

All three of the trained women immediately stood up straight, their hands going to their hips in search of weapons. Natasha smirked and deployed one of her new pistols while Ema and I looked around as if expecting something to come from the vibrating walls.

“That was an explosion...” Natasha said, seeing my confusion. “Around a dozen or so floors up.”

Hearing her explanation my eyes went wide and I quickly activated my armor.

“Where is Steve being kept?” I asked, getting a gasp from Peggy and a cold nod from Natasha.

“About a dozen floors up.”

I cursed and unbuckled my guns, absentmindedly carding the boxes of money Ema pushed at me before anyone could say anything. Thank god she kept a calm head. And Thank god I was with Natasha. When I was done carding the lot I turned to Natasha and pushed out her mask.

“This is your mask, you control it with your mind, take it off by pulling your nose.” I said in a rush, pushing out Ema’s quiver and bow and handing it to her. “Now what the hell do we do?”

“We go protect Steve.” Peggy said as if it was obvious, which I suppose it was. The experienced agent looked even younger now, easily passing for under fifty. “Assuming he needs any protection.”

Natasha stopped for a moment before another explosion rocked the building and a blaring alarm started going off. Quickly Natasha walked to the door and peeked out before motioning for us to follow. I turn to find that Sharon already had her gun out, while Peggy is looked envious. I put my hands on my revolvers, unclipping the buckle that holds them in their holster.

“What floor is it on?” I ask Natasha as I push past her into the hall, one revolver up and pointed down the hallway. “Ema and I will be able to get there faster.”

Natasha bit off a curse before nodding. “Eleven floors up. I’ll let Fury know you are on your own.”

I nodded and ran to the nearest stairwell with Ema right behind me. I kicked the door in easily, ignoring the security lock and card scanner. Immediately more alarms started going off. I stood in the middle of the stairwell, looking up the spiral staircase that seemed to go on for miles.

“Ema, Get us up there!”

Without hesitation Ema put an arm around me, shifting it to get a better, more secure grip, before flinging an elongated hand up four floors. Suddenly we were going up, my partner kicking off the railings as we rose higher. Within seconds we were six floors up, then eight, then twelve. Both of us rolled over the railing, making a beeline for the nearest door. I kicked this one open too, stepping into chaos.

This floor had a clear lab or sterile medical room vibe to it, though it looked anything but sterile at this point. Burning papers fluttered around, fires burned in a few corners and several walls were blown out. I could see a few unmoving bodies on the ground, cooling pools of blood under them.

Further into the floor, several soldiers, dressed in a uniform that I didn't recognize, all in full combat gear, turned to look at me. One of them pointed and shouted something that sounded like Russian.

“Открытый огонь!”

My danger sense flared softly for a moment before the small hallway the door opened into was suddenly full of bullets, dozens of them pinging off my armor in seconds. Instinctually I pulled my arm up to cover my face, but after a moment I realized that even as I could feel the impact of bullets against my armor, they felt like sturdy, rough pokes. Even when they hit the gaps of my deployable plating to flatten against my under armor, they were noticeable and forceful, but ultimately useless. I could feel myself getting pushed back slightly by the kinetic energy but they weren't even leaving a scratch. I couldn't help but smirk as my danger sense slowly faded, even as more bullets impacted against me.

“Less gloating, more shooting!” Ema said, calling me out despite being unable to see my face. She was already letting an arrow fly down the hall.

I jolted into action, pulling out my revolvers and firing down the hallway as I stepped forward, two soldiers dropping immediately. The line of soldiers faltered for a moment before the same soldier shouted something in again.

“Держи их! Зимнему солдату нужно время, чтобы уйти с посылкой!”

The shouting soldier turned to run in the other direction while the other soldiers spread out, looking for cover.

“Fuck that!” I said, holstering one of my revolvers and switching the other to my shotgun, cranking it up to the second level before walking forward to catch up to the leaving soldier.

As I moved I kept my shotgun at my hip and fired as I went, the powerful weapon punching through the improvised cover and slamming into the soldiers behind, blowing through their armor as well. Ema seemed content to conserve her ammo and cover me, only shooting an arrow once to freeze a grenade in a soldier's hand, the hunk of ice she made exploding and scattering shrapnel through the office, though hardly any of it reached us. I had whirled around as my danger sense spiked for a moment, only for it to drop off as Ema covered me easily.

As we turned a corner we saw even more soldiers, though these ones were facing away from us and trading fire with Shield agents. I shifted my shotgun back to my revolver, sliding it in my holster before charging the unsuspecting soldiers. I grabbed the first one from behind, latching onto his uniform and hurling him sideways into one of his compatriots, before stepping into a kick that sent a third soldier flying, cracking a wall and slamming back to the ground. By now they knew I was there, quickly turning their guns on Ema and I, opening fire immediately. Bullets pinged and ricocheted off of us as we tore through the five remaining soldiers, finally reaching the one in charge. He worked his shotgun as fast as he could, the fired slugs deforming against my helmet and chest, rocking me back slightly before I recovered, grabbed his gun and bent it in half. I grabbed him and threw him up and over some desks, landing and rolling among the Shield agents, who immediately restrained him.

Agent Coulson stood out of cover, walking closer, his head on a swivel and his pistol pointed at the ground.

"We were making a final push to Captain Rogers, but the soldiers were holding us off." He explained unprompted. "They knocked out the elevators after they came down from the top floor."

"Which room is he in?" I asked, turning back the way I came

"Twelve zero nine!" Coulson called out as I ran back, skidding to a stop by the right door, shoulder checking it into splintered pieces.

The room, which seemed to have been some sort of monitored hospital suite, was in complete disarray, the furthest wall blown open to the elements. I could see the opposite building through the massive hole and darkness, wind buffeting Ema and I as we stepped closer. I could see two long black wires, both anchored to the floor and hung down and out. With a click on my helmet I looked over the edge, down in the street below, my vision shifting green as I zoomed in. I could make out the unconscious form of Steve Rogers being put into an armored vehicle of some sort. Resetting my vision I looked back just in time to see Peggy, Sharon, Coulson and Natasha pile into the room.

"They have Steve, I'm going after them." I said, looking back at the group. "Anyone coming with us?"

"I-" Peggy started, only to get shut down by Natasha.

“Mrs. Carter it’s been too long since you’ve been an active agent.” Natasha said bluntly, stepping closer to me. “Let us get him back, you need to stay safe for him.”

Peggy reluctantly nodded, before pulling off my amulet and tossing it to me. I caught it easily and put it on quickly before reaching out to Natasha. She wrapped her arms around me, and I put my arm around her before Ema wrapped us both in a hug, her arms extending and merging around us. When we were secure Ema’s body shifted and wrapped around the wires as well. She nodded to me, and without another word we jumped.

We were free falling for the first eight floors, slowing harshly after that. By the time our feet hit the ground the armored truck had already pulled away and was barreling down the road. I flicked out a card and the super truck was suddenly there.

“Ema! Take the wheel!” I said as I easily jumped in the bed of the truck, one hand gripping the corner of the roof tight enough to dent it into a decent handhold.

Ema and Natasha climbed in and the truck leapt forward. With my free hand I reached down and pushed the back window open, letting me hear a string of harsh Russian coming from the red headed super spy as the truck accelerated at a ridiculous pace to catch up to the armored vehicle. While the large tank-like vehicle smashed and shoved cars out of the way, Ema nimbly dodged and weaved between them, gaining on them slowly. Luckily the late night roads were mostly empty. As we got closer a hatch opened on top of the fleeing vehicle, a light machine gun pushing out and swinging around.

I ducked down behind the cab of the truck as my danger sense warned me, leaning in so I could hear inside the truck, just in time to hear and see Black Widow curse and duck under the front dash as the large gun opened fire. Bullets sparked and thumped against the hood, windshield and front tire wells, but nothing penetrated. Realizing that no bullets were punching through the car Natasha slowly sat back up straight, watching with wide eyes as bullets pancaked against what looked like simple glass.

“Just be glad it’s not a fifty cal, that might have made it through.” I shouted with a smirk. “If they had a few days.”

Eventually the soldier manning the turret stopped firing, either to check the damage or to fix a jam, I couldn’t see. In a smooth motion I stood, pulled out my right side revolver and shot once, the bullet slamming into the mounted gun’s housing. The second shot caught the soldier in the chest, the now dead man sliding back down into the vehicle. I hit the gun with a few more rounds just to make sure it was totally out of commission before crouching back down.

“Any suggestions Natasha?” I asked, shouting to be heard over the wind.

We had traveled a surprising distance by now, and I could hear the sound of distant sirens. We needed to finish this quickly before more people got hurt, including the police who had no idea what they were getting into.

“You got anything bigger in that deck of surprises?” She called back.

“Yeah, but I’m worried that I might hit Steve!” I responded.

Before we could continue the back door of the armored vehicle popped open and a man leaned out. He cut an imposing silhouette with the internal light behind him, and the grenade launcher he was carrying. My danger sense spiked harder than it ever had before as there was a muffled thump. Thanks to my danger sense warning I had just enough time to duck down and hold on before an explosion engulfed the truck, rattling and shaking it roughly. We blasted through though, the dark smoke engulfing us before we pushed out the other side.

After we cleared the smoke I stood and aimed my revolver, about to fire when I saw who it was. A black face mask, black tactical gear and a metallic arm, marked by a red star.

The Winter Soldier.

I cursed and holstered my pistol, holding on tight again as he raised and fired his grenade launcher again. The truck shook and flagged for a moment before it revved and caught back up.

“Ema! Floor it!”

“What! No, just shoot him!” Natasha shouted back but Ema nodded, flooring it.

The truck surged again, though the dented hood poured out smoke as she did. The truck made it though, quickly closing the gap. I climbed to the roof, jumped over the floodlights and ran down the hood, jumping just as the super truck engine died. I was flying through the air, my strength enhanced jump leaving boot imprints on the strengthened hood of the truck. The Winter Soldier, who had a solid chance of being Bucky Barnes, watched as I managed to slam down on the roof of the armored vehicle. I slid and tumbled forward but managed to catch the side of the hatch, pulling myself back up and standing. With a little jump I hopped into the hatch, landing inside the large interior. Before my feet even touched the floor my danger sense slammed into me. I tried to move, only to turn just in time to catch a metallic fist to my jaw, knocking me back into the barrier between the drivers and the back area.

The metallic fist flashed forward again, though this time I managed to move my head just enough for it to slam into the barrier, putting a fist shaped dent into the metal an inch deep. I quickly shoved him back, kicking his chest, sending him stumbling backwards before he straightened and launched himself back at me. As we fought I caught a glimpse of Steve, securely strapped down to a row of modified seats.

The Winter Soldier came at me with a flurry of blows, overwhelming me and hammering against my armor, even with my danger sense giving me small clues to what he was going to do. His normal fist knocked into me through my weak spots while his metal fist slammed and rattled my bones more than a few times. After a few moments of being forced onto my back foot the vehicle swerved and turned, causing the potentially brainwashed soldier to stumble for just a moment.

Taking advantage I flicked out the lightning gun, pushed it into my hand and I stepped forward, lashing out with a kick that shoved him back before lunging forward, slamming the lightning gun against his stomach and pulling the trigger, sending who knows how much electricity into his body. The soldier convulsed and shuddered, tried to fight it for a moment before going limp, collapsing to the ground. With a groan, I pulled out my revolver, scaled it up to twice the firepower and pointed it down, dumping five rounds into and through the soldier's arm.

When I was done depriving him of his strongest weapon I hefted his still slightly twitching body into one of the seats, strapping him in quickly before sitting beside him, making sure I was on his left side, the side of his now useless arm. I strapped in quickly as well before turning my revolver to the front and opening fire, hammering the metal barrier with bullets. The streaks of orange energy slammed into the barrier and stopped, and I couldn't help but frown. I clicked the power setting up again and repeated the barrage, this time smirking as it penetrated the thick metal armor. I peppered the barrier, sweeping wide to guarantee that I would hit everyone in the front seat.

There were two muffled shouts and then silence as the vehicle swerved one way before cutting sharply in the other. The sudden shift caused the armored vehicle to swerve even harder before flipping. My danger sense screamed and I found myself very grateful to have strapped in as up became down, then back up, then back down, back up and down before the vehicle settled on its top. I could feel myself swinging around, even my enhanced strength unable to fight the whipping and inertia of the flips. I could feel my head smash into the side of the vehicle at least twice, my thoughts rattled and disconnected for a moment.

I coughed as the vehicle finally settled and groaned under its now poorly distributed weight. With a grunt I pulled out my knife, scrolled to the second level and cut my straps, collapsing to the once ceiling of the armored vehicle. I cursed under my breath as I made my way to Steve, doing my best to gently help him to the ground. I checked him over for any injuries, but found nothing. I laid him outside, making sure to put him down somewhere free of glass.

I dropped down beside him, leaning against a telephone pole, letting out a deep sigh as I could feel my head slowly clearing, my amulet working its way through my bruised body and concussed brain. I only had to wait a minute or so before the first of many black Shield SUV's to

pull up, carrying Ema, Natasha Peggy and Coulson. Ema rushed to my side to scan me, while Peggy kneeled beside Steve. I let out a long sigh, closed my eyes and lay my head back against the telephone poll.