

The Marvel Teens

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/13015107) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/13015107>.

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| Rating: | Mature |
| Archive Warnings: | Graphic Depictions Of Violence , Rape/Non-Con , Underage |
| Categories: | F/M , M/M |
| Fandoms: | The Avengers (Marvel Movies) , The Avengers (Marvel) - All Media Types , Marvel Cinematic Universe , Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (TV) , Marvel |
| Relationships: | Clint Barton/Natasha Romanov , Bruce Banner/Tony Stark , Phil Coulson/Melinda May , James "Bucky" Barnes/Steve Rogers , Leo Fitz/Jemma Simmons , Skye Daisy Johnson/Grant Ward , Jane Foster/Thor |
| Characters: | Steve Rogers , Natasha Romanov (Marvel) , Thor (Marvel) , Loki (Marvel) , Clint Barton , Tony Stark , Bruce Banner , Phil Coulson , Nick Fury , Maria Hill , Jasper Sitwell , Skye Daisy Johnson , Leo Fitz , Jemma Simmons , Grant Ward , Melinda May , Bobbi Morse , Lance Hunter , Alphonso "Mack" Mackenzie , Antoine Triplett |
| Additional Tags: | Kid Fic , Kid Avengers , Teenagers , Teen Avengers , Teen Natasha Romanov , Teen Clint Barton , Teen Thor , Teen Tony Stark , Teen Bruce Banner , Teen Steve Rogers , Teen Bucky Barnes , Teen Skye , teen daisy johnson , teen leo fitz , teen grant ward , teen jemma simmons , Daddy Phil Coulson - Freeform , daddy nick fury , mommy melinda may , Protective Avengers , Avengers Family , Domestic Avengers , Violence , Blood and Violence , Sexual Violence , Sexual Slavery , Sexual Abuse , Childhood Friends , Childhood Sexual Abuse , Childhood Sweethearts , Rape/Non-con Elements , Rape , Self-Harm , Eating Disorders , Starvation , Suicidal Thoughts , Suicide Attempt , Domestic Violence , Abuse , Child Abuse , Parent/Child Incest , Child Neglect , Natasha Romanov Needs a Hug , Clint Barton Needs a Hug , Steve Rogers Needs a Hug , Bucky Barnes Needs a Hug , Tony Stark Needs a Hug , Bruce Banner Needs a Hug , Thor (Marvel) Needs a Hug , Natasha Romanov Is a Good Bro , Clint Barton Is a Good Bro , Steve Rogers Is a Good Bro , Bucky Barnes Is a Good Bro , Tony Stark Is a Good Bro , Bruce Banner Is a Good Bro , Thor (Marvel) is a Good Bro , Protective Natasha Romanov , Protective Clint Barton , Protective Steve Rogers , Protective Bucky Barnes , Protective Tony Stark , Protective Bruce Banner , Protective Thor (Marvel) , Nick Fury Knows All , BAMF Nick Fury , Protective Phil Coulson , Phil Coulson Has the Patience of a Saint , Protective Nick Fury , Protective Melinda May , Parent Melinda May , Parent Phil Coulson , Parent Nick Fury , Leo Fitz Feels , Grant Ward Feels , Jemma Simmons Needs a Hug , Skye Daisy Johnson Needs a Hug , Skye Daisy Johnson Feels , Natasha Romanov Feels , Clint Barton Feels , Steve Rogers Feels , Bucky Barnes Feels , Tony Stark Feels , Bruce Banner Feels , Thor (Marvel) Feels , Past Rape/Non-con , Alternate Universe - Childhood Friends , Rape Recovery , Rape Aftermath , Anorexia , Bulimia , Therapy , Post-Traumatic Stress |

[Disorder - PTSD](#), [Nightmares](#), [Flashbacks](#), [Panic Attacks](#), [Anxiety](#), [Anxiety Attacks](#), [Anxiety Disorder](#), [Depression](#), [Recovery](#), [Dissociation](#), [Dissociative Identity Disorder](#), [Blood](#), [Blood and Injury](#), [Borderline Personality Disorder](#)

Language:

English

Series:

Part 2 of [The Teens](#), Part 23 of [Sophie's Clintasha extravaganza](#), Part 4 of [Soph's gay s**t](#)

Stats:

Published: 2017-12-14 Updated: 2020-05-12 Words: 27,361 Chapters: 29/?

The Marvel Teens

by [SophieRomanoff97](#)

Summary

High School AU with all your faves!

This is the life of our teen Avengers and Shield agents as they deal with abuse, self-harm, eating disorders, loss, friendship, love and a whole bunch of other stuff.

Some fluff, some angst, some very dark themes so heed warnings.

Notes

Hey everyone, it's ya girl, back starting another fanfic before she's finished others.

First up, this fic is fairly Natasha centric so if that's not your thing, that's okay but maybe not the fic for you.

This one is a high school au with a lot of our Marvel faves (mainly the OG Avengers and OG Shield team).

All of the Avengers are around 15/16 and The Shield characters are around 12/13. Phil is 36, Nick is 33.

Whilst there are going to be some fun, fluffy bits, there are darker themes and darker parts throughout. Warnings for self-harm, rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, suicidal thoughts and everything that goes with that so please, if any of that triggers you, I want you to take care of yourself and either click off or proceed with caution.

Also, I live in England not America so I might get some school stuff and phrases wrong, please bear with me.

This plot mainly came from one of many roleplays with my best friend. So, Cassi, this is for you!

Alright everyone, let's go!

The start (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone. This series was getting far too confusing so after debating for literal months I decided to compile it all in one fic.

To help clear things up chapter titles will be posted with a (A) for Avengers chapters, (S) for Shield chapters and (B) for both. This is so you can read all of it or if you just want to read Avengers or Shield characters you can skip the irrelevant chapters. For chapters where it's both of them, I would just suggest skimming it maybe in case you miss any details for whichever story you're following. Of course, I'd love for you guys to read all of it but I know that's not going to be everyone.

The other two parts of this series will be archived and this is renamed as The Marvel Teens. If you were following the Shield guys, I suggest maybe subscribing to this one now so you don't accidentally miss anything. Before archiving The Shield fic, I will be posting an update as a chapter and will be leaving it for two weeks, to give people the chance to see it, and then it will be archived.

Not only does this make things easier for me, but it does for everyone reading too since you don't have to skip from fic to fic.

As time and energy permits, I will be going over old chapters and making them as good as they can possibly be so stay tuned for that. I'm very excited to be putting all of this together in one place and I hope you guys like it too. I would also suggest going back to the beginning to check you haven't missed anything important!

Thank you for all the support, I know I haven't updated in a while, honestly I'd been stressing out like crazy about this series and constantly going back and forth on what I would do. I hope new chapters will be coming soon!

Natasha, Bucky, Steve, Clint, Thor, Bruce and Tony had been friends since they were in kindergarten. They'd officially started to play one rainy afternoon when they were forced to stay inside.

Clint and Natasha were joined at the hip, as were Tony and Bruce and Steve and Bucky. They'd been sitting after snack and Clint, ever the most outgoing of them had asked if the four boys wanted to play with him and Natasha. They'd agreed and minutes later they were immersed in a game of Superheroes, giving themselves cool names and firing pretend lasers at each other.

The next day, they'd come together again, even when the sun was shining outside. Thor had quickly joined the gang since his brother Loki was nearly always in time out.

Now, twelve years later, they were still just as close. Things had changed of course. Bruce had been taken from his abusive, shit head father and was living with the principal of Shield high, Mr Fury. He was one of two foster parents in their small little town. Their history teacher, Mr Coulson was the other. Coulson had four foster kids with him and his wife, English teacher Mrs Melinda May. Fury only had Bruce at the moment, as he always went for the older kids; Coulson went for the younger ones.

Other things had changed too. Thor's brother was in juvie, and his mother had died. Clint lived with his older brother after an accident. Tony lived with his ever absent parents. Steve and Bucky lived together with Steve's mother. Natasha's mother had died and she was living with her piece of shit father.

No one knew that her father beat her, touched her and gave her to his friends for beer.

Clint and Natasha were still best friends and after a kiss at the yearly school dance, had tentatively started dating. Bruce and Tony were close, but unsure of their relationship and Steve and Bucky were very much in love and walked around holding hands and breaking girl's hearts. Thor was with a quiet, science geek called Jane, a good friend of Bruce's.

They were all together pretty much constantly, when possible. Recently though, Natasha had been pulling away and closing herself off.

She missed days off school frequently and was often late for her first class.

She was now, as she ran onto school grounds and burst into History. Her hood was pulled up over her red hair and her ratty old school bag was over her shoulder.

She apologised profusely to Mr Coulson and could see the teacher's eyes scan her critically.

"Take your seat, Miss Romanoff, I'll see you after class."

Cursing under her breath, she took to her seat and silently pulled her books out.

"Tash?" Clint hissed from her side, a bemused and slightly worried expression on her face.

"I woke up late." She rolled her eyes.

Clint opened his mouth to argue and the redhead rolled her eyes and cut him off. "Shut it, Barton, I'm in enough trouble with getting busted for talking." She growled and Clint, expression darkening, pulled back and turned to his pages.

He had noticed the thicker than usual Russian accent, something that happened when his best friend was exhausted or ill.

She'd been born in Russia and had moved to America when she was four. She'd been a shy, quiet girl who didn't speak much. Clint had been the first one to get her to chat, offering her

his favourite crayon during playtime. She'd taken it carefully, offering a bright smile and they'd been joined at the hip ever since.

Clint didn't push it now but his attention was definitely not on his work during the lesson. Something was wrong with her, that much was certain.

She'd been off recently, barely talking to them and not letting anyone touch her unless she was really distressed.

They all had issues, but Natasha often had panic attacks and was a frequent flyer at the nurse's station.

Clint watched as she minutely stiffened at the end of class bell.

As he was leaving, he turned to look at Natasha to find her whispering furiously with Mr Coulson, her hands making exaggerated gestures. Burying the worry, he texted his friends to meet him at lunch and headed to his next class.

When lunch came around, Clint was the first to their spot on the grass. He often brought two lunches with him because Natasha never seemed to have lunch or money to buy it. She wouldn't ask for food but if given to her, she would eat it.

When all seven of them were there, they set out their food and fell into that easy conversation they had. Thor had insisted Jane sit with her girlfriends, Darcy and Pepper because Natasha wasn't really close with Jane, and he knew she needed her good friends.

"So, Nat, tardy again?" Bucky grinned from beside Steve. "Naughty naughty."

"Ugh, don't." Natasha drawled. "I expected an earful from Coulson and I got him asking if I was alright and whatever. I'd prefer anger." She snorted.

"I was late, it's not like I killed someone." She shrugged, biting into her sandwich with gusto. She stopped talking then because she was basically inhaling her lunch, like she hadn't eaten for a while. Her eyes darted around and her body was coiled and protective over her sandwich, like someone would yank it away.

Used to it, the others didn't watch her and talked among themselves.

They arranged a sleepover at Tony's, his house almost a mansion because his family were loaded. And his parents were always gone.

When Natasha had finished eating, she joined in the conversation, her hood still pulled up over her head.

"Are you alright, Tash? No bullshit with us." Bruce said quietly. He understood her better than anyone, and his gut was always flaring when he caught a sight of her with a bruise or cut on her. He knew the signs and had actually brought it up secretly with Coulson. He knew that was why the man had talked to her after class. He felt guilty but like he had done the right thing. He wouldn't let her go through what he had.

"Yeah." The redhead shrugged, tugging almost anxiously on her hood.

"What's with that?" Steve chirped up from where he was sharing a cup of fruit.

"With what?" She feigned ignorance.

"The hood, Tasha, c'mon." He sighed.

"My hair is wet." She mumbled, shrugging.

"From this morning?" Thor raised an eyebrow.

"Yes." She snapped, eyes flaring.

From beside her Clint rolled his eyes and reached out, tugging the hood down from her face.

At first, no one saw anything wrong with her hair or anything and Natasha had yanked her hood up, stood up and stalked off seconds later.

"Uh, guys." Bucky murmured. "Did you see that?"

A few of them had.

"The side of her face-" Clint croaked, looking frantically between the rest of his friends.

"We're they-"

"Bruises?" Bruce asked, swallowing hard. "Yes, they were."

"Do you think her dad did that?" Steve asked, baffled and Bucky nodded, his eyes dark and dangerous.

"Well I certainly don't think she did that herself." Tony growled.

"We have to go to someone." Clint murmured. "Coulson or Hill or even Fury. We need to get her out of there-"

Bruce nodded slowly, his gaze pained. "I brought it up a little with Coulson, just my fears but now...now her face is like that, we have proof." He grit his teeth and got to his feet. "Come on, we're going to Principal Fury. Now."

The six of them all agreed, clambering to her feet.

The last thing Fury expected that lunch time was the little ragtag group of students sliding into his room.

"What can I do for you?" He asked, silently rubbing one of the scars circling his left eye. He had an eyepatch pulled over it but some lines were still visible.

The patch made him look even scarier, especially to younger students and the rumours about how he'd gotten hurt like that were numerous.

“We’re here about Natasha, Sir, Natasha Romanoff.” Steve said quietly, stepping forward as the kind of leader of the group of teens.

“What about her?” He asked, quirking his eyebrow, glancing to his foster child.

“We think...we’re almost certain that her dad is beating her.” Bruce ground out, the pain evident in his eyes and his voice.

“What makes you think that?” Fury asked, frowning.

“Her face.” Clint said bluntly. “It’s all bruised up, and we’ve all at some point or another seen other marks on her.”

Natasha sometimes had a penchant for getting into fights, as did Bruce, but these marks seemed more brutal than a simple punch from an asshole.

“Have you asked her about this? Perhaps, Miss Romanoff got into a fight.”

“No, she hasn’t for ages, and if she had, her knuckles would be all tore up.” Bucky shook his head. “She always fights back. Her hands are clean.”

“And there’s other things. Not...necessarily beating things but...” Clint struggled to find the right words to say.

“Like...neglect things.” Bruce said quietly and Fury’s eyes softened at his foster son.

“Like what, Bruce?” He asked softly.

“Well...you know I know about this stuff.” Bruce stammered, his cheeks red as he wrung his hands.

“Her clothes are dirty, or they’re wet.” He said quietly. “She never has anything to eat or drink, we always bring extra food and water.” He shrugged and it clicked with Fury where his snacks had been going. For a long time Bruce had taken any extra food and hidden it under his bed, for fear of not being given any more soon.

“She’s always exhausted.” Clint said softly. “Always late. She misses days, as you well know, with no actual reason.”

“And, I’ve seen Natasha flinch more than once at any loud noise, or any touch.” Thor chirped up.

The others nodded their agreement.

Fury carefully looked over the group of friends. “I’ll call CPS.” He said quietly. “I’ll send them to her house.”

The group visibly sighed with relief as he believed them.

“Thank you.” Bucky breathed, his hand firmly in Steve’s.

“Where is Miss Romanoff now?” Fury asked quietly and they all looked among themselves, Clint sheepish.

“I pulled her hood down, just joking around but...then she ran off.” He sighed, looking forlorn.

“Alright, go and enjoy the last of your lunch and I’ll send the teachers around to look for her.” Fury said, kindly.

The boy nodded their thanks and slowly left the room.

Fifth period rolled around, the one class they all shared together, but their redhead was nowhere to be seen. Panic rolled through each of them as they anxiously counted down the minutes, Clint’s phone open in front of him with her messages open. She hadn’t responded to any of them, and a sick feeling settled in his stomach.

Something was very wrong.

After class, the six boys walked the short distance to Fury’s office. They knocked and waited for an answer, when none came they pushed the door open to find it empty.

Bruce frowned and looked down at his phone. He had a single message from Fury, telling him to go to one of the boys homes after school.

“He must be at Natasha’s, we should skip and go there.” Bucky said quietly.

In minutes, they were all bundled onto the bus to go to her house.

Once there, they found the entire place surrounded with police cars and police officers. They pushed their way through the crowd, trying to spot either their principal or their friend.

They found Fury first and they called to the man, pulling his attention from the police woman he was speaking to.

“I told you to go to one of the boys.” He said, tone clipped as his eyes darted around to each of them.

“We had to see her.” Clint shook his head. “Where is she, is she okay? They’re locking her dad up right?”

Fury sighed and gently ushered them all off to the side.

“Sir, who are all these other men?” Bucky asked, a frown on his face.

Fury’s own face was grave as he looked down at them.

“We found...Natasha in a...compromising position with a few of the men. They’re friends of her father. They were...”

Clint blanched and he faintly heard Bruce turning around and slamming his hand into the wall.

“They were raping her?” Steve asked, his voice incredulous.

“Yes.” Fury said quietly.

“Oh my god.” Tony whispered, hand covering his mouth.

Bucky inched towards Steve and Bruce wound his arm around Tony’s waist.

“What now?” Clint whispered, anguish in his voice and tears on his cheeks.

“She gets checked out at the hospital. She talks to the police and then...if it’s alright with you, Bruce, she comes home with us.”

TBC

(Next chapter is Fury’s pov of finding Natasha)

Nick's POV (A)

Chapter Summary

Nick's point of view of finding Natasha and what has happened to her.

Graphic sexual abuse and rape, so be careful, you have been warned.

Lots of love,
Sophie

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. This chapter involves graphic sexual abuse, rape and physical abuse against a minor. As awful as it sounds, I have experience in this so don't tell me I don't know what I'm writing. Please tread carefully.

This is kinda a filler chapter until I decide what I want to do, or if I want to move forward, cause I'm kinda sure no one is reading. But oh well.

When Nick had been informed that Natasha had left the premises, he called the police immediately.

The feeling in the pit of his stomach told him that something was wrong and it was always right.

He called Coulson into his office, explaining his fears and leaving him in charge of the school.

The police man met him at the gates and they headed to Natasha's house together.

Letting Fury go was a little unorthodox but he was a foster parent and knew Natasha.

They knocked on the door, not expecting an answer but Natasha's father answered and silently let them in.

"She's in the basement. Do what you want with her, pay me when you're done." He jerked his thumb in the direction of the stairs.

The police man nodded and the men moved to the basement.

What they found made Fury's stomach clench so violently he thought he might be sick.

His student was laying on her back on the floor, her underwear thrown to the side and her shirt ripped open.

Her face was slack, eyes blank as she stared at the corner of the ceiling.

One guy was pushing inside her, the other had a hand pulling her hair whilst he jerked himself off.

He realised with a start that Natasha wasn't fighting, that was taking it like she was used to it.

He moved forward and the police man pulled out his gun, levelling it at them.

"Get off the girl, put your dick back in your pants and don't try anything." He growled, watching as the man yanked back and tidied themselves.

Natasha was still frozen in place and seemed to be whispering under her breath.

Fury pulled his coat off and rushed towards her, wrapping the girl up in the material.

"Natasha?" He asked, surprisingly gentle.

He was able to hear what she was whispering now.

"Just do what he says and you might get food. You won't end up like mama. Just do what he says. It's nearly over. Mama is proud. so proud of you. Just do what he says. Take it like a good little girl."

Fury growled low in his throat and the sound startled Natasha, who seemed to be pulled from her thoughts.

He'd seen it before. A kid going into their mind to block out was happening. To try and be anywhere else.

"Natasha." He breathed. "It's Principal Fury. You're safe now. I'm gonna take care of you."

"Sir?" She winced, rubbing a hand over her face and struggling to sit up.

"You're getting out of here. He is never going to touch you again. Can you stand?"

Natasha nodded minutely, shuffling to her hands and knees before clambering to her feet.

To her credit, she stayed standing for a good few seconds before her legs gave out and she went crashing to the floor.

Fury just managed to avoid her head cracking against the floor, wincing as his hand came away sticky with blood.

Now he noticed it, she was bleeding quite heavily from somewhere in her hair and her body was littered with cuts and bruises.

He cursed and lifted her easily, way too easily, into his arms.

She was stiff in his arms, shuddering softly in a way Fury knew wasn't good.

"I've got you, sweetheart." He said reassuringly, holding her to his chest as he got to his feet and walked up the stairs.

By the time he got there, the place was surrounded with police and ambulance crew, the two men and her father in handcuffs and being led to separate cars.

He headed for the ambulance, stepping into the back and placing her down.

"I'll be right back, honey." He murmured as she clung to his neck, refusing to let go.

"I'll be right back. They won't leave without me." He glared at the paramedics who nodded in response.

Fury exited the ambulance and headed to speak to the police man who had been with him.

That was when six boys grabbed his attention. He sighed and steeled himself, moving over to talk to them.

This would not be fun to explain.

Fury's house (A)

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we see Natasha at the hospital and coming home with Fury and Bruce. Heed the warnings, take care of yourself and enjoy!

Chapter Notes

Hey hey everyone!

Some warnings for this chapter: mentions of sexual abuse and rape, physical violence, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Believe it or not, I know about all of these so it's coming from experience. Take heed of the warnings, click off if triggered. If not, I'd love some encouraging comments and enjoy (?)

Natasha sat tucked under a blanket on a bed at the hospital.

The hard stuff was over, a female police officer had told her. Her name was Bobbi Morse, and at any other time Natasha would've been stricken by how beautiful she was.

She had met Natasha and Fury at the hospital and had been by her side ever since.

Natasha had gone through many invasive tests, had had swabs taken and bloods done to check whether she was pregnant or not, or had any sexually transmitted disease. They'd come back clear. A small victory.

She'd had stitches in the back of her head, cuts and burns bandaged and a couple of her fingers wrapped up.

They were by no means the worst injuries she'd ever had. Her father enjoyed beating her and the men who paid for her body were never gentle.

She'd given evidence, working on autopilot. They'd asked questions and she'd answered, she'd had to go into excruciating detail and had broken down crying twice.

It had taken her hours to get through it all.

She'd been looked over again and had been told she could leave.

Obviously she couldn't go home, so Fury had told her she would be going home with him and Bruce.

She hadn't seen her friends since school earlier and was in no rush.

She couldn't face them now, now that they knew about it. Knew she was her father's sex toy and the men's plaything. She didn't think she couldn't ever look them in the eyes again.

Just then, Fury knocked and poked his head around the door.

Natasha hadn't wanted him in the room when she spoke to the police, so he had taken a quick trip to the mall. She wasn't allowed any of her own belongings, not that she had many, so he had gotten her some stuff.

"Hey, Natasha, PC Morse. Can I take her home now?" Fury asked quietly.

"Sure." Bobbi nodded, helping Natasha clamber off the bed.

"I'll be coming tomorrow to check up on you, Natasha. And you'll need to see a doctor in a few days to get the stitches out and check on your fingers. Alright?" Bobbi asked.

Natasha nodded stiffly, eyes on the floor.

On their way out, they stopped to pick up a prescription. Natasha had been given the morning after pill, some anxiety meds and sleeping tablets for a week.

Natasha wasn't sure she wanted to take the latter but she'd figure that out later.

...

Half an hour later, Fury was unlocking the door.

"Bruce?" He called out, expecting the boy even though he'd been told to stay at Tony's.

"Hey." Bruce said softly, poking his round the doorframe. "I wanted to be here when you got back. It's just me."

Fury sighed but nodded, understanding.

"I'll show you where you're staying, you can take some time to settle in and then we'll order some food." He said gently.

The redhead hadn't spoken the whole way back and she just nodded.

When he'd shown her to her room, Fury left her with the bags from the mall and went to talk to Bruce.

They had a very in depth chat, spoken in soft voices.

Fury had told him the bare minimum he needed and it was understood that Bruce wouldn't push it.

...

Back in the room Fury'd shown her too, Natasha emptied the bags.

She found new clothes, pyjamas, underwear, shower stuff and a school bag.

She figured a shower wouldn't hurt so she took the shampoo and shower gel into the adjacent bathroom.

The warm water felt amazing on her bruised skin and she sank down onto the floor.

She'd searched the cupboards and had come up with a straight shaving razor.

Feeling only a little guilty for using Fury's razor in his house, she took the blade to her skin.

Soon the water was running red and she was suitably dizzy.

She briefly considered taking the blade and cutting deeper, the image of bleeding out under the running water inexplicably intoxicating.

However, she shook her head and stood, tucking the blade into a pair of new socks and shoved it in a cupboard.

She got dressed into some pyjamas, since was planning on going to bed as soon as was allowed.

She picked out the long sleeve red top, knowing it would cover her arms if she bled through. She picked the matching pants and threw on her hoodie over the top.

She headed out to the living room, leaving her hair to air dry.

"Natasha." Fury smiled, "we were deciding on what to eat for dinner. Any preference?"

Natasha shook her head, looking down at the carpet.

Bruce bit his lip, "She likes pizza." He said softly.

Natasha smiled weakly at him, cautiously walking over to him.

He said nothing else, just wrapped his arms around her and pulled her to his chest.

She hugged him back, squeezing her eyes shut and tucking her face against his shoulder.

When she pulled back, his shirt was wet but he didn't comment on it.

He moved to the sofa, patting the place beside him.

She shuffled over and silently sat down, pulling her knees up to her chest.

Fury appraised her quietly, handing over the tv remote.

"Feel free to find something to watch. Bruce, the usual?" He asked, getting a soft nod in response.

"Yeah, thanks Nick." He murmured.

"What do you like, Natasha?" He asked gently.

"J...just plain." She whispered, twisting her sleeve material around her fingers.

"Thank you, Sir."

"No need to call me that, Natasha, Nick is fine."

"Okay." She mumbled. "Sorry."

"Nothing to be sorry for." He shook his head.

It was a habit she wouldn't be breaking any time soon.

...

When they'd finished eating, Natasha silently looked down at her empty plate.

She was so used to taking what food she could, eating it as fast as possible and not stopping until it was gone. She never knew when her next meal was coming.

Bruce knew that too, it had taken him forever to break that habit and Fury had been incredibly kind and patient throughout.

"Would it...be okay if I went to lay down?" Natasha asked, voice soft and nervous.

"Of course, Natasha." Fury glanced over at the clock. "It's about nine anyways."

Bruce stood to clear the plates away and Fury gently moved closer to the girl.

"Do you think you can get some sleep or do you want to try a pill tonight? Whatever you choose is fine, don't worry about school tomorrow, you can spend the day here."

Natasha bit her lip, cheeks flushing.

"I don't think I can sleep." She said quietly, afraid to admit it.

"Alright, how about we try the pill for tonight and then we can re-evaluate tomorrow?"

She nodded slowly, silently getting to her feet.

"I'll bring it to your room, feel free to go get into bed."

Fury watched her go, her feet dragging and her eyes darting around the hallway.

He sighed softly, realising they'd have to have a talk sooner rather than later. About where to go next, what to do, about therapy and meds. For tonight though, he would let her sleep.

A couple minutes later, he knocked on her door and pushed it open.

"I'd like you to keep the door open, alright? It sounds a bit silly, but it's better for me to know if something is wrong."

Natasha nodded, pulling the covers to her chin and she sat against the headboard, not laying down.

He passed her a glass of water and two pills. One the sleeping pill and one the morning after pill.

He watched her silently as she took them, nodding as he was satisfied she hadn't hidden them.

Getting meds into Bruce had been a challenge and a half.

"Lay down, sweetheart, you'll feel better after some sleep."

She slowly stretched her legs out and slid down in the bed.

Fury smiled gently at her. "I'll be in my room if you need anything, feel free to yell for me." He said kindly, silently pulling the covers over her shoulders.

"Sleep well, Natasha, good night."

He just heard her voice as he exited the room.

"Good night, Nick."

The next day (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone, I have no real plan for this chapter it's just gonna be coming out as it comes out. Heed the warnings for abuse, rape, self harm, suicidal thoughts, panic attacks etc. Take care.

Natasha woke up late the next morning, groggy and confused.

She'd never had sleeping meds before and they'd knocked her out almost straight away.

Pushing herself up in the bed, it took her a couple of minutes for her to remember everything.

She inhaled raggedly, the covers feeling too trapping as she struggled to get out of bed.

Her bare feet hit the floor and she crashed into multiple things before she made it to the bathroom, slamming the door and sinking down beside the sink.

Her breaths came harsh and fast as she clamped her hands over her ears.

Can't breathe can't breathe can't breathe.

There was a loud rap on the door and Natasha cowered, rocking herself on her heels.

"Please, please don't. Stop, stop-" She gasped, trying to ignore the increasingly loud knocks.

"Natasha? Are you okay? If you don't answer, I'm coming in." The voice sounded and Natasha just pushed herself back against the wall.

A couple of seconds later, the door was pushed open and Nick was kneeling in front of her.

"Natasha, look at me, can you look at me?" He asked gently, not touching her but getting low enough that she could see him.

"I'm not going to hurt you, Natasha, just look at me, I need you to breathe." He inhaled slowly through his nose.

"Can you try and follow my breathing? In through your nose, nice and slow." He said softly. "You're okay, no one is going to hurt you."

"I...can't-" She whispered, shuddering, nails digging into her temples.

"Natasha, you can, I promise you can. It's just a panic attack, you're okay. Breathe for me." He coaxed, doing his own slow breathing for her to follow.

A couple of minutes later and she'd mainly gotten ahold of her breathing.

"Sweetheart, hey, how about we get off the floor?" Nick asked gently, getting to his feet.

Natasha silently nodded, clambering up on shaky legs.

"Let's get some tea in the living room." He suggested, waiting for her to follow before leaving the room.

When they were sat on the couch with a warm drink in hand, Nick spoke.

"What happened back there, Natasha?"

"I just..." her voice was quiet and wary. She wasn't used to talking about how she felt. "I woke up and...I didn't know where I was. Then...then I remembered everything and freaked out." She shrugged, staring at her cup of tea.

"Panic attacks are okay, Natasha. I know how terrifying they are at the time." He didn't try to tell her it was pointless or stupid like she expected him to, he just accepted her feelings.

"How do you feel now?" He asked quietly.

"I...I'm okay." She mumbled.

"Really? Because you don't have to be."

"I just...I'm shaky and my chest hurts. I don't know if I'm going to freak out again."

Nick nodded, sipping his tea.

"We were given some meds called Diazepam by the doctor, they're supposed to help lower your heart rate and the physical symptoms. We can try one if you want. They're not a long term solution, just whilst you adjust."

"I...I think I'd like to try." She admitted softly.

Nick nodded and stood up, fetching her a glass of water and half of one of the tablets, passing them over to her.

"What time is it?" She asked, taking the pill and grimacing.

"A little after twelve, I took the day off for the both of us and Bruce, so don't worry about school." He said quietly.

"I didn't need to miss classes." She mumbled, flushing with embarrassment.

"Just for a day or two, you need some time to relax and adjust to being here."

Natasha sighed deeply and shrugged.

"I'll give you some time to relax but we really need to talk later, okay?"

Natasha just silently nodded as Fury stood. "I'll be in my office, feel free to come get me if you need to. You're safe here, Natasha, I promise."

The police visit (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone. Tw's as usual for this fic with the addition of death. This chapter is based around something that actually happened to me recently. Take care of yourselves and click off if needs be, love you all and please leave a comment.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Natasha was sitting watching tv with Bruce when the doorbell rang.

Fury came out his office and opened the door, talking quietly to someone for a minute.

He came into the living room with PC Morse, and Natasha remembered vaguely that she'd said she would be stopping by.

"Bruce, can you go to your room for a bit please." Fury's face looked grave, and the sight of his expression set Natasha on edge.

Bruce frowned and nodded, turning the tv off and squeezing her hand. "Come get me after." He said softly.

She only nodded numbly as the police officer stepped towards her.

"PC Morse." She said quietly.

"Please, call me Bobbi." The blonde said gently, sitting down on a chair across from her.

"I'll go make some drinks." Fury murmured, pointing a careful glance at the woman.

"None for me, thank you." Bobbi nodded as he left.

"Natasha, there's been..." the blonde swallowed, "something has happened." She said carefully.

"What? What is it? Did he get out of jail? Is he coming?" Natasha asked, already internally freaking out.

"Natasha, your father...he was found dead this morning."

Natasha felt like her world had stopped. She stopped breathing, her eyes burning as she tried to comprehend what she was hearing.

"What?" Is all she could say, hot tears burning tracks down her cheeks.

"Your father was in a cell overnight." The blonde said quietly. "When they checked on him, he was unresponsive. He...was pronounced dead at the hospital."

Natasha didn't realise she was shaking, her chest agony.

"I don't...understand." She whispered, shaking her head and swiping at her face. "He...was fine yesterday."

"A cause is still being determined, so I'm afraid I can't tell you what happened. I came here as soon as I could." The blonde's voice was calm and soothing but it all went over Natasha's head.

"He's...dead?" She was talking on autopilot, her brain shouting at her.

So many different thoughts and emotions encompassed her.

Anger, remorse, sorrow, guilt, relief.

Everything flooded her system and all she could do was bury her head in her hands and sob brokenly.

She heard footsteps and Nick coming closer.

"Natasha, I know this hard." He said quietly. "This isn't what you expected, what you needed and I'm sorry."

Natasha shakily lifted her head, hiccupping little sobs escaping her throat.

"You're okay." He said softly. "You're going to be okay."

Natasha struggled to catch her breath, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"I'm so sorry, Natasha." Bobbi said, sincerely sounding like she meant it. "I'll be in touch whenever I get any information. And we still have the two men we found you with in custody, it's not over because he's gone, Natasha." The blonde stood, handing her a card.

"Call me if there's anything you want to ask. I've spoken to some colleagues in another department, they'll be in touch. They can help with finding therapists and groups." She nodded at Fury.

"Keep safe, Natasha." She said softly, Fury walking her to the door.

When he came back, Natasha was gone.

It didn't take long to find her; she was in Bruce's room, the boys arms around her as she sobbed into his chest.

"He's dead." She whimpered, fingers curled into his shirt. "He's dead and I'm broken. I don't know what to do...or feel."

Bruce looked stricken as he met Fury's eyes at the door.

Nick pushed the door open with enough noise to alert Natasha to his presence but not startle her.

"I can't imagine how difficult this is for you." He said quietly, kneeling at the foot of the bed. "But Natasha, anything you feel, anything you think is completely valid. This is...a difficult situation, and anything you feel is okay."

Natasha shuddered, not lifting her head, murmuring against Bruce's shoulder.

"It's not okay for me to feel relieved but sad, for me to hate him but to love him too."

"That is more than understandable and okay." Nick said firmly. "It's okay to be confused and to be filled with warring emotions."

"I'm so confused." The girl whispered as Bruce tightened his arm around her.

"I know." Nick murmured gently. "And I can't try to make it better, but I can tell you you're going to be okay." He pushed himself up.

"I'll give you two a little time, but then I want you to both come to the living room, okay?"

They both nodded and Fury stepped out.

"Tasha, I'm so sorry." Bruce sighed, rubbing her shoulder.

"Thanks." She said listlessly, leaning against him. She was tired from crying and just wanted to escape for a while.

"How about we nap a little bit?" He gently released her so he could move up the bed and lift the covers.

"You know how we all used to pile on the floor at sleepovers and sleep all together?"

"Yeah. I loved those times." Natasha sighed, rubbing her eyes.

"I'm gonna lay down in the bed, and if you're comfortable and okay with it, you can lay down too."

He pulled back the covers and lay down.

Natasha quickly left the room, coming back with a comfy hoodie on and a bear in her arms.

Natasha wasn't allowed her belongings, not that she had many, but she'd kept a bear from her mother in her locker at school. She usually took it home and hid it under her bedroom floorboards where, after her father had left her room for the night, she would take it out and sleep with it.

It had been in her locker and Bruce had brought it home with him.

She crawled into bed beside Bruce, pulling the covers over then both and cuddling up to his side.

"Thanks, Bruce." She whispered, taking a little comfort in her friend.

"Always, Tasha." He murmured, kissing her temple.

She slid her fingers into his and they both fell asleep like that.

Chapter End Notes

Also in case it's not clear, Bruce and Natasha are just friends, really good friends, and friends can cuddle and hold hands without it being a relationship thing. She is with Clint. Okay

Phil's family (S)

Chapter Notes

TW's for child abuse (sexual, physical, emotional + in the past), eating disorders, violence + neglect (also both in the past)

"Breakfast time!" Phil yelled up the stairs, joining his wife in the kitchen.

They were growing kids and they ate a lot so the table was full of food.

Pancakes, syrups, juice and fruit because they were trying to get them to eat more healthy.

Soon enough four sets of footsteps sounded down the stairs as they all crowded in to get to the table.

"Easy, kids, there's enough for everyone." Melinda hummed, handing out plates.

They all sat down and picked out what they wanted to eat.

Phil noticed that Skye's plate only held the fruit they'd put out.

So it was one of those days.

"Here, Skye, do you want a pancake? They're just plain and we used almond milk in the batter." Melinda asked quietly.

The dark haired girl shrugged and looked down at her plate. "No thanks."

"Do you remember what the nutritionist said? You have to have a good breakfast so you can have energy for the day." Coulson looked at her.

"I remember. I'm just not hungry." she stabbed her fork into a piece of fruit and pushed it around her plate.

Phil sighed. "Okay. At least have some juice for now."

They had a deal that as long as she had enough calories throughout the day they wouldn't have to get the doctors involved again. She wouldn't have to go to day hospital, where all her meals were their choice and she would have to sit there until it was all gone. They wouldn't have to admit her into a unit. She wouldn't need another feeding tube.

They all made their own lunches, chose their food, the only difference was that Skye had to eat her snacks and lunch in the office.

"Okay." she mumbled, reaching for the pitcher of OJ.

Finding that acceptable for the moment, Phil started up a conversation with them, reminding them of their appointments for the day.

They all had talking therapy, Grant had anger management classes, Leo had music therapy, Jemma had art therapy and Skye had animal therapy, on top of her appointment with her nutritionist.

Their appointments were all spread out on different days so it got hard for them to keep track sometimes.

"I'll meet you all outside at half three and I'll drive Leo and Jemma to their therapies and we'll come back for dinner. The rest of the night is yours, if you want to go out remember I need the address and phone number."

"Yes Sir." Grant murmured, pushing his plate away and standing.

"Easy on the sir, Grant, you're not in class."

The boy bobbed his head. "Sorry."

"No need to be."

"Are your bags all ready?"

Specifically that meant did Leo have his fidget toys and headphones, did Jemma have her notebook and pencils, did Grant have his stress ball, did Skye have her two snacks.

They all nodded and began to stand to gather their stuff for school.

After parking in their usual spot, the kids all began clambering out. "Jemma, Leo, Grant, I'll see you after school. Skye, I'll see you at break time."

The girl sighed and nodded, pulling her hood up as she left the car.

Some days were hard with four troubled kids, but Phil and Melinda never regretted their decision to foster.

They couldn't have their own kids, so at least this way they were giving back something to the kids who needed help.

All of them had been either abused or neglected.

They were the kids May and Coulson chose. The older ones that were stuck in the system, troubled kids that no one else wanted.

They came from all over, but had somehow found their way into their lives.

Jemma came from England, Leo from Scotland, Grant and Skye from different places in America.

They had searched for almost two years before finding the right kids to join their home.

Skye had been nine, the youngest and first they'd brought home. She'd been in hospital, feeding tube up her nose. Her father had left and her mother had neglected her to the point of starvation. Her eating disorder started out with the fact she simply wasn't given food. But as her body healed from the neglect, her thoughts had darkened and she no longer wanted to eat at all. They were still trying to work it out in therapy why.

Grant had been in juvenile detention, only twelve when they'd found him. His mother and father had abused him so much he had seen no other way out and had lit the house on fire with him inside. He hadn't realised his brother had also been there and he'd been hurt enough by the smoke to require hospitalization. He'd been charged with attempted murder but it had been dropped to arson when his brother woke up and told them what their parents had done. He'd been too young to take care of Grant when their parents were arrested so he'd come to May and Coulson. His brother visited every month.

Leo they'd found after he'd been in hospital for almost a week following a brutal beating that had left him in a coma for three days. He'd been eleven. He was on the autistic spectrum and his father had been so disappointed that he had an 'idiot' as a son and had taken to beating him when he couldn't make eye contact or continue a conversation. His parents were also in jail.

Jemma had been found only a year earlier, twelve years old. In a situation not unlike Natasha's, she'd been found when the police raided their home for drugs. She been half unconscious and in the middle of being raped by her father when the police busted the door down.

So yes, they were all...troubled, but it was worth every argument, every tantrum, every sleepless night to see them smiling and getting healthy.

Melinda kissed Phil gently, squeezing his hand. "See you later."

"Not if I see you first."

Shield school times (S)

Chapter Notes

Hiya everyone! Not entirely sure where this chapter is going so I'm just making it up as I go along. Please pay attention to the trigger warnings and tread carefully. Thank you all for the support.

The morning went well. Coulson had a meeting with Fury and after work talk was out of the way, they got onto the kids.

Coulson explained that he worried Skye was getting worse, that she wasn't eating a lot and she was withdrawing to a degree that threatened something worse to come.

Fury told him about the police dropping by and the news that Natasha's father was dead. That she wasn't speaking much and hid away in her room.

"Maybe we could have a dinner sometime. Us and Melinda, all the kids. It'll be good for them to realise they're not alone." Coulson shrugged.

"That's a good idea." Fury hummed, "Thursday is the only day without any therapies."

"We can figure it out later. Sounds good though. I'll cook, it's easier to get Skye to eat somewhere she knows."

"Of course." He smiled, tidying away all the paperwork.

"I'll check in at the end of the day." Phil hummed, pushing back his chair.

The morning may have gone well but the afternoon certainly did not.

Leo was in a special ed class because when he got overwhelmed, he could shut down or get angry and the teachers in that class were well equipped to handle it.

He'd been sent to the office not long before break time. The teacher had asked him a question and he'd gotten it wrong. A couple kids had laughed and Leo had shut down.

He'd started off crying, but it had escalated quickly to banging his head on the desk.

When the teacher had tried to stop him, he'd tipped over his desk and had thrown his books and pencils across the floor.

The teacher was good and had gotten him out the room and away from the other kids.

The anger quickly faded into upset, and she'd gently led him to Coulson's office.

He was sitting across from Phil now, twiddling his tangle, little plastic pieces that fit together that he could break apart and twist.

Getting the question wrong had triggered the fight or flight instinct inside him, questions wrong used to mean getting hit, and he hadn't been able to realise no one there would hurt him.

A couple of tissues, a chocolate bar and some talking later, Leo had calmed down some.

He wasn't ready to go back to class so they arranged for his work to be brought to the office.

Coulson had a couple of classes so one of the other teachers would sit in there with him.

Other than Phil, Leo was better around females so Miss Hill, a close friend to Phil, just happened to be able to sit in.

Before class, it was break time, and Skye was knocking on the door.

"Hey, monkey." She said softly, taking in the tear tracks down his cheeks and red eyes.

"Rough day, huh? That's okay. We all have those." She sat next to him, pulling out her protein bar and taking a bite.

Leo shrugged and sniffled.

"When we get home, we can put the nature channel and get your crafting stuff out. We need to carry on making that scrapbook." Skye smiled, avoiding Phil's eyes as she took another reluctant bite.

Her stomach hurt, hunger gnawing at her insides. The bar barely filled a corner, but it was a start.

Skye cared about others way more than she cared about herself. She would neglect herself to the point it could be dangerous but if someone else was upset, she was all over it.

They sat in silence until the bell rang, Skye grabbing her bag to head to class.

She'd eaten with minimal fuss and Coulson was very proud of her for that.

"I'll see you at lunch." He smiled at her before kneeling in front of Leo.

"Okay, bud. I have to get to class but Miss Hill is gonna sit in here and help you with your work. Remember, this isn't a punishment. It's just so you can have some time to work and feel better without other kids in the way. Yeah?"

Leo nodded slightly. "Music?"

"Of course you can listen to music. You have your headphones, right?"

Another soft nod.

"Okay, I'll be back soon." He squeezed his shoulder.

He hoped the rest of the afternoon would be smooth sailing, and even if it wasn't, they could figure it out.

They always did.

Evening (S)

Chapter Notes

Hi everyone. Sorry uploading is so sporadic, it's too much pressure to have a certain day I need to upload on. Thanks for sticking with me. Enjoy and read the tw's before moving forward. Thank you.

After therapies were done, the four kids and May and Coulson sat down for dinner.

It was better for Skye to know in advance what dinner was, so they had set meals for set days of the week.

Tonight was spaghetti, and everyone seemed to love it.

It was actually one of Skye's favourites but she more pushed the food around than ate any of it.

Phil and Melinda exchanged looks as the others engaged in general conversation.

Leo was still quiet and withdrawn. They didn't like distractions at the dinner table, but his headphones had been allowed so a meltdown didn't occur.

Phil cleared his throat. "Skye, you don't like it?"

"It's fine." The girl mumbled, shrugging her shoulders. She still had yet to take a bite.

"Would you prefer something else?"

Everything they put in front of her was calorie counted and by now they had it down. They could switch out foods that were the same calories with little thought.

"There's bread for sandwiches, ice cream if you'd prefer something sweet." Melinda said softly.

"It's fine." Skye ground out, knuckles white as they clutched the fork in her hand.

"Then please will you try to eat some of it?" Phil asked softly.

"After, we can make cupcakes. I know Leo would really enjoy that."

Skye glanced at her foster sibling, tapping his foot under the table and scooping spaghetti into his mouth.

"But we can't do that until you've all eaten dinner."

Phil hated using the other kids as an excuse for her to eat. But she would do anything for her foster siblings.

"Okay." Skye sighed, slowly starting to take tentative bites of the food.

The others finished a lot sooner than Skye and all dispersed to do their own things.

Melinda stayed with Skye, chatting with her to distract her from the food and the thoughts she was having.

After another half hour, a big chunk of dinner had been eaten. As long as she had her night snack and one of the calorie drinks, it was acceptable.

"Help me clean up?" May asked, standing.

It was also important that for half an hour after eating, Skye wasn't left alone.

She had a habit of eating just to please everyone, and then throwing it all up as soon as she'd done.

Skye nodded and they washed dishes in silence for a couple of minutes.

Melinda was starting to think the day would have a good end when the sound of shouts and things breaking sounded from upstairs.

Grant.

Melinda quickly ushered Skye into the living room, instructing her to sit with Jemma and Leo and keep them calm before taking off upstairs, Phil already in front of her.

Sometimes the smallest things could set the kids off.

The pair knocked once on Grant's door before pushing it open. There was a reason they didn't have locks.

Grant was sitting in the middle of chaos, screaming into his palms, rocking on his heels.

"Grant-" Phil said loudly, taking a step towards the boy.

"Don't. Fucking. Touch. Me." He growled, eyes wild as he looked up at them.

He stood in one fluid motion and stepped towards them, hands clenched into fists.

"Grant, it's us. You're safe. We won't hurt you." Melinda held her hands up.

Grant could get very angry. It was born from suppressing other emotions and would just come out in the only way he knew.

Violence. Like his mother and father had inflicted on him.

"What if I want to hurt you?" Grant growled, taking another step closer.

It had been scary at first. But he would never want to hurt them. Not on purpose.

"You don't." Phil said softly. "You don't want to hurt us, Grant."

"You're safe. We won't hurt you." Melinda shook her head.

Grant stumbled to a stop, eyes clouded.

"It's us. We're your family." Phil held out a hand.

Tears rolled down the boys face. He shuddered and whimpered, head dropping into his hands.

The two moved closer, touching his arms to ground him. "You're safe." They repeated.

Back downstairs, Jemma and Skye were trying to calm Leo down.

He'd heard the noise even with his headphones.

Loud noises were not good for any of the kids. The two girls could hide how it affected them better than Leo could.

They would have issues later on in the day with what had happened, but for Leo the problems happened right there and then.

The boy had his hands fisted in his hair as he rocked back and forth, crying and trying to catch his breath.

"You're okay. You're okay, monkey. We're here. We promise." Skye rubbed a hand up and down his back.

Jemma sniffled and petted the boys hair, lower lip trembling.

More upsetting that the noise upstairs for her, was seeing her best friend in the world so frantic.

"You're okay, monkey. Take a deep breath. You're not there anymore. You're here with us and no one will hurt you." Skye wrapped an arm around his shoulder and rubbed up and down his arm.

The three came down from upstairs and Melinda took one look at Leo and rushed right over.

Phil directed Grant over to the sofa, where the boy sat with his hands balled up to his chest.

Skye changed places with May, heading over to the older boy whilst Melinda helped Leo control his breathing.

"Hey, Grant." Skye said softly, sitting beside him and nudging his shoulder.

"What happened up there?"

Grant tended to not be good at articulating what brought on the anger episodes. With Skye, it was like they had a special connection. Like Leo with Jemma.

"Things...were in the wrong places. And...and they need to be in the right places or...or people will get angry and...and I'll be hurt." He stammered, shaking all over.

"I understand what that's like." Skye said softly. "But no one here will hurt you. Making a little mess is what we teenagers do. It's not a problem here."

"I...I know that. It just...It Just happens. It comes out. I can't help it."

His fingers opened and closed around the stressball in his grasp.

"That's what we're learning to do. Control these things. It will take time." The girl shrugged.

"I know." The boy sighed, shoulders loosening just a little bit.

"It'll come. May and Coulson, they'll help us figure it out." The girl said quietly.

"For now, why don't we make cupcakes?" Coulson asked, arm around Leo's shoulder, the boy calmer now.

Cupcakes sounded pretty good to all of them after the day they'd all had.

One thing at a time.

Hanging out (A)

Chapter Notes

Hello everyone! It's been a while since I updated this fic so here we go. Tw's as usual. Please be careful.

Bruce woke up before Natasha, rubbing his eyes and squinting to see without his glasses.

Looking at the clock told him they'd been asleep for almost an hour.

He carefully got out from under Natasha, picking up his phone and slipping out to the living room.

After a quiet conversation with Fury, it was decided that if Natasha was up to it, it would be nice for the rest of their friends to come to dinner and hang out for a bit.

Fury knew Natasha wouldn't sleep well that night if she slept more now so he went to wake her from her nap whilst Bruce messaged their friends.

With their plans confirmed, Bruce headed to the kitchen to make the three of them some drinks.

With two teas and a hot chocolate made, Bruce met the others in the living room.

Natasha looked drained, even after their nap, and her face was pale and bruised.

"Hey, Nat, how're you feeling?" he handed her the hot chocolate and sat beside her.

"Tired." the redhead murmured, shrugging. "Kinda out of it."

"That's not surprising." Fury said softly. "Between the meds and the news, you'll feel it for a while. But it will get better." he smiled at her. "I'll be here for whatever you need."

After he'd left, Natasha settled against Bruce, sipping her drink.

"So, Nat, the others and I were thinking we could all have dinner together here tonight. Only if you feel up to it."

Natasha sighed and shrugged. "I guess it'll be nice to see them. If they're okay with me not talking so much."

"Of course they will be, Tash. They love you." he squeezed her shoulder.

"TV?"

"Sure, Brucie."

After three episodes of Once Upon a Time, it was time to get ready for the others.

Natasha opted to stay in her pyjamas. If her friends were bothered about it then they weren't really her friends.

Bruce set up the living room, because Fury was going to Coulson's to catch up on work for the day.

He carefully set out blankets and pillows, putting snacks out on the tables and pulling up Netflix for something to watch.

"Alright, I'm heading to Coulson's. There's money on the counter for food, get whatever you want and I'll be back at eight. Call me if you need me." Nick told the two of them before heading out.

Ten minutes later the rest of the group knocked at the door.

The boys filtered in, all stopping to give hugs and whisper to Natasha.

Clint was last and he wrapped his arms around her waist, hugging her tightly. "We missed you today."

"Sorry. I didn't know Fury would take me out for the day." she sighed.

"No, Nat, that's fine. You needed a day at the least." he pressed a kiss to forehead.

"Did Bruce tell you what happened?"

"No?" Clint frowned.

"Later." she sighed, sliding her hand into his.

They headed to the living room and the seven of them spread out over the sofas and floor.

After a little deliberation, Bruce ordered Chinese food and they all settled themselves in for the night.

Half way through the film, Natasha fell asleep cuddled in between Clint and Bucky, her head in the former's lap and her feet in the latter's.

"Do you think she'll be alright?" Tony asked quietly, his arm casually slung around Bruce's waist.

"I think in time." Steve looked around at them.

Bruce wanted to tell them what had happened but knew it wasn't his place.

"It might take a while but we're all here for her." He said softly, eyes on her sleeping form.

"Always." Bucky nodded and they all chimed in with their agreement.

It could take years and years but they would always be there for Natasha.

Family wasn't always blood. Sometimes it was the friends found in life. The ones that cared deeply and would always have each other's backs.

No matter what.

Nick isn't an idiot (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. Sorry it's been a hot minute. Things are going on that I won't go into. Just thank you for sticking with me. Tw's apply especially in this chapter, self harm in particular. Enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The next couple of days passed with little incident.

Natasha had gone to school for a couple of periods at a time.

The rest of the time, she did catch up work at Fury's home, binge watched a LOT of tv, and tried to hang out with her friends as much as possible.

Silence was not an option. Silence led to thinking and thinking led to darker than dark thoughts.

As far as Fury was concerned, things were going as well as could be expected.

He didn't know that Natasha was self harming every day, sometimes more than once.

Well, Natasha thought he didn't.

She felt guilty every time but couldn't seem to stop.

It was a release. A punishment. A distraction.

Guilt kept piling up.

She was giving in to her father by doing it, giving him the pain he wanted her to have.

But she still couldn't stop.

She took the sleeping pills every night. They were close to running out and she knew she might be able to wrangle another week or two, but no more beyond that.

She didn't even want to think about how she would sleep, or rather wouldn't sleep, once she had no more.

Even with the pill, she tossed and turned, woke up screaming and sweating and crying.

The days weren't much better.

She'd plowed through her workload in less than a day.

Had gone through almost an entire colouring book.

Had done more puzzles in a week than anyone did in their lives.

She'd gone through at least four shows all the way through.

Anything to stop the thoughts. Anything.

She didn't enjoy eating. It was just another thing she did to pass the time.

With all this food at her disposal, she was still hoarding snacks under her bed.

Her and Clint were supposed to be studying, but she couldn't face him.

She was bone tired, and looked it.

She couldn't do it.

She cancelled and instead holed up in bed, eyes on the tv but her mind wandering.

She heard Fury come back and reluctantly dragged herself out of bed.

She'd been taking the anxiety meds and they zonked her out a lot.

It was nice.

"Natasha? Bruce and I picked up some food."

The redhead dragged herself into the living room, uncaring that she hadn't showered or changed out of her pyjamas for days.

She'd had a couple classes on Friday and had spent the weekend in her room.

She'd said she felt too bad to go to school Monday and had been alone in the house until Fury and Bruce had come home.

"Yeah. Cool. Thanks." She mumbled, grabbing a plate and taking a few slices of pizza.

She made a move to go to her bedroom but Fury gently stopped her.

"How about we eat at the table?" He said softly.

Natasha sighed, rubbing her eyes and sitting down at the table.

"How are you feeling?" Bruce sat beside her.

"Fine." She shrugged, picking some stuff off the pizza and more pushing it around her plate.

Fury felt a little apprehensive. After his talk with Phil, he'd realised just how little Natasha ate.

Phil and Melinda had said it started with Skye just not having access to food but had grown into something more.

Fury very much hoped that wasn't happening with Natasha.

"Just eat whatever you can, Natasha. There's some ice cream if you'd prefer that."

The girl shrugged again, taking a bite of her pizza.

Fury changed the course of the conversation, talking about the work and projects both kids had.

Natasha just wanted dinner to be over so she could go back to bed.

Fury subtly eyed her arms as they rested on the table.

He wasn't an idiot. He knew the signs.

After dinner had been eaten, Fury quietly asked Bruce to give them a minute.

The boy retreated and Fury stood.

"Help me do the dishes? Then we can grab some ice cream and watch some tv."

Natasha put the dishes in the sink. "I'll dry." She mumbled.

"Okay."

They both got to work with their tasks and Nick cleared his throat.

"Is there a reason you didn't want to wash up?" He asked quietly.

"Nope. Just don't feel like it."

"You can talk to me, Natasha. I...look, I know what's going on. I'm not mad. I'm not disappointed. I'm just worried."

"You shouldn't be. It's fine. I'm fine."

"You're not. And that's okay. I'm not telling you to just stop...Just please come to me when you feel that urge to hurt yourself. Maybe I can help, maybe I can't. Let me try."

Natasha swallowed, eyes wet, hands shaking as she dried the plates.

"Okay." She croaked, clearing her throat. "I'm...I'm not promising. I will try to come to you first."

"That's all I can ask, Natasha. Trying. Now, how about you call Bruce back and we choose some ice cream?"

Natasha smiled weakly and nodded, ducking her head.

He was hoping a night of all three of them watching tv, would show the girl she didn't have to hide in her room all the time.

There was no judgment, they didn't have to speak at all if it wasn't wanted.

Just having some company would be good.

He hoped brighter things were coming, but he wasn't holding out for that.

He would take whatever came gracefully and gratefully.

That was just being a parent.

The ups and downs, good and bad days.

Nick had signed up for them all.

Chapter End Notes

So this chapter was all over the place, and part of that was me, but part of it was wanting to show how her thoughts flitted from one thing to another, and how she couldn't really focus much on one thing. This will come in later with a diagnosis that I've been building to a little. Anyway, hope that explains it.

I messed up (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys I'm back with a other chapter. My best friend stayed with me for a month after over 3 and a half years apart so that was my priority but I'm here now. I'm struggling with chronic illness and in bed but I can at least write. Brain fog is real though so it might be short and I'm trying my best to make sure it makes sense. Lots of love and thanks for sticking with me.

Tw's as usual but even more so in this chapter. Self harm, blood, unintentional (kinda) near death experience. Be careful loves.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The next couple of weeks dragged.

Natasha got settled into her new home, was back at school three days a week and spent most of her free time at home or at Tony's with the others.

It felt like she was just trudging through life, not actually living.

She woke up, took a shower, either went to school or did the work at home, ate three meals, watched tv, kept herself busy.

But her thoughts continued to darken.

She'd gone to Fury a couple times when the urge to cut came.

He'd been pretty helpful.

He'd gotten her onto the waiting list for therapy, had found a support group not too far away that she would be starting the next week.

He brought her new colouring and puzzle books, an array of fidget toys and headphones.

He'd been beyond nice to her and that was why Natasha felt so guilty.

Fury was at school, so was Bruce. She held the phone in her hand, wanting to call him.

He would come. She knew he would.

But she still didn't call that number.

She put the phone down and picked up the blade.

The meds made her fuzzy and so she went deeper, did more, to feel it more.

Just to feel outside pain instead of inside.

Natasha wasn't aware she'd gone too far until it was too late.

She never bled this much.

Blood spurted from her arm and the redhead stumbled off the bed, clamping her hand down onto her wrist.

"Shit!" She cursed, grabbing a towel and pressing down, struggling to stay calm.

It'll stop. It's okay. You didn't go too far. You'll be fine.

Panic built and she reached for the phone, fingers wet with blood as she dialed the number.

"Natasha, everything okay?" Fury asked.

"Nick-" The girl choked out, voice shaking. "I need you to come home. I...I messed up-"

"I'm coming. Are you hurt?" The sound of keys clattered over the line.

"Y...yes. I'm sorry-"

"Stay on the line, I'm calling an ambulance. Press down on where it's bleeding most. Don't take your hand away. Sit down, put your feet up above your heart. Can you do that?"

"Yes." Natasha whispered, sliding down to the carpet, lifting her feet up onto the bottom of the bed.

"Natasha?"

"I'm...I'm down. It...It's not stopping. Shit, I'm sorry-"

"Breathe, sweetheart, keep pressing down. Keep talking to me."

The dizziness hit Natasha like a truck and her vision blurred as she watching the towel turn red with her blood.

"Natasha? Talk to me, sweetheart."

"I...I'm here." She whispered, swallowing as she leaned her head on the carpet.

"That's it. Breathe, stay calm. I'm not far away."

"Nick, I'm scared." Natasha shivered, gritting her teeth as black crept up on her vision.

"I know. I know, I'm nearly there. Talk to me."

Her tongue felt heavy as she tried to summon the energy to reply.

"Natasha?" She could hear the worry in his voice. Knew she'd messed up big time.

"Sorry." She mumbled, eyelids slipping closed.

She shuddered, dropping her knees from the bed as she curled up as small as she could.

"Natasha?!"

The phone slid from her fingers as the darkness took her.

...

Fury raced through the door, calling Natasha's name as he ran up the stairs.

He went straight to her room, shoving the door open.

"Fuck." He almost stumbled as he landed beside Natasha.

"Hurry up with that fucking ambulance." He shouted at the phone before dropping it.

His fingers reached for her neck, the faint fast thrumming under his fingers more reassuring than he knew.

"Natasha?" He brushed hair off her face, gently shaking her shoulder.

"Natasha, can you hear me?"

He got no response and he reached for her arm.

He peeled back the sopping towel and winced, inhaling sharply.

He quickly pressed it back to the wound, gripping tightly with one hand.

"Sweetheart, wake up." He tapped her cheek with his free hand, grief and panic welling up inside his chest.

He could hear sirens but it did nothing to stop the worry.

She wasn't responding, her pulse was weak and she was bleeding out on his floor.

"Natasha please-" he said gruffly, hearing the pounding of footsteps as the medics raced up the stairs.

"In here!" He shouted, voice wavering.

Natasha couldn't die.

She wouldn't.

Natasha wasn't the only one who had messed up.

Chapter End Notes

I hope that was okay. My mind is foggy atm so it's kinda short and maybe not very good but I hope you enjoyed it anyway. Please leave a comment if you're so inclined. They brighten my day

Phil tells the boys (B)

Chapter Notes

Pay attention to the triggers in the tags <3

Nick had rushed into Phil's office five minutes ago, clutching the phone in his hand.

"You're in charge. I need you to call an ambulance to my house, it's Natasha."

Phil stood and quickly reached for his phone.

Fury backed up, phone to his ear. "Breathe, sweetheart, keep pressing down. Keep talking to me."

Phil swallowed hard, calling the ambulance and telling them where to go.

He patched the call to Fury's phone so the man could stay in touch the paramedics.

Phil sat for the other four minutes, trying to breathe as he thought what would happen if any of his kids did something like that.

He knew Natasha. She was a lovely girl, hard working, clever.

She'd been through a lot and Nick and him had had many conversations about all the kids.

Natasha reminded him a lot of Skye, and that's what worried him.

What had happened to Natasha had also happened to Jemma.

So Phil was rightfully concerned.

The six of them had gone through a lot.

The fights, the cutting, the starving, the panic attacks.

But they'd never had a suicide scare.

Phil knew it had been a possibility when he took the kids on.

He had to talk to them.

Phil stood and left the office to teach his next lesson, but his mind kept straying to the four kids and Natasha.

He got a message half way through his lesson.

At hospital. Natasha's in surgery. Need you to gather the boys and tell them and get them to the hospital. NF

Phil put the phone down and turned to the class. "Okay guys, we're gonna break up early today, head to lunch."

The kids whooped and grinned, getting out of there as fast as possible.

"Bruce, Clint, stay back."

When it was just Phil and the two boys left, he gestured for them to follow him down to the office.

When there, he pressed the intercom button. "Will James Barnes, Steve Rogers, Tony Stark and Thor Odinson report to the vice principals office please."

He turned and stood against his desk. "Boys, take a seat."

Clint and Bruce shared worried glances but said nothing.

When the other four knocked on the door, Phil asked them to sit too.

"Nick asked me to talk to you." He said quietly. "He's with Natasha at the hospital. I don't know exactly what happened but he said she's in surgery and to take you there."

"Surgery?" Clint choked, eyes wide and panicked.

Bruce wrapped his arms around himself, nails digging into the skin of his arms.

Bucky silently took Steve's hand, squeezing as hard as he could.

"Is she going to be okay?" Tony croaked.

"I don't know." Phil said quietly.

"Oh my god." Bruce inhaled sharply, hand over his mouth.

"Come on, let's go out to the van. We'll go straight to the hospital."

Phil quickly messaged Melinda.

Natasha is hurt. She's in surgery and I'm taking the boys over there. I'll see you at home later. Tell the kids I'll see them at dinner. Phil

The man quickly led the boys out to his van and let them all in before starting it.

He knew right away that Bruce was nearing panic attack levels.

"I know you're all worried and scared. But she's in the best possible place, getting the best care. She's a fighter. If anyone can pull through, it's Natasha."

He glanced in the mirror as he started driving.

"Tony, help Bruce get his head between his knees. Take a deep breath, in and out, buddy."

This would be a long drive.

The hospital (B)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! It's time for a new chapter. I'm suffering badly with my chronic illness so this fic and all my others will be a little more sporadically updated until I get over this slump. Please don't comment asking when I'll update because the answer is always when I feel okay enough to write. I'm sorry if it's out of character at all, I'm trying my best. Thank you all for sticking with me. Lots of love.

As always, triggers in the tags, be careful <3

Once at the hospital, they met Fury in the waiting area.

The man stood and quickly walked towards them. "Follow me, I managed to wrangle a little room for us to talk in."

He started walking and the boys and Phil followed.

Once in the room, Fury cleared his throat. "You boys might want to sit down."

Clint swallowed and shook his head, "your shirt-" he said weakly.

Nick looked down, cursing silently. He'd had the presence of mind to scrub his hands clean, but there was blood down the front of shirt.

"Yes." He winced. "Okay. Well Natasha is in surgery at the moment. She...She cut herself pretty badly. She's lost a lot of blood but they're helping her now."

The boys were all fairly stunned.

"You mean..." Bruce stammered. "That she tried to kill herself?"

Fury paused before shaking his head. "I can't be certain, but no I don't think she did. I think it was an accident." He said carefully.

Clint quickly wiped at his eyes, sniffing a little.

"Will she really be okay?" Bucky asked softly.

"I can't promise anything, but Natasha is a fighter and they're well equipped to help her." Nick glanced over at Phil.

Fury was inwardly freaking out, just a little, but he couldn't show that at all.

Phil's gaze showed him that the other man knew.

"We should go back out to the waiting room, I'll ask if there's any news." Nick gestured at the door.

The boys filed out.

Clint's eyes were red rimmed and teary and tears tracked down Bruce's cheeks.

They all took seats in the waiting room, huddled together.

Bucky's arm slid round Steve's waist and Tony sat holding Bruce's hand. Clint and Thor sat shoulder to shoulder.

Fury came back from the desk, telling them that they didn't have any new information so they all settled in to wait.

As they waited, Nick spoke quietly with Phil.

"You can take the car, Mel will pick me up." Phil said quietly.

"I appreciate that. You should get back to school." Fury sighed. "Thank you for bringing them."

"Of course, Nick. Let me know when you get news." He squeezed his shoulder and stood.

"I'll see you soon, boys." Phil smiled.

Then they waited again.

An hour and a half passed before a nurse called Fury's name and he stood, quickly following her to a room.

"How is she?" He asked before the door had even closed.

"Stable." The woman said softly. "She had a blood transfusion as they prepped for surgery, and another during. She did damage to a vein but they managed to stop the bleeding and stitch it up. She did go through a couple nerves and there will be damage to the hand because of that."

"Will she be okay?"

"Physically, bar the nerve damage, yes. She's in ICU for now, because her vitals are still very low. The blood will help." She said gently.

"What then?" He swallowed, wincing.

"She'll be on a blood drip for a couple of hours, and a warm saline IV to combat the shock to her body. She's getting supplemental oxygen, and is coming around from the anaesthetic. You

can see her, but it would be best if visitors are kept to one at a time, we don't want to overwhelm her. She's still very sick. But she is out of immediate danger."

"Okay, thank you." He nodded, feeling rather overwhelmed himself as he went back out to the boys.

"Natasha is out of surgery." He said quietly. "They think she's going to be fine, apart from some nerve damage to her hand. You can see her, but it's limited to one at a time. It's going to be scary when you go in there. She's going to have tubes giving her blood and meds, and she's getting oxygen."

It took a moment for them to fully understand what had been said.

"She's okay?" Bucky asked.

"She's out of danger." Fury said quietly. "Clint, do you want to go see her first?"

The boy exhaled and nodded slowly.

During the short walk to ICU, Clint was very quiet.

"If you have any questions, or need to step away, let me know. I'll be just back in the waiting room."

"Yeah. Thanks." He mumbled.

At the door, Fury squeezed his shoulder and Clint took a couple deep breaths before stepping inside.

His breath caught in his throat as he crept closer.

She looked incredibly pale and small, red hair fanned out across the white cushion.

Her arms sat on top of the covers, covered in bandages from over her elbows to wrapped around her knuckles.

The tubes were scary, one in each arm. The blood dropping through one frightened Clint a little as he slowly sat down.

The oxygen mask over her face seemed too big and too in the way.

He slowly reached for her hand, setting his on top of hers.

"Oh, Nat."

Phil and Melinda (S)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! New chapter coming today, hope you enjoy. Please excuse any mistakes or odd words, brain fog is powerful af today but I'm powering through to bring you a new chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

When Melinda pulled up beside Phil as he waited outside the hospital, she got out of the car and walked around to him.

She silently opened her arms and he closed the distance, exhaling shakily as he wrapped his arms around her, pulling her close.

A gentle hand stroked through his hair as he pulled back a little.

"How is she?"

"They don't...they don't know. She's in surgery. Alive at least." He shook his head.

Melinda nodded and squeezed his hand. "She's strong."

"I know, that's what I told the boys." He sighed. "I thought I'd be waiting there all day, but it wasn't my place. I need to get back to school. There I can help."

Melinda hummed. "If you're sure." She squeezed his hand and stepped back to get into the car.

He had to be sure. It was his job.

...

The rest of the school day dragged.

He didn't have any classes with his kids that afternoon, and whilst their teachers reassured him they were fine, he wouldn't stop worrying until he saw them.

When it was almost time to go, Phil got a message.

"Natasha is out of surgery, still not well but out of danger. Will update you later. Thank you for your help. Nick'

Phil exhaled and as the bell rang, he quickly packed his stuff and headed to Melinda's car.

Skye was already waiting as he got there and he silently pulled her into his arms.

She flushed and laughed but hugged him tight. "What's this for?"

"For being safe." He said quietly, stepping back.

"Phil..." Skye frowned. "What's going on?" Her eyes widened. "Oh god...You're upset. Why are you...are you sending me back?" She whispered.

"No! No, god Skye. Never." He crouched a little, taking her hand. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to worry you, today has been a long day. I need to have a talk with everyone tonight. But don't worry, you're not in trouble."

A dubious nod of the head. "Okay."

Then Melinda was walking over, Jemma and Leo trailing behind.

Phil smiled and opened the doors, after giving them a hug each too.

"So," Phil murmured as he got into the passenger side, "You're all free to go out tonight, as usual, but we are having a family dinner together first."

"We we're going to go to Mack's house." Jemma said softly.

"And you still can, just a little later. We'll have an early dinner so the rest of the night is yours."

"He has new cars." Leo whispered, biting his lip as he looked up from his tangle. "He said we could play with them."

"That sounds like a lot of fun, bud." Phil smiled.

When the last member of their family was there, Melinda made sure all belts were buckled.

Grant crossed his arms over his chest, eyes wary.

"Is it true you left school to go to the hospital?" He'd directed this at Phil and the man fought back a sigh. He had been hoping to wait until they got home.

"Yes. And no, I'm not sick, Melinda isn't sick, we're okay."

"It doesn't sound okay." Skye frowned.

"Hospital is bad." Leo whispered, absently chewing on the corner of his tangle toy.

"Hospitals can be a good thing. They help people get better." Melinda glanced back in the mirror.

"But why were you there if you're not sick?" Grant pointed out.

"Because...a friend needed some help." Phil said softly.

"Is your friend okay?" Jemma asked nervously.

"Yes." Phil said. "Yes, she will be."

Chapter End Notes

short and sweet <3

Panic attacks and worries (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone. Here comes a new chapter. Hope you enjoy!

Clint sat there for a good ten minutes, in silence, just watching Natasha.

He knew that she wouldn't be waking for a while, but he couldn't help but wish her eyes would open.

His heart had settled in his throat the moment he'd heard Natasha was at the hospital, and he knew he would not calm down until she was awake and speaking.

He brushed his thumb over the white of the bandage covering her left hand.

Nerve damage.

What the hell did that even mean? Would she be able to use her hand? Or would it just...be like that forever?

What if that made her mental state even worse? What if it wasn't an accident next time? What if she tried to kill herself? What if she succeeded?

Clint stood, pushing the chair back, his hand clutching his chest.

He knew logically that he was having a panic attack. But he'd never really had them much before and the thoughts flooded his system.

I'm dying.

He staggered back, numbly pulling the door open.

Waiting room.

Help there.

His steps shaky, Clint began to feel the weight on his chest and he tried to catch his breath.

Tears welled in his eyes and he wasn't sure how he'd even made it to the waiting room.

He couldn't even feel embarrassed at the fact all his friends and a good portion of the others in the waiting room were watching him freak out.

"Clint?" Fury had stood, Bruce close behind him.

Clint gasped, "I can't-" he choked out, knees shaking.

Fury caught him before he fell.

He half dragged the boy to a seat, gently pushing his head down to rest at his knees.

"Deep breaths, Clint, nice and slow." He murmured.

Bruce settled at Clint's feet, a reassuring hand on his knee, gently combing through his hair with the other.

"You're okay. You're okay, nothing is wrong with you, it's just a panic attack."

Clint shuddered, tears down his cheeks and he openly struggled for air.

"Easy." Fury said softly. "In through your nose, Clint, out through your mouth."

"Count to seven." Bruce squeezed his knee. "Here, we'll count with you."

"One, two, three, four, five-" Bruce and Fury spoke out loud and soon, their friends were joining in.

They were getting some weird looks from the other people in the waiting room but they didn't pay any attention.

"Nearly there, Clint. Let's try again, to seven-"

Almost five minutes later, the boy had finally gotten a hold of his breathing.

He swiped at his eyes, teeth gritted.

"You're okay." Bruce murmured.

"I am." Clint shook his head. "I am. But she isn't." He closed his eyes and dropped his head into his hands.

"She will be." Fury said softly.

"Will she? Because if this was an accident then imagine what the hell could happen if she intends to hurt herself this bad." Clint stood.

"I'm gonna get some air."

Bruce exchanged a worried glance with his friends and Tony stood too.

"I'm dying for a cigarette anyway." The boy hummed.

Fury raised an eyebrow and Tony flushed a little but shrugged. "In the scheme of things, it's really not the worse thing I could do."

Tony followed Clint out and Fury sighed.

"Who wants to go see Natasha next?"

Bruce sighed and after a quick look at his remaining friends, he stood. "I'll go."

Fury nodded. "I'll come and wait outside the room. Call if you need me."

Bruce inhaled shakily and twisted his hands as they walked down the hallway.

"What if Clint's right? What if she does try to do something and..."

"Don't worry about it." Fury murmured. "We'll get her help. She can get better, Bruce. The problems will never go away, not fully, but recovery is possible."

Bruce sighed, pushing the door. "I hope you're right."

The talk (S)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! Enjoy. Always heed the Tw's.

They managed to get home without a barrage of more questions and as they pulled into the driveway, Phil told the kids to get started on their homework.

Jemma and Leo took the living room, laying on the floor as they started their class reading.

Grant went straight to his room.

Skye sat at the breakfast island, papers spread out around her as she ate the pot of dried fruit and nuts she always had as her afternoon snack.

Phil decided simple for dinner was best and Melinda moved around him, taking stuff out the freezers and putting it all in the slow cooker.

That way they didn't have to spend much time in the kitchen but they'd all have a nice, warm meal at the end of it.

"Hey, AC, can you help me with this math question?" Skye asked, pushing the empty bowl across the counter.

It had been hard work to get Skye to call him anything but Sir. She'd slowly come around to calling him Coulson, then Phil.

AC had come from Phil's interactions with Fury. She'd said that Nick spoke to him sometimes like he was an agent and not a teacher.

Phil had laughed and said it came from his time in the army but it had been an inside joke from there on.

Skye called him AC when she was comfortable and he couldn't even find it in him to be annoyed.

"Ah, here, this is what you do-"

Thirty minutes and finished math homework later, Skye sat across from Melinda as they split a cookie.

As they ate, they spoke about their day.

Coulson smiled as he leaned against the doorway after checking on the other kids.

He was very proud to see Skye eating something not on her list, something out of routine.

But they had to act like it wasn't a big deal, even though it really kind of was.

Phil checked on the food, calling the kids to come set the table as he plated up warm chilli for everyone.

Sat at the table, as everyone started to eat, Phil started the difficult conversation.

"So, I know I owe an explanation for why I was at the hospital. I won't say names, that's not my place, and please no guessing." A slight pause.

"I had to take some students to the hospital to meet their friend. This student was...self harming and it accidentally went too far and an ambulance had to be called. The student had surgery and is in recovery, but we do need to talk about this."

Skye had stopped eating, pushing the food around her plate.

Grant balled his hands into fists under the table, steadfastly not meeting anyone's gaze.

Leo was the only one still eating, kicking his legs a little as he scooped up chilli.

Jemma was quiet, sipping from her water glass.

"I know it's not a comfortable thing to talk about, and I'm not telling any of you to talk right now, in front of everyone." Melinda said quietly.

"But if anyone at this table is self harming or thinking about it, I want you to know that you can come to me and Melinda. We can help. It's never nothing, okay? It's never harmless. It's important we talk about it. But you don't have to be ashamed or guilty, we understand." Coulson looked around the table before slowly starting to eat again.

Eventually the others followed suit and Melinda ended the conversation with a soft 'you can come to us for anything, kids, always believe that'.

Phil smiled, squeezing her hand.

When dinner had been eaten, Skye and Grant cleared the plates and Leo and Jemma folded the tablecloth.

When everything had been put away, the kids headed to do their own things for the night.

Leo and Jemma got picked up by Mack's dad to go to his house for the evening.

Grant left with some friends, football tucked under his arm.

That left Skye.

She would usually spend her time in her room, doing more homework or reading or doing something crafty.

Instead, as Melinda and Phil sat on the sofa, marking papers, Skye sat on the armchair in front of the tv.

"Can I join you?" She asked, nervous.

Phil smiled and Melinda nodded.

"Of course. Would you like to choose something to watch?" Melinda hummed.

Hours passed and Skye didn't talk much but as the three of them sat, cradling hot chocolate and laughing at the tv, the parents exchanged glances.

Skye may not be ready to talk to them, but the evening had gone very well and it seemed like the girl was working up to opening up to them, and that was more than they had thought possible a few months previous.

Mel's eyes were a little watery as she sat back, Phil's arm around her shoulders.

Phil understood.

Skye was very closed off most of the time and to have her sitting there, making jokes and enjoying the show, drinking hot chocolate when she was so afraid of drinking calories was...it was wonderful.

Maybe things were looking up.

Home (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! Enjoy this new chapter. Trigger warnings as usual but I feel like if you've made it this far in the story, you already know the warnings. Enjoy!

Article about her new diagnosis:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borderline_personality_disorder

Natasha had stayed in hospital for five days.

Two of those days she'd been held on suicide watch.

Once she'd come around from the operation, and was able to talk and remember what had happened, psych had been to see her.

They'd soon determined that though she may feel suicidal at times, this had been an accident and she hadn't meant to cause so much damage.

They arranged for crisis to come see her every day for the next week, whether she was at home or still in hospital.

Over the five days, the team and Natasha decided that she would be put on an anti-depressant and because her panic attacks were so frequent, anti-anxiety meds.

She would also go to one on one therapy once a week as well as a group therapy targeted to help a new diagnosis she'd been given; borderline personality disorder.

Once she got home, they would also be looking into any groups around the area specific to abuse and sexual abuse.

So five days had passed, Natasha had been off blood for the last four, off oxygen and IV nutrients for the last two, and now it was finally time for her to go home.

As well as the therapies, she would also need to come to the hospital once a week for physical therapy on her hand and arm.

It was wrapped up at the moment and tucked into a sling around her neck. She would have to wear it until the stitches could come out and the outside wound had fully healed.

Fury and Bruce helped her pack up her stuff and Bruce slung her bags over his shoulder as Nick helped her up.

She was still a little wobbly on her feet and would be for a while.

They signed out at the front desk, grabbing their prescription for the next couple of days; her two new meds as well as some painkillers and antibiotics to fight off any infection.

Then they were off home.

...

Fury helped the girl over to the sofa, pulling off her shoes and settling a blanket over her legs.

He'd taken the week off work and had taken Bruce out for the day, so they could help settle Natasha home.

Natasha hadn't spoken a whole lot since they'd met her at the hospital that morning and her expression was drawn.

"Thank you." She said quietly, tiredly rubbing her eyes.

Phil had stopped off before work, dropping off some groceries for them and Nick moved around the kitchen to make them lunch.

When sandwiches were made and juice poured, he carried the plates over to the table in front of the sofa.

Bruce and Nick sat, Bruce taking the space on the sofa beside Natasha and Nick taking the armchair.

They flicked through tv channels as they ate.

Fury had realised early on that though Natasha was injured and did need a certain degree of help, there were things she could do and wanted to do.

She didn't need to be fussed over that much.

As long as she was helped when cleaning and bandaging her arm and walking if she was dizzy, Natasha was fine to do almost anything else.

She'd not taken the injury to her hand lightly and it has been difficult for her to adjust to only having the use of one hand.

But she managed incredibly and ate with ease, simply putting her sandwich down when she wanted a drink.

They settled in for the afternoon, going through countless Brooklyn Nine Nine episodes and enjoying the silence compared to the noise of the hospital.

Crisis would be coming early evening to finalise her recovery plan but until then, they had time to relax.

Natasha managed a couple of episodes before she grew tired, rubbing her eyes as she tried to stay awake.

Bruce silently lifted her legs up into his lap and she shuffled so she was laying down.

In seconds, she was asleep.

Bruce rested his hand on her ankle, sighing softly. He was very happy that she was home, but also terrified that she was home.

He worried what would happen next, if all these meds and therapies would help.

If she'd self harm again.

He tipped his head back, fighting the tears welling as he spiralled just a little.

"Breathe, Bruce." Nick said quietly. "We can do this. We can all do this."

"I know. I know, I'm just...I'm just scared." He shook his head, sniffing and wiping his eyes.

"I know. Of course you are." Fury said, voice kind. "I am too. And I know Natasha is. We're going to do this right, with the right therapy and the right meds, there a no reason she shouldn't be feeling better in the coming months."

"Better?" Bruce asked, shaking his head.

"Not completely better, I think it's unrealistic to think that will happen. But we can manage it, Bruce, get her feeling somewhat better. Functioning and dealing with it all. Yeah?"

Bruce nodded tiredly. He'd been up all night worrying and now wanted nothing more than to curl up and sleep too.

"Rest, Bruce." Nick stood, handing him a blanket and the tv remote.

"I'll be in my office if you need me, for anything, okay?"

The boy nodded, pulling the blanket up and yawning. "Okay."

Nick smiled and squeezed his shoulder.

"We can do this."

Pain and Nightmares (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! It's been a long time and I can only apologise. It sucks when you lose ideas for a fic you love but that's what happened. I don't want this fic to be all drama and angst but I'm worried you guys might find it boring if it's not all go go go. Anyway, I'm back. I'm not sure if the next update will be soon, it depends if inspiration hits. If you guys have any ideas I'd love to hear them, and I hope you enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Natasha woke up in pain, wincing and wrapping her fingers just below her elbow, gripping tightly.

She took a few deep breaths through her nose, tears welling in her eyes as the wave of nausea associated with the pain hit.

The physical therapist said the pain was a good sign; it meant her arm was beginning to heal and it hinted that she might regain at least partial use of the arm.

Didn't make it suck any less.

It was still dark outside as the girl rolled over in bed and planted her feet against the floor, grunting softly as she shakily got up.

She wasn't allowed access to her meds, for obvious reasons, but Fury would leave a cup of water and two pills in the en-suite.

One was her painkiller and the other one of her emergency anxiety tablets. He'd told her to only take them if she needed to, and she'd been pretty good at only having them if she felt like it was necessary.

Natasha turned the overhead light on once she reached the bathroom, trying to ignore her reflection in the mirror.

She felt god awful and she knew she'd look even worse and then she would spiral into self hate. Again.

She picked up the blue pain pill, sighing softly as she placed it on her tongue and chased it down with a swig of water.

Already awake now, and in too much pain to go back to sleep, Natasha moved back to her bedroom and flicked on the bedside lamp and the tv.

With the soft thrum of the television in the background, Natasha sank back against the pillows behind her, gently flexing her wrist and fingers.

It burned and tears filled the girls eyes again, but she was determined to do the exercises. She'd been told they would help, and she was stubbornly set against having to live with the damage her whole life.

She tried to focus on the tv screen, teeth gritted as she swallowed against the rise of bile in her throat.

The exercises lasted only a minute before Natasha couldn't take it anymore, exhaling and cradling her arm to her chest.

The whole thing had knocked the breath out of her and she quickly rubbed at her eyes, determined that she was not going to cry.

The girl sighed, a few stubborn tears leaking down her cheeks as she took her phone from the nightstand.

Shuffling further down the bed, the redhead occupied herself by playing games and reading before her eyes grew tired again.

It was almost five, so she still had some time to sleep, especially since Nick was being so lenient at the moment.

Closing her eyes, the pain in her arm dulled a little, Natasha fell into a fitful sleep.

...

She'd been asleep for only an hour before the quiet house was filled with shouts and whimpers, followed by a strangled scream as Natasha got caught in the covers.

The girl twisted and lashed out with her hands and feet, breaths catching as sobs built up.

In seconds, there were footsteps and her bedroom door was pushed open.

Bruce was close behind Nick as the man turned the light on and moved towards the bed where Natasha was still tossing and turning, cheeks wet as exclamations left her lips.

"Natasha-" Nick gently touched her shoulder, shaking her a little. "Sweetheart, wake up."

His fingers gently brushed over her forehead as her eyelids fluttered and she struggled up into a half sitting position, shuddering and breathing hard.

"You're okay, you were having a nightmare but you're here, you're safe." Nick gently sat on the edge of the bed as Bruce took the other side.

"I'm sorry." Natasha's voice was hoarse as she looked down, wincing once more. The nightmare and her subsequent hitting out had jarred her arm even more.

"Nothing to be sorry for, Tash." Bruce smiled softly, squeezing her knee reassuringly.

"I woke you guys up and it's early." She sniffled, hastily dragging her sleeve over her face and eyes to try and dry them.

"My alarm was going to go off any minute now anyways." Nick said softly. "And besides, it's not a problem, you didn't do it on purpose."

"Yeah, Nat, you know it happens to me all the time and I wake you up. It's really okay." Bruce handed her a box of tissues from the cupboard and Natasha wiped at her eyes.

"Still sorry." She mumbled, shrugging.

"And there's still nothing to be sorry for." Nick said gently, sighing as a beeping came from the hallway.

"I told you my alarm was going to go off. Will you be okay if I go turn it off?" Nick asked.

The redhead nodded and scooted over to the left side of the bed, lifting the duvet.

Bruce immediately slid in beside her, yawning as they both shuffled down the bed to lay down properly.

Bruce had at least forty minutes before he had to get up for school and Natasha wasn't going back for another week so Bruce took her uninjured hand and they both closed their eyes to go back to sleep for a little while.

They would talk about the nightmare when they woke up; when it wasn't still fresh and terrifying in Natasha's mind.

For now, they got comfortable, Bruce squeezing her fingers as they drifted.

...

Nick got up earlier than the kids since he had so much paperwork to do; it was like there was a never-ending pile to get through.

He got ready for the day quickly, stopping outside Natasha's room on his way to make breakfast for the three of them.

He smiled softly as he watched the pair sleep, turning off the light and closing the door.

If Bruce woke late and had to go to school late than that's what would happen.

He would get his work done, but for now, after everything, they deserved to get some good rest.

Leave a comment if you liked?

Breakfast and Ideas (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone! Another filler sort of chapter but I hope it chapter doesn't disappoint too much.

Natasha and Bruce slept through the morning and by the time the pair woke, school had already started.

Reluctantly, the boy got up and rushed around the house to get ready for the day.

Fury would drop Bruce off and then come back home. It would be a pretty calm, easy day and then later that night, Clint would be joining them for dinner and a movie.

Natasha was struggling with over-stimulation and over-exertion and despite wanting to see her whole group of friends, she really wasn't up to it, so Clint stopping by was a good middle ground until she felt a little better.

After dropping Bruce at school, Nick called up to Natasha that it was time for breakfast.

Sighing, the girl clambered out from her covers and pulled a dressing gown over her pyjamas.

Showers were just a lot of hassle, with trying to keep the bandages dry and then washing with one hand and if she was being honest with herself, she could not be bothered anyways.

The anaemia that had followed the blood loss meant she was freezing pretty much all of the time, so once two pairs of fuzzy socks and slippers were put on, she was heading down the stairs.

Nick was just plating up the last of the food as Natasha took her usual seat.

"Morning, sweetheart. How are you feeling?" Fury placed a cup of juice beside her plate and bowl.

"Tired." She said quietly, lifting the fork and trying to use it cut up her pancakes.

"That's not surprising," Nick said quietly as he sat down too, "do you want to talk about the nightmare?"

The redhead paused with her fork on the way to the bowl of fruit before stabbing a strawberry and shaking her head. "Not really."

"That's okay, you don't have to talk about them if you don't want to." Nick tried to be subtle with his glances to her plate. Too much time talking with Phil about Skye had him constantly checking the kids when they ate.

Natasha more pushed her food around than ate it, but Nick wasn't worried about it quite yet. She'd told him that her stomach was knotted up more often than it wasn't. And he knew that and nausea were side effects of both blood loss and the new medications. He'd give it another week or so, for everything to settle down, and then see how she was with food then.

After about a quarter of the pancakes were gone, Natasha put her cutlery down and toyed with the cup of juice.

"I was thinking, sometime in the next couple of days, we could take a trip to IKEA and you could pick out some stuff for your room. It seems like we haven't really had time to make it into something nice. What do you think?" Fury asked.

It was a simple enough offer, and it in no way should it have made Natasha worry and over think but that was exactly what happened.

Buying furniture, picking out items whilst nice on the surface, opened up a whole can of connotations.

It made it very clear that this was where she was living now and that there was no going back to her old house. The house where so much bad had happened, yes, but also the house where her momma had loved her, cared for her, and died in.

New furniture also meant money, money that Natasha didn't have and had never had. The concept of someone spending enough money on her to furnish a room was more than a little scary.

Not only all that, but Natasha wasn't really sure how to handle picking and choosing what she wanted. The most she'd ever been asked to decide was when her friends asked her opinion on takeout or snacks for sleepovers.

And then her even thinking about making her room nice made her spiral further. She didn't deserve it, didn't need it, it was purely for comfort since she had a bed and that was the only thing 'needed' (even though at her old home, she more often than not slept on the floor). Why anyone would want to spend money on her, to make her happy, made no sense.

"Natasha?" The way Fury's voice rose indicated that it wasn't the first time he'd called her name and without even realising it, she'd pushed herself from her seat.

"I..." she stammered, trying to control the racing of her heart as she slowly came back to the moment and out of her head. "I'm fine. I just..."

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset you, Natasha. I should have thought more about what I was saying." Nick said quietly, standing about a foot away, uncertain if she was going to bolt or sit back down.

"No, it wasn't..." Natasha exhaled and rubbed a trembling hand over her forehead. "It's just me, my stupid brain overthinking things when it shouldn't." She looked back at her plate of nearly untouched pancakes and slowly made her way back to her seat.

"Over thinking happens, sweetheart. Maybe if you tell me what you're worried about, we can try and rationalise your thoughts?" His face betrayed nothing as Natasha picked up her fork again but she thought he seemed pleased at her choice.

"I don't even know where to start with it." Natasha sighed, chewing a mouthful of pancake, expression thoughtful. "There's just...a lot of stuff going around in my head. Like...It makes it clear that I'm staying here, that...that /he's/ dead and I'm never going home. And then...It's like...I don't need anything new and expensive, I don't deserve it and I feel guilty because you're spending money on me and I'm not used to that."

Nick waited a moment to make sure she'd finished talking before nodding. "Okay, well first of all, you deserve a lot of things Natasha. A nice room, belongings that you enjoy are just the tip of that. I'm not sure if you're aware, but I get money from the state specifically for you. Some of it is going into a savings account for when you're eighteen, and the rest is for clothes and groceries and transport to therapies and such. I'm not taking a penny from that, okay? Whatever we don't spend in a week goes into that account. So really, I'm not paying for anything that you want or need. That money is yours." He paused to see if Natasha wanted to say anything. When she just blinked, looking a little dazed, he carried on.

"We don't have to spend a lot of money all in one go for your room. We can look round the thrift stores and second hand places and see if anything takes your fancy. You've got the basics but maybe you'd like a desk or a chair or to paint the walls. Maybe you'd like to get some clothes or a new school bag. Anything you want."

Natasha swallowed hard, fists clenched on top of the table. She was quiet for a long while as Nick just continued to eat his breakfast, very much not pressuring her and letting her take her time.

Eventually the girl spoke. "I...I'm not sure what I'd even want. I haven't thought about it, really, I thought the room was fine but...I guess I don't really like the colour?"

Nick smiled softly. "You mean army green isn't your colour?" He chuckled.

Natasha actually laughed back. "I'm more of an all black kinda girl but that's probably not the best colour for a room."

"Maybe we'll stick to black for clothes." Nick hummed. "What colour were you thinking?"

Natasha thought for a moment before choosing. "Yellow." She said softly.

That was a little bit of a surprise but Nick only nodded. "Yellow it is."

"It's happy. Bright. It's like outside but inside, when I don't wanna actually go outside." She shrugged, a little embarrassed.

"I think yellow is a great choice. Why don't we go to the store sometime this week to pick out a shade?" Nick suggested.

"Yeah...yeah okay." Natasha said softly. "That sounds good."

She was still more than a little anxious about the whole idea but choosing something simple like paint seemed like a good place to start.

Maybe things would be okay.

Or maybe they'd go very very wrong.

Gone (S)

Chapter Notes

This chapter is where things start getting...not so good for this group. Sorry? But hey, it can't always be good. I hope you enjoy and please make sure you read the triggers in the tags before reading any of this.

Melinda wasn't exactly sure what had woken her up and was almost drifting back to sleep when it happened again.

Sitting upright in bed, the woman glanced at the bedside clock. It was almost five am and she'd usually have at least another hour left to sleep but now she was wide awake.

She carefully got out of the bed without disrupting Phil, padding out into the hall.

She figured she'd just check in on the kids to calm her nerves before heading downstairs to get some chores done before the house began to wake up.

Phil and Melinda had first gotten a bigger house than the pair needed because they expected to have children sometime in the future. Years later, they'd almost packed up and moved somewhere smaller but something had held them back. And now they had a full house with all rooms filled. They'd even turned one of the offices into a bedroom when Jemma had joined them.

Stepping to each room was second nature, since Melinda found herself checking on them probably more than was healthy but she couldn't help it.

They'd been fine every time she checked, but this time something was different. Something was wrong.

She looked in on Jemma, Leo and Skye, all asleep in their beds. Her stomach twisted uncomfortably as she pushed open Grant's door.

It was empty.

The bed was made up all neat and perfect and it was clear it hadn't been slept in.

Half of Melinda's mind was screaming that that didn't make sense, because she'd said goodnight to Grant and watched him go up to his bedroom the night before.

She wasn't panicking just yet because he might have just not been able to sleep, in which case he'd be downstairs so he could watch tv without disrupting them. Either that, or he was already up for the day like she was.

She checked the bathrooms next, just to make sure, but they were both empty too.

She prayed in her head as she walked down the stairs that she'd find the tv on low, Grant asleep across the couch or doing homework under the dim light.

Melinda knew before she'd even gotten halfway down the stairs that Grant wasn't down there.

She checked anyway, turning in lights and moving through every room of the house.

Empty.

Now fully panicking, she was on her way up the stairs to tell Phil when she saw the note on the front door.

Dread filling her, she walked to it and pulled it from the frame.

'Coulson and May, I'm sorry if you see this and worry, I'm okay though. It's just best I leave now before I get even more comfortable only for you to send me back for someone younger. Either that, or before I end up hurting one of you. I couldn't deal with that, not again. Please tell Skye I'm sorry, and the kids too. Thank you for everything you did for me.

Grant'

Fingers trembling as they clutched the paper, Melinda ran up the stairs two at a time, pushing open their bedroom door.

"Phil, wake up-" she shook the man lightly but firmly until sat up, rubbing a hand over his face.

"Mel?" He murmured.

"Grant's gone. He left a note and his backpack is gone too." Melinda's eyes were damp with unshed tears, wide with panic.

That seemed to wake Phil up as he reached for the note in her hands, swinging his legs off the side of the bed to turn on the lamp.

His mouth moved as he read over the words, swallowing thickly when done.

Foster kids ran away, they'd known that from the very beginning, but they had somehow managed to avoid any of their kids doing that.

They'd been expecting it, yes, but at the beginning. During the first couple of months, not over two years into his being with them.

The reasons he'd stated for running away had both parents rattled; he was doing it so they wouldn't give him away or so he wouldn't hurt them.

Coulson dragged his eyes away from the page and up to Melinda's waiting gaze.

"Okay," he said quietly, "I'll call Christian, see if he's gone there. If not, we'll have to call the police."

Melinda nodded, throat feeling tight as she spoke next, "what about the kids? Skye?"

A glance at the clock told him that it still wasn't really an acceptable time for them to get up ready for school.

Now they were faced with the dilemma of waking the kids before schedule to tell them Grant was gone, even though there was nothing they could do to help or letting them sleep until their alarms went off, and still having to tell them.

"Give it half an hour. I'll call Christian." Phil sighed, squeezing Melinda's hand as he got to his feet.

"I'll make a list of his friends and as soon as it's late enough, I'll call round." She said quietly.

Phil tried to smile. "Want me to make the call to the police?"

"Would you?" The woman exhaled, hastily rubbing a hand over her eyes.

"We'll find him." Phil said firmly as he stepped towards his wife, kneeling so he could look at her as he spoke. "We'll bring him home."

"God, Phil, we have to."

Telling the kids (S)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. I know it's been a while, I'm sorry. This chapter is short but I felt something was better than nothing at this stage. Hope you enjoy <3

Calling Christian proved unfruitful, not that Coulson had expected much. Grant's brother was almost two hours away by car and Grant hadn't been gone anywhere near long enough to have completed the walk.

Phil told Christian to call him if the teenager showed up and that he himself would be calling to update whenever they had any information.

Phil met Melinda back in their bedroom, where she was looking just as dejected. After multiple phones ringing through because of the early hour, she'd only gotten through to a couple of Grant's friends parents. They hadn't seen anything.

After leaving messages on the phones that hadn't been answered, Melinda hung up, cradling her phone.

She looked up as Phil came in, her expression dropping even more. "Nothing?" She asked quietly.

"He hasn't seen him," Phil rubbed a hand over his face, "I'll call the police now but it's best the kids know about this before they turn up."

Melinda exhaled, nodding, glad to have something to do. "I'll go talk to them." She slowly got to her feet, squeezing Phil's hand as she walked past him.

It was still early but it wasn't far off the time she would usually be making the rounds for them to start getting up.

She went first to Jemma, the girl already sitting up, the bedside table lamp on and a book about thermodynamics in her hands.

"Morning, sweetheart." Melinda said softly, sitting next to her feet on the bed. "I have something we need to talk about, will you go get Leo and come into Skye's room?"

Jemma carefully closed her book, sitting further up in the bed. "What's wrong?" Her small face was already pinched with worry, her eyes wide and watching.

"I'd rather talk about it with the others, okay? Just get Leo and then we can talk about it." She tenderly brushed a fly away brown hair from Jemma's cheek.

The girl looked abjectly frightened but she nodded and pulled back her covers. "I'll get him." She said softly.

"Thank you, darling." Melinda offered a smile as the girl, clutching a white bunny in hand, stepped from the room.

Blowing out a breath, Melinda got up from the bed and headed down the hall to Skye's room.

She carefully flicked on the overhead light, knowing that was one of the best ways to get Skye up without scaring or startling her too much.

She then walked over and pulled back the curtains, letting even more light into the room.

The girl on the bed grumbled and poked her head out from the covers.

"Don't wanna." Skye mumbled, dragging a hand over her eyes.

"I know," Melinda smiled, like it was any other morning. Except it wasn't and her smile dropped.

Leo and Jemma stood in the doorway, the former having his fingers clenched around a raggedy stuffed monkey.

Skye heard the soft footfalls and lifted her head, blinking over at the doorway. "Hiya monkeys, what's this about?"

"We need to talk," Melinda said softly, gesturing for the pair to come in from the hall.

They sat on Skye's bed, with the older girl properly sitting up. Her face had paled considerably and her thumb went up to her mouth, where she began to chew on the digit.

Melinda carefully pulled her hand back down from her mouth, holding it in hers.

Skye watched the movement with watery eyes, already close to tears. "You're sending me away? Or all of us away?" She whispered.

Leo whimpered from behind his monkey and Jemma immediately wrapped an arm around him, tugging him close. She pressed a kiss to his hair, her own wide eyes looking over to Melinda.

"No," the woman said immediately, "absolutely not. That is never going to happen. Never." She said firmly but kindly, eyes gazing around the three kids.

Skye exhaled shakily, the fingers of her free hand clenched around the covers of the bed.

Jemma seemed to relax a little, surely nothing could be as bad as her being sent back there. "If we're talking, shouldn't we wait for Grant?"

Skye, watching Melinda, saw the slight stiffening of her shoulders.

The girl closed her eyes. "Its about him, isn't it?" Those brown eyes opened again, "look, if he's done something...if he's broken something or...or said something, we can fix it. We can always fix it, he didn't mean to-"

"Skye, Jemma, Leo," Melinda started softly, "I want you to know that we are going to fix this and I know it's going to be scary and upsetting." She took a measured breath. "Grant has...Grant's ran away."

UPDATE

Hey everyone. This series was getting far too confusing so after debating for literal months I decided to compile it all in one fic.

To help clear things up chapter titles will be posted with a (A) for Avengers chapters, (S) for Shield chapters and (B) for both. This is so you can read all of it or if you just want to read Avengers or Shield characters you can skip the irrelevant chapters. For chapters where it's both of them, I would just suggest skimming it maybe in case you miss any details for whichever story you're following. Of course, I'd love for you guys to read all of it but I know that's not going to be everyone.

The other two parts of this series will be archived and this is renamed as The Marvel Teens. If you were following the Shield guys, I suggest maybe subscribing to this one now so you don't accidentally miss anything. Before archiving The Shield fic, I will be posting an update as a chapter and will be leaving it for two weeks, to give people the chance to see it, and then it will be archived.

Not only does this make things easier for me, but it does for everyone reading too since you don't have to skip from fic to fic.

As time and energy permits, I will be going over old chapters and making them as good as they can possibly be so stay tuned for that. I'm very excited to be putting all of this together in one place and I hope you guys like it too. I would also suggest going back to the beginning to check you haven't missed anything important!

Thank you for all the support, I know I haven't updated in a while, honestly I'd been stressing out like crazy about this series and constantly going back and forth on what I would do. I hope new chapters will be coming soon!

Routines and fine mornings (A)

Chapter Notes

In case any of you missed the update chapter I'll write my update here too:

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.....

Now

I know a lot of you were probably waiting for an update for the Shield guys but honestly I'm struggling with them and to have ideas right now. I guess I also wanted to wait until I wanted to write this fic again. Because I think you can tell when someone is writing because they need to get something up as opposed to wanting to write. Anyway. Here's an Avengers chapter.

I also didn't mean to totally kinda ignore the rest of the gang so soon I'll be doing some chapters focused on them.

Here's what Natasha makes in this chapter: <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirozhki>

The morning Grant disappeared had been a fairly calm one at the Fury household, even though Nick had woken to a frantic call from Melinda.

Despite badly wanting to go out and start looking for Grant, Nick knew that wasn't possible to do. He had Natasha and Bruce to worry about and had to keep to their schedule for their sakes.

So instead, he'd started about their usual morning routine, beginning with getting ready for the day.

Then he went to the kids rooms and woke Natasha up, since Bruce was already finishing homework at his desk.

Natasha was going to have a half day at school, working till lunchtime and then being brought home after lunch. Fury was back at school, since it had been a few weeks since Natasha had come home from the hospital.

Everyone had been so busy that yesterday Nick had finally been able to tell Natasha that they would go shopping after her half day. He would take her to get ice cream or a milkshake at the diner and then they would go around various stores to pick out items for her bedroom as well as clothes and school supplies.

Then they would collect Bruce at school, stop off at the grocery store and all help pick out something for dinner.

So despite how much Nick wanted to go out searching, not only was in not possible but he knew deep down that it wasn't likely to help in the slightest. That didn't stop him constantly checking his phone for updates as he made breakfast though.

Calling the kids down, Nick set the food on the table and took his seat, hoping for a good day, for both his family and Phil and Melinda's.

...

Natasha stood in front of the mirror, clumsily adjusting her sweater. She'd been able to go without the sling for a few days but her hand and arm were nowhere near completely okay. She struggled a lot with holding things, with the pain, with the random numbness. So putting on a sweater should have been easy but since her hand had decided it wanted to not feel shit for a while, she was struggling.

But finally, she'd gotten it on. She'd chosen the dark purple one because even though red was her colour, at the moment it had just been reminding her of blood so...not good, really. And purple was Clint's colour and well, she'd been missing him a lot.

She'd been missing all of them a lot. Tony's jokes, Bucky's sharp tongue, Steve's mother-henning, Thor's brightness. The way they made her feel important, part of something, not alone.

Yeah, she was actually looking forward to lunchtime, when they would all sit out in the field like old times. They'd arranged it as soon as they'd heard Natasha's schedule.

Steve had suggested they do something they hadn't in a while-a sort of picnic/potluck/gossip session.

Basically, each person would bring one food for them all to share.

Natasha and Bruce had spent the whole evening making their contributions. Bruce focused on his blueberry muffins (vegan and downright delicious and also Tony's favourite). The boy had blushed furiously when Natasha pointed that out.

Natasha had been stuck on what to make for days. She barely remembered anything food related from her childhood. The hazy memories she had included some sort of Russian bread/bun thing? And after a lot of research she'd finally found the name of the item: Pirozhki! As she'd flicked through the recipes, a warmth had settled in her chest and she knew for sure that those were what she remembered her mama making. So she tried her hand.

The first batch failed miserably and set off the smoke alarm. Nick had stepped in to help with the second batch and though they weren't perfect, the three had split one and they were actually pretty delicious.

Not exactly like she remembered but she hoped in time she would remember and be able to make the same as her mama had.

Beef ones were apparently popular so even though her and Bruce didn't eat meat, she'd made them ones for the rest of the boys. Then she'd made a potato and vegetable one and one top of all that, a dessert one with caramelized apples.

They'd been in the kitchen for hours, Bruce sticking around to help long after his muffins had cooked.

For the first time in a while, Natasha found herself looking forward to eating as opposed to it being a chore or something to pass the time or even something she felt guilty about because she didn't deserve food or hadn't earned it.

She had very proudly, though still feeling guilty, bought her own ingredients. It had taken a lot of talking and reassuring from Nick and Bruce for her to understand that the money Nick gave her was already hers. The government gave him money to look after her and after the necessities had been paid for, what remained was hers and Nick wasn't going to keep a single part of it.

So she'd perhaps gone overboard at the store, buying more than she could ever possibly need because hey, she apparently had no impulse control and since she had pretty much never set foot in a big ass grocery store, so much of it was new to her.

Besides mountains of snacks she would probably never eat, she'd gotten a cheesy card for each of her friends, Clint and Nick. They were all various thank you cards with notes inside to tell them each how grateful she was for them.

Nick and Bruce had already had their's, proudly displaying them in the living room and the others sat in her bag for lunch time.

Now that the sweater debacle was over, Natasha headed downstairs.

She made sure her Piroshki's were packed up in boxes and in a bag and that she had all her school stuff, including her falling apart notebook and broken binder. She was actually quite excited to get new supplies.

Sitting down at the table, Natasha shared a small smile with Bruce and Nick before scooping some eggs onto her plate.

She'd never had so much food in her life and had probably eaten more in the past week then she usually did in at least two, maybe three. She was sure she'd probably put on a lot of weight already, but she was struggling to stop, despite the guilt.

Having barely any food, constantly worrying about her next meal, never knowing if she would be able to eat that day had now morphed into literally being able to eat what she wanted whenever she wanted and she could not stop.

The food on the table did not last long with two hungry teenagers so soon they were clearing up and heading out to the car.

Yeah, Natasha thought, as she leaned her head against the window, hopefully today would be a good day.

And if not good, fine would be good enough by her.

A fine day.

Anxious days (S)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. I hope you can all forgive me but with how my health is at the moment, I can't post the bigger chapters like I usually do. It's too much. So I'm now writing shorter chapters but they will be just as detailed and because they're shorter, there will be more of them. It just means that I can get content I'm happy with up as opposed to waiting weeks until a longer chapter is finally done. I hope this won't affect you guys sticking with me and I appreciate all the support.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The kids flat out refused to go to school, even after they'd calmed down.

Phil didn't have the heart to argue. He knew that if they went to school, at least one of them would breakdown and need to come home anyways and besides, this way they were right there if there were any updates.

A few hours had passed and they still had no news. Melinda had gone out in the car looking, as well as some of the parents of Grant's friends.

Phil was left to look after the kids and continue making phone calls.

Because Grant was a vulnerable young person, they also had police cars out patrolling the streets.

Phil had to believe someone would find him. Grant didn't have any way of getting too far and they just had to hope he wasn't holed up somewhere secret.

Lunchtime came and went and despite getting the younger two to at least nibble on a sandwich, Skye refused to eat anything. In all fairness, she had been sick pretty soon after Melinda had delivered the news, so it was likely it was more about anxiety and less an ED relapse.

Another hour went. Leo had fallen asleep on the sofa after a long crying and screaming fit that even Phil had struggled to help with. Eventually they'd gotten the boy calm enough for him to lay down and play one of his games until he inevitably fell asleep.

Jemma was sitting beside the slumbering boy, eyes on the TV screen but not really watching.

Skye had tried to leave and been stopped by Phil, though not easily. There had been a lot of shouting and swearing but Phil had carefully explained that the family couldn't take two missing members and that Leo and Jemma needed her.

Now she stood pacing the length of the living room, constantly looking at her phone in the hopes Grant would contact her.

He didn't.

As quickly as the time seemed to rush by in a haze, it dragged by too. But eventually evening came and there was still nothing.

Even Phil was getting antsy at this stage and after a phone call with Melinda, the pair agreed to switch.

After the trade, Melinda reheated leftovers for dinner and tried to coax the kids to eat. Again, Leo and Jemma nibbled and Skye didn't touch it.

"Just a little bit, we don't need you getting sick." Melinda said quietly but still the girl refused.

After a rather unsuccessful dinner, the group retreated back to the living room to sit in front of a TV no one was watching as they waited.

Melinda got the call two hours later. It was Phil.

"They found him," he breathed, "he's at the station. I'm going there now."

"Oh thank god, is he okay?"

"Apparently he's high," Phil murmured, "and they found drugs on him. They think he's dealing."

"Dealing?" She hissed, "how the hell did that happen?"

"I guess we'll find out."

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! Comments are my lifeblood and maybe subscribe so you don't miss anything!

I might also re-write this chapter I'm not sure if I'm completely happy with it.

Finding Grant (S)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. I know it's been a long time. You know when you lose that spark and inspiration for a fic? I think I just needed to take a long break and figure out where I was going. But don't worry, I'm back! By no means will there be regular uploading but I think you guys know by now that's never really been my thing. I know this chapter is short but y'all deserved something.

Tw: for mentions of someone thinking they could be about to get sexually abused but very brief.

Enjoy!

When Phil got to the station, he was taken right in to talk with the captain.

After a fairly long, in depth talk, it was decided that Grant would be released to Phil for the time being.

The man told Phil that they were certain Grant wasn't the owner of the drugs. That the boy had been far too afraid to tell them the name of who had gave them to him.

Grant also had shown up with multiple bruises on his face, and none on his knuckles, meaning he hadn't even tried to fight back.

The boy was scared. He'd been pulled into something dangerous but it seemed like they'd caught it at the beginning, a rare thing to manage. Grant had no money on him, hinting that he hadn't sold any of the drugs yet.

They were lucky. He could be charged with intent to sell but not actual dealing. However, if Grant could give them the name of whoever had groomed him into doing such a thing, he would likely walk free.

Finally, Phil could pick him up.

Grant looked broken sitting in that cell, head buried in his hands, his whole body trembling.

As soon as the doors opened, despite the fact that he rarely ever touched anyone but Skye, the boy walked right over to Phil.

He pressed his face to the man's shoulder, arms tight around him and fingers digging into the material of his jacket.

Phil hugged him back, gentler. "Let's get you home, son." He said kindly.

Grant pulled away, staring at the floor, head carefully ducked away from Coulson's gaze.

He shuffled his feet, still shaking in a way Phil thought was probably the come down from whatever he'd taken.

"Grant." Phil said quietly. "I'm not going to hurt you, you know me by now. But we do have to talk about this. We have to talk about what you've been doing."

Grant shook his head, inhaling shakily. "Is Skye okay?" He murmured.

"She's worried." Phil said honestly. "Everyone is, Grant. You're a part of our family and when one part of that goes missing, the others worry."

"I'm sorry." The boy breathed, his voice thick. He wiped quickly at his face, brushing tears from his cheeks.

"I know. Come on, how about we go get a hot chocolate first?" Phil suggested.

Grant sniffled and continued to stare at his shuffling feet. He shrugged his shoulders, "whatever."

Except Phil was well versed in 'whatever' and knew what it really meant.

"Alright, hot chocolate it is."

...

They got through one hot chocolate and were into their second and Grant still hadn't said anything.

Sighing softly, Phil pulled a hand through his hair. "Okay, Grant. I know you don't want to talk about this but it is very important. It could be the difference between you coming home to Skye and the kids and going to jail, son, alright?"

Grant shrugged again, hand tightening around the mug he held. After a few seconds, he lifted his gaze.

The boy's eyes were red and watery and he had bruises trailing from his cheek down to his jaw, and a cut sticky with dried blood above his eyebrow. It looked like he'd bitten his lips to shreds.

Phil swallowed, the hollow pit in his stomach filling with acid. Taking those kids in was never going to be easy but he would die long before he let it play out like this.

"Who is he?" Phil asked quietly, expecting a shrug, for Grant to drop his head or storm out.

Instead, Grant cried, clumsily wiping at his eyes.

"I didn't mean to, Sir." The boy whispered. "I...I just needed some money and...and I knew this guy and he'd seen me before and I knew he had money. He tried to get me into it before, almost convinced me but...I didn't." The boy inhaled and shivered, hands rubbing at his arms.

"When I went to him today, he was happy. Said he knew I'd be back. He had just the job for me. He had friends with him and they laughed when he told me what I had to do. I wasn't going to. I was gonna just leave but then..." He winced, pressing fingers to his jaw. "He was on top of me for a while. I thought...I thought maybe he..."

Phil's fists clenched and that acid burned his throat.

"He didn't. He got off, handed me the drugs and sent me off. I don't know his name, Sir, I swear. I just...I know what they call him." Grant exhaled, even his teeth chattering now.

"What do they call him?" Phil fought to keep his voice even, and his face neutral so he wouldn't make Grant fearful.

"I just know him as The Clairvoyant."

Picnics, panic and hopeful propositions (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! TW for brief panic attack

Natasha had been keeping an eye on Nick all day. He was good at hiding when something was wrong, and she figured it didn't concern her because he'd told her he wouldn't hide anything about her situation.

But something was still wrong.

And not only was he acting strange and constantly checking his phone, but Coulson and May weren't in class.

However, despite knowing something was wrong, she couldn't help but be pulled into lunch time with her friends.

It was really nice to just sit with them all and talk, the last few weeks had been hard on all of them and Natasha felt guilty for that.

But they stuck to the lighter topics and dug into the food everyone had brought.

There were sandwiches, homemade fries, pasta salad, veggies and dips, apples and peanut butter, cookies and Bruce and Natasha's treats.

A lot of food but they did good with a lot of food, Thor could clear half by himself if he was allowed to anyways.

They didn't get an awful lot of time for lunch but if anything, that made them enjoy it all the more.

Natasha was thoroughly enjoying leaning against Clint's chest as she picked her way through her plate of food. His arm was wrapped around her middle and he dropped his head to kiss her hair every few minutes.

"Hey, how about we all get together later this week? My parents are away." Tony suggested, glancing around the group.

Nearly everyone chimed in with their affirmative responses but Natasha took a little time to respond. "I...I'm not sure if Nick'll let me just yet." She said quietly, brows furrowed. "But if not, you guys should still do it."

Bucky rolled his eyes from opposite her and immediately the others were shaking their heads.

"Nat, we ain't gonna leave you out. If you can't do this week, we'll wait for another time." Bucky shrugged, looking up at Steve, who nodded his agreement.

"Exactly. We wait for all of us to be able to do it." He smiled. "Besides, who's gonna keep Clint in line if you're not there?"

Clint looked affronted for a second but then he hummed and pulled Natasha closer. "Yeah, he's got a point."

Annoyed at herself for feeling guilty for making them not be able to do the sleepover, and then being annoyed and being annoyed, Natasha rubbed a hand over her eyes. "Alright. If you're all sure." She shrugged.

"Very!" Thor grinned and paused for a second. "Is anyone else going to eat that?" He asked, pointing at the last piroshki.

Natasha grinned and shook her head. "All yours."

...

After lunch, Nick met her at his car.

Natasha was suddenly back to being concerned about what was going on with him.

He said he wouldn't keep anything about herself from her but people lied all the time. Maybe this outing wasn't just a nice trip to get stuff. Maybe it was a goodbye trip or...or maybe they wouldn't even get to the mall at all. Maybe he'd drop her off somewhere. Another foster home, a children's home. Maybe this whole day had just been her saying goodbye to everyone and-

"Natasha? Natasha, hey, take a breath-" without even noticing she'd pressed herself against the car door, the girl lifted her head to find that her chest hurt and she was struggling to catch her breath.

Nick was in front of her, one hand on her shoulder as he crouched down a little.

"You're okay. You're okay, Natasha, just breathe like we practised, you can do it."

It wasn't a full on attack, Nick had intervened quickly enough that it hasn't escalated but still, Natasha was shaking as she gulped down air, embarrassed and trying not to spiral.

"Just like that, you're doing such a good job." Nick soothed, patiently standing there and rubbing her shoulder as Natasha calmed down enough to be able to speak.

"Did something happen?" Nick asked carefully, knowing there could have been no rhyme or reason at all but wanting to check.

Natasha rubbed her sleeve over her eyes and took another deep breath. She swallowed, unable to look him in the eye. "Something's wrong. With you. And...and maybe that's what today is. You're...You're taking me somewhere else or...or I've done something wrong."

"Natasha." Nick said softly. "That's not what's happening here at all. I'm sorry, I should have realized you were so observant, a right little spy. Something is happening, yes, but it's nothing to do with you and you've done nothing wrong at all, I promise. This trip is what I said it is. We're going to get you some things so you can make your room your own, so it can...well, so it can start to feel like a home."

Natasha blinked and slowly lifted her head up. "A home?" She asked weakly.

"I...I was going to wait until we got to the diner but...you know I've adopted Bruce and I know it hasn't been an awful lot of time that you've been with me, but I want you to know that you're not just a foster kid to me. Not someone I'm going to look after only to send you away. I...I was going to ask if you'd like me to adopt you. Formally. I have all the paperwork, I've just been waiting for the right time to ask."

Natasha was momentarily stunned into silence, her eyes wide and her mouth open a little. She stammered through her words. "You...what...uh-"

"You don't have to answer now, it is completely down to you. If you want to find a different home, then that's what we'll do. But, Natasha, I would like you to join our little family. Properly. If that's something you would like."

Natasha stared dumbfounded at him for a few seconds and wow she'd really gotten that all wrong, thanks anxiety.

Before she even really knew what she was doing, before she even realized she hadn't hugged an adult in over ten years, that was exactly what she was doing.

Nick wrapped his arms around her too and smiled into her hair, his heart clenching at the uncertainty in the girl's touch. "Is that a yes?" He asked quietly.

Natasha closed her eyes, shaking all over, tears on her cheeks.

"Yes."

When your brain rebels (A)

Chapter Notes

Hey guys. We're really getting into the BPD diagnosis now. This has all come from me and my experiences with it. Bear in mind that Natasha is an unreliable narrator and what she feels about herself and the disorder is not the reality but is something she feels is true, like I often do. This chapter is going through how I've been struggling lately.

Italics are Natasha's thoughts and thought process.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy.

TW's: mental health stuff like intrusive thoughts, anger issues, black and white thinking, fear of abandonment, all the general BPD things.

Here's a link if you wanted to know more about it:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borderline_personality_disorder

The outing went surprisingly well. They went around the mall and picked up clothes as well as paint and other furniture for Natasha's room.

Sure, she felt guilty about it as the price kept going up and up but she kept trying to remind herself that the money Nick got was for her and he wasn't the type of person to keep it for himself.

They didn't quite manage all the stores because Natasha had gotten twitchy and anxious with all the people so they left for the diner without stopping at a few places. Nick had been really nice about it and they'd decided to come back on the weekend with Bruce as extra support.

The diner was fairly empty since the lunch rush was over so they got settled into a booth. They both ordered milkshakes, with Natasha getting strawberry because it was her comfort food. She vaguely remembered her mother sneaking her little cartons of strawberry milk after particularly brutal evenings.

A little sick to her stomach as anxiety twisted her insides, they didn't stay there too long. Nick got the rest of her milkshake to go and soon they were back home.

It was almost time for Nick to go pick up Bruce from school so after making sure Natasha was settled, since she didn't feel up to the school run, Nick left the house.

He hadn't left Natasha on her own since the last time he had. And that had clearly not gone well at all. But they'd been working on building their trust and Nick felt like Natasha was in a good enough place for him to trust her alone in the house for half an hour.

She promised she wouldn't do anything bad, saying she would just do her homework and maybe lay down for a bit.

She had started her homework but then a text from Clint had sent her spiralling in a way she'd never seen coming.

The borderline personality disorder diagnosis was still very new but now she knew the criteria, every time a symptom came up, one she'd suffered with for a long time, she now knew where it came from.

But that didn't make it easier. At all.

It was like there was another Natasha inside her head, one that was impulsive and scared and so anxious she couldn't even think enough to try and stop it all from happening.

She wasn't sure how it had happened or how it had escalated so quickly. It was like a switch being turned on and a dial being turned up to full on emotion.

One minute she'd been doing history homework and the next, she'd happened to glance at her phone, and then she was on the floor in front of the mirror, sobbing so hard she couldn't catch her breath.

Her mind screamed at her incessantly, a constant bombardment of awful things flooding her brain. She couldn't even breathe, the wave was so all encompassing that she didn't even have chance to think logically.

There was no logical in that moment, just the crushing weight of her own thoughts pressing down and down and down on her until she couldn't breathe or hear over the shouting in her head.

He hates me. He's leaving and never coming back because all I ever do is fuck up. I'm too broken, too much of a screw up. I'm nothing. Literally nothing. No one actually cares about me, they're just pretending. They're going to have the sleepover without me and laugh about me, make fun of me. Nick will realise I'm beyond help and will send me into the system. No one will want me. Why am I even here? What's the point? Clint doesn't care. Clint doesn't want me. No one wants me. I don't even want me.

He's leaving he's leaving he's leaving he's leaving he's leaving he's leaving he's leaving.

He doesn't love me.

...

When Nick got home, that was how he found Natasha.

Curled up in a ball on the floor, her hands covering her face as her body shook violently with sobs. She was gasping so hard she didn't even hear him come in, didn't even realize he was there until his hand was on her shoulder.

She recoiled immediately, gasping and scooting away, momentarily shocked into stopping crying.

Her face was flushed and her cheeks were sticky with tears, her eyes red rimmed and bloodshot.

Nick first scanned her quickly for any sign of blood and injury. Finding none didn't stop the panic in his chest, but it helped a little.

"Natasha? Hey, what's happening?" He asked quietly, kneeling on the floor, hands away from her.

Still caught in the swirling of her own head, Natasha couldn't even find words to answer him. As she recalled what was happening, she burst into a fresh round of tears.

She pressed her palms to her eyes, sobbing brokenly against her hands.

They all hated her.

They were all going to leave.

"Natasha? Sweetheart, I can't help if you don't talk to me." Nick murmured, still keeping his hands far enough away that he wouldn't touch her accidentally.

And then, it was like another switch being flicked in her head, except this time she was angry.

Not necessarily at Nick, nor at Clint, more angry at herself than anything else.

It was her fault they were leaving, no one else's.

The tears in her eyes dried up as she pushed herself to her feet and snatched her phone up from the floor.

"You really want to know what's happening?" She spat, eyes narrowing. "What's happening is that's there's something so fucking inherently wrong with me that all I do is fuck up. There is something bad in me and it means that no matter how fucking hard I try, nothing is ever good enough. My mom fucking left me, my dad left me, you're going to leave me. Clint's already left me because he can see me for who I am. A fuck up. A fucking disaster. A hurricane that destroys everything in it's path. I'm not worthy of anything and he knows that. He knows that and that's why he's leaving!" She threw the phone in Nick's direction and stalked over to the bed where she lay down, back facing the man.

At a momentary loss for words, Nick picked up the phone to see what had Natasha so upset.

'Hey, Nat.' The text read, 'I'm sorry but I can't hang out tonight, Barney needs me to help him with something. Call you later x'

It seemed simple to Nick, Clint was busy and had had to cancel their plans. But to Natasha, it seemed like the whole world was ending. Her relationships were crumbling in front of her very eyes and she was the cause of it.

"Natasha." Nick said quietly, pushing himself to his feet and sitting cautiously on the end of the bed. "Sweetheart, remember how we went through the information on the diagnosis when you were in hospital? Remember what we read?"

Natasha, now starting to calm down just a little, just enough to let the slightest hint of logical into her head, stubbornly kept her mouth shut.

Her cheeks flamed with embarrassment and yet more annoyed tears sprang to her eyes.

She didn't want to fucking be that way. Didn't want to be so fucking caught up in her head that she couldn't see anything else. She didn't want to be broken. Didn't want to push people away or accuse those she loved the most of leaving her. Didn't want to be utterly convinced that she was getting abandoned.

"We talked about it, right? This is part of what's going on, yeah? Feeling this way. And I know it doesn't make it better or make the feelings go away but sweetheart, Clint loves you. He's not leaving you, he adores you. He wouldn't leave. And none of this is your fault. You wouldn't say it was your fault you had a broken leg, would you?"

"Depends if I tripped over my own feet." The girl muttered, clutching a stuffed animal close to her chest.

"Okay, fair enough, bad example." Nick hummed. "We're both still learning, aren't we? Learning together and in time, I'm sure we can help you to come up with ways to make this a little easier for you. But for now, sweetheart, I promise you that no one is leaving. Clint isn't leaving. And none of this is your fault. Here, why don't you call him, I'm sure it'll be more reassuring coming from him than from me."

Natasha dragged a hand over her eyes, sniffing. "Sorry." She whispered.

"You have nothing to be sorry for, at all." Nick promised, leaning over to place the phone by her hand. "I'll leave you to call Clint and then when you're done, come downstairs. We can do some more research, look into that group the doctor told us about, and talk more about this." Nick understood that Natasha needed more time to comprehend and understand, more time to let the logical side of her back in.

Nick stood, "I'll be downstairs when you're done, sweetheart." He said kindly.

After leaving the room, he stayed out in the hall for just a little bit until he heard Natasha shuffling.

After a few moments, Natasha's voice broke around Clint's name and Nick could just about hear Clint's soothing tone from the other end.

With a soft sigh, Nick went downstairs to join Bruce, grabbing his computer to start reading into the disorder more.

Natasha wouldn't go through any of it alone, he vowed.

Anxious stomach's and tearful reunions (S)

Chapter Notes

I know it's been a long time I'm really sorry.

TW's: drugs mentioned a few times

Skye was almost vibrating with energy by the time Phil and Grant got home.

Hearing that Grant had been found should have reassured the girl completely but the anxiety that had been crushing her all day refused to leave.

Her chest felt heavy, her stomach twisting as nausea settled in and didn't seem to get any better, even with the 'good' news. Skye was a good listener, she'd heard the 'rents on the phone and apparently Grant was high? She'd known him smoke marijuana before and that was fine by her, but it sounded like he'd taken something much worse and that scared the shit out of the girl. What if he was addicted? What if he took too much? What if he ran far far away next time and didn't ever come back?

When Grant finally walked in, Skye was torn between being so glad he was back and being angry. Everyone had been worried sick but on the other hand, she understood why he'd left which made her anger lose some of its heat. She was scared everyday that she would fuck up or that Melinda and Phil would disown her, send her into the system again. If she was sure that would happen, she would run away too.

One look at his bruised face and red eyes immediately made the anger disappear altogether. He looked...like shit, honestly. His face was all bruised up and his lips were all bloody, his eyes were glazed and he was making himself as small as possible.

She took a small step forwards, arms hugging herself tightly, as if that would stop the ache deep inside her. "Hi." She whispered.

Grant's voice was hoarse and he refused to look up, shuffling his feet a little. "Hi." He mumbled, rubbing the back of his neck.

Skye didn't have time to say anything else before a smaller body knocked her aside a little. Leo ran right up to Grant, his cheeks wet with tears. He'd struggled all day with his emotions and hadn't really said a single word unless it was to Jemma in whispers.

Grant wasn't a hugger, they all knew that, but Leo was just so happy to see him that he'd forgotten about the older boy's personal space.

The older boy looked a little shell shocked as Leo wrapped his arms around him. After a few moments, Grant returned the embrace, hesitant and a little awkward. "I'm sorry for scaring you." He said gruffly, voice sounding a little wet.

Phil caught Melinda's gaze from across the room. The woman's relief matched his own. It had all been too close to something awful and irreversible happening.

"Leo, why don't you and Jemma go get some ice cream?" Melinda suggested after seeing Grant's overwhelmed expression.

"C'mon, monkey, we can heat up some leftovers for Grant." Skye smiled at the boy, ruffling his hair. She looked back at Grant and he seemed to understand that she wasn't done talking to him. They would do it alone, without anyone else around, but she needed questions answering and he sure looked like he needed someone to talk to.

As the other three kids headed to the kitchen, Grant hastily scrubbed at his eyes, clearing his throat.

Knowing Skye could handle leftovers, Melinda walked over. She squeezed Phil's shoulder first and then smiled at the boy. "We're all very glad you're back, Grant."

Shuffling on the spot, the boy shrugged, hands balled up into fists. He was shaking so hard Phil was immediately on edge.

"Grant, what did you take?" He asked quietly, taking extra care to make sure none of the other kids heard him.

Grant flinched, exhaling shakily. He shook his head and squeezed his eyes shut. "I don't know." He whispered.

"Can you tell us how you took it?" If he'd used a needle, they'd have to take him to get blood tests and tetanus shots in case it hadn't been clean.

"He...I mean I..." Grant stammered, rubbing aggressively at his temple. "He had his powder on his finger, it was kinda lumpy, and he s...said it would make me less anxious and feel good and I didn't want to make him angry, I needed the money so I..."

Phil swallowed the lump in his throat. "Did it calm you down?" He asked mildly.

Grant frowned and shook his head. "No I felt more anxious. And sick. It tasted gross. Like...like when you go too fast in the car and the tires kinda burn?"

Melinda forced herself to look as calm as possible. So cocaine then. Not just cocaine, but crack cocaine. Well fuck.

"Okay. I'll make a doctors appointment for tomorrow just so we can check how you're doing." Phil didn't make it into a question because Grant needed to be checked out, there wasn't really a choice in that one.

"Fine." The boy mumbled. "Can I go shower now?"

"Of course but please come down when you're done so you can have something to eat. You'll feel better after it."

Without another word, Grant took off up the stairs. Once he'd disappeared from view, Phil exhaled and wrapped his arms around Melinda.

"We can do this." She promised softly, fingers rubbing at the base of his neck. "He's back, that's what matters."

"Yeah." Phil sure hoped so.

Bad nights and bad days (S)

Chapter Notes

hey hey heyyyyy

i'm watching AoS again and i'm a mess of feels because ugh grant. i miss season one them so much

i'm going to be re-writing probably about half this fic. i started it when i was kinda new to fanfic and honestly not super great. some of it is rushed and non-descriptive and short. i wrote some chapters when i didn't want to just because i felt like i had to get something up and i'm sure you can tell so yeah, the first half of this will be slowly re-written. content won't necessarily change but it will be more descriptive and longer and yeah maybe you guys can re-read when i get that done. for now enjoy! i'm so happy i got excited to write for this fic again.

tw's: vague drug talk including coming off cocaine, and some illness talk and general food talk and mental health issues including anxiety

enjoyyy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The next day, none of the kids went to school again. It had been an awful night around, for all of them.

Grant had been coming down for most of the evening and into the night, either shaking and curled up on his bed or slumped in front of the toilet, throwing up. Even if the boy hadn't been coming off literal cocaine, there was little chance anyone would have gotten much sleep.

Melinda and Phil alternated staying with Grant and checking in on the other kids. Jemma had fallen asleep briefly after supper, waking up an hour later to find that Leo had crawled into her bed at some point, his monkey clutched to his chest. He was fast asleep but Jemma was the opposite, all nerves and remembering things she desperately wanted to forget.

Sleep had been a no go so she'd turned on the bedside light, carefully not to jostle the boy too much, and had been attempting to read or finish homework for the rest of the night. One of the parents often came in to see how the pair were doing, talking in soft whispers, offering hugs, brushing the girl's hair, tucking her up in the covers. It was nice, but it didn't help with sleep.

Skye hadn't slept at all. She'd tried for a little while, tossing and turning, eyes burning with tiredness but her whole body too wired, too panicked, to fall asleep for even a second. If one

of the 'rents wasn't with Grant or the monkeys, they would meet the older girl in the living room, where the TV was playing softly the whole time. She didn't speak much, neither did AC or Melinda, but it was nice to feel not completely alone in her feelings. Everyone was worried and on edge.

So no, the night had not been great. But come morning, Grant had finally managed to fall asleep and it seemed like he was over the come down, but they had the doctors appointment to confirm that properly, and check that there hadn't been any long lasting effects.

Time for school had come and gone with minimal fuss. Nick had understood and Maria had been called in to handle some of Melinda's classes for the day. None of the kids had even hinted at wanting to go to school. Leo had been confused and upset when he'd woken up- he liked routine, felt safer with a routine, but sending him to school without Jemma, without Melinda or Phil there, would have ended very badly.

Breakfast was unusual, coming at more lunch time, with some of the family members noticeably missing. Leo seemed like the only one even interested in food, scooping his cereal like it was any normal day.

With all the craziness, Skye's food routine had been messed about a little, meaning she had to have a bigger meal than she ever wanted, to make up for missing breakfast. She seemed less than enthused as she absently mashed at her bran flakes with the back of her spoon.

Melinda noted that the girl looked pale, her hands shook as she took bites of her food and she was often rubbing at her head. It was possible the anxiety had made her feel unwell, either about Grant or the food or both. It was possible it was the lack of sleep but either way, the woman was going to be keeping a close eye on her.

When Skye was down to the last half of her toast, most of the cereal gone, Melinda let the girl be finished because she was looking more and more like she was going to throw up if she ate anymore, maybe even if she didn't. She would just lay down an extra snack for Skye at some point in the day.

The girl wasn't supposed to be alone after meals but Skye trudged towards the stairs nonetheless.

"Skye." Melinda called after her, tone a reminder.

The girl sighed, rubbing at her temples before turning around and moving towards the living room instead, where the youngest kids were in front of the TV. Leo had his headphones on and was staring unenthusiastically at his history homework. Give him science or maths and he loved it, but anything else was near torture.

Melinda knelt beside the boy to help him, watching out the corner of her eye as Skye lay down on the couch, shivering and dropping her head to the armrest. "Try and get some sleep, sweetheart." The woman said softly, offering a reassuring smile. The girl did just that.

...

A few hours passed in a sleepy haze for most of them but soon it was time for the doctors so Melinda got Grant up and Phil met them in the doorway and lead the boy out to the car. He tended to take the kids to appointments whilst Melinda stayed with the kids.

The dark haired woman couldn't help but find herself nervously waiting for the pair to come home. Her mind kept flitting to Grant's incessant shaking, his pale and pinched face, arms curled around himself as he threw up or fought to sleep.

Instead of heading back to the living room after watching Phil's car pull out, Melinda went to the kitchen. She'd left the kids either asleep (Skye), or playing some sort of game on the floor (Jemma and Leo) and she was close enough to still be able to hear the monkeys talking to one another. Preferably the woman would have gone down to the garage to work out or do yoga, but she felt uneasy leaving the kids somewhere she wouldn't be able to hear them. As it would turn out, that would be a very very good decision.

So instead, the woman set about baking cookies, hoping the smell would entice the kids to leave the living room for a bit. She'd been busy for about twenty minutes when the front door clicked open and Phil and a teary eyed Grant walked in.

The boy was rubbing at a band aid stuck to the crook of his arm, eyes downcast as he shuffled in.

"How did it go?" Melinda asked mildly, looking between the pair. Phil opened his mouth to speak when a cry came from the other room, followed by a shout of Melinda's name.

The three ran to the living room to find Skye crumpled on the floor, Jemma kneeling beside her, Leo staring wide eyed at the girls.

"What happened?" Melinda asked as she and Phil moved quickly towards the girl, Grant right behind them. The woman took Skye's wrist, pressing her fingers to the inside of it, as Phil gently gathered Skye up, cradling her head in his lap.

Jemma swallowed, shaking and pale, "I don't know." She whispered. "She stood up and... and she was talking funny, it didn't make sense and then she fell."

"Skye, can you hear me, love?" Phil asked softly, brushing his fingers over the girl's temple. He met Melinda's gaze, eyes flicking to where the woman was still holding Skye's wrist.

"Not the best." She murmured under her breath, shuffling a little closer so she could cup one of Skye's cheeks, running her finger under her eye. It wasn't the first time Skye had passed out on them, it had happened a fair few times in the beginning, but it hadn't for months and months and it wasn't as if the girl wasn't eating, because they were making sure she was.

"Open your eyes, sweetheart-" Melinda murmured, free hand reaching into her pocket to grab her phone to call for help.

"What's happening?" Grant croaked out, eyes wide. "Why do you need to call for someone, is she okay?"

“Is she gonna die?” Jemma whispered, looking over at Leo, who sniffled and stumbled over to her, hiding his face against her shoulder.

“No one’s dying.” Phil said firmly, as Melinda stood and took a few steps away so she could explain what was happening to the person on the other end of the phone.

“She’ll be okay.” Phil murmured, not entirely sure how he was so calm. Thank you, army, he supposed. “We’re just getting her some help and she’ll go get checked out, just like you just did.”

And then Skye was stirring, brows furrowing, eyelids fluttering. When they finally opened, her gaze was glazed and confused as she looked up at Phil.

“Hang on, love, just stay still.” Phil whispered, still brushing over her hair. “Don’t try and get up, Mel’s just getting you some help, okay? You’re going to be alright, Skye, just take some deep breaths.” Looking around the room at all the scared faces, Phil said what they all needed to hear.

“It’s going to be okay.”

Chapter End Notes

maybe lemme know what you thought :) see you next time hopefully <3

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