themselves from capture. "Stay back!" A woman with super strength exclaimed as she held a man by the throat, threatening to squeeze the life out of him.

However, the masterfully accurate turrets mounted on the Sentinels' shoulders proved to be ruthless executioners. In a grisly spectacle, the turrets unleashed large-caliber rounds, instantly ending the lives of those using hostages as shields. The air echoed with the terrified screams of the hostages as they witnessed their captors' heads explode in a gruesome display.

Stan Edgar, seated beside Peter, watched the events unfold with a mix of relief and grim acceptance.

The Sentinels efficiently neutralized any resistance, ensuring that the fleeing superheroes faced the consequences of their actions. The remaining heroes who had chosen not to attempt an escape seemed to share a collective acknowledgment that they had made the right choice in surrendering peacefully.

As the Sentinels completed their mission, capturing the heroes, both living and otherwise, they ascended to the sky. Flying up to the police barricade surrounding Vought Tower, the robotic enforcers delivered the captured individuals to the waiting authorities.

The authorities, a mix of government agents and law enforcement officers, looked on with a combination of awe and trepidation as the Sentinels unloaded their cargo. The towering robots, seemingly indifferent to the chaos they had wrought, fulfilled their programmed duty without hesitation.

Stan Edgar, despite the grim nature of the situation, couldn't help but feel thankful for the resolution. The swift and decisive action of the Sentinels had averted a potentially catastrophic confrontation, ensuring that Vought wouldn't take too much of a blow.

Peter, observing the scene with a casual demeanor, remarked, "Looks like things are coming to an end. At least for this branch of Vought..." Peter said, hinting at the fact that, soon enough, situations like this would repeat all across the world.

Stan nodded, acknowledging the gravity of the situation. "It's over," he said with a sense of finality.

Chapter 597: Clone

In the aftermath of the Sentinel's raid on Vought-owned properties worldwide, a meticulously executed plan unfolded. Across the globe, the metallic army descended upon Vought installations, systematically dismantling the company's reign. The Sentinels, under Peter's control, became an unstoppable force, ensuring that justice was served.

At each location, a portion of Vought Supes attempted desperate escapes or futile resistances, but in the end, the Sentinel army proved too strong for them. The Sentinels, with their numerical advantage, overwhelming strength, and precision, swiftly neutralized those who posed a threat to others.

The casualties among Vought's superpowered individuals was a grim sight for the executives watching. After all, each one of them was worth millions or even billions of dollars. Though they didn't have much time to think, as these executives soon found themselves in hand cuffs.

Among the notable properties that the Sentinels visited was The Sage Grove Center, a psychiatric hospital in Pennsylvania, exposed as a sinister Vought subsidiary, which experimented on the civilian patients.

The Sentinels, accompanied by Peter, who did nothing but sit back and watch his army at work, faced a group of Supes who refused to surrender. And why would they? These people were involved in torturing and experimenting on civilians, so why give up when you know a heavy punishment is on the horizon?

Lamplighter, a former member of The Seven, attempted to use his flames to cover his escape by burning down the hospital, but sadly for him, the Sentinel's Compound V detection system picked up his fluctuating powers before busting in, ending his life with a hail of large caliber bullets.

As the Sentinels continued their operation, uncovering corruption and illegal practices committed by Vought, the number of captured heroes reached 146 out of the 237 employed by the company. The rest met their demise during the operation, a harsh consequence of their unwillingness to give themselves up peacefully.

Throughout the operation, the world witnessed a noticeable dip in the number of superheroes. Vought's influence, once pervasive, crumbled under the weight of a robot army and the exposed truth behind their facade.

The Sentinels, acting as a symbol of justice, had reshaped the landscape of the superhero community. With Vought in a downward spiral, which would most likely end in the companies demise, and the Sentinels to punish those who step out of line, the world would never be the same again, nor would its heroes.

...

As Peter traversed through the last Vought Facility on the list, his Sentinels doing all of the work as he strolls around, he suddenly stopped and looked at a blank wall. Hearing the sound of air flowing on the other side, he wasted no time in punching open a concealed metal door, discovering a dark staircase leading downward.

Ordering his Sentinel army to complete their tasks above, Peter descended alone. In the dimly lit depths, he stumbled upon a reinforced prison-like door. 'This isn't a good sign...' he thought as he ripped it off its hinges.

Tossing the door aside, Peter entered a gloomy chamber where a child, no older than 3 or 4, sat in the corner, staring up at him with piercing blue eyes.

The boy, rocking back and forth in the fetal position, as if hugging and soothing himself, regarded Peter with a mix of fear and appraisal, his gaze shifted toward the open door, hinting at a fleeting thought of escape.

'Called it... Why does it always have to be kids? Can't evil organizations just limit their experiments to murderers or something?' Peter thought, feeling bad for the poor kid.

Maintaining a safe distance to avoid frightening the child, Peter knelt down and gently introduced himself, "Hello, I'm Peter. What's your name?" The boy, however, remained silent, his eyes betraying a mix of curiosity and wariness. "Can you talk?"

Without responding in any way, the child's eyes turned to the door once again before he shot off the ground with superhuman speed, attempting to attack Peter and break free.

With ease, Peter extended his arms, catching the child mid-air by grasping him under his armpits, holding him up in front of him. "That's not very nice. You shouldn't attack people like that. It's rude, you know?"

The boy's eyes widened in realization of Peter's strength as he struggled in vain. Even with his own super strength, he couldn't wrench himself out of Peter's hold, which only fueled the fear that was already radiating through his entire body.

Closer now, Peter could scrutinize the child's appearance. Dressed in tiny white hospital-type scrubs, his unkempt blonde hair flowed long. Even his fingernails bore the signs of neglect. Although not visibly malnourished, the child seemed abandoned and uncared for.

[Insert picture of child Homelander here]

A particular detail, however, drew Peter's attention, and that was the striking resemblance to Homelander. The blonde hair, the piercing blue eyes... 'This is definitely a Homelander clone.'

As if to prove his growing suspicion, the child's eyes began to emit an ominous red glow, charging up his heat vision in order to escape. Immediately, it became evident that this was a clone, a creation of Vought, echoing the powerful superhero it sought to replicate.

"Sigh..." Seeing the attack charging up, Peter let out an exasperated breath before setting the kid back on his feet and flicking him on the forehead.

"Ouch!" The kid exclaimed as he rubbed his reddening forehead, his eyes dimming back to their normal blue.

Kneeling down again, Peter spoke with a calming tone, trying to reach the frightened child. "Hey there, I've already introduced myself. It's your turn now. Don't worry, I'm not here to hurt you." The child, still displaying a mix of fear and defiance, remained silent. "Do you have a name?"

Instantly, the child averted his eyes to the side, almost ashamed to answer. 'So, they didn't even give him a name...' Peter thought sadly. "Would you like one? A name, I mean."

"!" Whipping his head back to Peter, the boy seemed both eager and hesitant, though he still didn't speak, which worried Peter.

"Should I take that as a yes?" Peter smiled as the kid reluctantly nodded his head. "How about I take you out of here and we can think of a good name for you? After all, it's not everyday that you get to pick your own name. You're pretty lucky, you know that?"

Refuting Peter's words, the kid looked around the room, as if to say 'does this look lucky to you?'

"That's not what I meant." Peter shook his head. "I mean, you have the chance to pick your own name. If I could do that, I'd name myself something cool, like Dante King..." He said, his eyes suddenly widening. "Oh! That's a good name. Do you want it?"

"..." Unimpressed, the kid shook his head side to side.

"Okay... picky kid, I guess..." Peter muttered as he stood up and picked the kid up with him. "How about Axel Blaze? That one's pretty cool..."

At first, the kid's eyes widen as he froze, unused to being carried like this. He wonders whether he should struggle out of Peter's hold, but before he could, Peter started walking out of the room and up the stairs. "What about Kane Hendrix..."

As Peter carried the child out of the Vought facility, he continued suggesting names, trying to lighten the somber atmosphere that clung to the kid. Stepping into the sunlight, Axel's eyes adjusted, tears welling up as he stared at the world beyond his prison cell. Peter gently stopped him from looking directly at the sun as he cried, finally free.

Frowning at the kid's silent anguish, Peter realized he needed to uncover the child's story. 'I also need to check if he's a psycho, like Homelander...' Unable to communicate verbally, Peter decided to use his telepathy to delve into the child's mind without his awareness.

Images flashed before him as Peter witnessed the kid's entire life unfold. Surprisingly, he was born to a mother in a normal hospital, and even lived in an apartment with her afterward, but Vought intervened after a year, killing his mother and taking him away.

Scientists casually discussed this around the unaware toddler, revealing that his mother was merely an incubator paid to birth a Homelander clone. But she had grown attached and tried to escape with him. Of course, Vought eventually found them and reclaimed their asset, ending her life in the process.

Since then, the kid lived alone and neglected in the lab, clinging to fading memories of the days spent with his loving mother. Exiting the child's mind, a few tears rolled down Peter's cheeks. Although he was happy that the kid wasn't a psychopath like Homelander, he felt a profound sadness for the life the child could have had if he hadn't been separated from his mother.

As they walked away from the facility, Peter spoke gently, "kid, I know it's tough, but you're free now. We'll find a better life for you." The child, still teary-eyed, looked up at Peter, a small glimmer of trust in his eyes.

Suddenly, Peter smirked as he thought of another name. "How about Alexander Storm?" he proposed, but the kid shook his head. "Alright... you're way too picky, you know that?"

"..." The silent kid just shrugged his shoulder as if to say, 'It's not my fault your names suck...'

Rolling his eyes, Peter yells some orders to his Sentinels, which the kid in his arms seemed to finally notice, before waving his hand and opening a shimmering golden portal. "Fine, let's just ask MJ. Hopefully, she'll have a name that you'll like..."

As Peter left, the Sentinels continued their word. And before the day was over, every Vought property was raided, and every employee, including superheroes were in custody.

With Vought's systematic takedown complete, the extent of their illicit activities came to light. The investigations revealed a web of deception, from manipulating public opinion to conducting unethical experiments. The company, once a formidable force, now faced insurmountable challenges in rebuilding its tarnished reputation.

No, it was better to say that they would never be able to come back from this. It wasn't just insurmountable, it was impossible for Vought to rebuild. If Peter's leaked evidence was the coffin, then these raids were the nails in that coffin.

Vought was officially dead, and there was no coming back.

Chapter 598: Leo

Returning to the Butcher residence, Sentinels standing guard outside, Peter stepped out of a portal, which quickly snapped shut behind him. Carrying the nameless kid, he strolled past the Sentinel guards, who saluted him as he passed by before stepping into the house.

The neighbors, peering out from the safety of their homes, witnessed Peter's arrival, accompanied by the unusual sight of saluting robots. Confused and concerned, they had already called the police multiple times, but with the president backing Peter, any interference was deterred.

Before the whole Sentinel operation started, Peter moved everyone out of the government bunker and back here. After all, Vought has a lot more to worry about right now than capturing the son of Homelander.

Inside the house, Peter closed the door behind him, ignoring the curious glances from the neighbors. "Honey, I'm home-!" He called out as a shotgun appeared, aimed at his face.

Billy Butcher, gripping the shotgun, guarding the door, skeptical of the robotic protectors. The kid in Peter's arms flinched at the sight of the gun, prompting Peter to disarm Billy with a swift motion. A glare from Peter conveyed the gravity of the situation, and Billy, realizing his mistake, "Uhh, sorry about that..." He apologized.

The noise drew the attention of everyone in the house. MJ, Becca, and Ryan gathered, their faces reflecting a mix of confusion and concern, especially when they saw the unkempt, filthy child in Peter's arms.

Before they could ask any questions, Peter spoke up, "I'll explain in a minute. First, can one of you go and start the bath? This kid smells like a wet dog..." He scrunched his nose as the kid turned to him, glaring silently as if to say, 'I don't smell!'

Of course, Peter completely ignored him. His nose wasn't lying after all. It was obvious that the kid just didn't want to take a bath. Peter, sensing his reluctance, chose to ignore it, which seemed to only annoy the child even more.

Their silent communication brought smiles to those witnessing the unique bond. Peter and the kid seemed to have some sort of unspoken understanding between them.

Becca hurried off to prepare the bath, and Peter directed Ryan to find some of his old clothes for the kid. As Ryan rushed away, Peter turned to eye the kid's long fingernails and unkempt hair, potentially hindering the bath. With a snap of his fingers, a golden energy surrounded the child, trimming his hair and nails to perfection.

The sudden transformation surprised everyone, and the kid, now with a groomed appearance, began to struggle in Peter's arms. In response, Peter conjured a mirror, revealing the child's new look, short, well-trimmed hair and neatly manicured nails. Although the kid wasn't thrilled with the change, he didn't voice any complaints.

...

Soon enough, the bath was ready, and Peter handed the kid over to Becca, who volunteered to bathe him. As Peter left the bathroom, intending to speak with MJ, the kid floated out of Becca's arms, shooting towards him. Wrapping his tiny arms tightly around Peter's neck, fear evident in his eyes, the child clung to Peter, terrified that he might be left alone again.

Witnessing this, everyone in the room realized exactly where Peter found this kid, Vought. After all, where else would he find a kid that could fly? Their minds instantly wandered to thoughts of cruel experimentation. Sad and pitying looks exchanged among them as they eyed the boy, only guessing at the pain he carried.

"Hey, little buddy," Peter said gently, feeling the level of fear that the kid was radiating as he stuck to him like a glue. "I'll just be outside talking to my wife, okay? I'm not going anywhere. I'm not even leaving the house, okay?"

The kid pulled back, searching Peter's eyes for any signs of lying. Satisfied, yet reluctantly, he floated back into Becca's arms, unhappy with the entire situation. As Peter left with promises of returning soon, the bathroom door closed behind him.

...

In the kitchen, Peter and MJ took refuge. A quick spell ensured privacy, considering the kid's Homelander origins and potential super hearing ability. As Peter started cooking, knowing the kid will be hungry after his bath, MJ's questions flowed, probing into the mysterious child's backstory.

"He's a clone of Homelander. I found him during the whole Vought mess," Peter explained, pouring a small amount of olive oil into a pan. "The kid's got issues, though. Neglect and abandoned being the top two, as you saw in the bathroom just now."

Initially wary, MJ voiced her concern, "But... Didn't you say he's a clone of Homelander? Is it safe for him to be here?" Of course, she was hinting at Homelander's psychotic tendencies.

Peter reassured her, "He's not like that. I read his mind to make sure of it. He's just a scared kid with a sad and messed up past."

As the aroma of the cooked food filled the air, MJ broached the inevitable question, "What are we gonna do with him? He seems pretty attached to you..." she didn't mention it, but that attachment seemed to be a two way street. "Are we...?"

After observing the clear attachment between Peter and the child, she hinted at the possibility of adoption, which Peter was reluctant to do again. After all, they already have two children. America was still newly adopted, so it might not be the best idea to bring back another child.

But MJ didn't seem to mind. The idea having another super-powered child running around the house seemed like a splendid idea to her. Seeing the look on his wife's face, Peter couldn't help but wonder if she's become addicted to adopting wayward children...

Peter sighed, glancing toward the direction of the bathroom with a conflicted expression. "I don't know, MJ. I'd have to think about it..."

The weight of responsibility and the complexity of the situation lingered in the air as they pondered the uncertain future for the nameless, traumatized child.

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As the bathroom door flung open, a transformed golden haired child sped down the steps, clad in Ryan's old clothes. His once unkempt appearance had given way to a cleaner, more presentable version.

"?!" Frantically searching for Peter, he soon spotted him in the kitchen. The mere sight of Peter seemed to calm him immensely, and he approached, sticking close as Peter finished cooking.

"Look at you," Peter remarked with a grin, glancing at the child's now groomed appearance. "You don't smell like a dumpster anymore."

Leo didn't voice his thoughts, but a subtle shift in his expression indicated his annoyance at Peter's comment. Of course, he didn't let it stop him from hovering over Peter, constantly following his every move like a lost duckling.

MJ watched this scene unfold with a small, adoring smile on her face. 'Cute...'

Once the food was ready, Peter sat Leo down, filling his plate with care. "Eat." He said, watching as the kid eyed his food warily. "I didn't put anything in it. It's just normal food..."

Of course, he knew why the kid was wary. After all, he saw his memories. One of which was when the scientists at the facility would put things into his food, like poison or other chemicals to test his bodies reaction.

Obviously, these were painful memories, which is why he's always wary of any food that he eats. "... Hesitantly nodding, he started eating, happy to find no odd tastes in the food.

MJ and Peter joined him at the table. As they ate, Peter began suggesting names again, "...Dean Atlas? ...Jeremiah Ambrose? ...James Bond ...Bart Simpson?" But no matter what he suggested, the kid would always shake his head, clearly dissatisfied with anything Peter said.

Frustrated, Peter turned to MJ for help. After a moment of contemplation, she proposed, "Why don't we stick to a first name for now?" She said, receiving zero disagreement. "How about... Leo? It means lion-heart, and you certainly looked like a lion when you arrived with your hair and claws."

Peter scoffed. "And he smelled like one too." He commented, though unlike usual, the kid didn't glare at him in displeasure.

Pausing, Peter looking down at him, surprised to see him considered the name before nodding in agreement and pointing at himself. "L-Leo" He stuttered in a broken voice, unused to talking.

Peter's eyes widened. This was the first time he heard Leo speak. A warm smile spread across his face as he patted Leo's head. "It's decided then. You're Leo from now on."

Leo looked up at Peter, a bright smile breaking across his face, revealing bits of food in his teeth. The unexpected display of happiness left both MJ and Peter momentarily stunned, soon replaced by their own smiles. They had witnessed two firsts today. Leo's first word and his first smile.

MJ glanced at Peter, noting the doting look he had while watching Leo eat. She instantly knew then and there that they would be taking Leo back with them. It was inevitable at this point. Leo had somehow found his way into Peter's heart, and the path to adoption seemed all but certain.

'Maybe we should make a baby next time...' MJ thought, her mind drifting off to thoughts of pregnancy, and the process it takes to get there. 'Hehehe...'

Sensing something off, Peter looked up at MJ, seeing her smiling with her eyes glazed over in bliss. "... He didn't know what she was day dreaming about, but he felt that it was going to give him a headache...

Days rolled on in the unfamiliar universe, where Peter found himself embracing the role of a mentor to Ryan, guiding him through the intricacies of controlling his burgeoning powers.

As training sessions progressed, Ryan exhibited remarkable progress in gaining mastery over his abilities. The suburban upbringing may have shielded him, but Peter's guidance was proving instrumental in honing those latent powers.

Even Leo, despite the trauma of his past, joined their sessions and showcased an innate control, which Peter already knew about. After all, he saw all of the harsh tests that Vought put him through when he read his mind.

Other than training, Peter, MJ, and Leo formed an unconventional family, with Leo proving inseparable from Peter, refusing to stray far from his newfound protector.

Nights, however, presented an unexpected challenge for the newlyweds. Leo's insistence on sharing the same room disrupted any semblance of intimacy between Peter and MJ. The delicate dance of a young marriage was interrupted by the presence of a scared but clingy child. The bedroom became a sanctuary for comforting Leo's nightmares rather than the sanctuary of Peter and MJ's shared moments.

...

'This little bastard...' Peter thought right after Leo came barging into their room, completely c*ck-blocking him. "Sigh..." He let out an annoyed breath as he watched Leo snuggle up to MJ with a relieved smile on his face.

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Peter couldn't shake the feeling that Ryan and Leo were part of some twisted experiment, two sides of a coin tested to see which life would yield the perfect weapon. The contrast in their upbringing, one surrounded by love and the other marred by cruelty, fueled suspicions that Vought had been manipulating them from the start. Questions lingered, but with Vought's demise, the answers didn't really matter anymore.

With each passing day, Leo's past, marred by experiments and neglect, was slowly replaced by a present where he was cared for, protected, and given the chance to be a kid again.

The living room became a hub of activity, where Peter and Leo shared moments of laughter while watching cartoons. Despite everything, Peter felt a sense of responsibility for the boy. He began to realize that he couldn't abandon Leo, especially not after the past few days spent with him.

'Sigh... MJ is going to rub this in my face, isn't she?' Peter could already hear her voice, telling him 'I told you so' over and over again.

...

One evening, as the sun dipped below the horizon, casting hues of orange and pink across the sky, Peter knew it was time to bid farewell to this universe. But before doing so, he had two crucial tasks to complete.

But before that, Peter took Ryan aside for a final session of guidance, ensuring the young man was equipped to handle his powers responsibly. With Leo observing, a sense of camaraderie developed among the trio, an unspoken acknowledgment that they had become a family of sorts.

As the training session concluded, Peter watched with pride as Ryan exhibited mastery over his powers, passing the test he set up with flying colors. It was a moment of accomplishment, a testament to the guidance and effort put into honing the young man's abilities.

"Great job, Ryan," Peter commended, a genuine smile on his face. "Your control is impressive now. Your training is officially over. You've come a long way and I'm very proud of you."

Ryan, initially smiling in pride and accomplishment, suddenly realized what Peter just said, his face morphing into a mix of shock and sadness. "That's it?" he asked, a tinge of disappointment in his voice. "You won't train me anymore?"

Peter's smile turned bittersweet. "I wish I could, Ryan, but I'll be leaving soon. However, if you want to continue your training, I can leave behind some manuals and resources. You've got the hang of it, and I believe you can carry on without me. I'm sure your dad would love to teach you as well. After all, he used to be in the military."

The disappointment in Ryan's eyes was palpable. "You're leaving?" he questioned, a hint of sadness creeping into his voice.

Peter nodded solemnly. "Yeah, it's time for me to move on. But I have faith in you, Ryan. You can handle this."

Without another word, Ryan ran off, a whirlwind of emotions clouding his usually composed demeanor. Peter sighed, realizing the impact of his departure on the young man. But duty called, and he had other matters to attend to.

Turning to Leo, Peter gestured toward the house. "Leo, I need you to go check on Ryan. He might need someone right now, and I need to go out and deal with a couple things." Peter instructed, the weight of responsibility evident in his eyes.

Leo reluctantly nodded, hesitant to leave Peter's side, but willing to do as he's told. Of course, Leo didn't think for a second that Peter leaving would affect him. In his perspective, he would be leaving with Peter, as no other possibility could formulate in his young, dependent mind.

As Leo hurried off to find Ryan, Peter took a moment to reflect on the transient nature of his existence in this universe. The bonds he had formed with these individuals made parting difficult, yet it was a necessary step.

Entering the living room, Peter wrote up some training manuals for Ryan's continued training. His departure would leave a void, but empowering Ryan to navigate his abilities independently was the best Peter could offer.

Once he was done, Peter left the manuals on a table in the living room before opening a portal and disappearing from the house. 'Okay, it's time to fulfill my promise to Hughie...'

Meanwhile, Leo found Ryan in his room, sitting on the edge of the bed, a mixture of sadness and frustration etched on his face. Without a word, Leo sat beside him, offering silent support. Ryan, unable to contain his emotions, looked at Leo, tears glistening in his eyes.

"I can't believe he's leaving," Ryan muttered, his voice a mix of frustration and sadness. "I thought he'd stay here with us forever..."

Leo, usually reserved, glanced at Ryan, a questioning expression in his eyes. Ryan, caught in the swirl of emotions, continued, "I mean, he taught us so much. And now he's just going to disappear."

Leo, still processing the situation, felt a wave of panic washing over him. "L-Leaving us?" Leo stuttered, Ryan's words unintentionally planting a seed of fear in his mind.

"Well, yeah, I guess," Ryan nodded sadly, not realizing how impactful his words are right now. "Maybe he'll come back and visit though?"

Leo, however, wasn't easily reassured. The fear of abandonment triggered a deep-rooted anxiety within him. His eyes widened, and he clutched onto Ryan's arm, his silent demeanor disrupted by an unspoken panic.

"Hey, hey, it's okay," Ryan said, realizing what was happening as he attempted to soothe Leo's concerns. "Peter will come back. I'm sure we'll see him again."

Leo, still not entirely convinced, looked at Ryan with a mix of worry and uncertainty. In his limited vocabulary, he managed to utter a few words, "Peter... come back?"

Ryan nodded. "Yes, he'll come back... I think..." But he wasn't too sure, which Leo seemed to pick up on.

Ryan's attempt to reassure Leo instantly fell short as the young child, overwhelmed by the fear of abandonment, abruptly stood up and darted through the house. His small footsteps echoed all over the place as he desperately searched for Peter, his panicked cries filling the air.

"Leo, wait!" Ryan called out, chasing after him. But Leo's distress fueled his determination to find Peter, and he seemed oblivious to Ryan's pleas.

In the absence of their mentor, Leo's silent world unraveled. Tears streamed down his face as he frantically checked every room, calling out for Peter's name. His small hands gripped doorknobs, his eyes darting around, seeking a familiar face that had temporarily left his world. The living room, once a place of joy, became a maze of uncertainty for the distressed child.

As Leo rounded a corner, MJ, sensing the distress, emerged from another room. She saw Leo's tear-stained face and the evident panic in his eyes. Without hesitation, she rushed to his side, kneeling down to his level.

"Leo, what's wrong? What happened?" MJ asked, concern etched on her face. Leo, unable to articulate his feelings, could only sob in response. MJ pulled him into a comforting hug, whispering reassurances as she tried to decipher the cause of Leo's distress.

"Shh, it's okay, Leo. You're safe here," MJ murmured, gently rubbing his back. Leo, in the embrace of someone who cared, began to slowly calm down. His cries softened to sniffles as MJ held him close.

As Leo gradually composed himself, MJ continued to offer comfort. "Now, tell me, what happened? Why are you so upset?" she inquired, hoping to unravel the mystery behind Leo's sudden outburst.

Leo, still processing the overwhelming emotions, spoke, "Peter... Leaving?" His limited vocabulary couldn't convey the complexity of his feelings.

MJ, piecing together the situation, understood that Leo was looking for Peter, but nothing more than that. "Did Peter go out? You don't have to worry, he'll be back soon, I'm sure of it." She said, though her words didn't seem to help.

Suddenly, Ryan stepped forward. "Umm, I think, I can explain..."

Meanwhile, Peter, unaware of the turmoil and chaos unfolding upon his departure from the Butcher residence, stepped out of a portal into a dark hospital room.

On the bed before him lay the familiar hero, A-Train, sleeping like a baby thanks to the painkillers and muscle relaxers they've given him. Both of his legs are broken in multiple places and bound in hard casts, leaving him trapped in this hospital bed ever since his encounter with Peter.

"Wakey Wakey..." Peter called out as he walked over to his bedside.

"..." A-Train stirred from his sleep and the first thing he saw was Peter standing over him, staring down at him with a demonic smile on his face. "!?"

Chapter 600: Gruesome Death

In a small, dimly lit living room, Hughie slouched on the couch, his thoughts consumed by a mix of frustration and yearning. The days had drifted by, and the news of Peter's heroic exploits echoed throughout the world. Yet, Hughie felt a lingering sense of exclusion, a bitter taste in his mouth. His attempts to reach out to Billy went unanswered, leaving him in the shadows of Peter's grand actions.

His father, sitting across from him, sighed, trying to console his despondent son. "Hughie, Vought is falling, justice is being served. You should be grateful for that."

But Hughie couldn't find solace in the broader victory. His focus remained fixed on one target, A-Train. The man who had stolen the love of his life. The man who had shattered his world. Hughie couldn't let go of the burning desire for personal retribution, a need to make A-Train pay for the pain he had caused with his own hands.

As the days passed, the realization dawned on Hughie that Peter might not fulfill his promise to let him take down A-Train personally. The frustration gnawed at him, and he grappled with the inner turmoil of unfulfilled vengeance. His father's attempts to pacify him fell on deaf ears, as Hughie yearned for closure on his own terms.

In the dimly lit room, Hughie's phone lay silent, his repeated calls to Billy unanswered. The once hopeful connection now felt severed, leaving Hughie with a sense of abandonment. The camaraderie he thought he had with Billy seemed distant, and the isolation fueled his determination to take matters into his own hands.

One evening, as the shadows grew longer and the room echoed with silence, Hughie made a decision. Ignoring his father's advice to let the authorities handle it, he stood up with a newfound determination. The quest for justice, as he saw it, demanded personal involvement.

Without a word, Hughie grabbed the largest knife in the kitchen and left the confines of his home, stepping into the cool night air. He knew exactly which hospital A-Train was admitted to, so his destination was clear. He would confront A-Train and exact the revenge that had eluded him for far too long.

Just as Hughie took a step towards his car to embark on his mission, a sudden golden portal materialized before him, and an unexpected figure tumbled out, landing at his feet.

It was A-Train, clad in a hospital gown, his legs encased in hard casts. He let out a pained grunt as he hit the ground, confusion and fear etched on his face. Hughie stared dumbfounded at the unexpected twist of fate, his grip loosening, nearly dropping the knife.

Seconds later, behind the crippled hero, Peter stepped out of the portal, hands in his pockets. "Yo," He strolled casually towards Hughie, glancing down at the knife in his hands with a look of realization. "Good timing," Peter remarked, unfazed and rather causal. "I brought him as promised."

Hughie's shock was palpable, his gaze shifting between Peter and A-Train. The gravity of the situation sank in as Peter kicked A-Train towards Hughie. A-Train, now fully conscious, began to crawl away in a desperate attempt to escape, his broken legs hindering his progress.

"Why are you doing this?" A-Train pleaded as he looked between Peter and Hughie, his voice a mixture of pain and confusion. "My legs are already broken! I'm a f*cking cripple! What more do you want from me?"

Hughie, his rage boiling beneath the surface, felt a surge of frustration. A-Train didn't recognize him, didn't remember the one he had taken everything from. As A-Train begged for mercy, Hughie's resentment burned hotter.

Just as Hughie was about to confront A-Train, Peter intervened, motioning towards the house. "Maybe we should do this inside," he suggested calmly. "Drawing attention out here won't help anyone."

A-Train, seizing an opportunity, screamed, "Help! Someone! They're trying to kill me!" Panic etched across his face, but before the sound could continue, Peter snapped his fingers, silencing him with a mystical force. A-Train's eyes widened in realization, his voice completely muted no matter how much he screamed, a terrifying predicament. "...!?"

Dragging the thrashing and terrified A-Train inside, Peter led the way, followed closely by Hughie, who clutched the knife with a determined grip.

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Tossing A-Train onto the floor of the dimly lit living room, Peter casually stepped back, creating space for Hughie, who approached with a determined stride, the knife glinting in his hand. A-Train, terrified and unable to escape, looked up at Hughie, attempting to beg for his life, but his voice remained stifled by the mystical force that bound him.

As Hughie prepared to unleash his revenge, a sadistic smile playing on his lips, he paused. Something in him demanded more than a silent demise for A-Train. Turning to Peter, he requested, "Unmute him, please..."

"Why?" Peter asked curiously.

"Thankfully, she got a fast and quiet death, but he won't get that sort of luxury." Hughie wanted the man who had stolen his love to suffer loudly and painfully.

And thankfully, his father was at work at the moment, which meant he didn't have to hold back or worry about anyone walking in.

Peter, feeling a bit of respect for Hughie's intensity, shrugged indifferently and snapped his fingers once more, unmuting A-Train. "P-Please, don't kill me! I'll do anything...!" The room echoed with the desperate pleas of the broken hero, his attempts to beg for mercy falling on unwilling ears.

Ignoring A-Train's cries, Hughie leaned in, asking, "Do you remember Robin Ward?"

A-Train, confused and seemingly ignorant, shook his head, "No, see, you have the wrong person! I don't even know who that is!" The denial only fueled Hughie's rage. A-Train's lack of recognition added another layer of torment to an already tortured soul.

Without hesitation, Hughie inched closer to A-Train, looming over him menacingly. He unleashed a torrent of anger, jumping on the fallen hero and stabbing relentlessly. Blood splattered across the room, creating a gruesome painting of vengeance.

A-Train's screams of pain and agony filled the air, mingling with the sickening sound of steel slicing against flesh and bone.

As the minutes passed, Hughie showed no signs of relenting. Each stab was a manifestation of his pent-up grief and fury.

A-Train's desperate cries transformed into choking on his own blood, the life slowly draining from him. Yet, Hughie persisted, a man possessed by a relentless need for retribution.

Stab... Stab... Stab... Stab...

Finally, exhausted and panting, Hughie fell backward, the knife slipping from his grasp. He stared up at the ceiling, a mixture of satisfaction and emptiness etched on his face.

'I avenged you Robin...' Hughie thought over and over again, the weight of her death ascending off his shoulders.

...

After cleaning up any traces of the gruesome encounter and incinerating A-Trains body, Peter stood in the dimly lit living room, the air thick with the residue of violence. Hughie, a conflicted mix of emotions etched on his face, looked at the now clean room with both horror and a strange sense of closure.

"Thanks, Peter," Hughie mumbled, his voice tinged with a weary gratitude. "I... I don't know how to feel about this, but it had to be done..."

Peter nodded solemnly, understanding the weight of the moment. "You did what you needed to do. That's all that matters."

As Peter prepared to leave, Hughie extended a hesitant hand, gripping Peter's shoulder. "I don't think I'll ever forget this." He said, looking up at Peter, a weak smile on his face. "Thank you."

"No problem... Take care, Hughie," Peter offered a small, reassuring smile before stepping into a swirling golden portal, leaving Hughie to grapple with the aftermath of his choices.

Stepping out of his portal and into the Oval Office, Peter faced the President, who nearly jumped out of his seat as Peter appeared out of nowhere. Even now, he wasn't used to how Peter just appearing whenever he wanted.

Handing over the controls for the Sentinels, as he won't be here to command them as he is now, Peter explained, "The Sentinels are powerful tools, but they're not meant for personal agendas. I've implemented failsafes to ensure they stay within their intended purpose, which is the policing of superheroes, nothing more."

The President, uneasy at the implications, stammered, "W-What if we need them for national security?"

Peter's gaze hardened. "Any attempt to misuse them or alter their protocols will have severe consequences. They're not here to enable wars or power plays." He threatened before giving a quick explanation. "The Sentinels will not respond to any orders that stray outside of their programming. And before you try, please know that any attempts to tamper with the Sentinels or their factory will result in the swift deaths of anyone involved."

Peter pauses for a moment before staring straight into the presidents eyes. "Simply put, be good and you'll be fine."

The President swallowed hard, realizing the gravity of Peter's warning. With a stern nod, Peter stood up and opened one last portal, returning to the Butcher residence, his involvement in this universes affairs officially closed.

As the portal sealed behind him, a sudden gust of wind tore through the house. A child-sized figure with golden hair and bright blue eyes shot around the corner, tackling Peter to the floor.

"Leo!" Peter chuckled, embracing the three-year-old. "You sure know how to make an entrance..." Expecting a reply, Peter looked down and noticed that Leo was shaking and gripped Peter as if his life depended on it. "What's going on? What happened?"