

Marvel Manifestor

Chapter 21: Ghost-Spider Gwen

Lucas dropped onto the couch, watching the two masked figures shuffle nervously inside. He was about to speak when Skye, who'd been gaming with the Moogles, suddenly froze.

She tossed the controller aside and hurried to Lucas's side, eyes glued to the newcomer.

"This is the Spider-Man from the news and the papers?! Just like the photos online! Do your eyes blink? And your webs—do they really come out of your body?"

Skye circled Spider-Man and Ghost-Spider, examining them like specimens.

"So there are two Spider-Men?" she finally asked, settling back onto the sofa.

"I just found that out myself," Lucas said flatly, gaze locking onto Ghost-Spider. No doubt in his mind—it was Gwen. The only mystery was how she'd gotten her powers. As far as he remembered, Peter was the only one bitten.

"Then why'd you bring them here? Do they have a commission?" Skye whipped out her laptop, opening a fresh page to take notes.

"Spider-Man, tell us your request! This could be Devil May Cry's very first case!" she said, practically bouncing with excitement.

"Uh... well... actually..." Peter stammered, lost for words. He had no commission—he'd just followed Lucas back.

"Enough, Peter. No need to keep pretending here."

Lucas waved a hand dismissively, casually dropping a name that made Spider-Man flinch.

"You... you know who I am?!"

Peter yanked off his mask in shock.

The room froze. Skye and Ghost-Spider both stared, dumbfounded. The Spider-Man who'd been plastered all over the headlines was... timid, nerdy Peter Parker?!

"Yeah. I knew from the moment you got bitten," Lucas said bluntly.

Peter let out a sigh of relief and plopped onto the couch. But his eyes quickly flicked toward the other masked figure.

"Lucas, you know who this is too, don't you? Otherwise why bring them here?"

"Not only do I know," Lucas said evenly, "but so do you."

Ghost-Spider's body tensed in fear.

"Really?!" Peter and Skye blurted in unison, both turning toward her.

Cornered, Ghost-Spider had no choice. She pulled back her hood and mask—revealing golden hair and a familiar face.

"Gwen?!"

Peter and Skye's jaws dropped. Neither had imagined that the mysterious Ghost-Spider was none other than Gwen Stacy. It was surreal.

"Lucas... I can explain..." Gwen looked like a scolded child, eyes wide with guilt and fear.

Lucas sighed. He'd meant to tear into her, but seeing her gaze—like a pitiful kitten—his anger melted.

"Sit down. Don't worry, I won't tell your dad."

"Really?!" Gwen lit up instantly, plopping down right beside him.

"But... you have to promise not to get hurt. I don't want your family worrying themselves sick over you."

Gwen pouted. "Who can guarantee they won't get hurt? I'm a superhero, you know~~"

"Then quit the hero gig. I'll call your dad right now and tell him everything." Lucas reached for his phone.

"No way!" Gwen lunged onto him, snatching the phone from his hand. "Fine, fine, I promise! Happy now?!"

Lucas nodded, satisfied.

Peter, however, was bursting with curiosity. "Gwen, how did you end up like this? Did a spider bite you too?"

She nodded. "Yeah. Remember that day we toured Oscorp? Lucas, you even came with me to look at that weird spider with the long legs. That's the one that bit me. After that... well, you see the result."

Lucas blinked, memory snapping into place. He did remember Gwen pointing out that strange red-and-black spider, longer-legged and unnervingly agile.

"So that's why you got sick afterward... turns out it was the bite's side effects. Can't believe there are two Spider-People now. Unreal..."

He'd assumed she'd just come down with a bug.

"Wow, me too! I was bitten during that field trip while taking pictures. Then out of nowhere, bam—powers!" Peter blurted, relieved beyond words. He wasn't alone anymore.

"Hold on—where do your webs come from?" Lucas cut in. "That stuff costs a fortune. There's no way you two broke kids could afford to use it like this—swinging, tying people up every night. That's a serious drain."

Peter grinned sheepishly. "I swiped a sample cartridge from Oscorp and reverse-engineered it at home. Turns out the raw materials aren't expensive at all. Once I cracked the formula, mass production was easy."

He showed off his web-shooters, which Skye immediately snatched up, fiddling with them in fascination.

Gwen explained that she hadn't stolen anything—she'd simply ordered materials online and figured it out herself.

Geniuses, both of them. Oscorp's R&D department had probably spent years on it, and these two high schoolers cracked it in weeks. If Oscorp ever found out, they'd send assassins to make sure it stayed buried.

"Wait a second," Skye frowned, "if it's that simple, why hasn't every company already replicated Oscorp's webs?"

"Because I only figured out a rough formula," Peter admitted. "The core stabilizing agent? Still beyond me. My webs only last about two hours before degrading. Oscorp's can last much longer, and their tensile strength is higher."

Lucas and Skye exchanged looks. Even with limitations, it was still insanely impressive.

Gwen's version wasn't quite as strong as Peter's, though hers had superior elasticity.

The two compared abilities, and soon a picture emerged: Peter excelled in raw strength, while Gwen outmatched him in agility. One was the powerhouse, the other the speedster.

A natural balance.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight\_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

## Chapter 22: The Graduation Prom

That night, Gwen didn't go home—she stayed at the apartment. Lucas had already prepared a room for every member of the Stacy family on the second floor, right next to his own.

Time passed quickly, and before they knew it, graduation day had arrived. Lucas and Gwen had officially finished high school.

Lucas didn't plan to continue studying. Chief George Stacy didn't object—he simply said his son was old enough to make his own choices. But Lucas could see a faint trace of disappointment in his father's eyes.

Seeing that, Lucas tried to lighten the mood. "Come on, Dad. You know I'm not cut out to be a cop. And Gwen—she's your little girl. Even if she became one, you'd never stop worrying. Soooo..."

Lucas grinned and yanked over his two younger brothers, who were still in elementary school.

"You should start training them! Cops need early training, right?"

To Lucas's surprise, that argument actually worked. George nodded solemnly. "You're right. The eldest can't be relied on anymore. I'll just have to count on the little ones."

The two boys shivered under the combined pressure of their father and big brother. If they dared complain, they'd be in for a triple beatdown once they got home.

It was fair to say the two youngest Stacys had the least human rights in the family—no say in anything, constantly bullied by Gwen, who could handle both of them with one hand.

The good news? Gwen had actually been accepted into MIT. A true prodigy through and through.

Peter and Felicia had gotten in as well—something that blew Lucas's mind. He'd never expected quiet, mischievous Felicia to be such a hidden academic ace.

Mary Jane, on the other hand, didn't make the cut and chose to attend college in New York instead.

After the graduation ceremony, everyone went their separate ways, but the most anticipated event was still to come—the graduation prom, set for three days later.

Proms were a long-standing tradition in America—a rite of passage for graduates. Some schools rented fancy venues, while others hosted theirs in the auditorium. Midtown High was the latter.

The student council had been decorating the hall for a week straight. It was both a farewell for seniors and a welcome for new students.

Meanwhile, Skye had already launched the Devil May Cry website, but after all this time, they still hadn't received a single commission. Not even a casual inquiry. It left her so frustrated she spent her days glued to the computer and the office phone.

Skye was already a homebody—now she was practically part of the furniture. So Lucas decided to drag her to the prom too, just to get her out of the house for once.

Three nights later, Gwen showed up at the Devil May Cry office.

She was stunning—wearing a flowing white dress that made her fair skin glow under the lights. Her golden hair was tied back neatly, radiating youthful energy and elegance all at once.

Lucas sat on the couch as Gwen twirled in front of him, showing off her outfit. She had clearly spent hours preparing. He knew better than to make the wrong comment—one word out of line and she'd toss him out the window.

So Lucas wisely poured on the compliments until Gwen was smiling ear to ear.

A few minutes later, the office door opened, and Skye stepped in. Both Lucas and Gwen froze for a moment.

Skye was wearing a dark green dress, her black hair flowing freely over her shoulders. There was something effortlessly mysterious about her, and her figure—fuller and curvier than Gwen's—made her look stunning.

"Wow, Skye, I had no idea you had such a great figure!" Gwen gasped, looping her arm through Skye's. "You always wear those baggy clothes—I never noticed!"

Standing side by side, the two girls were completely different yet equally breathtaking—Gwen all bright energy and youthful charm, Skye radiating mystery and allure.

For a second, Lucas wondered if skipping the prom and just staying home with them might actually be the better option.

When the three arrived at school, Peter, Felicia, and Mary Jane were already there.

"Hey, man, I'm so jealous," Peter said, shooting Lucas a playful look. It was hard not to be—Gwen and Skye each had an arm wrapped around Lucas's. Peter looked like he might shoot a web at his face out of sheer envy.

"Get lost, man," Lucas said, rolling his eyes. Then he caught sight of Felicia and did a double take.

She looked incredible tonight—dressed in a sleek black gown that perfectly matched Peter's black suit. The two of them standing together looked... well, like a dangerously attractive couple.

Lucas smirked. "Here's some advice, Peter—stop wasting time being a simp. Look around you for once."

Peter blinked. "What do you mean, 'look around'? Who are you talking about?"

Lucas gave him a long, exasperated look while Felicia rolled her eyes so hard it was a wonder they didn't get stuck.

"Where's MJ? She not here yet?" Gwen asked, glancing around.

"Oh, she's already inside," Felicia replied with a shrug. "Off saying goodbye to her boyfriends."

Mary Jane was known for her bold, outgoing personality. She'd dated several of Midtown's most popular guys, and tonight, she was apparently making her rounds to part ways with them.

Still, she was flirty—not promiscuous. There was a line she didn't cross.

Everyone except Peter knew the truth—Mary Jane's heart had always been set on Harry Osborn.

Peter's expression dimmed. Years of pining, and still, he didn't stand a chance against a rich ex.

"Forget it, man," Lucas said, slapping a hand on his shoulder. "I told you ages ago, MJ's not the one for you. Maybe you should start paying attention to the girl right next to you."

He physically turned Peter's head—and there she was, Felicia, in all her black-dressed glory.

For a moment, Peter was speechless. She really did look incredible.

"Look at it this way," Lucas continued with a grin. "If you're gonna be a simp, might as well switch targets. And this one? She's every bit as gorgeous as MJ—maybe even more. Plus, you're going to the same college. You really wanna watch someone else sweep her off her feet?"

Peter glanced between Lucas and Felicia but said nothing.

Felicia, meanwhile, was chatting happily with Gwen and Skye, the three of them heading toward the auditorium together.

"Hey, what are you two whispering about back there?" Gwen called over her shoulder.

"I bet they're plotting something shady," Felicia laughed.

"Hurry up, boss! We're not waiting for you!" Skye added, waving as the girls disappeared into the crowd.

By the time Lucas and Peter followed, the auditorium was already packed.

Groups of guys were joking, gaming, and holding beer-drinking contests with those ridiculous helmet dispensers. It was chaos—pure, unfiltered teenage energy.

The couples, meanwhile, were either out on the dance floor or tucked into corners having "deep conversations."

The girls, ever more composed, gathered in small clusters, chatting, laughing, and occasionally sneaking glances—or throwing flirty looks—at the boys.

When the clock struck the hour, the lights dimmed, and the prom officially began.

The host was none other than Betty Brant, Midtown's self-proclaimed gossip queen, who'd dreamed of being a journalist or news anchor since she was a kid.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

Chapter 23: The Sudden Sandstorm

As the soft music began to play, couples drifted toward the dance floor, swaying gently to the rhythm.

Gwen immediately pulled Lucas along with her. To be honest, Lucas didn't know how to dance—but Gwen did. All he had to do was follow her lead and avoid stepping on her feet. Surprisingly, after a few steps, he found himself moving quite naturally.

Peter wanted to ask Mary Jane for a dance, but when he saw she already had a partner, he slumped into a chair, sipping his soda with a dejected look.

"Peter, shall we give it a try?"

A gentle voice came from beside him.

Peter looked up—straight into Felicia's dazzling eyes. For a second, his brain short-circuited. He nodded before he even realized what he was doing.

Like a puppet, he let Felicia pull him onto the dance floor. He awkwardly shuffled along with her, his mind completely blank.

Felicia couldn't help but laugh at his stiff, flustered movements.

"You know, Peter—you actually look kind of handsome tonight~"

She teased with a playful smile. Felicia had a habit of toying with shy boys like Peter just to see their reactions.

"Ah—r-really?"

Peter stammered, his cheeks burning. Despite all his superhero training, when faced with a beautiful girl like Felicia, he was still hopelessly shy.

"Hehe~ you're too cute," Felicia giggled.

Meanwhile, Skye was sitting alone at a table, tinkering with a laptop she'd pulled out from who-knows-where. Every now and then, she'd sip her soda. Several guys came over to ask her for a dance, but she turned each one down flat, barely looking up from her screen—as if the entire prom had nothing to do with her.

Then, Gwen and Lucas came over after finishing their dance.

"You're still playing on your computer? Come on, go dance! With the way you look tonight, you could have any guy you want!" Gwen said, grabbing Skye's arm.

Before Skye could protest, Gwen shoved her toward Lucas.

"Lucas, you dance with her! She'll be bored to death just sitting here."

Lucas blinked, caught off guard, but nodded and led Skye toward the dance floor.

Skye didn't resist. She just let Lucas pull her along. Neither of them could actually dance, so they just moved slowly, swaying in time with the music.

"Um... boss," Skye said softly, cheeks a little red. "When does the prom end? I kinda wanna go home."

Lucas didn't notice her flustered expression. "Probably not for a while," he said lazily. "But if you're bored, you can head back first. Honestly, I didn't wanna come either. Staying home sounds way better."

Skye nodded in agreement. She was a homebody too—just like Lucas. Neither of them were the "party" type.

Just then, Peter rushed over, his face serious. "I just got an alert—I have to go."

He waved his hand, showing a modified phone he'd pulled from his pocket.

Lucas instantly recognized it. Peter must've hacked into the NYPD's radio channel. That meant something big was happening—and Spider-Man was needed.

"Go," Lucas said simply.

"Uh... about that..." Peter scratched his head awkwardly.

"What is it?"

"Can I... borrow Gwen?"

Lucas rolled his eyes. Borrow Gwen? What kind of phrasing was that?

"Ask her yourself. Just—make sure she doesn't get hurt."

His tone was serious. Ever since learning that Gwen was the Ghost Spider, he knew he couldn't stop her from being a hero. But he also trusted her to be careful.

Peter nodded. "Got it."

He ran to Gwen, who glanced at Lucas. When she saw him give a small nod, she followed Peter out.

"Guess it's just us now," Lucas said, looking down at Skye. "Wanna head home?"

Skye's cheeks were still a little pink. She nodded. "Let's ask Felicia too. If she wants to leave, we can give her a ride."

Coincidentally, Felicia was also ready to go, so the three of them left together.

On the way back, their taxi driver mentioned that there'd been a traffic accident nearby. "Whole section of Queens Boulevard's shut down—sand everywhere," he said.

That's probably where Peter and Gwen went, Lucas thought. He didn't think much of it. A traffic accident was hardly rare in New York—there were several every day.

Back at the Devil May Cry office, Skye was back to typing furiously on her laptop, while Lucas sprawled on the couch like a corpse.

"Hey, Skye," he called lazily. "Grab me an orange juice, would ya? Thanks."

With a helpless sigh, Skye got up, went to the bar, and took out two glass bottles filled with golden liquid—one for Lucas, one for herself.

"Here. Seriously, what brand is this? It's insanely good."

"Ha! Trade secret," Lucas said smugly as he popped the cap and took a swig. The sweet, refreshing taste of orange filled his mouth. "You won't find this anywhere else."

Of course, he wasn't about to tell Skye that everything in the bar—food and drink alike—came from the FF world via his system, which even restocked automatically. He never had to worry about running out. Sometimes he didn't even bother cooking anymore—just grabbed food straight from the fridge. Everything tasted five-star good.

And thanks to the system's "Master Chef" perk, anything he did cook with those ingredients turned out divine. Not that Skye knew it, but it was a hidden perk for her too.

Sipping his orange juice contentedly, Lucas melted into the couch like a puddle of lazy bliss.

On the shelf, the little Moogle plush was fast asleep, a tiny bubble puffing from its nose. Skye didn't disturb it—if she did, she'd probably end up cuddling it all night.

"Hey, boss, check this out!" Skye suddenly called. "They're reporting on that thing the taxi driver mentioned—and Peter and Gwen are on the news!"

She turned the laptop toward him.

Sure enough, the live broadcast showed the scene of the incident: sand had suddenly appeared all over the street, blocking traffic and causing a fifteen-car pileup. Spider-Man and Ghost Spider were seen swinging through the chaos, rescuing civilians.

"'Sand suddenly appeared'?"

Lucas frowned. That caught his attention. If his Marvel memory served him right, the only person who could manipulate sand like that—and who had history with Spider-Man—was Sandman.

Could it really be him?

He pondered it for a moment but didn't think too much of it. Right now, the only thing that really mattered was getting his first commission. Whether or not Sandman caused the accident wasn't his problem—as long as the guy didn't mess with him.

"Skye, still no clients?" Lucas asked wearily.

She shook her head. "Nope. Plenty of people have left comments out of curiosity, but no actual commissions.

Honestly, boss, you really shot yourself in the foot by insisting on only taking supernatural cases. It's not like the world's crawling with ghosts and demons! Now look—we've got nothing!"

She sighed, rubbing her temples. Sometimes she just couldn't understand how Lucas's brain worked.

Lucas only snorted. "That's because you haven't seen what I can do. Taking normal cases would be a waste of talent."

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight\_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

## Chapter 24: The Client Arrives

At the same time, in Washington, D.C., inside a large, arc-shaped building—

"Director, we've found the video footage from that case."

A young man in a black suit hurried into a spacious office, handing a USB drive to a bald man with dark skin.

"Good work, Agent Moore. You're dismissed."

The bald man turned his head—one eye sharp and observant, the other covered by an eyepatch. It was none other than the Director of S.H.I.E.L.D., the man known to some as the "One-Eyed Fury" or "Motherf—king Fury": Nick Fury himself.

He plugged the drive into a console built into his desk, and a holographic screen flickered to life.

The video showed Lucas, Daredevil, and the Punisher wiping out an entire gang. The camera lingered especially on the tornado-like vortex Lucas had created with his energy burst.

Fury narrowed his one visible eye. "Coulson, what did the field investigation find?"

Across from him sat a middle-aged man with a receding hairline—Agent Phil Coulson.

"The scene's been mostly processed, Director. The residual energy readings are... strange. It's some kind of spatial field—our instruments can't properly identify it."

Coulson flipped through a folder and handed it over.

Fury waved it off. "Forget the paperwork. Tell me if you've found the man."

He pointed at the figure in the video—Lucas, calmly walking through the center of the storm.

"Our people spoke with Daredevil and the Punisher," Coulson said. "They both claimed not to know him—though it's obvious they're hiding something."

Coulson tossed the folder into a nearby trash bin. Since Fury didn't want to read it, it was as good as destroyed.

"I was hoping to hear a 'but,' Coulson..." Fury said, leaning forward.

Coulson smiled faintly. "But... we managed to identify him. We combed through every nearby security camera and even checked satellite footage. We finally got a match."

He took out another file and handed it over.

This time, Fury accepted it and flipped it open.

The first page contained a detailed identity record—Lucas Norman. Every bit of his life, from birth to now, was laid out neatly. Even his biological mother—a drug addict—was listed with full details.

Fury studied the young face in the photo for a long while. Then he glanced at the last page, where the "threat level" assessment was printed.

"Coulson, just have him monitored. Don't make contact yet. He's still just a kid," Fury finally said, exhaling softly.

Though the risk level was marked high, it was followed by a note: "Low threat to public safety."

And really—raised by the NYPD's commissioner, growing up in a stable, loving household—there was little reason to see him as a danger.

That was why Fury didn't order an immediate capture—just surveillance.

"Oh? He owns a whole building on Manhattan Avenue?"

Fury raised an eyebrow. It was rare enough for a teenager to own property—much less an entire building in one of the most expensive parts of New York City.

Of course, S.H.I.E.L.D.'s investigation concluded it was "inherited," and there was nothing suspicious on record. After all, the system's cover stories were flawless.

Fury thought for a moment. "Where's Natasha right now?"

"She's in Fiji," Coulson said wearily. "Finished the job there and decided to take a little vacation."

He gave Fury a bitter look. Out of everyone in S.H.I.E.L.D., he was probably the only one who never got his full time off—every time he was about to relax, Fury called him back in.

"Ahem..." Fury coughed, a little guilty, then straightened. "Tell Agent Romanoff to come back. Give her a different vacation spot.

And put this Lucas Norman under Top Secret Classification."

Top Secret meant only Fury himself could access the file—no one else.

---

Meanwhile, completely unaware of all this, Lucas walked into the Devil May Cry office the next morning—only to have Skye come rushing up to him.

"Boss! Good news!! We finally got a commission!!"

"Kupo~!!"

She shouted excitedly, hugging the little Moogles plush in her arms. Even the Moogles seemed to cheer along.

Lucas's sleepy eyes lit up instantly.

"Where? Where's the client?!"

He spun around, looking for someone.

"Relax, boss," Skye laughed. "The client posted the request online. They said they'd come by around ten o'clock today to discuss details."

She glanced at the wall clock—still half an hour to go.

"Ohhh, perfect!"

Lucas plopped down into his chair, anticipation gleaming in his eyes.

Finally, an official commission. Time to get that system quest moving.

Sure enough, around ten o'clock, the bell over the door jingled—ding-ling-ling!

Lucas and Skye both turned toward the entrance.

To their surprise, the door opened... and in walked a little girl, maybe ten years old.

"Hey, sweetheart, are you lost?" Skye asked gently, waving her over.

The girl shook her head and stepped inside. "No, I'm the one who made the online appointment. My dad's missing. I want you to help me find him."

She spoke in a clear, sweet voice, sipping the glass of milk Skye handed her.

"What?! You're the client?" Lucas slumped back in his chair, staring at the ceiling with lifeless eyes.

He'd been so ready for his first real supernatural case—only for it to turn out to be... a "find my dad" mission.

"Sweetie," Skye said kindly, crouching beside the girl, "your dad probably just went to work. He'll be home tonight—you'll see him then, okay?"

But the girl shook her head firmly. "No. He's been gone for two days. He was taken away... by sand."

"Sand?"

Lucas's eyes snapped open. He immediately thought of the mysterious sandstorm that had clogged the streets a few nights ago.

Skye, however, didn't connect the dots. She just kept trying to comfort the child, assuming her father had abandoned her—just as Skye's own parents once had.

"Can you tell me exactly what happened when your dad was taken?" Lucas asked, kneeling beside the girl, his tone gentle.

The little one showed no fear. She took a sip of milk and nodded seriously, speaking like a tiny adult.

"It was like this—two days ago, I was about to go to school..."

---

"I'm going to school, Daddy! Don't touch the appliances while I'm gone, okay?"

The girl waved toward the house before running toward the bus stop.

"Okay, okay, got it~"

A man's voice replied cheerfully from inside. A moment later, a broad-shouldered man in a plaid shirt stepped into the hallway, watching her leave.

At the bus stop, the girl suddenly patted her pockets—then froze. She'd forgotten her house key.

She turned and sprinted back home, knocking on the door when she arrived—but no one answered.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review!  
Your support means everything.

~~~~~

Chapter 25: Dad Was Taken by the Sand

"Strange... Daddy should be home."

The clever little girl decided to go around the back. Sure enough, the kitchen window wasn't locked, so she climbed in through it.

"Daddy? Daddy, are you here?"

She called out while searching the rooms—but the house was completely empty. Her father was nowhere to be found.

What caught her attention most was the sand—piled up thickly in the entryway and along the hallway floor, enough to block the front door completely. A trail of sand stretched all the way up the stairs.

Summoning her courage, the little girl followed the trail upstairs. But all she found was more sand—leading straight to her father's bedroom.

When she entered, she saw that the bedroom window was open... and the sand trail continued right out the window.

The smart girl immediately knew something was wrong. She picked up the phone and called the police.

"I waited two whole days," the girl said softly, looking up at Lucas and Skye with wide, pleading eyes. "The police didn't find my daddy. So I asked for help online instead. You'll find him for me, right?"

Her big, innocent eyes melted Skye's heart on the spot. She thumped her chest confidently.

"Don't worry, sweetie. We'll definitely find your dad. Can you tell me your name and your father's name?"

Skye spun her laptop around, her fingers flying across the keyboard as she hacked into a certain database—its logo a large, bold F surrounded by a government seal.

"My daddy's name is Flint Marko," the girl said clearly. "And my name's Keemia Marko."

Within seconds, Flint Marko's file popped up on Skye's screen—but most of it was blacked out. Redacted.

That alone told her this man was far from ordinary.

She turned the laptop to show Lucas. He frowned. "Yeah... this guy's definitely not your average construction worker."

"You know what your father does for a living?" Lucas asked the girl gently.

"My daddy works for a construction company. I have his business card."

She dug into her little shoulder bag and handed over a slightly bent card.

It had Flint Marko's name, phone number, and the name of a company neither of them had ever heard of.

"Skye, check out this company," Lucas said, handing the card to her.

In truth, the name Flint Marko rang a bell for Lucas. It wasn't his real name—his real name was William Baker, better known to Spider-Man fans as Sandman.

Still, to be sure it wasn't just a coincidence, he had Skye verify it.

Sandman was one of Spider-Man's classic villains—a small-time crook who'd stumbled into a desert experiment site and, by sheer bad luck, been transformed by it. He gained the power to manipulate sand—able to reshape himself into towering giants, shrug off physical attacks, and reform endlessly. The man was basically a walking, talking version of a "Sand-Sand Fruit" user.

After some digging, Skye finally pulled up the unredacted file. Sure enough—Flint Marko was a fake identity. His real name was indeed William Baker.

Sandman.

And the little girl before them—Keemia—was his daughter, the one who, in Lucas's past life knowledge, had been born with a terminal illness.

Yet looking at her now—bright-eyed, healthy, full of energy—there was no trace of sickness at all.

To confirm his suspicion, Lucas asked Skye to pull up Keemia's medical history—every record from birth to now.

The results were clear: she had never had any serious disease. The worst thing on record was a bout of pneumonia caused by a high fever—easily treated with modern medicine.

What's going on? Lucas wondered silently. Why is it different from what I remember?

Maybe this was just how the real world worked—things didn't always follow movie logic.

Lucas smiled softly, reached out, and ruffled Keemia's hair. "Alright. We'll take your case."

The little girl's face lit up immediately. She rummaged through her bag and pulled out a small plush cat. Around its neck hung a tiny silver whistle.

"This is my most precious thing," she said seriously. "You can have it as payment for helping me, okay?"

It was clear she had no money—and this was all she could offer. The toy had once belonged to her late mother.

Skye tugged at Lucas's sleeve and whispered, "Boss, maybe we just deduct the fee from my salary. She's just a kid—she can't pay for a commission like this."

Her big eyes were full of both worry and hope.

Lucas grinned. "You said it yourself."

He hadn't planned to take the girl's money anyway—but now that Skye volunteered her pay, he couldn't help but think about how to "maximize the opportunity."

Skye nodded enthusiastically, smiling brightly—completely unaware her boss was already scheming like a seasoned cheapskate.

Lucas took the stuffed cat from Keemia's hands, then gently unhooked the silver whistle and returned it to her.

"Alright," he said. "I'll accept the plush toy as payment. You keep the whistle—it's important to you."

"Really? Isn't that too little?" Keemia blinked in surprise.

Lucas shook his head. "Nope. This is more than enough."

"Yay! Thank you, big brother—and thank you too, big sister!" she said sweetly, clutching her whistle.

"Alright then," Lucas smiled. "Skye will walk you home. I'll start looking for your dad."

Once Skye left with the girl, the office grew quiet. Lucas leaned back in his chair, frowning in thought.

"Hmm... where to start..."

After a moment, he remembered what Peter and Gwen had encountered at the graduation dance the night before. The mysterious sand there couldn't be a coincidence.

He grabbed his phone and dialed Gwen.

"Lucas? What's up?"

Gwen's voice came through the speaker. She was in the middle of packing her things for MIT, putting him on speakerphone.

"Yesterday—you and Peter, at the accident scene. Did you find anything?"

Gwen thought for a moment. "Not really. There was a ton of sand everywhere—it caused a huge traffic jam. Peter and I were focused on rescuing people. Nothing suspicious that we could see."

"How did the sand appear? Were there any overturned dump trucks or construction vehicles around?"

"No... none. Not even one large vehicle."

"I see. Got it."

Lucas frowned. So nothing useful there.

"Why are you asking?" Gwen asked curiously.

"I just took on a commission," Lucas said. "A little girl's father went missing—she says he was taken away by sand. Since both incidents involved random sand appearing out of nowhere, I thought maybe they were connected."

"Oh? You actually got your first client?" Gwen said, suddenly intrigued.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight\_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

Marvel Manifestor

"Other than the sand, is there any real connection between the two incidents?" Gwen asked curiously.

"Not yet," Lucas replied, rubbing his chin. "But I've got a theory that needs proving. My gut tells me that yesterday's accident wasn't just a coincidence."

He couldn't shake the feeling that Flint Marko's disappearance and the sand-related traffic disaster were somehow linked—it was just that the missing piece of the puzzle hadn't shown itself yet.

"Want me to help?" Gwen asked, closing her suitcase.

MIT wasn't that far from New York—maybe 300 to 400 kilometers. A few hours by car. It wasn't a big move, and she could come back anytime she wanted.

"Not for now," Lucas said. "Focus on school. I'll handle the rest."

"Alright, but promise me—if something happens, call me." Gwen's tone was serious. Even if she had to, she'd come straight back to New York.

"Got it. Talk later."

Lucas ended the call.

Just then, Skye returned—holding a small vial filled with sand from Keemia's home.

The two examined it for a long while but came up empty-handed.

"It looks totally normal," Skye muttered, frowning at the little bottle. "But her whole house was full of it."

Lucas nodded thoughtfully. "Right... I want to see last night's surveillance footage and the police's case report."

"On it."

Within a minute, Skye's fingers had danced across her keyboard, and the footage appeared on Lucas's screen.

The video showed the accident from multiple city cameras. New York didn't have that many public surveillance cameras—America, after all, prided itself on "freedom" and "privacy."

Of course, Lucas thought wryly, that didn't stop the government from planting hidden cameras and spy satellites to secretly monitor everything anyway.

There were only a few usable angles, and Lucas quickly skimmed through them.

The reason it went so fast was simple—all the footage cut out the moment the sand appeared. Every single camera lost its signal at the exact same time.

That was all the proof Lucas needed. This wasn't an accident. Someone—or something—was behind it.

"Skye," Lucas said, "I've got a job for you. Run facial recognition and find Keemia's father. Something about all this isn't adding up."

"Got it."

Skye immediately dove into her work, hacking into the Federal Bureau's facial recognition system and beginning the search for Flint Marko.

But with millions of faces to scan, it wasn't going to be quick. They'd have to wait.

Lucas didn't just sit idle. He kept turning it over in his head—the sand, the timing, the two connected incidents. He couldn't yet see the pattern, but he could feel it was there.

He decided to go check in with the NYPD.

But the moment he stepped outside, several police cars screamed past, sirens blaring—and overhead, a red-and-blue blur swung between the buildings.

"Lucas! Come look at this!"

Skye's voice called from inside. She was watching the news—another live report.

Yet another traffic accident.

And once again, caused by a sudden, massive surge of sand.

This time, it was right on Manhattan Avenue, barely a block from their office. No wonder Lucas had seen the squad cars—and Spider-Man—rushing by.

Both he and Skye frowned as they watched the footage.

The scene was chaos—sandstorms whipping through the streets, cars piled up in a massive wreck. Engines were clogged with sand, cutting out instantly and triggering chain collisions.

"I need to see it for myself," Lucas said, already heading for the door. "Stay inside, don't leave the building."

He sprinted down the block and reached the scene within minutes. Police had already cordoned off the area, and Spider-Man was working alongside firefighters and officers to rescue people trapped in their cars.

Among the chaos, Lucas spotted a familiar face—George, standing at the front lines barking orders.

"Hey, old man, what's going on here?" Lucas called, grabbing his shoulder.

George turned, surprised. "Lucas?!" He immediately looked him over, checking for injuries. Clearly, he'd assumed Lucas was one of the accident victims.

Lucas quickly explained that he'd only seen the news and came to check things out. That eased George's worry.

"Honestly, we don't know much yet," George said tersely. "We just got flooded with emergency calls—same story each time. Huge sandstorm out of nowhere. Cars wrecked, people trapped."

He pointed down the street at the dunes of sand still swirling through the air.

"You shouldn't be here—it's dangerous."

With that, George turned and ran back to help with the rescue efforts.

Lucas slipped away into a nearby alley. After checking to make sure no one was watching, a soft gust of wind swirled beneath his feet—and in an instant, he lifted off, landing quietly on a nearby rooftop.

From above, he could see the entire scene clearly.

He studied the intersection, the layout of the connecting streets, and the surrounding buildings.

That feeling returned—like the pieces of a puzzle were there, but just out of reach.

---

Meanwhile, in Washington D.C., inside the Triskelion.

"Coulson, what's the situation in New York?" asked Director Nick Fury, his one visible eye fixed on the live news feed.

Across from him, Coulson flipped through a report. "According to the meteorological department, the incident area experienced an intense sandstorm—but the effect was limited to a single street. That's definitely not a natural phenomenon."

"So... man-made, then?" Fury said, turning toward him. "Find out who's behind it. If someone caused it, I want a name."

"Yes, Director." Coulson stood, about to leave, when Fury stopped him.

"Where's Natasha?"

"She's already in New York," Coulson replied. "Should be meeting the target today."

Fury nodded. "Good. Have her look into the sand incidents while she's there."

"Understood." Coulson left the room.

---

Back in New York—

The accident cleanup was nearly complete. The street was still blocked off, but all the injured had been rescued.

Landing silently back on the ground, Lucas frowned. That faint instinct tugged at him again—but he still couldn't pinpoint the reason.

The two accident sites were connected by nearby streets, but they had nothing in common—different blocks, different traffic flow, no shared patterns.

He was still thinking when Skye's voice came through his earpiece.

Ever since they'd taken on their first client, Skye had gotten so excited that she'd built Lucas a customized comms device—hacked into the Federal Communications Bureau and even S.H.I.E.L.D.'s secure networks.

With her upgrades, as long as those systems could connect, Lucas would never lose signal—anywhere in the world.

Lucas couldn't help but grin. "Damn... Skye, you're a genius."

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 27: A Wrong Direction in the Investigation

"Lucas, I found Flint Marko's trail," Skye's voice came through the earpiece. "Facial recognition confirms he appeared at both of the sand-related traffic accident sites."

"Got it. I'm on my way back."

Lucas exhaled, turned, and started walking back toward the Devil May Cry Detective Agency.

"Man, Batman's tech really puts everyone else to shame," he muttered under his breath. "Just a couple taps and you get instant footage. Jealous~"

Unlike Gotham's billionaire with infinite toys, Lucas still had to head back to his office to see what Skye had dug up.

When he arrived, the footage was already on screen—clear images of Flint Marko.

As expected, Marko was a tall, muscular man. This time, however, he wasn't wearing his signature green-and-black striped shirt; instead, he had on plain work clothes, probably to avoid drawing attention.

"Can we track where he went next?" Lucas asked.

"Nope," Skye replied, shaking her head while spooning up some fig panna cotta from the mini-fridge. "The guy avoided every camera after that—completely vanished."

Ever since Skye had tried the food Lucas made from the Final Fantasy world, she'd become hopelessly addicted. Once she realized Lucas could make more anytime, she insisted the fridge stay fully stocked.

Her favorite part? No matter how much she ate, she never gained weight. That discovery had turned her into a total foodie.

Lucas rubbed his chin, thinking. One name came to mind—S.H.I.E.L.D.

If Skye could hack into their system, finding Marko's location would be easy.

After all, with HYDRA lurking in its shadows, S.H.I.E.L.D.'s surveillance network was one of the most comprehensive on the planet. They had eyes everywhere—so

much so that one day, they'd even try to launch a system that could monitor the entire world.

"Skye," Lucas said seriously, "I've got a new task for you. This might be the biggest challenge you've ever faced."

He paused, realizing the risk.

If Skye hacked into S.H.I.E.L.D. and got caught, HYDRA would notice too. Then both agencies would come after them—either to capture or eliminate them.

Contact with S.H.I.E.L.D. was inevitable, but Lucas wasn't afraid of Fury or HYDRA's agents. What he worried about was his family. Gwen and Peter could protect themselves, but George and his family were ordinary people.

If S.H.I.E.L.D. found out about him, he'd just be watched. But if HYDRA did... they'd either brainwash or kill everyone close to him.

Being exposed was only a matter of time. Once S.H.I.E.L.D. learned his and Gwen's identities, HYDRA would too.

Unless—

Lucas remembered something. Nick Fury kept a private classified file—so secret that even HYDRA hadn't fully infiltrated it. That file contained the identities of certain enhanced individuals. If Lucas and Gwen could somehow end up in that file, they'd effectively vanish from HYDRA's radar.

"Skye?" Her voice broke his thoughts. "You said something about a challenge? What kind?"

"...Never mind," Lucas said after a pause. "Not yet. Forget it."

He quickly dropped the idea. Exposing himself voluntarily would be beyond foolish—the consequences were impossible to predict.

"Oh," Skye said, shrugging before turning her full attention back to the panna cotta.

Lucas leaned back and thought through everything he knew about Sandman. In his previous life, he hadn't been a hardcore Marvel fan—he'd just seen a few movies. He remembered only that Flint Marko had turned to crime to pay for his daughter's medical treatment.

"Skye, did you find Keemia's medical records?"

"I did," she said, scrolling on her laptop. "But there's nothing serious—just some minor colds and fevers. No terminal illness."

Lucas blinked. "Wait... so in this world, Sandman's daughter isn't even sick?"

"Where's her mother then?" he asked after a moment's thought.

"Divorced from Marko," Skye replied. "She's living in New York with Keemia now."

She tapped a few keys and turned the laptop toward him. "Here. Their address—Queens. And check this out—the house even looks exactly like the one from Spider-Man 3."

Lucas's eyes widened slightly. "So this really is the same setup as the Marvel Spider-Man universe..."

He stared at the familiar photo—the same house, the same angle. It looked identical to the flashback scene where Marko's daughter appeared in Spider-Man 3.

Now everything lined up.

All that was left was to locate Marko himself—or maybe...

He didn't even need to look.

The realization hit Lucas all at once. He almost laughed at how hard he'd been overthinking it.

A guy like Flint Marko—a literal super-powered criminal—wouldn't stay quiet for long. He was bound to cause a big enough scene soon enough. When that happened, Lucas would know exactly where he was.

His mood lifted instantly.

"Skye," he said lazily, "from now on, just keep an eye on NYPD dispatch logs. If any reports mention sand—call me immediately."

"Got it."

Without hesitation, Skye cracked her knuckles and hacked straight into the NYPD's emergency system, setting up an auto-filter for all sand-related incidents.

Lucas grabbed a chilled bottle of white peach juice from the bar and leaned back comfortably.

The rest of the day passed quietly.

At one point, Skye video-called little Keemia to update her on the investigation. The girl asked anxiously whether they'd found her father yet. Skye reassured her, saying they were getting closer, and even chatted briefly with Keemia's mother.

Her mother had initially thought the whole "detective agency helping a little girl find her missing dad" story was a scam. But after seeing Skye on the call—and realizing they were actually serious—she was both shocked and touched.

After multiple promises that they'd find Flint soon, Skye ended the call.

"Boss," she called out, stretching, "what's for dinner tonight?"

"There's food in the fridge. Help yourself." Lucas was sprawled on the couch, half-asleep.

The fridge was already stocked with several days' worth of meals. Thanks to his Cooking Skill, he didn't even need to actually cook. As long as he had the ingredients, the dishes would appear perfectly made—fresh, fragrant, and ready to eat.

Night fell.

NYPD's emergency dispatch center stayed as busy as ever—but there were no new sand-related incidents reported.

Lucas was still asleep the next morning when his phone buzzed.

"Mr. Norman," said a cheerful voice—it was his real estate agent. "A woman's interested in renting your apartment. When would be a good time to show it?"

Lucas yawned. "Anytime today's fine."

He hung up and immediately rolled over, half-asleep again.

At nine sharp, Skye woke him. "Lucas! The agent's here—with the new tenant."

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight\_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

Marvel Manifestor

Lucas finally dragged himself out of bed and went through his morning routine at a snail's pace.

Half an hour later, he walked into the Devil May Cry Detective Agency, only to find Skye and the real estate agent sitting on the couch with a woman he didn't recognize. All three had steaming cups of fragrant tea in their hands.

Just from the aroma, Lucas could tell it was High Mountain Tea—and sure enough, on the coffee table were several human-shaped High Mountain Tea Biscuits.

"Good morning, Mr. Norman," the real estate agent, John, greeted with a grin, lifting his cup. "Your tea is as wonderful as ever—can't find anything like it anywhere else in New York."

"Thanks," Lucas said, smiling. "Before you leave, have Skye pack you some chestnut cakes. Take them home for little Jenny."

Jenny was John's four-year-old daughter, a sweet and mischievous little girl.

John had once rented an apartment in Lucas's building before being transferred to Tusten Island to manage all real estate there. Though he'd moved out, Lucas had kept him on as his exclusive agent for all property matters.

"Thanks, Mr. Norman," John said cheerfully. "Jenny's been asking for your chestnut cakes for weeks."

Then he gestured toward the woman sitting beside him. "Oh, right—this is the prospective tenant, Miss Ariana Spencer."

At that, the woman stood up with a poised smile.

"Hello," she said smoothly. "Please, just call me Ariana."

The moment Lucas saw her face, his entire body tensed. His pupils dilated slightly.

No way...

He hadn't expected them to find him already—and this fast.

Because standing right there in front of him—posing as "Ariana Spencer"—was none other than Natasha Romanoff, the world-famous Black Widow.

Lucas didn't need anyone to tell him. That face was unmistakable to anyone who had ever seen a movie.

Of course, Natasha noticed his sudden stiffness. Years of spy training had honed her senses to razor sharpness—body language, microexpressions, even breathing patterns were all clues to her.

Did he just recognize me? Impossible, she thought.

Her eyes narrowed imperceptibly, but her tone stayed casual as she studied him.

Lucas's lips curved into a friendly smile. "Well then, Miss Ariana, why don't I show you around the property?"

He extended a hand in a polite gesture of invitation.

Natasha kept her expression neutral, matching his smile with one of her own. She didn't believe for a second that Lucas could have identified her that easily.

"Of course, Mr. Norman," she said smoothly. "I've heard this is one of the most exquisite residences in all of New York. I'm looking forward to seeing it for myself."

More like spying on it, Lucas thought coldly but kept his smile fixed.

Once Natasha and John stepped out, Lucas turned sharply to Skye.

"Skye, sweep the place for bugs and surveillance devices. If you find anything, tell me immediately."

Skye blinked, confused, but nodded anyway. "Uh... sure." She opened her laptop and started typing furiously.

Lucas followed Natasha and John out of the office and into the adjoining apartment building.

Even for someone as experienced as Natasha, the sight made her pause.

"Wow," she breathed, eyes sweeping across the high ceilings and ornate decor. "This place is like a palace."

She ran her fingers along the railings, examined furniture, and studied details—every motion smooth and deliberate.

"Mr. Norman," she asked, her tone casual, "are all these antiques... real?"

"They're all genuine," Lucas replied evenly.

Of course, he knew exactly what she was doing—planting bugs and hidden cameras while pretending to admire the decor. S.H.I.E.L.D. never changes, he thought with a smirk.

He didn't expose her—at least not yet. He simply continued giving her the tour.

When they reached the third floor, he opened one of the doors.

"This would be your room. Please, take a look."

Natasha stepped inside. The interior was as luxurious as the rest of the building—fully furnished with top-of-the-line appliances and imported décor.

Her eyes gleamed slightly. This place is better than the Versailles Palace.

Not to mention, S.H.I.E.L.D. was footing the bill. She was already imagining how much she could squeeze out of Fury for this one.

"This is perfect," she declared with a dazzling smile. "Beyond my expectations! It's like heaven. I'll take it!"

She didn't even bother to ask the price.

John was overjoyed—another successful deal meant another hefty commission.

Soon after, the paperwork was done. Natasha wired the deposit immediately—she wanted to move in today. The apartments were, of course, move-in ready.

John left soon after, happily carrying the chestnut cakes Lucas had promised him.

Back inside Devil May Cry, only Lucas, Natasha, and Skye remained. Skye was wandering around the room, laptop in hand, scanning frequencies.

Lucas didn't waste time. "Agent Natasha Romanoff," he said flatly, "let's not play games. I'd really like to know—how exactly did you find me?"

Natasha froze for just half a second before feigning confusion.

"Excuse me? Natasha... who? You must have me confused with someone else."

Lucas didn't bother arguing.

Just then, Skye returned from her sweep. Without a word, she tossed a handful of tiny devices onto the coffee table—bugs, micro-cameras, and transmitters.

"These are yours, right?" she said dryly.

Natasha blinked, a faint twitch at the corner of her mouth. So much for subtlety.

Her cover was completely blown. There was no point pretending anymore.

"Skye," Lucas said calmly, "go check the apartment next. I'm sure there are plenty more of these."

Skye nodded and grabbed her gear.

Natasha sighed and, with practiced ease, touched her earpiece. "Director, my cover's been compromised. Lucas Norman seems to have known who I was from the start."

From the other end came Nick Fury's deep voice, transmitted through her bone-conduction comms.

"Interesting. I'd like to know how he figured it out."

"So would I," Natasha murmured.

Lucas chuckled. "You can report to your boss later. For now, why don't we talk? I'd love to hear how you tracked me down."

He tossed her a bottle of Golden Pineapple Juice, keeping a Honey Melon Juice for himself.

Natasha took it, twisted the cap open, and took a sip—then her eyes widened in surprise.

"Wow... this is incredible. What brand is this?"

She turned the bottle in her hands, but there were no labels. The shape was unusual too—like a smaller version of a single-handled water jug.

"You can't buy it," Lucas said casually. "Secret recipe."

Natasha smiled. "Pity."

Just as she was about to take another sip, Fury's voice crackled in her ear again.

"Romanoff. Put me through. I want to speak with him directly."

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - [Twilight_scribe1](#)

~~~~~  
If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review!  
Your support means everything.

~~~~~  
Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 29: The Showdown

"Director Fury wants to speak with you."

Natasha removed a small black cube from her wrist and set it on the table. A soft hum followed, and a holographic projection flickered to life—revealing none other than Nick Fury, the one-eyed, bald-headed Director of S.H.I.E.L.D.

"Mr. Lucas Norman, it's a pleasure to finally meet you. I'm—"

Before he could finish, Lucas interrupted casually, waving his hand.

"I know, I know. Nick Fury—the legendary Director of S.H.I.E.L.D. Also known as the Cyclopean Spymaster, Motherf***er Man, and the Great Black Egg."

He fired off a list of nicknames with a perfectly straight face.

Natasha blinked. Black Egg? She had to bite her lip to keep from laughing.

He really does look like one, though...

Meanwhile, Fury's already-dark face somehow managed to darken further—like an ink-stained squid that had been left in the sun too long.

"Mr. Norman," he said in that deep, even voice, "may I ask how you learned about our organization?"

Lucas gave a nonchalant shrug. "You people are everywhere. I'm sure a man of your legendary resources can figure that out yourself, can't you, Director?"

Of course, he wasn't about to tell Fury the truth—that he was a transmigrant from another universe. He'd have to be insane to admit that.

Fury's eye narrowed. He stayed silent for a long moment, then tapped something on his end. A video appeared in the projection—grainy satellite footage showing a tornado ripping apart a warehouse.

"Mr. Norman," Fury said slowly, "care to explain this?"

Lucas barely glanced at it before leaning back lazily.

"Explain what? That I was walking by and happened to see a tornado? They're not that uncommon in New York, you know."

He knew exactly what it was—the moment he unleashed one of his powers. They'd already confirmed there were no security cameras in the area, so this footage could only have come from a satellite.

Still, he wasn't worried. As long as he didn't admit anything, S.H.I.E.L.D. had nothing solid.

"It seems you don't plan on cooperating," Fury said. "Then I'll keep this brief. Two questions."

He raised two fingers, not waiting for Lucas's consent.

"First—are you a mutant?"

Lucas chuckled and shook his head. "Do I look like a mutant? Come on. You ever seen one this handsome?"

Even Natasha had to fight a smirk.

Fury pressed on, unfazed. "Second question: where did your abilities come from?"

"Born with them," Lucas replied vaguely. "They only awakened recently. But no, I'm not a mutant."

Fury frowned, deep in thought. Not a mutant, but born with powers? Then could he be...

He looked back up sharply. "Have you come into contact with any crystals recently? Perhaps... something called Terrigen?"

Lucas knew exactly what he was referring to—the Terrigen Crystals of the Inhumans.

"I know what you're talking about," he said calmly, "but no. I've never touched any Terrigen crystals."

Fury's single eye narrowed even more. Now he was truly intrigued. The fact that Lucas even knew about Terrigen was alarming.

This man was no ordinary civilian.

Lucas, meanwhile, could practically read Fury's mind. The man trusted no one—always digging, always doubting, probably even suspicious of his own reflection.

"Save yourself the brain strain, Director," Lucas said, cracking open a bottle of melon juice. "I'm not your enemy. I run a detective agency. I don't have any grand ambitions, and I don't want to be part of your messy global spy drama.

Unless, of course, you make me part of it."

He smiled, all easy charm—but there was a quiet weight behind his words that made even Fury hesitate.

Truth was, Lucas was happy living a laid-back life—doing the occasional system-assigned mission, lounging on his sofa, cooking ridiculous desserts. He wasn't rich beyond measure, but he was comfortable, and that was enough.

As long as S.H.I.E.L.D. didn't screw that up.

"Of course," he added suddenly, eyes glinting, "if you ever need help, Director Fury, I'm open for business. You can hire me—at a reasonable fee."

His grin widened as he rubbed his hands together. "We can negotiate the price."

Fury blinked once, expression unreadable.

From cosmic anomaly to shameless businessman in three seconds flat, he thought.

He finally said, "Last question, then. Will you ever pose a threat to this world?"

Lucas stared at him. "Seriously?"

"Seriously."

Lucas groaned, leaning back on the couch. "What's wrong with you people? You've got a persecution complex the size of Asgard. Threaten the world? What am I, a Saturday morning cartoon villain?"

I've got a comfy apartment, good food, and a killer gaming setup. Why the hell would I want to blow up the planet?"

Even Natasha had to look away to hide a grin.

"...Fair enough," Fury said at last. "No further questions."

He was about to cut the transmission when Lucas suddenly raised a hand.

"Hold up. I'm not finished yet."

Both Fury and Natasha looked at him.

"The thing is..." Lucas paused dramatically. "Natasha's rent isn't refundable."

For a moment, there was silence. Then Fury's jaw actually twitched.

Natasha just stared at Lucas, dumbfounded. Is this guy for real?

"I'm aware," Fury said dryly after a beat. "Since the lease is signed, she'll stay. No point wasting the agency's money."

Natasha nodded quickly. Who would want to give up such a luxurious apartment, anyway? Besides, she knew what Fury really meant—she was to keep an eye on Lucas Norman.

Lucas, of course, saw right through it. But he didn't object.

If Natasha left, they'd just send someone else—or worse, plant surveillance teams nearby.

And Lucas hated being spied on. If it had to happen, he'd rather the spy be someone at least tolerable to look at.

Seeing he wasn't resisting, Fury seemed satisfied. The hologram flickered and vanished.

Natasha remained silent for a few moments, her earpiece crackling softly as Fury's voice came through again—issuing direct orders.

"Keep monitoring him. If he shows signs of being a threat—neutralize him."

Lucas didn't need to hear it to guess what was being said.

But Skye—still monitoring signals from her workstation—had already intercepted and recorded the entire encrypted transmission.

"So she is a spy," Skye muttered darkly. "And they're planning to move against the boss..."

Her fingers clenched around a handful of recovered bugs. Her expression hardened.

She wasn't about to let anyone—S.H.I.E.L.D. or otherwise—mess with the peaceful life she'd built here.

By the time she returned to the office, she dropped the small devices in front of Natasha with a sharp clack.

"Here. Take your toys. And stop planting them everywhere."

Then she plopped down at her desk, fingers flying over the keyboard. Within seconds, she was launching a counterattack—using the signal she'd intercepted to trace back and hack into S.H.I.E.L.D.'s mainframe.

It didn't last long. Even with hundreds of fake IP masks, her intrusion was detected almost immediately.

Seconds later, Natasha's phone began to ring.

It was Nick Fury.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight\_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review! Your support means everything.

~~~~~

## Chapter 30: Marco Appears

"Natasha, someone's hacked into S.H.I.E.L.D.'s mainframe. The signal's coming from inside your building. Find that person—now."

Nick Fury's voice was colder and sharper than usual, the kind that made even seasoned agents straighten up instantly.

And it was serious. S.H.I.E.L.D.'s central system—known to be one of the most secure networks in the world—had just been breached. If that wasn't a crisis, nothing was.

Natasha turned her head, eyes narrowing immediately at Skye, whose fingers were flying across her keyboard like a machine gun. The way she typed, the confident grin, the timing—it all added up.

"Director," Natasha said into her comm, "I've found the culprit. It's the young woman—Lucas's assistant. Judging by her skillset, she's a top-tier hacker."

"A valuable talent," Fury replied after a beat. "See if you can persuade her to join S.H.I.E.L.D."

Before Natasha could respond, a furious voice boomed through the comms—Skye's voice, echoing inside Fury's own office.

"Dream on, you one-eyed egg! I'm not working for you creeps! Keep it up and I'll have Lucas blow your whole damn S.H.I.E.L.D. sky-high!"

The line went silent for half a second. Then Fury exploded.

"Motherf—!!! Are my tech teams eating dirt?! Didn't they say the intrusion was contained?! Why the hell can she still talk through the channel?!"

"You've got one minute to restore the mainframe—or I swear, every last tech in this building is going to Africa to dig mines!"

Agent Coulson, standing nearby, blinked. He had never seen the director lose his cool like that—not even during global-level threats.

Back in the office, Natasha looked at Skye in disbelief. "You... you're still connected to S.H.I.E.L.D.'s network? You weren't purged from the system?"

"Please," Skye scoffed, brushing her hair aside with a smirk. "Your so-called 'secure mainframe' isn't that special. It's no harder than the Pentagon. You guys just have a bigger ego, that's all."

She shot Natasha a look of pure disdain. "Maybe teach your people to use real firewalls next time."

Natasha gave a low whistle. "Impressive. Really impressive. You're wasted here, you know. You should be with us—S.H.I.E.L.D. could give you resources, a lab, everything you'd ever need."

"Ha! Not interested!" Skye snapped, hugging the curious little Moguri creature in her arms protectively.

Of course, Natasha couldn't see Moguri. To her, Skye was just clutching at thin air—but she didn't comment.

Lucas, watching the entire exchange, could only sigh internally. He already knew Skye was talented, but this was something else. Not only had she hacked into

S.H.I.E.L.D.'s mainframe in minutes—she'd stayed inside after being detected and even left a backdoor.

Guess real life doesn't follow TV logic, he thought with amusement.

But that reminded him of something else—Skye's real potential. In this world, she was destined to awaken as Quake, a powerful Inhuman.

He glanced thoughtfully at her. Maybe it's time I help her unlock that power... but only if she wants to. I'm not forcing anyone.

Still, the artifact that could trigger her awakening—the Obelisk—was in S.H.I.E.L.D.'s possession. He'd have to find a way to get his hands on it.

After mentally running through the Marvel timeline, Lucas frowned. The nearest major event should be Tony Stark's kidnapping... but S.H.I.E.L.D. wasn't really involved in that, were they?

Colson only approached Stark and Pepper after the kidnapping. Hm... this might be tricky.

He needed S.H.I.E.L.D. to come to him, not the other way around. That was the only way he could use the Obelisk as a bargaining chip.

Across the room, Natasha had given up trying to recruit Skye and leaned lazily against the sofa, stretching her long legs. Her body language was pure temptation—but Lucas was so deep in thought he didn't even notice.

Then—

Beep! Beep! Beep!

A sharp alarm burst from Skye's computer.

"What's going on?" Lucas immediately looked up.

Skye's eyes darted over the data streams. "We've got a hit! Marco just appeared—he's driving a stolen truck down the main street!"

She quickly pulled up multiple camera feeds, chaining together every surveillance view in the city—and even tapping into satellite imagery.

Natasha whistled. "Wait... is that military-grade satellite footage? You hacked the Pentagon again, didn't you?"

Skye didn't even bother to deny it.

Natasha shook her head in disbelief. "You're really something else. You sure you won't reconsider joining S.H.I.E.L.D.?"

Skye ignored her completely.

On the screen, Marco's truck was barreling through traffic, leaving chaos in its wake.

"What the hell is he doing? He's gone insane," Lucas muttered.

At that exact moment, another feed popped up—a police emergency alert flashing red.

Armed Robbery in Progress – Manhattan District Bank.

Suspect possibly metahuman. Can generate and control sand.

The report continued: the entire interior of the bank had been filled with sand, trapping everyone inside. Meanwhile, Marco was using his powers to create sand walls on the surrounding streets, completely blocking traffic.

"Skye! Pull up all surveillance from his previous movements—every street he's passed through!"

Skye complied instantly. Within seconds, several camera feeds appeared on the screen. Lucas studied them carefully—and then his eyes lit up.

"See this? Those earlier 'sand-related traffic accidents'? Same locations. Marco was rehearsing! He was running test drills for this bank heist!"

Skye's jaw dropped. "So this was all premeditated..."

Exactly. Marco's plan had been simple but genius—use previous incidents to test his power range, then unleash it for real. Now, with the streets blocked by sandstorms, not a single police car could reach him.

Meanwhile, Marco himself was having the time of his life.

"Hahahaha! You useless pigs! Come catch Grandpa Marco if you can!"

He laughed wildly as his truck tore down the streets, sand surging behind him like a living beast. Cars were flipped, traffic lights buried, and terrified citizens scattered everywhere.

Bang!

Suddenly, there was a loud thud on the truck's roof.

Marco frowned. "What the—?"

Something—or someone—had just landed on top of the vehicle.

Then, through the howling wind and roaring engine, a calm, cold voice came from outside.

~~~~~

For 20 advanced chapters, visit my Patreon:

Patreon - Twilight_scribe1

~~~~~

If you enjoyed Marvel Manifestor, please give it a Power Stone and leave a review!  
Your support means everything.

~~~~~