

Spider-Man 421

Chapter 421: Reactions (2/2)

"T-Tony?" Pepper whispered, her voice quivering with emotion.

Tony managed a weak smile. "Hey, Pep," he said softly.

For a moment, Pepper stared at him, as if unable to believe her eyes. Then, the dam broke, and tears spilled down her cheeks. She launched herself at Tony, wrapping her arms tightly around him, and he returned the embrace just as fiercely.

Unlike the spies in Iowa, Pepper didn't need any verification or codes to believe that this was her Tony. After all, she was married to the man and had his child. Nor did she have a paranoid mind, born from a lifetime of espionage.

"You're really here," Pepper choked out, her voice filled with joy and disbelief.

"I told you I'd be back," Tony replied, his voice breaking with emotion. "I'm so sorry, Pep. I never wanted to leave you and Morgan."

Pepper pulled back slightly, looking into his eyes as realization dawned on her. "You knew..." she said, her voice trembling. "You knew that you were coming back. A whole year, Tony. We thought you were gone forever. Why didn't you explain better!"

"I know, but I was kinda in the middle of dying. I'm so sorry," Tony said, his heart aching at the thought of the pain he had caused. "I wish I could have come back sooner. I really do..."

Pepper's fingers gently caressed his cheek, her touch filled with tenderness. "It doesn't matter now," she said softly. "You're here, and that's all that matters."

Just then, they heard a faint sound coming from down the hall, and they turned to see Morgan, donned in her pink bunny pajamas, standing there, rubbing her sleepy eyes. "Mommy, who's at the door?" she asked, her voice still groggy with sleep.

Pepper smiled through her tears, kneeling down to her daughter's level. "Morgan, sweetie, look who's here," she said, her voice filled with both joy and trepidation.

Morgan's eyes widened when she saw Tony standing there. "Daddy?" she whispered, her voice tinged with uncertainty.

Tony's heart broke at the sight of his little girl, looking both excited and cautious. "Hey, bug," he said softly, using his nickname for her. "It's me."

Morgan's eyes filled with tears as she ran into Tony's open arms. "Daddy!" she cried, clinging to him tightly.

Tony held her close, burying his face in her hair, inhaling the sweet scent of children's shampoo. "I'm so sorry I was gone for so long," he whispered, his voice choked with emotion. "I promise I'll never leave you again."

As they stood there, Pepper wrapped her arms around both of them, holding her family close. The pain of the past year was slowly being replaced by the overwhelming relief and joy of having Tony back. They had spent countless nights longing for him, and now, he was here, in their arms once more.

The three of them stood in a tight embrace for what felt like an eternity, finding solace and comfort in each other's presence. As the initial excitement settled, Tony shook his daughter, who held him tight like a koala. "I think you should be in bed, but since it's a special occasion, why don't we all camp out in the living room?"

Pepper smiled, wiping away her tears. "I think that's a great idea," she said, her voice filled with warmth.

Hand in hand, they walked to the living room, where Tony got comfortable in the couch with Morgan attached to him like a super-magnet. Morgan refused to separate from her father, her grip locked around his neck.

Seeing this, Pepper couldn't keep the smile from her face. "Since your trapped, why I go and get some pillow and blankets?" Pepper said and walked off.

Morgan nodded, still processing the fact that her father had returned from the dead. "I missed you, Daddy," she said softly, her voice filled with love and longing.

Tony smiled, sitting on the edge of her bed. "I missed you too, bug," he replied, playing with her long hair. "But I promise I'm here now, and I'm never leaving again."

"Promise?" Morgan asked, her eyes searching his for reassurance.

Tony placed his hand over his heart. "I promise," he said, his voice unwavering. "I love you both so much, and I'll always be here for you."

Morgan pulled her head up, staring at her father with a frown. "No, you have to say it right!" She practically ordered.

"Huh...? Oh!" Tony was confused for a moment before realizing what she meant. "I love you 3000." He said, bringing a blooming smile to her face as she resumed her position, glued to his body.

Soon enough, Pepper joined them on the couch, bringing along all sorts of pillows and blankets, and the three of them cuddled close, reveling in the feeling of being together again. As the night stretched on, they shared stories, laughter, and tears, catching up on all that had happened during Tony's absence.

For Morgan, it was a night she would never forget. Her father had come back from the dead, and she held onto him as if afraid he might disappear again. But as Tony tucked her in and kissed her forehead, she felt safe and loved, knowing that he was truly back for good.

As they finally drifted off to sleep, Tony found himself overwhelmed with gratitude and love. He had been given a second chance at life, and he wasn't going to waste it. With his family by his side, he knew that no challenge was too great, and he was determined to make every moment count.

And so, as the night turned to dawn, Tony Stark, the Iron Man, found himself surrounded by the two most important people in his life. The pain of the past year was still there, but it was now overshadowed by the joy of being together again.

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Time skip - 1 week

It didn't take long for the news of Tony Stark resurrection spread like wildfire across the globe, capturing the attention of the general public and sending news stations into a frenzy. Reporters scrambled to cover the astonishing story, trying to make sense of the seemingly impossible events.

Lucky, for Natasha, she didn't have much to gain by stepping out into the public again, so she was able to stay 'dead' so to speak. Tony, on the other hand, has a family, a large fortune, and a very successful company, so he had to step out into the light sooner or later.

On television screens and news websites, headlines blared with excitement and curiosity: "Avenger: Return from the Dead," "Stark: Back from the Beyond," and "The Marvelous Resurrection: How Did He Do It?"

As the news broke, people everywhere stopped in their tracks, unable to believe what they were hearing. Social media erupted with a mix of shock, skepticism, and joy. Memes and fan theories flooded the internet, with people speculating on how such a miraculous event could have occurred.

Journalists sought expert opinions from scientists, historians, and even conspiracy theorists, trying to find a rational explanation for the unexplainable. But the consensus was clear. Tony Stark was indeed back among the living.

The Avengers held a press conference to address the public directly. Tony and his family stood side by side, projecting an aura of love and happiness.

Questions from reporters came in rapid-fire succession, but Tony faced them with composure and candor, opting to just say a short speech before heading home. "Yes, I actually died a year ago. Yes, I'm now alive. No, I'm not an alien or dimensional shapeshifter. I hope that clears things up. Now, if you guys don't mind, I promised to take my daughter to the park. Iron Man out..." He gave the reporters the peace sign and walked off, followed by Pepper, Morgan, and Happy, who would be driving for them.

For the weeks to come, news stations continued to broadcast updates and stories, diving into the details of Tony's return to the living. The excitement of it all seemed to slowly give way to a renewed sense of hope and optimism. The world knew that if the Avengers could overcome death itself, then there was no challenge they couldn't face.

The swirling energy engulfed Peter and Lily, transporting them back to their universe and their home. As the bright lights faded away, they found themselves standing in the familiar kitchen of their house. Peter's girlfriend and Lily's mother, MJ, was nowhere to be seen.

"Dad, we're back!" Lily called out, happy to be home.

Peter nodded and let out a relieved sigh. "Finally back home," he said, his voice tinged with exhaustion. After all, he had been universe hopping for a while now.

But as they stood there, they noticed something odd. The house was in a state of chaos. All of the doors were open, including the cabinets for some reason, not to mention the mess...

"Dad, where's Mom?" Lily asked, her brow furrowing with concern. "She was here when I left..."

Peter's heart skipped a beat as he looked around, calling out for MJ. "MJ! MJ, are you here?"

A distant voice echoed from the living room, "Lily?! Peter? Is that you?"

They rushed out of the kitchen and found MJ pacing nervously in the living room. As soon as she saw them, she let out a mix of relief and frustration, "Lily Parker! Where have you been? I've been looking everywhere for you!" She shouted, both happy for her return and irate for her leaving.

Peter stepped forward, trying to explain, "We got caught up in something... a bit complicated. But we're back now, safe and sound."

Lily nodded, "It's true, Mom! We were in another universe!"

While MJ was contemplating what she just heard, Peter spoke up. "Umm, how long ago did Lily disappear?"

MJ's eyes narrowed as she checked her phone. "About half an hour." She revealed as she scooped Lily into her arms. "I was about to call Tony and have him scour the cities cameras for her, but thankfully she's back."

"I missed you, Mom," Lily said, giving her mother a hug.

Peter leaned against the wall, allowing them to have their moment. "As you can probably tell, it's been more than thirty minutes for us..." he reveals, explaining their little adventure across the multiverse.

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MJ embraced her daughter tightly, trying to hold back tears. "So it's been a few days for you?" She asks and Lily nods into her shoulder.

Peter joined the hug, and the three of them stood there, cherishing the moment of being reunited. After a few moments, Peter pulled back and smiled at MJ, "Sorry for all the trouble. But we're home now, and that's what matters."

MJ couldn't help but smile back, her heart filled with love for her little family. "Well, you better not disappear like that again, okay? It's not good for my nerves."

"We promise," Lily said, giving her mother a mischievous grin. "At least not without a good reason."

Peter chuckled, shaking his head. "I'll be look into a way to stop any sort of forced multiverse travel, so you don't have to worry." After all, he didn't want this to happen again, especially to Lily or MJ.

As the tension from the past events slowly dissipated, Lily couldn't wait any longer to share her experience with her mother. She excitedly recounted their adventure, from meeting the alternate Spider-Men to the confrontation with the villains, and finally, bonding with Venom.

"Oh! And I made a new friend!" Lily exclaimed as her body was instantly covered in an ominous black goo. "His name is Venom!" She spoke through Venoms fanged mouth, her voice monstrous and distorted.

"?!"

Chapter 422: Strange Encounter

After a long explanation, Lily managed to convince her mother that Venom wasn't a threat to her or anyone else. The three of them got to work cleaning up the mess MJ unintentionally created while frantically searching for Lily.

Once the house was back in order, Lily turned to her father expectantly. "Can you teach me magic now? You promised..." she said, looking up at him with puppy dog eyes.

MJ perked up upon hearing this. "Can I learn magic too?" MJ asked, matching her daughters manipulatively cute expression. "You don't have to teach me much. I just want to be able to open portals."

Peter sighed in exasperation. He hasn't been back for more than a few hours and wanted to spend some time lazing around, but... "Sure, it would be great to have someone else that can open portals," he nodded, unable to say no to the double attack. "But we'll need to get a sling ring to open portals. They're heavily restricted by Kamar-Taj, for good reason..."

Lily and MJ's excitement deflated slightly upon hearing that. However, Peter reassured them, "Don't worry. You'll just have to become official students of Kamar-Taj."

Their excitement immediately returned. "How do we do that?" Lily asked.

Peter couldn't stop himself from patting her on the head affectionately. "We'll go and get the Ancient One's permission, of course."

The idea of becoming students of Kamar-Taj instantly thrilled Lily and MJ, though they turned nervous upon realizing they'll be meeting the Sorceress Supreme. It felt like they were being given a chance to step into a magical realm, almost like entering Hogwarts and meeting Dumbledore himself.

Once the cleaning was done, the family got ready to visit Kamar-Taj. As Peter prepared to open a portal, he laid out some ground rules. "Remember, don't mention anything about us being superhero's. Only a few high level masters know that I'm Spider-Man. To most of the masters and students, Peter Parker is just the Ancient Ones student and Spider-Man is an entirely separate Master." He warned.

Agreeing to keep the secret, the two girls nodded eagerly, excited for the adventure that awaited them. With a gesture of his hand, Peter opened a swirling portal. Stepping through, they found themselves in the grand foyer of Kamar-Taj, a marvel of ancient architecture.

The high, intricately designed ceilings adorned with ornate carvings and hanging tapestries greeted them, and the wooden walls were adorned with odd, runic carvings, filling MJ and Lily with awe and wonder.

"This place is amazing," MJ whispered, taking in the surroundings.

"Yeah, it's like something straight out of a magical story," Lily chimed in, her eyes wide with excitement.

As they were about to venture further into the sanctum, they heard a knock at the door. Surprised to find someone at the entrance of the mystic realm, Peter strolled over and opened it to see a bearded, disheveled, and dirty man standing there. It was Doctor Strange.

[Insert picture of Doctor Strange here]

"...hello?" Doctor Strange greeted, looking at Peter with both confusion and suspicion. After all, he was in Kathmandu Nepal, so seeing an American teenager answer the ornate door was a bit shocking.

Peter was just as shocked, not expecting to meet Doctor Strange today. 'This must be his first encounter with Kamar-Taj...' He thought as he collected himself and smiled welcomingly. "Doctor Strange, the Ancient One is expecting you."

Laughing internally, Peter enjoyed the bewildered look on Strange's face. After all, the broken-handed Doctor doesn't yet believe in magic, so he must be paranoid as hell right now. 'I completely understand why the Ancient One does this all the time...'

Doctor Strange glanced at Peter before peaking behind him, where MJ and Lily stood. "I'm looking for Kamar-Taj," he answered, his tone cautious. "Is this the right place?."

"Yes, come in," Peter stepped aside, allowing Strange inside.

Doctor Strange narrowed his eyes but ultimately stepped inside. "Thank you..."

As he led Doctor Strange inside, Lily and MJ couldn't help but be intrigued by the new arrival. Lily was just about to say hello, since she knew Doctor Strange from Tom's universe, but one glance from her father told her to keep her knowledge to herself.

As he closed the door behind them, Peter motioned to Lily and MJ. "This is my girlfriend MJ and our daughter Lily. They're here to become students of Kamar-Taj."

Strange turned to Peter, eyeing him skeptically. "Your daughter? What are you two, 18?" He asked, spotting the age problem. After all, it's unlikely that Peter and MJ had Lily when they were 7 or 8 years old.

Lily perked up, happy to explain her birth. "Dad made me with magic and technology! I was an artificially intelligence."

"Right..." Strange drawled out, unable to believe a word she said.

Peter smirked, enjoying himself. "Anyway, you're here for healing, right?" He asked, eyeing the doctors shaking hands.

Strange's eyes widened. "How do you know-"

Peter waved him off, as if it wasn't that big of a deal. "That doesn't matter. Why don't you wait here with Lily and MJ? I'll go and get the Ancient One."

"That won't be necessary." Just as Peter was about to head off, the Ancient One appeared, greeting them with a serene smile. "Welcome, everyone," she said, smiling toward MJ and Lily warmly.

MJ was taken aback by the Ancient One's sudden appearance, momentarily lost for words. Lily, however, beamed with excitement. "You're the Ancient One! Why are you bald?"

Peter sputtered, finding it extremely hard to hold back his laughter. "Yeah, teacher, why are you bald? Is it because your so old?"

The Ancient One chuckled softly, though the glare she gave him while Lily wasn't looking told another story. "The honor is mine, Lily. Your father has told me so much about you." She replied before turning to MJ. "You as well, Miss Jones."

"Umm..." MJ hummed nervously. "H-Hello, Ma'am."

Nodding towards her, the Ancient One finally turned to Doctor Strange. "Stephen Strange, I've been expecting you."

"So I've heard..." Strange says, not nearly as weirded out as the first time.

Seeing that her favorite part of moments like this was ruined, the Ancient One turned to the most likely suspect, Peter. "You had to ruin it, didn't you?"

"What?" Peter shrugged uncaringly. "Are you the only one that gets to freak the guests out?"

"Alright!" Strange shouted in exasperation. "I've had enough! Someone better explain what's going on, now..."

"I know this is difficult to comprehend, but magic is real," the Ancient One began her explanation, stepping closer to the doctor. "If you seek to cure your hands, I can't do it for you. Though I can teach you to do it yourself."

Strange's skepticism was evident, "Okay, thanks for nothing, I guess. If you don't mind, I'll be leaving now. No need to show me to the door, I know where it is. Enjoy this little cult you've got going for yourself."

Peter interjected, stopping the doctor in his tracks, "She's not lying, you know? And If you leave now, you'll spend the rest of your life in regret. You'll never be Stephen Strange, the star surgeon

again. Just Stephen Strange, the cripple." His words struck center mass, hitting all of Strange's weak spots.

"Dad!" Lily shouted as she stomped over. "Stop being mean!"

Peter smiled and raised his hands in the air, "Sorry, sweetheart." He turned back to Strange and motioned towards Lily and MJ. "Why don't you just stay and see for yourself? Even MJ and Lily are here to join Kamar-Taj. You can learn together, and I assure you, it's worth it."

"Learn what? Magic?" Strange chuckled, dismissing the idea as utter nonsense.

Seeing that he couldn't be convinced with words, Peter decided to just show him. With a mischievous glint in his eye, Peter took a step forward and struck out with an open palm, hitting Strange square in the chest. In an instant, Strange's astral form was ejected from his physical body, and he found himself watching in shock as his lifeless form collapsed to the floor.

"What... what is this?" Strange stammered, completely bewildered by the surreal experience.

The Ancient One, though mildly annoyed at Peter stealing her moment, sighed and motioned for him to bring Strange back. Peter smirked and guided Strange's astral form back into his body, saying, "Now you can do the 'open your mind' thing, right?"

The Ancient One rolled her eyes playfully. "What? You don't want to do that as well?" She asked sarcastically as she walked towards Strange.

Strange's astral self was now back in his physical body, and he was visibly shaken from the encounter. He tried to rationalize the events, attributing them to some kind of hallucination or drug-induced illusion.

Ignoring Strange's frantic ramblings, the Ancient One stood before him, placing a finger on his forehead. "Open your mind, Stephen," she said softly, her voice carrying an air of command.

Suddenly, Strange's consciousness was thrust across dimensions, witnessing sights and phenomena beyond comprehension. He saw worlds folding in on themselves, mystical beings, and ancient cosmic forces. It was an overwhelming and awe-inspiring experience, pushing the limits of his perception and understanding.

When his consciousness finally returned to his physical body, Strange found himself on his knees, humbled by the revelations he had just encountered. He looked up at the Ancient One with newfound respect and a desire for knowledge.

"Please, teach me," he implored, his ego shattered and replaced by genuine humility.

The Ancient One smiled, happy with his transformation. "Welcome to Kamar-Taj, Doctor Strange," she said, offering her hand to help him up. "Your journey into the Mystic Arts begins now."

Peter watched from the side, pleased to see the movie moment play out in real life. Though a frown suddenly marred his face. After all, he knew that this was a sign of what's to come...

Eyeing the Ancient One, the teacher that was like an aunt or second mother to him, Peter wondered how he could save her. 'I refuse to let you die, whether you like it or not...'

Chapter 423: Dark Ritual

In the courtyard of Kamar-Taj, MJ, Lily, and Doctor Strange stood among the other students, dressed in the traditional grey robes. They were diligently practicing katas, following the instructions of the master leading the training. Lily chatted happily with Strange, her friendly demeanor managing to chip away at his usual prickly personality.

As they trained, Peter and the Ancient One observed from the sidelines, watching over the students. Peter's attention shifted momentarily as he caught a glimpse of a passing Master, donned in a yellow robe.

[Insert picture of Kaecilius here]

Kaecilius, a man with slicked back hair and piercing gaze, and the very man who would eventually betray and kill the Ancient One. With his future knowledge, Peter knew what lay ahead for her, and his determination to save her only strengthened.

The Ancient One followed Peter's line of sight and frowned. "Peter, let it be," she said gently, reading his thoughts. "I have seen my fate and accepted it long ago."

Peter turned to her with a resolute look. "I won't accept that, not when I have the power to change it," he declared firmly. "You've been like a second mother to me, and I won't stand by and watch you die, even if Dormammu himself stands in my way."

The Ancient One couldn't help but be touched by Peter's unwavering determination to protect her. Despite her acceptance of her fate, she couldn't deny the warmth that his words brought to her heart. She remained silent, unsure of how to respond.

With determination in his eyes, Peter continued, "You don't have to say anything. Just know that I won't rest until I find a way to sever your connection with Dormammu and keep you alive. You've done so much for me, and I owe it to you to return the favor."

A mix of emotions swirled within the Ancient One as she looked at Peter, this young man who carried the weight of the future on his shoulders. She had come to terms with her destiny long ago, but now, she found herself torn. A part of her wanted to accept Peter's offer of hope and salvation, while another part was still resolved to fulfill her destiny.

For a moment, the Ancient One's emotions wavered, but she ultimately nodded at Peter, her voice soft yet firm. "Thank you, Peter, but you must understand that some things are beyond our control. Fate has its way of unfolding, and I have seen the countless paths that lead to this moment."

"Yeah? Well, fate can go f*ck itself," Peter stated, his voice unwavering.

The Ancient One placed a gentle hand on Peter's shoulder, her eyes filled with wisdom and compassion. "I know you mean well, but remember that the choices we make can have far-reaching consequences. Saving me won't end well..."

Peter shrugged uncaringly. "Then I guess we better prepare," he said resolutely. "I'll protect you and deal with any consequences. Just sit back and leave everything to me."

The Ancient One smiled softly, enjoying the feeling of being protected for once. "Do what you will..." She said, giving up. "Now, let's focus on the training at hand. There is much for our new students to learn. You know, your daughter is quite skilled."

Peter nodded as he turned to see Lily, who has already mastered the Katas with ease. "Well, she's my daughter, so it makes sense." He smirked smugly.

Hours later...

In a secluded courtyard within Kamar-Taj, Peter stood with MJ and Lily, ready to begin their magical training. The courtyard was surrounded by tall, ancient walls covered in intricate runes, giving it an air of mystique and secrecy.

"Alright, let's start with the basics," Peter said with a warm smile. "The first thing you need to do is focus your mind and tap into the energy of the universe. We call it Eldritch Energy. 80% of what you'll learn here is all about channeling that energy and shaping it with your will."

MJ and Lily listened intently, eager to learn. They both knew that this was a rare opportunity to delve into the world of magic, and they weren't going to waste it.

Peter demonstrated a simple spell, conjuring a small ball of light in his palm. "See? It's all about visualization and belief. You have to believe that you can do it," he explained.

MJ nodded, her determination evident. "I'm ready to give it a try," she said, closing her eyes to concentrate.

Peter guided her through the process, helping her visualize the energy flowing through her body and focusing it into her hand. After a few attempts, a tiny spark of light appeared in her palm, bringing a smile to her face.

Lily clapped excitedly, her eyes shining with admiration for her mother. "That was awesome, Mom!"

Encouraged by her daughter's praise, MJ continued to practice, honing her newfound magical abilities under Peter's watchful eye.

"Now, it's your turn, Lily," Peter said, turning his attention to his daughter. "Remember, you already have a connection to magic thanks to your unique origins. Just embrace that connection and let the magic flow through you."

Lily took a deep breath and closed her eyes, focusing on the magic within her. She imagined herself as a conduit, channeling the energy from the universe. With a burst of energy, her hands started to emit a faint golden glow, far more impressive than her mother.

"That's it, Lily! You're a natural," Peter praised, proud of his daughter's progress.

Lily beamed, feeling the magic surge through her veins. "This is so cool! Can I try something else?"

"Of course," Peter chuckled. "Let's move on to something a bit more challenging."

Over the next few hours, Peter patiently guided MJ and Lily through various magical exercises and spells. They learned how to create protective shields, and even manipulate objects with a weak form of telekinesis.

As the sun began to set, the trio took a break, sitting together on a nearby bench. MJ and Lily were both excited and exhausted from their magical training.

"Thank you, Peter," MJ said, her voice filled with gratitude. "You're an amazing teacher."

Lily nodded enthusiastically. "Yeah, Dad, you're the best!"

Peter chuckled, ruffling Lily's hair affectionately. "It's my pleasure." He said as he checked the time. "It's getting late. We should head home."

The night was dark and shrouded in secrecy as Kaecilius gathered his followers in a hidden chamber within Kamar-Taj. The flickering candlelight cast eerie shadows on their faces as they prepared a very forbidden ritual.

"Are you sure about this, Kaecilius?" one of his loyal zealots asked hesitantly. "Tapping into the Dark Dimension is dangerous."

Kaecilius glared at the doubter with unyielding conviction. "The Ancient One hoards power from the Dark Dimension for herself," he retorted. "We deserve to know the truth and claim our own power. Dormammu will grant us the immortality and strength we seek!"

Nervous glances were exchanged among his followers, but they were all united in their desire to defy the Ancient One's teachings and forge their own path. They surrounded a carefully arranged pattern of runes and symbols on the floor, ready to channel their combined energies into the spell.

With determination in his eyes, Kaecilius led the chanting, his voice resonating with power. "Astrapi thalassa pyr mystikon agkaleos arcanos magike phoibos daktylos, nymphai thavmata, theoseleia..." The words spoken were ancient and forbidden, invoking the very essence of the Dark Dimension itself. The chamber began to hum with energy as the ritual intensified.

As the incantation reached its climax, the room seemed to pulse with an otherworldly aura. A swirling vortex of darkness materialized in the center of the rune pattern, and the air grew thick with an oppressive presence.

A distorted voice echoed from the void, surprising everyone. "Who dares touch my dimension?"

Kaecilius stepped forward, undeterred by the ominous response. "I am Kaecilius, and we are seekers of the truth," he proclaimed. "We wish to make a pact with you."

The darkness in the center of the vortex seemed to shift, as if contemplating Kaecilius' proposal. Dormammu, a cosmic entity beyond comprehension, had little interest in the affairs of mortals, but the audacity of these sorcerers had piqued its curiosity.

"You seek my power," the distorted voice replied. "What do you offer in return?"

"We offer loyalty, servitude, and... the Ancient One." Kaecilius declared, knowing that the Ancient One was feeding off of his dimension without an ounce of repayment for countless years. "We will be your devoted disciples."

Dormammu's presence seemed to grow stronger, seeping into the chamber like a chilling wind. "Very well," the voice intoned. "Your pact is forged. Embrace the power of the Dark Dimension, and know that you shall serve me for all eternity."

As the connection with Dormammu intensified, the zealous followers felt a surge of energy coursing through their bodies, empowering them with dark mystic might. Kaecilius and his followers had taken a dangerous step, willingly aligning themselves with an entity far beyond their understanding.

Unbeknownst to them, hidden in the shadows, the Ancient One had been silently observing the forbidden ritual. Her face expressionless, but her mind racing. 'Where did I go wrong?' She wondered, her eyes lingering on Kaecilius.

After all, seeing one of the Masters she trusted the most betraying her in real life was far different than her usual visions of the future. It felt far more real than she imagined it would.

Sat at his computer desk while MJ slept in the bed behind him, Peter started formulating a game plan to save the Ancient One. 'I already have the Resurrection Elixir, which can keep her alive, but now I need to find a way to sever her connection to the Dark Dimension...'

Chapter 424: Red Dust

In the heart of the night, whilst Peter worked diligently on finding a way to help his teacher, a dark and sinister presence loomed over Kamar-Taj. The ancient compound, usually cloaked in an aura of tranquility, was now gripped by an ominous aura that sent shivers down the spines of its inhabitants.

Kaecilius, flanked by his devilishly empowered zealots, moved stealthily through the shadows, their footsteps masked by a veil of magic. With their knowledge of Kamar-Taj's defenses and the element of surprise on their side, they navigated through the countless secret passages and concealed corridors, steadily advancing toward their nefarious goal.

As they approached the secluded library housing the vast repository of mystical knowledge, Kaecilius signaled his followers to halt. His eyes glinted with an unholy fervor as he envisioned the power contained within those ancient tomes.

The librarian, a venerable sorcerer well-versed in the secrets of the arcane, was lazily guarding the entrance to the restricted section. Oblivious to the impending threat, he was engrossed in the study of an ancient grimoire, illuminated only by the flickering light of a candle.

With a silent command, Kaecilius motioned his followers to surround the unsuspecting librarian. Like specters emerging from the darkness, they closed in, their eyes gleaming with a malevolent glee.

In a heartbeat, Kaecilius materialized behind the librarian, his hand wrapped in a dark, ethereal energy. Before the librarian could react, the malevolent sorcerer struck swiftly, severing the head from the shoulders with a single, cruel stroke.

The room fell into an eerie silence, the only sound the echo of the librarian's lifeless body slumping to the ground. Kaecilius and his followers wasted no time, stepping over the fallen sorcerer to enter the grand library.

The shelves were lined with ancient manuscripts, grimoires, and scrolls containing knowledge that had been carefully guarded for centuries. Kaecilius, driven by his thirst for power and knowledge, began to meticulously select the most forbidden and potent tomes, which he knew the Ancient One would never allow him or any other Master to touch, let alone study.

Each book he chose was a forbidden fruit, and as he stole them away, he could feel the tendrils of dark energy coursing through his veins, empowering him further. His followers eagerly followed suit, their faces filled with a mixture of reverence and trepidation at the forbidden knowledge they were acquiring.

With their mission accomplished, Kaecilius and his followers made their way back through the labyrinthine passages of Kamar-Taj. The weight of their stolen knowledge seemed to cast an oppressive aura over the once-hallowed halls, a grim reminder of the betrayal that had taken place.

As they reached the courtyard, Kaecilius turned back to look at the imposing structure of Kamar-Taj, once his home and sanctuary. His gaze lingered on the tower where he had once trained and learned under the watchful eye of the Ancient One.

"We are free now," Kaecilius declared, his voice resonating with a mixture of triumph and bitterness. "No longer bound by the shackles of tradition, we shall forge our own path and wield the power of the Dark Dimension."

The zealots nodded in agreement, their faces filled with zeal and devotion to their newfound cause. With their stolen knowledge, they believed they could reshape the world according to their desires, heedless of the consequences.

Together, Kaecilius and his followers vanished into the night, leaving Kamar-Taj behind them. Their departure marked the end of an era and the beginning of a dark chapter in the history of the Mystic Arts.

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The next morning...

In the aftermath of their betrayal, the inhabitants of Kamar-Taj would awaken to a grim reality. The beheading of the librarian and the theft of many books in the forbidden section sent ripples of alarm throughout the compound, leaving the sorcerers to grapple with the security breach and the implications of Kaecilius's actions.

Even the students, like Strange, who weren't privy to much information, heard about the theft. 'Even the world of magic has its problems, I suppose...' He thought.

The Ancient One, as ever, remained resolute and calm in the face of adversity. Though her heart ached for the loss of her trusted librarian, she knew that this was what needed to happen. It was her fate and only Peter was knowledgeable enough and willing to change it.

The next morning, Peter woke up early to see MJ and Lily off to school. Lily was excited to study magic again today, but sadly she had to get through another day middle school first, while MJ playfully reminded Peter that he was welcome to grace the high school with his presence, despite his overwhelming absences.

Peter smiled. "Maybe I can spare some time to drop by for lunch." He said, thanking god that his academic achievements gave him special privileges.

After seeing them off, Peter quickly changed into his Spider-Man suit and swung through the city toward the Avengers tower, enjoying the sights along the way. As he arrived at the tower, Peter made his way straight to Tony Stark's workshop, where he found the man himself tinkering with one of his Iron Man suits.

"Hey, Tony," Peter greeted as he entered the room.

Tony glanced up and grinned when he saw Peter in his suit. "Look who decided to show up to work today," he teased.

Peter smiled awkwardly, realizing his multiverse travel may have hurt his work attendance as well. "Come on, you know I'm always working." Peter replied, pulling off his mask and sitting down next to Tony. "In fact, I happened to visit two separate universes recently. I even managed to save a version of your sorry a*s from dying. You're welcome, by the way."

Tony's eyes widened with curiosity and jealousy. "Why do you keep leaving me out of all the fun stuff?" He asked in mock disappointment.

"Well, I didn't exactly choose to leave in the first place." Peter chuckled. "But don't worry, I managed to bring back something interesting," he said, reaching into his suit and pulling out a hard drive.

He plugged the hard drive into Tony's workstation, revealing the stolen plans and data from Olivia Octavius on multiverse travel. Tony's interest was immediately piqued as he browsed through the information.

"Wow, this is some high-level stuff," Tony remarked, his excitement evident. "Olivia Octavius, huh?" He read the name that was printed all over the research. "I've never heard of her."

Peter smirked. "That's because she doesn't exist in this universe. Olivia Octavius, or better known as Doc Ock is a villain from the first universe that I visited. As you can see, she has some interesting ideas pertaining to multiverse travel. I thought we could work together on this," he suggested.

Tony raised an eyebrow. "Are you asking for a partnership, Mr. Parker?" he said playfully.

"You bet, Mr. Stark," Peter replied with a grin. "I've come to realize that the multiverse is vast and filled with endless possibilities. With our combined brains, I think we can be safely traveling the multiverse by the end of the year."

Tony leaned back in his chair, considering the proposal. "Alright, you got yourself a deal, Webhead," he said, extending his hand for a shake.

Peter shook Tony's hand, feeling a surge of excitement. He knew that with Tony's expertise and the resources of Stark Industries, his dream of controlled multiverse travel will take place much sooner.

As they delved deeper into the data and started brainstorming ideas, Peter's mind was already racing with the possibilities that lay ahead. 'I wonder if we'll be able to visit non-Marvel universes?'

In the depths of a hidden underground facility, Yelena Belova, once a victim of the Red Room's insidious mind control, now stood defiant against her former oppressors. The bloody corpse of a rogue Widow laying before her was a haunting reminder of the life she had once been forced to lead, a life of violence, manipulation, and heartless obedience.

[Insert picture of Yelena Belova here]

Yelena was sent by the General Dreykov, the commander of the Red Room, to kill a traitorous Widow, but in the process, Yelena was exposed to some sort of gas, which immediately freed her life of all foreign control. Her mind was free, her will her own. But sadly, it was too late for her target. The woman who managed to free her of her shackles was already dead.

And as the dust settled, and Yelena emerged victorious. The rogue Widow lay defeated, her body still and lifeless. A mixture of sorrow and relief washed over Yelena. She had killed the woman who helped her, acting as nothing but a puppet dancing on the strings of the Red Room's puppeteers. But now, she was free.

In the aftermath, Yelena felt a momentary dizziness, her consciousness clouded by the after affects of the antidote. Her mind experiencing freedom for the first time in a long while, leaving Yelena in a daze.

Soon enough, realization dawned on her, the gas she inhaled was an antidote, a serum designed to neutralize the Red Room's mind-control agent. It was a chance encounter that had freed her from the chains that had bound her mind and soul for so long.

With her mind finally her own, Yelena knew what she had to do. She couldn't waste this opportunity. She had to help others still enslaved by the Red Room's control.

Raiding the dead Widows supply of antidotes, Yelena packed everything up and ran off, disappearing into the night.

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Days later...

After a long and stealthy journey, Yelena Belova, a former Black Widow, stood outside the towering structure of the Avengers tower in New York City, her backpack filled with the few vials of antidote that she could find. Her heart raced with nervous anticipation, unsure of how her sister would react to her sudden appearance.

Taking a deep breath, Yelena walked into the lobby, her confident demeanor masking the turmoil inside. The receptionist looked up from her desk, a friendly smile on her face.

"Hello, welcome to Avengers tower. How can I assist you?" the receptionist asked politely.

Yelena's mind raced for a moment, searching for the right words. "I'm here to see Natasha Romanoff," she said, trying to keep her voice steady. "Tell her, her sister's here to visit."

Chapter 425: Dreykov

As Peter and Tony continued to work on Olivia Octavius's research, their minds fully engrossed in the fascinating possibilities of multiverse travel, Jarvis's voice suddenly echoed through the intercom. "Mr. Stark, there's a woman here to see Natasha Romanoff. She claims to be her sister."

Tony looked up, slightly surprised. "Natasha has a sister? I didn't know that," he mused, scratching his head.

Curiosity got the better of Peter as he recalled the Black Widow movie. "Jarvis, what's her name?" he asked.

"One moment...." Jarvis replied as he went quiet for a moment. "...She says her name is Yelena Belova, but I can't seem to find a registered individual matching her description under that name."

Yelena Belova? Tony's mind whirred, trying to recall any information about her. He couldn't remember Natasha ever mentioning a sister named Yelena.

"Send her up to my office," Peter said, trying to portray confusion in his voice. "I'll handle it from here."

Standing from his seat, Peter quickly donned his mask. He gave Tony a sheepish smile. "Sorry, Tony. Duty calls. I promise I'll be back soon."

Tony huffed in mock annoyance. "Sure, sure, go save the day. I'll just be here, unlocking the secrets of the multiverse," he teased.

Peter chuckled as he walked out of the workshop, leaving Tony to his devices. As he made his way up to his office, he contemplated Yelena's arrival. 'She never showed up like this in the movie...'

Although the small change alarmed him, this may actually work out for the better. Yelena couldn't have contacted the Avengers in the movie, because it was just after the civil war, but thankfully, Peter has been able to avoid any mess like that from cropping up. The Avengers were completely united. At least, for the time being...

Peter suddenly remembered something. 'Wait a minute... Shouldn't Wanda and her brother pop up soon?'

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In the heart of the Avengers tower, Peter sat in his office, awaiting his guest. He impatiently tapped his fingers on the surface of his desk, contemplating how to handle the situation. He couldn't help but imagine a division of bada*s Black Widows working under him.

And as he thought of that, some rather naughty images filled his mind. But as soon as they came, another image overlapped every single one of them. It was MJ, her eyes glowing menacingly in a red hue. She held a sharp blade in hand, eyeing his family jewels with a sharp glare.

Finally, the door to his office opened, and Yelena Belova stepped inside. Her eyes widened in surprise as she saw Spider-Man waiting for her. "Uh, I was expecting Natasha," she said hesitantly, unsure of what to do.

Peter waved off her concerns. "Natasha's currently on a mission," he explained. "I'm Spider-Man. Natasha was my teacher, so when I heard her sister came to visit, I was intrigued. Especially since she's never mentioned anything about a sister. Or family, for that matter."

"Right..." Yelena replied, finding herself slightly taken aback.

"Well, why don't you take a seat." Peter gestured toward a chair, which she hesitantly took.

"So, what brings you here?" Peter asked. "As I said, Natasha never mentioned having a sister."

Yelena hesitated for a moment, considering her words carefully. "I'm Yelena Belova," she revealed. "I'm Natasha's adoptive sister and a former Black Widow operative under General Dreykov's control. When Natasha defected, the remaining Black Widows, including myself, were subjected to a mind-control program. But recently, I managed to break free from it, and I came here hoping to get Natasha's help and the Avengers' support in freeing my sisters and shutting down the Red Room once and for all."

Peter nodded his head, her story matched exactly what he knew. "I see," he replied, his voice calm compared to Yelena, who was a big ball of nerves. After all, she was seated before the world most famous superhero.

"I'll do everything in my power to help you," Peter said earnestly. "Though you'll have to wait until Natasha returns and verifies your words. As long as she okay's it, the Avengers will gladly assist"

Yelena nervously gripped her fists. "What should I do before then? Dreykov must already know that I defected. He might even know that I'm here..."

Peter shrugged, not threatened in the least bit. "Then he can come and experience the towers defenses."

"But..." Yelena appeared conflicted. "What if he sends Widows? They aren't in control. I don't want them to die..."

Peter smiled. "We have non-lethal defenses as well." He revealed as he leaned back in his chair. "You heard her Jarvis?"

Suddenly, a disembodied voice filled the room, surprising Yelena. "Yes, sir. The defenses will be set to capture for the time being."

Yelena's eyes gleamed with hope, gratitude evident in her expression. "Thank you," she said sincerely. "I didn't expect Spider-Man to be the first person I'd meet here, but I'm glad it was you."

Peter smiled beneath his mask. "I'm glad too," he replied. "Once Natasha returns, we'll discuss our plan of action and take it from there. But until then, let's find you an apartment to stay in." Peter stands up, followed by Yelena. "I'd let you stay in Natasha's apartment, but she may not like that, so..."

"Wait!" Yelena suddenly called out, pulling off her backpack. "While we wait, can you find a way to make more of this..." She reaches inside and pulls out a case containing five vials, each filled with a red liquid.

"What is it?" Peter asked, feigning ignorance.

"It's the antidote for the red rooms mind control." She reveals, cradling the case as if it were the most important thing in the world. "This is all that was left..."

Peter takes the case, which she was more than hesitant to part with. "Okay, I'll get right on that. Now, let's head down a few floors and find you a place to stay until Natasha returns."

After setting Yelena up in an apartment and leaving the antidotes for Jarvis to analyze and replicate, Peter departed the tower, intending to have lunch with MJ and Ned.

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In the bustling cafeteria of Midtown High School, MJ and Ned sat at their usual table, surrounded by the clamor of students chatting and laughing. The aroma of mystery meat wafted from the kitchen, causing a few wrinkled noses among the students.

Just as MJ was about to take a bite of her less than appetizing cafeteria food, the cafeteria doors swung open, and a familiar figure strolled in, catching the attention of everyone present. It was none other than Peter Parker, the habitual no show.

Peter approached MJ and Ned's table with a grin on his face, holding a couple of takeout bags in his hand. "Hey, MJ, Ned," he greeted them, waving the bags in front of their hungry faces.

MJ's eyes lit up in delight. "Peter, what are you doing here?" she asked, sounding both surprised and pleased to see him. He did say he'd come for lunch, but when it came to school, Peter rarely showed up.

"I thought I'd drop by and join you guys for lunch," Peter replied. "And I brought some good food too, so you don't have to suffer through the lunch ladies cooking."

Ned chuckled as he eagerly peered into one of the bags. "You're a lifesaver, man," he said gratefully. "This cafeteria food is a real disaster."

Peter handed them the takeout containers, revealing tacos from the best Mexican spot in the city. MJ beamed at him. "You're the best boyfriend ever," she said, already stuffing her face with food.

As they enjoyed their tasty lunch, Peter filled them in on the progress they were making on Olivia Octavius's research.

Ned's eyes widened in shock as he heard Peter talk about the multiverse. "Dude, can you send me to another universe too? I want to get a Demi-Human girlfriend with cat ears!"

Peter and MJ turned to Ned with raised brows. "Have you been watching Hentai again?" Peter asks as Ned began blushing up a storm before stuffing a whole taco in his mouth, so he doesn't have to answer. "Whatever, I'll see what I can do when everything is operational."

After they finished eating, Peter decided to bring up the other reason he came here. "Actually, I have a mission for you two, if you want it."

Ned froze in place, his eyes going wide. "Is it an Avengers mission?" He asked, obviously excited.

Peter nodded. "Yeah, If your interested-"

Ned practically jumped out of his skin in excitement. "Yes! We'll take it!"

MJ sighed, but reluctantly nodded alongside him. "Sure, what do you need us to do?"

"Well, have you heard of the Red Room?"

Deep within the secure and shadowy confines of a hidden Russian underground facility, General Dreykov, the enigmatic and ruthless leader of the Red Room, received the alarming news about Yelena Belova's defection. His usually composed demeanor faltered for a brief moment as he processed the information, and his grip on the tablet tightened.

[Insert picture of the General here]

One of his trusted agents, an operative loyal to the Red Room's cause, stood before him, delivering the report with a mix of fear and uncertainty. "General, we have received confirmation. Yelena Belova has defected from the Red Room," the agent reported, keeping his head lowered in deference.

Dreykov's eyes narrowed, his mind already calculating the implications of Yelena's betrayal. "Tell me everything," he demanded, his voice steely and cold.

The agent hesitated for a moment, aware of the General's formidable reputation for dealing with those who failed him. "She seems to have broken free during her last mission," he explained cautiously. "We were unaware of the extent of her programming's instability. By the time we realized, she was gone."

Dreykov's jaw tightened, the revelation clearly unsettling him. "And her whereabouts?" he pressed, trying to maintain control over the situation.

"We've been tracking her movements, but she's been highly elusive," the agent replied, feeling a tinge of unease. "She seems to be somewhere in the East Coast of America."

A dangerous glint flickered in Dreykov's eyes. "The Avengers," he repeated, his tone laced with disdain. "She must be trying to find her sister.."

The agent nodded in agreement, understanding the General's frustration. "We believe she might be planning to expose the Red Room's operations," he continued. "She's a liability, General."

Dreykov's expression darkened, and his mind began to devise a sinister plan. "Find her," he commanded. "Bring her back alive if possible. We need to find out how she broke free, but if it's not viable, then at least bring her body back for study..."

The agent nodded once again, understanding the gravity of the order. "Yes, General," he replied, before quickly leaving the room to execute Dreykov's command.

Alone in the dimly lit chamber, General Dreykov contemplated the unfolding situation. Yelena's defection threatened to expose the darkest secrets of the Red Room, and he knew that he could not allow that to happen. The walls of the underground facility seemed to close in around him as he pondered his next steps...

That night...

Agent Natasha Romanoff returned to the Avengers tower after completing a particularly easy assassination mission. Her eyes were tired, but her spirit was still strong as she made her way through the familiar corridors of the tower.

As she approached the gym, heading to her apartment, she heard the faint sound of training equipment clinking and the rhythmic thuds of punches hitting a heavy bag. Curious, Natasha quietly entered the gym, expecting to find one of her fellow Avengers honing their combat skills.

To her surprise, it wasn't one of her teammates but a young woman she didn't recognize at first. The woman had dirty blonde hair, and she moved with the grace and skill of a highly trained fighter. Yelena Belova, clad in a simple training outfit, was lost in her training routine, her focus unwavering.

Natasha's eyes narrowed as she realized who the woman was... Yelena, her sister in all but blood. Her heart skipped a beat, and a mix of emotions washed over her. She had left her behind, hoping to allow her only family to live a normal life, yet here she was, training with the grace of a trained killer.

"Yelena..." Natasha called out, causing her sister to jump in fright.

"N-Natasha..."

Chapter 426: Sisterly Love

As Natasha stood in the gym, her heart raced with emotions she thought she had buried long ago. Yelena's eyes filled with a mix of relief and anger as she saw her sister, and before Natasha could react, Yelena charged forward, her movements fluid and precise.

"NATASHA!" Yelena's voice was filled with a raw intensity as she swung a high kick aimed at Natasha's head. Natasha deftly dodged the attack, her body instinctively reacting to the threat.

"You left me!" Yelena spat, her eyes blazing with fury. She followed up her kick with a rapid series of punches, each one laced with a deadly intent.

Natasha parried the blows, her training kicking in as she maintained her calm exterior. "Yelena, I didn't want you to be a part of this life," she tried to reason with her sister. "I left to protect you."

Yelena's attacks only grew fiercer as her anger bubbled to the surface. "Protect me? You abandoned me, Natasha!" she shouted, a mix of sorrow and rage in her voice. "I thought we were family, but you left me to suffer in that hellhole!"

With a quick spin, Yelena aimed a low sweep kick, trying to knock Natasha off balance. Natasha leaped over the leg, somersaulting in mid-air to gain distance from her relentless sister.

The two Black Widows circled each other, their eyes locked in a tense stare-down. Natasha was beyond confused, but she couldn't let her guard down. She knew that Yelena's emotions were clouding her judgment, and if she didn't defend herself, this reunion would end in disaster.

Yelena lunged forward again, aiming a series of swift punches at Natasha's abdomen. Natasha expertly blocked and countered, her strikes measured and controlled. She wasn't fighting to defeat Yelena, but to subdue her without causing any serious harm.

Their movements were a mesmerizing dance of power and grace. Natasha's years of training with the Red Room were mirrored in Yelena's every move. It was like looking into a mirror from her past, a reflection of the younger Natasha she once was.

With a sudden shift in strategy, Yelena attempted a leg sweep followed by a roundhouse kick. Natasha anticipated the move and leaped over the sweeping leg, ducking under the roundhouse kick with impeccable timing. She swiftly followed up with a gentle palm strike to Yelena's chest, just enough to knock the wind out of her without causing significant damage.

Yelena stumbled back, her breath catching as she glared at Natasha. "You think you're better than me, don't you?" she seethed, her voice laced with hurt and bitterness.

Natasha shook her head, trying to appeal to the lost connection between them. "No, Yelena. Now, can you please tell me what's going on? Why are you here?" she asked, her voice soft yet determined.

Yelena's fists clenched, her resolve wavering for a moment. But the pain in her heart quickly turned into anger once more. She didn't plan to fight, but as soon as she saw her sister stroll in, this boiling anger erupted deep inside of her. "You don't get it, Natasha! I was alone, abandoned, and you never came back for me," she accused, her voice breaking with emotion.

Before Natasha could respond, Yelena launched herself forward again, a renewed fire in her eyes. She threw a barrage of rapid strikes, each one driven by frustration and despair. Natasha evaded and deflected the attacks, her heart heavy with the burden of the past.

"I can't change the past, Yelena," Natasha said, her voice carrying a touch of sorrow. "But I promise I will make things right now. Just please stop and explain to me what's going on, okay? What happened?"

"..." Yelena wouldn't relent. All of the anger and resentment that filled her body over these many years finally erupted. The very fact alone that Natasha had to ask those questions sent her over the edge.

Their fight intensified, both sisters equally matched in skill and determination. Each blow and dodge was a testament to their shared history and the bond that had been severed.

Natasha refused to fight back with her full force, unwilling to harm her sister more than necessary. Technically, she could end this fight in a few moves, but what good would that do? 'I should just let her tire herself out...'

As the minutes passed, the tension in the room grew, and the once smooth movements of the sisters started to falter. Yelena's anger and pain were draining her strength, while Natasha remained calm, waiting for the right moment.

Finally, Natasha saw an opening. Yelena's exhaustion was becoming evident, and her attacks were losing their edge. With a quick step, Natasha expertly flipped Yelena, sending her falling to the ground.

Before Yelena could react, Natasha swiftly moved in and wrapped her arms around her sister, pulling her into a tight embrace. Yelena struggled for a moment, but her resistance slowly melted away as tears welled up in her eyes.

"I'm sorry, Yelena," Natasha whispered, her own tears escaping. "I never wanted you to suffer, but I had to protect you from the life I led. I couldn't bear to see you become like me."

Yelena's anger and resentment finally gave way to her true emotions. She buried her face in Natasha's shoulder, clutching onto her sister as years of pent-up pain poured out in tears. "I thought you abandoned me," she sobbed, her voice choked with emotion.

"I will never abandon you again," Natasha vowed, her heart heavy with remorse and determination. "Now, tell me what's going on? What happened to that family I left you with?"

"You really don't know, do you?" Yelena asked, shocked and saddened that her sister didn't even bother keeping tabs on her. "The family you left me with all those years ago... they're dead."

Natasha's eyes widened in shock. "What happened?" she asked, her voice trembling with concern.

Yelena's gaze dropped to the floor, and she took a moment to steady her emotions before continuing. "The Red Room found us. Only a month after you left, Dreykov came knocking at the door with a platoon of soldiers. They tried to stop them from taking me, but... they didn't make it," she explained, her voice strained with grief.

Natasha felt her heart sink as she heard the devastating news. Guilt washed over her, realizing that her attempts to protect Yelena had led to this tragic outcome. She had left her sister with the hope of giving her a better life, and instead, it had led to unimaginable pain.

"But that doesn't make any sense," Natasha said, her mind racing. "I killed Dreykov... I took down the Red Room. How is he still alive?"

Yelena looked up, her eyes filled with pain. "I don't know," she replied. "But this wouldn't have happened if you had simply took me with you!"

Before Natasha could press for more answers, Jarvis's voice unexpectedly filled the room from the intercom. "My apologies for interrupting, but Spider-Man is waiting for you both in his office," the AI announced.

Natasha frowned, wondering what could be so important that Spider-Man would need both her and Yelena. "What's this about, Jarvis?" she asked.

In response, Jarvis projected an image on the holographic display, showing the surveillance cameras around the Avengers tower. Natasha's eyes widened as she saw the footage of two groups of women in tight, tactical body suits infiltrating the building.

"Widows?" Yelena's voice quivered with fear. "They know I'm here."

Natasha's mind raced, realizing that the Red Room, which she thought was long dead only seconds ago, had somehow tracked Yelena to the Avengers tower. She knew they couldn't afford to let these highly trained operatives wreak havoc in their home.

"We need to stop them," Natasha said, her voice resolute. Her expression hardened into that of a seasoned operative ready for battle.

"I'll help..." Yelena stood beside her sister, ready to fight.

Just as they were about to head out, Jarvis's voice appeared again. "That won't be necessary."

"Why?" Natasha asks. "Is Spidey handling it?"

"Just watch." Jarvis says cryptically.

Natasha and Yelena watched the surveillance cameras closely, observing the two teams of Red Room Widows making their way through the Avengers tower. Thankfully, it's passed work hours, so all of the non-mechanical staff has already left for the night.

As the first team of Widow's entered an elevator, the doors closed behind them, sealing them inside. Unaware of the danger, they waited patiently for the elevator to arrive at their destination. Their faces are partially covered, but the look in their eyes was noticeably dull and almost robotic.

Suddenly, a low hiss filled the elevator, and the Widows began to cough as a cloud of knock-out gas filled the small space. Panic spread among the team as they desperately tried to find a way out, but the gas quickly took its toll, and one by one, they slumped to the floor, unconscious.

Natasha and Yelena exchanged glances, realizing that the building's defenses were doing the job for them.

Meanwhile, the second team of Widows continued on their mission, passing by a seemingly harmless cleaning droid, which was waxing the floors. Unbeknownst to them, the droid was equipped with a hidden mechanism. As they walked past, the droid silently fired sleep darts at their backs, striking each Widow with precision.

One by one, the Widows collapsed, unable to fight off the sudden onslaught. They never even had a chance to identify the source of the attack, the droid already retreating down the hall to continue its work.

Natasha and Yelena couldn't help but feel a mix of satisfaction and relief as they saw the two teams of Red Room Widows neutralized by the building's defenses. Their friends and allies in the Avengers were safe, thanks to the security measures they had put in place.

As the automated defenses continued to maintain control, the two sisters turned their attention to the captured Widows. They knew that these operatives were just pawns, forced to follow the Red Room's orders without question.

"We need to find out why they're here," Natasha said, her voice determined.

"They're here for me," Yelena revealed, her eyes trailing off to the floor.

Suddenly, Jarvis's voice appears again. "Excuse me, but Spider-Man is waiting. He said and I repeat: What the f*ck is taking them so long?"

Chapter 427: Past Decisions & Regrets

In Peter's office, Natasha and Yelena walked in, and Peter couldn't help but notice the complex emotions on their faces. On the way up, Yelena explained her ordeal of being mind-controlled by the Red Room, and that the captured Widows were currently under the same influence.

Peter turned to Natasha as she and her sister took a seat across from him. "So, she's really your sister, huh?"

Natasha nodded solemnly, "Not by blood, but we grew up together."

Peter nodded understandingly. "What do you want to do about the Red Room? I can put you in charge of this and give you a team, if you want?" He wondered if she wanted to fight them again. "Of course, I'll help where I can."

Natasha's eyes hardened with determination, "I'll take care of it. I don't know how Dreykov survived, but I failed once to take him down. I won't fail again..."

"How do you think he survived? I mean, you put two in his chest and one between the eyes right?" Yelena asked, repeating what they were taught in the Red Room. "Did you check the body?"

Natasha took a deep breath, her mind drifting back. "I had a plan to take down the Red Room, but in order to do that, I had to take out Dreykov, but that was impossible..."

-Flashback-

A much younger Natasha Romanoff stood outside her small, run-down apartment, clutching a small card with a phone number she had received from an odd bow and arrow wielding agent. He gave her an offer that could change her life forever. The past few years had been a constant struggle for Natasha as she tried to distance herself from the Red Room's darkness, all while looking after her newfound baby sister, who had been thrust into a life of violence and manipulation.

Opening the door, Natasha found Yelena sitting at the table, surrounded by piles of books and dangerous-looking weaponry. The sight of her trying to learn the art of assassination filled Natasha with anguish.

'At least, I was able to bring her with me on my missions, or else who knows what they'd do to her...' Natasha thought as she frowned softly. "You should be in school, Yelena."

Yelena looked up, her eyes filled with a mix of innocence and curiosity. "But I want to be like you and you didn't go to school," she said, her young voice filled with admiration.

Natasha's heart ached at the sight of the young girl aspiring to become a cold blooded murderer like her. She knew she had to make a choice, either let Yelena continue down this dark path or take the opportunity she was given and give her a chance at a better life.

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Later that night, after tucking Yelena into bed, Natasha sat alone in the darkness, contemplating her decision. The bow wielding man's words still echoed in her hand, urging her to join SHIELD and work from within to dismantle the Red Room.

"I can't let Yelena go through this," Natasha whispered to herself, her resolve firming. "I'll take down the Red Room, protect her, and make sure she has a future free from all of this bullsh*t."

The next day, Natasha made the call, accepting the offer to join SHIELD. It was not an easy decision, as it meant eventually leaving Yelena behind. But Natasha knew it was for the greater good. After all, she can't give her the life that she deserves. She had to ensure that Yelena had a chance at a normal life.

But before any of that, in order to win SHIELD's trust and prove herself, she had to do the impossible.

Destroy the Red Room.

And with a heavy heart, Natasha knew what she had to do...

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One fateful night, Natasha stood hidden in the shadows, watching the great General Dreykov and his young daughter enter their luxurious house. Her finger hesitated over the wireless detonator in her hand.

She had planned for every contingency, calculated every risk, but there was one thing she hadn't accounted for...

The sight of a child in the blast zone.

As she stared at Dreykov's daughter, innocence radiating from her, Natasha's own memories of Yelena as a young girl flooded her mind.

Tears welled up in Natasha's eyes as she struggled with her emotions. She didn't want to take an innocent life, but she also knew that this was the only way to free countless other children from the Red Room's grip. And who knew when Dreykov would give her an opportunity like this again?

In the end, Natasha clicked the detonator, her heart shattering as the explosion engulfed the house. She knew that Dreykov's daughter was inside, but she had to remind herself that she was doing this for Yelena and all the other children trapped in this nightmare.

The weight of her actions weighed heavily on Natasha's soul as she fled the scene. The first part of her mission was accomplished, but the cost was immeasurable. She couldn't escape the guilt that washed over her, knowing she had taken a young, innocent life, even if it was to save others.

-Flashback End-

"He survived an explosion?!" Yelena exclaims in shock.

"Y-Yeah..." Natasha stuttered, unable to reveal who else was in the house at the time. She couldn't help but wonder if his daughter survived as well, finding herself hoping that she did. 'Maybe she's fine?'

"I see..." Peter nodded, knowing that Natasha was leaving out a key detail. 'Didn't Dreykov turn his daughter into a cold blooded killing machine? Maybe I can help her...'

"So, what do we do now?" Yelena asks, ready to work.

"Well, do either of you know where Dreykov is?" Peter asks, unable to remember much from the movie. 'I guess, I didn't really care about the Black Widow movie at the time...'

"Nope/No idea." the sisters answered in unison.

"Okay, then let's move on to plan B..." Peter says as he stands up and walks to the door. "Follow me."

...

Peter, Natasha, and Yelena stood before a row of glass prison cells, each containing a mind-controlled Widow. Their dull and lifeless expressions sent chills down the sisters spines, especially Yelena, who recalled all sorts of atrocities she had endured under the Red Room's control.

"Jarvis, let's do it," Peter commanded, his voice firm but filled with compassion. A red gas began to fill each cell, as the AI carefully administered the antidote that would break the mind control.

Yelena jumped in place as she turned to Peter, a smile forming on her lips. "You were able to make more?!"

Peter smirked under his mask. "We're the Avengers. There's nothing we can't do."

As the Widows breathed in the gas, their vacant gazes slowly began to change. Confusion gave way to awareness, and the transformation was evident as they blinked and looked around with uncertainty.

In the first cell, a Widow clutched her head, her eyes widening with recognition. Memories of the horrors she had been forced to commit came flooding back, and she broke down crying, the weight of her actions overwhelming her.

One by one, the other Widows followed suit, tears streaming down their faces as they recollected the dreadful acts they had been compelled to perform. The room filled with the sounds of their anguished sobs, as years of suppressed emotions finally found release.

Yelena watched with experienced empathy, knowing all too well the pain of being controlled and manipulated. But even through their tears, there was a sense of relief on the Widows' faces, as they began to regain control of their own minds.

"I'm free," one of them whispered through her tears, her voice trembling with gratitude.

Natasha stepped closer to the cell, her heart heavy with sympathy. "You're free now," she assured, her own voice choked with emotion. "We're here to help you. You're safe now."

With newfound hope, the liberated Widows looked to Natasha as a symbol of strength and freedom. Yelena, too, approached the cell, her presence a reassuring reminder that they weren't alone in this fight.

Peter's step forward as well, hoping to get some answers from them. "We need your help," he said gently. "We need information about the Red Room. High level targets, bases, and especially Dreykov's location. Can you tell us anything that might help?"

Through tears and shaky breaths, the Widows began to share what little they knew. They spoke of secret facilities hidden around the world, the intricate network of agents and operatives, and the sadistic cruelty of Dreykov. But sadly, none of them seemed to know where Dreykov could be.

As they recounted their experiences, Natasha's anger grew, but she pushed it aside, knowing that they needed to focus on gathering as much information as possible. Peter listened intently, offering comfort and reassurance where he could.

"We'll do everything in our power to bring down the Red Room and kill Dreykov," Natasha promised, her voice unwavering. "You have my word."

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After getting everything they need, Peter prepared to leave, but Yelena stopped him. "We aren't leaving them here, are we?" She asked, motioning toward the still imprisoned Widows.

"Yes, we are." Natasha answered for him.

"Why, they aren't being controlled anymore!" Yelena was not happy.

This time, Peter spoke up. "Because they need to go through a ton of security procedures. Not to mention the possibility of one or more of them tipping off the Red Room." He said, causing each captured Widow to look amongst one another suspiciously.

"They wouldn't do that!" Yelena yelled angrily.

Peter nodded. "That may be true, but it also doesn't mean we shouldn't take precautions."

"..." Yelena glared at him and Natasha for a moment before letting out an annoyed sigh. "Fine..."

"Good, now let's go and figure out where Dreykov is hiding..." Peter walks off with the two sisters following closely behind.

"I think I might know how to find him, but I'm not going to like it..." Natasha said, piquing everyone's interest.

"How?" Yelena asks curiously.

Natasha turned to her sister, a frown forming on her face. "Simple, we ask our parents."

Chapter 428: Red Guardian

Back in Peter's office, the atmosphere was heavy with tension as Natasha explained the next step of their plan. "My and Yelena's parents were high-level members of the Red Room. Our father in particular was a close friend of Dreykov, so he might have information about his whereabouts or how to contact him."

Yelena's eyes widened at the revelation. "You know where they are? Can we contact them?" She hasn't seen or heard from her adoptive parents for a long time. Mind controlled slavery will do that to a person.

Natasha sighed, her face clouded with mixed emotions. "I don't know where our mother is. She could be dead for all I know, but our father is currently in the Seventh Circle Prison, for criticize the Russian government. It's a black site prison built for high-level prisoners."

Yelena was taken aback, disbelief written all over her face. "Our father is in prison? Why didn't you tell me? He raised us like we were his own children, even if it was for only a single mission. I can't believe you just wrote him off like that."

Natasha's gaze hardened, a hint of remorse evident in her voice. "After I joined Shield, I wanted to distance myself from any reminders of my past. I heard about his imprisonment and just thought... maybe he deserved it? You know, we did some horrible things in the Red Room, him included. I'll admit, he was a good father for the short time that we had him, but he was a horrible person."

Yelena's anger softened, replaced with sadness and understanding. "I get what you mean, but he's still our father, Nat. He cared for us like we were his own children, and he didn't have to. We owe him... even if he's a complete and total d*ck." She said, causing her sister to laugh.

In 1992, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, their father, Alexei Shostakov was sent deep undercover in Ohio to infiltrate and destroy a Hydra occupied Institute within Shield, assigned with Melina Vostokoff, their mother, to pose as an American family with two surrogate daughters, Natasha Romanoff and Yelena Belova.

The mission was simple for the newly made sisters, pretend to be a happy American family, but behind closed doors, they didn't have to act. They could have just pretended for their neighbors, friends, and colleagues, but no, Alexei treated them like his own children 24/7, as if he actually adopted them.

And this small action triggered their mother, Melina to do the same. Within a couple weeks of their mission, what was supposed to be a fake family turned into a real, loving household. Melina took care of the house and the children, while Alexei went to work, providing for the family. Natasha and Yelena even went to school for the first and last time.

And between all of that, they actually spent time as a family, watching TV, playing games, visiting amusement parks, cooking in the kitchen. For the first time ever, Natasha and Yelena felt what it was like to live normally. No killing, no brainwashing, no experiments, no cruelty. It was beautiful.

Of course, Alexei had many faults, but at the end of the day, he was a good father to them during that mission.

This is why Natasha was so quick to accept Shields offer and betray the Red Room. Because when that dream-like mission came to end, so did their happy family. Their parents disappeared, leaving them in the hands of the Red Room once again.

And before they knew what happened, It was right back to killing, brainwashing, experiments, and cruelty. Natasha didn't want that for her sister. And if her 'parents' wouldn't do anything about it, then she would.

Peter watched the emotional exchange, sensing the complex bond between the sisters. "From what I'm hearing, you're both right in your own ways, but your father might be the key to finding Dreykov, so we should get him. And who knows what's happened to your mother. For all we know, she could be a mind controlled slave right now..."

Natasha nodded, tears glistening in her eyes. "You're right, we should break him out..."

"You should have broken him out years ago..." Yelena huffed, though she turned sympathetic as Natasha flinched at her words. "Look, everything will be okay. Besides, he was a raging douche bag, so maybe prison has taught him a lesson?"

Taking a deep breath, Natasha composed herself. "Alright, I'll figure out a way to get him out, but we need to be careful. I'm sure the Red Room has eyes and ears everywhere, especially in Russia."

Peter smirked under his mask and waved his hand. "Did you forget that I can open portals to just about anywhere?" He asks as a golden portal appeared, showing the rocky landscape of the moon. "Just get me the prisons coordinates and I'll have your Daddy here in no time."

"Woah..." Yelena muttered in awe. "I heard Spider-Man could open portals, but this is crazy..."

Natasha nodded. "That makes things easier. I'll make some calls. Since it's a black site, we won't be able to get coordinates the normal way, but Shield should have something..." She said as she rushed out of the office.

...

A half an hour later, Natasha returned to the office and handed Peter a piece of paper with the precise coordinates of the prison, and he waved his hand, opening a portal to the heavily fortified facility.

The trio stepped through the portal, finding themselves in the shadows just inside the prison's high walls. Armed guards patrolled the perimeter, and surveillance cameras were placed at strategic points, watching every move.

"Okay, we need to be quick and silent," Natasha whispered, her eyes scanning their surroundings. "He has to be in a cell designed to contain someone with superhuman abilities, so we need to find a way to get him out without triggering any alarms."

"Your dad's enhanced?" Peter asked, pretending that he didn't already know.

"Have you heard of the Red Guardian?" Yelena asked, as if she were bragging.

"You mean, Russia's Captain America knock-off?" Peter answered, a teasing smirk hidden under his mask.

Yelena frowned, unhappy. "He's not a-"

Natasha interrupted their conversation, an annoyed scowl on her face. "Can we please talk about this later? I'd like to break Alexei out without tipping Dreykov off."

Yelena huffed. "Fine."

Peter nodded, his senses heightened as he assessed the situation. "Okay, I'll open another portal deep inside the prison. From there, we can try to find his cell."

Natasha glanced at Yelena, her expression firm. "Stay close to me, Yelena."

Yelena nodded, her face resolute. "We've got this."

Peter waved his hand, creating a second portal inside the prison. They stepped through, finding themselves in a dimly lit corridor with cells lining the walls. Natasha led the way, her years of espionage experience guiding them through the maze-like layout.

As they approached Alexei's cell, they could see him sitting in the corner, his large figure hunched over, seemingly lost in thought. Natasha's heart clenched at the sight of her father, and she swallowed back the rush of emotions threatening to overwhelm her. Both good and bad.

"So, do you have a plan to open that cell?" Yelena asked, her voice low. "A portal maybe?"

Peter nodded, stepping closer to the thick metal door. He tapped his knuckles on the door, his hands glowed with a faint, otherworldly light as he began to manipulate the energy around the cell door.

The cell door seemed to shake for a moment before shimmering with a golden light. And in front of everyone's shocked gazes, the door disappeared completely. Yelena especially watched in awe as it vanished.

Hearing the knock alongside a sudden rush of fresh air, Alexei looked up in surprise, his eyes widening at the sight of his daughters standing before him. "Natasha? Yelena? My two little killers? You've come for me!" He exclaimed, his voice tinged with a mix of shock and excitement.

[Insert picture of the Red Guardian here]

"Keep it down!" Yelena snapped at him. "We're here to get you out quietly, not alert the whole of Russia." She said, a small, unnoticed smile tugging at her lips.

Natasha stepped forward, hiding all emotion with a blank, annoyed look on her face. "Let's go, stop wasting time."

Alexei's face softened as he walked up and pulled his daughters into a tight embrace. "I never thought I'd see you two again. Who would have thought my little murderers would actually come and break me out." He spoke, his voice gruff with emotion. "I knew you loved me more than that vixen mother of yours."

"Yeah, whatever.." Natasha muttered, pulling away from her smelly fathers grip. "Maybe save the hugs for after you take a shower..."

"Yeah, you smell like sh*t..." Yelena agreed.

With the three reunited, Peter opened a portal back to the tower, and motioned for them to step in. "Come on, let's get out here. This place smells like dirty Russian as*hole."

Finally realizing that they weren't alone, Alexei turned to Peter, seemingly offended by his comment. "Is this the Spider-Man I've heard so much about?" He asks, looking Peter up and down. "You don't look like much..."

"And neither do you fatty." Peter replied, eyeing the old man's protruding stomach. "Aren't you supposed to be a Captain America knock-off? How did you get fat? Don't most people get fit in prison? Maybe those Russian scientists got the serum wrong..."

"You motherf*cker!" Alexei shouted as he rushed toward Peter, who simply stepped aside and tossed him through the portal. "Ugh!"

Motioning toward the portal, Peter turned to the two sisters, who looked very amused by what just happened to their father. "Ladies first."

Chapter 429: Obvious Trap...

As they stepped through the portal, Natasha and Yelena followed their father's lead, but Peter lingered for a moment, casting a quick spell on Alexei's prison cell to camouflage it.

"What is he doing?" Alexei asked his daughters as he picked himself up off the floor.

"Magic?" Yelena guessed due to the glowing spell circle.

Satisfied with his work, Peter joined the group on the other side, the portal snapping shut behind him.

Alexei looked around, confused by all the magic that was happening. "What did you do? Is this some sort of witchcraft?" He exclaimed, crossing himself and spitting on the floor.

Peter chuckled behind his mask. "Not witchcraft, just a little magic. I cast a spell on your cell to make everyone think you're still inside while also forgetting to check on you. This way, Dreykov won't be alerted to your disappearance."

"Dreykov!" Alexei spat again, a deep-seated bitterness in his voice. "He's the one who put me in that place. We used to be like brothers, but after the Ohio mission, I told him I wanted to take Melina and my daughters away to retire as a family. He refused, and instead, he sent an army of soldiers to attack me."

Natasha's eyes widened in shock. "He attacked you? But I thought you were just locked up for criticizing the government..."

Alexei shook his head, his face darkening with resentment. "No, he betrayed me. I was no longer useful to him after I started talking about retirement, and he couldn't risk me taking away his precious Widows. So he had me thrown in that prison and branded me as a traitor."

Yelena's fists clenched with anger. "He's going to pay for this..." She growled, realizing that her and Natasha could have lived normal lives again if things just went a little differently.

"I agree," Natasha said, her voice filled with the same anger as her sister. "We'll make him pay for everything he's done, but first..." She turns to her father, a frown marring her face. "I'm sorry."

"What? Why?" Alexei asked in confusion, realizing that things just got emotional out of nowhere. "What's happening? You know, I'm not good with these sorts of things."

Natasha looked down at her hands, struggling to find the right words. "I believed for so long that you left us behind willingly. I thought you abandoned us to the Red Room."

Alexei's expression softened with understanding. "I can see why you would think that. But don't be sorry. This is my fault, not yours. I should have listened to you all those years ago. We could have stayed in America or hid in Canada. Things might have turned out differently..."

Natasha looked up, meeting her father's gaze. "Yeah..." She still felt bitter from the betrayal of that moment.

All those years ago, in Ohio, Natasha pleaded and begged Alexei to not return to Russia, hoping to stay and be the family they created. After all, Yelena was only 4 years old, she didn't deserve a life in the Red Room. But sadly, Alexei wouldn't listen to her pleas, thinking he knew better.

Alexei sighed, looking at his two grown daughters. "I know I can't change the past, but I promise you both, I will do everything in my power to protect you now. I won't let anyone hurt our family again." He says seriously before a playful smile forms on his bearded face. "Though we all know you don't need my protection. My little assassins could kill a thousand man army in their sleep and no one would wake up to find the bodies. You take after your mother in that way."

"..." The sisters rolled their eyes at his constant mention of their killing abilities.

Finally, Natasha broached the topic that they broke him out for. "We need to find Dreykov. Do you have any idea where he might be or how we can get in touch with him?"

Alexei thought for a moment before shaking his head solemnly. "I wish I did, but it's been many years since I was a free man. Everything has changed by now. And Dreykov won't trust me anymore after what happened."

Yelena frowned, frustration evident in her voice. "So, what do we do then? How do we find him?"

Alexei hesitated for a moment before speaking. "There might be one person who could have some information, your mother. Melina was always close to Dreykov, and if anyone knows where he is or how to contact him, it would be her."

Natasha raised an eyebrow, curiosity piqued. "Is she even still alive? It's been so long, and I haven't heard anything about her."

Alexei smirked. "My lovely Melina is a survivor. Nothing but death itself could kill that woman. She's resourceful and cunning. If she's alive, she might be hiding somewhere, keeping a low profile. Or she's still working for Dreykov..." He frowned at that last part.

Yelena looked determined. "Then we need to find her. She might be our only link to Dreykov."

Peter leaned forward, intrigued by the possibility. "How can we reach her?"

Alexei looked at each of them, his expression solemn. "I need to warn you all, dealing with Melina is not easy. She's cunning, manipulative, and sexy vixen. And if she is working for Dreykov, then this could get messy."

Natasha's face hardened with determination. "We'll take that risk. And if she is willingly working for Dreykov, then I guess Yelena and I only had one real parent, after all."

Yelena nodded, her eyes glinting with resolve. "We'll tread carefully, but we have to try."

Alexei took a deep breath, mentally preparing himself. "Alright then. There's a specific radio frequency that Melina and I used to use to talk during missions. If she's still using that signal, we might be able to reach her."

Peter snapped his fingers and a Ham Radio appeared on his desk. "Alright, let's get to work..."

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After tuning the ham radio to the specific channel they believed Melina might be using, they spent an hour periodically calling out over the receiver. "Hello, is anyone there... Please respond..." Frustration was starting to set in, but just as Alexei was about to complain for the hundredth time, a female voice with a Russian accent crackled over the radio.

"This is Melina," the voice said, causing everyone in the room to hold their breath.

Natasha took the lead, speaking clearly into the radio. "Uhh... hi... It's Natasha and Yelena. We need your help."

There was a brief pause before Melina responded, her voice guarded yet tinged with curiosity. "My daughters, is it really you? Why are you calling? How do you know about this channel?"

Alexei, who had taken a shower and changed into fresh clothes, grabbed the receiver from Natasha. "You know, Melina, I never stopped thinking about you all these years. Even in prison my love for you couldn't be extinguished, like a roaring forest fire."

Yelena groaned, rolling her eyes. "Seriously, Dad? Now is not the time for this." She said, while Natasha couldn't help but smile at the familiar, yet cringe, lines her father would always spew.

Melina's voice softened slightly. "Alexei, you never could resist your own charm. But enough of the pleasantries, what do you want from me?"

After some banter, Alexei got down to business. "Melina, we need to talk. In person. Where can we meet you?"

The radio went silent for a moment before Melina's voice returned. "Meet me at this address 629 ***** road *****. I'll be waiting..."

She gave them the address, and then the radio went silent. The room was filled with uncertainty, and all eyes turned to Alexei, who was still holding the receiver.

"Well, this is probably a trap..." Natasha spoke what everyone else was thinking, "But we have to go. We can't let this opportunity slip away..."

In a dimly lit room, Melina sat by the ham radio, her mind clouded and her emotions suppressed by the grip of mind control. General Dreykov loomed over her, his presence suffocating as he commanded her every move.

[Insert picture of Melina here]

"Tell them the address, Melina," Dreykov ordered, his voice cold and commanding.

Melina's expression remained blank, her eyes devoid of any spark of life. She spoke into the radio in a monotonous tone, "Meet me at this address: 629 ***** road *****. I'll be waiting..."

As the transmission ended, Dreykov stepped closer, observing her every move. "Good. Now turn off the radio," he commanded.

Without hesitation, Melina reached out and switched off the ham radio, her movements mechanical and robotic. She was a puppet in Dreykov's hands, bound by the invisible shackles of mind control.

Dreykov's satisfaction was evident in the cruel glint of his eyes. He reveled in the power he held over Melina, using her as a pawn in his twisted game of manipulation and control.

"You will do as I say, without question," Dreykov sneered, his voice dripping with malevolence.

Melina nodded obediently, her mind locked in a state of compliance. She was a highly skilled agent, once formidable and independent, but now reduced to a mere pawn in Dreykov's grand scheme.

For many years, Melina was forced to carry out Dreykov's orders without protest, her free will extinguished by the relentless grip of the mind control. She no longer recognized herself, lost in the labyrinth of manipulation that Dreykov had ensnared her in.

In moments of respite, when Dreykov was not watching, flashes of her past life would briefly surface, memories of her daughters, Natasha and Yelena, and the love she once shared with Alexei, the big, lovable idiot. But those memories were fleeting, washed away by the powerful conditioning that held her captive.

Despite her altered state, Melina still longed for freedom. Deep within the recesses of her mind, a flicker of resistance remained, a tiny ember of defiance that refused to be extinguished.

Chapter 430: Farmhouse Battle

A couple hours later, everyone assembled in Peter's office, ready for their mission to confront Natasha's mother. Natasha donned her tactical suit, and even gave a spare to her sister alongside some weaponry as well. Alexei was offered a spare Captain America suit, but...

"Are you f*cking with me?!" He exclaimed in disgust as he spit on the floor. "I would rather die than wear that American scum's colors!" And since he refused, Peter just shrugged it off and left him to his adidas sweat suit.

When it was time to go, Silk (MJ) and Black Noir (Ned) stood beside Peter, their faces hidden as they embraced their roles as superheroes. Peter promised them an Avengers mission, so now was the time to deliver. Waving his hand, Peter summoned a shimmering portal.

"Let's go," Peter said, stepping through the portal, followed by a very excited Ned Leeds, and the rest of the group followed shortly after.

As they emerged on the other side, they found themselves in the front yard of a quaint Russian farmhouse. Standing by the front door, a portly pig caught their attention as it bumped into the door, inadvertently opening it for them.

"Guess that's our invitation," Natasha remarked, eyeing the peculiar scene before them.

Once inside, they found Melina sitting at the kitchen table, her expression impatient. "Took you long enough. Poor Alexei has been waiting outside for hours in the cold," she chided them.

Alexei couldn't help but glance at the pig with a mixture of disbelief and amusement. "You named the pig after me?" he asked incredulously.

Ignoring her husband completely, Melina waved over the group. "Come and join me for dinner. I didn't expect so many of you to show up, but I think I made enough..."

As they reluctantly took their seats, Peter's heightened senses picked up on a strange number of presences around the farm. 'hidden soldiers, probably under Dreykov's control, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.' He thought.

Without even looking at the food, Natasha began questioning her mother. "We came to ask if you know where General Dreykov might be?"

"Why do you want to know?" Melons asks back, guarded.

Natasha frowned in annoyance. "Because he..."

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After a quick explanation of what Dreykov did to Alexei and Yelena, Natasha turned an expectant eye to her mother. "Basically, he locked up your husband and enslaved your daughter. Now, where is he?"

Melina went silent for a moment before finally speaking. "Let me tell you what really happened during that family mission years ago," She paused for a moment, as if trying to find a way to speak. "It wasn't just about stealing weapons technology from Shield or Hydra. It was about stealing the key to controlling the mind... We inadvertently gave Dreykov the means to subjugate anyone he pleases."

Natasha's eyes widened in shock, "What do you mean?"

Melina took a deep breath, the weight of her past decisions evident in her gaze. "I was more than just a Widow, Natasha. I had a scientific background that Dreykov found valuable. He wanted Hydras mind control technology, and I was tasked with verifying it for him."

Yelena's expression turned from curiosity to anger. "So, you willingly helped him?"

Melina's eyes filled with regret, "I had no choice. I was a Widow and a Widow completes her mission, no matter what. I couldn't refuse..."

Amidst their conversation, Peter noticed something peculiar. First, Melina seemed to be fighting to speak, as if she could barely get the words out. 'Is she veering off of Dreykov's instructions?' He wondered.

And secondly, Melina was tapping on the kitchen table constantly. She seemed to be keeping a certain rhythm to it as well, which was odd. 'What is she doing?'

After a moment of thought, Peter began deciphering it as Morse Code, and soon realized that she was desperately trying to warn them not to eat the food. "Don't eat food," she repeated, her message over and over again.

But thankfully, no one here was dumb enough to eat or drink anything. Well, except for one person.

Like a starved beast, Alexei dug into his dinner as soon as he sat down, savoring the flavors without a care in the world. Meanwhile, the others remained captivated by Melina's revelations, unaware of the danger they were in.

Seconds after Peter realized this, Alexei fell face-first onto his dinner plate, snoring loudly.

"He's out like a light," Peter remarked, trying not to laugh.

Natasha's eyes narrowed, suspicion growing as she glanced at her mother. "So you are working for Dreykov..."

Melina was forced to smile. "No, I would never, my dear. Now, let's get back to dinner. After all, you don't want to hunt down Dreykov on an empty stomach..." As she spoke, Melina's hand slowly grabbed the knife beside her plate and swiftly stabbed herself in the leg. "Ugh! Don't eat! Soldiers nearby!" She yelled as the pain freed her trapped mind for a single second.

And when that second came to an end, as if she didn't just stab herself, Melina smiled and continued eating. "Mmm, this chicken is so good..." She said, her voice almost haunting.

Everyone watched in shock, especially Ned and MJ, who haven't dealt with something remotely like this before. They're mainly used to stopping normal crimes in New York City. The oddest thing they've ever seen couldn't measure up to this.

"Okay, I think this has gone on long enough." Peter says as he stood from his seat and pulled a small spray canister from his suit. "Hello, Miss whatever the hell your Russian last name is. Please

look this way." And when she turned her head, Peter sprayed her in the face, engulfing her in a cloud of antidote.

With the cloud of red dust enveloping Melina's face, her eyes widened in shock as if she was waking up from a nightmare. The effects of Dreykov's mind control started to fade, and a glimmer of recognition returned to her eyes. Peter swiftly pulled the knife from her leg, and used a quick spell to heal the wound.

"Melina, can you hear me?," he asked gently, his hand on her shoulder for reassurance.

Melina blinked, trying to grasp her surroundings. "What's happening?" she asked, her voice shaky and confused.

"We'll explain later, but first, where is Dreykov?" Natasha asked, p*ssed off that even her mother was under his control.

"I...I..." Melina seemed to be in a daze, unable to respond for the moment.

Peter turned to Alexei, casting another spell to remove the drugs that had put him to sleep. The big man groaned and rubbed his head, slowly regaining consciousness. "Wha... What happened? Did I drink too much Vodka?" he mumbled, looking around in confusion.

"No time to explain, Alexei. Get ready to fight," Peter said, his senses alerting him to an approaching threat.

Even Silk could feel the soldiers closing in, and she immediately warned the group, "Guys, we've got company. A lot of them."

"Time to show them what we're made of," Ned said, excitement evident in his voice as he practically bounced in excitement.

Moments later, the farmhouse was lit up by assault rifles, tearing countless tiny holes in the walls as a hail of bullets turned the place into Swiss cheese.

Acting quickly, Peter summoner a golden translucent dome around the kitchen table, stopping every bullet that came their way. In a matter of seconds the small house turned into a battlefield as the

Avengers faced off against the soldiers outside. Natasha and Yelena moved with precision and grace, finding cover and pulling their pistols before returning fire, taking down the soldiers with deadly precision.

Alexei, now fully awake and fueled by anger, displayed his formidable strength, rushed out of the house and overpowering his opponents with each strike. He would pick up soldier after soldier, using them as shields to avoid the rifle fire, only dropping them when they became too mangled to be a proper shield anymore.

Silk leaped through the air, dodging bullets with ease, taking out the soldiers from a distance with a few well shot webs. Black Noir rushed to cover and began throwing household objects at the soldier. Thankfully, his super strength could turn even the most fragile figurine into a conclusive projectile.

Peter left the dazed Melina in the golden dome and danced along the battlefield with agility and finesse, using his webs and hand-to-hand combat skills to subdue the enemies with ease. After all, these were only normal soldiers, so he wasn't worried one bit. Everyone, including the enemy, watched in awe and fear as Peter swept through dozens of soldiers at a time, dismantling them as if they were made of cardboard.

Soon enough, Melina awoke, free from Dreykov's control. Without a second thought, she rushed to fight alongside her daughters, determined to make amends for her past actions. Her combat skills, honed from years of training.

The battle raged on, the clash of metal and the sound of gunfire filling the air. Despite their outnumbered situation, the Avengers swept through hundreds of soldiers with relative ease.

As the dust settled and the last soldier fell, surrounding the once-quiet farmhouse with blood and bodies, the Avengers stood victorious. They gathered in the farmhouse, catching their breath, especially Ned who's never seen so many dead bodies before.

"I think I'm gonna puke..." Ned rushed to the kitchen sink and instantly emptied his stomach.

Natasha looked at her mother with a mixture of emotions. "Thank you for helping us," she said, her mind finally at ease. Thankfully, either of her parents were the traitors that she thought they were.

Melina smiled weakly, "I'm sorry for everything, Natasha. I never wanted any of this to happen." She said, feeling responsible for everything.

"Well, you can make it right." Peter said as he took a seat amongst the wreckage. "Where's Dreykov?"