

“Are you ready?” Ema asked, both of us approaching the front entrance.

“Yeah, let's do it,” I said, taking a deep breath and pushing the double doors open.

I stepped into the Triskelion for the first time in four months, getting plenty of looks as my armor slowly receded to its undeployed form, the bands of metal and armor plating receding into the remaining chest plate. Ema followed behind me, her own “armor” shifting into a more compact state. My leather jacket extended onto my body when my armor was done shrinking, all of it done automatically, the initial transformation triggered by a thought.

I had spent a lot of time refining my equipment over the last few months.

“And what if they aren't interested?” Ema asked, holding the door open.

“Then we give them to Stark to sell. And if that doesn't work then I'll just do it myself,” I answered with a shrug.

Working on and finishing the Caduceus Droid had made me realize the potency of designing and making my own objects to then use in my conceptual crafting. Since then I had been in a flurry of building, expanding and crafting that resulted in quite a few powerful developments. Two of which were following behind Ema and I, hovering a foot and a half off the ground.

A simple trunk, about two feet wide, two feet tall and three feet long sat attached to a hovering dolly, trailing behind us by about six feet as we made our way into the building. Made from a custom hovercraft design, a few drones and a couple of dolly's, the floating cart could carry up to four tons, automatically followed whoever was carrying its key, and could navigate simple obstacles on its own. It also self adjusted its size depending on what you stacked on it.

It was hard to figure out what was getting more stares. Yes I could have carried the trunk in the Deck, but Ema pointed out it was important to point out that I hadn't been sitting back and resting on my laurels.

I stopped a few dozen feet into the entrance, looking around for a moment before spotting Clint, who was already making his way to me. Ema and I met him half way, greeting him with a smile.

“Hey Clint. It's been a while,” I said, reaching out and shaking his hand, the agent shaking Ema's hand after mine

“It has, but by the looks of it you've been busy,” Clint said with a smirk. before pointing to the trunk. “What is this? Fury said you were coming to make good on an agreement? Something to do with the squad you enhanced?”

“Yeah, I promised to resolve a problem with the enhanced squad. It took a bit for me to get the design just right,” I explained, looking around as he led us back to the elevator. I already recognized the path to the underground training facility.

I had promised to enhance the durability of the squad I equipped way back when Shield was still dealing with Hydra. I had figured out the basic formula almost immediately, but felt like there was major room for improvement. When I had eventually gotten around to figuring it out I had redone my own tattoo with the new inks. I was now bulletproof to all pistol caliber bullets and a significant portion of rifle calibers. However, my first attempts of the improved formula were clumsy and resulted in loss of skin sensitivity.

“That's good. They were pretty key in taking down a few of the larger Hydra bases. What was the issue?”

“Their increased strength didn't protect them from hurting themselves,” I explained with a shrug, watching the elevator door open. “They could break their own bones if they hit things too hard or leveraged their strength the wrong way.”

“And you can just fix that? Make them tougher?”

“Yup,” I responded, popping the P.

We stepped into the semi familiar training facility, spotting the same eight soldiers as before, all of them at attention. Once again Fury was there, explaining what was going on. Ignoring the sense of déjà vu I stepped into the large open area.

“Fury!” I called out, waving to the serious man as he turned. “I need a table, two chairs and a privacy screen!”

Fifteen minutes later Ema was tattooing the first soldier behind a privacy screen while I stood by my floating trunk on the other side of the training area. I cracked open the trunk and pulled out a piece of jewelry, one of a few hundred identical pieces inside the trunk.

It was a palm cuff, a rather simple looking and adjustable piece that wrapped around the palm, and had a ring and chain system to hold it in place. On the palm was a red crystal, a mix of jasper, garnet and quartz. I demonstrated putting it on before removing it and tossing it to Clint.

“That is a healer's cuff.” I explained. “Instead of healing yourself like my amulets do, this allows you to heal others.”

“You mean like your healing flashlights?” Clint asked, looking over the jewelry before passing it to Fury. “What's the deal with using flashlights by the way?”

“Convenience,” I answered simply, noting that Clint hadn’t been told how my power works. “And yes, the only difference is that I will give these to anyone, without binding them.”

Both Clint and Fury looked shocked for a moment before sharing a look.

“What’s the catch?” Fury asked suspiciously.

“There are several.” I said with a smile. “The first is that if they are stolen in any way shape or form the crystal shatters, the metal tarnishes and the whole thing becomes completely inert.”

I pushed a cuff from a card and tossed it to Clint, who caught it deftly. Sure enough the golden metal was tarnished, and a chunk of the crystal fell from its setting.

“I left this on a park bench in New York. It took a surprisingly long amount of time for someone to take it.”

“Alright, what else?”

“It will not work if the wearer is being threatened or being bribed. It can’t be used to heal yourself and it won’t work on or for evil people.”

Both Fury and Clint looked at me funny, before Fury shook his head.

“And how does it decide who is Evil?” He asked. “What are the qualifiers?”

“A lot of ethics, psychology and plenty of other research.” I answered. “It will stabilize the highest level of evil it recognizes. Rapists, murderers, child molesters. People like that will be healed just to the point that they won’t immediately die. After that it depends on the severity and reasoning behind your crime. Steal an old lady’s retirement fund? It will close your wounds but you will still have a long healing process after that. Steal to feed your children? It might leave you with some soreness after it heals a broken bone. Kill in true unavoidable self defense? Not even a scar. It takes into account ignorance, brainwashing through deliberate means or by parental pressures. It even takes into account real guilt and true attempts to be better, as well as culpability due to neurodivergence and the general stupidity of youth.”

“How... How did you do that?” Fury asked, before waving any response away. “You know what, I don’t want to know. Why are you showing this to me?”

“Because I want Shield, with its global connections, to distribute them all over the world.” I explained. “Take your time, do what tests you have to do, give out free samples if you want, but help me distribute them to every corner of the world. Hell you could even take the credit for making them.”

“And what does Shield get in return for doing this?” He asked with a tired sounding voice.

“Besides the credit?” I asked. “I’ll give you as many as you want for Shield’s personal use. But keep in mind that breaking a contract is a form of stealing.”

“So the second we take them and decide to not distribute them they become useless.” Fury said, shaking his head. “I will talk to the Security Council, this... this is beyond my pay grade.”

“Well make sure they know this isn't the only thing I plan on doing this with,” I explained. “I have quite a few projects that I plan on making available to the general public.”

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It wasn't much long after Fury's promise to kick my idea up the chain that Ema finished tattooing the eight Shield soldiers. They kept the tattoos simple, mostly singular shapes filled in with the black ink. When everything was packed up Ema and I headed back up to the entrance, leaving the trunk of healers palm cuffs with Fury. Clint was leading us, despite the fact that we could see the exit from the elevator. When I stepped out I noticed Natasha was standing by the doors.

“Maker, Ema, nice to see you both again.” She said with a smile, nodding to Clint.

Once Shield had finally cleaned up the last vestiges of Hydra, Natasha had given me a call, just as she said she would. We had a short meeting and, surprisingly, she had explained her issue openly. Apparently when she was younger, going through the hell that was the Red Room, they removed her ability to have children, something that haunted her. I had made her two offers. One, she could put on my most powerful healing amulet, my own personal amulet that was a ten times stacked version of what had de-aged Peggy, or she could wait a few weeks for me to do some research, fiddle with a few ideas to try and see if I could come up with something with less questions about what it would do.

It had taken me a few days to wrap my head around the problem itself. I had a general understanding of how women were born with every egg they would have in their life, and that removing them would mean that they wouldn't ever have their own children. But if I could regenerate an entire arm, what would that do to a woman's missing ovaries? Would they be her own eggs? Or some sort of weird magic created eggs?”

With no answers in science I decided to go meta with my solution. I gathered everything I could find for fertility, from statues of various goddesses, to wiccan charms and everything in between. However, I quickly ran into an issue. Almost everything I found had double meanings. Very few goddesses were of just fertility, which meant hundreds of different concepts, some of them stacking and some of them conflicting.

In the end I applied my newest lesson, that making my own foundations could really improve the effectiveness and conceptual simplicity of an object. Over the span of three days I carved and dedicated a dozen statues of the kindest, fairest and generous fertility goddesses I could find in my research, making offerings to each one, all with the prayer to miraculously help me heal Natasha Romanoff's infertility. I combined them all together and added them to a quintuple stacked healing amulet. The result was a healing amulet that had a particular angle towards female healing, and had a certain positive concept that really seemed to indicate that using it wouldn't result in anything unfortunate or strange. Finishing it was the final thing I finished before I was ready to return to the Triskelion.

"It's good to see you, Natasha," I responded. "Are you ready?"

"I'm all set," She answered, looking nervously at Clint, who's eyes went wide.

"Wait... He is...?" He started to ask, and upon seeing the confirmation in Natasha's eyes, turned to me. "You think you can...? Jesus Christ Maker, I hope you can."

"I think I have a solution," I said with a shrug. "It's up to Natasha if she takes it."

Clint nodded, seemingly doing his best to not seem too excited at the chance. He gave Natasha a hug and asked her something under his breath, something about telling someone. Natasha responded that she would tell them herself if it worked. When they separated Clint gave me a nod before heading back into the crowd, heading to another elevator before disappearing inside.

"Alright. Take this," I said, pushing out a basic speed wing pack, one that had been improved to be easier to wear. "We are going to be flying some of the way."

Natasha's eyes went wide as she took the pack, looking between me and it for a moment before putting on the simple straps. I motioned to a button on one of the straps.

"Push that when it feels snug."

Natasha looked down, noticed the button and pressed it. The straps shifted, merged and changed, locking the wing pack on her completely.

"C'mon, let's get outside and I'll give you the short version of how they work."

Ema and I led her outside, walking out of the parking lot until we could see the sky, all the while assuring her that they were instinctual and easy to use. After a few more minutes Ema and I pushed out our wings and took to the air, the redhead super spy following just behind us. We flew slowly across the city before landing on the outskirts. I think we would have spent more time flying but I could feel Natasha's anxiety and eagerness to get this done with.

“So where to next?”

“Now we head to the workshop,” I said, holding out my hand, one to Natasha and the other to Ema, the latter immediately taking it.

“Where is it?” She asked, looking around before noticing my hand and looking at it for a moment before looking back at me with a raised eyebrow.

“Oh relax, I promise I won't give you cooties,” I said, rolling my eyes. “You need to hold my hand, and I'll take you.”

Natasha's skeptical look relented after a long moment, finally taking my hand in a firm grip.

“Alright. I want to warn you. It's kind of intense for a moment but you're safe and it's just part of the process,” I warned her. “Try not to instinctually attack me like Steve did.”

“Wait, Steve attacked you, why-”

“Travel Alpha Base.”

With a rush of bifrost energy and the intense feeling of traveling, all three of us were standing in a massive warehouse. Easily thirty thousand square feet, it was dotted with large metal pillars anchored to a flattened but natural light gray stone floor. The ceiling was a light blue while the walls depicted a pretty impressive mural of the four seasons, though fall and spring walls weren't done yet. Fall in particular was only half done, while spring was still just an outline. A floating bench, laden with painting supplies, hovered in front of the fall wall.

A lot of the warehouse was still empty, about a quarter of it taken up by various machines and workstations. In one area were a dozen ten stacked UCM's along with five metal working machines, flanked by two cargo container sized UCM's that were much slower, but could process and copy much larger things. My storage shed, once a simple purchase from Walmart was now a metallic color, enhanced by vibranium and Asgardian alloy, sat in one corner by my workshop area.

“Maker, I'm going to work on fall a bit more while you talk to Natasha,” Ema said, giving the red head a smile. “This is private and I don't need to hear it.”

“Sure Ema, I'll shout if I need anything.”

My companion nodded and headed to the furthest wall from the landing pad, easily sitting on her floating workstation. She manipulated a set of controls and the bench floated another fifteen feet off of the ground before she picked up a brush and started painting.

“Ema painted all of this?” Natasha asked, turning to look at the summer wall, which was the closest to us.

“Yeah, she picked up painting as a hobby just before this place was finished,” I explained with a smile. “It gives her something to do when I’m crafting. Plus she doesn’t sleep so she has a lot of free time.”

“She... doesn’t sleep?” Natasha asked, following me as I made my way to a sitting area, two comfortable couches and a few chairs around a singular table.

“Yeah, but that’s kind of her thing to explain, if she feels like it,” I said with a shrug, sitting down in one of the chairs.

I waited for Natasha to sit down on the couch, leaning forward to the edge of my seat. I started to explain the process I went through to make the amulet, pushing it out onto the table. It took a bit to explain to her about the more meta things I could get concepts from. When I was done I leaned back, letting Natasha think for a moment.

“And you’re sure it won’t hurt me?” She asked, looking down at the amulet.

“Absolutely sure,” I said with a nod. “You can keep an eye on your progress using one of my medical scanners. If something goes wrong we can either remove the amulet immediately, or we can continue the process and fix any problem after, that is up to you. If the eggs that it produces inside your ovaries are somehow different then what your natural eggs should have been then the scanner will let us know. I’ve already tested its ability to detect both organs and body parts that have been regrown, as well as the female reproductive organs. You can thank Pepper Potts for volunteering to be scanned for the latter and Bucky Barnes for the former.”

As Natasha was thinking I stood, pushed out my cabinet of tricks and pulled out a medical scanner, handing it to Natasha.

“Just point it anywhere on your body. The selector wheel changes between singular scans and a constantly updated feed.”

Natasha nodded and pointed the scanner at her hand, scanning herself and going through the results before finally nodding.

“Alright. Let’s give it a shot.”

I nodded and stood, taking the amulet and putting it around her neck as she held the scanner against her hand. I fought my own curiosity and sat back down, not wanting to invade her privacy. As the minutes ticked by she got more and more emotional, finally letting a few

tears trailed down her face. After ten minutes the powerful healing amulet was done, and she pulled it off, laying it on the table.

“Thank you Maker,” She said, wiping her tears. “Thank you from the bottom of my heart. This... this is something I never thought would happen. It's all me, they... I can have kids and they will be mine.”