

超级英雄 双语故事

MARVEL



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漫威
超级英雄
双语故事

美国漫威公司 著
王烁静 译

MARVEL

AVENGERS
MS. MARVEL'S FISTS OF FURY

复仇者联盟

惊奇队长之重拳出击

华东理工大学出版社

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES



Ms. Marvel



Nakia



Mr. Khan



Thor



A pet-shop owner



A waitress



Mjolnir



A ridiculously hard
biology test



Bruno



Chicken-boy



A shiny red button



The Inventor



Hawkeye



A cell phone



A bunch of Inhuman teenagers



And a lot of birds. So many birds.

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AVENGERS



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The Story of Ms. Marvel

Until recently, Jersey City's Kamala Khan didn't think she was special. But one night not too long ago, everything changed. Kamala was caught in a mysterious mist, and when she recovered, she realized that her Inhuman powers were suddenly activated. Kamala went from being an ordinary high school student to being Ms. Marvel—a Super Hero with the power to stretch, morph, and heal.

Kamala Khan was determined to keep living her life as an ordinary girl—going to school, going to her mosque, and writing Avengers fanfic on the Internet. So she hid her Super Hero identity from everyone in her life. But in secret, Kamala began to fight crime as Ms. Marvel. Eventually her friend Bruno found out, and has been in on the secret ever since.

As Ms. Marvel, Kamala was able to fight Super Villains and other supernatural criminals in Jersey City. She used her new powers to become large enough to punch out giant robots, and small enough to climb inside their guts. Basically, she fought a lot of giant robots. But her powers also allowed her to change her shape and to heal faster than ordinary people.

The healing powers came in handy, because Kamala wasn't the type of hero to stand back and stay safe when things got dangerous. She fought hard, and she got hurt sometimes. But being a hero meant a lot to Kamala—she was determined to help people. So she kept practicing, and kept fighting, and eventually became an unstoppable force for good. Kamala Khan finally became Ms. Marvel.



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Chapter 1

“Don't be late, don't be late, don't be late,” Kamala Khan chanted under her breath.

She walked as fast as she could without actually running. Kamala was on her way to school, and she already had three tardies on her record for the month.

“Stupid criminals, always making me late for school,” Kamala muttered. She had her hands full with her schoolwork and her family. Balancing her regular life with her life as the Super Hero Ms. Marvel was always hard. Sometimes it was more than Kamala could handle. But not today. Today was totally under control.

“So far so good,” Kamala said, pausing at a streetlight and checking the time on her phone. “Seven fifty-one. I'm definitely, for sure going to get to school on time. I'm not stopping for anything short of an actual Super Villain.”

“RRRRRRRIIINNNNNGGG!!!” The quiet morning air was shattered by a loud alarm bell.

“Help!” someone yelled. “My store is being robbed!”

There was a pause, then the person added: “By a Super Villain!”

With a weary sigh, Kamala ducked into an alley. She hid behind a dumpster and pulled off her regular clothes, revealing her Ms. Marvel costume.

“Let's do this,” Ms. Marvel said. That Super Villain was going to regret maybe-probably making her late to school.

“RRRRRRRIIIIIINNNNN—CRUNCH!” Ms. Marvel smashed the alarm bell with her embiggened fist. “I'll replace that,” she told the shop owner sheepishly. “It was just making it really hard for me to concentrate.”

Then Ms. Marvel stretched one arm long until she could grab the criminal by the scruff of the neck.

The person she pulled out of the store was wearing a hoodie and a...

beak?

“Squawk!” she said. “Squawk, squawk!”

“I wouldn't exactly call her a Super Villain,” Ms. Marvel said to the shop owner. “Super Villains don't usually wear Halloween masks.”

“Hey!” the bird-girl said, offended. Her eyes lit up and she zapped laser beams at Ms. Marvel, but Ms. Marvel quickly slapped a hand over the girl's eyes.

“Ow!” the girl yelped as she accidentally shot lasers at the insides of her own eyelids.

“Put a tight blindfold on her, and you should be fine,” Ms. Marvel told the police, who were arriving on the scene. She handed the bird-girl over to them and hurried back to the alleyway to get her regular clothes back on.

“Don't be late, don't be late, don't be late,” Kamala muttered as she jogged toward her school. “Ammi and Abu would be so mad if they knew where I was!”



Kamala hated disappointing her parents. The thought of having to explain another tardy on her report card was enough to make Kamala go from a jog to a sprint.

She ran into the classroom as the bell was ringing and slid into her seat just in time!



Later that day, she saw her friend Bruno at lunch.

“You look kind of frazzled. Everything okay?” Bruno said.

“Yeah, I just had a weird morning,” Kamala said. She lowered her voice. Bruno knew about Ms. Marvel, but nobody else at school did. “I foiled a robbery.”

“Cool!” Bruno said. “A bank? A hotel? A jewelry store?”

“No,” Kamala said. “A pet store. And the girl who was robbing it squawked at me.”

“Squawked?” Bruno said.

“And that's not the weirdest part,” Kamala said. “She was wearing a bird mask.”

“You're right,” Bruno said. “That is weird. Oh—here comes Nakia!”

Nakia did not know about Ms. Marvel, so Kamala and Bruno changed the subject.

“Have you started studying for that big Biology test on Thursday?” Kamala asked Nakia.

“Yeah,” Nakia said, “all week. But I need to study more. I can't believe half our grade is based on this one test!”

“I haven't even started studying for it,” Kamala admitted. “I'm kind of freaking out.”

Nakia stared at her. “You haven't even started?” she said, shocked. “But it's half our grade! What would your parents—?”

“I know,” Kamala said, glaring at her friend. Nakia cocked her head. “You've been kind of cranky lately,” she said. “Is everything okay?”

Bruno nodded. “I've noticed that, too,” he said. “I know you've been really... busy.” He gave Kamala a knowing look.

“I'm fine,” Kamala said. The whole conversation was stressing her out, and she wanted it to be over. So she smiled brightly. “See? Fine. Hey, have you guys been playing *Pork-Bun Go*?”

“Oh my gosh, I finally captured a wild spinach dumpling!” Bruno said, pulling up the game's app on his phone.

Nakia got out her phone. “I don't have any spinach dumplings. But I have eleven shrimp shumais. Want to trade?”



“No way,” Bruno said. “But you can have one of my pea shoots.”

Kamala watched her friends with a smile firmly fixed on her face. But inside, it was all starting to get to her.

Sometimes Kamala thought she just wasn't cut out for Super Hero-ing.



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Chapter 2

The rest of the day passed by in a blur. Kamala couldn't stop thinking about the big Biology test.

Nakia's been studying for a week already. Kamala absentmindedly passed the basketball to someone on the other team in gym class.

“Hey!” one of Kamala's teammates yelled, but Kamala barely heard him. She was too wrapped up in her worries. *I should have been studying, too. But when? I've been out late fighting crime every night for the last two weeks.*

“You're the worst, Khan,” her teammate told Kamala.

Kamala ignored him, but the boy continued, still annoyed.

“You're a total—OOMPH!”

He was cut off by the basketball bouncing off his head.

Kamala rolled her eyes. *I have to get a grip. There are just too many things to keep track of!*

As Kamala shrugged on her jacket at the end of the school day, she made a decision. There would be no crime-fighting tonight. Nothing was going to distract her from studying.

Kamala texted Nakia as she walked home from school.

“Pardon me,” a deep voice boomed. Kamala looked up. The largest homeless person she had ever seen was standing in front of her. His tattered hat hid his hair and his long, stained coat hid the rest of him, but there was still something kind of familiar about him.

“Sorry. I don't have any change.” She kept walking. The man walked with her.

“I do not seek money,” he said in that booming voice. “I seek you. You must come with me, Ms. Marvel.”

Kamala stopped short. He knew who she was, and he was obviously looking for trouble. This wasn't good.

“I must, huh?” Kamala said, her hands on her hips, glaring up at the guy.

Whoever this guy was, he could get lost. Kamala was going to study tonight, not get into a fight with yet another weirdo.

“Do you not wish to protect yourself?” the man asked.

Was he threatening her? He was! How dare he? All the stresses of the day suddenly piled up on her.

It just wasn't fair.

“Okay,” Kamala said furiously. “That's it. Let's go.” This guy was going to get it.

“Excellent,” the man said cheerfully. “I shall lead the way!” He started walking away, clearly expecting her to follow him.

“No, I shall,” Kamala said, and walked into an empty alley. She didn't want people to see ordinary teenager Kamala Khan kicking this giant guy's butt. But she didn't have time to change out of her normal clothes. Luckily, the alley was deserted.

“What a fine alleyway,” the man remarked pleasantly as he followed her, looking around. “But I fail to—OOMPH!” He grunted in surprise as Kamala punched him in the stomach.

Kamala's knuckles throbbed painfully. Hitting this guy was like punching a brick wall.

“Okay,” Kamala said, trying to shake out her hand without looking like a big dork. Luckily, her accelerated healing meant that her hand would be fine in no time.

Kamala kicked and punched, using every bit of training she had. She embiggened to the size of a car. She shrank down to the size of a cat. She was a flurry of motion, her fists flying. But soon she started to feel pretty foolish, because the big guy didn't seem to feel her blows at all. In fact, he wasn't even fighting back.

He was just standing there, saying things like “Wait!” and “Perhaps I could have been clearer.”



“You were plenty clear when you threatened me!” Kamala snapped, doing her best to give the guy a black eye. But he ducked under her fist, and she knocked off his hat instead. Kamala grabbed him by the front of his coat to swing him around, but the threadbare fabric tore right down the back seam. The man's hat and coat hit the ground.

Kamala gasped and stepped back. Standing in front of her, was The Mighty Thor!

It was really Thor. Not a villain. But then why had he threatened her?

Thinking back on what he actually said, Kamala realized suddenly that he had been warning her.



This is the worst, she thought. I just tried to beat up Thor. I just tried to beat up an Avenger!

“Forgive me if I was unclear,” Thor said. “Perhaps I should introduce myself.”

“I know who you are. I have, like, four action figures of you in my room,” Kamala blurted out.

Way to go, Kamala. Real cool.

She made a fist and tapped it against her forehead. A little too hard. Then she gave an awkward smile. “Ah-ha-ha. I mean... um. Never mind.”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 3

“I call this one Tiny Thor,” Kamala said, making the little action figure do a funny dance. She picked up another one. “And this is Fashion Thor. I stole the butterfly hair clips from Nakia when we were, like, five years old.”



“Very fierce,” Thor said seriously. He picked up another action figure of himself and examined it carefully. Kamala shook her head. Thor the Avenger was sitting on her bedroom floor, rummaging through a bin of old toys with her, asking her about her collection of... well, him. It was one of the weirdest things that had happened to her since she became a Super Hero. And that was really saying something.



“That’s Peg Leg Thor,” Kamala said. “He lost his leg, so I had to replace it with a clothespin.”

“How careless of him,” Thor said, frowning down at the one-legged action figure disapprovingly. Kamala leaped to his defense. “Not careless—brave!” she said. “He lost it in battle! It was a valiant struggle. Against a *Tyrannosaurus rex*.”

She dug the plastic T. rex out of the bin of toys. “See?” Kamala said, showing Thor. “A formidable opponent.”

“With an honorable wound to match,” Thor said, satisfied. “Kamala, I apologize for approaching you in disguise. I was trying to ‘keep a low profile,’ as Hawkeye puts it.”

“Don’t worry about it,” Kamala said. “It’s not your fault—I’m just super on edge lately. I’ve got a lot on my plate. Sorry I overreacted.”

“You are forgiven,” Thor said.

She was feeling a little starstruck. She had even more action figures of Hawkeye than of Thor. But she didn’t want to hurt Thor’s feelings, so she didn’t tell him that.

“I have come to your city to investigate a string of pet-store robberies that have been committed over the last several months,” Thor said.

“Yikes,” Kamala said. “That's pretty weird. What are they stealing? Tell me it isn't puppies.”

“Birds,” Thor said, “and many of them.”

“Huh,” Kamala said. “You know, the girl who was trying to rob that pet store this morning was wearing some kind of dumb bird mask. And she was making bird noises, too.”

“Yes,” Thor said. “The intelligence that we have received at Avengers Headquarters has been...”

“Disturbing?” Kamala suggested.

“Silly,” Thor finished.

Kamala nodded in agreement.

“Regardless,” Thor continued, “I have been sent to investigate. I was not planning to include you in the investigation, even though Jersey City is your ‘turf,’ as Hawkeye puts it. I did not want to endanger you, because you are so young.”



“I can handle myself!” Kamala protested.

“Yes,” Thor said, “I learned that today. In any case, I overheard several of these teenage bird-people discussing their plan to target you, Ms. Marvel. And I realized I must warn you.”

“So what's next?” Kamala asked, trying to act cool—like hearing Thor himself call her by her Super Hero name wasn't the best thing that had ever happened to her.

“Obviously you must stay safely indoors while I conduct my investigation,” Thor said.

Kamala frowned. “Normally I try to at least pretend to obey authority figures. You know, people like my imam. Or ancient alien Super Heroes like you.”

“Very wise,” Thor agreed.

“But come on,” Kamala continued. “This is Jersey. Hawkeye was right—this is my turf. If you don't let me team up with you, I'm going to do my own investigation anyway, and then we'll just get in each other's way. You don't want to be tripping over me every time you turn around, right?”

Thor frowned. “It would indeed be more efficient to work together,” he said reluctantly. From downstairs, Kamala heard her father's voice. “Kamala? Who are you talking to? Is there someone in your room?”

Kamala jumped. “You have to get out of here!” she told Thor. “Quick!”

“Kamala?” her father called again. “Who is in there with you?”

“Out the window!” Kamala hissed, waving her arms frantically at Thor. “I'll meet you later!”

In the hallway outside his daughter's room, Yusuf Khan paused to listen. The murmur of voices had stopped. There was a strange whoosh, and then silence again. But Yusuf was certain he'd heard another voice inside the room. He knocked on Kamala's door and opened it.

“What on earth is going on in here?” Yusuf said, looking around. But the only person in the room was his daughter. She was sitting on the floor, surrounded by plastic toys. In one hand Kamala was holding a small plastic man with a red cape. In the other, she was holding a houseplant in a clay pot.

“Oh, hi, Abu,” she said, smiling.

“I thought I heard voices,” Yusuf said, looking around in confusion.

“Nobody here but me and Thor,” Kamala said. She waved the small plastic toy, and its little red cape fluttered. “He's fighting crime with a new partner.”

Kamala turned back to her game. She waggled the toy as though it was

talking to the plant. “It is I, Thor!” Kamala said in a booming, deep voice. “Come, thou potted vegetation. Thou and I must hie unto Asgard Anon. Forsooth and gadzooks!”

Yusuf shook his head and smiled. It was nice to be reminded every now and then that Kamala was still his goofy little girl.

He shut the door behind him and went back downstairs to finish reading the newspaper.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 4

That afternoon, Kamala tried—and failed—to study for her test.

“Come on,” she told herself, squinting at her Biology textbook. “You aren't meeting Thor until tonight. You have three hours of primo study time. You can do this. You have to do this.”

She gripped her highlighter tight and started reading. But the words ran together on the page. Kamala stared blankly down at the book while her mind raced over the mystery of the pet-shop burglaries. Why were these bird-people stealing from pet shops? What were they after? And why was this happening in New Jersey? In Ms. Marvel's territory?

Come to think, why were they talking about going after Ms. Marvel in the first place?

Finally, Kamala threw down her highlighter in frustration and instead opened a web browser on her computer.

If I can't get any studying done, she thought, I might as well do something productive.

Soon, Kamala was deep in a search through local news sites, looking for any information about the pet-shop robberies.

She clicked through to an article about a break-in at the Puppy Pile, a pet store in Edison, NJ.

Break-In at the Puppy Pile

“They didn't even take any money,” said Anita Batra, the owner of the Puppy Pile. “That was the weirdest thing. The cash register was right there, but instead they went straight to the birdcages at the back of the store.”

The criminals made off with seven canaries and an African grey parrot. They are described as three teenagers wearing bird costumes.

“I'm pretty sure one of them was levitating,” said Ms. Batra. Police

are investigating the robbery and have released a statement saying that the suspects are thought to have superhuman abilities of some kind.

Meanwhile, the Puppy Pile is planning to reopen on Monday, but Ms. Batra says she still hopes the police find her missing birds soon.

That night, after bedtime, Kamala stuffed a pillow under the covers. She hoped it looked like she was still in bed, asleep. Then she changed into her “sneaking around” clothes, grabbed her backpack, and embiggened her legs until they were long enough to reach the ground outside. She stepped quietly out of her second-story window.

Kamala shrank her legs back down and looked around. Sure enough—Thor was standing in the shadows under a tree. He waved at her and Kamala trotted over, being careful to make no noise. The last thing she needed was to wake up her parents.



“Hail and well met, my sister in arms!” Thor boomed out as she reached him.

“Shush!!!” Kamala said, waving her hands desperately at him. Then she panicked for a whole different reason. Thor was an Avenger and she’d just told him to shush?

“I mean,” she said, backpedaling, “I’m sorry, but if you wouldn’t mind —”

Thor shook his head. “No apologies are needed, except from me. I admit

I am not accustomed to stealth.”

“I can tell. You wore the cape and everything,” Kamala said, relieved. “But let's get out of here, yeah?”

“Yeah!” said Thor. “I mean, yeah.”

Thor wanted to see the pet store where Kamala had foiled the latest robbery, that morning. So they went there first, and Kamala showed Thor the scene of the crime.

“I was standing out here,” she said. “The robber was in the back of the store.”

Thor peered through the window into the darkened store. “What manner of animals are kept in the back?” he asked.

“Not sure,” Kamala said. She pulled out her flashlight. “Let's see.”

The bright circle of light glinted off a row of birdcages in the back of the store.

“Birds again,” Kamala said thoughtfully. She explained to Thor about the article she'd read earlier. “So they're stealing birds, wearing bird masks, and making sounds like birds... what else do we know?”

“At least some of the suspects have supernatural abilities, perhaps all of them.”

“Superpowered bird fans stealing birds,” Kamala said. Then something occurred to her. “Hey, there's a pet store right here in Jersey City that only sells birds. It's called Betsy's Bitsy Birdies. Do you know if it's been robbed, too?”

“Not yet,” Thor said. “But perhaps...”

“Just in case...” Ms. Marvel agreed. She looked up the address on her phone, and they were off.

Kamala and Thor arrived at Betsy's Bitsy Birdies ten minutes later. The store was dark and quiet. All the windows were unbroken, and the door was closed.



Kamala and Thor climbed into a tree and hid quietly. Sure enough, not long after that, a group of teenagers wearing bird masks came sneaking up to Betsy's Bitsy Birdies.

"This is the place," one of them said.

"Jackpot!" said another. "We're going to be his favorites after we come back with all these birds."

A third birdlike teen raised her arm. She was gripping a brick. Just as she was about to smash it through the window, Kamala shot her elongated arm out and grabbed her.

"Squawk!" yelled the teen.

"Squawk! Squawk!" yelled her friends, trying to tug her out of Kamala's grip. But it was too late. Hanging from his flying hammer, Thor glided out of the tree and straight into the fray. He kicked the two teens away from their friend and got to work tying them up.

"This young woman seems to have super strength," Thor remarked. He grunted as he struggled to subdue the girl. "Luckily, my ropes are magic

bindings from the halls of Asgard.”



The girl chirped sullenly as Thor tied a firm knot around her wrists.

“Okay,” Kamala said once the three teenage burglars were all tied up. “I’ve called the cops. Now talk. Why are you stealing birds? Who do you work for?”

The three teens stared at Kamala and Thor in silence.

“Wait,” Kamala said, “are your masks made of real feathers?”

“Peep,” the superstrong girl said, glaring defiantly at Ms. Marvel.

Thor reached out and plucked a feather from her head.

“Peep!”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 5

After the police arrived, Kamala and Thor went to a twenty-four-hour shawarma place for a post-crime-fighting midnight snack. Kamala was famished, so she ate two whole sandwiches. Thor ate seven.

“Is your friend okay?” the waitress asked Kamala. “That's just... a lot of shawarma.”

Thor burped delicately into a napkin. “Delicious. I'll have another,” he said. “This time, extra sauce. And extra bread. And meat. Actually I'll just have two more sandwiches.”

“Are you sure?” the waitress asked, still looking a little worried. “Maybe you should take a breather. The shawarma isn't going anywhere.”

“It's okay,” Kamala said reassuringly. “He's from Asgard. They probably eat, like, whole turkeys for dinner there.”

“Once I ate two oxen,” Thor said proudly. “They still tell the tale to this day.”

“See?” Kamala said.

All told, Kamala wasn't in bed until 2:00 a.m. She woke up the next morning more tired than she'd been when she went to bed. The only thing that kept her awake during her classes was the memory of those three bird-people, with their weirdly elaborate masks.



What is this all about? Kamala thought for the millionth time as she stumbled down the school steps at the end of the day.

“Kamala!” a familiar voice boomed out. It was Thor, back in his homeless-person disguise.

“You know,” she said, walking up to him, “even in disguise, you’re super obvious.”

Thor frowned. “Perhaps I should have a different disguise, but I have more urgent business to share with you right now.”

Kamala followed Thor into the alleyway where they had first fought. “What’s up?”

“I have been to Asgard,” Thor said, holding up the feather he’d plucked off the bird-girl’s head the night before. “I had our best alchemists examine this feather, to determine its origin.”

Kamala looked up from where she was stashing her civilian clothing behind the dumpster. “And?” she asked.

“The girl is an Inhuman,” Thor said. “With bird DNA in her genome.”

Kamala’s eyes widened. “So those weren’t masks? You’re telling me those kids are Inhuman. Like me? Except not quite like me. I don’t have bird... stuff.”

“Avian genetic material,” Thor filled in.

“Exactly,” Kamala said. “And these kids are working for someone. Someone with a plan. But who?”

Thor furrowed his brow. “It would have to be a great mastermind,” he said. “And someone familiar with New Jersey.”

“And someone with a grudge against me,” Kamala said.

“And someone with an interest in birds,” Thor added.

Kamala gasped. “I have an idea! But it's impossible. The only person I can think of who fits this description is... No, it couldn't be!”

“Who?” Thor asked.

“The Inventor,” Kamala said, referring to the bird-man Super Villain she had defeated early in her career. “He hates me, and he's half bird himself. But he's in prison!”

Kamala pulled out her phone and entered a search in the web browser. “At least he was in prison...” she murmured as she tapped through to a recent article.



Despite concerted effort by local law enforcement there is still no sign of the Inventor, New Jersey's own birdlike Super Villain, who escaped from prison several months ago. Authorities have redoubled efforts to locate this avian menace, but several leads...

“Oops,” Kamala said.

“So we have our slime suspect,” Thor said. “The Inventor.”

“I think you mean ‘prime suspect,’” Kamala said.

“I am quite sure Hawkeye said the term was ‘slime suspect,’” Thor protested.

Kamala tried not to laugh.

Later that night, Kamala and Thor sneaked through a chain-link fence in an industrial park. “The police haven't found the Inventor but they don't know him the way I do. He loves these spooky abandoned plants.”

“You seem very confident,” Thor remarked.

“Well,” Kamala said. “I kind of do the Super Hero thing a lot. But you do, too, I guess.”

“Indeed,” Thor said. “I think perhaps you and I have more in common than I would have thought.”



“What do you mean?” Kamala asked. She pulled out Bruno's custom lock-zapper—a handy gadget he'd made just for her—and pointed it at the side door to the plant. Then a little light flashed red and the door made an alarming crunch sound.

Kamala tried the doorknob, but it wouldn't turn. She frowned. “Stupid gadget,” she muttered at it. “Be more open-y.” She zapped the lock again, and this time it crunched even more loudly. A seam of melted metal appeared around the edge of the door. The door was now firmly welded to the door frame.

“Argh!” Kamala yelled. “What is wrong with this thing?”

“I believe you hit the wrong button,” Thor said. Kamala looked at the device again. Sure enough, it had two buttons.

UNLOCK

LOCK FOREVER

Kamala buried her face in her hands. She felt so stupid—for hitting the wrong button, but also for getting so mad about it.

Thor cleared his throat delicately. “Allow me,” he said. With a gentle

tug, he wrenched the door and the door frame right out of the wall.

“As I was saying,” Thor continued, “we have much in common, you and I. For example, we both like to celebrate a hard-won battle with a mighty feast.”

Kamala nodded. “That was some good shawarma last night,” she said. “I always get super hungry after a fight.”

“As do I,” said Thor. “And then of course—ahem—our short tempers.”

Kamala was quiet. She looked around the empty plant. “Nothing here.”

As they trudged out of the plant, she shook her head thoughtfully. “You’re right about my short temper,” she said after a while. “But it’s worse than usual, these days.”

“Why?” Thor asked, swinging his hammer into the sky. Kamala grabbed his arm and they sailed into the air.

“Head due north,” she instructed him. Then, in answer to his question: “Oh, I don’t know. I guess I’ve just got a lot to deal with lately. School, friends, family, and then this Super Hero-ing thing. I worry that it’s changing me. It’s making me... mean.”

Thor was silent, but it was an understanding kind of silence. Kamala stared down at the dark industrial wastelands beneath them and sighed.

“Sometimes I don’t know how long I can keep doing this.”



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Chapter 6

Kamala and Thor investigated six abandoned plants before they finally found one with a light glimmering dimly in one of its broken windows.

“This has got to be him,” Kamala whispered, as they landed in the courtyard outside the plant. Thor nodded. He tilted his head, listening.

“I hear voices,” he said. “Many voices. If this is truly the Inventor's stronghold, he has others defending it with him.”

Kamala shook her head to clear it. It was nearly 4:00 a.m., and she was so tired. “If it's more of those birdlike Inhumans, I can probably take a few of them at once,” she said. Then she yawned so widely it felt like her jaw was going to fall off.

Thor smiled. “I do not think you could take on a stiff breeze right now,” he said gently. “He will still be here tomorrow. Let us get you home.”

“But I—” Kamala said, cutting herself off with another yawn.

“You are in no shape for a showdown,” Thor said. He put his arm around her waist and swung his hammer up. “Let's get you to bed.”

Kamala nodded sleepily as they rocketed into the sky. “Okay,” she said. “Bed.”

Kamala Khan woke up feeling like death warmed over. She squinted blearily at her alarm clock, which was bleeping at her. 7:00 a.m. Time to get up. Time to eat breakfast. Time to go to school. Time to take that big Biology test.

Kamala sat bolt upright, her heart hammering in her chest.

“The test!” she yelled. She had forgotten all about the big Biology test. She hadn't even studied—



“Nakia!” she yelled even louder. She'd blown off her study date the night before with Nakia!

“Oh my glob,” she moaned. “I'm going to fail the test, and Nakia is never going to forgive me.”

Kamala was almost afraid to go to her locker that morning. And sure enough, there was Nakia, adjusting her hijab in front of her mirror. When she saw Kamala approaching, Nakia shut her locker and turned.

“Nakia, I'm so sorry—” Kamala started.

“I texted you twenty-two times,” Nakia said.

“I know,” Kamala moaned. She'd seen the texts when she finally checked her phone, on the way to school that morning.

“Where were you?” Nakia asked.

“I...” Kamala shook her head. “I don't want to lie to you. But I can't tell you that.”

“I don't even want to see your face right now,” Nakia said. She turned and walked into the Biology classroom. Numbly, Kamala followed her.

Kamala made it halfway through the Biology test before she just gave up.

“May I go to the bathroom?” she asked, raising her hand.

“Not during a test,” Mr. Lukoff said.

“I’m done,” Kamala said. She handed the half-filled-out test to Mr. Lukoff and left the room.

Kamala managed to keep it together until she got to the girls' bathroom. Tears began to stream down her face and she punched the tiled wall.

Kamala was so angry she could hardly think. Everything was falling apart, and it was all the Inventor's fault!





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Chapter 7

Kamala didn't wait for Thor. As soon as school was out, she changed into her Ms. Marvel costume in her usual alley and started walking. As she went, she elongated her legs until each stride was a block long.

Soon, Ms. Marvel was outside the Jersey City limits. And not long after that, she was sloshing through the marshes of industrial New Jersey. Normally she would have been grossed out by the squishy mud of the marshland, but today she was too angry to even notice.

This is the Inventor's fault. My life is a mess, and it's his fault. I failed the test, and it's his fault. My best friend hates me, and it's his fault.

Ms. Marvel was ready to fight. In fact, she couldn't wait. The Inventor was going to pay.

Soon the Inventor's lair was in sight. But before Ms. Marvel reached the fence, an Inhuman teenager stepped out of the tall grass and stood in her way.

“Stop right there,” he sneered. “Ba-grack!” He raked one foot through the dirt, and Ms. Marvel saw that instead of human feet he had long, scaly claws like a rooster. He was different from the other bird-people she'd seen so far—he even had a wattle, like a chicken. He looked ridiculous.

Ms. Marvel rolled her eyes. “Get out of my way.”

“No can do, Ms. Moron,” the boy said, dodging back into her path.

“Very funny,” Ms. Marvel said.



“It’s funny because Moron and Marvel both start with the letter M,” the kid said. “Basically, I just called you stupid.”

“Yep,” Ms. Marvel said, pushing the boy out of her way.

“But in a funny, clever way,” the boy added, pecking at her. “Ba-crawk!”

“Nope,” Ms. Marvel said, batting him away. “Not funny, not clever. Now scram.”

“Too bad!” the chicken-boy said. “The Inventor and everyone else aren’t even at headquarters right now. He left me here to guard the place all by myself until he gets back. Gra-kack!”

“Great,” Ms. Marvel said grimly. “Then I’ll just wait for him there, shall I?”

She tried once more to push the boy aside and keep walking toward the plant. But the chicken-boy danced around her, pecking at her arms with his weird beak-nose and scratching at her with his taloned feet. Ms. Marvel couldn’t take a step without tripping over him.

“Get out of my way!” she finally yelled, at the end of her rope.

“Ca-BAWK! Make me!” jeered the chicken-boy. “Try and make me, Ms. Moron! Ha-ha-ha! Ms. Moron! Ms. Moron! Ms.—”

Crack! Ms. Marvel punched the chicken-boy as hard as she could. She hit him so hard that her whole arm tingled. For a moment, it felt good. It felt satisfying. But then as she watched him stagger back, it stopped feeling good. His eyes were wide and shocked, and his mouth was bloody. Ms. Marvel had hit him harder than she needed to... a lot harder. He was really hurt.

The chicken-boy abruptly sat down on the ground and started crying. He was holding his face, but Ms. Marvel could tell she'd knocked out at least one of his teeth. She'd been in enough fights to know what that looked like. And this boy was younger than she was—he couldn't have been older than fourteen.

Ms. Marvel felt like a complete monster.

“Oh no,” she said. “I'm so sorry.” She rushed over to the boy, but he recoiled, scooting away from her.

“Don't touch me!” he said, the words muffled. “It hurts!” Tears were sliding down his face, and suddenly he wasn't annoying anymore... he was just pathetic.

“Oh man,” Ms. Marvel said. She got out her phone and dialed 9-1-1. The boy continued to cry as she gave their location to the police.

“An ambulance is coming. You're going to be okay.”

“I wuh-wuh-want my mommmmmmm,” the boy sobbed.

“Okay,” Ms. Marvel said, feeling lower than low. “We'll call her, too.” She sat down next to the boy and handed him her phone.

“You're mean,” he muttered as he dialed.

“Yeah,” Ms. Marvel said grimly. “I think you might be right.”

Ms. Marvel stayed with the chicken-boy until the ambulance arrived and took him away. Then she sat by herself on the ground, staring into space for a long time afterward.

The chicken-boy had been harmless. Annoying, sure, but harmless. Ms. Marvel was a hero—or she was supposed to be one, anyway.

“I'm supposed to be better than this,” she said softly to herself. “I'm supposed to be the good guy.”

But she'd been so angry at the Inventor for messing up her week that

she'd let herself really hurt someone who wasn't anywhere near as strong as she was.

She'd failed her Biology test, she'd failed her friend, and she'd failed as a hero.

“I don't deserve to be called Ms. Marvel,” Kamala Khan said softly, pulling her mask off and burying her face in her hands.





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Chapter 8

Thor found her there, letting her mind spin around in circles of anger and self-blame.

He had to wave his hand in front of Kamala's face a few times before she noticed him.

“Oh,” she said, “it's you.”

“Should not you be wearing your mask, Ms. Marvel?” Thor asked gently, crouching down in front of her. He picked her mask up off the ground and offered it to her.

Kamala stared at it blankly for a while and then shook her head.

“I'm not feeling very heroic,” she said. She told Thor all about what had happened.

“I thought it was the Inventor's fault that my life is a mess,” Kamala finished, “but it's my fault. I'm the one who forgot to study for the test. I'm the one who let down my friend. I'm the one who's messing things up every day. I just didn't want to face it, and I took it out on that stupid chicken kid.”



Thor sat down next to her and stared thoughtfully up at the sky.

“Perhaps you do not believe this,” he said, “but I have felt the same way myself.”

Kamala squinted at him skeptically. “You’re right,” she said. “I don’t believe it.”

Thor sighed. “I was not always as wise or as humble as I am now,” he said. “When I was a younger man, I had many faults. I was arrogant. I was impatient.”

He paused. “To be fair,” he said, “I was very handsome, brave, and fierce in battle. I still am!”

Kamala smiled and poked Thor in the side. “And wise and humble, too.”

Thor grinned. “Perhaps not perfectly humble,” he admitted. “We are none of us perfect.”

“No,” Kamala said sadly. “We aren’t. Me especially.”

“But that is my point,” Thor said. “Heed my tale, Kamala Khan. There came a day when I realized that I was nothing more than an arrogant child.

And on that day, I doubted.”

Kamala looked up at him. Thor was still staring at the sky, but there was something in his face that she recognized, because it was the same thing she was feeling.

“I doubted myself,” Thor continued. “I saw that I had been vain, cruel, and thoughtless. This man is no hero, I thought. This man is a fool.”

Kamala's heart twisted a little in her chest. “What did you do?” she asked.

“I learned to accept two important things,” Thor said. “First, that I was not perfect. Then, that I did not need to be, as long as I kept trying.”

Kamala frowned. “I know you're hoping to make me feel better about how badly I screwed up,” she said, “but I don't buy it. You seem pretty perfect to me. You're an Avenger.”

“I am an Avenger because I have learned to accept my faults,” Thor said. “And if I were perfect, I would have realized immediately that ‘slime suspect’ is not a thing.”

Kamala giggled. “See, Hawkeye knows what being an Avenger is really all about,” she said. “Pranking your teammates.”

“Indeed,” Thor said, smiling. Then he looked at Kamala very seriously. “You have failed today, but that does not mean you are a failure. You cannot do everything perfectly, Kamala Khan, and you cannot do everything by yourself.”

Kamala smiled. “Thank you, Thor,” she said. “That means a lot to me.” And she really did feel better. There was something amazing about knowing that Thor, the mighty Avenger, had once dealt with the same doubts and fears.

“There is no need to thank me,” Thor said. He handed Kamala her Ms. Marvel mask again, and this time she accepted it. “And you should not be so hard on yourself. You are a better person at sixteen than I was at nine hundred.”

“Aw,” Kamala said, throwing her arms around Thor, “you don't look a day over eight hundred and ninety-nine.”

Evening was dimming into night when Ms. Marvel and Thor approached the Inventor's lair at last. “I think he must be back by now,” Ms. Marvel said. “Hopefully we've still got the drop on him.”

Then a shout shattered the quiet night air.

“It’s time!” A shrill, unpleasant voice erupted from the factory tower. “My brilliance knows no bounds!”

Ms. Marvel and Thor looked at each other.

“That’s definitely the Inventor’s voice,” Ms. Marvel said.

“Tonight, we take Jersey City,” the Inventor yelled. “And tomorrow—”

“Ah, I know this one,” Thor told Kamala. He threw a fist into the air as though he were a maniacal villain. “And tomorrow, the world!” he said, mimicking the Inventor.

“The world?” Ms. Marvel replied incredulously. “With that gang of birdbrains as his army?”

“And tomorrow, the New York metropolitan area!” the Inventor finished triumphantly from inside the factory.

“That seems more reasonable,” Thor remarked.

“And shortly after that,” the Inventor added, still yelling, “the tristate area! And then, following our takeover of the northeastern United States, we’ll move on to the Eastern Seaboard—”

“Should we just go in right now?” Ms. Marvel said. “I feel like this could go on for a while.”

“By all means,” Thor said. He offered his arm, and Ms. Marvel grabbed it. Thor swung Mjolnir skyward, and the two heroes sailed into the sky, heading directly toward the tower.

It was time to fight.





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Chapter 9

Deep in the New Jersey marshlands, the Secaucus Amalgamated Macaroni Company's pasta manufacturing plant had stood empty for decades before the Inventor moved his latest sinister operation into it. But now it was full of activity. Empty birdcages hung from the rafters, and the Inventor's henchmen—both bird-people and robots—patrolled the corridors. And in the tower, a giant contraption stood, crackling with electrical sparks.

Thor and Ms. Marvel had just enough time to take in the scene below them before they crashed through the skylight in the tower and landed amid a small army of birdlike teenage Inhumans.

A siren blared. Ms. Marvel and Thor stood up, brushing broken glass off themselves.

“Get'em!” squawked one of the Inventor's Inhuman henchmen. And with a flurry of feathers and a chorus of cheeps, they attacked.



Ms. Marvel embiggened her fists, lengthened her arms, and threw herself into the fight. The first Inhuman to attack her clawed at Ms. Marvel's face, but Ms. Marvel grabbed her by the tail and tossed her into a pile of old boxes.

Nearby, Thor was fighting off seven fluffy Inhumans covered in downy yellow feathers. They were all making high-pitched peeps. "I do not wish to harm you!" Thor yelled at the duckling-like villains. "For you are extremely adorable! Ouch!" he added as one of them bit him.

Ms. Marvel started in Thor's direction to help him, but she was suddenly knocked sideways by a robot hurtling out of a dark corner. The Inventor's robots were dangerous—Ms. Marvel had fought them before. She picked herself up and jumped sideways, dodging a laser blast.

"Yaaah!" Ms. Marvel yelled, using her embiggened fist to smash the robot to pieces.

Ms. Marvel took a deep breath, hoping for a little break so she could help out Thor. But just then, three more bird-people and another laser-armed robot all charged her at once. In a blur of fists and feet, Ms. Marvel kicked and punched—swung and spun—until she was surrounded by the scraps of

the robot, and all her attackers were tied up. Her lungs were heaving and her fists were aching.

“I don't know how many more of them I can handle,” Ms. Marvel said to Thor.

“How about one more?” said a sneering, shrill voice.

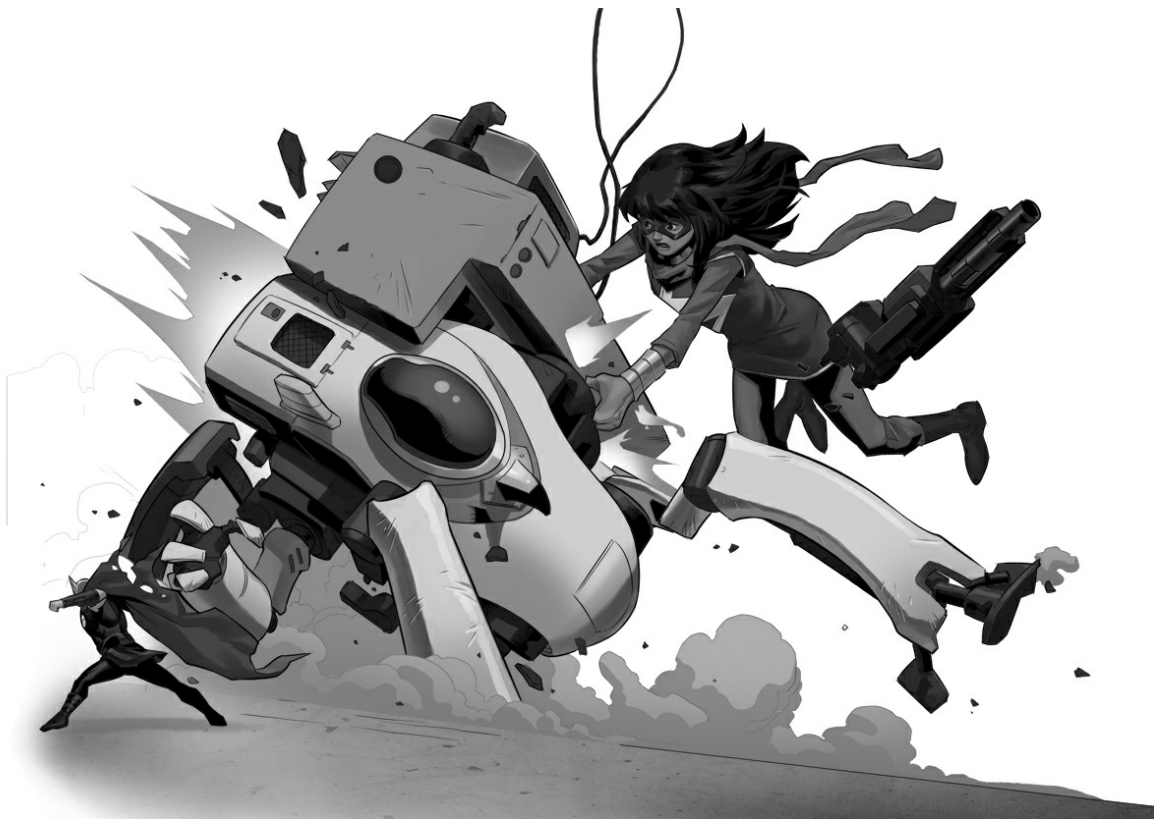
Ms. Marvel looked up. Standing in front of the giant machine was the Inventor. He was dramatically silhouetted against the sparking waves of electricity.

“I bid you welcome,” he said, “to your doom.”

“At least he is polite,” Thor remarked, smashing the robot onto the cement floor.

The Inventor snapped his fingers, and the rest of the robots and Inhumans backed away from Ms. Marvel and Thor.

“Perhaps you're wondering what I am doing here,” the Inventor said, strolling slowly toward them. “Well, make yourselves comfortable, and I shall tell you a tale the likes of which—”



“You're stealing pet birds and putting their DNA into Inhuman teenagers you recruited for your villainous army of superpowered bird- people,” Ms. Marvel said.

“Oh,” the Inventor said, annoyed. “Yes, well. Got it in one.”

“Cool,” Ms. Marvel said. She embiggened until she was nearly as high as the ceiling. “How about we move straight to the final-showdown part of the evening?”

“You don't want to hear more about my revolutionary new nuclease enzyme? It's perfect for gene-splicing!”

“I'd really rather fight,” Ms. Marvel admitted. “And besides, Biology is sort of a sore subject for me right now.”

“If you insist,” the Inventor said and snapped his fingers. Suddenly a huge robot loomed up behind him—it was easily as big as all of the other robots put together.

Ms. Marvel's heart sank. She'd never taken on a robot this big.

I don't think I can do this, she thought.

But then she remembered what Thor had told her. *You cannot do everything by yourself.*

With help, though, she could do pretty much anything.

“Let's go!” Ms. Marvel yelled, and she and Thor leaped into action. Thor drew the laser fire away from Ms. Marvel by flying up to the ceiling and zigzagging across the room. Meanwhile, Ms. Marvel smashed at the robot's legs with her embiggened fists. Now the robot had noticed her. It stopped shooting lasers at Thor and started shooting them at Ms. Marvel instead!

Ms. Marvel leaped out of the way just a little too slowly. One of the lasers hit her on the arm.

“Augh!” she screamed, rolling behind a big cement column. She looked at her arm. It was bleeding a little, and it hurt terribly.

Taking a deep breath, Ms. Marvel dived out from behind the column. She had to help!

Frantically looking around the old factory, Ms. Marvel spotted a huge, dusty old piece of equipment. It said MACARONI MASTER 3000 on the side, and it looked like it weighed about a ton. Ms. Marvel embiggened herself until she was big enough to pick up the macaroni press. Then she heaved it up into the air and bashed it hard against the robot.

There was a terrible grinding noise, as the robot shuddered and ground to a halt. The lights along its body dimmed down and finally winked out.

“We did it!” Ms. Marvel cried. She turned to Thor. “High five!” she said, holding up her hand.

“Ah!” Thor said. “I know this one. Hawkeye taught me.” He high-fived her back. “Did I do it right?” he asked.

“Yep!” Ms. Marvel said. She looked around. All the fight seemed to have gone out of the Inventor's birdlike henchmen. The few that Ms. Marvel and Thor hadn't already defeated were sitting down, muttering unhappily. “We give up!” one said. “Please don't tell our parents! We just signed on because we were bored!”

“I wasn't bored,” another Inhuman teen said. “I just did it so I'd have something to write my college application essays about.”

“I did it on a dare,” said another birdlike henchman.

“I did it because all my friends were doing it,” said a girl with purple feathers.



Ms. Marvel rolled her eyes. She was about to launch into an angry lecture about how dumb it was to sign on with a villain like the Inventor for any reason, when she realized...

“Where is the Inventor?”

Ms. Marvel looked around the factory, and a sudden motion caught her eye. It was the Inventor, running for the door!

Quick as lightning, Ms. Marvel stretched her arms out and caught the Inventor.

“Not so fast!” she said. “You've got to pay for your crimes. Also, you have to help untangle this mess.” She pointed at the sullen teenagers sitting around the factory. “What happened to all the birds you used, anyway?”

“I'll never tell!” the Inventor shrieked. “My twisted creations will be stuck like that forever! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!”

“It's this button, isn't it?” Thor said, pointing at a big red button on the mysterious machine.

REVERSE

“No?” the Inventor said unconvincingly.

“That's a yes,” Ms. Marvel said. Thor pushed the button, and there was a huge crackle as electricity coursed through the machine.

After a few seconds, Ms. Marvel blinked stars out of her eyes and looked around.

All the birdlike teenagers were now just normal teenagers. And the factory was full of exotic birds flying in confused circles.



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Chapter 10

It took most of the night for the police to cart away the Inventor and all his juvenile sidekicks, and even longer for a local animal rescue to come collect all the pet birds. By the time the cleanup was done, even Thor looked a little worn-out.

“Shawarma?” he said hopefully.

“I was hoping you'd say that,” Ms. Marvel said with a grin.

Soon the two Super Heroes were sitting in their usual corner of the all-night shawarma shop in Jersey City. Thor ordered seven sandwiches again, but the waitress brought him ten.

“On the house,” she said. “Mostly I just want to see if you can actually eat ten of these.”

“Good lady, I will endeavor not to disappoint,” Thor said grandly and dug in.

He was halfway through the fifth sandwich when the door opened with a cheerful little chime, and Hawkeye walked in.

Ms. Marvel almost choked on her sandwich. What was Hawkeye doing at Nour's Kebab Hut at two in the morning?

“Yo, Thor,” he said, plopping into the booth at their table. “What's up, Ms. Marvel?”

Ms. Marvel managed a muffled “Hi” around her half-chewed bite of shawarma.

“Well met, my friend!” Thor boomed, clapping Hawkeye on the shoulder so hard he nearly fell out of his chair. “Have you come to sample Nour's wares? Truly, her sandwiches are the best in Jersey City.”

“No,” Hawkeye said, “I'm here because the Avengers are assembling. If you're done with your investigation here in New Jersey, we need you back at HQ. It's kind of an emergency.”



Thor stuffed the rest of his sandwich into his mouth, nodding vigorously. He stood up and grabbed Mjolnir.

“Hey!” the waitress said, coming out from the kitchen. “You did it! You ate five sandwiches!”

Thor grinned widely, his cheeks stuffed full of shawarma, and held up his hand for a celebratory high five. The waitress slapped his palm.

“You know who taught him to high-five?” Hawkeye asked Ms. Marvel quietly.

“It’s a mystery, and you’re the slime suspect,” Ms. Marvel shot back, deadpan.

Hawkeye gave her a wide-eyed, innocent stare. “I have absolutely no idea what you’re talking about,” he said, softly enough that Thor, who was still talking to the waitress, couldn’t hear. “I would never prank another Avenger like that. For instance, I definitely have not replaced Thor’s conditioner with glue.”

Kamala giggled and then turned to Thor. She wrapped her arms around his gigantic body. Thor hugged her back.

“Truly it has been an honor fighting at your side, my mighty friend,” he said. “Remember: there is great honor in accepting help.”

“Thanks, Thor,” Ms. Marvel said. “And here is some wisdom from me to you: throw away your conditioner and buy a new bottle. Just trust me on this.”

“Hey!” Hawkeye said. “No fair!”

In the morning, Kamala woke up feeling tired but happy. She had defeated the Inventor once again. And she felt more confident about her Super Hero life than she had in a long time. Talking to Thor had really helped.

But on her way to school, Kamala started to get worried. She'd still failed that Biology test, and that was still a big deal. Her parents were going to be so disappointed in her! Kamala had forgiven herself for screwing up the test, but she still hated having a bad grade on her record. She took pride in her schoolwork.

Plus, Nakia was probably still furious with her.

At lunch, Kamala sat by herself and pushed her french fries around on her plate gloomily.

“If you aren't going to eat those, give them to me,” someone said. Kamala looked up and was surprised to see Nakia. She sat down and reached over delicately to snag one of Kamala's fries. Bruno plopped down next to her.

“Okay,” Nakia said, biting into the fry, “you're officially forgiven, Kamala. I can't stand seeing you moping around like a big, sad puppy.”

“Me neither,” said Bruno, “which is why we talked to Mr. Lukoff on your behalf. And he's going to let you retake the test.”

“Really?” Kamala said, astonished. “What did you tell him?”

“Bruno told him you spent the last week looking for someone's escaped pet bird,” Nakia said.

“He was very impressed with your civic-mindedness,” Bruno added.

Kamala was shocked. “But that's not true!” she said. “You can't just lie to a teacher like that!”

“Well,” Bruno said thoughtfully, “you were being civic-minded.”

“Huh,” Kamala said. “I guess that's true.” Then she and Bruno both froze and looked guiltily at Nakia. Nakia still didn't know about Ms. Marvel, and Kamala couldn't believe they'd come so close to letting something slip just then!

Nakia shrugged. “I'm sure you were,” she said. “Just because I don't know what's going on with you doesn't mean I don't know there's something going on with you. I figure you'll tell me about it when you're ready. And in

the meantime, you can retake that test and quit acting so sad.”

“You really didn't have to—” Kamala started to say, but then she remembered what Thor had told her.

There's great honor in accepting help. “Thank you,” she told her friends. “This means a lot to me.”



One week later, Kamala sat down to take a makeup exam in the Biology classroom. She had spent the entire week studying at Nakia's house, and she'd never felt better prepared for a test in her life. Her pencil flew across the page as she answered each question in turn with perfect confidence.

Finally, Kamala got to the extra-credit question at the bottom of the page. Kamala squinted. Something about this question was familiar. Then she remembered!



惊奇队长的故事

直到近来，住在泽西城的卡玛拉·克汗都还觉得自己没什么特别的，但在不久前的一天夜里，一切都变了。她受困于一团迷雾，苏醒后发现蕴藏在自己体内的超能力被激活了。卡玛拉由一名普通的中学生变为惊奇队长，成了能伸缩自如、任意变形、抚慰自愈的超级英雄。

卡玛拉·克汗决定像普通女孩那样继续生活，去上学、去清真寺、继续在网上写她的复仇者联盟同人小说。卡玛拉在生活中隐藏自己的超级英雄身份，但是私底下，她开始以惊奇队长的名义打击犯罪。最终被她的朋友布鲁诺识破，这位朋友一直替她保守这个秘密。

惊奇队长卡玛拉在泽西城惩恶除邪。新能力使其变得大到出拳抗衡巨型机器人，也能使其变得小到钻进机器人体内。惊奇队长抗衡的对象大多为巨型机器人，但她伸缩自如，可任意变形。即使受伤，惊奇队长也比常人愈合得快。

卡玛拉不是危险来了便袖手旁观、明哲保身之人，骁勇善战的她也免不了受伤，因而她的自愈能力总能派上用场。但是做巾帼英雄对卡玛拉来说意义重大——她决意助人。因此她勤练技艺、勇战强敌，最终永久地成了一股不可阻挡的力量。卡玛拉·克汗终于成了惊奇队长。



第一章

“千万别迟到，不要迟到，不要迟到。”卡玛拉·克汗小声念叨着。她快步流星地奔向学校，这个月她已经迟到过三次了。

“那帮蠢蛋老耽误我上学。”卡玛拉嘀咕着。学校和家里的事让她忙得不可开交。她辛苦地应付着日常生活与当超级英雄惊奇队长的日子，尽力在两者间保持平衡。有时卡玛拉确实应付不过来，但今天可以，今天，一切皆在掌控之中。



卡玛拉在路灯下停住了，拿出手机确认了下时间，说道：“一切正常。7:51。按时到校没问题。除了超级恶棍，没什么能让我迟到。”

“丁零零!!!”响亮的警铃声打破了清晨的寂静。

“来人哪！”有人高呼，“有人在抢劫我的店！”

顿了一下，那人又说：“是超级恶棍干的！”

卡玛拉疲倦地叹了口气，闪进巷子。她躲到垃圾桶后边，换上了惊奇队长的戎装。

“开工了。”惊奇队长说道。超级恶棍大概又要因为让她上学迟到而后悔了。

“丁零零——嘎吱！”惊奇队长硕大的拳头击碎了警铃。“我会赔的，”她羞怯地对店主说，“刚才没控制好。”

瞬时，惊奇队长伸长胳膊，一把抓住罪犯的颈背。

从店里被拽出来的人，穿着卫衣，还戴着……鸟嘴面具？

“嘎嘎！”她叫着，“嘎嘎，嘎嘎！”

“这也能叫超级恶棍，”惊奇队长冲着店主喊道，“超级恶棍是不戴万圣节面具的。”

女孩愤愤地吼道：“嘿！”她双眼放光，激光直射惊奇队长，惊奇队长立马冲着她的眼睛猛掴一巴掌。

激光却误射到了女孩的眼睛，她痛得尖叫：“哎哟！”

“给她戴紧眼罩，你们不会有事的。”惊奇队长对赶到现场的警察们说道。惊奇队长把半鸟女孩交给警察，转身返回小巷，换上了上学的衣服。

“千万别迟到，不要迟到，不要迟到，”卡玛拉嘟囔着，一溜小跑赶往学校，“要知道我还没到校，爸妈会发狂的。”

卡玛拉不愿让爸爸妈妈失望，想到得交代清楚成绩单上又多了一条迟到记录，她不由得加快了脚步，朝学校奔去。

卡玛拉踩着铃声，及时跑进教室，溜到了自己的座位上！

当天午饭时，她见到朋友布鲁诺。

“你看起来有点儿疲惫啊，一切都还好吧？”布鲁诺问道。

“嗯，离奇的早晨啊。”卡玛拉说。校园里只有布鲁诺知晓惊奇队长的秘密。她压低了声音接着说，“我阻止了一场抢劫。”

“真酷！”布鲁诺说，“银行抢劫？酒店，还是珠宝店？”

“都不是，”卡玛拉回答，“是家宠物店。行窃的女孩冲着我嘎嘎直叫。”

“嘎嘎叫？”布鲁诺问道。

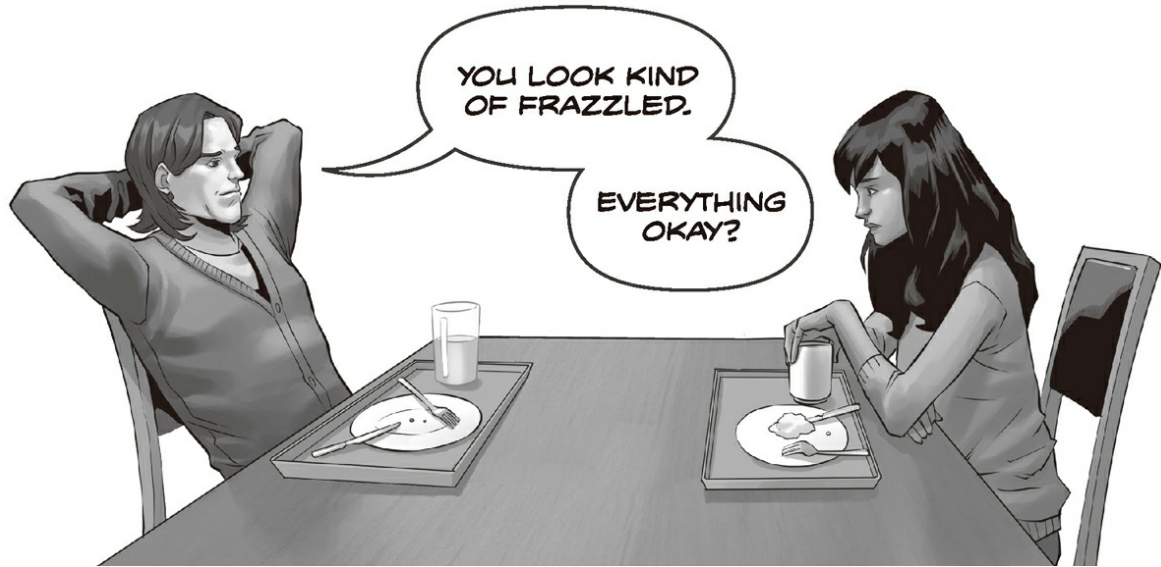
“那还不是最奇怪的，”卡玛拉说，“她还戴了鸟面具。”

“是挺奇怪的。”布鲁诺说，“哎呀——纳奇亚来了。”

纳奇亚不知道惊奇队长的秘密，因此卡玛拉和布鲁诺换了话题。

“星期四生物大测验，你开始复习了吗？”卡玛拉问纳奇亚。

“嗯，”纳奇亚说，“已经复习一周了，但还需要接着复习。我真不敢相信，这个考试占我们成绩的一半。”

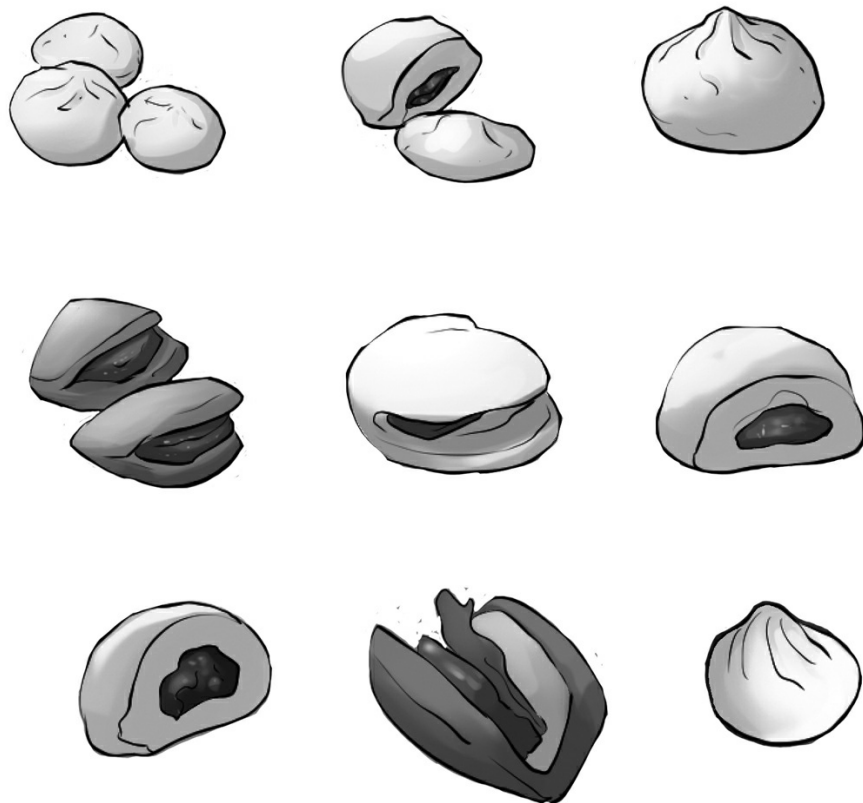


卡玛拉坦白道：“我都还没开始复习呢，有点儿崩溃了。”

纳奇亚疑惑地看着卡玛拉。“你还没开始？”她惊讶地说，“占我们成绩的一半呢！你爸妈会——？”

“我知道。”卡玛拉对着纳奇亚怒目而视，说道。纳奇亚昂起头，反问：“你最近有点儿暴躁啊，出什么事了吗？”

布鲁诺点了点头。“我也发现了，”他说，“我知道你一直都很……忙。”他会意地看了卡玛拉一眼。



“我没事儿。”卡玛拉说道。整个谈话弄得她紧张兮兮的，她想让这一话题终结。因此她爽朗地微笑着说：“看见没？我挺好的。对了，你们玩‘肉包’了吗？”

“哦，天哪，我总算捕获了一个野生菠菜饺子！”说着，布鲁诺便在手机上打开了这个游戏应用程序。

纳奇亚也拿出手机，说：“我没什么菠菜饺子，但是我有十一个虾肉烧卖，要不要交易？”

“没门儿，”布鲁诺连忙说，“豌豆苗倒还可以考虑考虑。”

卡玛拉面带微笑地看着朋友们。可是内心深处，一切都开始向她袭来。

有时候卡玛拉觉得自己天生就不是当超级英雄的料。

第二章

这一天余下的时间就这样浑浑噩噩地过去了，卡玛拉老惦记着她的生物大测验。

“纳奇亚复习一周了。”心不在焉的卡玛拉在体育课上把篮球传给了对手。



“嘿！”一名队友大喊道，卡玛拉却几乎没有听到。她沉浸在自己的忧虑中。“我也得复习了。可是什么时候复习呢？过去的两周，我每天晚上都在外面抓坏蛋抓到很晚。”

“克汗，你是最差的队员！”她的队友抱怨道。

卡玛拉没搭理他，可那男孩还接着嚷嚷。

“你真是个——哎哟！”

他还没说完，篮球便砸到了他的头上。

卡玛拉翻了个白眼。“我得振作起来，好多事等着呢！”

放学时，卡玛拉边穿外衣边拿定了主意。她今天晚上不再抓坏蛋，要专心复习考试。

放学回家的路上，卡玛拉给纳奇亚发了短信。

“打扰了。”一个低沉的声音响起。卡玛拉抬头看去，面前站着一个无家可归的大块头。破旧的帽子遮住了大块头的头发，他身着一件长长的、满是污渍的外套，给人一种似曾相识的感觉。

“不好意思，我没带零钱。”卡玛拉继续朝前走，男子跟着她。

“我不要钱，”他用洪亮的声音说道，“我找你，你必须跟我来，惊奇队长。”

卡玛拉停住了。他竟知道她是惊奇队长，显然是来找碴儿的。情况不妙。

卡玛拉双手叉腰，抬头怒视着这个家伙，说道：“我必须，哈？”

不管这家伙是谁，都得把他打发走。卡玛拉今晚要复习考试，不能再与奇奇怪怪的人卷入争斗了。

“不考虑考虑自己的安全？”男子问道。

他这是在威胁她吗？是的！他好大的胆子！卡玛拉再也按捺不住积累了一天的压力了。

真是太不爽了。

“行，”卡玛拉怒冲冲地说道，“就这样，我们走吧。”早晚有他好看的时候。

“太好了，”男子高兴地说，“我带路！”男子前面走，显然是要卡玛拉紧跟其后。

“不，我来带路。”卡玛拉说着便走进了一条空巷子。卡玛拉·克汗不愿让人瞧见十几岁的她踢一个大块头的屁股。她来不及换衣服收拾这个家伙了，好在这是一条废弃的巷子。

“这巷子真不错。”跟着卡玛拉的男子环视四周，愉悦地说道，“但是我未能——哎哟！”男子突然被卡玛拉一记重拳打在腹部，他诧异地嘟囔着。

卡玛拉的指关节疼痛不已。揍这家伙就像打在一堵砖墙上面一样。

卡玛拉为掩饰自己的憨愚之举，她边甩手边说：“可以呀。”幸亏她有自愈能力，手很快会好起来。

卡玛拉使尽浑身解数，拳打脚踢。一会儿胀到汽车那么大，一会儿

缩到猫咪一样小，上下跃动，快拳如飞。她突然发现自己太蠢了，因为大块头对她的拳头根本没感觉，他甚至都不反击。

他站在那里，对卡玛拉说：“别急着动手，等我把话说清楚。”

“你刚刚恐吓威胁我时，已经把话说得很清楚了！”卡玛拉一边恶声恶气地说，一边拼尽全力要打他个鼻青脸肿。男子一猫腰，躲过卡玛拉的拳头，帽子却被打落了。卡玛拉一把扯住男子的衣服，试图扳过他的身体。男子的破衣烂衫最终从后背缝合处撕开了，他的衣帽都掉在了地上。

卡玛拉气喘吁吁，后退了几步，才发现站在面前的是雷神托尔。

真是托尔，不是恶棍，可托尔当时为什么要威胁她呢？

回想托尔的话，卡玛拉突然意识到他一直在警示她。



“真是糟透了。”她心想，“我竟然要揍托尔，要痛打一位复仇者联盟成员。”

“刚刚是我没把话说明白，多多包涵。”托尔说，“或许我该自我介

绍一下。”

“我知道你是谁，我房间里有四个你的‘活动人偶’呢！”卡玛拉脱口而出。

“干得漂亮，卡玛拉，这下可好了。”

卡玛拉一拳打在自己额头上，打得有点重了。她尴尬地笑笑，忙说：“啊哈哈，我是说……嗯。你千万别见怪。”

第三章

“我叫这个‘小托尔’。”卡玛拉说着就让这个小活动人偶跳起了滑稽的舞蹈。她又拿起一个活动人偶，说道，“这是‘时尚托尔’，大概五岁时，我偷了纳奇亚的蝴蝶发夹。”

“过分了。”托尔严肃地说道。他拿起了另一个托尔活动人偶，仔细观察。卡玛拉摇了摇头。复仇者托尔在她卧室地板上坐着，和她摆弄一箱旧玩具，过问她还收集了……他的哪些活动人偶。这是她成为超级英雄后，碰到的最奇怪的事情之一。真有点意思。



“那个是‘假腿托尔’。”卡玛拉说，“他失去了一条腿，所以我不得不用衣夹代替腿。”

“他太不小心了。”看着一条腿的活动人偶，托尔不以为然地皱了皱眉头，说道。卡玛拉连忙辩解：“不是不小心，他很勇敢。他在战斗中失去了一条腿，那是一场对阵雷克斯暴龙的勇猛战斗。”

卡玛拉从玩具箱中扒出了那只塑料雷克斯暴龙。“看到了吧？”她边说边拿给托尔看，“一个强大的对手。”

“这才配得上光荣负伤。”托尔欣然说道，“卡玛拉，原谅我乔装打扮接近你，我只是想像鹰眼说的那样‘保持低调’。”

“别在意，”卡玛拉说，“不是你的错——是我最近太紧张了，手头事情太多，抱歉我反应过激了。”

“我不在意。”托尔说道。

她追星多少有些狂热。比起托尔活动人偶，她有更多鹰眼活动人偶，但她不想伤了托尔的感情，便没告诉他。

“我来你这儿是为了调查近几个月发生的一系列宠物店抢劫案。”托尔说。



“呀，”卡玛拉说，“真是太离奇了。他们偷什么呢？别告诉我是偷小狗。”

“鸟，”托尔说，“偷的都是鸟。”

“哼，”卡玛拉接着说道，“你知道吗，今天早晨试图在那家宠物店行窃的女孩戴着个无聊的鸟面具，还发出‘嘎嘎’的鸟叫声。”

“我知道，”托尔说，“接到的复仇者联盟总部情报已经……”

“是令人烦扰的情报吗？”卡玛拉提出了自己的想法。

“是愚蠢至极。”托尔毫不客气地回答道。

卡玛拉点头表示赞同。

“不管了，”托尔接着说，“既然派我来调查，鹰眼说这里是你的地盘，但我不打算让你参与。你还这么小，我可不想把你置于危险中。”

“我能保护自己！”卡玛拉抗议道。

“是的，”托尔忙说，“我今天算是领教了。总之，我无意中听到几个少年半鸟人正商讨着对付你的计划，我意识到自己必须提醒你。”

卡玛拉问：“下一步呢？”她尽量表现出冷静的样子，仿佛托尔称呼她为超级英雄惊奇队长并不是她碰见的最好的事情。

“安全起见，我调查的时候，你必须在家待着。”托尔说。

卡玛拉皱着眉头说：“通常我尽量假装服从权威人物，比如清真寺的阿訇，或像你这样来自远古的外星超级英雄。”

“算你聪明。”托尔同意卡玛拉说的。

“可是，”卡玛拉接着说，“这里是泽西城。鹰眼说得没错——这是我的地盘。如果你不让我参与，我就自己调查，到那时我们互相挡道，你不会想每次都被我阻碍吧？”

托尔眉头一皱，很不情愿地说：“还是一起干好。”卡玛拉听到楼下传来了父亲的声音：“卡玛拉，你在和谁说话？有人在你房间吗？”

卡玛拉跳了起来，冲着托尔说：“你得赶紧离开这儿！”

“卡玛拉？”父亲又叫她了，“谁和你在一起呢？”

“从窗户走！”卡玛拉朝离去的托尔使劲挥动双臂，急促地压低声音说，“我待会儿再去找你！”

尤瑟夫·克汗站在女儿房间外的走廊上，听着里面的动静。窃窃低语听不到了，只听见一阵嘶嘶声，便归于沉寂。尤瑟夫确信房间里还有其他人的声音，他敲开了卡玛拉的门。

“这儿到底发生了什么？”尤瑟夫边说，边环视房间，只见房间里只有女儿一个人，坐在地板上的她被一堆塑料玩具包围着。她一只手拿着一个披红色斗篷的塑料玩偶；另一只手拿着一盆盆栽植物。

“哦，嗨，爸爸。”卡玛拉笑着说。

“我自己听到了什么声音。”尤瑟夫满脸困惑地四下察看。

“没别人，只有我和托尔。”卡玛拉回答。她挥了挥那个托尔小塑料玩偶，玩偶的红斗篷飘了起来。“他正和新伙伴打击犯罪呢！”



卡玛拉继续玩她自己的。她摆弄着玩偶，好像它在冲着盆栽说话。“是我，托尔！”她用洪亮而低沉的声音说，“嗨，你是陶罐树吧。我们得尽快赶到阿斯加德，千真万确，天哪！”

尤瑟夫摇摇头，笑了。时不时被提醒一下卡玛拉仍是傻乎乎的小姑娘，也挺好的。

他关上房门，走下楼，继续读报纸去了。

第四章

那天下午，卡玛拉在复习迎考，但她学不进去。

“加油。”她瞟了一眼桌上的生物课本，告诉自己，“你今天晚上才能见到托尔，你还有三个小时的学习时间，你行的，必须行。”



卡玛拉紧握荧光笔，投入了学习。但卡玛拉怎么也学不进去，她茫然地盯着课本，满脑子想的却是令人费解的宠物店抢劫一事。为什么半鸟人要偷宠物店？他们想得到什么呢？这种事为什么会发生在新泽西，在惊奇队长的地盘上？

让我想想，为什么他们一开始就冲着惊奇队长？

最后，卡玛拉沮丧地把荧光笔丢在一边，打开了网页浏览器。

“既然我学不进去，”她想，“不妨做点有意义的事情。”

随后，卡玛拉仔细浏览了当地的新闻网站，寻找任何关于宠物店抢劫案的信息。

她点开一篇有关新泽西州爱迪生市发生的“小狗营”盗窃案的报道。

“小狗营”盗窃案

“他们一点儿钱都没偷，”“小狗营”的店主安妮塔·巴特拉说，“最离奇的是，收银台就在眼前，他们却直奔店后面的鸟笼子。”

罪犯偷走了七只金丝雀和一只非洲灰鹦鹉。据目击者描述，他们是三个身着鸟装的少年。

“我非常确信其中一人会飞。”巴特拉说。调查此案的警察透露，嫌犯可能具有某种超能力。



与此同时，“小狗营”计划周一重新开放。巴特拉表示，希望警方能尽快帮她找回被偷的鸟。

晚上就寝时，卡玛拉把枕头塞进被窝里，看起来就像她躺在里面睡着了。她换上“掩护服”，抓起背包，伸长双腿，从二楼房间的窗户悄悄溜了出去。

下去后，卡玛拉把腿缩了回来并四下张望。果然，托尔在树影里站着。托尔朝卡玛拉挥手，她小心翼翼地跑了过去，生怕弄出响声吵醒爸爸妈妈。

“全副武装，欢迎归队，我的战友！”托尔用浑厚的声音对赶来的卡玛拉说道。

“嘘！”卡玛拉边说边使劲冲着托尔摆手，紧接着她为自己捏了把

汗，她居然示意复仇者托尔“安静”。

“我是说，”她收回自己刚才说的话，“对不起，你别见怪——”

托尔摇摇头，说：“不必歉疚，是我的问题，我承认我不习惯偷偷摸摸的。”

“看得出来，你总是穿着斗篷，全副武装。”卡玛拉如释重负地说，“我们走吧？”

托尔说：“好，走吧。”

托尔想去看看最近被盗的那家宠物店，就是那天早晨卡玛拉阻止的盗窃案事发地。他们先去了那里，卡玛拉指证了现场。

“我当时站在这儿，”她说，“盗贼在店后面。”

托尔透过窗户凝视着黑暗中的宠物店，问道：“关在店后面的是什么呢？”

“不清楚。”卡玛拉说着便掏出了手电筒，“我们去瞧瞧吧。”

店后面，明亮光环将一排鸟笼子照得闪闪发光。

“又是鸟。”卡玛拉若有所思地说。她向托尔提起先前读的那篇报道，“他们偷的是鸟，戴着鸟面具，还学鸟叫……我们还知道什么呢？”

“至少其中几个嫌犯有超能力，或许他们都有。”

“有超能力的鸟迷们偷鸟，”卡玛拉说道，然后她又想起了什么，“对了，泽西城有一家宠物店只卖鸟，叫‘贝齐小小鸟’。那儿会不会也被盗了？”

“还没有，”托尔说，“但是有可能……”

“以防万一……”惊奇队长表示赞成。她在手机上查看了地址，两人便动身赶往“贝齐小小鸟”宠物店。

十分钟后，卡玛拉和托尔赶到了宠物店，店里一片漆黑寂静，所有窗户都完好无损，店门紧闭。

卡玛拉和托尔爬上一棵树，悄悄地藏了起来。果不其然，没过多久，一群戴着鸟面具的少年就偷偷溜进了“贝齐小小鸟”宠物店。



“就是这儿。”其中一人说道。

“走运了！”另一个人说，“把这些鸟弄回去，我们就成他的红人了。”

第三个装扮似鸟的少女抬起胳膊，她握着砖块，正要朝窗户砸去时，卡玛拉伸出长胳膊，一把抓住了她。

“嘎嘎！”她大叫道。

“嘎嘎！嘎嘎！”她的同伴们叫喊着，企图把她从卡玛拉手中拽出来，但为时已晚。托尔凭借其飞锤，从树上滑下来，投入了战斗。他踢开了两个上来搭救的，并将他们绑了起来。

“这个年轻女的似乎有超能力，”托尔说道，他边嘟囔边努力将其制服，“幸亏我有阿斯加德宫殿的魔绳。”

托尔把她的双手牢牢绑在一起，女孩愤愤地尖叫着。

捆好了三个盗窃犯，卡玛拉说：“好啦，我已经报警了，说说吧，你们为什么偷鸟？谁指使你们偷的？”

三人默默注视着卡玛拉和托尔。

“且慢，”卡玛拉说，“你们的面具是用真羽毛做的吗？”

“啾啾。”一个强势的女孩叫了一声，挑衅地看着惊奇队长。

托尔伸手从她头上拔了根羽毛。

“啾啾！”

第五章

警察赶到后，卡玛拉和托尔走进一家24小时营业的沙瓦玛店，午夜战斗结束，两人要犒劳一下自己。卡玛拉饿极了，她吃了两个三明治，托尔则吃了七个。

“你朋友还好吧？”女侍者问卡玛拉，“他可吃了不少沙瓦玛啊……”

托尔拿餐巾纸捂着，小心翼翼地打了个饱嗝。“真香，我再要一个，”他说，“这回多来点酱汁、面包和肉，干脆再给我来两个三明治吧。”



“你确定要再来两个吗？”女侍者略为担忧地问，“你还是歇口气吧，沙瓦玛跑不了的。”

“没关系，”卡玛拉确信地说，“他是从阿斯加德来的，那里的人都挺能吃，大概一顿饭吃得下一整只火鸡。”

“我曾经一顿吃过两头牛，”托尔骄傲地说，“这个故事如今都还在江湖上流传。”

“放心了吧？”卡玛拉说。

总之，卡玛拉折腾到凌晨两点才躺下休息。第二天早晨醒来的她比上床睡觉时更累了。课堂上，唯一让卡玛拉保持清醒的是有关三个半鸟人的记忆，他们戴着古怪精巧的面具。

“这一切究竟是怎么回事？”放学时分，卡玛拉冥思苦想，缓缓走下台阶。

“卡玛拉！”一个熟悉的声音传来。是托尔，他还是一身流浪汉的装扮。

“你知道吗？”她边说边朝托尔走了过去，“就是伪装，你也超群出众。”

托尔皱皱眉头，说：“也许我该换个装扮，但我有更紧急的事要马上告诉你。”

卡玛拉跟着托尔，来到了他们第一次争斗的小巷，问：“什么事？”

“我回了趟阿斯加德，”托尔举着前一天夜里从半鸟女孩头上拔下的羽毛说，“我让最好的炼金术士帮忙检测了这根羽毛以判定它的起源。”

卡玛拉不再看向垃圾桶后面她藏日常衣服的地方，抬起头问：“有什么发现？”

“那女孩是个异人，”托尔回答，“她的基因组里有鸟的DNA。”

卡玛拉瞪大了眼睛。“他们戴的不是面具？你是说那些孩子像我一样是异人？还不太一样，我没有鸟……那些东西。”

“鸟基因。”托尔补充道。

“对的，”卡玛拉说，“这些孩子是受谁的指使呢？一定是有计划的，究竟是谁呢？”

托尔眉头紧锁。“幕后定有一个厉害的操纵者，并且此人熟悉新泽西的情况。”

“竟有人对我居心不良。”卡玛拉说。

“而且此人对鸟感兴趣。”托尔补充道。

卡玛拉倒吸一口气，说：“我有个想法，但不太可能。符合描述的只有一个人，就是……不，不会的！”

“谁？”托尔问。

“创造者，”卡玛拉说的是早年她刚成为惊奇队长时，被她打败的半鸟人超级恶棍。“他恨我，他自身携带鸟基因，可他还在监狱里呀！”

卡玛拉拿出手机，在网上搜索。“至少他坐过牢了……”浏览着最近发表的一篇报道，她喃喃低语。

尽管当地执法部门齐心协力，仍没有发现创造者的踪迹。该创造者是新泽西州的超级恶棍（鸟基因携带者），几个月前越狱了。为应对半鸟人威胁，当局已加大力度顺着几条线索展开了追查……

“哎呀，不好。”卡玛拉大叫。

“王牌嫌犯，”托尔说，“创造者。”

“你是指‘头号嫌犯’吧。”卡玛拉说道。

“我非常确定鹰眼说的是‘王牌嫌犯’。”托尔反驳道。

卡玛拉尽力憋着不笑出声来。

那天夜里，卡玛拉和托尔穿过铁丝网围栏，潜入一个工业园区。“警察还没发现创造者，他们不如我了解他。他喜欢躲在阴森森的、废弃的工厂。”

“你好像很有把握啊！”托尔说道。

“那当然，”卡玛拉回应道，“超级英雄的活儿干多了，我想，你也一样。”

“真是这么回事儿，”托尔说，“看来我们的共同点比想象的要多。”

“什么意思？”卡玛拉问。她拿出了布鲁诺为她定制的解锁器，用这小巧便携的玩意儿对准工厂的侧门，忽而红光闪烁，门发出了扰人的嘎吱声。

卡玛拉扭了扭门把手，但是门把手没动。她皱了皱眉头。“破玩意儿，”她嘟囔道，“开门——”她接着破解门锁，这回声音更大了。沿着门边出现了一层熔化的金属，门却还是死死地焊在门框上。



“哎呀！”卡玛拉叫道，“这门怎么回事儿啊？”

“按错按钮了吧？”托尔说。卡玛拉又检查了一回装置，果然，解锁器上有两个按钮：“开锁”和“永不解锁”。

卡玛拉双手掩面，她觉着自己太蠢了，竟按错了按钮，而且自己还气呼呼的。

托尔小心翼翼地清了清嗓子，说：“我来试试。”他轻轻一拉，门和门框都被他从墙里面拽了出来。

“我说的对吧，”托尔接着说道，“我们有很多一样的地方。比如，打完硬仗，美餐一顿。”

卡玛拉点了点头。“昨晚的沙瓦玛真不错，”她说道，“打完仗，超级饿。”

“我也是，”托尔说，“当然——嗯——，我们都是急性子。”

卡玛拉没出声，她环顾空荡荡的工厂，说：“这儿什么都没有。”

他们步履沉重地走出工厂，卡玛拉若有所思地摇了摇头。“没错，我就是急性子，”过了一会儿她说，“这些天比以往更急。”

“为什么？”托尔边问边把神锤抛向天空。卡玛拉抓着托尔的胳膊，与他一同飞向空中。

“向正北方向前进。”卡玛拉指示着方向，随后才回答托尔的问题：“哦，我也不知道为什么，我想可能是自己最近事有点多，学校、朋友、家人，还有当超级英雄的事。我担心我变了，变得……暴躁。”

托尔沉默了，但沉默中充满了理解。卡玛拉盯着下方黑暗中的工业废墟，叹了口气。

“有时候真不知道自己还能坚持多久。”

第六章

卡玛拉和托尔调查了六家废弃的工厂。终于，他们找到了一家，其中一扇破碎的窗户里正透着微弱的光。

“一定是他。”卡玛拉低声说，两人降落在工厂外面的院子里。托尔赞成卡玛拉的推断，他侧耳倾听着。



“有声音，”托尔说，“声音很杂。如果这里真的是创造者的据点，会有其他人和他一起守着。”

卡玛拉摇摇头以便保持清醒。快到凌晨四点了，她太累了。“如果有更多的半鸟人，我能对付一些。”她说完，打了个哈欠，感觉自己下巴都快掉下来了。

托尔微微一笑。“我觉得你现在扛不住了，”托尔温和地说，“他明

天还会在这儿，我先送你回家吧。”

“可是我——”卡玛拉说着又打了个哈欠。

“你还没进入决战时的绝佳状态，”托尔说着，搂住了卡玛拉的腰，抡起了锤子，“你还是回去睡觉吧！”

卡玛拉睡意昏沉地点了点头。他们飞向天空。卡玛拉说：“好吧，先休息。”

卡玛拉·克汗醒来感觉筋疲力尽。她睡眼惺忪地看了看闹钟，是早晨七点。该起床、吃早餐、上学、参加生物考试了。

卡玛拉突然坐了起来，心怦怦直跳。

“考试！”她叫着。她把生物大测验忘得一干二净，根本没复习。

“纳奇亚！”她叫得更大声了。定好前一天晚上和纳奇亚一起复习，结果自己把这件事抛在了脑后。

“哦，老天，”她抱怨道，“我要考砸了，纳奇亚绝不会原谅我的。”

那天早上卡玛拉几乎不敢去开她的储物柜。果然，纳奇亚也在那儿，正在镜子前整理着她的头巾。见卡玛拉过来，纳奇亚关上柜子，转过身去了。

“纳奇亚，真对不起——”卡玛拉先开了口。

“我给你发了二十二条短信。”纳奇亚说。

“我知道。”卡玛拉不好意思地回道。那天早晨上学的路上，她查看手机，才看见纳奇亚的短信。

“你当时在哪儿？”纳奇亚问。

“我……”卡玛拉摇摇头，说：“我不想对你撒谎，但我不能告诉你。”



“我现在都不想看见你了。”纳奇亚说着，转身走进了生物教室。卡玛拉面无表情地也跟着走了进去。

卡玛拉考试考了一半，便中途放弃了。

“我可以去洗手间吗？”她举手问道。

“考试期间不行。”卢科夫老师答道。

“我考完了。”卡玛拉说着把做了一半的试卷交给卢科夫老师，然后走出了教室。

一路上，卡玛拉硬撑着进了女卫生间，满脸泪水的她，一拳砸在了瓷砖墙上。

卡玛拉生气至极，几乎无法思考。事事支离破碎，处处分崩离析，都怪创造者！

第七章

卡玛拉没等托尔，一放学，她便在往常的小巷里换好了惊奇队长的装扮，步行在路上，走着走着，她伸长了腿，一步能跨过一个街区。

不一会儿，惊奇队长来到了泽西城外。没过多久，她便穿行在新泽西州工业区的沼泽里。平日黏糊糊的泥浆让她厌恶至极，今天她太生气了，连看都没看便走进了沼泽。

“都是创造者的错。我的生活全乱了，就是因为他。考试不及格，好朋友讨厌我，就是他的错，都怪他。”

惊奇队长做好了战斗的准备。事实上，她早已等不及了，她要让创造者付出代价。

很快惊奇队长来到了创造者的藏身处，刚要跨过栅栏，高茎茂草丛中走出一个半鸟人少年，挡住了她的路。



“不许动，”少年讥讽道，“雏！”他一脚踩进泥里，惊奇队长注意到他长的不是人足，布满鳞片，倒像是公鸡爪。少年与她见过的半鸟人不同，他和鸡一样，长了肉垂，看起来很滑稽。

惊奇队长翻了翻白眼，喝一声：“让开。”

“不行，奇葩队长。”男孩说着，挡住了她的去路。

“有意思。”惊奇队长说。

“有意思，‘惊奇’和‘奇葩’里面都有个‘奇’字，”男孩儿接着说，“我是想说‘你是个笨蛋’。”

“行啊。”惊奇队长一把推开了挡路的男孩。

“来点儿有趣、聪明的办法，”男孩边说边冲她啄了过去，“雏！”

“不——没趣，更不聪明。给我滚开。”惊奇队长说着，把男孩打到一边。

“很遗憾！”半鸡人大叫，“创造者和其他人现在都不在总部。他留我一个人镇守此地，等他回来。雏！”

“很好，”惊奇队长冷酷地说道，“我在那儿等他，总行了吧？”

惊奇队长又把男孩推到一边，朝工厂走去。半鸡人男孩围着她转，用怪异的尖鼻子啄她的胳膊，用有爪子的脚抓她。要是不把男孩撂倒，惊奇队长一步也动不了。

“滚开！”她终于失去了耐心，大声喝道。

“雏！抓我呀！”半鸡人戏弄她，“来抓我呀，奇葩队长！哈哈！奇葩队长，奇葩队长！奇葩——”

啪！惊奇队长一记重拳砸向半鸡人，狠狠地揍了他一顿，揍得她自己胳膊都痛了。片刻间，感觉好多了，也满意了。但见他踉跄而行，惊奇队长感觉不再良好。他的眼睛睁得大大的，吓坏了，满嘴是血。惊奇队长揍得太狠了，他伤得很重。



半鸡人突然坐在地上捂着脸哭了起来，惊奇队长能看出刚刚至少打掉了他一颗牙齿。战斗经验丰富的她知道自己把他揍成了什么样。这男孩比她还小——不会超过十四岁。

惊奇队长觉得自己是个彻头彻尾的恶魔。

“哦，不，”她说，“非常抱歉。”她冲到男孩身边，但他吓得退了回去，急忙跑开了。

“别碰我！”男孩低沉地说，“疼！”泪水从他脸上滑落下来，惊奇队长突然觉得他不让人讨厌了……他不过是个可怜的孩子。

惊奇队长喊道：“哦，天哪。”她拿出手机拨打了911，把事发位置告诉了警察，男孩还一直在哭。

“救护车马上到，你会没事的。”

“我想要妈妈。”男孩抽泣着说。

“行，”惊奇队长失落至极地说道，“我们也给她打个电话吧。”她挨着男孩坐了下来，把手机递给了他。

“你太残忍了。”他一边拨号，一边嘟囔着。

“是，”惊奇队长伤感地说，“你或许说得对。”

惊奇队长一直陪着半鸡人，直到救护车来把他带走。随后她独自席地而坐，久久凝视着天空。

半鸡人是无辜的，招人烦，却很无辜。惊奇队长曾是个英雄——或者说她无论如何都应该是个英雄。

“我应该做得更好，”她轻声自言自语道，“我应该做个好人。”

可她生创造者的气，怪他把自己这一周搞得乱七八糟，她还重伤了一个没自己那么强壮的人。

她的生物测试考砸了，她辜负了自己的朋友，英雄也没当好。

卡玛拉·克汗轻声说：“我不配被人称为‘惊奇队长’。”她摘下面具，双手掩面。

第八章

托尔在那里找到了她，任由她的思绪在愤怒和自责中旋转。他在卡玛拉眼前挥了好几下手才引起她的注意。

“哦，”她说，“是你啊。”



“你怎么没戴面具，惊奇队长？”托尔在她跟前蹲下身子，关切地问道。他从地上捡起面具并递给了卡玛拉。

卡玛拉茫然地盯了面具片刻，随后摇了摇头。

“我觉得自己不像英雄。”她说。接着她把刚才发生的一切告诉了托尔。

“我原以为都怪那个创造者，是他搅乱了我的生活。”卡玛拉

说，“其实都怪我自己。是我自己忘了复习考试，是我自己对不住朋友，是我把每天的生活搅得一团糟。我不敢面对，却把气撒在了那个幼稚的半鸡孩子身上。”

托尔挨着她坐了下来，若有所思地抬头凝视着天空。

“也许你不信，”他说，“我也有过这样的感受。”

卡玛拉疑惑地看着托尔。“没错，”她说，“我不信。”

托尔叹了口气。“我并不总像现在这样聪明或谦卑，”他说，“我年轻时，有很多缺点，傲慢、焦躁。”

他停顿了片刻，又说：“说句公道话，战斗中，我还是非常英俊潇洒、勇猛威武的。我现在依然如此！”

卡玛拉笑了，戳了托尔一下，说：“既聪明又谦卑。”

托尔咧嘴笑了，他承认：“也许不是极致的谦虚，但人无完人。”

“是啊，”卡玛拉忧伤地说，“我们都不是完美的人，尤其是我。”

“可这正是我想的”，托尔说，“听我讲，卡玛拉·克汗，有一天，我忽然意识到自己不过是一个傲慢的孩子。从那天开始，便产生怀疑了。”

卡玛拉抬头看着托尔，他依然凝视着天空。卡玛拉领悟到了托尔神情中传达出的某种意味，因为她感同身受。

“我怀疑自己，”托尔接着说，“我发现自己自负、冷酷、轻率。我想，这样的人怎么能是英雄呢，纯粹就是个傻瓜。”

卡玛拉心头一紧，便问：“那你怎么办？”

“我学会了接受两件重要的事情，”托尔说，“第一，我不是完人；第二，我也不必是完人，只要全力趋近之即可。”

卡玛拉皱了皱眉头。“我表现得很糟糕，我知道你在安慰我，”她说，“但我不相信。在我看来，你很完美。你可是复仇者呀！”

“我成为复仇者，是因为我已经学会接受自己的缺点。”托尔说，“如果我是完美的，就应该立马明白，对付‘王牌嫌犯’根本不是什么事。”

卡玛拉咯咯笑了起来。“看来，鹰眼真懂当复仇者意味着什么，”她说，“又在打趣队友。”

“的确，”托尔微笑着，转而异常严肃地看着卡玛拉，说道，“今天失败了，并不意味着你是一个失败者。卡玛拉·克汗，你不能事事完美，也无法事事亲为。”

卡玛拉笑了。“谢谢你，托尔。”她说，“对我来说，意义非同。”她

真的感觉好多了。让人难以相信，雷神，这位强大的复仇者，竟也曾怀疑过、忧惧过。



“不用感谢我。”托尔说，他又把惊奇队长的面具递了过去，这回卡玛拉接住了，“别对自己太苛刻，十六岁的你比过去九百岁的我棒多了。”

“噢，”卡玛拉搂着托尔说，“你不像过了八百九十九岁啊。”

惊奇队长和托尔快到创造者的藏身地时，夜幕降临了。“我觉得他现在一定回来了，”惊奇队长说，“但愿我们能先发制人。”

随后，一声叫喊划破了寂静的夜空。

“是时候了！”工厂塔楼里传来一阵刺耳、难听的声音，“我才华无限。”

惊奇队长和托尔面面相觑。

“肯定是创造者的声音。”惊奇队长说。

“今晚，我们将攻下泽西城，”创造者高呼，“明天——”

“啊，我知道他要说什么。”托尔告诉卡玛拉，说着便朝空中挥舞拳

头，仿佛是一条疯狂的恶棍。“明天，征服世界！”托尔学着创造者的口吻说道。

“世界？”惊奇队长怀疑地应道，“就凭这群虾兵蟹将？”

“明天，直捣纽约大都会区！”创造者在工厂里耀武扬威地完成了演说。

“这么讲还差不多。”托尔评论道。

“不久之后，”创造者又接着高喊，“还有三州地区！接着占领美国东北部后，我们将挺进东部沿海区——”

“我们现在就冲进去吗？”惊奇队长问道，“看样子他还得说一会儿呢。”

“出战必胜。”托尔说道。惊奇队长抓住托尔伸出的胳膊，托尔冲着天空挥舞雷神之锤，两位英雄飞向天空，直抵塔楼。

是时候出击了。

第九章

位于新泽西沼泽地深处的斯考克斯合营通心粉公司的面食制造厂，已经闲置了几十年，直到创造者搬了进来，变成了其为非作歹的策源地，如今则是一片“生机勃勃”的景象。椽子上垂挂着空鸟笼，创造者的随从，半鸟人和机器人，在走廊里巡逻。塔楼里矗立着一个巨型装置，冒着火花噼啪作响。

托尔和惊奇队长恰好有宽裕的时间将下方的一切尽收眼底，接着他们从塔楼的天窗里俯冲而入，降落在一群少年半鸟人中。

警报声响起。惊奇队长和托尔起身抖落了碎玻璃。

“抓住他们！”创造者的一个异人随从大叫了起来。羽毛翻飞，鸟声阵阵，鸟群攻向了惊奇队长与托尔。

惊奇队长变大拳头，伸长手臂，投入了战斗。第一个半鸟人的爪子朝惊奇队长的脸挠去，惊奇队长揪住她的尾巴，把她甩进了旧箱子堆里。

就在附近，托尔击退了七个黄羽覆身的毛茸茸的半鸟人，他们发出尖锐的啾啾声。“我不想伤害你！”托尔冲着半鸟人恶棍大叫，“你实在太可爱了！哎哟！”正说着，被其中一个啄了一口。

惊奇队长去帮托尔，但她突然被从暗地里杀出来的机器人撞到了一边。创造者的机器人很危险，惊奇队长曾与其交过手。她起身跃到一旁，躲闪着激光的追击。

“看招！”惊奇队长大叫一声，一记重拳把机器人捣成了碎片。

惊奇队长深吸一口气，想缓缓劲儿，好助攻托尔。就在那时，又有三个半鸟人与另一个装有激光武器的机器人同时向她发起攻击。一阵拳打脚踢，惊奇队长出拳如霹雳、挪步似疾风、势如破竹。霎时间，她周围布满了机器人的残肢碎体，残兵败将被绑起来了。她觉着肺里一阵恶心，拳头疼痛难忍。



“我不知道自己还能对付几个。”惊奇队长对托尔说。

“再来一个，怎么样？”一个轻蔑刺耳的声音说道。

惊奇队长抬起头，只见创造者站在巨型机器跟前。在四处飞溅的火花的映衬下，他的身影异常清晰。

“欢迎你们啊，”他说，“迎来了你们的末日。”

“他还是很有礼貌的。”托尔将机器人砸碎在水泥地上。

创造者打了个响指，其余的机器人和异人都撤了回来，不再与惊奇队长和托尔抗争。

“大概你们是想知道我在这儿干吗？”创造者说着，缓缓走向惊奇队长和托尔，“别那么紧张，我讲个故事给你们听听——”

“你把偷来的宠物鸟DNA植入异人少年体内，用来组建邪恶的超能力半鸟人军队。”惊奇队长说。

“哦，”创造者怒气冲冲地说，“是的，很好，一语中的啊。”

“行啊，”惊奇队长说着，伸长了胳膊，她几乎要够到天花板了，“今晚我们一决胜负，怎么样？”

“你难道不想听听更多关于我那革新性的新核酸酶吗？它非常适于基因剪接！”

“还是来硬的吧，”惊奇队长坦白，“再说了，现在一提生物，我就难受。”

“你执意如此，那好吧。”创造者说着，打了个响指。瞬间，一个巨大的机器人出现在他身后——像是所有其他机器人组装在一起那么大。

惊奇队长心头一沉，她从来没与这么大的机器人较量过。

“我想我做不到。”她心想。

但随即她想起了托尔对她说的，“你无法事事亲为。”

不过，有了别人的帮助，她几乎可以任何事情。

“一起上！”惊奇队长大叫一声，两人腾空而起。托尔为了牵制激光攻击保护惊奇队长，他飞至屋顶，在房间中来回移动。与此同时，惊奇队长用重拳砸碎了机器人的腿。激光不再追击托尔，而是瞄准了惊奇队长。

惊奇队长闪躲慢了一点，一束激光便击中了她的胳膊。

“噢！”一声尖叫，惊奇队长滚到了一个水泥柱后面，查看后发现，流了一点血，却疼得厉害。

她深吸一口气，从柱子后面冲了出来。她得助攻！

惊奇队长发狂似的环顾这个旧工厂，她发现了一个巨大的、布满灰尘的老旧装备。上面写着“通心粉大师3000”，看起来重约一吨。惊奇队长变了身，她变大到足以拿得动通心粉压制机那样，然后把机器举到空中，用力砸向机器人。

一阵可怕的碾磨声过后，机器人战栗着停了下来，它身上的灯光渐渐暗淡直至熄灭。

“我们成功了！”惊奇队长转向托尔欢呼道。“击掌！”她边说边举起了手。

“哦！”托尔说，“我懂这个，鹰眼教过我。”托尔举起了手，朝着惊奇队长的手掌击了过去，问道：“我做得标准吗？”

“标准！”惊奇队长回答。她环视四周，所有战斗似乎都是和创造者的半鸟人随从们打的。没被惊奇队长和托尔挫败的少数人坐了下来，发着牢骚。“我们投降！”其中一人说，“千万别告诉我们的父母！我们入伙是因为无聊！”

“我不是因为无聊，”另一个少年异人说，“我是因为可以有东西写进大学申请书里才这么干的。”

“我为了挑战一下。”又一个半鸟人随从说。

“我这么做是因为朋友们都这么做。”一个长着紫色羽毛的女孩说。

惊奇队长翻了一个白眼，准备教训教训这群少年，跟着创造者这样的恶棍干是多么的愚蠢，忽然她意识到.....

“创造者去哪儿了？”

惊奇队长环视工厂，一个突然的举动引起了她的注意。原来是创造者，他正朝门口跑去！

惊奇队长闪电般地伸出双臂，逮住了创造者。

“别这么快就溜！”她说，“你得为你的罪行付出代价，还有，你得收拾这烂摊子。”她指着围坐在工厂里的那群闷闷不乐的少年。“说说，你所利用的那些鸟都怎么样了？”

“我绝不说！”创造者尖叫起来，“等我的创造被毁了，你们就再也找不到了！哈哈哈哈哈！”

“是这个按钮，对吧？”托尔边说边指向神秘机器上又大又红的“倒转”按钮。



“不是？”创造者说道，语气难以令人信服。

“那就一定是了。”惊奇队长说。托尔按下按钮，机器通电后，传出一阵巨大的爆裂声。

几秒钟后，惊奇队长眨了眨眼睛，四处张望。

所有像鸟一样的少年现都变成回正常人。奇异的鸟儿在工厂里凌乱无序地转着圈飞来飞去。

第十章

警察用了大半个晚上把创造者和少年共犯带走了，当地的动物救援又花了不少时间把宠物鸟收归回来。一切清理完后，连托尔也略显疲惫了。

“吃沙瓦玛去？”他满怀希望地说。

“我早盼你这么说了。”惊奇队长笑着说。

很快，两位超级英雄来到了泽西城的那家通宵沙瓦玛店，坐在了他们平日常选的角落里。托尔又点了七份三明治，这回女服务员给了他十份。



“免费品尝，”她说，“我就想看看你怎么把十个都吃下去。”

“尊敬的女士，我不会让你失望的。”托尔郑重其事地说完，埋头吃了起来。

吃到一半，门开了，和着欢悦的铃声，鹰眼走了进来。

惊奇队长差点儿被三明治噎住，凌晨两点，鹰眼来努尔烤肉店干什么？

“哟，托尔，”他说着，扑通一下坐到了两位英雄的餐位区，“你好，惊奇队长？”

嚼着沙瓦玛的惊奇队长挤出一句低沉的“嗨”。

“真高兴见到你，我的朋友！”托尔的声音低沉而有力，他用力拍着鹰眼的肩膀，鹰眼几近跌坐在座位上。“你来努尔是想尝尝吗？说真的，这里的三明治是泽西城最好的。”

“不是，”鹰眼说，“我来是为了复仇者联盟汇合。新泽西的事情处理完了，请你们返回总部，情况紧急。”

托尔使劲儿点头，把余下的三明治塞进了嘴里，起身抓住雷神之锤。

“嘿！”从厨房出来的那个女服务员说，“还真行！你吃了五个三明治！”

脸颊上沾满沙瓦玛的托尔咧嘴一笑，他举起手要击掌以示庆贺，服务员与托尔击了掌。

“谁教他的击掌庆贺？”鹰眼悄悄地问惊奇队长。

“这是个秘密，你教的是‘王牌嫌犯’。”惊奇队长不动声色地回道。

鹰眼睁大眼睛，用无辜的眼神盯着惊奇队长。“我不知道你在说什么。”他说得很小声，与服务员攀谈的托尔并没有听到，“我不会再捉弄复仇者了。比如，我不会把托尔的护发素换成胶水。”

卡玛拉转向托尔，咯咯地笑了起来。她搂住托尔巨大的身躯，托尔抱了抱她。

“和你并肩作战，真是荣幸，我伟大的朋友。”他说，“记住：接受帮助，荣幸之至。”

“谢谢你，托尔。”惊奇队长说，“我给你的建议是：扔了那瓶护发素，买瓶新的，听我的。”

“嘿！”鹰眼喊道，“这不公平！”

卡玛拉早晨醒来，觉得很累，却很开心。她又一次打败了创造者。较之过去相当长时间里，卡玛拉对她的超级英雄生活更有信心了。和托

尔交心真是大有帮助。

可是卡玛拉在上学路上又担心起来。她没通过生物测试，这可是件大事。父母会对她非常失望的！卡玛拉虽然原谅自己考砸了，但她不想在记录里有个糟糕的成绩。她以学业为傲。

再加上纳奇亚大概还在生她的气。

午餐时，卡玛拉独自坐着，她沮丧地把盘子里的炸薯条扒拉来扒拉去。

忽听有人说：“你要不想吃，都给我吧。”卡玛拉抬起头，惊讶地发现是纳奇亚。纳奇亚坐了下来，小心翼翼地伸手去抓卡玛拉的薯条。布鲁诺重重地坐在了她身边。

“好了”，纳奇亚说着，咬了一口薯条，“我原谅你，卡玛拉。受不了你像只悲伤不已的小狗，郁闷消沉。”

“我也受不了，”布鲁诺说，“所以我们代你与卢科夫先生沟通了一番，他会让你补考一次。”

“真的吗？”卡玛拉吃惊地问，“你们是怎么跟他说的？”

纳奇亚说：“布鲁诺告诉他，过去一周你一直帮人寻找逃脱的宠物鸟。”

布鲁诺补充说：“你的公民责任心给他留下了深刻的印象。”

卡玛拉惊呆了。“可是不是这样的呀！”她说，“你们不能对老师撒谎啊！”

布鲁诺若有所思地说：“好吧，你有公民责任心。”

“哼，”卡玛拉说，“倒也是。”说完她和布鲁诺都僵住了，内疚地看着纳奇亚。纳奇亚还不知道惊奇队长的事情，卡玛拉不敢相信他们这么亲密，当时居然能把这事瞒过去。



纳奇亚耸了耸肩。“你当然有公民责任心，”她说，“我不知道你有什么事，但我知道你肯定有事。想对我说的時候再说吧。在此期间，你可以补考一次，别难过了。”

“你真的不必——”卡玛拉说，她想起了托尔对她说的话。

接受帮助，荣幸之至。“谢谢你们，”她对朋友们说，“这对我来说很重要。”

一周后，卡玛拉在生物教室参加了补考。过去的一周里，她都在纳奇亚家学习，她从来没这么充分地准备过考试。她下笔如飞，满怀自信地作答了每一个问题。

最后，卡玛拉的试卷底部有一道加分题，她眯眼思索着，感觉这道题好像在哪里见过，她终于想起来了！





漫威
超级英雄
双星故事

美国漫威公司 著
方新柱 译

MARVEL

SPIDER-MAN

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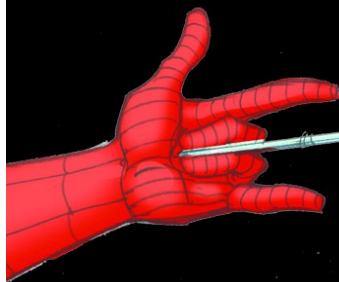


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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES!



Spider-Man

Kid from Queens



Peter Parker

The Crush

Gwen's dad



Captain Stacy



Gwen Stacy



Daredevil



Nova



Cap's shield



vibranium???

Peter's aunt,
who loves to bake



Aunt May

world-famous

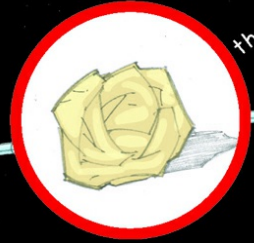


milk and cookies!

the jock



Flash



crumpled paper

the jock's
weapon of choice



Thing



Iron Man

Quack!



a rubber ducky



and a creepy spider

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SPIDER-MAN



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The Story of Spider-Man

Peter Parker was just an average kid who loved science. While attending a presentation about radiation, he was bitten by a radioactive spider. This bite gave Peter amazing abilities. He could cling to walls, leap like a spider, and sense danger.

Peter used his scientific knowledge to create sticky fluid and web-shooters. With these he could spin webs and swing from skyscraper to skyscraper high above the streets of New York City. He created a costume and called himself Spider-Man!

One night, Peter's beloved uncle Ben was killed by a burglar—a burglar Spider-Man could have stopped earlier that night but had decided not to. Peter was devastated. But he remembered something Uncle Ben had always told him: With great power comes great responsibility.

He would never again pass up an opportunity to help. From that day on, Peter used his powers to fight for justice and defend the public. He stopped everything from petty thieves to Super Villains.

Peter has had countless amazing adventures since becoming Spider-Man. This is just one of them...



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Chapter 1

“Don't look up, don't look up, don't look up,” Peter Parker mumbled. He squinted and tried to will away what was coming toward him.

“Hey, bookworm!” Flash Thompson called out from the other end of the hall. Peter looked up from his locker. Flash was Midtown High's quarterback and was always followed by a group of other jocks and adoring cheerleaders.

“Think fast!” Flash said as he tossed a balled-up piece of loose-leaf paper at Peter. It bounced off his forehead and into his locker.



“Real funny, Eugene,” Peter said. He never called “Flash” by his nickname, because he knew the jock hated his real name. “Maybe if you used paper for something other than throwing, you'd actually graduate high school before you're a senior citizen,” Peter quipped.

“And maybe if you spent less time studying and more time relaxing you'd have better luck with the ladies,” Flash said, motioning to the giggling cheerleaders several lockers away.

“Luck, huh? Glad that's something you think you have, because it's all you've got,” Peter shot back.

Flash waved his hand in the air to dismiss Peter. But Peter could tell by the look in Flash's eye that his comment had stung.

“Come on, crew. Let's not waste any more time with this loser,” Flash said. Then he and his fan club headed down the hall.

Peter picked up the crumpled paper from the floor of his locker. He opened it. Even though he wasn't surprised at what he saw there, he had to admit that it still bothered him.

He tossed the paper into the recycling bin. Flash shot a look back at Peter over his shoulder. By his smile, Peter could tell that Flash had seen him open the paper and throw it away. And the worst part was that Flash seemed to be enjoying every second of it. If Peter thought he'd stuck it to Flash before with his comment about Flash's need for luck, it was Flash who had the last laugh — as usual.

Flash and Peter went their separate ways — Flash to the schoolyard and Peter to the school library. Maybe Flash was right. Maybe Peter did spend too much time studying and not enough having fun. After all, it was lunchtime, and the rest of his class was outside enjoying the beautiful late-fall weather. He was holed up in the stuffy school library, preparing for the next week's science test. And he was the only one in there.

Well, almost the only one.

“Hey, Pete!” Gwen Stacy said.

“Shhh!” the school librarian scolded.

“I thought I was the only one who spent my lunchtime studying,” she whispered.

“Even a girl as smart as you has to be wrong sometimes,” Peter said, and he thought he saw Gwen blush a little.

“Well, I couldn't ask for better company,” she replied.

Then it was Peter's turn to squirm uncomfortably. He set his books down next to her and took a seat. If Flash could see him now! For once Peter was happy to be a bit of an outsider. In this case it meant he got to spend time

alone with Gwen Stacy. There was no way any other kid in his class would be joining them. Who else would pass up the beautiful weather for a study session?



Then the library door creaked open, and Peter couldn't believe what he saw.

Flash was on his way in. What could he be doing in a library? Smiling, he slowly walked over to where Peter and Gwen were sitting.

“Hey, bookworm, I noticed you dropped this,” Flash said, and handed Peter the drawing he'd thrown out just a few minutes earlier. There it was in plain sight. And Gwen was staring at it, too. What would she think? Would she find it funny? Would she laugh at him?

Peter ripped the paper off the table and grabbed his books.

“I've got to go,” he said, and pushed the chair back, maybe a little too hard.

“Shhhhhhhh!!!” the librarian said again.

“But I was just doing my good deed for the day!” Flash said sarcastically.

“You wouldn't know a good deed if it hit you like a ton of bricks!” Peter

replied, imagining a ton of bricks falling onto Flash.

“How would you know about a ton of anything? You're such a weakling you couldn't even lift a pound!” Flash said.

Peter stormed out of the room and slammed the door behind him.

“Shhhhhhhh!!!” the librarian said so loudly that Peter could hear him through the closed door.

Peter was shaking.

He was hurt.

He was embarrassed.

But most of all he was angry!



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Chapter 2

Peter spent the rest of the day distracted. In chemistry lab, his teacher noticed that he was not quite himself.

“Can anyone tell me the symbol for gold on the periodic table of elements?” the teacher asked.

When no one could answer, he turned to Peter, hoping his star student would know.

“Peter?” he asked.

“Huh? Oh...” Peter said. “Sorry, what were you asking?”

His teacher looked deflated.

“The symbol for gold. On the periodic table,” the teacher repeated.

“Ummm, G???” Peter answered.

“AU. AU is the symbol for gold,” the teacher said with disappointment.

And Peter was disappointed, too. He didn't like anyone getting the better of him. And Flash was certainly doing just that. He had him so down that Peter couldn't even concentrate in his favorite class. He couldn't even remember the most obvious answers.

But he did remember that piece of paper with the drawing and how he'd felt when Gwen saw it. Peter just wanted that day to end!

The bell rang, signaling the end of the school day. Peter made his way to his locker to collect his things.

“Pete!” someone called from behind him.

He turned to see Gwen.

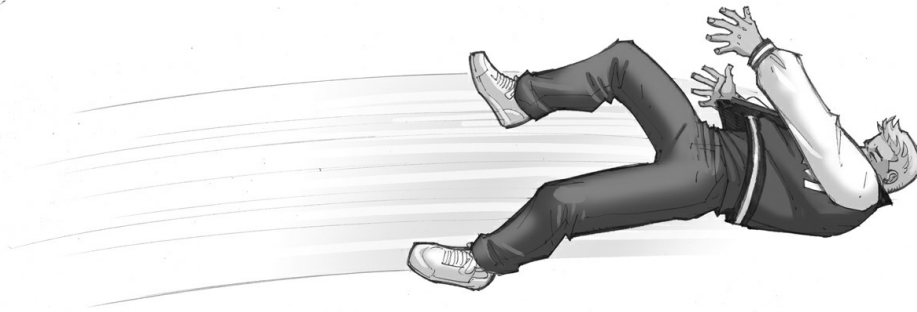
“Hey, I just wanted to say that I think what Flash did before was a bit mean,” she said.

“Yeah, well, I don't let it get to me,” Peter replied, trying to smile.

“It sure doesn't look that way,” Gwen said.

“You're not your upbeat self. Don't let that jerk get to you. You'll be the one laughing when you've won a Nobel Prize and he's still repeating

sophomore year.”



Peter tried to imagine this.

“Thanks,” he said, forcing a smile.

“You're welcome,” she said, grinning. “Want to go hang out at the Queensboro Coffee Shoppe? We can finish up our studying. Pick up where we left off in the library?”

Peter thought about it. It sure was tempting. But he knew he might not be the best company right now. He was in a really bad mood, after all. And besides, what if Flash busted in on them again? Peter was sure he wouldn't be able to hold back. And he couldn't hit Flash. Peter packed an unusually powerful punch.

“I wish I could,” Peter said. “But I promised Aunt May that I'd run a few errands before I got home.”

Gwen looked disappointed, but understood. Peter searched for things to grab from his locker and paused, his eyes landing on his gym bag. Then, as Gwen walked away, he snatched it and made his way up to the school's top floor.

Peter looked around to make sure the coast was clear. Then he slipped into a small supply closet that he knew hadn't been used in years.

He unzipped his bag and took out his famous red and blue mask, gloves, and boots. He always wore the rest of his costume under his street clothes, just in case he needed a quick change. He put on the rest of his costume and relied on his special power—his spider-sense—to warn him if anyone was around.

Confident, Peter sneaked up the stairs to the rooftop and pointed his

wrists at the school's clock tower. Then he shot streams of webs from his web-shooters, and faster than anyone could notice, he swung out over Queens toward the city.

Being Spider-Man

didn't mean Peter didn't have to deal with the same problems as ordinary teenagers. But it did give him unique

ways of blowing off

steam. One of his

favorite ways was using his webbing to swing over the rooftops of New York and through the skyscraper canyons of Fifth Avenue.



Spider-Man swung his way to the Queens cable car that ran over the Queensboro Bridge into Manhattan. He shot his webbing at a car and hitched a ride under the cab into the city. The wall-crawler would make it to Manhattan in no time!

“Woo-hoo!!!!” Peter hooted as he swung over the East River. There were few things that made him happier than this. He climbed up the side of the car and noticed a little boy looking out over the skyline with his hands

against the window. Peter waved at the surprised kid, who smiled and waved back. The boy tugged on his dad's shirt, but before the man turned around, Peter was gone. He'd leaped off the cab and was swinging between skyscrapers and springing from water towers.

Soon he was in Central Park, swinging from the trees and enjoying the crisp fall air. He noticed people running and biking on the park trails, pointing up at him in amazement as he swung by. A little boy dropped his ice cream as he watched his favorite Super Hero swing right overhead. Everything was so different when he was dressed as Spider-Man. People were interested in him. They were excited when they saw him. They grabbed their smartphones and snapped pictures. It wasn't like school at all.

Peter looked down and saluted his fans. He loved the attention.

But being Spider-Man wasn't all about having fun. And Peter was reminded of this when his spider-sense began to tingle.

"Of course," Peter said. "Nothing like a problem to spoil a perfect afternoon."

As he continued to swing through Central Park, he looked for any sign of trouble. Then he noticed lights flashing from police cars. There were at least a dozen of them parked at odd angles in front of the Museum of Natural History. Then he looked up and couldn't believe his eyes.

"What's going on?" he said.

Daredevil, another Super Hero, whom Spider-Man had worked with a bunch of times, was swinging away from the scene. Daredevil had a special extending billy club that he used to swing around the city the same way Spider-Man used his webs.

Daredevil turned around.

"Spider-Man!" he said, looking at Peter.

Peter noticed Daredevil's glance. He must have been using his other senses to spot Spider-Man. After all, as Spidey knew, Daredevil was blind. No matter what had tipped him off, Daredevil started to flee over the city. Spider-Man chased after him. Both of the heroes swung through alleyways, over rooftops, across bridges, and through tunnels until Spidey finally caught up with Daredevil to confront him.

"Hey, DD, what's up?" Spider-Man asked. He looked down. "Other than us, obviously."

Daredevil gritted his teeth and took a swing at Spider-Man with his billy club.

“Whoa. You in a bad mood or something?” Spider-Man asked.

Daredevil just grunted and swung at him again.

“Um, okay, if it's a fight you're looking for...” Spider-Man said, then lifted his wrists and shot webbing at Daredevil, and the pair began to struggle in midair!

In the clash, Spider-Man noticed something fall from Daredevil's belt. He shot a web to snatch whatever it was. And in that moment of distraction he allowed Daredevil to escape.

Peter looked at the object he'd caught. It just looked like a chunk of metal—very heavy metal, but still metal. And if it came from the Museum of Natural History, it must be valuable. Peter rushed back to the gathered officers. He might have lost Daredevil, but he got something in return.



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Chapter 3

“Here you go, Officer,” Spider-Man said as he dropped the metal into the sergeant's hand.

“Wow, you Super Hero types never stop surprising me. One of you steals something, another one brings it back,” the cop said.

“Honestly, I'm not sure what's going on. The guy who got away is usually on our side,” Spider-Man replied.

“We know. Daredevil's helped us before, too,” the sergeant said. “But he's now wanted for questioning.”

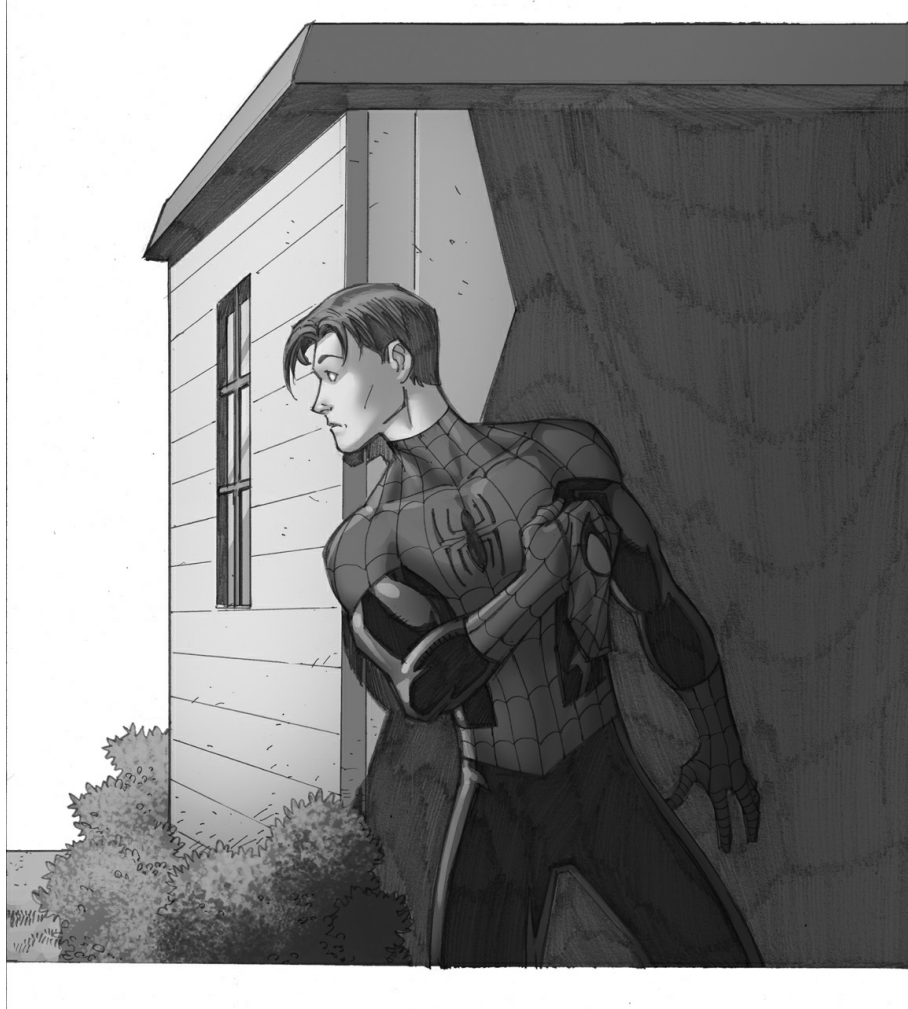
None of this was making sense.

“Well, got to run—or swing, I should say,” Spider-Man said. “Hey, before I go, what's so special about that chunk of metal?”

“It's from the vibranium exhibit at the museum,” the sergeant said. “It's the strongest metal on earth. Really rare. Captain America's shield is made from it. Better hope Cap doesn't go bad. This stuff would hurt if it was thrown at you!”

“Yikes!” Spider-Man said, not wanting to think about it. He waved to the officers, who thanked him; then he swung off across the river toward home. By the time he got there, the sun was setting. He swooped down behind his garage and changed out of his costume.

“Peter! I was worried about you!” Aunt May said when he finally walked into the house. “Where have you been?”



Aunt May had always been edgy. But she'd been worse since Uncle Ben died. She often thought the worst when Peter was running late. Peter kissed her on the cheek and smiled, which always made her smile, too.

"I'm sorry, Aunt May," Peter said. "I lost track of time studying after school, and then I got stuck on the train. I didn't have service in the tunnel, so I couldn't call."

Peter didn't like lying to Aunt May, but he couldn't ever tell her the truth. He couldn't tell her he was the amazing Spider-Man.

"I'm just glad you're home," she said, squeezing his hand.

After dinner, Peter went up to his room to do his homework and was soon ready for bed. But he had a lot of trouble sleeping. He wondered why Daredevil had stolen the vibranium. He worried about his upcoming science test.

Before he knew it, morning had arrived and it was time for school again. He wasn't sure how much he'd slept, or if he'd even slept at all. He felt like a robot going through the motions as he showered, brushed his teeth, and got ready for school.

“See you later, Aunt May,” he said between yawns as he left the house.

“Peter!” his aunt called after him. “You forgot this,” she said, standing at the door, holding his backpack. “You know, studying is great and important, but if you study too hard you'll just exhaust yourself.”

Peter pecked her on the cheek and continued on to the subway, which he rode to school, completely wiped out from the night before.



“Hey, look who it is!” Flash shouted as Peter walked into Midtown High.

“Not in the mood,” Peter replied.

“Bookworm's ‘not in the mood,’” Flash teased.

Peter opened his locker and yawned.

“Tired, Parker? What, was the Math-lete World Series on last night? Went into extra innings?” Flash said, elbowing his buddies for a laugh.

“Hey, check this out,” one of Flash's friends said. “Somebody's posted another angle.” He held up his smartphone, and there was a clip of Spider-Man battling Daredevil. Peter's fight had gone viral!

“Ooooooh!!!!”

“Dude, let me see that,” Flash said, grabbing the phone from his friend. “Man, he's freaking amazing. Send me this link. I want to print out some of those pictures and put them up in my locker. Maybe that's what I'll major in when I get to college—Super Hero. You can do that, right?”

Anytime anyone talked about Spider-Man around Peter, he became uncomfortable. He couldn't let anyone find out he was Spider-Man. So he never knew how to react.

“I don't think any of them go to college,” Peter said. He was immediately sorry he said it.

“Huh?” Flash said.

“I don't think Super Heroes go to college. I think they're a bunch of dopes. I don't trust any of them,” Peter said, not sure how to get out of the conversation without bringing more attention to himself and to Spider-Man. He felt himself blush a little at being put on the spot. Of course he didn't believe these things, but if the other guys thought he hated Super Heroes, they'd never discover he was one.

“Hohoha!” Flash laughed. “I think Petey here is scared of Spider-Man! Is that it? Is Petey-weety afwaid of spiders?” he said in a babyish voice, making “Itsy-Bitsy Spider” gestures with his hands.

Peter slapped his hands away.

“Ouch!” Flash shouted genuinely, grabbing one of his hands where Peter had hit him. Peter had held back his strength, but even a light tap from Spider-Man was going to sting a little. Still, Flash tried to make it look like he wasn't hurt.

As he walked away he shouted down the hall, “Better be careful, Petey. Spider-Man is going to get you! Bwahahaha!”

As Flash moved on to his class, Peter couldn't help burying his face in his locker and cracking a smile.



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Chapter 4

On his way to his next class, Peter bumped into Gwen.

“Peter!” she said, smiling at him.

“Oh, hi, Gwen,” Peter responded, smiling back.

“Hey, I just got an alert on my phone that says they have Wall Street blocked off. Some sort of thing going on at the stock exchange,” Gwen said, looking concerned.

“My dad works down there,” she continued. “I hope he's okay. I texted him but haven't heard back yet.” Gwen's father was a captain in the New York City Police Department.

Peter's first thought was that he'd throw on his Spider-Man costume and swing down to the stock exchange to see what was up. He had actually almost moved to jump away from Gwen and up to the roof. Whenever he heard about trouble, his first thought was always to run off and check it out, and then help if he could.

But he stopped himself this time. He was there at school to learn. He couldn't run off every time he heard something might be wrong.

“Did they say what was going on?” Peter asked.

“Nope,” Gwen answered. “Just some news that blocks were roped off in the area.”

Peter decided to wait until he had more information. After all, the city was protected by one of the world's top police forces. They could easily solve most of the city's problems. And if it seemed like they could use a hand, he'd be there as fast as possible.

“Well, let me know what's up,” Peter said.

“I'm sure everything's fine. You'll hear back from your dad soon. He's just got to be busy with everything that's going on down there.”

“I hope so,” Gwen replied.

For the next two hours, Peter couldn't keep himself focused on his

schoolwork. He stared out windows, looking for police helicopters or other Super Heroes rushing toward downtown Manhattan. He fought the urge to go check out the scene. It was in his nature.



Then, just before the dismissal bell rang, Peter heard two kids in his English class whispering about the scene downtown.

“I heard it was another Super Hero scare down at the stock exchange.” One of them said.

If there was any truth to that at all, Peter had to get involved.

Brrrrrinnnnng! Brrrrrinnnnng!

Right after the bell rang Peter headed into Manhattan. He sneaked off the school grounds without anyone seeing him and swung quickly under the tracks of the elevated number 7 subway line on his way to downtown.

Before him was the New York Stock Exchange, and standing on top of it was his fellow Super Hero—and his good friend—Nova!



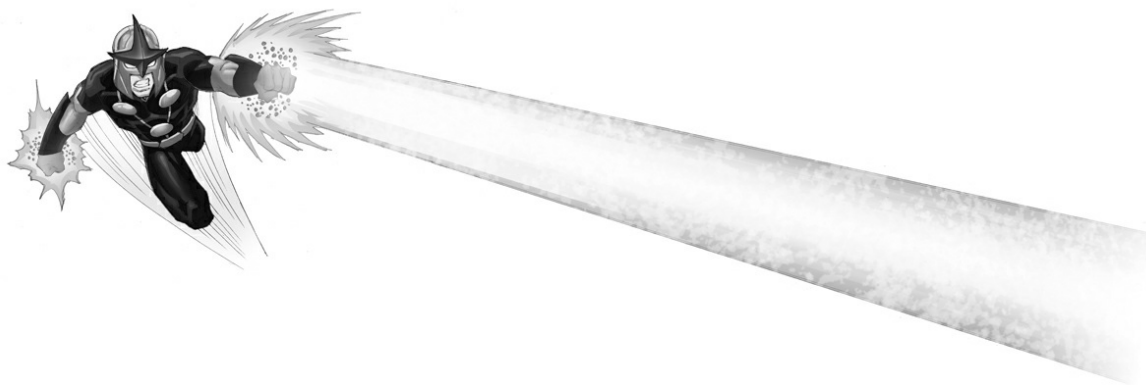
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Chapter 5

Okay, now I know something's up, Spider-Man thought.

He didn't know Daredevil all that well. Sure, he knew enough to say that he was one of the good guys. But he couldn't say he was totally, 100 percent, absolutely sure he'd never go over to the other side and become a Super Villain. But Spider-Man had fought beside Nova a bunch of times, and the two heroes had become pretty good friends.

“Hey, Nova!” Spider-Man shouted as he swung by. “Not sure what's going on here, but I'm sure it's all a great big misunderstanding...”



“Spider-Man!” Nova said. He even sounded like a villain.

“Yeah, it's me, Spider-Man, your fellow Super Hero, buddy.”

Nova lifted his hand and shot a blast at Spider-Man.

“Um, are you mad at me or something? If it has to do with that five bucks I didn't lend you for a sports drink a few weeks ago, I swear, I really didn't have it on me... Yikes!” Spider-Man jumped out of the way as Nova sent another blast in his direction.

Meanwhile, Spider-Man's spider-sense was tingling like crazy. He

looked down and saw that the police were trained on him as well. It looked like the entire police force was gathered below. There were sirens blaring and lights flashing all over.

“Spider-Man and Nova, this is captain Stacy of the New York City Police Department. Surrender yourselves and you will not be hurt!” Captain Stacy announced.

“Surrender?” Spider-Man said.

“I figured you, or some other costumed creep, would try to stop me,” said Nova. “So I already warned the cops. I told them to expect other Super Heroes to arrive.”

“They think we're working together?” Spider-Man asked, shocked.

Nova smiled. “Yep, exactly as I set it up. Worked like a charm. So, what do you say, Spidey? They already think you're a criminal. Why not reap the benefits and work with me here?” Nova asked.

“Have you lost your mind? Oh, sorry, obvious question,” Spider-Man replied. “You clearly have.”

“Come on, Spidey, if you can't beat me, then join me,” Nova replied.

“No way, no how, pal. I have no idea what's gotten into you, or Daredevil, but I'm going to figure it out,” Spider-Man said.

“Spider-Man and Nova, we are giving you another sixty seconds to surrender. We're prepared to act if you won't come peacefully,” Captain Stacy announced.

“They're going to get you one way or another,” Nova said. “If you try to run, they'll think you're in this with me anyway. Or you can help me and actually get something out of it.”

“What do you want here, anyway?” Spider-Man asked.

“Thirty Seconds.” Captain Stacy shouted.

“Will you help me?” Nova said.



“It depends,” Spider-Man replied. “What do I have to do?”

Nova smiled. “The building has been evacuated. Through the third-floor window on the northeast corner, you’ll see a notebook computer. It will help us hack into any financial system in the world. We can divert funds. Grab it and I’ll split whatever I snag with you.”

“So that’s what you’re up to!” Spider-Man said, proud of himself for tricking Nova into telling him. “Thanks for the tip!”

“Fifteen seconds!”

Spider-Man swooped around behind Nova and fired his webs at him, turning him into a Super Hero cocoon! Nova was fastened tightly to the roof, and Spider-Man was getting ready to move in for questioning when he heard Captain Stacy yell from below: “Time’s up!!!”

Before Spider-Man could do anything else, rockets filled with some sort of gas started to streak around him. He began to cough but was able to dodge the pellets with his super skills. He weaved his way around their paths and

swooped into the third-floor window Nova had mentioned. He webbed the notebook and grabbed it, shoving it under his arm, and swung back outside.

The cops were still firing their gas, so Spider-Man took a deep breath and swung down over their heads, avoiding it. He dropped the notebook to Captain Stacy.

“That’s what he was looking for!” Spider-Man shouted down to them as they continued to try to stop him. “Keep it safe!”

Captain Stacy looked up at Spider-Man skeptically. Peter nodded as if to say “Honest, Captain!” Captain Stacy looked down at the laptop.

Maybe Spider-Man is on our side, Captain Stacy thought.

Spider-Man saluted the cops, then shot a web at the flagpole on top of Federal Hall across the street and swung away. He took a quick look back at the stock exchange and saw Nova streak up into the sky and out of sight.

He must have slipped away while the cops were focused on me! Peter said to himself. Zero for two—first Daredevil gets away, now Nova. You’re not doing too well here, Spidey.

Just when Peter thought he was clear, he heard police choppers overhead.

You have to hand it to those guys—they don’t give up easily! he thought.

The copters swiveled and swerved to keep track of him. But like an acrobat he tumbled and darted all over the city streets. When he was sure he was out of the copters’ views, he slipped into an alleyway. He couldn’t walk back out in his costume. But he didn’t have anything to change into.

Spidey frantically took off his mask and made his way out of the alley, walking proudly in a suit of webbed-together garbage bags and a newspaper fedora.

He started walking down the street, hardly noticing the sideways glances he was getting. After all, to a guy who spends a lot of time swinging around the city in a red-and-blue suit, walking around in garbage bags was no sweat at all.

Two businessmen walked by and gave Peter a strange look. Peter tipped his hat to them and walked on. But he could still hear their conversation.

“Man, people are getting weirder and weirder in this city. Did you hear what’s going on down at the stock exchange?” one of the businessmen asked his friend.

“Yeah, and now they're saying Spider-Man's involved, too,” the other replied. “I never trusted those guys anyway. You ask me, they're too dangerous to be out there.”

Peter shook his head. Two heroes—Nova and Daredevil—had gone bad, Spider-Man looked like a villain, a bully was bothering him at school, and the girl he was crushing on might be interested in him! Not to mention that he now had to ride the subway home wearing garbage bags and newspapers. How could things get any crazier?

And then Peter remembered: he had a science test coming up at the end of the week.



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Chapter 6

Peter spent the next morning listening to Aunt May worry about Super Heroes in general and Spider-Man in particular.

“That Spider-Man really gets to me. I mean, why wear a mask if you don't have something to hide?” she asked.

Peter nearly smiled. Of course he wore his mask as Spider-Man in part so his enemies wouldn't harm the people he loved—to protect Aunt May—and here she was thinking he wore it to hide deep dark secrets about his intentions.

If she only knew...

When he got to school about an hour later, he found the usual mixed bag of talk: sports, music, celebrities, fellow students, and, of course, Spider-Man.

“Did you see those clips of the stock exchange?” Flash was asking one of his pals.

Peter rolled his eyes. Why did his locker have to be right next to Flash's?

“Man, not sure how Spider-Man does it, but he nails every crook in town.”

Without thinking Peter jumped to his friend Nova's defense.

“Nova's not a crook,” Peter fired back.

Flash turned around slowly.

“Figures he'd root for the villain,” Flash said, right in Peter's face.

“What are you reading? The *Daily Bugle* Website? Every other paper thinks Spider-Man saved the day,” Flash stated. “Petey here doesn't like Spider-Man so much.”



“And I hate to do this, but I have to side with Flash here, Pete.”

Peter turned around to see Gwen.

“My dad said himself that Spider-Man was a big help, even though he didn't give me details when I asked,” she added.

“All I'm saying is I don't trust him, that's all,” Peter said.

“And all I'm saying is you're just scared of a real man like Spider-Man,” Flash teased. “Afraid of what he'd do to a wimp like you? Huh?”

“Flash, cut it out,” Gwen said.

“Oh, sorry,” Flash said as he threw his hands up. “Forgot you two geeks are in love.”

“We're not ...” Peter and Gwen said at the same time.

Flash biffed Peter on the head.

“Good choice, Parker. Her dad's a police officer. Maybe he can protect you from big, bad Spider-Man!” Flash said. “I'd watch my back when I'm walking to the subway if I were you. Look behind the shower curtain when you walk into the bathroom. Check under your bed before you go to sleep. Spider-Man's coming for you...” Flash said in a singsong voice.

“Ignore it, ignore it,” Peter whispered.



He opened his locker and jumped back as hundreds of little plastic spiders fell out of it and onto him. It had been rigged!

“Hahahahahahahahahahaha!”

Flash and his friends laughed, jeering at Peter.

“If you think those spiders are scary, just think about one the size of a guy! Better watch out, Peter Parker—the Spider-Man's coming to get you!”

“Jerks!” Gwen said. But Flash just smirked and walked away.

Gwen grabbed a few toy spiders. “Here, I'll help you clean these up,” she said to Peter.

“Thanks,” he said. “You know, I didn't really mean you weren't... that I wasn't... I mean, when Flash said that thing about me and you, I didn't want you to think...” Peter stuttered, scrambling for the right words.

“Oh, I know, don't worry about it. Neither did I. I mean, neither do I. Oh, never mind,” Gwen said, brushing her hair behind an ear nervously. “Um, I'll see you in chemistry, yeah?”

“Er, yeah. See you in a bit,” Peter said. He could feel his face getting all

warm. It was a stranger feeling than anything else he'd ever felt.
It was even odder than his spider-sense.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 7

That night Peter decided he had to put everything else out of his mind and study. He knew high school was important if he wanted to have any shot at a good college and a career as a scientist. He powered on his tablet and started to read about chemistry, from things as simple as water's molecular structure to things as exciting as unbreakable metal alloys.

Peter had forgotten how much he loved science. He had been so distracted by other things recently. He had totally lost sight of one of the things that made him happiest.

As he read and researched, he quickly dismissed the dozens of app updates and push notifications that popped up on his screen—everything from weather alerts to newly available game levels.

But one notice he dismissed too quickly. He was getting tired. He'd been studying for hours. He was sure he must have read it wrong. Because he could have sworn he had read something that couldn't be true.

Did that say what I thought it said? Peter wondered.

He tapped his search engine app and typed in *News for Spider-Man*.

Peter chose the *Daily Bugle's* Website. He knew that the publisher, a man named J. Jonah Jameson, hated Spider-Man. Jameson was convinced the hero was a menace, as he called him. And he spent most of his time trying to get the public to believe Spider-Man was a villain, too. But Jameson also had the best reporters in the business. So even though he forced his staff to paint Spider-Man in a bad light, the stories usually had more information than any other news source.

Peter tapped on a link to a video. He couldn't believe what he was seeing! The big, rocky Super Hero known as the Thing was standing in a dark room with what looked like Spider-Man tied to a chair in front of him.

“What the heck?” Peter said.

Peter pressed play. The clip began to run. “If ya haven't noticed, a bunch of us are tired of playing the part of the Super Hero. We work night an' day

protecting you people, and we get nothing out of it,” the Thing said. “So we're gonna take what you owe us, without asking. Consider it payback. Daredevil is on board with us, and so is Nova. And every day more an' more step forward. They want to join the Super Hero Resistance.

“But this bozo over here hasn't done anything but get in our way.”

“And because of that,” the Thing continued, as he slapped his captive Spider-Man upside the head.

Whoa! Peter flinched. *Even a love tap from the Thing would hurt!* he thought.

The Thing went on, “we're going to make him help us. In fact, we're gonna keep him locked up in here to do our dirty work. Our real dirty work, that is—cleaning the toilets, ironing our costumes, whatever.”

It was weird for Peter to see himself onscreen in that position, even though he knew the guy on the screen wasn't really Spider-Man.

“See, you got twenty-four hours. If you hand over the laptop this guy over here snagged from us, we'll set Spider-Man free. Otherwise, we squash him like the bug he is, and me and Nova and Daredevil and a whole bunch of other heroes destroy the city, one borough at a time. And we take the spoils for ourselves.”



“And just in case you people don't care if Spider-Man lives or dies, I have a special treat for you. I'm gonna unmask this guy. Even if Spider-Man doesn't have any friends or family, the guy under the mask probably does. That means someone's bound to step up.”

Peter leaned in. This was getting weirder and weirder.

The Thing's big rocky hand clenched the mask of the Spider-Man on the screen. The Thing whipped it off and revealed the wall-crawler's true identity. Spider-Man was really... Flash Thompson?



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 8

“Whoa,” was all Peter could utter.

He stared at the screen. *How in the world had Flash Thompson wound up in this situation? And where had he gotten that cheesy Spidey suit? I mean, mine looks waaay better than that, Peter thought. None of this was making sense. Was it all just a trap? Was Flash in on it?*



Someone knocked on Peter's bedroom door.

“Come in,” Peter said, and Aunt May entered.

“Peter, there was just a report on the TV,” she said, sounding very nervous. “A boy from your school's been kidnapped. A boy named Eugene. They're saying he might be Spider-Man!”

“I know, I saw,” Peter said.

“Well, please, please be careful, Peter. Shut and lock that window,” she said while shutting and locking it herself. “These Super Heroes can fly, they can blast through walls—sometimes it seems there's nothing they can't do.”

“In that case I'm not sure how much a locked window's going to do,” Peter chuckled.

She took his hand. “I couldn't bear if something were to happen to you.”

Peter kissed her on the cheek.

“I can take care of myself,” he said. And although Aunt May smiled and nodded, Peter could tell by the look on her face that she didn't believe him.

“I've got some homework to finish up,” he sighed. “Don't worry about it, Aunt May. We'll be all right. Who's going to come looking for a random lady and her nephew in the middle of Queens? I mean, what would they get out of it? Unless they're looking for your chocolatechip cookies. I can see that, actually. They're worthy of an attack on the house!”

This managed to get a chuckle from Aunt May, who closed the door as she left the room, wishing Peter luck in his studies.

But Peter wasn't laughing at all, and he definitely wasn't thinking about his studies. As soon as he was alone, he started to research more about the story. According to what he read, no one knew where the clip had been filmed. The *Daily Bugle* site said that the Thing had contacted it saying he and the other fallen Super Heroes wanted the laptop dropped off at Belvedere Castle in Central Park. Police had already roped off and searched that area and found no sign of the Thing, Spider-Man, or anyone else.

Peter paused. It didn't really sound like Flash's life was in danger. The Thing had basically said they were going to turn Flash into their housekeeper. He'd have a miserable life. He'd spend every minute worried that the heroes were waiting around every corner, ready to toss orders at him. He'd be afraid to simply walk down a hall. Basically, he'd feel the same way he made Peter feel every day at school.

Maybe Spider-Man didn't need to get involved in this one. After all, it

looked like the cops had it under control.

And if they didn't, wouldn't Flash just be getting what he deserved?

Peter turned off his tablet, lay down on his bed, and stared at the ceiling. He was imagining his new, easy life at school without Flash.

He thought about it a lot.

And after a long while of thinking about it, when Aunt May was asleep and the house was quiet, Peter put on his Spider-Man costume. He leaped from his window and swung toward New York City. As much as Peter disliked Flash Thompson, Spider-Man needed to save the day.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 9

In no time, Spider-Man had swung over the bridge and straight to Central Park. He carried an old, broken laptop tucked away in his costume. He'd dug it out of his closet and stripped it, knowing he could always use the spare parts for his tech experiments. Then he had taken the shell of the machine with him to Central Park.

He saw Belvedere Castle in the distance. It was a huge building made to look like a grand palace. It overlooked a quiet pond and sat next to the park's Great Lawn. Best of all, it was surrounded by trees. This made it easy for Spider-Man to sneak past the police. He climbed into the treetops and made a web tightrope from one to another, walking over the heads of officers who were guarding the castle.

When he reached a group of trees that overlooked the palace, he shot a web toward its tower and swung down to the courtyard where the Bugle's article said the Thing wanted the laptop left. Right after Spider-Man dropped it off, he swung back up into the trees, completely unseen.



Then he waited in the trees.

Nothing.

Spider-Man had hoped that whoever was behind this had been watching the castle. He thought they'd show themselves when he dropped the laptop off, but no luck. The police barricade must have kept the place clear. Spider-Man needed to move to Plan B. He took out his phone and zoomed in on the castle courtyard and the computer and began recording.

"I've delivered the laptop, as you've requested. Now, set Spider-Man free," he said in a voice much deeper than his own. Then he created a fake name, uploaded the video to VidTube, and sent an e-mail to every media outlet he could think of.

In just a matter of minutes, he noticed the police starting to move in. But before they even got close to the castle, Spider-Man heard a roar overhead. He looked up and saw something shooting across the sky. It sounded like a jet's roar, but it was moving way too fast.

The streak shot down to the courtyard, near where the laptop was, and

then darted right back up into the sky. Spider-Man knew he was about to lose the laptop and whoever had taken it. Worse still, he had a feeling that they weren't going to keep up their part of the deal and return Flash Thompson.

Spider-Man needed to act, and fast. As the streak of red and gold whizzed overhead, Spidey shot a web at the heels of the flying figure and was soon jerked up. He was whisked away, over the park and New York City, riding behind the criminal like a windsurfer. He held on tightly to the webs as he soared over the skyline at what felt like light speed.

He guessed that whoever he was following hadn't felt the webs attach to him and had no idea Spider-Man had hitched a ride. Skyscrapers and bridges seemed to zoom by. The water below was calm, but surely cold this time of year. As they started to descend, Spider-Man worried they were going to land right in it.

But upon hitting the ground, he discovered they'd landed on one of the many small islands that surrounded the city—the ones that were off limits to almost everyone and hardly ever occupied.

Spider-Man looked up, and looking directly back at him was Iron Man!

“You've gone bad, too, huh?” Spider-Man said.

He expected Iron Man to raise up his hands and blast him with one of his repulsor beams. But he just tried to run—and in a pretty clunky way, at that.

“Um, you're not actually Iron Man, are you?” Spider-Man said to whomever was limping away from him. One thing was sure—the guy trying to pass for Iron Man wasn't doing such a great job of it.

Spider-Man shot his webs at the fleeing suspect. The bad guy quickly got tangled up and fell down. Spidey ran up to him and noticed that he was wearing a good—but not nearly perfect—replica of one of Iron Man's suits of armor. He tore off the man's helmet and gasped. He was face-to-face with a hairless man whose pale skin was so white he could practically see his veins beneath.

“Where's Flash?” Spider-Man asked.

The villain laughed, as if to say he wasn't going to tell him.

Spider-Man looked around. The island was very small. It could fit no more than a few houses on it. He spotted a crude shack on the opposite shore. He rushed there and tore off the splintered door.

And there he was: Flash Thompson. He was tied to a chair, still wearing the Spider-Man costume without his mask. And he looked desperate and terrified, and most bizarrely for Peter, he was hysterically crying.

Spider-Man rushed over to untie him.

“It's okay, kid. We're going to get you out of here,” he told him.

As he loosened the ropes to free Flash, Spider-Man noticed that the high school student was shaking, almost violently. He was too scared even to stand. Spider-Man steadied Flash as he continued to sob.

“I'm so sorry. It was so stupid of me. So, so stupid!” Flash cried.

“Look, this wasn't your fault,” Spider-Man said, amazed at himself for feeling bad for Flash.

“But it—it sort of was. There's this kid at school. And he's real scared of you. I thought it was funny, so I...”

“You put on a Spider-Man costume to scare him,” Spider-Man finished, and Flash nodded.

“You're right, that was stupid,” Spider-Man admitted as he whipped away the last rope from Flash's hands. “But not stupid enough to wind up in this position.”

“He—he thought I was you,” Flash finished. “I was hiding behind the basketball courts and he must have seen me there. He thought I was you and...”

Flash began to cry again.

Spider-Man's spider-sense tingled and he turned, expecting the guy he'd webbed up to be behind him. But then he realized that his senses were reacting to something below.

He pushed Flash and the chair out of the way and made a fist.

“Well, it took you long enough, webhead!” said the Thing from the bottom of a pit that had to be at least a hundred feet deep. Thing was joined by Daredevil, Nova, and Iron Man.

“This is odd,” Spider-Man asked.

“Just get us outta here and we'll explain everything,” Nova said.

Spider-Man spun a webbed ladder into the pit and slowly the heroes emerged. A few times it looked like the huge Thing might not make it, but he eventually clawed his way up.

Spider-Man told them he'd tied up the guy responsible for this outside.

“Lemme at 'im,” the Thing said as he stormed out of the shack and the other heroes and Flash followed.

The others explained that the guy who'd captured them called himself the Chameleon. He was a master of disguise. He was able to change his skin to look like anyone, or anything. And he could do the same with his clothes, which also responded to his thoughts.

“He could even make clothes that helped him fly?” Spider-Man asked, remembering how Chameleon had posed as Nova and Iron Man and flown away.



“Nah, those were some second-rate jet packs,” Iron Man said, pointing to the back of the Chameleon's Iron Man suit. The real Iron Man kicked it and it crumbled apart.

“So that's why he couldn't fire a repulsor blast,” Spider-Man realized. “And why his Nova blast was so weak.”

Spider-Man learned that each of the heroes had been trapped the same way. The Chameleon had posed as a fellow hero and led them to the deserted island. Once there he'd told them that there was trouble down an abandoned

tunnel, at the other end of the island. Once the heroes were at the far end of the tunnel the Chameleon slammed down vibranium walls and trapped the heroes inside, then took on their identities.

“That's why he wanted the vibranium from the museum,” Spidey realized. “A little bit of it goes a long way. He could have used even that little chunk of it to reinforce the tunnel.”

“He should have thought of that earlier,” Nova noted. “The Thing was able to dig through the tunnel floor. I helped burrow through the ground and Daredevil's senses helped us navigate the network of tunnels under this place. We heard the commotion at this end of the island and headed over. That's when you found us.”

“Just ta make sure, why don't ya do something to prove you actually are Spider-Man?” the Thing demanded.

“Ta-da,” Spider-Man said as he landed.

“Who's this guy, then?” Iron Man asked, pointing to Flash.

“Oh, him?” Spider-Man asked, looking over at Flash.

“He's just a kid who's learning that playing games isn't always so much fun.”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 10

Led by the Thing, the other heroes took the Chameleon to the authorities, and Flash Thompson back home. Spider-Man raced back to his own home in Queens.

After all, he had homework to finish up.

The next day Midtown High was abuzz with the news. As he walked down the hall, Peter caught bits of conversation. It was always strange for him to hear some of the things people had to say about Spider-Man's adventures.

“Spider-Man was working with the crooks!”

“Flash is Spider-Man's backup now.”

“The X-Men were behind it all.”

By his locker, Peter noticed a group of kids gathered around. As he pushed through the mob, he saw Flash in the middle. He was smiling and laughing and talking to the group.

“Scared? No way, dude, I wasn't scared!” he was saying to a kid standing next to him. “I actually think the Chameleon was scared of me! Sure, I played it cool at first, but after he turned off that camera, I got tough. ‘Listen,’ I said, ‘I've got a lot of powerful friends. They'll be looking for me.’ And then, of course, Spidey—that's what I call him, ‘Spidey’—swooped in to help me out. And together we put the Chameleon away. You know I think Spider-Man is freaking amazing, but even he needs a hand sometimes. I was happy to lend him one.”



Peter couldn't help laughing as he walked by, hearing all this. He glanced at Flash and caught his eye. The two of them looked at each other for a second. Then Peter pushed through the rest of the crowd and moved on to his locker.

"I mean, that guy never stood a chance," Flash said. "Between me and Spider-Man—man, he didn't know what he was getting himself into..."

"Hey, Pete!"

Peter turned around to find Gwen. "Crazy what's going on here, huh? I'm just glad Flash is okay. I mean, the guy can be a jerk, but still..."

Peter looked at her and smiled.

"Yeah, I guess I know what you mean," he said.

"So, you ready for the test?" Gwen asked, and Peter shrugged, not really sure. He had been studying late into the night.

The morning bell rang. Peter removed his books and closed his locker. Then he moved through the thinning crowd and walked with Gwen to their first class.



Peter looked back at Flash, who was high-fiving kids as they walked away.

“You'd think he'd learn a thing or two. You know, after being kidnapped by a Super Villain and all,” Peter said.

“What makes you so sure he hasn't?” Gwen asked.

“I don't know. I just wouldn't count on it,” Peter said, remembering how different the scared and shaking Flash was from the one who was celebrating in the hallway.

As they continued to walk to class, Peter heard someone call his name. Then the person called it again.

“Hey, Parker!” Flash shouted out to him from down the hall.

Peter took a deep breath and turned around slowly.

Flash was running toward him. It looked like he had something in his hand. Peter braced himself to block whatever was about to be thrown at him.

“You dropped this out of your locker, ” Flash said, holding out a crumpled piece of paper.

Peter opened it and was surprised and confused by what he saw. He wasn't sure what to say. So he said the natural thing.

“Thanks, Flash.”

“Yep, you bet,” Flash said. Then he jogged back down the hall to catch up with his friends, who were moving on to whatever they had next on their schedules. Gwen shot Peter a smile.

“You were saying?” she asked.

Peter smiled back, happy that for once he wasn't the only one trying to hide a deep, dark secret. And that maybe, just maybe, Spider-Man had helped somebody change. Even if it was just a little bit.

(The End)

蜘蛛侠的故事

彼得·帕克是一个热爱科学的普通孩子，在参加一次辐射主题的展示活动时，被一只携带放射性物质的蜘蛛咬了。这一咬给了彼得神奇的能力，他可以像蜘蛛一样飞檐走壁并能预感到危险。

彼得用他的科学知识研制出黏性液体和蛛网发射器。靠着这些东西，彼得就可以在纽约市街道上的摩天大楼间织着网荡来荡去。他还打造了一套蜘蛛侠制服，称自己为蜘蛛侠！

一天晚上，彼得心爱的叔叔本被一个入室行窃的盗贼杀死了——蜘蛛侠本来可以在那天晚上早些时候捉住这个贼的，但他却没这么做。彼得悲痛欲绝。但他想起了本叔叔常对他说的话：能力越大，责任越大。

他再也不会放过任何一次帮助他人的机会。从那天起，彼得开始用他的超能力为正义而战，为保护大众而战。小到小偷小摸，大到超级恶棍，他制止一切恶行。

自从成为蜘蛛侠后，彼得经历了无数惊人的冒险。接下来的故事只是其中之一……



第一章

“别抬头，别抬头，别抬头。”彼得·帕克嘟囔着。他眯起眼睛，尽量避开冲着他来的所有东西。

“嗨，书呆子！”闪电·汤普森从大厅的另一头喊道。彼得从储物柜里抬起头来。闪电是中城高中的四分卫，后面总是跟着一群队友和崇拜他的拉拉队队员。

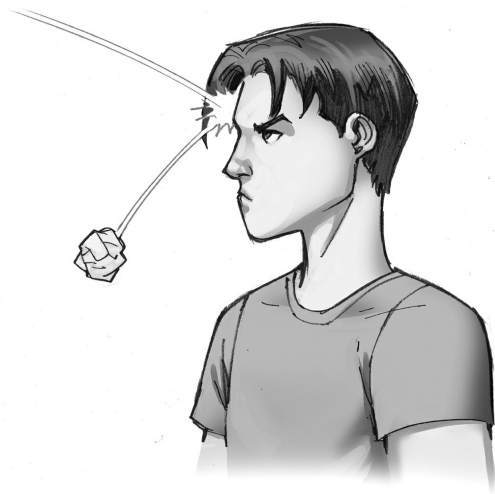
“快想想！”闪电边说边把一张团成团的活页纸扔向彼得。纸团从他的前额弹进了他的储物柜里。

“真有趣，尤金。”彼得说。他从来不叫尤金“闪电”这个外号，因为他知道这个运动健将讨厌他的真名。“你要是不把纸扔来扔去，而是用于其他用途，那你就能够在成为老年人之前从高中毕业了。”彼得打趣道。

“你要是少花点时间学习，多花点时间放松，你就能走桃花运了。”闪电说着，朝着站在几间储物柜开外，正咯咯傻笑的拉拉队队员看了看。

“运气，哼？很高兴你认为你有，因为你就只剩运气了。”彼得回敬道。

闪电向空中挥了挥手，和彼得道别。但彼得从闪电的眼神中可以看出自己的话刺痛了他。



“得了,大伙不要再把时间浪费在这个失败者身上了。”闪电叫嚷道。然后,他和他的粉丝们朝着大厅走去。

彼得从储物柜底部捡起那张皱巴巴的纸,把它展开。尽管他看到纸上的内容后并不感到惊讶,但也不得不承认这些内容在困扰着他。

彼得把纸扔进了垃圾桶。闪电回头看了彼得一眼。从他的微笑中,彼得知道闪电看见自己打开了那张纸并把它扔掉了。让彼得感觉最糟糕的是,闪电似乎享受着这一分一秒。如果彼得仍然相信他之前认为闪电需要运气的理论,那么和往常一样,是闪电笑到了最后。

闪电和彼得各走各的路——闪电去了操场,而彼得去了学校图书馆。也许闪电是正确的。彼得可能确实花了太多时间学习,却没能找够乐子。毕竟,现在是午餐时间,他的同学们都在外面享受着晚秋的好天气。他却躲在闷热的学校图书馆里,准备下周的科学测验。而且整个图书馆里就只有他一个人。

喔,差一点就是一个人了。

“嘿,彼得!”格温·斯泰西叫道。

“嘘!安静。”学校的图书管理员责备道。

“我还以为我是唯一一个在午餐时间学习的人。”她低声说。

“即使像你这样聪明的女孩有时也会判断失误的。”彼得说。他觉得他看到格温有点脸红了。

“好吧,你就是我的最佳搭档啦。”她回答道。



接下来轮到彼得局促不安地扭动身体了。他把书放在她旁边，然后坐了下来。要是闪电看到他现在的样子会怎样呢！彼得一时间因为自己的不合群而感到高兴。在这种情况下，这意味着他可以单独和格温·斯泰西待在一起。他班上绝对没有别的孩子会加入他们。还有谁会为了学习而错过这么好的天气呢？

这时，图书馆的门嘎吱一声开了，彼得简直不敢相信他眼前的一切。

闪电正要进来。他来图书馆做什么？他微笑着，慢慢走到彼得和格温坐的地方。

“嘿，书呆子，我注意到你把这个丢了。”闪电说着，把彼得几分钟前刚扔出去的纸递回给他。它出现在眼前。而且格温也一直在盯着它看。她会怎么想？她会觉得好笑吗？她会嘲笑他吗？

彼得一把从桌子上扯下那张纸，又抓起自己的书。

“我得走了。”彼得说着把椅子往后推了推，可能有点太用力了。

“嘘——”图书管理员又提醒道。

“可我今天只是想做件好事！”闪电讽刺道。

“如果一件好事就像一堆砖头一样砸到你，你不会知道什么是好事的！”彼得一边想象着一堆砖头砸到闪电身上，一边回答道。

“你又知道一堆什么鬼东西？你就是个胆小鬼，你甚至连一磅的重量都举不起来。”闪电说道。

彼得气冲冲地走出房间，猛地关上了门。

“嘘——”图书管理员大声提醒，即使隔着紧闭的门，彼得都能听见。

彼得气得发抖。

他很痛苦。

他感到很狼狈。

但最严重的是他生气了！

第二章

彼得一整天都心不在焉。在化学实验室里，他的老师注意到他有点不对劲。

“谁能告诉我元素周期表上金元素的化学符号？”老师问。

没有人答得上来时，他转向彼得，希望他的明星学生能知道。

“彼得？”他问道。

“啊？嗯……”彼得说，“对不起，您在问什么？”

老师看起来有些不高兴了。

“金的符号，元素周期表上金元素的符号。”老师重复道。

“嗯，G？”彼得答道。

“是AU。AU是金的化学符号。”老师失望地说。

彼得也很失望。他不喜欢任何人胜过他。闪电就做到了。他让彼得心情差到甚至不能集中注意力上他最喜欢的课。他甚至连最明显的答案都想不起来了。

但他确实记得那张画着画的纸，以及格温看到时他自己的感受。彼得只是想这一天尽快结束！

下课铃响了，这是放学的信号。彼得走向他的储物柜去取自己的东西。

“彼得！”有人从他身后喊道。

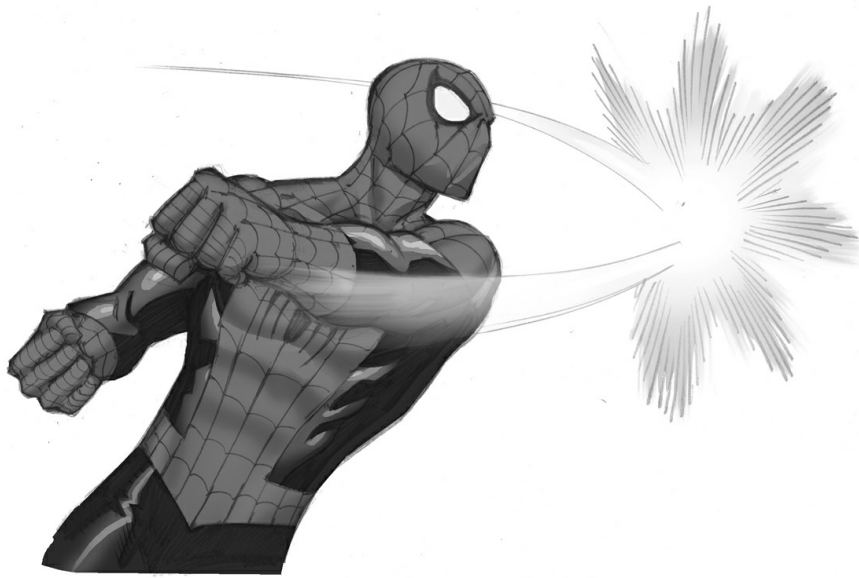
他转身看到了格温。

她说：“嘿，我只是想说，我觉得闪电之前的做法有点卑鄙。”

“是啊，好吧，我不会让它影响到我。”彼得笑着回答。

格温说：“那样肯定行不通。”

“你不是一个乐观的人。别让那个混蛋影响你。当你获得诺贝尔奖，而他还在念大二的时候，你就是那个笑到最后的人。”



彼得试着去想象这一切。

“谢谢。”他苦笑说。

“不客气。”她笑着说，“想去昆斯伯勒咖啡馆逛逛吗？我们可以在那儿把我们的功课看完。从我们上次在图书馆中断的地方开始？”

彼得想了想。这提议当然很吸引他，但他知道，他现在可能不是最佳同伴。毕竟，他的心情很糟。再说，万一闪电再次从中作梗怎么办？彼得确信他不会退缩。他又不能把闪电揍一顿。彼得狠狠地挥了一拳。

“我真希望我能陪你去。”彼得说，“但我答应了梅姑妈，在我回家之前还要帮她办点事。”

格温看上去很失望，但她能理解彼得的心情。彼得在储物柜里东翻西找，突然停了下来，视线落在他的健身包上。接着，在格温离开时，他一把抓住健身包，朝学校的顶楼走去。

彼得环顾四周，确保没有人在。然后，他溜进了一个小小的储藏室，他知道这个小房间已经很多年没人用了。

他拉开健身包的拉链，拿出他那套著名的、红蓝相间的面具，手套和靴子。他总是把剩下的制服穿在便服下面，以防需要快速变装。他把这套制服的其余部分穿好，依靠他的特殊能力——他的蜘蛛感应——来提醒他周围是否有人。

彼得自信满满地溜上楼梯，来到屋顶，手腕对准学校的钟楼。然后用他的蛛网发射器织出了一串串蜘蛛网，以任何人都无法察觉的速度，从皇后区向市里飞去。

成为蜘蛛侠并不意味着彼得不必去应对一般青少年所面临的同样问题。但这确实给了他独特的发泄方式。他最喜欢的一个方式就是用他织出的蛛网在纽约的屋顶上荡秋千，穿梭在第五大道的摩天大楼所构成的峡谷之间。

蜘蛛侠荡上女王号缆车，缆车穿过昆斯伯勒桥进入曼哈顿。他向一辆汽车发射蛛网，然后搭上一辆出租车的底盘进城。这位飞檐走壁的蜘蛛侠很快就能到达曼哈顿！

“哇喔——”在东河上，彼得一边荡来荡去一边大声叫道。没有什么比这更令他高兴的了。他爬上汽车的一侧，注意到一个小男孩正用手贴着窗户向天空望去。彼得朝那个吃惊的孩子挥挥手，孩子微笑着也向他挥了挥手。男孩拽了下他爸爸的衬衫，但在那个男人转身之前，彼得已经不见踪影了。他从出租车上跳下来，在摩天大楼之间飞荡，在水塔上一跃而下。

很快，彼得就到了中央公园，他在树上荡来荡去，享受着秋高气爽的天气。他看到人们在公园的小路上跑步和骑自行车。当他从他们身旁荡过时，人们惊讶地指着他。一个小男孩看到他最喜欢的超级英雄在他头顶上荡过时，冰淇淋都掉到了地上。当他变身成蜘蛛侠时，一切都一样了。人们对他很感兴趣。他们看到他都很兴奋。他们抓起智能手机拍照。这一切和在学校里完全不一样。

彼得低头向他的粉丝们敬礼。他喜欢这种被关注的感觉。

但成为蜘蛛侠并不全是为了找乐子。当彼得的蜘蛛感应兴奋起来时，他就想到了这一点。

“当然，”彼得说，“没有什么事情能破坏这样一个完美的下午。”

他继续在中央公园荡来荡去，寻找一切有麻烦的迹象。然后他注意到警车在闪动着灯光。在自然历史博物馆前，至少有12辆警车横七竖八地停着。他随即抬起头，简直不敢相信眼前的一切。

“怎么回事？”他说。

超胆侠是另一位超级英雄，蜘蛛侠曾与他合作过很多次，现在正在逃离现场。超胆侠有一支特殊的折叠警棍，就像蜘蛛侠使用他的蜘蛛网一样，超胆侠利用这根特殊的警棍同样也能在城市里荡来荡去。

超胆侠转过身来。

“蜘蛛侠！”他看着彼得喊道。

彼得注意到了超胆侠的目光。他一定是用他的其他感官来定位蜘蛛侠的。毕竟，正如蜘蛛侠所知，超胆侠是盲人。也不管他得到什么消息，超胆侠开始逃离这座城市。蜘蛛侠追逐着他。两个英雄在小巷、屋

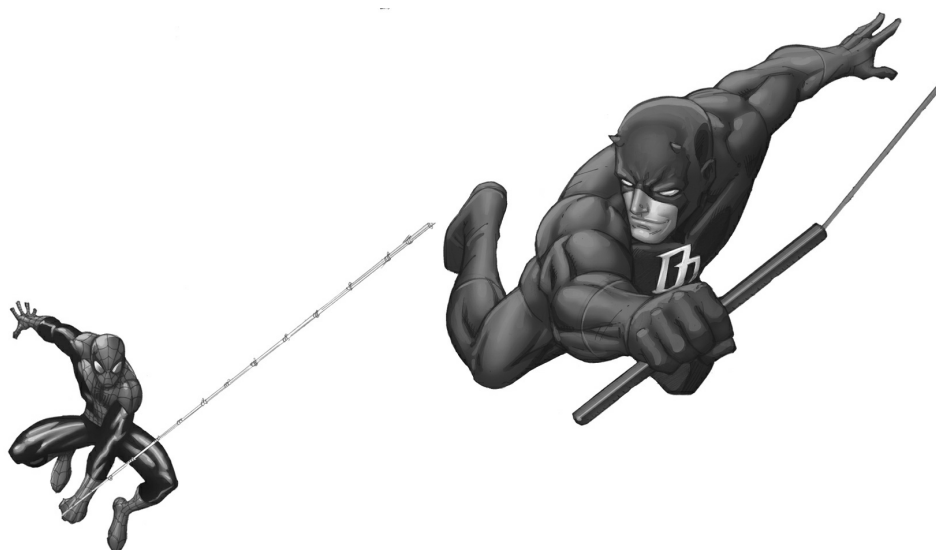
顶、桥梁和隧道中穿梭，最后蜘蛛侠还是追上了超胆侠，并与他对峙。
“嘿，超胆侠，怎么了？”蜘蛛侠问道。他看了看下方说道，“就我俩，很明显。”

超胆侠咬紧牙关，拿着他的警棍向蜘蛛侠挥去。

“哇。你怎么了？心情不好吗？”蜘蛛侠问道。

超胆侠只是咕哝了一声，又朝他挥棒打去。

“嗯，好吧，如果你现在就想打一架……”蜘蛛侠说完，举起他的手腕，把蛛网向超胆侠射去，两人开始在半空中进行较量！



在较量中，蜘蛛侠注意到有东西从超胆侠的腰带上掉了下来。他撒开一张网去抓那东西，一分心却让超胆侠逃走了。

彼得看了看他抓住的东西。这东西看起来就像一大块金属——非常重的金属，反正就是金属。可是如果它来自自然历史博物馆，就一定很有价值。彼得急忙跑回到那群警察那里。尽管他追丢了超胆侠，可他也获得了某样东西作为回报。

第三章

“给你，警官。”蜘蛛侠说着，把金属交到了警官的手中。

“哇，你们这些超级英雄永远不会停止给我惊喜。你们其中一个偷了东西，另一个又把它带回来。”警察说。

“老实说，我不知道发生了什么。逃跑的那个人通常是站在我们这边的。”蜘蛛侠回答。

“我们知道。超胆侠以前也帮助过我们，但我们现在要抓他回去审问。”警察说。

刚刚发生的一切实在令人费解。

“好吧，我得跑开或者荡走了。”蜘蛛侠说，“嘿，在我走之前，能告诉我那块金属有什么特别的吗？”



“这是来自博物馆展览的振金。”警官说，“它是地球上最坚固的金属，非常罕见。美国队长的盾牌就是用它做成的。最好祈祷队长没有变坏。这东西要是砸到你身上，你会受伤的！”

“呀！”蜘蛛侠说完，不想再去想它。警察们对他表示了谢意，他向他们挥挥手。然后彼得转身荡过河回家去了。当他到家里时，太阳已经下山了。他俯冲滑入车库后面，脱下了蜘蛛服。

当他最终走进屋子时，只听见梅姑妈说：“彼得！我很担心你！你去哪儿了？”

梅姑妈一直很紧张。但自从本叔叔去世后，她的情况更糟了。一旦彼得迟迟不回家，她总是往最糟糕的方面想。彼得吻了吻她的脸颊，笑了笑，这样也总会让梅姑妈笑。

“对不起，梅姑妈。”彼得说，“放学后，我竟然学得忘记了时间，然后就被困在火车上了。在隧道里又没信号，所以我无法给您打电话。”

彼得不喜欢对梅姑妈撒谎，但他却永远不能告诉她真相。他不能告诉梅姑妈自己就是那个神奇的蜘蛛侠。

梅姑妈捏了捏彼得的手，说：“只要你回家了，我就开心了。”

晚饭后，彼得去他的房间做作业，很快就准备睡觉了。但是他很难入睡。他想知道为什么超胆侠要偷那块振金。同时，他还担心即将到来的科学测验。

不知不觉中，天亮了，又到了上学的时间。他不知道自己睡了多久，甚至不知道自己是否睡着了。他觉得自己就像一个机器人在做着这些动作：洗澡、刷牙及准备上学。

“再见，梅姑妈。”他打着哈欠出了门。

“彼得！”他的姑妈在他身后喊道，“你忘了带这个东西。”她站在门口，手里拿着背包，说道：“你知道，学习要紧这很好，但如果你学得太努力，你会精疲力尽的。”

彼得在梅姑妈的脸颊上亲了一下，继续朝地铁走去。他一般都乘地铁去上学，昨天晚上的事情很快就忘了一干二净。

当彼得走进中城高中时，闪电喊道：“嘿，看谁来啦！”

“没心情理你。”彼得回答。

“书呆子竟然‘没心情’。”闪电调侃道。

彼得一边打开储物柜，一边打着哈欠。

“累了，帕克？怎么，昨晚参加数学世界大赛了？进入加时赛了吗？”闪电边说边用手肘推着他的伙伴们让他们笑。

“嘿，看看这个。”闪电的一个朋友说，“有人发布了一则消息。”他举起智能手机，里面有一段蜘蛛侠与超胆侠搏斗的视频。彼得的打斗视

频在网上疯传！

“哦哦！！！”

“伙计，让我看看。”闪电说着，从他的朋友手里抢过手机，“伙计，他真是太神奇了。把这个链接发给我。我想把这些照片打印出来贴到我的储物柜里。这也许就是我上大学后要学的专业——超级英雄。你能做到的，对吧？”

每当有人在彼得周围谈论蜘蛛侠时，他就变得不自在。他绝不能让任何人知道他就是蜘蛛侠，所以他总是不知道该如何应对。

“我想他们中没有一个人上过大学。”彼得说。他立刻后悔说了这句话。

“嗯？”闪电说。

“我认为超级英雄是不会上大学的。他们就是一群笨蛋。我不信任他们中的任何一个。”彼得说道。他不知道怎样才能避免把更多的注意力转移到自己和蜘蛛侠身上。在这个情况下，他觉得自己有点脸红。当然，他并不相信这些，但是如果其他人认为他讨厌超级英雄，他们就永远不会发现彼得正是一个超级英雄。

“哈哈！”闪电笑了，“我觉得彼得害怕蜘蛛侠！是不是？小彼得害怕蜘蛛吗？”他一边用稚气的声音说，一边用手做着“小蜘蛛”的手势。

彼得把他的手打开了。

“哎哟！”闪电吃疼地喊了一声，抓住了自己被彼得打到的那只手。彼得已经克制住了他的力气，但蜘蛛侠的轻轻一拍都会带点刺痛。尽管如此，闪电还是尽力让自己看起来没有受伤。

当闪电走开时，他对着大厅大喊：“小心点，小彼得。蜘蛛侠会抓住你的！哇哈！”

闪电去上课了，彼得忍不住把脸埋在储物柜里，露出了笑容。

第四章

在去下一节课的路上，彼得碰到了格温。

“彼得！”她笑着对他说。

“哦，你好，格温。”彼得笑着回答。

“嘿，我刚接到电话提醒，说华尔街被封锁了。证券交易所发生了一些事情。”格温说，看起来很担心。

“我爸爸在那里工作，”她继续说，“我希望他没事。我给他发了短信，但还没收到回音。”格温的父亲是纽约市警察局的一名队长。

彼得的第一个念头就是穿上蜘蛛侠制服，到证券交易所去看看发生了什么事。他差点就打算离开格温身边，跳上屋顶了。每当他听到出了麻烦，他的第一反应总是跑过去查探，然后看看自己能否帮上忙。

但这次他克制住了。他还在学校里上课。他不能每次一听到有什么不对劲就跑掉。

彼得问道：“他们说发生什么事了吗？”

“没有，”温格回答，“只是有消息称那片区域有些地方被封锁了。”

彼得决定等他得到更多的消息后再做打算。毕竟，这座城市由世界上最好的警力保护着。他们可以很容易地解决这个城市的大部分问题。况且如果他们真的需要帮助，彼得也能尽快赶到。

“好吧，告诉我到底怎么回事。”彼得说。

“我相信一切都安好。你很快就会收到你爸爸的回音。他在忙着处理那里发生的一切。”

“希望如此。”格温回答。

在接下来的两个小时里，彼得无法集中精力学习功课。他盯着窗外，寻找冲向曼哈顿市中心的警察直升机或是其他超级英雄。他抑制住了奔赴现场查探的冲动。这是他的本性。

然后，就在下课铃响之前，彼得听到他英语班上的两个同学在低声谈论市中心正发生的情况。

其中一个说：“我听说在证券交易所又出了一起超级英雄恐吓事件。”

如果那是真的话，彼得就得尽快参与进去。

丁零！丁零！

铃声一响，彼得就冲去了曼哈顿。他偷偷溜出学校操场，没人看见他。他挂在7号高架地铁的铁轨下，快速地一路荡去了市中心。

纽约证券交易所就在他的面前，只见顶上站着他的超级英雄伙伴——同时也是他的好朋友——新星！



第五章

蜘蛛侠想：“好吧，现在我知道有事情发生了。”

他和超胆侠没那么熟。当然，他至少相信超胆侠是个好人。虽然不能说完全，百分之百，绝对肯定他永远不会走到另一边，成为一个超级恶棍。但是蜘蛛侠与新星诺瓦并肩战斗了多次，他俩已经是很好的朋友了。

“嘿，新星！”蜘蛛侠转身经过时喊道，“我不知道这是怎么回事，但我肯定这是一个很大的误会……”

“蜘蛛侠吗！”新星说。他甚至一开口听起来就像个恶棍。

“是啊，是我，蜘蛛侠，你的超级英雄伙伴，伙计。”



新星举起手，就朝蜘蛛侠发射了一道冲击波。

“嗯，你生我的气还是怎么了？如果是因为几周前我没借给你五块钱买运动饮料的话，我发誓，我当时真的没带钱……呵！”新星又向蜘蛛侠的方向发起了一波攻击，蜘蛛侠跳着躲开了。

与此同时，蜘蛛侠的蜘蛛感应也在疯狂地波动着。他低头一看，发现警察也在追他。看起来所有的警察都聚集在下面了。到处都是震耳欲聋的警笛声，和闪烁的警灯。

“蜘蛛侠和新星，我是纽约市警察局的斯泰西队长。你们主动投降

吧，我们保证不伤害你们！”警察局的斯泰西队长喊道。

“投降？”蜘蛛侠不解道。

新星说：“我原以为是你，或者其他穿着奇装异服的家伙想阻止我。所以我已经警告过警察了。我告诉他们只能指望其他超级英雄过来啦。”

“他们认为我们是一伙的吗？”蜘蛛侠问道，感到很震惊。

新星笑了：“是的，就像我设想的那样。确实有效。你说呢，蜘蛛侠？他们已经认为你是罪犯了。为什么不捞点好处，和我一起干呢？”新星问道。

“你疯了吗？哦，对不起，这很明显。”蜘蛛侠回答，“你一定疯了。”

“得啦，蜘蛛侠，如果你打败不了我，那就加入我。”新星回答。

“不可能，绝对不可能，伙计。我真不知道你是怎么了，同样也不知道超胆侠是怎么了，但我一定会搞清楚的。”蜘蛛侠说道。

“蜘蛛侠和新星，我们再给你们60秒时间考虑是否投降。如果你们再不投降，我们准备采取行动了。”警察局的斯泰西队长再次喊道。

“他们无论如何都会想尽办法来对付你。”新星说，“如果你试图逃跑，他们会认为你和我是一伙的。或者，如果你肯帮助我，我们可以从中获利。”

“你到底想在这儿干什么？”蜘蛛侠问道。

“还剩三十秒钟。”斯泰西队长继续喊道。

“你愿意帮我吗？”新星问道。

“看情况吧。”蜘蛛侠答道，“我到底该怎么办？”

新星笑了：“大楼已经被疏散了。透过东北角三楼的窗户，你会看到一台笔记本电脑。它将帮助我们黑进世界上任何一个金融系统。我们可以转移资金。搞到它，我就和你平分我弄到的任何东西。”

“这就是你要干的好事！”蜘蛛侠说，他为自己套出了新星的真实意图而感到骄傲，“谢谢你的好意！”

“还剩十五秒！”

蜘蛛侠绕到新星后面猛扑过去，向他投掷蜘蛛网，把新星变成了一个超级英雄茧！新星被紧紧地绑在屋顶上，蜘蛛侠正准备进去审问，这时，他听到斯泰西队长从下面喊道：“时间到！！！”

蜘蛛侠还没来得及做任何事情，装满某种气体的火箭弹就开始在他周围飞驰。他开始咳嗽，但凭借高超的技艺躲过了子弹。他迂回前进，

最后飞进了新星刚刚提到的三楼窗户里。他先用蛛网兜住笔记本电脑，然后抓起它，塞到胳膊下，接着转身荡了出去。

警察们还在发射气弹，所以蜘蛛侠深吸了一口气，从他们头顶上荡过，避开了子弹。彼得把电脑丢给了斯泰西队长。

“这就是新星要找的东西！”当他们试图继续阻击蜘蛛侠时，蜘蛛侠向他们大喊，“保护好电脑！”

斯泰西队长抬头看着蜘蛛侠，充满了疑惑。彼得点点头，好像在说：“相信我，队长！”斯泰西队长低头看了看那台电脑。

“也许蜘蛛侠是站在我们这边的。”斯泰西队长心想。

蜘蛛侠向警察打了个招呼，然后向街对面联邦大厅顶上的旗杆上发射了一张网，一转身又荡走了。他迅速地回头看了一眼股票交易所，发现新星飞向了天空，消失在视线之外。

“他一定是趁警察盯着我的时候溜走了！”彼得自言自语道，“接连两个——首先是超胆侠溜了，现在新星又跑了。蜘蛛侠，你在这里干得真不咋样。”

正当彼得以为他已经弄清楚时，他听到头顶上有警察的直升机轰鸣而来。

彼得想：“你得把它交给那些家伙——他们不会轻易放过你的！”

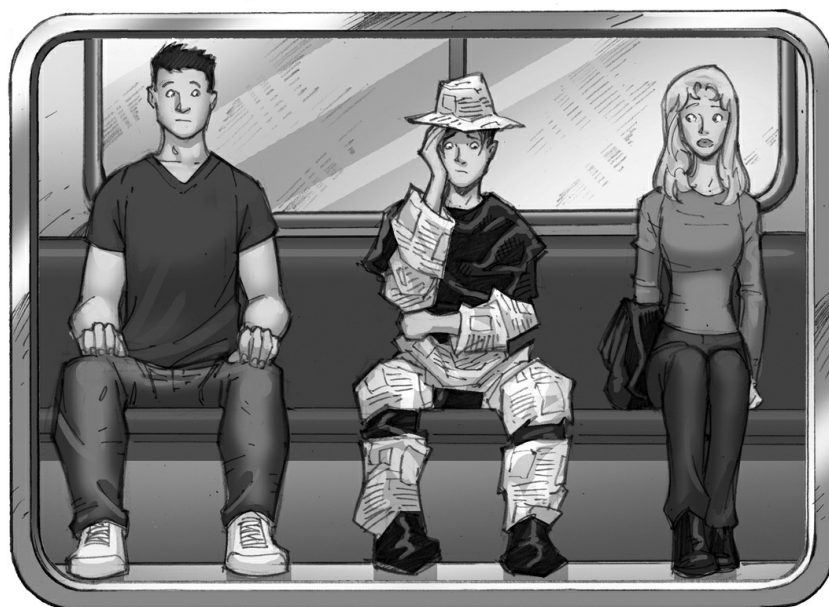
直升机转来转去，一直在追踪他。但彼得却像杂技演员一样，在城市的街道上翻腾穿梭。在他确信自己已经离开了直升机的视线后，他溜进了一条小巷。他不能再穿着蜘蛛服走出去，可是彼得没有其他衣服可换。

蜘蛛侠匆匆忙忙地脱下面具，昂首挺胸地走出了小巷，身上穿着一套用蛛网粘出来的垃圾袋套装，戴着一顶报纸做的软呢帽。



他开始沿街走着，没有注意到自己正受到路边行人的目光。毕竟，对于一个整天穿着红蓝相间的蜘蛛侠制服在城市里晃荡的人来说，现在穿件用垃圾袋做的衣服在街上四处走走一点都不费劲。

两个商人从彼得身边走过，用一种奇怪的眼神看着他。彼得向他们脱帽致意，继续往前走。但他仍然能听到他们的谈话。



“伙计，这个城市的人越来越古怪了。你听说证券交易所发生了什么事了吗？”其中一个商人问他的朋友。

“是啊，现在他们说蜘蛛侠也牵涉其中了。”另一个回答，“我从来都不相信这些家伙。依我看，他们实在太危险了。”

彼得摇了摇头。两个英雄——新星和超胆侠——都变坏了。蜘蛛侠看起来也像个恶棍，竟然在学校被恶霸一直骚扰着，自己迷恋的女孩可能也对他有意！更不用说，他现在还不得不穿着一身垃圾袋、头顶着报纸乘地铁回家。事情怎么会变得如此疯狂？

然后彼得突然想起来自己在本周末还有一门科学测试。

第六章

第二天一整个早上，彼得都在听梅姑妈唠叨超级英雄，对蜘蛛侠的意见尤其大。

“那个蜘蛛侠真让我生气。我的意思是，如果你没有什么要遮掩的，为什么要戴个面具呢？”她问道。

彼得差点笑出来。他戴着蜘蛛侠面具部分原因是为了不让敌人伤害他所爱的人——这样可以保护梅姑妈——而现在，她却认为他戴面具是为了遮掩什么见不得人的鬼秘密。

要是她知道就好了……

大约一个多小时后，他到达学校时，发现人们在谈论各种各样的话题：体育、音乐、名人、同学，当然还有蜘蛛侠。

“你看到证券交易所的那些录像了吗？”闪电问他的同伴。

彼得翻了个白眼。为什么自己的储物柜偏偏紧挨着闪电的呢？

“伙计，我不知道蜘蛛侠是怎么做到的，但他盯牢了城里的每个坏蛋。”

彼得毫不犹豫地跳出来维护他的朋友新星。

“新星不是坏蛋。”彼得反驳道。

闪电慢慢转过身来。

“我就知道他支持那个恶棍。”闪电当着彼得的面说。

闪电接着说：“你都读什么？《号角日报》网站吗？其他所有的报纸都认为蜘蛛侠拯救了世界，而我们的彼得却不太喜欢蜘蛛侠。”

“虽然我不想这么做，但我不得不站在闪电这边，彼得。”

彼得转过身看到了格温。

她补充说：“我爸爸亲口说蜘蛛侠帮了大忙，尽管我要他告诉我详情，他没有答应。”

“我只是说我不信任他，仅此而已。”彼得说。

“我想说的是，你就是害怕蜘蛛侠那样的真男人，”闪电揶揄道，“怕他会对你这样一个胆小鬼做点什么？嗯？”

“闪电，闭嘴。”格温说。

“哦，对不起。”闪电边说边举起双手，“忘了你们两个奇葩在恋爱。”

“我们没有……”彼得和格温异口同声道。

闪电敲了一下彼得的头。

“不错的选择呀，帕克。她爸爸是警察。也许她爸爸能保护你免受蜘蛛侠大坏蛋的伤害！”闪电说，“如果我是你，在去地铁的路上我会多加小心；进了浴室会看看浴帘后面；睡觉前，还得检查一下床底。蜘蛛侠要来找你了……”闪电用一种单调扭捏的声音说道。

“别理它，别理它。”彼得低声说道。

他打开储物柜，往后跳了一下，只见几百只小塑料蜘蛛从里面掉了出来，落在他身上。有人对储物柜动了手脚！

“哈哈哈哈哈哈！”

闪电和他的朋友们哈哈大笑，都在嘲笑彼得。

“如果你认为那些蜘蛛很可怕，那就想想和一个人体型一样大的蜘蛛有多可怕吧！你最好小心点，彼得·帕克——蜘蛛侠就要来抓你啰！”

“混蛋！”温格骂道。但闪电只是傻笑着走开了。

格温抓起几只玩具蜘蛛对彼得说：“来，我帮你把这些清理干净。”

“谢谢。”他说，“你知道，我并不是说你不是……我不是……我是说，当闪电说到我和你的事的时候，我不想让你认为……”彼得结结巴巴地说道，他绞尽脑汁想用合适的话来说。

“哦，我知道，别担心。我也不是那个意思，我是说，我也不是这么想。哦，不用担心。”格温一边说，一边紧张地把头发梳到耳朵后面，“嗯，我们化学课见，好吗？”

“呃，好的。待会儿见。”彼得说。他能感觉到自己的脸烧得火辣辣的。这是一种前所未有的奇怪感觉。

这比他的蜘蛛感应还要奇怪。



第七章

那天晚上，彼得决定把其他事情都抛在脑后，专心学习。他知道，如果他想进一所好大学并且成为一名科学家，高中阶段的学习至关重要。他打开自己的平板电脑，开始阅读有关化学方面的内容，从简单的水分子结构到带劲的超坚固金属合金。

彼得已经忘记了自己是多么热爱科学。最近他总是被其他事情弄得心烦意乱。他完全忘记这是一样最能让他感到快乐的事情。

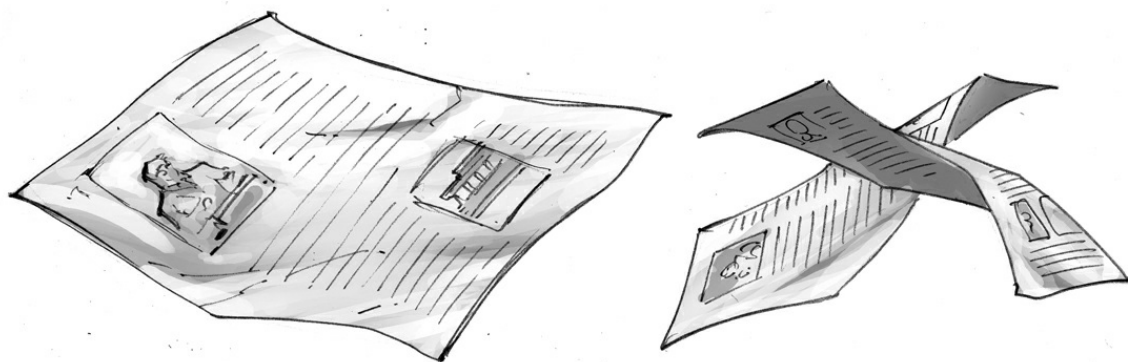
在阅读和研究的过程中，他迅速关闭了屏幕上弹出的数十个应用程序更新和推送通知——从天气预报到最新的游戏升级。

但有一个通知他关得太快了。他已经学习好几个小时，他太累了。他肯定是看错了。因为他发誓他读到了一些消息，那绝不可能是真的。

“上面写的是我想的那样吗？”彼得想知道。

他点击搜索引擎应用程序，输入“蜘蛛侠新闻”。

彼得选择了《号角日报》网站。他知道出版商J.约拿·詹姆逊讨厌蜘蛛侠。詹姆逊正如他所说的那样，坚信蜘蛛侠是个威胁。他花了大量时间试图让公众和他一样，相信蜘蛛侠是个恶棍。但詹姆逊也拥有业内最好的记者。因此，尽管他逼着员工抹黑蜘蛛侠，但这些故事包含的信息量往往还是会比其他任何媒体提供的要多。



彼得点击了一个视频链接。他简直不敢相信自己所看到的！被称为“石头人”的岩石超级英雄巨人站在一个黑暗的房间里，在他前面的椅子上绑着一个蜘蛛侠模样的人。

“这到底是怎么回事？”彼得说。

彼得点击播放键。“如果你还没有注意到，我们大家已经厌倦了扮演超级英雄的角色。我们夜以继日地工作，保护你们这些人，却什么回报也得不到。”石头人说道，“那我们就不用征求你们的意见，直接把你们欠我们的钱拿走了。就把这个当做回报吧。超胆侠已经与我们站在同一条船上了，新星也来了。每天还有越来越多的英雄在加入。他们都想加入超级英雄抵抗联盟。”

“但是这个笨蛋什么都不干，只知道在这儿妨碍我们。”

“正因为如此，”他继续说着，同时拍了拍被绑着的蜘蛛侠的头。

哇！彼得一闪。“石头人即使轻轻拍一下也够疼的！”他心想。

石头人继续说道：“我们要让他帮助我们。事实上，我们准备把他关在这里替我们干些脏活。我们真正的脏活其实就是打扫打扫厕所，熨熨熨制服，等等。”

看到自己以这样的情形出现在屏幕上，彼得感觉怪怪的，尽管他知道屏幕上的那人不是真正的蜘蛛侠。

“听着，你有二十四小时。如果你把这家伙从我们这里截走的笔记本电脑交上来，我们就放了蜘蛛侠。否则，我们会把他像碾虫子一样碾扁。我、新星、超胆侠和其他一大伙英雄们会一起一个区一个区地摧毁整座城市，然后把战利品留给我们自己。”

“为了防止你们这些人不在乎蜘蛛侠的生死，我给你们准备了一份特别的礼物。我要揭开这家伙的面具。蜘蛛侠没有任何朋友或家人，但戴面具的人却可能有。这意味着一定会有人站出来的。”

彼得凑近了看。事情变得越来越奇怪了。

石头人那粗糙的大手抓住屏幕上蜘蛛侠的面具。他一下子就把面具扯掉了，露出了爬墙者的真实身份。蜘蛛侠竟然是……闪电·汤普森吗？

第八章

“哇！”彼得惊叫了一声。

他盯着屏幕。“闪电·汤普森到底是怎么卷进这件事来的？他是从哪儿弄来那套蹩脚蜘蛛装的？我的意思是，我的那套看起来比他的强太多了。”彼得心想，“这些都说不通。这一切会不会只是一个陷阱？难道闪电也参与其中了？”

有人在敲彼得的卧室门。

“进来。”彼得说。梅姑妈进来了。

“彼得，电视在报道一桩新闻。”梅姑妈说，她听上去紧张极了，“你们学校有个男孩遭绑架了。是个叫尤金的男孩。人们都在说他可能就是蜘蛛侠！”

“我知道，我看见了。”彼得说。

“好吧，彼得，你务必得小心点。把那扇窗户关起来再上锁，”她一面说，一面亲自把它关上锁上。“这些超级英雄能飞，他们能炸穿墙壁——有时候他们简直就是无所不能。”



“要是那样的话，我不知道锁上的窗户能起到多大作用了。”彼得咯咯地笑着说。

梅姑妈抓住彼得的手说：“要是你出了什么事，我可受不了。”

彼得吻了吻她的脸颊。

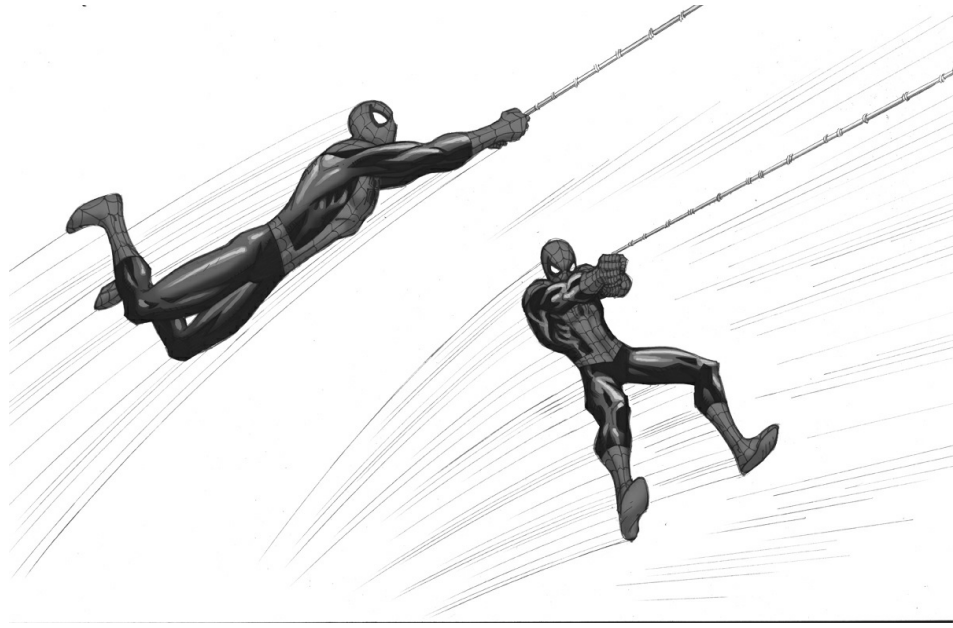
“我能照顾好自己。”他说。尽管梅姑妈微笑着点了点头，彼得从梅姑妈脸上的表情看出她还是不相信他的话。

“我有一些作业要完成，”他叹了口气，“别担心，梅姑妈。我们会好好的。谁会随便来皇后区的中心区域找上一位女士和她的侄子？我是说，他们能从中得到什么好处呢？在我看来，除非他们为了来找你的巧克力曲奇饼干，那倒是很值得攻击这座房子！”

这倒引起了梅姑妈的一阵笑声，她离开房间时关上了门，希望彼得在学习上能顺顺利利。

但是彼得却一点也笑不出来，而且他根本就没有在想他的学业。剩下他一人后，他马上开始再次琢磨起梅姑妈所说的事。根据他所读到的内容，没有人知道这段视频是在哪里拍摄的。《号角日报》网站称，石头人联系过该网站，说他和其他堕落的超级英雄想要那台笔记本电脑被送到中央公园的眺望台城堡。警方已经用警绳把那地方隔离起来搜查了一遍，但没有发现石头人、蜘蛛侠或其他人的踪迹。

彼得踌躇了一下。听起来闪电似乎并没有生命危险。石头人不过是说他们要把闪电变成他们的佣人。他会过上悲惨的生活。他每时每刻都要担心英雄们会在某个角落等着他，冷不丁蹿出来对他发号施令。哪怕只是走在大厅里都会让他担惊受怕。实际上，他的感觉就和彼得每天在学校的感觉是一样的。



也许蜘蛛侠不需要参与这件事。毕竟，警察好像已经控制住了局势。

而且即使警察没有控制住，那不也正是闪电他应得的下场吗？

彼得关掉了平板电脑，躺在床上，盯着天花板。他正想象着没有闪电后崭新、轻松的学校生活。

他想了很多。

想了好一会儿后，当梅姑妈睡着了，屋子里静悄悄的时候，彼得穿上了蜘蛛侠制服。他从窗口跳了出来，朝纽约市飞荡而去。尽管彼得不喜欢闪电·汤普森，蜘蛛侠还是需要拯救这个世界的。

第九章

没过多久，蜘蛛侠就从桥上荡了过去，直奔中央公园。他把一台破旧的笔记本电脑藏在衣服里。他从壁橱里把它翻了出来，把它拆散，因为他知道他可以用这些剩余的零件来做他的技术实验。他就这样把机器的外壳带到了中央公园。



他看到了远处的眺望台城堡。这是一座巨型的建筑，看起来像一座宏伟的宫殿。它俯瞰着一个安静的池塘，坐落在公园的大草坪旁边。最妙的是，它被树木包围着。这使得蜘蛛侠很容易从警察身边溜过。他爬上树梢，在守卫城堡的警察们的头顶上，织出了一个又一个的绳索。

当他走到一片俯瞰宫殿的树林旁时，他朝宫殿的塔楼射去一张蜘蛛网，然后荡到院子里，也就是《号角日报》文章里讲到，石头人要求留下笔记本电脑的那个院子。蜘蛛侠刚把笔记本电脑放下，就转身回到树上，根本没人看见他。

然后他在树林里等着。

什么动静都没有。

蜘蛛侠曾希望这背后的人一直在监视着城堡。他原以为当他把笔记本电脑丢下去的时候，他们会出现，但运气不佳，一个人影都没有。警察的路障一定把这个地方清空了。蜘蛛侠需要启用备用计划。他拿出手机，镜头对准城堡庭院和电脑放大，开始录制视频。

“我已经按你们的要求送来了笔记本电脑。现在，请释放蜘蛛

侠。”彼得用比自己平时要深沉得多的声音说道。然后他编了一个假名，把视频上传到VidTube网站上，并给他自己能想到的所有媒体发了一封电子邮件。

才过了几分钟，他注意到警察开始进来了。但他们还没靠近城堡，蜘蛛侠就听到了头顶上的轰鸣声。他抬头一看，看到天空中有什么东西掠过。它听起来像喷气式飞机的轰鸣声，但它移动得太快了。

那道亮光直冲到院子里，就在笔记本电脑所在的地方，然后又飞回了天空。蜘蛛侠知道，无论谁拿走了它，他都即将失去这台笔记本电脑。更糟糕的是，他有一种预感，他们是不会继续守约让闪电·汤普森回来的。

蜘蛛侠需要快速行动。当那道红色和金色的亮光在头顶呼啸而过时，蜘蛛侠紧跟在飞人的身后射出一张网，但很快就被拽了上去。他竟然被迅速带走了，穿过公园和纽约城，像帆板冲浪手一样跟在罪犯身后。他紧紧地抓住蜘蛛网，仿佛以光速在空中翱翔。

他猜想，不管他跟踪的是谁，都没有感觉到挂在他身上的蜘蛛网，也不知道蜘蛛侠搭了个便车。摩天大楼和桥梁纷纷呼啸而过。下面的水面很平静，但每年的这个时候肯定很冷。当他们开始降落时，蜘蛛侠担心他们打算降落在水里。

但一落地，他就发现他们降落在这座城市周围众多小岛中的一个。这些小岛几乎无人踏足，从未有人居住过。

蜘蛛侠抬头一看，发现钢铁侠正回头看着他！

“你也变坏了，是吗？”蜘蛛侠说。

他以为钢铁侠会举起手来，用他的冲击光束向他射击。但他只是想逃跑，而且是以一种相当笨拙的方式。

“嗯，你不是那个钢铁侠，对吧？”蜘蛛侠对这个一瘸一拐地想逃离他的人说。有一件事是肯定的——那个试图冒充钢铁侠的家伙无法完成如此壮举。

蜘蛛侠朝逃跑的嫌疑犯射出蛛网。那个坏蛋很快就被缠住摔倒了。蜘蛛侠跑到他面前，发现他穿着一件钢铁侠盔甲的复制品，虽然还行，但并不完美。蜘蛛侠扯下那人的头盔，喘了一口气。和他面对面的是一个秃顶男子，他的肤色如此苍白，几乎可以看得到皮肤下面的血管。

“闪电在哪里？”蜘蛛侠问道。

那个恶棍笑了，好像在说他不打算告诉他。

蜘蛛侠环顾四周。这个岛很小。它最多只能容下几间房子。他发现对岸有一间简陋的棚屋。他冲到那里，撕下那扇裂了的门。

闪电·汤普森就在那儿。他被绑在了一张椅子上，仍然穿着蜘蛛侠的服装，没有戴面具。他看起来既绝望又害怕，但让彼得觉得最奇怪的是，闪电·汤普森竟然在歇斯底里地哭。

蜘蛛侠冲过去给他松绑。



“没事的,孩子。我们会把你弄出去的。”他告诉他。

当他解开绳索释放闪电时，蜘蛛侠注意到这个高中生正在剧烈地颤抖。他吓得站都站不稳。当闪电还在抽泣时，蜘蛛侠帮他站稳了。

“我很抱歉。我真蠢。真是太蠢了！”闪电哭了。

“听着，这不是你的错。”蜘蛛侠说道，他为自己同情闪电的事实感到惊讶。

“但确实是这么回事。在学校有这么个孩子。他真的很怕你。我觉得很有趣，所以我……”

“你穿上蜘蛛侠的服装吓唬他。”蜘蛛侠替他说完，闪电点了点头。

“你说得对，这样做太愚蠢了。”蜘蛛侠一边承认，一边解开闪电手上的最后一根绳子，“但还不至于蠢到最后沦落到这种地步。”

闪电侠继续说：“他——他以为我就是你。我当时躲在篮球场后

面，他一定是看到我了，以为我就是你，而且……”

闪电又哭了起来。

蜘蛛侠的蜘蛛感应刺痛了他的身体，他立即转过身来，以为他用蜘蛛网捕捉到的那个家伙会出现在他身后。但后来他意识到他的蜘蛛感应是在对地下的东西做出反应。

他把闪电和椅子推开，握紧拳头。

“嗯，花了你足够长的时间吧，网罩头！”石头人站在一个至少有一百英尺深的坑底说道。超胆侠、新星和钢铁侠也和石头人在一起。

“真奇怪，”蜘蛛侠问。

“快带我们离开这里，我们会解释这一切的。”新星说道。

蜘蛛侠织出一架梯子伸到坑里，英雄们慢慢地爬出来了。有几次，体型巨大的石头人眼看就要爬不上来了，但最终他还是爬上来了。

蜘蛛侠告诉他们，他把干这件坏事的人绑在外面了。

“让我来对付他吧。”石头人一边说一边冲出小屋，其他英雄和闪电紧随其后。

其他人解释说，抓他们的人自称变色龙。他是一名伪装大师，能改变自己的皮肤，让自己看起来像任何人或任何东西。他也可以对他的衣服做同样的事情，让它们按他的想法变化。

“他甚至能做出会飞的衣服吗？”想到了变色龙是如何伪装成新星和钢铁侠飞走的，蜘蛛侠问。

“不，那些是二流的喷气背包。”钢铁侠指着变色龙钢铁侠套装的背面说。真正的钢铁侠踢了它一脚，它就碎了。

蜘蛛侠明白了：“原来如此，他不能发射冲击光束，他的新星冲击波也那么微弱。”

蜘蛛侠意识到所有的英雄都是被同一个手段骗入陷阱的。变色龙假扮成一个英雄，把他们引到这座荒岛上。一到那里，他就告诉他们，有一条废弃的地道通向岛的另一端，那里出了问题。一旦英雄们到了隧道的尽头，变色龙就会砰的一声关上坚不可摧的振金墙壁，把他们困在里面，然后扮演起他们的身份。

“这就是为什么他想要从博物馆那里取得振金，”蜘蛛侠意识到，“一点点振金就能派很大用场。哪怕只用上一小块振金就可以加固整个隧道。”

新星说：“他应该早点想到这一点。石头人可以挖穿地道。我帮着在地下开道，超胆侠靠感应帮助我们在这下面众多的隧道网络中导航。我

们听到在岛的这一头发生了骚动，便朝这边过来了。也就是你找到我们的时候。”

石头人突然质疑道：“为了安全起见，你为什么不做点什么来证明你真的就是蜘蛛侠呢？”

“到啦。”蜘蛛侠落到了地上。

“那么，这家伙是谁呢？”钢铁侠指着闪电问道。

“哦，他吗？”蜘蛛侠看着闪电问道。

“他只是一个孩子，他刚刚才意识到玩游戏并不总是那么有趣。”

第十章

在石头人的带领下，其他英雄一起把变色龙带到警局，然后把闪电·汤普森带回家。蜘蛛侠也迅速跑回到他在皇后区的自己家中。

毕竟，他还有家庭作业要完成。

第二天，整个中城高中都在纷纷议论这些传闻。彼得走在走廊上，听到了一些谈话的内容。每次听到人们谈论蜘蛛侠的冒险故事，他都会感觉很奇怪。

“蜘蛛侠和恶棍勾搭在一起！”

“闪电现在是蜘蛛侠的替补了。”

“X战警是幕后黑手。”



在他的储物柜旁彼得看到一群孩子围在那里。他挤过人群后，看到闪电在中间。他正笑嘻嘻地和大伙聊着天。

“害怕吗？不可能，伙计，我一点也不害怕！”他对站在他旁边的一个孩子说，“我倒觉得变色龙怕我！当然，一开始我表现得很酷，但他

关掉摄影机后，我就强硬起来了。‘听着，’我说，‘我有很多厉害的朋友。他们会找我的。’然后，

当然了，蜘蛛老弟——我叫他‘蜘蛛老弟’——飞过来帮我啦。我们一起收拾了变色龙。要知道，我觉得蜘蛛侠超级棒，但即使是他，有时也需要帮助。我倒很乐意帮他。”

听到这一切，彼得从旁边走过时忍不住大笑起来。他瞥了一眼闪电，两人的目光正好相接。他俩对视了一会儿。接着彼得挤过人群，来到他的储物柜前。

“我是说，那家伙根本没有机会。”闪电说，“碰上了我和蜘蛛侠，他不知道自己惹上了什么……”

“嘿，彼得！”

彼得转身看见了格温。“这事真疯狂，哈？我很高兴闪电没事。我的意思是，这家伙可能是个混蛋，但仍然……”

彼得看着她，笑了。

“是的，我想我明白你的意思。”他说。

“那么，你准备好考试了吗？”格温问。彼得耸了耸肩，不太确定。他一直学习到深夜。

早晨的铃响了。彼得拿出了书，关上了他的储物柜，穿过稀疏的人群，和格温一起去上第一节课。

彼得回头看了看闪电，他正和离开的孩子们一一击掌道别。

“你可能会以为他在被一个超级恶棍绑架之后或多或少会吸取点教训吧。”彼得说道。

“你怎么肯定他不会呢？”温格问道。

“我不知道。我只是不指望他会。”彼得说。他想起了那个在走廊里庆祝的闪电和那个被吓得发抖的闪电是多么不同。

当他们继续走去上课时，彼得听到有人叫他的名字。然后那个人又叫了一遍。

“嗨，帕克！”闪电从楼下的大厅对着他大喊道。

彼得深吸了一口气，慢慢地转过身来。

闪电向他跑来。看起来他手里好像拿着什么东西。彼得稳住自己，准备好挡住任何可能向他扔过来的东西。

“你把这个掉在储物柜外面了。”闪电说着，拿出一张皱巴巴的纸。

彼得打开它，对他所看到的東西感到既惊讶又困惑。他不确定该说什么好。因而他从容地回应了句。



“谢谢你，闪电。”

“没错，没错。”闪电侠说。然后，他慢跑着回到大厅，赶上他的朋友们，他们正要去做他们日常安排的事。格温对彼得笑了笑。

“你们刚刚说了什么？”她问道。

彼得回笑了一下，他很高兴自己再也不是唯一一个想要隐藏秘密的人了。也许，只是也许，在蜘蛛侠的帮助下，某些人有了变化。即使只是一点点变化也好。

（全书完）



漫威
超级英雄
双语故事

美国漫威公司 著
邱玲琳 译

MARVEL

CAPTAIN
AMERICA

THE TOMORROW ARMY

美国队长

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES!

The First Avenger!



Captain America

Alias



Steve Rogers



Falcon



Coulson

Director of S.H.I.E.L.D.



Nick Fury



Black Widow



Iron Man

Alias



Tony Stark



Arnim Zola



Hydra-prime

I love New York!



Hydra



Statue of Liberty

Steve's coffee guy



Cup of Joe



Old Joe

Made of vibranium!



Cool Motorcycle



Cap's Shield

**CAPTAIN
AMERICA**

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扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story of Captain America

All Steve Rogers ever wanted was to join the army. But he was frail and weak and unable to enlist. Then Steve was chosen to take part in a top secret experiment called Project: Rebirth. He was given the Super-Soldier Serum and was bathed in pulsating Vita-Rays.

When the experiment was over, Steve had been transformed from a small and thin weakling into a big, tall, and strong Super-Soldier. Steve was given a special uniform and an unbreakable red, white, and blue shield made from a rare metal called Vibranium. He promised to fight for freedom and equality for all as Captain America.

After one particularly tough battle with the evil villain called Red Skull, Cap's plane crashed into the icy waters of the Arctic. The plane—with Cap still inside—was frozen for many decades, until it was discovered by S.H.I.E.L.D., the world's best super spies. They soon revived Captain America from his icy slumber.

Steve joined S.H.I.E.L.D.'s team of Super Heroes, known as the Avengers. Now, fighting alongside Iron Man, Hulk, Black Widow, Hawkeye, and Falcon, Captain America once again defends liberty and justice from evildoers everywhere!



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 1

Steve Rogers woke up at 4:55 a.m., minutes before his alarm clock rang. He jumped out of bed, stretched, and began his morning routine. By 5:15, Steve had already done 3,250 push-ups and 4,500 sit-ups, and he hadn't even broken a sweat.

Next it was time for his morning jog — a quick ten-mile run around the streets of New York City.

Steve left his apartment, breathed in the warm June air, and began his jog. Good runners could finish a mile in five minutes. Steve could do it in under two.

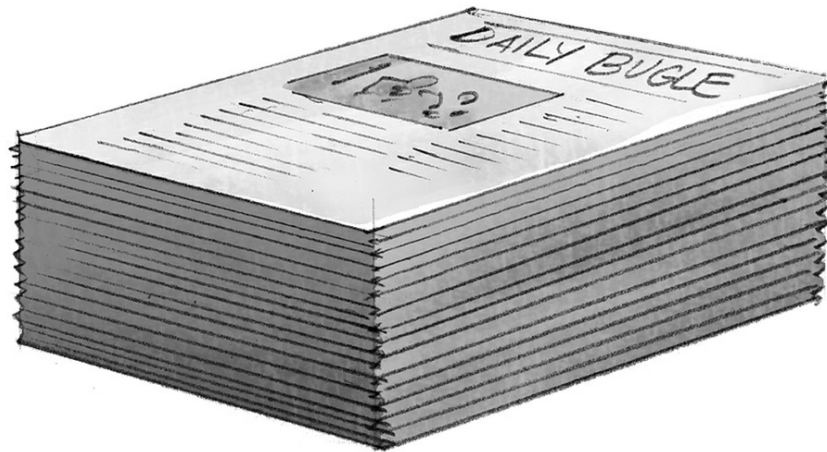
Steve made his way downtown and to Forty-Second Street, then cut over to Broadway. As he ran, Steve looked up at the giant billboards and bright lights of Times Square. Steve definitely preferred the old Big Apple.

Steve ended his run downtown in front of a newsstand and was instantly greeted with a “HIYA, CAP” from the guy working the stand, whom everyone called Old Joe.

“Just Steve, please,” Steve said.

“The usual?” Old Joe called out. Steve nodded, and the man handed him *the Daily Bugle*. Steve still couldn't believe a newspaper cost a dollar. He remembered when they were just five cents!

“Glad you're still buying the paper,” Old Joe began. “You're my best customer. Most people today get their news from phones or computers. You even pay with actual money. It's like the 1940s all over again,” he said with a smile.



Steve smiled back, took the paper, and walked across the street to get a cup of coffee. Usually, he'd go to the local diner.

But after hearing Old Joe talk about the '40s and how different things were today, Steve thought he would try something new, so he made his way to the trendy coffee shop down the block.

The shop was buzzing with people. They barely stopped moving long enough to order their drinks, all of which sounded weird to Steve. He stared at the chalkboard menu.

When it was his turn, Steve asked for "just a cup of joe," and the kid behind the counter stared back at him blankly.

"You want what?" the server asked, confused.



“A cup of joe, black,” Steve replied, but there was still no response. “You do sell coffee here, right?” Steve asked. The kid was amazed that someone wanted just a regular black coffee with nothing else in it. Steve paid for his overpriced drink, then took his paper and sat on a bench outside.

So much for trying something different, he thought.

Steve looked around and sighed. People were walking with their heads down, busy with other things, oblivious to the world around them. Everyone was connected to technology, but not . . . to one another. In Steve's day, people talked to each other. They read and conversed rather than losing themselves in their own virtual worlds.

But before he could continue thinking about how different things were, a strong voice called out to him. “Captain, we have a situation . . .” the voice began. Steve looked up to see his Avengers teammate Sam Wilson, code name Falcon, standing before him. Steve instantly rose to his feet.

“What's the mission?” Steve asked, ready to jump into battle.

“It's a matter of extreme urgency!” Sam began. “I've got an extra ticket

to today's Yankees game and no one to go with me. What do you say? Want to take in America's favorite pastime?" he asked.

Steve smiled. It wasn't an actual mission, but a baseball game with Sam would still be fun.

"Count me in," Steve said. "Besides, I haven't been to a ball game since Joltin' Joe played."

"Joltin' who?" Sam asked as they walked back uptown.

"Never mind," Steve said with a sigh. Little did he know that day would be the start of the most dangerous mission of Cap's career.

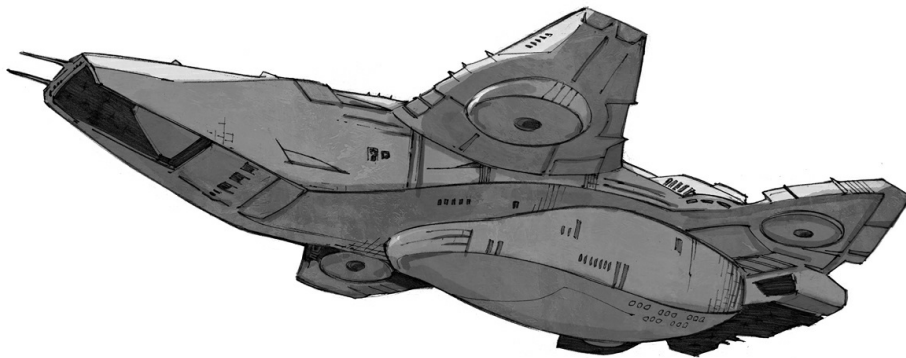


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Chapter 2

Captain America and Falcon stood before Nick Fury, the director of the super-spy group known as S.H.I.E.L.D. Cap—in his RED, WHITE, and BLUE uniform—was a very impressive figure. Next to him was Falcon, wearing a high-tech flight suit that, when activated, allowed him to fly with holographic wings. Both heroes stood at attention on board S.H.I.E.L.D.'s massive Helicarrier—part aircraft carrier, part helicopter, and all state of the art. The ability of this futuristic vessel to fly unseen above Manhattan still impressed Steve.

“Gentlemen,” the eye-patch-wearing Fury began as he called up a digital HUD. “Within the last three weeks, reports of missing persons around the tristate area have more than tripled. Men and women, all between the ages of eighteen and thirty, all seemingly in perfect health and in top physical condition.”



“Think they're all connected?” Cap asked.

“Stay Alert,” Fury said. “The kidnappings seem to be random, but S.H.I.E.L.D. intelligence tells me that there's something bigger going on. I have several agents hard at work trying to figure out who is behind this, and why.”

“What's our involvement?” Falcon asked.

“Right now, observe and report only. I want you up to speed for when we need to act,” Fury said.

As Cap and Falcon walked out of Fury's office, the First Avenger felt disappointed.

He was looking forward to some action, not sitting on the sidelines. But before he could harp on the issue too long, Falcon gave him a nudge.

“Come on , Cap,” Falcon said. “We're going to be late for the game. The Helicarrier is going up the East Coast and will be over the Bronx in two minutes—just enough time for us to change into less conspicuous clothing.”

Steve Rogers walked around Yankee Stadium in shock. There was music blasting, a huge TV, dozens of smaller TVs, various fancy restaurants and food stands, and even clothing shops.

“This certainly isn't the House that Ruth Built,” he said to Sam.

“You're living in another time, man. Welcome to the twenty-first century, where everything is at your fingertips!” Sam said.

As they sat, Steve wondered why a music video kept playing on the jumbotron screen. “Oh, that's one of the outfielders,” Sam said. “He has the number-three song in the country.”

“Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio never sang,” Steve said under his breath. “Isn't anyone interested in the game anymore?”

But before Sam could respond, their S.H.I.E.L.D. emergency beacons started to blink . It was Fury. There was a team of college kids on the way to the game, but their bus had gone missing. S.H.I.E.L.D. intercepted the garbled 911 call, and Sam and Steve were being called in to respond.



They ran out of the stadium and stood before Steve's vintage 1942 Harley-Davidson motorcycle. "You can't be serious," Sam said, referring to the battered and bruised cycle. "You could walk faster than that thing goes." But Steve was already opening a large duffel bag to reveal his Captain America uniform and Vibranium shield.

"She hasn't failed me yet," Cap said with a smile. "Now suit up and hop on."

"No way. I can fly. I'll carry you," Sam responded as his holographic hard-light wings began to form.

"Not a chance," Steve said as he lowered his mask into position. He jumped on his bike and started it with a loud roar. Now THIS was Cap's favorite pastime!



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 3

Falcon shook his head, then took to the air and activated the GPS on his watch. “I’ve got a lock on them, so try to keep up!” Falcon said as he flew toward the Major Deegan Expressway. Captain America followed on his bike, darting IN and OUT of traffic until he spotted the hijacked school bus.

Cap sped past all the other cars until he was right behind the bus. Suddenly, the emergency doors at the back of the bus burst open.

Energy beams shot from the windows. Whoever these guys were, they were very heavily armed.

“Falcon! I could use a diversion!” said Cap.

“Understood,” Falcon said. The flying hero dove down and fired a grappling hook at the roof of the bus, penetrating the thick top. Falcon swung high into the air and yanked with all his might, causing the driver to swerve. The distraction worked! Cap sped up and drove out of harm's way.

Inside the bus, an armed goon attached a small device to the end of the grappling hook and sent an electric charge up the wire and straight back to Falcon. It shocked the hero, and Falcon fell to the ground. The villain laughed as the bus sped away. “We did it,” the goon said. “Inform headquarters that the test subjects will be there within the hour.”

But before the driver could respond, he pointed out the window; the armed goon followed his gaze. “No! It can't be,” the driver said in disbelief. The villains saw him from a distance, standing atop an overpass, looking directly at them: it was Captain America!

Cap jumped on his bike and revved the engine, but it sputtered out. “Not now!” Cap said under his breath. He tried his bike again.

The bus was getting closer and closer. He tried a third time. The bike sputtered again and then conked out.

The motorcycle that had never failed . . . failed. By then the bus was almost under the overpass. There was only one thing to do. Captain America ran at full speed and JUMPED!

CRASH!

The bus swerved left and right, then burst through a guardrail and came to a stop. Cap, who had been clinging to the top of the bus, quickly jumped to his feet and swung down through one of the side windows.

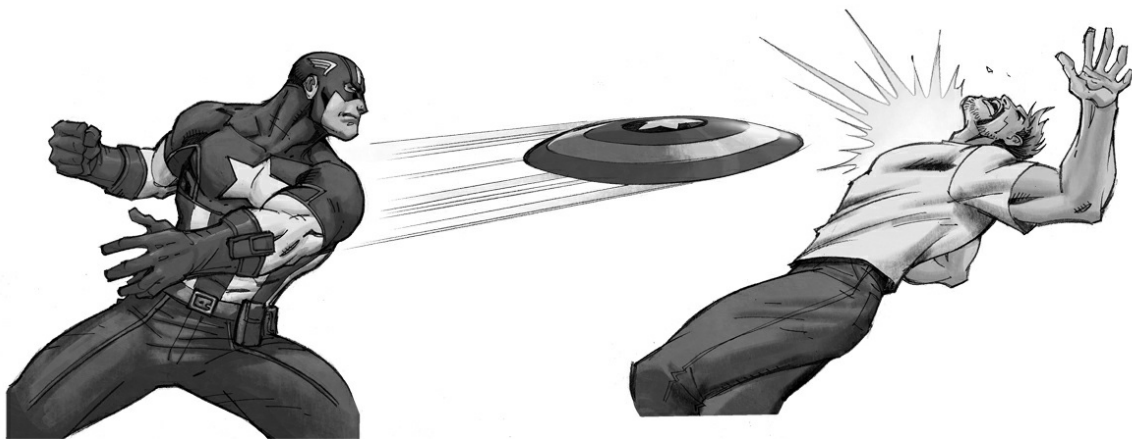
“Ah, the great Captain America,” the villain said as he raised his weapon.

The goon fired, but Cap was too fast. The beams bounced off his raised shield. Then Cap **THREW** his shield! The hostages stood there, stunned, as the goon fell to the ground. Then Cap noticed that the driver had gotten away.

“Wait here,” he instructed the hostages. “I’ll be right back!”

Captain America jumped off the bus and ran at top speed toward the driver. The driver had pulled out a high-tech energy weapon, ready to fire, when—wham! Falcon smashed down on the villain and knocked him out cold.

“Who are these guys?” Falcon asked.



“I don’t know, but they’re too heavily armed for a hostage situation,” Cap said. “Fury’s right: there’s more to this than meets the eye. And I don’t like it.”

“Captain America? Falcon?” a voice called from behind them.

“We’ll take it from here.” It was Agent Coulson from S.H.I.E.L.D. He and his team were ushering the hostages off the bus and taking the villains into custody. “Please report to Director Fury’s office at oh seven hundred

tomorrow morning,” Coulson said. Then he wheeled Cap's bike up to him. “Think you might want to requisition a new ride, Captain,” Coulson quipped.

“No, thanks,” Cap said as he quickly took the bike from him and wheeled it off toward the S.H.I.E.L.D. trucks.

“Was it something I said?” Coulson asked Falcon.

“Nah, he's just upset. He almost jeopardized the hostages thanks to his old motorcycle.” Cap heard what Falcon said. And he was right.



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Chapter 4

At seven the next morning, Steve Rogers stood in his civilian clothing before Director Fury.

“Thanks for coming in, Cap. Please sit down. Sam will join us later. First, we need to talk.” Fury said.

“You were right. That wasn't a normal kidnapping attempt.” Cap replied.

“Coulson will deal with what happened yesterday,” Fury said before changing the subject. “Your help is needed elsewhere.” He pressed a button under his desk.

The windows went black as a flat-screen TV lowered itself from the ceiling. “Watch this, and then we'll talk,” Fury said as he pressed another button.

Steve watched the screen as the men in the video spoke in hushed tones. “Notice anything special about those men?” Fury asked. Steve studied the video more closely.

“There are six of them, but . . . but only two of them look . . . real,” Steve said, almost in disbelief.

“Good eye. The other four are advanced holograms. But keep watching,” Fury said.

“Everything is proceeding according to schedule. The techno-disruptor has been completed and the tomorrow army will soon be ready,” said one of the holograms.

“Excellent. The final meeting is set for midnight tomorrow at Gravesend bay,” said one of the non-holograms. “I WILL INFORM OUR LEADER.” And with that, the video abruptly ended and the light in the office returned. Steve turned toward Fury.



“What is the Tomorrow Army?” Steve asked. “And where did this video come from?”

Fury pressed another button; a few seconds later, the beautiful yet dangerous Natasha Romanoff, code name Black Widow, entered the room.

“I took the video, and it wasn't easy,” Natasha said, then explained how she'd had to hold herself up in the rafters. “After the video cut out and the holograms disappeared, the two men raised both their arms and said: Hail, HYDRA!”

Steve's fists clenched at the mere mention of HYDRA, an evil organization that wanted to take over the world. They were the very opposite of the super spies who made up S.H.I.E.L.D. and worked to keep the world safe.

“I followed them down a hidden elevator shaft and tailed them to a secret underground training room. There were dozens of guards—all training with different weapons or in different fighting styles ... and all wearing HYDRA badges,” Natasha said.

“It's not possible,” Steve said. “HYDRA was defeated almost a century ago—by me!” “That's what we thought,” Fury said. “Then we found this.”

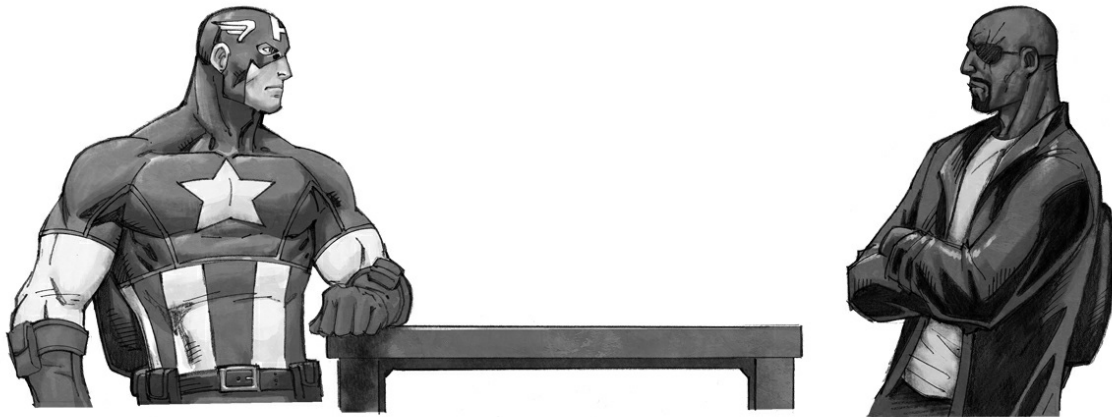
He handed Cap an envelope marked TOP SECRET. “Twelve of my best agents ended up in the hospital getting us this info,” Fury said. Cap opened the envelope to find several glossy pictures. “I think you'll recognize the person in the center of the room.”

Steve's eyes widened, and his blood ran cold. “No . . .” Steve whispered. The figure in the picture was a hulking one. It had a large half-human, half-robotic body—but its face wasn't on its head. Instead, it was on a television-like flat screen in the center of its body. The body was unrecognizable, but the face was unmistakable. It was HYDRA scientist and second-in-command Arnim Zola. Like Steve, Zola had fought in World War II. But Steve had thought Zola long dead.

In the photos, Zola was standing in front of a high-tech machine straight out of a science-fiction movie. “Somehow, Arnim Zola survived all these years and is now the head of HYDRA,” Fury said. “We believe that the thing he's standing in front of is the Techno-Disruptor.” Then Fury turned to face Steve, who had already suited up and was ready for battle.

“Your mission is to capture Zola and stop HYDRA—once and for all.” Fury said.

When Cap went to grab his shield, he noticed a new black-and-gray uniform that hung next to it. “That's your new stealth suit,” a voice behind him said. It was Nick Fury again. “It will allow you to sneak into the HYDRA meeting place without being detected,” the director said. “It's a present from Tony Stark. He's making them for all the Avengers.”



“I know you prefer red, white, and blue—but this will keep you from being caught and becoming black and blue,” Fury said with a grin.

As Fury left, Cap suited up again and made his way into S.H.I.E.L.D.'s equipment room.

Agent Coulson approached Cap with Cap's bike. “You know, we can add a rocket launcher, a GPS, even a cup holder to this thing,” Coulson began, but Cap refused. This was a classic bike, after all, and didn't want to change it. “I once felt the same way about Lola, then I had a talk with Stark, and he made a few upgrades.”

Coulson said as he got into his classic red Corvette. He flipped a switch. And with that, Coulson and Lola rocketed toward New York City below.

Cap shook his head at the flying car as Falcon and Black Widow stepped up behind him.

“I just heard the news about HYDRA,” Sam said. “When do we go after them?”

“We don't. I do,” Cap replied.

“Let me help!” Sam responded. But Cap refused. He was going in solo to find out more about HYDRA's secret plans, and he didn't need help. HYDRA was a dangerous and evil organization from Steve's past, and he knew exactly how to handle it.

But Cap wanted to be extra careful, especially when it came to his friends.

Sam walked off, frustrated that he couldn't help, but Natasha stayed

behind to have a word with Steve. It was an emergency signal. If Cap was over whelmed, he'd tap the screen and S.H.I.E.L.D. would be there.

“Spying on HYDRA alone, and on this rickety old bike, really isn't smart. I should do this mission.” Natasha worried.

“I've got the situation under control.” Steve comforted.

“I'm sure you do—but take this with you.” Natasha said.

“I'm just going on a routine mission,” Cap said, trying to make her stop worrying.

Then Cap thought about it. Maybe he did need help. He shrugged off the thought. “I'll be fine,” he said, and started to walk away.

“But what if fifty soldiers turn into five hundred? Not even the great Captain America can defeat all of them,” she said with a smile.

“Then I'm going to need a lot more than this beacon,” Cap replied. He strapped on a parachute, got on his bike, and prepared to ride off the ramp.

“Hey, Cap,” Black Widow said as he started the engine. “Be careful.” Cap nodded, then gunned his bike and rode straight off the ramp and into the open air high above New York City.

Once he landed, Cap revved the engine and sped out of sight, toward the Brooklyn docks.

The thought that this venomous group was back made Cap's blood boil. It was time to take the fight to *HYDRA*!



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Chapter 5

A gloved hand emerged from the cool water of the moonlit bay and grabbed onto one of the heavy mooring lines that kept the boat docked. Slowly, Captain America climbed out of the water and up the rope. Deep within the hold of the boat was a high-tech HYDRA meeting room, and Cap was going to find it.

He quietly made his way across the deck, taking out one HYDRA guard after another. Cap's new uniform was a great help. The black-and-gray suit allowed him to blend with shadows and move without being seen.

Cap quickly took out a big guard with his trusty shield. He left the unconscious guard locked in a storage room but without his helmet and armor. Cap, now disguised as a HYDRA guard, made his way to the bottom of the boat and into the secret meeting room. He stood silently in the back. At the center of the room was something—or someone. It was standing upright and was surrounded by a dozen HYDRA scientists, all of whom had evil smiles on their evil faces. They spoke of special gauntlets and boots that could increase a man's strength and speed; of high-tech armor and state-of-the-art helmets—helmets that were combat ready and could withstand a blast at point-blank range. Then they mentioned that this futuristic weaponry was ready to test today. Captain America had heard enough.

“Party's over, boys!” Cap said as he ripped off his HYDRA disguise and jumped into the center of the room. The guards fired their weapons immediately, but they were no match for Cap! Captain America raised his shield and blocked every attack, sending bullets and laser beams back toward the HYDRA agents, blasting them down and knocking them out. “This ends here!”



“You are so right, Captain,” one of the HYDRA scientists began. “But for you!”

The scientist then pressed a code into a keypad, and the metal box in the center of the room began to open with an eerie HISS.

As the box opened, a high-tech HYDRA agent stepped out wearing the same devices that the other agents had been speaking about earlier. The super HYDRA goon clenched his fists, smirked, and took a step toward Cap.

The super-agent raised his gauntlets and brought them crashing down on Cap with ease. Cap lifted his shield at the last possible second to block the blow, but the shock wave went right through him and rattled his bones. *Wow*, Cap thought. *Felt like Thor bashed me with Mjolnir*. Before Cap knew it, the super-agent was on the attack!

Cap dodged a punch, but then the super-agent grabbed him by the shoulder and unleashed an intense electroshock.



Cap screamed in pain and pushed forward, delivering a massive right hook to the agent's jaw that caused him to release Cap from his grip.

“You have a strong fighting spirit,” the super-agent began. “But you are unwise to continue this fight. You are no match for me.”

“I've never run from a fight, and I'm not about to start now!”

Whoosh! Cap leaped into the air, but the HYDRA super-agent was too fast for him. He reared back and brought his fists **SLAMMING** down on Cap. Cap raised his shield again, but it was no use.

Cap landed with a hard thud on the far side of the meeting room and momentarily blacked out. When he opened his eyes, Cap couldn't believe what had happened to his shield.

Captain America was in trouble.

He struggled to his feet as the super-agent charged toward him. Cap slowly raised his dented shield. But the super-agent was already looming above him.

The super-agent grabbed Cap's shield and flung it across the room—

with Cap attached! Cap landed on his feet and quickly slung his shield across his back.

He moved in close and delivered a series of punches to no avail.

“Good-bye, Captain.” The super-agent looked down at Cap and grinned.

He then pressed a switch on his gauntlet and began to punch. And he punched and punched and punched—faster and faster and faster.

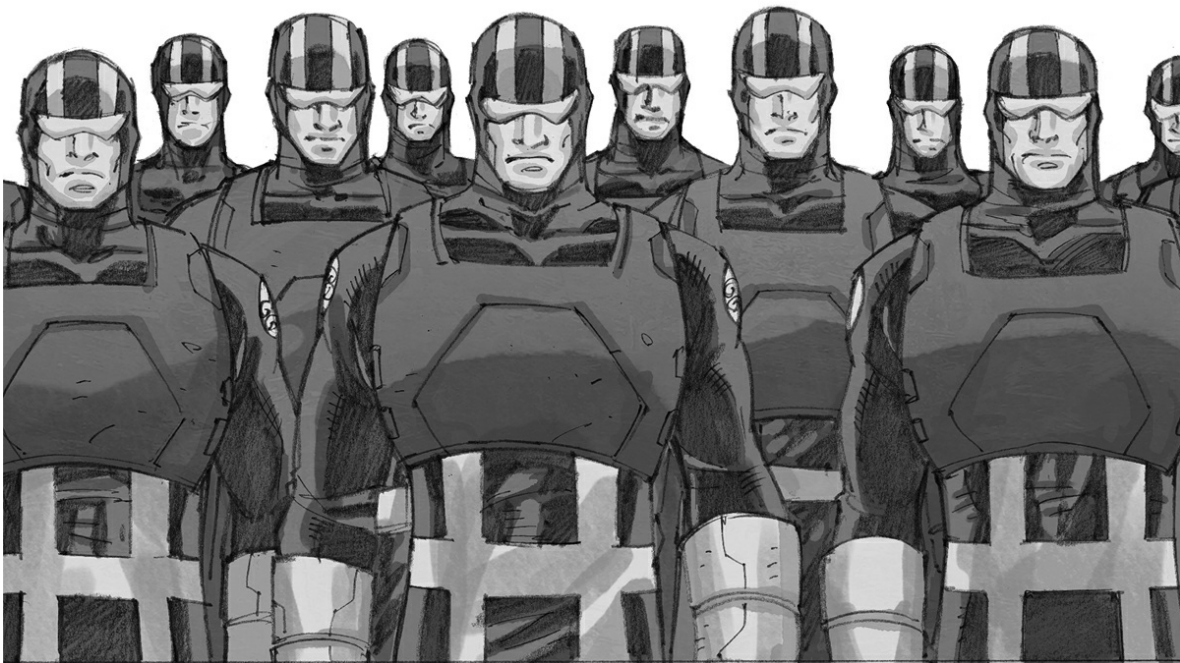
Then he sent another shock through Cap's body that nearly zapped him right out of his boots.

“AHHHHH!” Cap fell to his knees, barely conscious from the assault. He quickly reached into his pouch and pressed Black Widow's emergency beacon. Just in time, too. The super-agent was moving in for the final, finishing blow when a voice yelled out: “Enough!”

A shiver ran down Cap's spine. His vision was blurry, but he could still see the unmistakable form of Arnim Zola! The villain from Cap's past—who now looked like something from the future—stood before the fallen First Avenger and spoke. “Good evening, Herr Captain. Welcome aboard.”

“Zola . . .” Cap hesitated. “You'll never get away with this.”

“Ah, ever the optimist,” Zola said. “But clearly, you are no match for my TOMORROW ARMY.”



“This super-agent who bested you is merely the prototype. Soon, there will be dozens more. Hundreds, even! And no one—not you, or S.H.I.E.L.D., or your mighty Avengers—will be able to defeat them. I will do what Red Skull never could—I, Arnim Zola, will Rule the world!!!”

“Zola!” One of the scientists quickly interrupted. “Fighter jets are approaching!”

A battered Cap managed a smile. “You were saying?”

“This is inconvenient, but not unexpected,” Zola replied. He turned to the other scientists. “Evacuate the boat. Then blow it.” Zola looked at Cap and gave him one final blow.

17...16...15

14...13...12

11...10...9...

8...7...6...5...

Cap heard the escape subs shoot out from beneath. He then heard a timer ticking down toward zero. As he struggled to remain conscious, he heard a familiar voice. “What Are you doing? Taking a Nap?”

Falcon was standing before him.

He grabbed Cap and activated his hard-light wings.

The winged Avenger radioed Black Widow, who was watching from the Quinjet high above the boat. "I've got him," Falcon said.

"Well, what are you waiting for? Get to the main deck and get out of there!" Black Widow yelled.

Falcon grabbed Cap and flew high into the sky.

"Get the medical bay ready," Falcon said as they flew away. "We're coming home!"

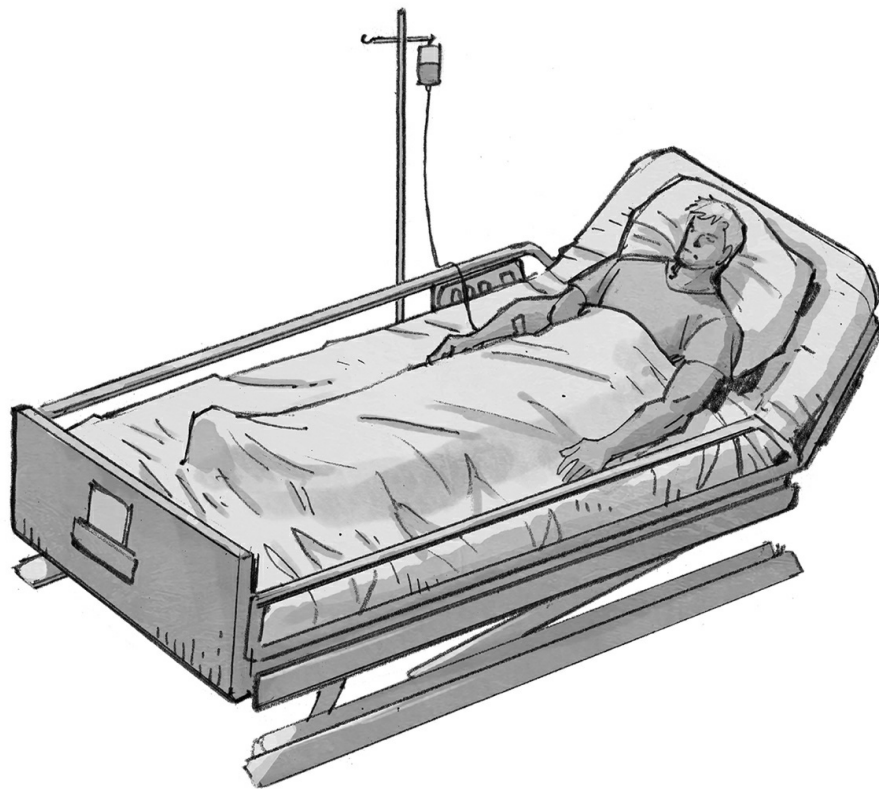


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Chapter 6

Weeks later, Steve Rogers woke up in the medical bay on board the Helicarrier.

“Ugh . . . what hit me?” he asked.



“A prototype HYDRA super-agent,” Nick Fury said. “Multiple times.”

“Thanks for reminding me,” Steve said. “I suppose you're here with another mission?”

“No,” Fury began. “I'm here to make sure you're all right. You took a bad beating, Captain,” he said as he walked over and looked Steve in the eye. “And you used poor judgment. This isn't the same HYDRA you fought

during World War II. This is a new-and-improved HYDRA. They adapted with the times. You didn't. Your mission . . . was a failure.”

Fury's words hurt almost as much as Steve's wounds. He's right, Steve thought. Steve had acted alone instead of accepting help. He'd thought his enemies were just like he was and fighting them would be just like it used to be. But he had been wrong.

“Thanks to the Super-Soldier Serum, you're going to be fine. You should be cleared to leave in another week or two.”

“A week? Or two? But what about HYDRA?” Steve asked.

“We've learned that HYDRA is going to make a move in five days—on the FOURTH OF JULY. You can watch the events from your hospital bed,” Fury said before leaving.

Steve thought long and hard about what Fury had told him. He wasn't about to let Black Widow, Falcon, and the agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. go up against Zola and HYDRA without him.

But Steve was still uncomfortable in this modern world. He liked the things he knew: the old Times Square, black coffee, his 1942 Harley. If he was going to adjust to the modern world, he would need help, and Steve knew just where to turn. He checked himself out and left to find a friend.

A red-and-gold blur streaked across the New York skyline and came to a stop atop a glistening state-of-the-art skyscraper. Steve Rogers, with his dented shield slung across his back, walked across the roof and addressed the red-and-gold Super Hero who stood before him.

“Hello, Tony,” Steve said to the invincible Iron Man.

“Oh, hey, Cap,” Iron Man nonchalantly said as his faceplate lifted to reveal the handsome Tony Stark. “I didn't see you there. What's up?”

“Is it an avengers mission? ”

“Does fury need help with something?”

“Alien invasion?”

“Ramp aging robots?”

“Mole men?”

“Something stuck in his good eye?”

“It's not an Avengers mission, and Fury doesn't need help,” Steve said. “I do.” Tony's smiling face turned momentarily confused, and then Tony

invited his fellow Avenger inside Stark Tower.

Steve explained everything that had happened in the past few weeks. No details were left out. When he was done, Tony let out a long sigh.

“So we're dealing with an army of high-tech super villains led by a dude older than you whose face is on a TV in his belly?”

“You forgot about the Techno-Disruptor, whatever that is” “Right. It's a device that can knock out and shut down specific technology,” Tony said.

Steve was shocked. “How do you know all that?”

“I'm a genius billionaire inventor. I know everything,” Tony said. “Plus, I hacked S.H.I.E.L.D.'s encrypted files last night. Anyway, we've got our work cut out for us. But if anyone can bring you into the twenty-first century, it's me.”

Tony continued. “Once we do that, then we'll do something about your horribly outdated wardrobe,” Tony added under his breath. “Then you can hit the town and do the jitterbug or whatever the craze was a hundred years ago.”



Steve stared at his clothes, unsure whether Tony was joking with him or insulting him.

Tony smiled. “Come on, Cap, let's go!”

During the next four days, Tony taught Steve everything he could about the modern world.

And all the while, Steve was getting stronger and healthier. Not only was he doing ten thousand sit-ups and push-ups again by the end of day

three; he was also texting. Tony Stark was proud, though there was one major upgrade left.

Tony led Steve into a large room—that was part garage, part laboratory, and part man cave—but that wasn't what impressed Steve. The room was lined with new Iron Man armors, all in various stages of development. Tony couldn't help noticing Steve's reaction to all the suits.

“Cool, right?” Tony remarked. He walked over to Steve's 1942 Harley. “But we're here to discuss this ancient two-wheeled vehicle that may have, at one point, been called a motorcycle.”

“Look, I've listened to you on everything else. Don't even try to talk me into a new bike!” Steve exclaimed.

“Do. Or do not. There is no try,” Tony said, much to Steve's confusion. “What? It's Yoda. Didn't we get to that? Never mind. You're getting a new ride, courtesy of me. Or do you want to have to jump onto another bus?”

Steve looked from his bike to Tony, then back to his bike. “What did you have in mind?” he asked.

A wicked smile flashed across Tony's face. “Two words,” he began, “space bike!”

Steve gulped. “All right,” he said. “But on one condition: you fix this first.”

“My pop made this,” Tony said. His father, Howard Stark, had crafted Steve's iconic shield. Tony looked at it and understood Steve's connection to the things from his past.

Then that mischievous smile came back to Tony's face. “These little dents? I can bang them out in no time. Then we fix your bike, get you back to the Helicarrier so you can stop HYDRA, and still have you home in time to watch the fireworks.”

“You want in?” Steve asked. “I could use the armored Avenger when I take on those super-agents.”

“Thanks, but I have to be in Europe by midnight. Reports are that Crimson Dynamo has been spotted near Italy—plus, I'd like some gelato for dessert.” And with that, the two heroes got back to work. It was going to be a long night.





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Chapter 7

The next morning, Captain America found himself again aboard the Helicarrier and inside Nick Fury's office. "Where have you been, Captain?" Fury asked, wondering why Steve had checked himself out of the medical bay days earlier.

"I went to see a friend," Steve began. "He helped me get back in the game. I'm ready to take on HYDRA. But I'll need a little help."

"You're America's First Super-Soldier and the First Avenger, and it's the Fourth of July," Fury replied as he extended his hand. "You can have all the help you need." The two men shook hands, and it was as if Cap had never left.

"What's the latest intelligence update?" Cap asked.

"Thanks to scraps recovered from the boat and surveillance from our best agents, including Black Widow, we have determined that HYDRA will strike this evening at the very symbol of American freedom: the Statue of Liberty."

"And what, exactly, is Zola's plan?" Cap asked.

"It's just like he said: he plans to take over the world with his tomorrow army. Regular men and women have been turned into an unwitting evil army. Those athletes on the bus—the ones you saved on their way to the Yankees game—they were part of Zola's plan. They were his test subjects. HYDRA's been kidnapping people and brainwashing them. Zola's been downloading HYDRA fighting skills and orders directly into their brains and then hooking them up to all this superior, futuristic tech—making them nearly unstoppable."

"And is each one as strong as the prototype I fought?" Cap asked.

Fury nodded.



“And you're sure of their target?” Cap asked.

“Yes. I believe Zola wants to make a very public display,” Fury

responded.

“Agreed,” Cap said. He thought for a moment and then added, “I need a battalion of your best S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. Black Widow, Falcon, and I will lead them into battle.”

Fury flashed a rare smile, suddenly feeling much more confident.

“I'm not done,” Cap said, much to the director's surprise. “I'm also going to need some tech.”

Nick Fury raised his unpatched eyebrow.

“Did Captain America just ask for tech?” Fury said.

Later, Agent Coulson led Captain America into the Helicarrier's Research and Development area. Cap made his way to the sonic disruptors and precise EMP blasters. “These are all nonlethal and won't hurt HYDRA's unwitting army, but they should do damage against Zola's tech,” Cap said, much to Coulson's surprise.

“I'll also need a team of our top programmers to be stationed nearby the fighting so they can work on creating firewalls and jamming frequencies to block HYDRA's intelligence network,” Cap added. Agent Coulson was clearly impressed. “So you plan on hitting them in the virtual world and the physical world.”

“It's going to be a one-two punch.” Cap flashed one of Stark's mischievous grins. “Please have the entire team assembled in the hangar in one hour.”

As Coulson saluted his hero, Cap added, “And, Coulson? Thank you.”

Inside the hangar, Captain America's team of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents and programmers were readying their equipment and suiting up for the battle as Fury watched from the sidelines.

“Welcome back, buddy,” Falcon began. “Don't take this the wrong way, but are you sure you're up for this? No one would blame you if you sat this one out. Me and Nat can handle this.”

“Falcon—Sam—I appreciate your concern. But if you're going after hydra, I'm going with you.” Cap replied.

“We're just concerned,” Natasha said. “I'm fine, Natasha. In fact, I'm better than fine. Now let's finish this briefing and get down to Liberty Island.”

“What about your ride?” Falcon asked. “Do we still have to drag that old bike around?”

“Thanks for reminding me,” Cap said. He took a small device out of one of the pouches on his belt and pressed down on its flat screen. There was a beeping sound, then a whirring, then a huge gust of wind. Everyone turned in amazement. The crowd of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents was speechless.

Fury looked at Captain America, totally shocked.

“TWO WORDS . . .” Captain America said, “space bike!”





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Chapter 8

Captain America, Falcon, Black Widow, and their battalion of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents were hidden throughout Liberty Island, waiting for HYDRA to make its move.

Just as the sun was setting, they heard a low humming. They looked up to see giant zeppelins floating toward the Statue of Liberty. Then they heard loud splashing sounds and saw vehicles rising from the bay. The invasion had begun.

Cap signaled everyone to remain where they were. He wanted the battle contained to the island, so they would have to wait until HYDRA disembarked and made the first move. As if on cue, Zola's voice reverberated from the lead zeppelin.



“I, Arnim Zola, leader of HYDRA, now control all transmissions. I control all information! I control all of you! Today, the world will feel the unmatched power of HYDRA. For too long we have stayed hidden in the shadows. Now, we will rise. Now, HYDRA and its Tomorrow Army will take its rightful place at the head of the world.” In response, the HYDRA soldiers and the brainwashed Tomorrow Army threw their arms into the air and yelled, “HAIL, HYDRA!” Cap gripped his shield and was ready to lead the attack when an eerie green wave of energy shot down from the zeppelin at the statue's crown.

“They're going to destroy the statue!” Falcon said in a hushed, urgent tone.

“No,” Cap replied. “If they wanted to destroy it, they would've done that by now. Zola has something else in mind.”

“Look!” Black Widow shouted. The beams Zola had fired made the

statue glow. Then it looked as if the statue was melting. Then, slowly, the statue began to change its shape. “They're using matter reorganizers. Not even Stark has that technology!”

The heroes looked on in horror as parts of the statue transformed before their very eyes. Zola melted the statue's head and spiked crown, then fired the ray again and molded them into a hideous, many-tentacled skull, the very symbol of HYDRA. “If you cut off one head, two more will grow! Hail, HYDRA,” Zola's voice then boomed from above.

Captain America stood horrified by this grotesque symbol of evil. For a split second, he felt utterly defeated. Then, as the last soldiers of the Tomorrow Army emerged from their vehicles and advanced on land, he felt a hand on his shoulder.

“Cap,” Black Widow said softly. “It's time.”

Cap felt hope return.

“Let's go,” he said, swinging his shield around and charging toward the statue's base.

“Zola, you and HYDRA have one chance to stand down and surrender. I won't ask again!” Captain America yelled.

“Herr Captain, so soon recovered, I see,” Zola said as he leaned out of the zeppelin's window and addressed the Super Hero. “Wunderbar. I had hoped you would attend the festivities and the invasion of your precious New York City.” Zola pressed a button on his wrist gauntlet, and the Tomorrow Army's helmets flashed a brief red light. They had been upgraded with new instructions: commence the attack, and bring Captain America to Zola. The fight was on!

In mere minutes, it was clear that HYDRA had the upper hand.

Cap radioed the S.H.I.E.L.D. tech team stationed on a rooftop in lower Manhattan, led by Coulson. “Coulson, report! Any chance of jamming their communications systems, or knocking them out entirely?”

“We're working on it, sir,” Coulson replied. “Their signals are being scrambled, and we've been unable to pinpoint their exact frequency. I need two more minutes.”

“The battle might be over in two minutes,” Cap yelled. “You have one!”

“Huh?”

Cap went back to the battle and threw his shield as hard as he could. It

bounced off one, two, three Tomorrow Army helmets, momentarily knocking soldiers down.

Cap reached out to retrieve his shield, but it never returned. Instead, a bigger arm covered in wires and tech had the shield in its grasp. It was the original HYDRA super-agent.

“I know you've already met my prototype soldier—or, as we call him, ‘HYDRA-Prime,’ ” Zola said with sinister glee. “This will be your last meeting, Herr Captain.” Then Zola addressed HYDRA-Prime. “Finish them,” Zola commanded. HYDRA-Prime nodded and advanced toward Captain America.

“Didn't take my advice the first time we met, hmmm?” the villain asked as he threw Cap's shield to the ground.

“Bring it on, pal,” Cap said through gritted teeth. It was time for a rematch!





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Chapter 9

Captain America's fist slammed into HYDRA-Prime's jaw.

Crack!

HYDRA-Prime delivered a powerful kick to Cap's ribs. As the two men continued their knock-down, drag-out fight, Arnim Zola grabbed a rope and descended from his zeppelin onto the Statue of Liberty, where HYDRA agents were connecting the Techno-Disruptor to the opposite side of the transformed face. Zola cackled. "Soon Lady Liberty will be singing out of the other side of her mouth that I am her rightful leader!"



Back on the ground, Cap was out of breath and in pain. He had managed to grab his shield, but he was still losing. “You are weak, Captain,” HYDRA-Prime taunted. “You cannot defeat me alone!”

“You're so right,” Cap said as he clicked on a small homing device from one of his pouches. “That's why I won't repeat the same mistake I made last time. This time I'm not alone!”

Within seconds, Falcon and Black Widow sprang into action. Falcon soared toward HYDRA-Prime as fast as he could, but HYDRA-Prime was faster.



Oomph! The two heroes collided and fell to the ground.

HYDRA-Prime merely laughed. “You will have to do better than that!”

“Okay, how about this!” Cap said, landing a right hook across HYDRA-Prime's face. Cap quickly turned and regrouped with Falcon and Black Widow.

“You weren't kidding about this guy,” Falcon said. “What's our plan?”

Before Cap answered, he hurled his shield at HYDRA-Prime. It smashed into his chest and returned to Cap. HYDRA-Prime staggered back and roared in pain. Captain America had bought them a few seconds of planning. “I'm his main target,” Cap said. “I'll provide cover; you two disable

his tech—but do it quickly. I can't go another twelve rounds with this guy.”
Then Cap's eyes suddenly grew wide. “That's it!” he exclaimed. “Boxing!”
Black Widow and Falcon looked at him, confused.



“We have to go twelve rounds with him. He won't expect that. He's looking to end this quickly. We've got to fight him like Joe Louis would: methodical and controlled, over and over again.”

“That's Joltin' Joe,” Falcon quietly said to Black Widow.

“Joltin' Joe was a baseball player, genius, not a boxer,” Black Widow corrected. “Now look alive—here he comes!”

The Super Villain charged toward them, then pointed his hands in their direction and fired bolts of electricity from his fingertips.

Cap raised his shield and deflected the bolts right back at the villain, temporarily distracting him. Falcon and Black Widow used the distraction to their advantage. Falcon fired his grappling hook and wrapped it around the villain's high-tech boots, tripping him up and sending him crashing to the ground.

As he fell, Black Widow fired her stingers directly at the side of his helmet in hopes of damaging the wires that connected it to the chest piece.

HYDRA-Prime staggered again and was knocked back by a spinning red, white, and blue blur. As Black Widow and Falcon attacked from the side, Cap charged from the front. As they fought, each hero took a turn leading. When HYDRA-Prime turned to face one of them, the other two heroes would jump in. Falcon and Black Widow followed Cap's lead, and soon the three heroes were working in unison. Their attack was methodical and controlled, and they were wearing down HYDRA-Prime.

HYDRA-Prime lunged at Cap. The villain swung and missed, and Cap knew it was time for the final strike. Captain America jumped on top of the villain and grabbed the now damaged wires tightly with both hands. Then, using every ounce of strength in his Super-Soldier body, he ripped them out.

HYDRA-Prime let out a loud scream before collapsing to the ground, defeated.

“You did it!” Falcon yelled to Cap.

“We did it!” Cap quickly corrected. “But it's not over yet. Zola's still standing. We have to stop him—and fast!”

“I can reach the top of the Statue of Liberty in twenty seconds,” Falcon said as he began to extend his hard-light wings.

“Too slow!” Cap replied as he pressed a remote. His space bike streaked through the sky and then down toward the heroes. The First Avenger jumped

in the air, grabbed the handlebars, and steered the bike straight up toward Zola.

As Cap approached the crown, “You are too late,” Zola said as he quickly grabbed a gauntlet from one of his fallen Tomorrow Army soldiers and fired bolts of electricity toward Cap. Cap dove the flying motorcycle out of the way, then revved its engines and sped through an opening in the crown. He jumped off the hovering bike to face Zola.

“Once again, you are too late, Herr Captain. I have already won,” Zola said as the Techno-Disruptor next to them sprang to life! Just then, Cap heard a transmission from Coulson: “Cap—we’ve figured out HYDRA’s tech! We can shut it down and disable the tomorrow army!”

“I have already won!”

But energy waves had already begun to cascade from the device toward Manhattan. Slowly, all technology began to fail and shut down, including S.H.I.E.L.D.’s tech! Cap’s flying motorcycle crashed to the ground with a loud THUD. He had to destroy the Techno-Disruptor—now!

Captain America advanced toward Zola, determined to stop him and the device. The villain cackled. “Fool! Your Super-Soldier strength is no match for my genius intellect! I control it all, Herr Captain! And he who controls technology controls the future!”

“And those who don’t learn from the past are doomed to repeat it!” Cap replied. He grabbed Zola and lifted him high above his head, throwing the HYDRA leader through the air.

Zola landed with a smash and fell back, sliding out of the crown.

“Admirable, Herr Captain, but you have only slowed me down,” the villain said.

Cap ignored him and flung his shield. It whizzed across the crown and landed with a ZING in the side of the Techno-Disruptor. The machine sputtered and sparked, but it wasn’t enough to stop it. Cap pulled his shield from the machine and ran toward his space bike. “Guess we’re going to have to do this the old-fashioned way.”

Cap tried to activate the flying but it was no use. Thanks to the Techno-Disruptor, it had no power. But Cap just grinned and flipped a switch. Pieces of his bike flew through the air. Beneath the high-tech exterior was a fully functioning old-school motorcycle!

Cap grabbed a cable from the side of the motorcycle bike and attached it to the machine. Then he jumped on the starter and revved the engine. Cap took a deep breath and gunned his bike, riding it—with the machine attached—straight off one of the tentacles.

Cap—on the motorcycle with the machine still attached—flew high into the air, then started falling to the island below.

“Need a hand?”

It was Falcon! As he soared toward Cap, the First Avenger jumped off the bike. Falcon caught him just in time, and they flew high into the air, the bike and the Techno-Disruptor exploding below!

Crash! The explosion was spectacular! Disabled by the S.H.I.E.L.D. team in lower Manhattan, the entire Tomorrow Army collapsed to the ground. When Coulson got the all clear from his men, he fired a single flare into the night: mission accomplished!

Somewhere along the East River, a New Yorker saw the explosion, then the flare, and decided to shoot his own fireworks into the sky. He was quickly joined by another New Yorker across town. And another. And another. And another.

Soon the sky was filled with explosions signifying the triumph of good over evil.

“And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,” Cap said quietly to himself.

“We did it,” Falcon said. “We stopped *HYDRA*.”

“And protected life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” Black Widow added.

“Yes, but Zola got away,” Cap said as he began to walk through the wreckage. “He's not here. And neither is *HYDRA-Prime*.”

“Slithered away like the snakes they are.” Falcon added.

“Still, the good guys did win.” Black Widow added.

“Nice work, team. Happy Fourth of July!” Cap said.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 10

The next morning, Steve Rogers woke up before his alarm. He got out of bed, stretched, and began his morning routine. He did his usual push-ups and sit-ups and soon began his morning run through Manhattan.

Steve's body ached from the battle the night before, but he was happy. He had saved the day. As he ran, he looked around Times Square. One of the giant screens was broadcasting familiar footage.

The news anchor announced, "Captain America saves New York!"

He ran downtown and stopped by Old Joe's for his morning paper, smiling at the headline.

"NICE JOB," Old Joe said. "I gotta tell ya, I was scared until I saw you on the scene."

"I was scared, too, Joe," Steve replied.

Steve headed to the trendy coffee shop and went inside. Everyone was talking to each other about what had happened the night before. Some were huddled around cell phones looking at pictures of the battle, and others were sitting at tables deep in conversation, but they were all connected—all bound by the same unbelievable events that had happened on the Fourth of July.

Steve stepped to the counter and saw the kid from the last time he had been there. Much to Steve's surprise, the kid remembered him. "Hey, cup of joe, black, right?" Steve nodded. "Coming right up, Cap!"

As Steve waited for his coffee, a few people came up and asked to take pictures. Others patted him on the back or shook his hand. After a few minutes, Steve paid for his coffee and sat on his usual bench outside. He looked across the water at Liberty Island. Construction crews were already hard at work fixing the statue. Scaffolding rose as high as the crown.

Then Steve looked around. He saw kids pretending to be Super Heroes. A young couple were walking down the street holding hands, and he overheard them say how happy they were that Cap had saved the day. They didn't know that Captain America was sitting just a few feet from them. The

city was bustling with energy, and all was right with the world.



Steve was happy to be alive. Thanks to the past few weeks, Steve had learned to appreciate what he had but also remember what had come before. He realized that he had to adapt with the times instead of living in the past. He also realized the importance of friends, and of working together and asking for help. Steve let out a contented sigh of relief. Then he heard a beeping sound.

Steve lifted the cell phone Tony Stark had given him and saw a text from Avengers Mansion. It read: "URGENT: REPORT IN IMMEDIATE."

Steve tapped the screen and was soon staring at Sam Wilson's face on his phone. "What's the situation?" Steve asked.

"It's Batroc," Sam began. "You, me, and Natasha are back in action. And I think we're going to need the others."

Steve smiled. "Text me your coordinates, and tell the rest of the Avengers to stand by to assemble," he said. "I'm on my way!"



美国队长的故事

史蒂夫·罗杰斯一直想要参军，但他体弱多病，无法入伍。后来，史蒂夫被选中参加一个最高机密的实验项目：重生计划。在这个计划中，史蒂夫接受了超级战士血清的注射以及脉冲玻璃射线照射。

实验结束后，史蒂夫已从瘦弱新兵变身成为高大强壮的超级战士。史蒂夫得到了一套特殊制服和一个由被称为吸音钢的稀有金属制成的坚不可摧的盾牌，它由红、白、蓝三色组成。作为美国队长，他承诺将为所有人的自由和平等而战。

在与邪恶反派“红骷髅”进行了一场殊死搏斗之后，美国队长的飞机坠毁在北极的冰冷水域。这架飞机和被困飞机里的美国队长被冰封了几十年，直到被世界超级间谍组织——神盾局发现。他们很快唤醒了在冰天雪地中沉睡的美国队长。

史蒂夫加入了神盾局的“复仇者联盟”超级英雄团队。现在，美国队长正与钢铁侠、绿巨人、黑寡妇、鹰眼和猎鹰并肩作战，再次从恶人的手中捍卫世界的自由与正义。



第一章

史蒂夫·罗杰斯在凌晨4点55分醒来，离闹钟响起还有几分钟。他从床上跳了起来，伸了伸懒腰，开始晨练。到5点15分，史蒂夫已经做了3250个俯卧撑和4500个仰卧起坐，一滴汗也没流。



接下来是他的晨跑时间——绕纽约市街道快跑十英里。

史蒂夫离开公寓，呼吸着六月温暖的空气，开始跑步。优秀的赛跑运动员能在五分钟内跑完一英里，而史蒂夫能在两分钟内完成。

史蒂夫来到市中心，跑过四十二街，抄近道来到百老汇。他一边跑，一边抬头看着时代广场上那些巨大的广告牌和明亮的灯。跟其他地方相比，史蒂夫绝对更喜欢绰号“大苹果”的老纽约。

史蒂夫在一个报摊前结束了他的市中心晨跑。报摊老板，人称老乔，见到他立刻问候“你好，队长”。

“请照旧给我。”史蒂夫说道。

“和平常一样？”老乔说道。史蒂夫点点头，老乔递给他一份《每日号角》。史蒂夫至今不敢相信一份报纸居然要一美元，他记得在他那时

候才五美分！

“很高兴你还买报纸，”老乔开始说，“你是我最好的客户。现在大多数人都通过手机或电脑读新闻。而且你还用现金付款。像是又回到了20世纪40年代一样。”他笑着说。

史蒂夫笑了笑，拿了报纸，走过马路，打算去买杯咖啡。通常，他会去当地的餐馆买。

但在听了老乔说起40年代以及当今的种种变化之后，史蒂夫觉得他该尝试些新东西，于是他来到了街区另一头的时尚咖啡店。

店里挤满了人。人们点饮料时都不会停留太久，这一切对史蒂夫来说都很奇怪。他盯着黑板上的菜单。

轮到他时，史蒂夫说“来杯咖啡”，而柜台后面的孩子茫然地看着他。

“你想要什么？”服务员问道，一脸困惑的样子。

“一杯咖啡，黑咖啡。”史蒂夫回答道，但对方依然没有回应。“你们这里卖咖啡，对吧？”史蒂夫问。那孩子很惊讶，居然有人只想要一杯普通的黑咖啡，什么也不加。史蒂夫为他的高价咖啡买了单，拿着报纸坐在了咖啡店外面的长椅上。

“以后再也不要尝试新东西了。”他心中暗想。

史蒂夫环顾四周，叹了口气。人们都在低着头走路，忙着做其他事情，对周围的世界漠不关心。每个人都与科技紧密相连，却疏忽了彼此。在史蒂夫那个时代，人们相互交谈。他们更注重阅读和交流，而不是迷失在自己的虚拟世界里。



但他还没来得及继续思考事物的变化，就听见有人大声叫他。“队长，有情况……”那声音开始说道。史蒂夫抬头看见他的复仇者队友山姆·威尔逊，代号猎鹰，站在他面前。史蒂夫立刻站起来。

“任务是什么？”史蒂夫问，准备加入战斗。

“情况特别紧急！”山姆说，“我多了一张今天纽约洋基棒球队的比赛门票，没人跟我去看。你怎么说？想不想去试试美国人最喜欢的消遣方式？”他问。

史蒂夫笑了。这不是项真正的任务，但是和山姆一起去看棒球比赛也挺有趣的。

“算我一个，”史蒂夫说，“而且自从‘摇摆乔’不打比赛后，我就再也没看过球赛了。”

“‘摇摆乔’是谁？”他们边朝住宅区走，山姆边问。

“没什么。”史蒂夫说着，叹了口气。他根本不知道那天会是他美国队长职业生涯中最危险任务的开始。

第二章

美国队长和猎鹰站在超级间谍组织，神盾局负责人尼克·弗瑞面前。队长身穿红白蓝三色制服，是个令人印象深刻的人物。旁边是猎鹰，身穿高科技飞行服，一旦启动，就可利用全息翅膀飞行。两位英雄立正，站在神盾局的大型天空母舰上——该战舰部分是航空母舰，部分为直升机，配备最新科技。这艘设计超前的战舰在曼哈顿上空隐形飞行的能力依然令史蒂夫印象深刻。

“先生们，”戴着眼罩的弗瑞一边打开电子显示屏一边说，“过去三个星期，三州地区的失踪人口报告增加了两倍多。有男有女，年龄都在18至30岁之间，似乎都身体健康，体能优异。”

“你认为他们之间有联系？”队长问道。



“要警惕，”弗瑞说，“这些绑架案看似是随机的，但神盾局情报告诉我更大的事情在发生。我有几个特工正在努力寻找幕后主使及事件原因。”

“这和我们有什么关系？”猎鹰问。

“目前，只是观察和报告。我希望当我们需要采取行动时，你们能跟上节奏。”弗瑞说。

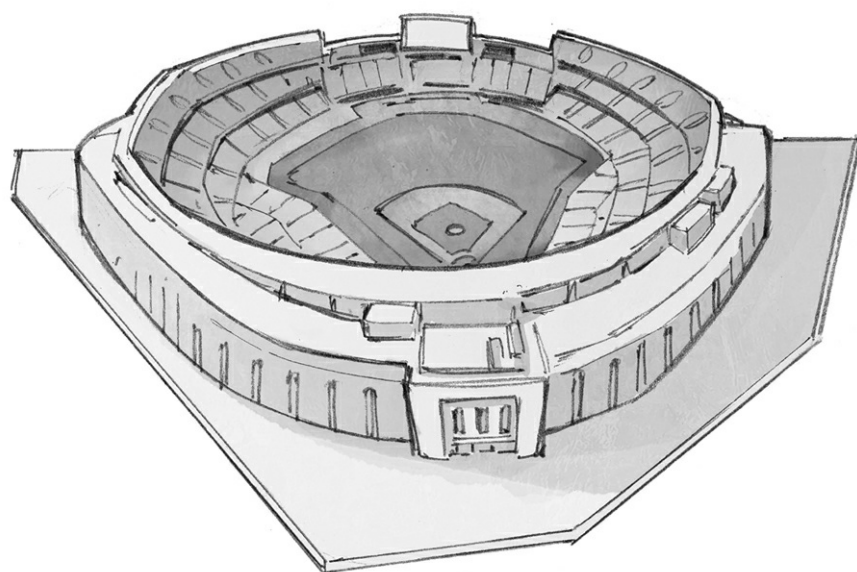
当美国队长和猎鹰走出弗瑞的办公室，这位复仇者先锋感到失望。

他希望能采取一些行动，而不只是袖手旁观。但他还没来得及对这个问题喋喋不休，猎鹰便推了他一下。

“来吧，队长，”猎鹰说，“比赛要迟到了。天空母舰正在东海岸飞行，两分钟后抵达布朗克斯上空——我们正好够时间换件不那么显眼的衣服。”

史蒂夫·罗杰斯震惊地走在洋基体育场。这里有亢奋的音乐，一台巨大的电视机，几十台较小型的电视机，各式高级餐厅和小吃摊，甚至还有很多服装店。

“这肯定不是贝比·鲁斯之屋。”他对山姆说。



“你活在另一个时代，兄弟。欢迎来到21世纪，这里一切都在你指尖，很方便！”山姆说。

他们坐下后，史蒂夫想知道为什么超大屏幕上一直循环播放一段音乐视频。“哦，那是个外野手，”山姆说，“他有一首歌在全国排名第三。”

“贝比·鲁斯和乔·狄马乔从来不唱歌，”史蒂夫低声说，“再没人对比赛感兴趣了吗？”

但山姆还没来得及回答，他们的神盾局紧急联系装置就开始闪烁。是弗瑞。有一队大学生在搭乘校车去比赛的路上失踪了。神盾局截获了911的这通混乱不清的电话，山姆和史蒂夫被叫去处理这件事。

他们跑出体育馆，站在史蒂夫那辆1942年款哈雷—戴维森老式摩托车前。“你不会是认真的吧，”山姆指着那伤痕累累的车说，“你走得都比这家伙快。”但史蒂夫已经打开一个大军用行李袋，里面装着他的美国队长制服和吸音钢盾牌。

“她还从没让我失望过，”队长笑着说，“现在穿好制服坐上来。”

“别！我能飞，我带你飞。”山姆一边说，一边张开他那全息硬光翅膀。

“不用了。”史蒂夫说着，戴好面具。他跳上摩托车，轰的一声发动引擎。现在，这才是队长最喜欢的消遣！

第三章

猎鹰摇了摇头，飞到空中启动了手表上的GPS定位系统。“我已锁定他们，你尽量跟上！”猎鹰一边说一边朝狄根少校高速公路飞去。美国队长骑着他的摩托车紧跟其后，在车流中穿梭，直到发现被挟持的校车。

队长加速超过其他车辆，来到校车正后方。就在这时，校车后部的应急门突然打开了。

窗子里射出许多能量光束。不管这些人是谁，他们都全副武装。

“猎鹰！我需要掩护！”队长说。

“明白。”猎鹰说。飞行英雄俯冲下来，朝校车顶部发射了一个抓钩，抓钩穿透了厚厚的车顶。猎鹰在空中盘旋，用尽全力，迫使司机急转弯。掩护起了作用！队长加速驶离了危险地区。

校车里，一个全副武装的暴徒将一个小装置安装在抓钩末端，发射出电荷，电流沿着抓钩绳索直击向猎鹰。猎鹰被电流击中，倒在地上。校车疾驰而去，暴徒大笑。“我们成功了，”暴徒说，“通知总部，测试对象将在一小时内到达。”

但在司机来得及回答以前，他指了指窗外，那个武装暴徒顺着他的视线朝外看去。“不！这不可能。”司机不敢相信地说。恶棍们远远看见，一人站在立交桥顶上，直视着他们：那是美国队长！

队长跳上摩托车，发动引擎，但它居然熄火了。“别是现在呀！”队长低声说道。他再次尝试发动摩托车。

校车越来越近了。他又试了一次。摩托车噼啪响了响，随后还是熄了火。

从没出过故障的摩托车在这时坏了。但校车已经快到立交桥下了。别无选择，美国队长全速奔跑起来，接着跳了下去。

轰的一声！

校车左摇右摆，冲出护栏，才停了下来。一直紧紧抓着车顶的美国队长迅速站起来，从旁边一个窗户滑进车内。

“啊，伟大的美国队长。”那暴徒边说边举起武器。



那暴徒开了枪，但队长速度太快。光束射到队长举起的盾牌上，反弹开来。然后队长把盾牌扔了出去！暴徒被击中，倒在地上，人质们站在那儿，目瞪口呆。队长注意到司机逃跑了。

“在这儿等着，”他告诉人质们，“我马上回来！”

美国队长跳下校车，以最快的速度朝司机跑去。司机拿出一件高科技能源武器，正准备开火，就在那时——嘭！猎鹰将那个恶棍打昏在地。

“这些家伙是什么人？”猎鹰问。

“我不知道，但他们携带的武器太多，不像只是简单的劫持。”队长说，“弗瑞是对的：事情比我们看到的要复杂。我不喜欢这样。”

“美国队长？猎鹰？”他们身后传来一个声音。

“这里我们接手了。”原来是神盾局的科尔森特工。他和他的队员正从校车上转移人质，并将坏人们抓了起来。科尔森说：“请于明早七点钟到弗瑞主任办公室报到。”然后他把队长的摩托车推了过来，打趣道：“队长，我想你可能需要一辆新车。”

“不用了，谢谢。”队长说着，快速从科尔森手中接过摩托车，朝神盾局的卡车推去。

“我说错什么了吗？”科尔森问猎鹰。

“不，他只是感到自责。因为他的旧摩托车，他差点危害到了人质。”队长听到了猎鹰说的话。是的，他说得没错。

第四章

第二天早上七点，史蒂夫·罗杰斯身穿便服站在弗瑞主任面前。

“谢谢你的到来，队长。请坐。山姆稍后会到。我需要先跟你谈谈。”弗瑞说。

“你是对的。这不是一次一般的绑架事件。”队长答道。

“科尔森会处理昨天发生的事。”弗瑞说道，然后转移了话题，“我们有其他地方需要你帮忙。”他按了一下桌子底下的按钮。

窗户黑了下來，一台平板电视从天花板垂下。“看完这个，我们再谈。”弗瑞一边说，一边按了另一个按钮。

史蒂夫看着屏幕，视频中的人在轻声说话。“注意到那些人有什么特别之处了吗？”弗瑞问。史蒂夫更仔细地研究了这段视频。

“他们有六个人，但是……但是只有两个看起来……是真人，”史蒂夫说着，几乎难以置信。

“好眼力。另外四个是高级全息图。再继续看。”弗瑞说。

全息图像之一说道：“一切正按计划进行。技术干扰器已经完成，明日军团很快将准备就绪。”

“好极了。最后一次会议定于明天午夜在格雷夫森德湾举行，”真人之一说道，“我会通知首领。”说到这儿，视频突然结束了，办公室的灯又重新亮了起来。史蒂夫转向弗瑞。

“明日军团是什么？”史蒂夫问，“这段视频又是哪儿来的？”

弗瑞按下另一个按钮。几秒钟后，美丽而危险的娜塔莎·罗曼诺夫，代号黑寡妇，走了进来。

“我拍的视频，很不容易。”娜塔莎说，之后讲述了她如何不得不攀在屋檐上进行拍摄。“视频切断后，全息图像消失，剩下的两人高举双臂，大呼：万岁，九头蛇！”

一提起九头蛇，史蒂夫就紧紧地握起了拳头。九头蛇是个邪恶组织，想要统治世界。他们跟那些创造了神盾局的超级间谍截然相反，因为神盾局致力于维护世界和平。

娜塔莎说：“我跟着他们下了一个隐藏的电梯，跟踪到了一个秘密

的地下训练室。那里有几十个护卫——都正用不同的武器和不同的战斗方式进行训练……而且都带着九头蛇徽章。”

“这不可能，”史蒂夫说，“九头蛇在差不多一个世纪前就被打败了——被我打败了！”“我们也是这样想的，”弗瑞说，“然后我们发现了这个。”

他递给队长一个标有“最高机密”的信封。“我们有12名最好的特工都受伤进了医院，他们为我们提供了这份信息。”弗瑞说。队长打开信封，看到几张光面照片。“我想你会认识那个站在房间中央的人。”

史蒂夫的眼睛睁得大大的，他的血液变得冰冷。“不……”史蒂夫低声说。相片中的人很笨重，有着一个巨大的半人半机器的身体，而他的脸不在头上，相反，是在身体中间的一个像电视一样的平面银幕上。他的身体无法辨认，但他的脸美国队长绝不会认错。那是九头蛇组织的科学家兼副指挥官阿尼姆·佐拉。像史蒂夫一样，佐拉也参加了第二次世界大战。但史蒂夫以为佐拉早就死了。

照片中，佐拉站在一台看起来完全来自科幻电影的高科技机器前。“不知为什么，阿尼姆·佐拉存活了这么多年，现在是九头蛇组织的首领，”弗瑞说，“我们相信他面前放着的就是技术干扰器。”然后弗瑞转向史蒂夫，史蒂夫已经装备好，准备战斗了。

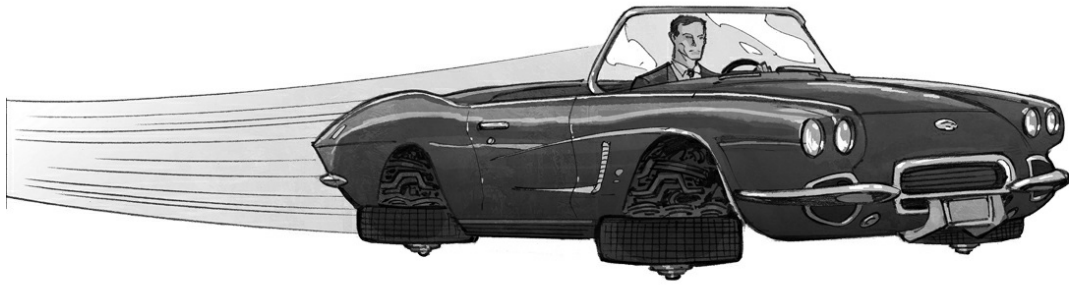
“你的任务就是抓住佐拉，阻止九头蛇——彻底地阻止。”弗瑞说。

当队长去拿盾牌时，他注意到旁边挂着一套黑灰色相间的制服。“那是你的新隐身服。”身后响起一个声音，还是尼克·弗瑞。“它能让你潜入九头蛇组织的会场而不被发现，”主任说道，“是托尼·史塔克给你的礼物。他正在给所有的复仇者制作隐身服。”

“我知道你更喜欢红、白、蓝色——但这颜色能让你不被抓住，不被打得青一块紫一块。”弗瑞笑着说。

弗瑞离开后，队长换上新制服，走进了神盾局的设备室。

科尔森特工推着队长的摩托车朝队长走来。“你知道的，我们可以给这家伙加个火箭发射器，GPS定位系统，甚至加个杯架。”科尔森说道，但队长拒绝了。毕竟这是一辆经典款摩托车，他不想改变它。“我曾经对我的飞天车劳拉也是这种感觉，后来我和史塔克谈了谈，他做了些升级。”



科尔森一边说，一边坐进他的经典红色科尔维特跑车。他按了个开关，瞬间科尔森和劳拉就朝着下方的纽约市疾驰而去。

队长朝飞天车摇了摇头，这时猎鹰和黑寡妇出现在他身后。

“我刚听说了关于九头蛇的消息，”山姆说，“我们什么时候去追击他们？”

“不是我们，是我。”队长答道。

“让我帮你！”山姆说。但队长拒绝了。他要独自去了解更多关于九头蛇的秘密计划的情报，他不需要帮助。从过去的经验中，队长知道九头蛇是个危险而邪恶的组织，他也确切地知道要如何应对。

但队长想要格外小心，尤其是当涉及他的朋友时。

山姆走开了，因为帮不上忙而感觉很沮丧。但娜塔莎留了下来，她有些话想要跟史蒂夫说。她提供了一个紧急信号装置。一旦队长遇到麻烦，只要轻敲屏幕，神盾局就会来帮忙。

“单独去侦查九头蛇，还骑着这个摇摇晃晃的老爷车，真不是个明智之举。这个任务应该交给我。”娜塔莎担心地说。

“一切都在我的掌控中。”史蒂夫安慰道。

“我相信你能搞定——但带上这个。”娜塔莎说。

“我只是去执行一项例行任务。”队长说着，想要让她不再担心。

然后队长想了想，也许他真的需要帮助。他耸了耸肩，否定了这个想法。“我不会有事的。”他说着，开始往外走。

“但如果五十个士兵变成五百个呢？即使是伟大的美国队长也无法打败那么多人。”她微笑着说。

“那我需要的就远不止这个信号装置了。”队长回答道。他系上降落伞，跨上摩托车，打算从斜坡骑下去。

“嘿，队长，”黑寡妇说，此时队长已经在发动引擎，“要小心。”队长点点头，发动摩托车，直接骑下斜坡，进入了纽约市上空。

一着陆，队长就再次发动引擎，朝着布鲁克林码头疾驰而去。

一想到这个邪恶组织又回来了，队长就热血沸腾。是时候向九头蛇开战了！



第五章

一只戴着手套的手从月光下海湾的凉水中伸出，抓住用来固定船只的沉重系船索的一端。慢慢地，美国队长爬出水面，爬上绳索。船舱深处就有一间高科技的九头蛇组织会议室，队长打算找到它。

他悄悄地穿过甲板，干掉一个又一个九头蛇护卫。队长的新制服帮了大忙。这黑灰相间的制服使他与黑暗融为一体，方便他在不被发现的情况下移动。

队长很快用他那可靠的盾牌干倒了一个身形高大的护卫。他把失去知觉的护卫锁在储藏室，但拿走了他的盔甲和头盔。现在队长伪装成一名九头蛇护卫，走到船底，进入了秘密会议室。他静静地站在后面。房间中央是某个东西——或者说是某个人。他直立着，周边围着十几个九头蛇组织的科学家，他们邪恶的脸上都带着邪恶的微笑。他们谈到了特殊的金属手套和靴子，可以用来增强人的力量和速度；还有高科技盔甲和最先进的头盔——头盔处于战备状态，可以承受近距离爆炸。然后他们提到，这种未来式武器已准备好，将在今天进行测试。美国队长已经听够了。

“派对结束了，孩子们！”队长说着，扯下自己的九头蛇伪装，跳到房间中央。护卫们立刻向他开火，但他们不是队长的对手！美国队长举起盾牌，挡住了每一次进攻，并向九头蛇特工发射子弹和激光，把他们打倒在地。“这一切都结束了！”

“你说得太对了，队长，”九头蛇的一位科学家说道，“但，是对你来说！”

那个科学家在键盘上输入一组密码，房间中央的金属盒子开始打开，发出诡异的嘶嘶声。

盒子打开时，一个高科技九头蛇特工穿着刚才其他特工说到的装备走了出来。这个超级九头蛇暴徒握紧拳头，得意地笑了笑，朝队长走近一步。

这个超级特工举起他的金属手臂，轻而易举地朝队长打来。队长在最后一秒举起盾牌挡住了攻击，但冲击波正好打中他的身体，让他的骨头震颤起来。哇，队长想，感觉就像被托尔的雷神之锤击中一样。队长

还没来得及反应，超级特工又发起了进攻！



队长躲过一拳，但随后超级特工抓住了他的肩膀，并释放出强烈电击。

队长痛苦地尖叫，继续向前推，打出一记有力的右勾拳，击中超级特工的下巴，迫使对方放手，队长挣脱了超级特工的控制。

“你有很强的战斗精神，”超级特工开口说，“但你继续战斗，是不明智的。你不是我的对手。”

“我从不逃避战斗，这次我也不会！”

呼的一声！队长跳到空中，但是九头蛇超级特工的速度对他来说太快了。超级特工退后一步，举起拳头朝队长狠狠砸过来。队长再次举起盾牌，但是没有用。

队长砰的一声落在了会议室远处，暂时昏了过去。当他睁开眼睛，队长简直不敢相信它的盾牌发生了什么。

美国队长遇到麻烦了。

他挣扎着站起来，超级特工再次向他冲来。队长慢慢举起他那凹凸不平的盾牌。但超级特工已经出现在他上方。

超级特工抓住队长的盾牌，连同队长扔到房间的另一边！队长顺利落地，迅速将盾牌背在背上。

他走近，打了几拳，但都没用。

“再见了，队长。”那个超级特工低头看着队长，咧嘴一笑。

然后他按下手套上的一个开关，开始用拳猛击。他打了一拳，一拳又一拳——越来越快，越来越快，越来越快。

然后他再一次发出电流穿透队长的身体，几乎要了队长的命。

“啊——”队长跪倒在地，几乎失去意识。他迅速把手伸进口袋，按下了黑寡妇给他的紧急信号装置。也恰好及时。在超级特工正准备做最后的致命一击时，一个声音喊道：“够了！”

队长感到背脊一阵发凉。他视线模糊，但仍旧认出那是阿尼姆·佐拉。这个来自队长过去的恶棍——现在看起来像是来自未来的某种东西——就站在跪倒的复仇者先锋面前，他说：“晚上好，队长先生，欢迎上船。”

“佐拉……”队长犹豫了一下，“你永远都逃不掉的。”

“啊，总是这么乐观，”佐拉说道，“但很明显，你不是我明日军团的对手。”

“这个打败你的超级特工不过是个样品。很快会有几十个，甚至几百个！没有人——无论是你，神盾局，还是你们那些伟大的复仇者——都无法打败他们。我将完成红骷髅永远也做不到的事——我，阿尼姆·佐拉，将统治世界！！！”

“佐拉！”其中一位科学家快速打断了他的话，“有战斗机飞过来了！”

伤痕累累的队长挤出一丝微笑：“你刚才说什么？”

“这有点麻烦，但在意料之中。”佐拉回答道。他转向其他科学家：“从船上撤离，然后把船炸掉。”佐拉看着队长，给了他最后一击。

嗡的一声！

队长听见逃生潜艇从水下发射。然后，他又听到有个计时器在嘀嗒倒数。当他挣扎着要保持清醒时，听到一个熟悉的声音：“你在做什么？打盹吗？”



猎鹰正站在他面前。

他抓起队长，启动硬光翅膀。

双翼复仇者用无线电联系上黑寡妇，她正从船上方的昆式战斗机里朝下看。“我找到他了。”猎鹰说。

“好的，你还在等什么？上主甲板，离开那儿！”黑寡妇喊道。

猎鹰抓起队长，高高地飞向天空。

“准备好医疗舱，”猎鹰边飞边说，“我们要回家了！”



第六章

几周后，史蒂夫·罗杰斯在天空母舰的医疗舱醒来。

“啊……击中我的是什么？”他问。

“一个九头蛇超级特工样品，”尼克·弗瑞说道，“很多次。”

“谢谢提醒。”史蒂夫说，“我想你带来了新任务？”

“不，”弗瑞说，“我来看看你还好吗。你被狠狠地揍了一顿，队长。”他边说边走过来，看着史蒂夫的眼睛。“你判断失误了。现在的九头蛇跟你第二次世界大战时遇到的可不一样。这是个新型的、改进过的九头蛇组织。他们与时俱进了，而你并没有。你的任务……失败了。”

弗瑞的话几乎像史蒂夫身上的伤口一样刺痛了他。他说得对，史蒂夫想。史蒂夫选择了单打独斗，而不是接受帮助。他以为他的敌人和他都还和过去一样，对付他们也会像过去一样。但他错了。

“多亏了超级战士血清，你会没事的。再有一两个星期，你应该就能离开了。”

“一星期？或两星期？那九头蛇怎么办？”史蒂夫问。

“我们了解到九头蛇将在五天后行动——也就是7月4日。你可以躺在病床上观看这些事件。”弗瑞在离开前说道。

史蒂夫认真想了很久关于弗瑞对他说的话。他不能不去，不能让黑寡妇、猎鹰和其他神盾局特工独自去对付佐拉和九头蛇。

但是史蒂夫还不太适应这个现代世界。他喜欢他所熟悉的那些东西：旧的时代广场、黑咖啡，还有他那1942年款的哈雷。如果他要融入现代社会，他就需要帮助，而史蒂夫知道该怎么办。他从医疗舱出来，离开去找一个朋友。

一个金红色的模糊身影掠过纽约的天际线，停在一座闪亮的最先进的摩天大楼上。史蒂夫·罗杰斯背着他那凹凸不平的盾牌，走过屋顶，跟站在他面前的金红色超级英雄打了个招呼。

“你好，托尼。”史蒂夫对无敌钢铁侠说道。

“哦，嘿，队长，”钢铁侠漫不经心地说着，抬起面罩，露出托尼·斯塔克那张英俊的脸。“我没看到你在那儿。有什么事吗？”

“复仇者任务吗？”

“弗瑞有什么需要帮忙的吗？”

“外星人入侵？”

“敲诈老机器人？”

“鼯鼠人？”

“他那只好的眼睛卡到东西了？”

“不是复仇者任务，弗瑞也不需要帮忙，”史蒂夫说，“是我需要帮忙。”托尼微笑的脸上露出了困惑的表情，他邀请他的复仇者伙伴进了史塔克大厦。

史蒂夫解释了过去几周发生的一切，没有漏掉任何细节。当他说完，托尼长叹了口气。

“所以我们要对付的是一个高科技超级恶棍军团，由一个比你还老的家伙带领，而他的脸长在肚子上的电视上？”



“你忘了那个技术干扰器，不管那是什么……”“对。一个可以摧毁和关闭特定科技的设备。”托尼说。

史蒂夫很震惊：“你怎么什么都知道？”

“我是个天才亿万富翁发明家。我什么都知道。”托尼说，“另外，我昨晚黑了神盾局的加密文件。总之，我们有自己的事要做。但如果有人能把你带入21世纪，那就是我。”

托尼继续说：“一旦我们那样做了，我们就要对你那可怕的过时的衣橱做点什么。”托尼低声补充道，“然后你就能去市里逛逛，跳跳吉特巴舞，或做点什么一百年前被认为是疯狂的事。”

史蒂夫盯着自己的衣服，不确定托尼是在跟他开玩笑还是在讽刺他。

托尼笑了：“来吧，队长，我们走！”

在接下来的四天中，托尼把他会的关于现代世界的一切都教给了史

蒂夫。

这几天下来，史蒂夫越来越强壮，越来越健康。到第三天结束时，他不仅又做了一万次仰卧起坐和俯卧撑，他还在发短信。托尼·史塔克很自豪，尽管他们还差一个重大升级。

托尼把史蒂夫带进一个大房间，里面有车库、实验室，还有他的小天地——但这些都不是引起史蒂夫关注的东西。房间里摆满了一排排新的钢铁侠盔甲，都处于不同开发阶段。托尼忍不住观察史蒂夫对这些盔甲的反应。

“很酷，对吗？”托尼说。他走到史蒂夫的1942年款哈雷前。“但我们来这儿要讨论的是这辆古老的双轮车，可能一度被称为摩托车。”

“看，我其他一切都听了你的。别想再说服我换辆新车！”史蒂夫惊呼道。

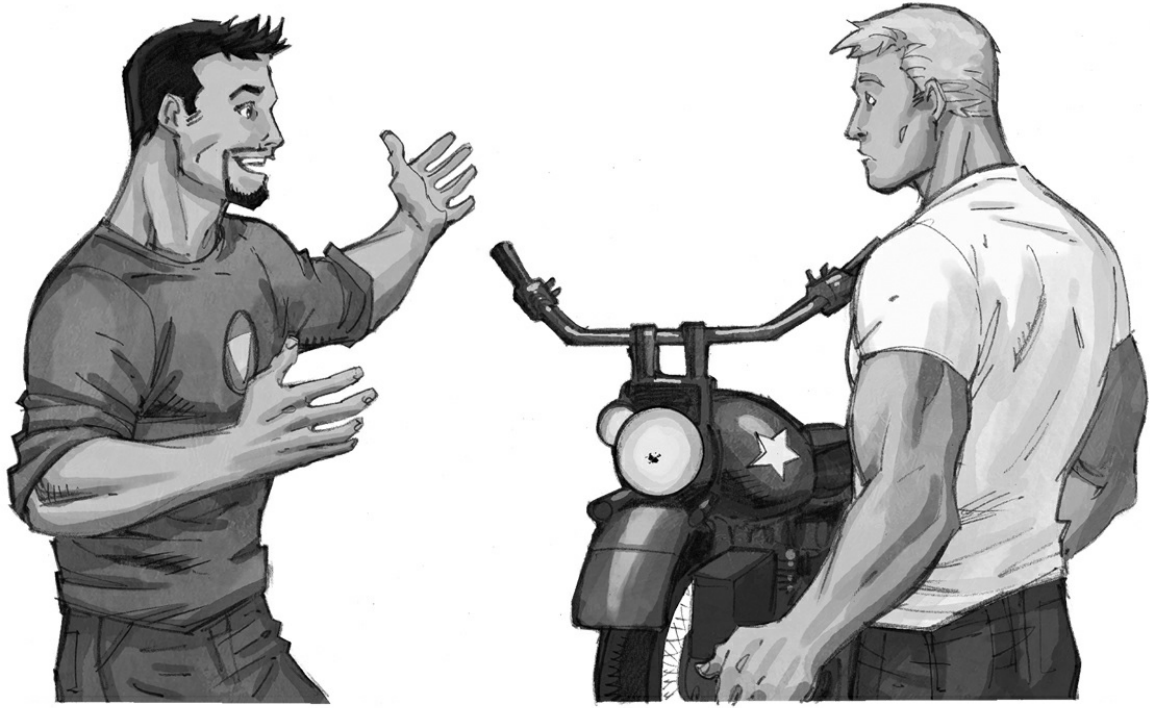
“要么做，要么放手，没有尝试一说。”托尼说，这令史蒂夫很困惑。“怎么？尤达说的。我们没讲到这个？算了。你将得到一辆新车，这是我免费提供的。或者你选择坐公交？”

史蒂夫看了看他的车，看了看托尼，然后又看了看他的车，问道：“你想怎么样？”

托尼脸上闪过一丝狡黠的微笑。“两个字，”他说，“飞车！”

史蒂夫深吸了口气。“好吧，”他说，“但有一个条件：你先把这个修好。”

“这是我爸设计的。”托尼说。他的父亲霍华德·史塔克设计了史蒂夫的标志性盾牌。托尼看着盾牌，明白了史蒂夫与那些来自他过去事物之间的联系。



接着，托尼脸上又露出了调皮的微笑：“这些小凹痕？我马上就能搞定。然后我们来修好你的摩托车，把你送回天空母舰，这样你就能阻止九头蛇，还能有时间赶回家看烟花。”

“你想加入吗？”史蒂夫问，“当我暴揍那些超级特工时，我用得上机甲复仇者。”

“谢了，但我必须在午夜前赶到欧洲。据报告，意大利附近发现了绯红机甲——另外，我想来些意大利冰激凌作甜点。”说完，两位英雄回到了各自的工作中。这将是个漫漫长夜。

第七章

第二天早上，美国队长发现自己又上了天空母舰，身在尼克·弗瑞的办公室中。“你去哪儿了，队长？”弗瑞问道，不知道为什么几天前史蒂夫要从医疗舱离开。

“我去看了个朋友，”史蒂夫说，“他帮助我再次回到游戏中。我准备好对付九头蛇了。但我还需要一点儿帮助。”

“你是美国第一位超级战士，也是复仇者先锋，而今天是7月4日，”弗瑞一边答道一边伸出手，“你会得到一切你需要的帮助。”两个男人握了握手，仿佛队长从来不曾离开过。

“有什么最新消息吗？”队长问。

“多亏了从船上复原的残片以及我们最好的特工，包括黑寡妇的监视，我们已经确定九头蛇今晚将袭击美国自由的象征：自由女神像。”

“佐拉的计划，到底是什么？”队长问。

“就像他说的那样：他计划利用明日军团来统治世界。普通男女被转化成没有自主意识的邪恶军团。那些校车上的运动员——就是你在去洋基比赛路上救下的那些，他们也是佐拉计划的一部分。他们是他的测试对象。九头蛇绑架了不少人，并给他们洗脑。佐拉已将九头蛇的战斗技能和指令输入他们大脑，将他们与所有这些先进的未来科技连接起来——使他们变得几乎势不可挡。”

“每个人都和那个跟我战斗的样品一样强大吗？”队长问。

弗瑞点了点头。

“你确定他们的目标？”队长又问。

“是的。我相信佐拉是想在公众面前显示自己。”弗瑞回答道。

“同意。”队长说。他想了一会儿，说道：“我需要神盾局最好的特工队。黑寡妇、猎鹰，我将带领他们加入战斗。”

弗瑞罕见地笑了一下，他突然觉得有信心多了。

“我还没说完。”队长说，这令主任大感意外。“我还需要一些技术协助。”

尼克·弗瑞未受伤的那只眼睛挑了挑眉。

“美国队长刚刚要的是技术支持吗？”弗瑞说。

随后，科尔森特工带着美国队长来到天空母舰的研发区。队长找到音速干扰器和精确电磁脉冲发射器。“这些都是非致命的，不会伤害九头蛇没有自主意识的军团，但应该会对佐拉的技术造成破坏。”队长说着，这让科尔森很是惊讶。

队长补充说：“我还需要一组我们的顶级程序员埋伏在战场附近，这样他们就可以创建防火墙和干扰频率来阻断九头蛇的情报网。”科尔森特工感到很钦佩：“所以你打算在虚拟世界和现实世界同时对他们发起攻击。”

“这将是组合拳。”队长闪过一丝史塔克那样顽皮的笑容，“请在小时内把整个小队集合到机库。”



科尔森向他的英雄敬礼，队长补充道：“还有，科尔森？谢谢你。”

机库里，美国队长的神盾局特工和程序员团队正在整理装备，准备战斗，弗瑞在一旁看着。

“欢迎回来，兄弟，”猎鹰开口说，“别误会，但你确定你真的准备好了吗？如果这次你不参加，没人会怪你。我和娜塔莎能搞定。”

“猎鹰——山姆——谢谢你的关心。但如果你们要去追击九头蛇，我要和你们一起去。”队长回答道。

“我们只是关心你。”娜塔莎说。“我很好，娜塔莎。事实上，我好极了。现在让我们结束这个情况汇报，一起去到自由女神岛。”

“那你的车呢？”猎鹰问，“我们还要拖着那辆旧车到处走吗？”

“谢谢提醒。”队长说。他从腰带上的一个口袋里拿出一个小型装置，按下它的屏幕。首先传来的是一阵哗哗声，然后是呼呼声，紧接着刮起一阵大风。每个人都惊讶地转过身。神盾局的那群特工个个说不出话来了。

弗瑞看着美国队长，惊呆了。

“两个字……”美国队长说，“飞车！”



第八章

美国队长、猎鹰、黑寡妇和他们的神盾局特工队已经暗中包围了自由女神岛，等待九头蛇采取行动。

太阳下山时，他们听见低沉的嗡嗡声。抬头一看，几艘巨大的齐柏林硬式飞艇朝自由女神像飞来。他们又听见响亮的水花声，看见很多舰艇从海湾升起。入侵开始了。

队长示意大家留在原地待命。他想把战斗控制在岛上，这样他们就必须等九头蛇上岸，才能发起第一波攻击。恰好在这个时候，佐拉的声音在领队的齐柏林飞艇上响起。

“我，阿尼姆·佐拉，九头蛇组织的领袖，现在掌控所有传输渠道。我掌控所有信息！我掌控你们所有人！今天，世界将感受到九头蛇无与伦比的力量。我们躲在黑暗中太久了。现在我们要站出来。现在，九头蛇和他的明日军团将占据世界之首的合法位置。”作为回应，九头蛇士兵和被洗脑的明日军团把他们的武器扔到空中，并高喊：“九头蛇，万岁！”队长抓住他的盾牌，准备发起攻击，突然一股可怕的绿色能量波从齐柏林飞艇射下，击中自由女神像的皇冠。

“他们要摧毁雕像！”猎鹰小声急切地说。

“不，”队长答道，“如果他们想摧毁它，早就已经那么做了。佐拉有别的想法。”

“看！”黑寡妇喊道。佐拉发射的光束使雕像闪闪发光。接着，雕像看起来好像正在融化。然后慢慢地，雕像开始变形。“他们在使用物质重组器。连史塔克都没有这种技术！”

英雄们惊恐地看着雕像在眼前一部分一部分地变形。佐拉融化了雕像的头部和尖尖的皇冠，然后他又发射射线，将它们塑造成一个丑陋的、多触角的骷髅形象，这正是九头蛇的标志。“如果你们砍掉它一个脑袋，它就会再长出两个！万岁，九头蛇！”佐拉的声音在上空回响。

美国队长站在那儿，被这怪异的邪恶象征物吓到了。有那么一瞬间，他感到彻底被打败了。随后，当最后一批明日军团士兵从舰艇中冲出来，向陆地发起进攻时，他感到有只手搭在了他的肩上。

“队长，”黑寡妇轻声说，“是时候了。”

队长感到又有了希望。

“我们走。”他边说，边挥舞着盾牌，朝雕像基座冲去。

“佐拉，你和你的九头蛇组织只有一次机会退出，投降。我不会再问第二次！”美国队长喊道。

“队长先生，这么快就恢复了，我明白。”佐拉一边说，一边从齐柏林飞艇的窗户里探出头来，并对超级英雄说，“好极了。我曾很希望你能参加这次庆典，亲眼见证我们入侵你珍贵的纽约市。”佐拉按下腕甲上的一个按钮，明日军团的头盔闪过一道短暂的红光。他们得到了新的指示：发动攻击，并把美国队长带来见佐拉。战斗开始了！



短短几分钟，很明显九头蛇占据了上风。

队长用无线电联系由科尔森带领的神盾局技术小组，他们埋伏在曼哈顿下城的一个屋顶上。“科尔森，报告！有没有可能干扰他们的通信系统，或是完全摧毁？”

“我们正在努力，先生。”科尔森回答道，“他们的信号很杂乱，我们无法确定他们的准确频率。再给我两分钟。”

“战斗可能在两分钟内结束，”队长喊道，“你只有一分钟！”

“哈？”

队长回归战斗，尽力狠狠地投掷盾牌。盾牌撞到一个、两个、三个明日军团士兵的头盔再弹开，暂时将几个士兵打倒在地。

队长伸手打算取回盾牌，但盾牌没有飞回来，反而被一只布满电线和科技装置的大手臂抓住了。是那个最初的九头蛇超级特工。

“我知道你已经见过我们的样品士兵了——或者，像我们一样称他‘黄金九头蛇’。”佐拉邪恶地笑着说，“这将是你们最后一次见面，队长先生。”然后佐拉向黄金九头蛇示意，命令道：“干掉他们。”黄金九头蛇点点头，向美国队长袭来。



“第一次见面时，就没听我的建议，嗯？”这个恶棍边问，边把队长的盾牌扔到地上。

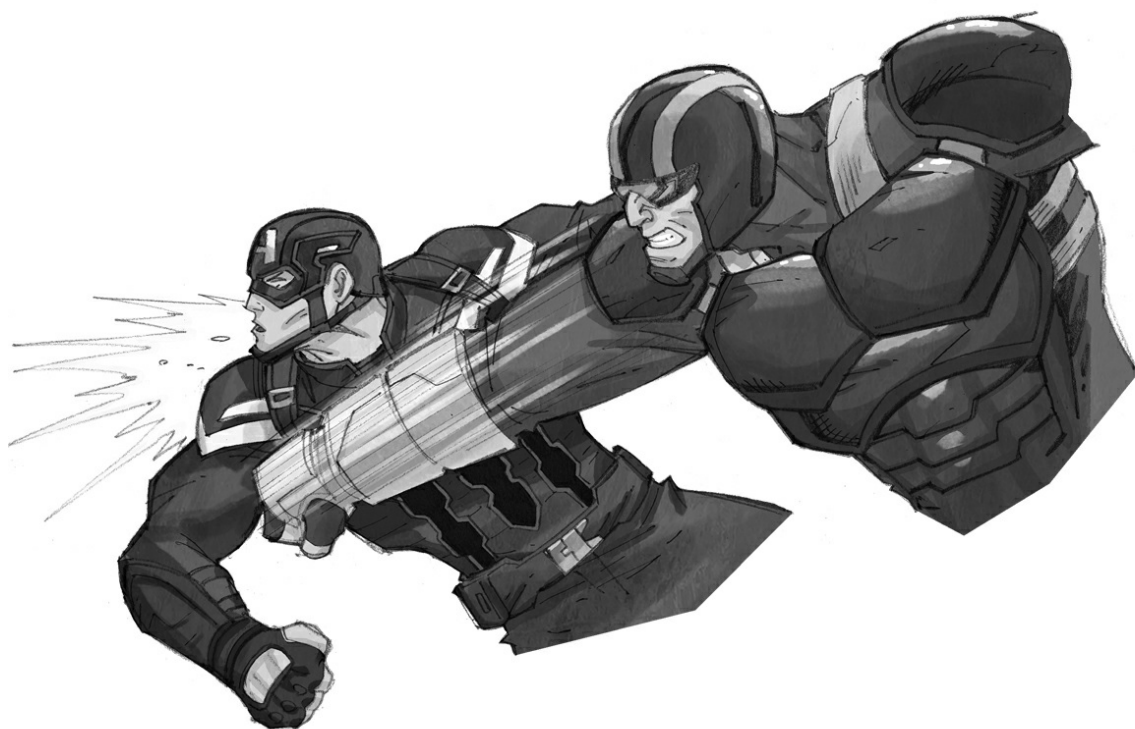
“来吧，伙计。”队长咬紧牙关说道。是时候重赛了！

第九章

美国队长的拳头打在黄金九头蛇的下巴上。

咔嚓一声！

黄金九头蛇朝队长的肋骨狠狠踢了一脚。当他俩还在殊死搏斗时，阿尼姆·佐拉抓着绳索从齐柏林飞艇上下来，登上了自由女神像，九头蛇特工正在那里将技术干扰器连在变形后的自由女神像的脸的背面。佐拉咯咯笑道：“很快自由女神就会从她嘴巴的另一边大声说出我才是她的领袖！”



再看地面上，队长上气不接下气，痛苦万分。他勉强抓住了他的盾牌，但他还是在败退。“你太弱了，队长，”黄金九头蛇嘲弄道，“就凭

你，是不可能打败我的！”

“你说得太对了。”队长边说，边按下了口袋里的一个小型自动追踪装置，“这就是为什么我不会再犯和上次一样的错误了。这次我不是一个人！”

几秒钟内，猎鹰和黑寡妇就开始行动了。猎鹰以最快的速度飞向黄金九头蛇，但黄金九头蛇更快。

砰的一声！两位英雄撞在一起，跌到地面。

黄金九头蛇只是大笑：“你们得干得比那更好！”

“好吧，这样如何！”队长说着，一记右钩拳，打中黄金九头蛇的脸。队长迅速转身，与猎鹰和黑寡妇重新组队。

“你之前说的关于这家伙的事儿不是开玩笑。”猎鹰说，“我们的计划是什么？”

队长没有回答，先把盾牌朝黄金九头蛇扔了过去。盾牌撞上对方的胸口，又飞回到队长手里。黄金九头蛇踉跄了一下，痛苦地嘶吼。美国队长为他们赢得了几秒钟来讲述计划。“我是他的主要目标，”队长说，“我掩护你们，你俩去毁掉他的科技装置——但要快。我可没法跟这家伙另打12场。”然后，队长突然瞪大了眼睛。“就是那样！”他喊道，“打拳击！”

黑寡妇和猎鹰看着他，一脸困惑。

“我们得和他打12场。他不想这样。他想尽快结束这一切。我们得像乔·路易斯那样跟他打：有条不紊地、沉着冷静地打，一次又一次。”

“那是‘摇摆乔’。”猎鹰悄悄地对黑寡妇说。

“‘摇摆乔’是个棒球运动员，天才，不是个拳击手，”黑寡妇纠正道，“现在精神点儿——他来了！”

那个超级恶棍朝他们冲来，双手指向他们，指尖发射出电光。

队长举起盾牌，将光束反射回恶棍，暂时分散了他的注意力。猎鹰和黑寡妇抓住了这个机会。猎鹰射出抓钩，缠住恶棍的高科技靴子，绊倒了他，使他摔在地上。

在他倒下的同时，黑寡妇直接向他的头盔侧面发射刺针，希望能够破坏他连接胸部装置的电线。



黄金九头蛇再次踉跄，被一个旋转的红、白、蓝三色模糊身影撞回来。黑寡妇和猎鹰从侧面进攻，队长从正面进攻。战斗时，三个英雄轮流打头阵。每当黄金九头蛇与其中一个对上时，另两位英雄就跳入其中。猎鹰和黑寡妇跟从队长的指挥，很快三位英雄就做到了齐心协力。他们的进攻有条不紊，沉着冷静，他们正在消耗黄金九头蛇的战斗力。

黄金九头蛇扑向队长。这个恶棍晃了一下，没打中，队长知道是时候做出最后一击了。美国队长跳到恶棍身上，用双手紧紧抓住那些现在已经损坏了的电线。然后，用尽他超级战士身体里的全部力量，把那些电线扯了出来。

黄金九头蛇发出一声尖叫，瘫倒在地上，他被打败了。

“你做到了！”猎鹰对队长大喊。

“是我们做到了！”队长马上纠正道，“但还没结束。佐拉还站着呢。我们必须阻止他——要快！”

“我能在20秒内到达自由女神像的顶端。”猎鹰一边说，一边展开他的硬光翅膀。

“太慢了！”队长答道，同时按下遥控器。他的太空飞车划过天际，向英雄们俯冲而来。复仇者先锋跳到空中，抓住车把，驾驶飞车朝佐拉而去。

当队长驶近皇冠时，佐拉说：“你来得太晚了。”他迅速从一个倒地的明日军团士兵手里夺过一个金属手套，向队长发射出电光。队长驾驶飞天摩托一个俯冲躲开了，接着，队长再次发动引擎，快速穿过皇冠上的开口处。他跳下盘旋的摩托车，面对佐拉。

“你又一次来晚了，队长先生。我已经赢了。”佐拉说，他们身旁的技术干扰器开始运作了！就在这时，队长听见科尔森传来信号：“队长——我们已经掌握九头蛇的技术！我们可以关闭它，解除明日军团！”

“我已经赢了！”

但那设备发出的能量波已向曼哈顿喷泻。慢慢地，所有的科技设施都开始失灵、关闭，包括神盾局的装置。队长的飞天摩托也砰的一声坠落在地上。他必须摧毁那个技术干扰器——现在！

美国队长朝佐拉冲去，决心阻止他和那装置。恶棍咯咯地笑了起来：“傻瓜！你的超级战士力量敌不过我的天才智慧！我控制了一切，队长先生！控制技术的人，控制未来！”

“而那些不从过去吸取教训的人也注定重蹈覆辙！”队长答道。他抓起佐拉，高举过头顶，把这个九头蛇首领扔到空中。

佐拉重重地跌倒在地，从皇冠中滑落出来。

“真令人钦佩，队长先生，但你也只是拖慢了我的脚步。”恶棍说。

队长没理他，甩出盾牌。盾牌呼啸着穿过皇冠，铮的一声砸中技术干扰器的侧面。那机器噼啪作响，火花四射，但没停下来。队长从那机器上拔出盾牌，跑向他的飞车。“看来我们只能用这种传统的方法了。”

队长试图发动飞天摩托，但没成功。受技术干扰器影响，它失去了动力。但队长只是咧嘴一笑，扭动了一个开关。飞天摩托的外壳四散飞出。在那高科技的外壳里面，是一辆功能齐全的老式摩托车！

队长抓起摩托车一侧的绳索，系到那机器上。然后他跳上启动器，发动引擎。队长深吸口气，加大油门，骑了出去——后面拖着那机器——从一个触角处冲出去。

队长骑在摩托车上，拖着那台机器飞到空中，然后开始落向下面的岛屿。

“需要帮忙吗？”

是猎鹰！他朝队长急速飞来，复仇者先锋跳下摩托车。猎鹰正好接住他，他们飞向高空，而摩托车和技术干扰器则在下方爆炸了！

轰！爆炸非常壮观！整个明日军团被曼哈顿下城的神盾局特工队解除力量，瘫倒在地。科尔森摆脱众人，向黑夜发射了一枚信号弹：任务完成！

在东河岸的某处，有个纽约人看到了爆炸，又看到了信号弹，决定把自家的烟花也射向天空。很快城对面又一个美国人加入，一个，又一个，又一个。

不久，天空中充满了爆炸声，象征着正义战胜邪恶。

“烈火熊熊，炮声隆隆。”队长轻声自语。

“我们做到了，”猎鹰说，“我们阻止了九头蛇。”

“而且保护了生命、自由以及对幸福的追求。”黑寡妇补充道。

“是的，但佐拉跑了。”队长说着，开始在残骸中行走，“他溜了。黄金九头蛇也溜了。”

“像蛇一样溜走了。”猎鹰补充道。

“但好人还是赢了。”黑寡妇说道。

“大家，干得好。7月4日快乐！”队长说。



第十章

第二天早上，史蒂夫·罗杰斯醒过来时闹钟还没响。他起床，伸伸懒腰，开始晨练。他如往常一样，先做俯卧撑、仰卧起坐，然后开始在曼哈顿晨跑。

史蒂夫的身体还在因为昨晚的战斗而疼痛，但他很高兴。他反败为胜。他一边跑，一边环顾时代广场。其中一个巨大的屏幕上正播放着熟悉的画面。

新闻主播播报道：“美国队长拯救了纽约！”

他跑到市中心，停在老乔的报摊前，拿到他的晨报，看着报纸标题微笑。

“干得好，”老乔说，“我得告诉你，我很害怕，直到我看到你出现在现场。”

“我也很害怕，乔。”史蒂夫答道。

史蒂夫走向时尚咖啡店，走了进去。大家都在讨论昨晚发生的事。一些人围在一起拿手机查看战斗图片，另一些则坐在桌边深入交谈，但他们彼此联系——都被7月4日那同一件令人难以置信的事件联系在一起。

史蒂夫走到柜台前，看到了他上次见过的那个孩子。史蒂夫很吃惊，那孩子还记得他。“嘿，一杯咖啡，黑咖啡，对吗？”史蒂夫点点头。“很快就好，队长！”

史蒂夫等咖啡的时候，有几个人走过来，要求合影。还有人拍拍他的背，或者和他握手。几分钟后，史蒂夫付了咖啡钱，如往常一样坐在外面的长椅上。他望向自由女神岛的水面。建筑工人正在努力修复雕像。脚手架搭得跟皇冠一样高。

接着，史蒂夫环顾四周。他看见孩子们正在假扮超级英雄。一对年轻夫妻牵着手走在街上，他无意中听到他们说他们很高兴队长反败为胜。他们不知道美国队长就坐在离他们几英尺的地方。整个城市充满活力，世界重归原样。



史蒂夫很高兴他还活着。多亏了过去这几周，史蒂夫学会了珍惜所拥有的一切，也学会了记住过去的一切。他意识到他必须融入时代，而不能只活在过去。他也认识到朋友的重要性，合作和寻求帮助的重要性。史蒂夫心满意足地松了口气。然后他听见一阵哗哗声。

史蒂夫拿起托尼·史塔克给他的手机，看到一条来自复仇者大厦的短信。内容为：“情况紧急，速来报到”。

史蒂夫轻敲屏幕，很快看到山姆·威尔逊的脸出现在手机屏幕上。“什么情况？”史蒂夫问。



“是巴托克，”山姆开口说道，“你，我，还有娜塔莎再次参加行动。我想我们还需要其他人。”

史蒂夫笑了。“把你的坐标发给我，告诉其他复仇者准备集合，”他说道，“我在路上了！”



美国漫威公司 著
姜逸恒 译

MARVEL

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黑豹

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Featuring YOUR FAVORITES



Black Panther



Shuri



Queen
Ramonda



The Dora
Milaje



Captain
America



War Machine



Captain Marvel



Nick Fury



Klaw



M'Baku



The White
Gorrila Cult



Vibranium



Wakanda



S.H.I.E.L.D Agents



An imposter
Black Panther



Klaw's sonic blaster

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BLACK PANTHER



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story of Black Panther

Growing up in a royal family wasn't always easy for Prince T'Challa. There was great pressure to live up to the legacy of his father, T'Chaka, the respected King of Wakanda. T'Chaka was also leader of the ancient Panther Clan, a role passed down for generations. Everything changed the day an outsider named Ulysses Klaw arrived in Wakanda. He wanted to steal the country's resources for his own evil purpose. Klaw attacked T'Chaka, hitting him with one fatal blow. The loss of T'Chaka left the royal family heartbroken. As he grew older, T'Challa learned not to dwell on the the past. His calling was to become more than just a prince. He loved science. He studied hard to become a thinker and trained his mind and body to work together. T'Challa studied fighting techniques and used a unique heart-shaped herb that gave him enhanced abilities. After inventing an impenetrable suit made of a powerful element called Vibranium, T'Challa was ready to inherit his father's title. His metamorphosis into a hero was complete. People all over the world would soon revere the powerful, the magnificent, the legendary Black Panther.





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Chapter 1

In the heart of Wakanda sat a large mountain known as the Great Mound. The area held the nation's greatest resource: Vibranium. This incredible, sound-absorbing metal had been the source of Wakanda's advanced technology for centuries. Wakandans working in the mines considered it an honor to be chosen for such a role. Today, however, many of them did not feel very honored.

“Look out!” a miner shouted.

Tick, tick, tick. Boom! An explosion rocked the Great Mound as the White Gorilla Cultists stormed the area. They were led by a fearsome warlord known as M'Baku, who directed his mercenaries to destroy everything. Their savagery was known throughout Wakanda. However, their exact motives remained unclear. They hadn't stolen anything, nor had they before. Their only mission, it seemed, was to terrify.



“Run for your lives!” another miner yelled.

Terrified workers scattered in all directions as cultists ravaged the area. Pandemonium overtook the Mound as miners desperately defended themselves against the brutal attack.

A cultist raised his spear high into the air above an innocent miner, but before he could land a blow, a silent black streak darted across the Great Mound at lightning speed.

It was the Black Panther, and he was angry. He pounced on the cultist, ripping the spear from his hand and tossing him through the air!

The fallen cultist scoffed. “You have no idea what's coming.”

The ominous warning struck fear in Black Panther's heart. Avengers

business had kept him busy. He'd been spending more time outside of Wakanda than he was used to, and it left him feeling as if he didn't know what was going on inside his own country.

“What do you want?” Black Panther growled.

“You'll see,” the cultist sneered.

“Where is M'Baku?” Black Panther asked. Before he could answer, a new commotion swept through the Mound.

“Clear out!” a cultist roared. The cultists were retreating. They'd released a smoke bomb that coated the area in a thick cloud of fog to mask their exit.

As the smoke cleared, Black Panther was left with even more questions.

“Is everyone all right?” Black Panther asked the miners.

“No!” a voice shouted. “We are not all right!” An angry miner named Ato barreled to the front of the throng.

“Speak freely, Ato, so that you may be heard,” Black Panther said.

Ato's body tensed as he described the situation.

“These White Gorilla Cultists have attacked the Great Mound three times in the past month. And for what?!” Ato shouted.

He paced back and forth with a nervous energy. “They do not steal our Vibranium. Why then do they attack? When will this violence stop?!” Ato looked at his fellow miners for approval. He hoped they, too, would speak up, but the crowd hung their heads low and remained silent.

Ato turned his attention back to Black Panther. “Where have you been, dear king? Do you not know what is happening in your own kingdom?”

Black Panther prided himself on being a kind and approachable leader. He wasn't used to being confronted with such anger from one of his own people. Ato's frustration was unmistakable. Black Panther wondered if his response would be enough. He considered his words carefully before speaking. “I'm aware of these previous assaults. I understand the terrible toll they've taken. I'm currently investigating the situation,” he explained.

“Ha!” Ato cackled. He turned, pointing to the other frustrated miners. “And you think this brings us comfort? We need a leader. Meanwhile, our king is too busy being a Super Hero.”

Ato's words stung. Black Panther cared deeply for the Wakandan people

and had always done what he felt was in their best interest. Being an Avenger and defending the Earth was part of that mission. Now he wasn't so sure it was the best course of action.

“Your father was devoted to his country. He died protecting it,” Ato said.

Black Panther's anger began to rise. “I love this country and will do anything to protect its people.”

“Prove it,” Ato said.

“Enough!” Black Panther turned and addressed the crowd with authority. “It's true that I have a life outside our nation. I'm proud to walk among Earth's Mightiest Heroes, but hear me when I say they do not own me. I am not at their beck and call.”

Fwooom!!! A mechanical roar sounded in the distant sky, moving closer by the second. It was the Quinjet, chosen mode of transportation for the Avengers. The craft landed on the edge of the Great Mound as the assembled miners stared with curiosity.

“Do you see? Do you see? Our king's masters are here to collect him,” Ato said, turning to the other miners. “These people and their ugly spacecrafts. A Wakandan could create something ten times better.”

The ship's door opened as Captain Marvel, Captain America, and War Machine stepped out.

“Looks like you've got a real party going on here,” War Machine joked. Black Panther's eyes narrowed.

“I'm dealing with a situation that requires my full attention. What brings you to Wakanda?” he asked.



“We need to speak with you,” Captain America said. “We wouldn't have come all this way if it wasn't important.”

Ato released a hearty chuckle. “Then it is confirmed!” he said, turning to the crowd once again. “Do you not see? He is owned by these Avengers. Our king serves another master.”

Captain America turned to Black Panther and gently grabbed his arm. “Is there a place we can speak privately?” he asked.

“We'll go to the capital,” Black Panther said, pulling away from his grip. “To the royal palace.”

“Yes, go to your shimmering palace, away from the people,” Ato said.

Ato's rudeness agitated Captain Marvel. “Watch it, buddy!” she shouted. “Black Panther is still your king!”

Ato sneered and picked up his broken tools as the crowd dispersed. Black Panther was impressed with his people's continued resilience in the face of danger. *I will get to the bottom of this*, he thought. The Avengers headed toward the Quinjet for the short journey to the capital of Wakanda.

War Machine noticed Black Panther's frustration and tried to lighten the

mood. "Tough crowd, man," he said with a smile.

"I can't believe you let that guy talk to you like that," Captain Marvel said.

"I didn't let him do anything. I merely listened," Black Panther said. "Respect isn't demanded, Captain. It's earned."

"You got that right!" Captain Marvel replied.

Black Panther pulled Captain America aside to speak privately as the others boarded the ship.

"The people are tense. My duties as an Avenger have kept me away from my duties as the King of Wakanda. A mysterious enemy has chosen to take advantage of this. It's a matter I look forward to handling on my own."

Captain American nodded.



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Chapter 2

At the royal palace, the Avengers made themselves comfortable in Black Panther's personal quarters. The modern space was filled with ancient relics from Wakanda's past. A portrait of his father when he was the reigning Black Panther hung in the middle of the room. Black Panther treasured it above all else. War Machine removed his helmet and strolled through the room, looking at each piece of history.

“Nice place you've got here,” he said. “Need a roommate?”

“You're always welcome to visit,” Black Panther said, grinning under his mask. “It's not often that I receive guests.”

Captain Marvel had grown tired of pleasantries. “Let's get down to business, Panther,” she said. “Last night, a guy dressed like you robbed a top secret S.H.I.E.L.D. black site. We know you didn't do it, but Nick Fury still wants us to bring you in for questioning.”

“I don't understand,” Black Panther said. “I've been in Wakanda for over a week now since our last mission. Fury knows this. S.H.I.E.L.D. should be able to solve this mystery easily and without my involvement.”

“There's a guy out there committing crimes dressed exactly like you,” War Machine offered. “Aren't you at least worried?”

Black Panther was annoyed. “Villains are invading my country. The people of Wakanda feel threatened, and I haven't been here to protect them. That worries me more than anything else right now.”

Captain America took a deep breath, and he explained the situation as he saw it. “I understand your predicament, T'Challa. I truly do. But believe me when I tell you—S.H.I.E.L.D. isn't asking. This is not a request.”

“Then it's an order?” Black Panther replied. “What if I choose not to come with you?”



“We answer to S.H.I.E.L.D. That's the way it is. You signed up for stuff like this when you joined the Avengers!” Captain Marvel said, her temper flaring. “There are no free rides. Even for kings.”

Black Panther wanted to honor his commitment to his people. There was a commitment to defend the Avengers, but he'd also made a serious choice before him, and he wasn't sure what to do.

Before he could answer, Ramonda, the Queen Mother, walked into the room. She smiled. “No one told me we had guests. I would've had the chef prepare a snack for everyone.”

Noting that they were in the presence of royalty, Captain America, War Machine, and Captain Marvel bowed.

But Ramonda wouldn't have such a thing. “Rise. Please. This tradition has always made me uncomfortable,” she explained. Ramonda embraced the Avengers, giving them each a warm and sturdy hug. “What brings you to Wakanda? Taking my son away on a new adventure?”

“Someone has taken my identity and used it to commit a crime. My colleagues are here to bring me in for questioning,” Black Panther said. The room fell silent.

“May I have a moment alone with my stepson, please?” Ramonda asked.

“Of course,” said Captain America.

The Avengers respectfully stepped out of the room.

“It's good to have you home,” Ramonda said.

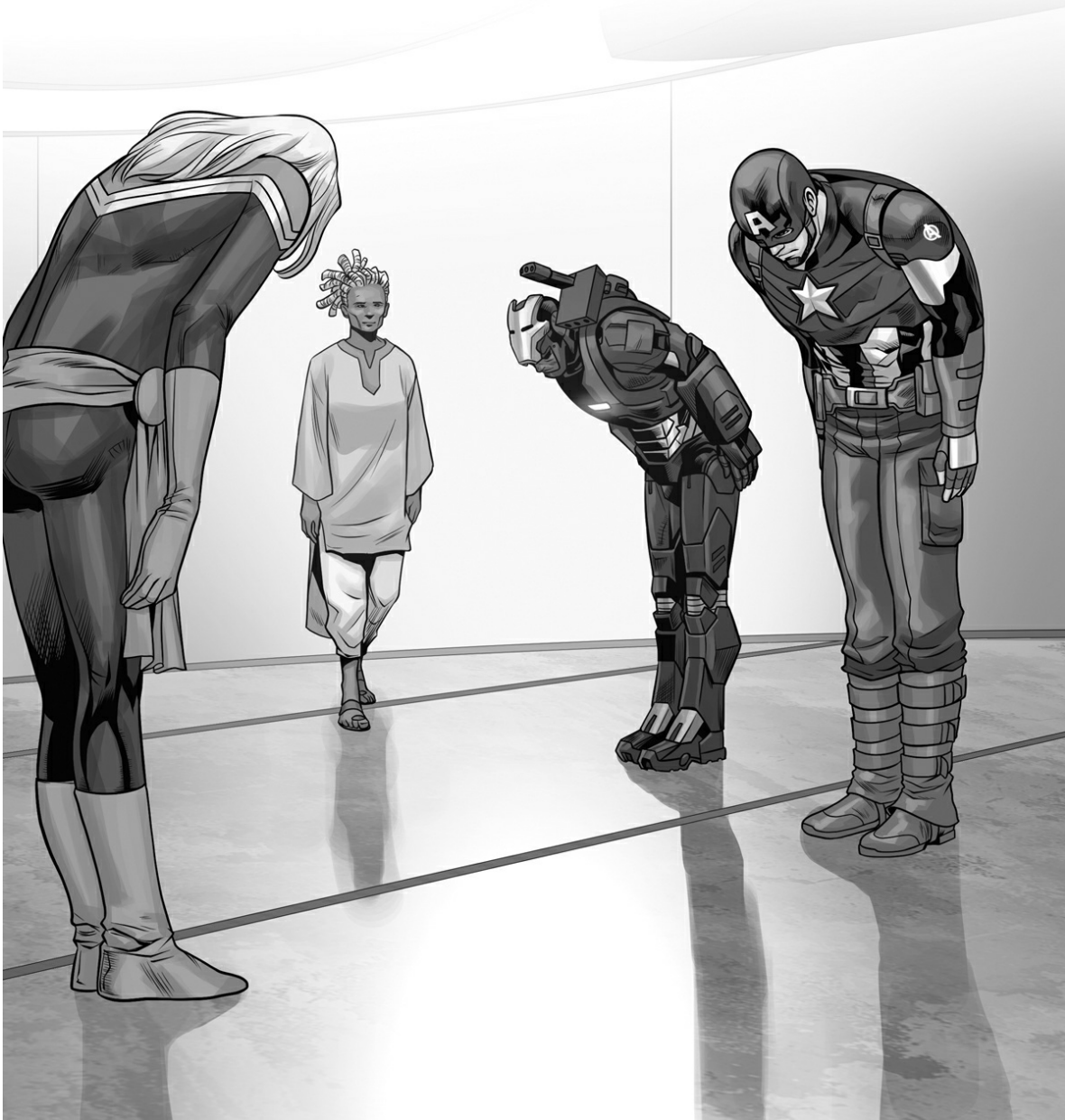
“It's good to be home,” said Black Panther. “I'm pulled in many directions these days, as you well know.”

“T'Challa, do me a favor and remove your mask,” Ramonda said. “I want to see your face when I'm speaking to you.”

The Black Panther's uniform was made of a bulletproof Vibranium weave that protected him from harm. It did not, however, prevent him from facing reality. He removed his mask and smiled at his stepmother.

Ramonda put her hand to T'Challa's cheek and grinned. “My proud son. The king,” she said. “Heavy is the head that wears the crown.”

“How many times must I hear that tired old phrase?” T'Challa asked. He turned to look at a Wakandan artifact on display. “There's unrest at the Great Mound,” he said. “The White Gorilla Cultists have reared their ugly unrest at the Great Mound,” he said. “The White Gorilla Cultists have reared their ugly heads yet again.”



“Do you have any leads?” Ramonda asked.

“No,” T'Challa answered. “It's infuriating.”

“Utilize all your resources. There are answers to your questions,” Ramonda said. “In the meantime, know that Wakanda is forever grateful for your protection.”

T'Challa shook his head. “You don't understand. The people think I'm

abandoning them,” he said. “They think my duties as an Avenger come before their needs. I wonder if they're right.”

“You've helped the Avengers fight madmen that would destroy the entire planet, Wakanda included,” said Ramonda. “Surely the people understand that.”

“It's not enough for them,” said T'Challa. “The people speak only of my failures.”

“And what of your achievements?” Ramonda said. “Remember the good that you're doing.”

Stepmother and stepson gazed out across the vastness of their kingdom and were met with a feeling of calmness as they recalled fond times from the past.

“Your father would have been so proud of you. This is not an easy job. Your father knew that more than anyone,” said Ramonda. She rested her head on T'Challa's shoulder.

T'Challa knew what he had to do. “I'll accompany the Avengers to the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier and return as quickly as possible,” he said. There was a renewed firmness in his voice. “Then I will get to the bottom of these attacks and stop them once and for all. I owe Wakanda everything I have,” he said. “I won't let my people down.”

“Is everything okay?” Shuri, T'Challa's sister, rushed into the room. “I was combat training when the cultists attacked. I came as soon as I heard. Also—is that a Quinjet parked outside?”

Despite her role as princess of Wakanda, Shuri was unconcerned with the flourishes of her royal stature. She preferred the heat of battle and had been training for it since she was a little girl.

“Shuri, my dear, your brother's friends are here,” Ramonda said. “How was your training session?”

“Learned a few new moves. You can tell the Avengers I'm ready if ever they need me, brother.” Shuri grinned.

Shuri's playful suggestion gave T'Challa an idea. When she wasn't busy with her studies, Shuri developed her skills as a fighter by watching the Dora Milaje, Wakanda's royal guard. “Shuri, listen closely. I must leave Wakanda again. I need you to lead in my stead,” he said.

Shuri's eyes widened at the prospect.

“You'll have the Dora Milaje at your disposal. Should the White Gorilla Cult attack again, I need you to rally your forces. Can you do that for me?” T'Challa asked.

“T'Challa, I don't . . .” Shuri stuttered. “You're the chosen one. You're the Black Panther, not me. I'm just a girl who dreams of being a hero.”

“You are yourself,” T'Challa said. “That's all I need you need to be.”

Shuri looked at Ramonda for approval. “Is that all right, Mother?” she asked.

“Always,” Ramonda said. “You both fill my heart with pride.”

T'Challa hugged his sister tight. “Stay vigilant. Be prepared. Wakanda is counting on you,” he said. “Oh, and make sure you leave your communicator on in case I need to reach you.”

Shuri couldn't believe her luck. She worked hard to suppress an excited giggle. “I won't let you down,” she said.

There was a light *Tap! Tap! Tap!* on the door. Captain Marvel poked her head into the room to check in. “What's the verdict?” she asked T'Challa. “Are you ready to do this?”

“To be clear—you've asked me to join you to prove myself innocent of a crime I plainly did not commit,” T'Challa said. “I was under the impression that membership in the Avengers afforded me a level of respect. Now my loyalties are questioned. Tell me, Captain America, what would you do?”

Captain America chose his words carefully. “I get it, T'Challa. I honestly do. S.H.I.E.L.D. can be frustrating. Their actions don't always sit well with me. I respect you and your royal stature. Your unwavering heroism is the reason I'm proud to call you my teammate. We need that heroism to help find this imposter and stop him. Once this is all said and done, the Avengers will help you take down the cultists for good. You have my word.”

T'Challa admired Captain America's leadership during their time on the battlefield, but they were in Wakanda now. The king made sure he remembered that. “I follow no one blindly, Captain. And you didn't answer my question.”

“We've got your back,” Captain Marvel said. “Don't worry.”

T'Challa sighed. There was only one solution to this problem. “I shall join the Avengers in clearing my name and return to Wakanda at once,” he said, putting his mask on again.



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Chapter 3

The Avengers boarded the Quinjet and prepared to leave Wakanda. But before it took off, Shuri ran to her brother's side.

“How long will you be gone?” she asked.

“As long as it takes to clear my name,” Black Panther answered. Shuri suddenly seemed anxious. The gravity of taking on her brother's responsibilities had finally hit her. “You'll do fine, Shuri. Trust me,” he reassured her.

Captain Marvel nodded from the cockpit of the Quinjet, signaling that it was time to go. Black Panther joined his fellow Avengers, waving at Shuri from the window.

“Be safe, brother,” Shuri whispered to the sky.

Aboard the Quinjet, Black Panther, Captain Marvel, and War Machine gathered around a holographic video display as Captain America briefed the team. “This footage was taken at a S.H.I.E.L.D. installation somewhere in the United States. The location is highly classified,” he explained. “Even I don't know.”

“S.H.I.E.L.D. and their secrets,” Black Panther said.

The group watched as an individual dressed exactly like Black Panther stealthily made his way around the perimeter of the ordinary-looking site.

He swiftly took out two S.H.I.E.L.D. agents with a barrage of intense, focused strikes.

“This guy is good,” Captain Marvel said.

The group watched as the imposter entered the facility. He was looking for something. Soon he discovered a private laboratory, filled with numerous mechanical devices. The imposter scanned the area and soon found his prize: a thin metal bracelet. Four more S.H.I.E.L.D. agents entered the room. The Avengers watched as the imposter mimicked Black Panther's fighting style to the letter. After defeating the agents, the imposter snatched the metal bracelet.

“Zoom in on that bracelet,” Black Panther said. “What does it do?”

“That is top secret,” Captain America answered.



“S.H.I.E.L.D. won't tell us. We can assume it's very dangerous.”

Before the imposter slipped away into the night, he stopped and stared directly into the closed-circuit camera.

“He knows he's being watched,” Black Panther said.

“And he doesn't seem to mind,” War Machine added.

Captain America ended the surveillance video.

“Do you believe that I've committed this crime?” asked Black Panther.

“Of course not,” Captain America said.

Black Panther became agitated. “Your justification is lacking, Captain. You know I've been in my homeland. It's easily verifiable. S.H.I.E.L.D. has an entire Helicarrier filled with technology. Tell them to use it,” he exclaimed. “I'm done here. Take me back to Wakanda at once.”

“There's one more thing you need to know,” Captain America explained. “S.H.I.E.L.D. found your DNA at the scene of the crime.”



“How is that even possible?” Captain Marvel asked.

Black Panther thought of himself as a team player, but he'd begun to wonder if joining the Avengers was more trouble than it was worth. He trusted his colleagues but he didn't trust S.H.I.E.L.D. Despite his rising anger, Black Panther did his best to remain calm. “Someone is framing me. That much is clear. What does Nick Fury think? Surely he has theories regarding this situation.”

“I've worked with Nick Fury for many years. He won't discuss specifics. This is a sensitive situation and his reasons are his own. Having said that, I was able to put together some clues based on what I know of all current and active S.H.I.E.L.D. investigations,” Captain America said.

“Come on. Spill it, Cap,” War Machine said. “What are we up against here?”

Captain America activated a holographic image of Baron Zemo. “Zemo may have been involved in some way. S.H.I.E.L.D. has been keeping an eye on him for a while now. There's a rumor he's been collecting weapons of all sorts,” he explained.

“Nothing new there,” War Machine said.

“Unfortunately, it's all we've got for the moment,” Captain America said. “Once we arrive at the Helicarrier, I hope we'll receive some new and better information.”

Black Panther's confusion increased. “I have no quarrel with Zemo. Why then would he seek to set me up?”

“Because he's a jerk,” Captain Marvel offered.

“He probably didn't get enough hugs when he was a kid,” War Machine said.

Black Panther was tired of jokes.

“I'll meet with Fury to prove my innocence,” Black Panther said. “Then we'll find this imposter and end this.”

“That's the spirit,” Captain America said. “You'll be home in no time.”

Beep! Beep! Beep!

The Quinjet received an incoming transmission from Nick Fury himself.

“Speak of the devil,” Captain Marvel said.



Fury's eyes lit up. “Black Panther, it's good to see you. Wouldn't you know it, you're robbing one of my facilities right this very moment. It's a former A.I.M. hideout. I had S.H.I.E.L.D. shut it down a while back. There's a lot of nasty stuff in this place. Being as busy as I am, I haven't had a chance

to clean it out yet. Would you guys mind making a pit stop before coming to say hello? Oh, and bring that imposter back with you, too. I've got a few questions for him.”

Black Panther's eyes narrowed. “My pleasure.”



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Chapter 4

The imposter Black Panther was in the middle of a fight against a handful of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents.

“Freeze!” an agent shouted. He drew his weapon and the imposter kicked it out of his hand. Two more agents tried to subdue the imposter. He grabbed them by the arms and tossed them into the air like sandbags. Thankfully the Avengers arrived to provide a helping hand.

“Gotcha!” War Machine exclaimed. He swooped in to save the agents then deposited them safely on the ground below.

The Black Panther imposter spotted the Avengers closing in on him. Suddenly he whipped around, digging his claws into the steel door behind him. He ripped it off, fleeing deeper inside the building.

Luckily, War Machine could use his infrared sensors to track him. “It looks like he’s headed toward the back of the place. Clear out! This might get messy!” Captain Marvel shouted.

She cracked her knuckles and barreled through the building like a battering ram, slamming through walls as if they were made of paper.

The Avengers followed closely behind as she punched her way through layer after layer of thick metal till she reached their destination; a hidden lab deep within the facility. It contained bizarre alien inventions and half-assembled devices.

Wires, circuit boards, and other assorted electronics were scattered across the room. When the heroes entered, they saw the imposter Black Panther frantically searching through a group of toppled metal boxes. Finally, he found the device he was looking for, clutching it in his hand. He whipped around at the sound of a booming voice coming from behind him.



“Sorry to rain on your parade, freak,” Captain Marvel said, confidently placing her hands on her hips. “But unfortunately we’re going to have to destroy you now. Personally, I think one Black Panther is enough. There’s only so much silent brooding I can take.”

The imposter narrowed his eyes. He was cornered. In front of him were three Avengers who were ready to pounce. Behind him was a giant digital screen covered in complicated schematics. There was nowhere left to run.

War Machine looked around, confused. “Hey guys, um, where’s the real —?”

Suddenly a pair of clawed hands ripped through the digital screen behind the imposter. Black Panther pounced and sent the imposter flying with one powerful punch!

“You put up quite a fight,” Black Panther said as the villain lay unconscious. “Time to see who you really are.” He pulled off the imposter’s

mask to reveal a face identical to his own.

“He's still alive, right?” War Machine asked.



Captain America eyed the lifeless body with curiosity. “He never was.”

“What?! But how?” War Machine said. “T'Challa, if you have a secret evil twin tell us now!”

“It's a S.H.I.E.L.D. Life Model Decoy,” Captain America said, stunned by the sudden realization.

“What's a Life Model Decoy?” Black Panther said.

“It's a highly sophisticated robot. It knows speech patterns and body language. It can also mimic thoughts,” Captain America explained. “It's even got your fingerprints and DNA, which explains why they found some at the scene of the first break-in.”

“Why is there a Black Panther version?” Captain Marvel asked.

“It looks like S.H.I.E.L.D. has some explaining to do. Another metal bracelet? I wonder what the connection might be,” Cap said.

Black Panther remained silent. He boiled with frustration over the mess he'd found himself in. “I would have words with Nick Fury. Take me to the Helicarrier. Now.”



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Chapter 5

The S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier moved through the clouds keeping a watchful eye on the world below. Stomping through the long corridors, it was clear to Black Panther that S.H.I.E.L.D. could never be trusted. They played by their own rules.

“Explain this!” Black Panther shouted as he tossed the limp body of the imposter at Nick Fury's feet.

“Thanks for returning my property,” Fury said. “I was wondering where he ran off to.”

Fury nodded to two S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. They picked the body up and placed it on a steel table.

“You knew what this was all along,” Marvel said.

“I had my suspicions, but in this business, one never knows what to expect,” Fury said.

“This thing tried to kill us!” Captain America said. “Someone else was controlling it, not S.H.I.E.L.D. Life Model Decoys aren't easy to program. Whoever did this must be one smart cookie,” said Fury. “And, Captain Marvel, I'd mind your tone if I were you. You destroyed a lot of S.H.I.E.L.D. property today.”

“She was trying to catch this guy,” War Machine said. “The guy you sent us to catch.”

“At ease, everyone. We're all on the same team here,” Fury said.

“Enough!” Black Panther shouted. “You lie and manipulate to get what you want, Fury, but you will not deceive the King of Wakanda. Speak plainly and tell me the truth.”

“The truth is complicated,” Fury said. “We're more alike than you think, Panther. Think of S.H.I.E.L.D. as my kingdom. I would do anything to protect it. You catch my drift?”

A S.H.I.E.L.D. agent entered the bridge.

“Excuse me for a moment, Avengers,” Fury said as he turned. “How are things on the cellblock, agent? Is Klaw adjusting to his new surroundings?”

Klaw. The name made Black Panther's skin crawl. When Black Panther was just a boy, he watched Ulysses Klaw murder his father after Klaw attempted to steal Wakanda's supply of Vibranium. The terrible sight scarred him deeply. Even with the support of his step-mother and sister, he never fully recovered from his father's passing. In an impulsive act, young T'Challa stole one of Klaw's own sound blasters and used it against him. The device destroyed Klaw's right hand, which he replaced with a powerful sonic weapon. He then embarked on a vengeful quest to destroy T'Challa. Though they hadn't faced each other in quite some time, Klaw's presence made Black Panther unsettled.

“What's Klaw doing here?” the Panther asked.

“He's a recent transfer from the Raft,” Fury explained. “Don't worry. He's not going anywhere.”

“Back to the matter at hand,” Captain America said. “Give it to me straight, Nick. Helmut Zemo is behind this, isn't he?”

Fury paced back and forth. “I'm unable to confirm or deny. You know that, Cap. Look, I'm very grateful that you were able to find my missing equipment. Thank you all for coming. We'll take it from here.”

Black Panther stepped into Fury's path. “Why did you create a duplicate of me?”

“You're a very powerful man, T'Challa,” Fury answered.

“This entire room is filled with powerful men and women. You evade the question,” Black Panther explained.

Fury stared Black Panther down. “It was a precaution. Don't worry. He won't get loose again,” he said. “Trust me.”

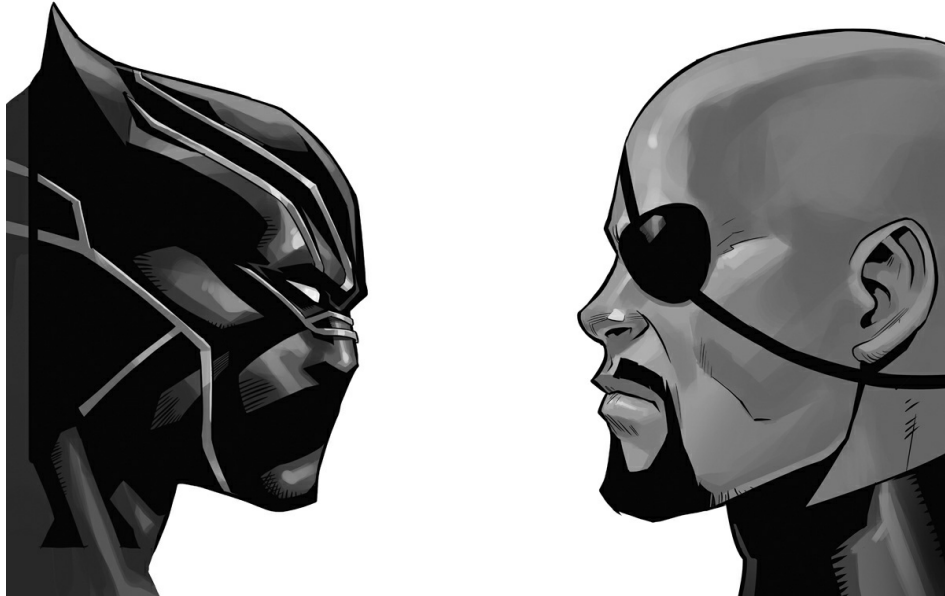
“Trust is the last thing I have in this organization,” Black Panther scoffed.

Captain America placed the stolen devices on the table beside the Life Model Decoy. “This is what it took,” he said. “Two metal bracelets. Not sure what they do.”

“What now?” War Machine asked.

Fury pondered the question. “Now we find out who's been controlling this guy,” he said. As Fury leaned in to get a closer look, the Life Model

Decoy grabbed him by the neck and tossed him through the air. The decoy launched itself off the table, landing squarely on its feet. It snatched the two bracelets, vaulted itself over a balcony, and took off running down a corridor.



Black Panther seethed. He took off after it, leaping off the walls to push himself forward.

Faster and faster, the two Black Panthers raced down the empty corridor at top speed. They chased each other around the winding metal hallways until they reached a dead end. The decoy lunged, swinging its sharp claws through the air with wild abandon. Black Panther dodged each swipe with ease.

The decoy swept its foot across the floor. Black Panther leaped into the air to avoid it. They grappled, straining with force as each one attempted to gain the upper hand. The Avengers soon arrived on the scene to find two Black Panthers locked in combat before them.

“Which one of these guys is our friend?” War Machine asked.

Captain America struggled to answer. “I don't know.”





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Chapter 6

Black Panther was in the fight of his life against the evil Life Model Decoy. The Avengers had no idea which one was which. One Black Panther head-butted the other before giving him a brutal punch to the gut.

“Ouch,” Captain Marvel whispered. “What do we do? Watch and wait?”

“I know how to tell them apart,” War Machine said. He activated his launcher and took aim. He fired a rocket, blasting through a wall and leaving behind a gaping hole. The decoy saw its chance at escape and took it.



“Now we know,” War Machine said.

“Where exactly does he think he's going?” Captain Marvel asked. “We're on a giant sky ship. It's not like he has a lot of options.”

“Beats me,” War Machine said. “You okay, Panther?”

Black Panther dusted his shoulders off. “I'm fine,” he said, jumping through the hole.

The decoy encountered a battalion of armed S.H.I.E.L.D. agents but remained unfazed. It looked up and swung himself onto a balcony ledge. The agents fired into the air after him. But the decoy ran down the catwalk. He knew where it was going. Then it leaped off and landed on another catwalk, lower down. The Avengers followed close behind, spotting it down below. “There he is!” shouted Captain Marvel. The decoy ran to a big red door, threw it open, and went inside.

“Oh no,” War Machine said. “That's not good.”

“What's behind that door?” Black Panther asked.

“That leads to the cellblock.”



The Black Panther decoy scoped out each cell. Once it found the right one, the decoy smashed through the control panel, which opened the cell door. Its criminal occupant stepped out in a dramatic fashion.

“Klaw,” growled Black Panther.

“Took you long enough,” Klaw scoffed. “I've been waiting for this moment.” The decoy handed him the two metal bracelets it had stolen. Klaw calmly snapped them into his wrist gauntlet. His eyes lit up as a jolt of power rippled through his body. “You're dismissed,” Klaw said, patting the decoy on the head. The android took a step back and deactivated itself.

The Avengers burst into the cellblock.

War Machine fired off a barrage of missiles.

Klaw bombarded the missiles with sound, causing them to explode in midair.

“The devices that decoy stole for me not only protects me from the effects of Vibranium, they also enhance my sonic abilities. I'm more powerful than ever.”

He released a crippling sound blast from his wrist gauntlet. The Avengers fell to their knees in agonizing pain.

Klaw located the cellblock's communication console and opened an outside channel. “Answer me this, Black Panther. If you're here avenging things, who's watching over your kingdom? It's such a beautiful place. I bet the people are angry at their king for leaving them so unprotected.”

Black Panther finally realized the scope of Klaw's plan. The revelation took his breath away. “No,” gasped Black Panther. “Don't!”

“Good-bye,” said Klaw. “I look forward to hearing you beg for your life.” He turned himself into pure sound waves and dissolved into the console. His destination: Wakanda.

“We have to get to Wakanda,” the Panther exclaimed. “Now.”



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Chapter 7

“Shuri!” the Dora Milaje warrior shouted. “They are coming!”

The White Gorilla Cult marched toward the Great Mound with renewed purpose. They were no longer looking to bring only chaos. This time, they were thirsty for blood.

Shuri stood among a handful of Dora Milaje warriors and addressed them with vigor. “Sisters, I'm here before you today not as a princess but as a warrior! The Great Mound will not fall today. Wakanda will rise!”

Cheers erupted from the hills as the White Gorilla Cult descended on the Great Mound. Shuri was flanked by two Dora Milaje, Ayo and Aneka. Nakia and Okoye, an additional pair of fighters, stood ready for Shuri's direction.

“Be careful, warriors. Repel these invaders at all costs,” Shuri commanded. “Okoye, stay on the ground. Nakia, watch the skies!”

As the cultists charged, the Dora Milaje met them with great strength. Nakia vaulted through the air toward a White Gorilla Cultist. She swiftly scooped him up and tossed him into a deep hole nearby.

Tick, Tick, Tick. Boom!

An explosion rocked the Mound. Shuri spotted the culprit attempting an escape. She quickly reached for her bolo, a long cord with weighted spheres on either end. Shuri tossed it at the fleeing cultist. The bolo wrapped itself around his feet, causing him to fall to the ground in a tangle.

The Dora Milaje battled back as many cultists as they could, but time was running out. They needed reinforcements.

Beep! Beep! Beep!

Shuri received a distress call from Black Panther. Before she could respond, a cultist lunged in her direction. Shuri dodged the attack and braced herself for the next one. “T'Challa, I'm surrounded by White Gorilla Cultists at the moment,” she said, activating her ear receiver. “What's going on?” Another cultist surprised Shuri from behind. He ripped the receiver out of her ear and tossed it to the ground. Shuri gave her attacker a swift strike to the

chest. He landed on the ground unconscious.



“Klaw is coming!” Black Panther shouted. “You must be careful.”

Shuri was unable to hear her brother's warning. Before she could grab the receiver, a monstrous foot stomped it to pieces as a beastly shadow fell upon the area. Shuri looked up to find the fearsome M'Baku, leader of the White Gorilla Cult. He snarled at Shuri and panted like an animal. His ferocity was legend.

“What will you do now, Princess?” said M'Baku.

“This!” Shuri said, kicking M'Baku in the knee. He remained unmoved.

“Ha ha ha! You have spirit, little girl,” M'Baku cackled. “I will destroy it.” He picked Shuri up by the shoulders and moved his face close to hers. M'Baku's foul breath made her wince in disgust.

Roar!

“You don't scare me.” Shuri smiled. She head-butted M'Baku with great force. The blow caused him to drop her. She landed on the ground with grace.

“M'Baku,” a cultist shouted, pointing to the Quinjet high in the sky. Black Panther and the Avengers had arrived. The cultists quickly scattered in all directions.

“Come back here, you weak fools!” M'Baku roared. “What are you scared of?!”

As the Quinjet descended from above, Black Panther catapulted himself out of its cockpit.

“You and your cult are done,” Black Panther shouted.

Black Panther vaulted himself toward M'Baku, delivering strike after strike at incredible speed. The barrage of blows left M'Baku unable to catch his breath.

Boom!

The White Gorilla Cultists watched as their leader's enormous frame crashed to the ground in defeat. The battle was over. The Dora Milaje rushed to secure their new prisoners.

“T'Challa!” Shuri exclaimed. She ran to her brother and hugged him hard.

“Klaw is in Wakanda,” Black Panther said.

The color left Shuri's face. “What?” she muttered.

“There's nothing to fear. Listen closely,” Black Panther said. “I need you to clear the Mound. Get everyone away from here, then join the Avengers. Can you do that?”

“Yes, but where's Klaw?” Shuri asked. “What are you going to do?”

Black Panther looked toward the Golden City. The final game had begun.





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Chapter 8

Fzzzt! Shazack!

Deep within the Wakandan royal palace, Klaw made his way through Black Panther's private workshop. He strolled among the many gadgets and inventions, destroying each one as he passed. It was in this workshop that Black Panther created the numerous innovations that helped fuel his country's economy. It was a place that held deep meaning, a place where he felt safe.

During the commotion, Black Panther slipped in through a secret door and hid behind a large iron column. In his hand was a glowing Vibrairon column energy dagger.

“Your sister is a strong fighter. She'll make an excellent Black Panther once you're gone. Don't think I couldn't hear you skulking around,” said Klaw. “Sound is my currency, fool.”

Fzzzack!

Klaw fired off a sonic assault toward Black Panther. The Panther somersaulted across the room, dodging each sound wave with aplomb as Klaw grew irritated. It was a standoff.

“I'm not going anywhere,” Black Panther said.

“I'd expect nothing less, you insufferable brat,” said Klaw.

Black Panther threw himself through the air toward Klaw.

Bweee! Bweee! Bweee!

Klaw unleashed a high-pitched frequency that rattled Black Panther's head.

“I'm not just here for Vibranium, you know. I'm also here to watch your people turn against you.”



Klaw spoke as Black Panther struggled to stand. “M'Baku and his White Gorilla Cult attacked the Great Mound every time you left Wakanda because

I hired them to do so. I wanted the people to remember that you'd abandoned them in their time of need. Wakanda will fall.”

“Never!” Black Panther exclaimed as he leaped toward Klaw.

“That's all you've got?” asked Klaw.

Klaw adjusted his wrist gauntlet and created a devastating sound wave that shook the royal palace to its foundation. Black Panther had been studying Klaw's movements and demeanor. *He's quick but his body lacks tension. That means he feels comfortable*, he thought.

“Your father once told me Vibranium wasn't Wakanda's greatest resource. He said it's the people that make this nation strong,” Klaw said.

“Never speak of my father,” Panther said.

“Do you miss him?” asked Klaw. “Don't answer. I know you do. He was a better king than you'll ever be.”

“You play mind games,” said Black Panther. “Do what you came here to do or leave.”

“How dare you?!” Klaw spit back. “Your foolishness turned me into this. All of this is your fault!”

Vuzzat! Vuzzat!

Klaw coated the room in a blanket of steady pulsing sound. Black Panther had taken many hits during his years as a hero but never anything like this. To move through the pain, Black Panther turned to meditation, another tool his father had taught him.

Whenever he found himself in a stressful situation, Black Panther closed his eyes, cleared his mind, and focused his energy inward. peaceful silence. “You're not the threat I thought you'd be. How disappointing,” he said. “When you regain your strength, come say hello. You know where I'll be.” Klaw dissolved into the air.

Black Panther opened his eyes and awoke from his meditation. “I know what I must do.”





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Chapter 9

Black Panther shook his head in disbelief as he sifted through the remnants of his workshop. He couldn't believe his many great achievements had been destroyed in front of his eyes. Now they were broken things that needed fixing. The conflict wasn't over yet. Shuri returned from her task to find her brother among the wreckage.

"We don't have much time," Black Panther said. "Klaw is expecting me." His eyes darted through the room, searching for something. He began rummaging through the wreckage.

"Are you all right?" Shuri asked.

"I'll survive," Black Panther said.

"What are you going to do?" Shuri wondered.

"Keep going," Black Panther said. He finally found what he was looking for: a long, magnetic tube. He looked the item over and was pleased. "Where is Ramonda? Is she safe?" he asked.

"Yes. The Great Mound has been cleared but the people are concerned. Where's Klaw? What are you planning to do, brother?" Shuri said.

Black Panther took off his mask and smiled at his sister.

"No matter what happens today, Shuri, know that I am proud of you. I know our father would be as well," he said.

"You speak as if this is the end, T'Challa," Shuri said.



Just then, the Avengers entered the workshop.

“You should definitely fire your maid,” Captain Marvel said.

Captain America was in no mood for jokes. “Stay focused, team. Klaw is at the Great Mound.”

“How is that possible? His body would dissolve around Vibranium,” Shuri said.

“He acquired technology that protects him. It's been integrated into his sonic cannon,” said Black Panther.

“I take it you have a plan?” wondered Captain America.

“Of course,” replied Black Panther. “But I must confront Klaw alone.”

“Are you crazy?” War Machine exclaimed.

“I know Klaw better than anyone here,” Black Panther explained. “He

will see the Avengers coming a mile away. He'll prepare. I must approach him one-on-one."

"He shoots sound. It's not like he's unstoppable," Captain Marvel said. "Let's just blast him and get it over with."

"After Klaw killed my father, I didn't understand what could drive a man to take another's life," Black Panther explained. "I soon realized that Ulysses Klaw is a man that chooses to believe what he wants. I believe this arrogance will lead to his downfall."

"So, what can we do?" asked Captain Marvel.

"You must not be seen. All of you, including Shuri and the Dora Milaje, stand ready with your weapons. When I give the signal, aim for Klaw's sonic wrist gauntlet and open fire."

Captain Marvel noticed the magnetic tube in Black Panther's hand. "What's that for?"

Rumble!

"You'll see," Black Panther replied.

Rumble!

Wakanda began to tremble with the power of sound.

"I hope you know what you're doing." Said Captain Marvel.

"Trust me." Black Panther replied.



I hope you know what you're doing.

Trust me.



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Chapter 10

Fvzack!

Klaw stood in the middle of the Great Mound, using his sonic powers to tear it apart. High in the clouds above, War Machine circled with Black Panther in tow.

“Drop me,” Black Panther said.

“I know that Vibranium suit can take a beating, but we're over a thousand feet up. Are you sure?” War Machine asked.

Black Panther nodded in the affirmative. War Machine loosened his grip and Black Panther plunged from the sky, landing on the Mound's hillside ledge with a boom!

Klaw grinned. A mechanical hum filled the air as pure sound energy pulsed through his body.

Shathoom!

He blasted the rock underneath Black Panther's feet, causing him to fall from the hillside amid a flurry of rubble.

Black Panther pulled himself from the rock pile and stumbled to his feet. Black Panther's master plan was taking shape.

Shazack!

Klaw attacked again. “I will take your greatest resource and I will destroy you with it!” he barked. “Then I will come for your people.” He laid his hand on the ground and focused his power, using it to create an earthquake. Vibranium churned deep below the earth as a series of tremors vibrated outward toward the whole of Wakanda. The Great Mound shook with violent force as it began to crumble to pieces.

“Klaw!” Black Panther shouted. “Stop!”

Klaw paused. A maniacal grin developed on his face. “Surrender. Surrender to me!!!”

Black Panther tried to keep himself balanced on the trembling Earth.

Klaw's tremors were making the ground crumble beneath him. Then, Black Panther slowly raised his hands in the air. But it wasn't a surrender—it was the signal. In the blink of an eye, Shuri, the Dora Milaje, and the Avengers rose from the edges of the Great Mound. Black Panther smirked.

All at once, the heroes fired their weapons. Klaw was caught unaware. His wrist gauntlet shattered as his scream echoed throughout the kingdom. With his safeguards destroyed, the Vibranium within the Great Mound overwhelmed Klaw's physical form. Black Panther grabbed the magnetic tube, capturing Klaw's sound.

“This tube keeps Klaw in a state of constant unrest, leaving him unable to reassemble into his physical form,” Black Panther explained.



Captain America was in a state of disbelief. “Klaw hit you with everything he had.”

“That's what I was counting on,” Black Panther said.

“Why endure all of that?” Captain Marvel asked.

“Enduring is what I do,” Black Panther said. He looked out among the hills and noticed the citizens of Wakanda had assembled.

“They must have heard the commotion,” Shuri said.

The people looked upon their king's bravery. They saw his commitment to defending Wakanda, and their spirit was renewed. Then a curious thing happened. The crowd parted to reveal T'Challa's mother, Ramonda. She walked over and stood at his side. “Like your father would say, it's the people of Wakanda that make this nation strong.”

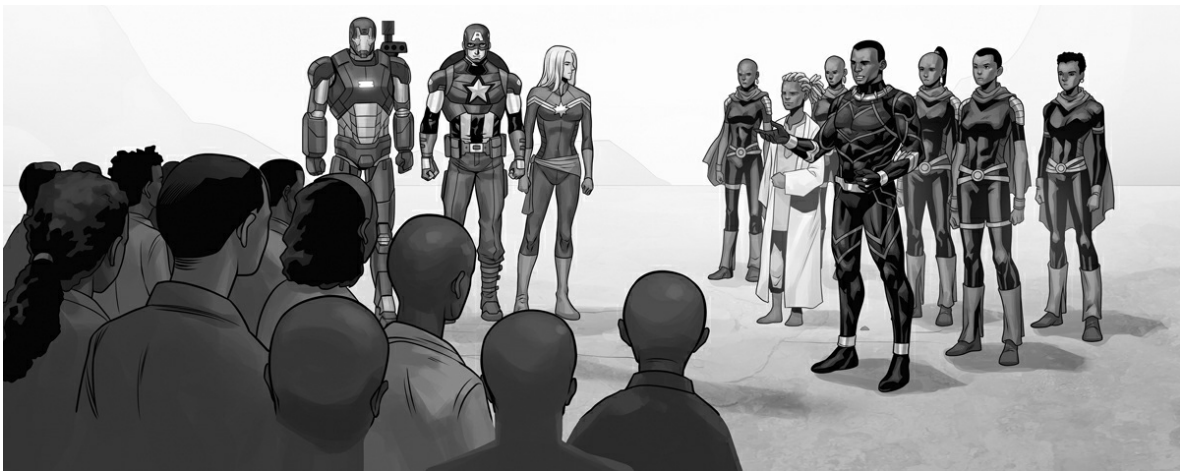
Black Panther prepared to speak to his people, but before he could begin, Ramonda leaned into his ear with a reminder. “Take your mask off, son.”

“Thank you, Mother,” T'Challa said, removing his mask. He took a breath and began.

“Wakandans, forces within our nation conspired to instill fear in our people through violence and terror. These forces have been dealt with. We are safe once again. Wakanda is grateful for the protection offered by the Dora Milaje. That's why my sister, Shuri, will take an active role in their development.”

Shuri's eyes widened. She hadn't expected such an announcement. Her brother continued.

“The Avengers are my teammates. They defended our nation as if it were their own. I'm thankful to be among their ranks. Furthermore, Wakanda is not a world unto itself. We must bridge the gap between us and other cultures. In the coming weeks, I will invite representatives from the other nations of the world to see Wakanda for themselves. We are not a country of secrets. Lastly, I wish to mention my father, T'Chaka. He is missed by many, myself included. He was a great man and an exceptional leader. I am not him. I never will be. I am my own man and my own leader. My father and I do, however, share a love for Wakanda and its people. Let us continue to build our nation together.”



Cheers erupted across the Great Mound. Black Panther gazed out among the crowd and was pleased. Wakanda's people were alive again.

“Thanks for the shout-out,” Captain Marvel said.

“Rest assured, T'Challa, Nick Fury and I are going to have a conversation. Whether he likes it or not,” Captain America said, smiling. “The Avengers are there to help S.H.I.E.L.D. defend the world, but we don't follow orders blindly. Only by trusting each other will we be able to work together and move forward. Thanks for reminding me of that.”

“Can I move here? I promise I'll be a great roommate. All I need is a bed and a window, I swear,” War Machine joked. “And maybe a bathroom.”

“Thank you, all,” Black Panther said. “For everything.” The Avengers boarded the Quinjet and ascended into the sky. Ramonda and T'Challa retired to the royal palace for some well-deserved peace and quiet.

“How are you, son?” Ramonda asked.

T'Challa thought for a moment. In the past day he'd wrestled with cultists, tracked down his imposter, and faced his greatest enemy in battle. Even for a Super Hero, he'd experienced quite a lot.

Despite the dangerous situations he'd recently been through, T'Challa felt complete.



“Hope springs eternal,” T'Challa said.

Shuri burst into the room. “Oh! I didn't mean to interrupt,” she said.

“Come in, dear,” Ramonda said.

“I was thinking of heading out to Warrior Falls for a training session,” Shuri said.

T'Challa gave a long sigh and then shot Shuri a devilish look. “Race you?”

“Only if I can have a head start,” Shuri said, rushing out of the room.

“T'Challa, can you not just rest?” Ramonda asked.

“Not really,” T'Challa said, and smiled.

He put his mask on and leaped off the balcony into the brush below. The people of Wakanda could now rest easy because the Black Panther was on the prowl once again.

黑豹的故事

对特查拉王子而言，在王室成长并不是一件易事，要想达到备受尊崇的瓦坎达先王特查卡的要求，特查拉王子压力重重。特查卡先王同时也是古黑豹族的族长，其地位历代相传。一天，外来者尤利西斯·克劳闯入瓦坎达之后，一切都改变了，他为了一己私利，想要盗取瓦坎达的资源。克劳攻击了特查卡先王，给先王致命一击。痛失特查卡先王令整个王室悲伤不已。特查拉年纪渐长，自知不能再沉湎于过去。他肩负着的不仅是一位王子的使命。他热爱科学，努力成为一名智者，训练脑力与体力并重。他钻研格斗术，使用独特的心形草提升能力。他研发出了一套由超强元素振金所制的、刀枪不入的战袍，已经准备好继承父亲的王位了。他完完全全成了一位英雄。全世界子民不久将见证这位传说中的强大伟岸的黑豹。



第一章

瓦坎达的核心区域坐落着一座大山，叫“巨丘”，这里储藏着瓦坎达最好的资源：振金。这种非同寻常的吸音钢是几百年来瓦坎达高科技的源泉。过去，瓦坎达的矿工认为他们的工作是一份殊荣，而如今，他们当中有许多人已不这么认为。

“当心！”一名矿工大叫道。

嘀，嘀，嘀。砰！白猿部落进攻时，一声巨响，爆炸声响彻巨丘。他们的首领正是令人闻风丧胆的军阀姆巴库，他指挥雇佣兵无恶不作。瓦坎达无人不知他们的恶行。然而，没有人清楚他们的真实目的。他们和以前一样不偷不抢。看上去，他们唯一做的，就是恐吓人们。

“逃命啊！”另一名矿工大喊道。

白猿部落入侵后，吓坏了的矿工们四散奔逃，巨丘一片混乱，矿工们绝望地抵抗着白猿部落的凶猛进攻。

一个白猿人高举长矛，对准一名无辜的矿工，而就在他击中矿工前，一道黑色光芒以闪电般的速度静默地划过巨丘的上空。

这正是黑豹，他愤怒极了。只见黑豹一把抓住白猿人，从他手中夺过长矛，将他扔到空中。



那白猿人坠落到地上后冷笑道：“你根本不知道即将来临的是什么。”

不祥的预感使黑豹心中有了一丝恐惧。黑豹一直忙于复仇者联盟的事儿，相比从前，他更多时间都不在瓦坎达，这也让他感觉到，他似乎对瓦坎达所发生的事情一无所知。

“你想怎么样？”黑豹怒吼着。

白猿人冷笑道：“走着瞧吧。”

“姆巴库在哪儿？”黑豹问道。还没等对方回答，新一轮暴乱就席卷了巨丘。

“撤退！”一个白猿人大喊道。白猿部落都开始撤退，他们投掷了一枚烟雾弹，使周围笼罩上了厚厚的烟雾，为撤退打掩护。

烟雾散去后，黑豹心中却有了更多的疑问。

“大家还好吗？”黑豹问矿工们。

“不好！”人群中传来一个声音，“我们一点儿也不好！”这名愤怒的矿工叫阿拓，他挤到了人群前面。

“畅所欲言吧，阿拓，让大家听听你的心声。”黑豹说道。

阿拓描述情况时，身子颤抖着。

“这群白猿人上个月进攻了巨丘三次，到底是为了什么？！”阿拓大吼道。

他紧张地踱来踱去。“他们并未偷取振金，那他们究竟为何而来？这场暴动究竟何时才能停？！”阿拓看向其余的矿工，想要获得他们的

支持，希望他们也能够发声，然而大伙儿都低着头，一片沉默。



阿拓再次将注意力转回了黑豹身上，说：“尊敬的国王，您这阵子都去哪儿了？您知道自己国家发生了什么吗？”

黑豹一直自认为是平易近人的国王，他并不习惯面对子民的愤怒。显然，阿拓很沮丧。黑豹在思索他的回答是否合适，并在发言前小心翼翼地斟酌用词。“之前白猿部落的袭击我有所耳闻，的确造成了惨痛的人员伤亡，目前我正在调查。”他解释道。

“哈！”阿拓冷笑道。他转过去，指着那些神情沮丧的矿工。“您认为这就能让我们过上好日子了？我们需要真正的领导者。但是，我们的国王却忙着做超级英雄呢。”

阿拓的话刺伤了黑豹。一直以来，黑豹都非常关怀瓦坎达子民，他做的一切都是为了子民的利益。作为复仇者联盟成员之一，保卫地球也在他的职责之内。如今，他并不确定这样做是否正确。

“您的父亲为国献身，至死都在保卫祖国。”阿拓说道。

黑豹的愤怒逐渐升温。他说：“我热爱我的国家，也定当竭尽所能保护我的子民。”

“那就向我们证明啊。”阿拓说道。

“够了！”黑豹转身，威严地面向大家，说道：“确实，在瓦坎达之外，我过着另一种生活。我非常荣幸能与地球上的超级英雄们为伍，但是我想说，我并不属于他们，我也并不是对他们有求必应的。”

嗡嗡嗡嗡！！！！机械轰鸣声遥响在空中，瞬间就靠近了。原来是复仇者联盟专属的昆式战斗机。它停靠在巨丘的边缘，矿工们聚在一旁十分好奇地注视着。

“看到没？看到没？国王的主人们来召唤他了。”阿拓转向其他矿工说道，“瞧瞧这群人和他们丑陋的宇宙飞船。瓦坎达子民随便造个也比他们的强十倍。”

机舱门打开了，只见惊奇队长、美国队长和战争机器走了出来。

“看上去你这儿还在开派对呢。”战争机器开起了玩笑。黑豹却眉头紧锁。

黑豹问道：“我现在需要全神贯注地处理一个情况。什么风把你们给吹到瓦坎达来了？”

“我们要跟你谈谈，”美国队长说道，“要是没事儿我们当然不会来了。”

阿拓会心一笑。“这不就证实了嘛！”他边说边面向大家，“瞧见了没？复仇者联盟把他给操控了，我们的国王要为别人效力了。”

美国队长转向黑豹，轻轻地抓住他的胳膊，问：“有没有什么地方能让我们单独谈谈？”

“我们去首都，”黑豹说道，挣脱了他的手，“去王宫吧。”

阿拓说：“好啊，就去你那闪闪发亮的宫殿，远离我们这些人吧。”

阿拓的粗鲁激怒了惊奇队长。“注意点儿，兄弟！”她大声说道，“黑豹还是你们的国王呢！”

当人群散去，阿拓一声冷笑，捡起了他那破损的工具。黑豹被子民面临危险时所展现的承受力震撼到了。他心想：“我一定要弄清楚真相。”复仇者联盟的成员们朝着昆式战斗机走去，快速赶往瓦坎达首都。

战争机器看见黑豹非常沮丧，想要让他放松一下，便笑着说：“真是一群难对付的家伙啊！老兄。”

“我简直不敢相信，你竟然允许那个家伙那样跟你说话。”惊奇队长说道。

“我什么也没让他干。我只是听着。”黑豹说道，“队长，不能光靠命令去获得尊重，而要自己去赢得。”

“这点你倒是说对了！”惊奇队长回答道。

其他人登船时，黑豹把美国队长拉到一旁说悄悄话。

“子民现在都十分紧张。复仇者联盟的职责让我不能尽心尽力地担任瓦坎达国王。神秘入侵的敌人也恰好利用了这一点。我希望亲自来解决这个问题。”

美国队长点点头。



第二章



来到王宫，复仇者联盟在黑豹的地盘怡然自得。装修现代的王宫内，处处摆放着瓦坎达的古物。黑豹父亲统治时的一幅画像挂在屋子正中间，这是黑豹最珍视的物件。战争机器取下了头盔，漫步在屋子里，欣赏着每一件古物。

战争机器说：“你这地方不错啊，缺室友吗？”

“随时欢迎你来参观，”黑豹戴着面具大笑道，“我这儿客人可不多。”

惊奇队长不想再开玩笑。“黑豹，我们来说正事儿吧。”她说道，“昨晚，一个穿着打扮和你一样的人，抢劫了神盾局的一处顶级秘密黑牢。我们虽知不是你干的，但是尼克·弗瑞还是让我们带你回去接受审问。”

黑豹说：“我不明白。上次任务结束后，我在瓦坎达待了一个多星期了，弗瑞知道的呀。神盾局理应在我不参与的情况下就能轻而易举地解开这个谜题。”

战争机器提道：“那个家伙在外头胡作非为，行头和你一模一样，难道你一点儿都不担心吗？”

黑豹怒了，他说：“有群恶徒正在入侵我的国家。瓦坎达子民危在旦夕，而我却没能在这儿保护他们，没有什么比这更让我烦心的了。”

美国队长深吸一口气，谈了谈他的看法：“特查拉，我理解你的处境，真的。但是我要告诉你，神盾局不是在征求你的意见，而是在下达命令。”

黑豹回答：“所以这是命令？要是我选择不跟你们回去呢？”

“我们需要对神盾局有个交代，就是这样。你加入复仇者联盟时就签署过这样的协议！”惊奇队长火冒三丈地说，“任何事都是有代价的，哪怕是国王！”

黑豹想要信守对子民的许诺，他也承诺保卫复仇者联盟，但他需要做出艰难的选择，他并不知道该如何是好。

他还没开口，王太后拉蒙达就走进了房间。她笑了笑，说道：“都没人通知我来客人了呀，我该给大家准备些零食的。”

注意到王室成员出现，美国队长、战争机器和惊奇队长纷纷鞠躬。

拉蒙达却不喜欢这一套，她解释说：“快快请起，这规矩总让我不自在。”拉蒙达欢迎复仇者联盟成员，给了他们每人一个温暖坚实的拥抱。“什么风把你们吹到瓦坎达来啦？又要带我儿子去新的冒险吗？”

黑豹说道：“有人冒充我的身份在外犯罪，我的同伴是来把我带回去审问的。”顿时房间里安静无比。

拉蒙达问：“请问我能和我的继子单独聊两句吗？”

美国队长说：“当然。”

复仇者联盟成员们纷纷走出了房间。

拉蒙达说：“你回来了真好。”

黑豹说：“回家是好啊。您也知道，我这些天都忙晕了。”

拉蒙达说：“特查拉，给个面子，把你的面具取下来吧，说话的时候我想看着你的脸。”

黑豹的一身战衣由振金打造，刀枪不入。但是，这并不能帮他躲避现实。他取下面具，对着继母笑了笑。

拉蒙达抚摸着黑豹的脸颊，边笑边说：“我引以为傲的儿子，亲爱的国王。欲戴王冠，必承其重。”

“这句老话我还要听多少遍？”特查拉问道，他转头看向正在展出的瓦坎达工艺品，“巨丘动荡不止，白猿人就是要制造这种不安的局面，

他们中的恶势力又抬头了。”

拉蒙达问：“你有什么线索吗？”

特查拉回答：“没有，真令人生气。”

拉蒙达说：“动用你所有的资源，肯定能找到答案。同时，瓦坎达子民会永远感激你的保护。”

特查拉摇摇头。“您不明白，子民认为我抛弃了他们，觉得我在考虑他们的需要之前，总是会优先尽到复仇者联盟的责任。我在想我是不是真的像他们所说的那样。”

拉蒙达说：“你帮助复仇者联盟打击那些危害整个地球的人，瓦坎达也在你的保护之内。他们会懂的。”

特查拉说：“这还远远不够，他们只会议论我的失败。”

拉蒙达说：“那你的成就呢？要记得你做的好事儿。”

母子俩眺望这广阔的国土，回忆着从前的时光，感受到了一丝平静。

“你父亲一直都以你为荣，他比任何人都知道这事儿不容易。”拉蒙达说着，将头靠在特查拉的肩上。

特查拉明白自己的使命。“我会和复仇者联盟回到神盾局的天空母舰，尽快回来的。”他的语气又恢复了坚定，“我一定会将他们进攻的原因查个水落石出，一次性阻止他们。我欠瓦坎达一个交代，我不会让我的子民失望的。”

“一切还好吗？”特查拉的妹妹舒莉冲了进来，“白猿部落入侵时，我正在做战斗训练。一听说这事儿，我立刻赶过来了。问一句，门口停着的是昆式战斗机吗？”

尽管舒莉是瓦坎达的公主，但她完全不在意这个身份，反而更享受格斗的乐趣，她从小就开始训练了。

“舒莉，亲爱的，你哥哥的朋友们在这儿呢。”拉蒙达说道，“你训练得怎么样啊？”

“新学了几个动作。哥哥，你可以告诉复仇者联盟，若他们需要，我随时都可以加入。”舒莉笑着说道。

舒莉的玩笑话倒是让特查拉有了一个新主意。平日舒莉不忙的时候，经常围观瓦坎达国王亲卫队训练，也积攒了不少战斗技能。他说：“仔细听着，舒莉，我又得走了，我需要你替我来领导。”

舒莉想想就两眼大睁。

“你可以指挥国王亲卫队。若白猿部落再次进攻，我需要你集结军

队。你能做到吗？”特查拉问道。

“特查拉，我恐怕……”舒莉结结巴巴地说，“你才是天选之人，黑豹是你，不是我。我只是个有英雄梦的小女孩儿罢了。”

“你就是你自己，”特查拉说，“你只要做好自己就够了。”

舒莉看着母亲，想要征求同意。“可以吗，母亲？”她问道。

“我永远支持你。你俩都是我的骄傲。”拉蒙达说道。

特查拉紧紧地抱住妹妹。他说：“保持警惕，时刻准备。瓦坎达就指望你了。哦，还要确保通讯畅通，我可能会联系你。”

舒莉还难以相信这份幸运的降临，只好强作笑颜地说：“我不会让你失望的。”

门上亮着“啪，啪，啪”的灯。惊奇队长探头看了看里头的情况，问特查拉：“有结论了吗？你准备好了没？”

“有一点需要弄清楚，你们要求我跟你们走，是为了证明我是清白的，而我根本没犯罪。在我的印象中，复仇者联盟一向给予我许多尊重，而如今神盾局却质疑我的忠诚。美国队长，你说说，你会怎么做？”



美国队长非常谨慎地说道：“特查拉，我懂，真的。神盾局有时是会令人失望，我有时候也不赞同他们的做法。我尊重你，也尊重你的王室身份。你坚定不移的英雄气概也是我把你当兄弟的原因。我们正需要这种精神来找到真凶，阻止他。一旦搞定，复仇者联盟定当帮你把白猿部落彻底解决，我向你保证。”

从前在战场，特查拉就很崇拜美国队长的领导力，然而他们现在是

在瓦坎达。作为国王，特查拉想让美国队长记住他刚才的保证，便说：“队长，我从来不盲从。你还没回答我的问题。”

“我们支持你，别担心。”美国队长说道。

特查拉叹了口气，现在只有一个法子。“我先和你们过去，还自己一个清白，再立刻回到瓦坎达。”他边说边把面具戴上。

第三章

复仇者联盟登上了昆式战斗机，准备离开瓦坎达。起飞前，舒莉跑到了哥哥身边。

她问：“你要离开多久？”

黑豹回答：“直到我自证清白。”舒莉突然焦虑了起来，想到要承担起哥哥的重任，她感到不安。“舒莉，你会做得很好的，相信我。”黑豹宽慰道。



惊奇队长在舱内点点头，示意该出发了，于是黑豹回到了队友身边，在窗边和舒莉挥手道别。

舒莉轻声对着天空说：“保重啊，哥哥。”

昆式战斗机上，美国队长向大家汇报情况，黑豹、惊奇队长和战争机器围着一个全息视频影像。美国队长说：“这段影像来自神盾局在美国某处安装的摄像头，地点高度保密，连我也不知道。”

黑豹说：“神盾局和他们的秘密。”

大家看到一个和黑豹穿着一模一样的人在一栋看似普通的楼门口转悠，看上去鬼鬼祟祟的。

凭借着精准有力的攻击，他迅速撂倒了两名神盾局特工。

惊奇队长说：“这家伙有两下子。”

大家看着这个冒充者进去了。他在找东西。不一会儿他发现了一个私密实验室，里头各种机械设备，他快速扫描了一下这片区域，发现了他要找的东西：一个细细的金属镯子。四名神盾局特工进入了实验室。复仇者联盟发现，这个冒充者完完全全模仿了黑豹的打斗风格。与四名特工打斗结束后，冒充者夺走了那个金属镯子。

黑豹说：“放大这个镯子。它是干什么用的？”

美国队长回答：“这是顶级机密。”

“神盾局不会告诉我们的。我们可以断定的是它很危险。”

冒充者溜走之前，还停下来，直直地盯着闭路摄像头。

黑豹说：“他知道自己被监视了。”

战争机器补充道：“而且他好像并不介意。”

美国队长关掉了监控录像。



黑豹问：“你们相信这是我干的吗？”

美国队长说：“当然不相信。”

黑豹变得有点激动，他大声说：“队长，这根本不合理。你知道我一直都待在瓦坎达，这轻而易举就可查证。神盾局的天空母舰上都是高科技，叫他们用它查查看就知道了。就这样，立刻带我回瓦坎达。”

美国队长说：“还有一件事需要告诉你，那就是神盾局在犯罪现场找到了你的基因。”

惊奇队长惊呼：“这怎么可能？”

黑豹一直把自己当作内部成员，但现在他开始思索，加入复仇者联盟是否带来了更多麻烦。他信任这些队友，但不信任神盾局。他强忍着怒火，试图保持冷静。“这显然是有人想诬陷我。尼克·弗瑞会怎么想？他看到这场面，肯定心里也有自己的想法。”

“我和尼克一起共事多年了，他从来不会说细节。情况有点特殊，他也有自己的理由。刚才说过了，我也只能就神盾局目前调查到的线索和大家说说。”美国队长说道。

“拜托，赶紧说吧，队长。我们的敌人到底是谁？”战争机器说道。

美国队长打开泽莫男爵的全息图像，说道：“泽莫男爵也许参与进来了。神盾局已经观察他一阵子了。有传言说他正在收集各种武器。”

战争机器说：“没发现新线索。”

“不巧，这些就是我们目前掌握的情况了。等我们上了天空母舰，我希望我们能掌握新的消息。”美国队长说道。

黑豹更加不解地说：“我从未和泽莫男爵有过什么过节，他为什么要陷害我呢？”

惊奇队长说：“因为他是个混蛋。”

战争机器说：“也许是他小时候得到的关爱不够，长大了才会反社会吧。”

黑豹不想再听这些玩笑话了。

“我要和弗瑞见面，证明我的清白。找到那个冒充者，结束这一切。”黑豹说道。

“这就对了。你很快就能回家了。”美国队长说道。

哔！哔！哔！

昆式战斗机收到了来自尼克·弗瑞本人的传送消息。

“说曹操曹操到。”惊奇队长说道。

弗瑞的眼神亮了起来。他说：“黑豹，见到你真好。你大概都不知

道吧，你此刻正在我们的一个地盘打劫，是先锋科技之前的隐匿处，神盾局已经将其关闭了，但那儿还是有不少麻烦。我太忙了，都还没空把它清理干净。你们介意在过来之前先去那儿清理一下吗？对了，把那个冒充者一块儿带回来，我有一些问题要问他。”

黑豹眼睛一眯，说道：“非常乐意。”

第四章

冒牌黑豹正同一群神盾局特工打斗。

“不许动！”一名特工大叫。他一举起枪，冒牌黑豹就把枪从他手中踢了出去。另外两名特工试图拿下冒牌黑豹，但他一把抓住他们的胳膊，像丢沙袋一般将他们丢了出去。幸亏复仇者联盟及时赶来援助。

战争机器尖叫：“抓住了！”他冲进去救下这些特工，让他们安全地躺在地上。



冒牌黑豹发现复仇者联盟正朝他靠近，他赶紧转过去，将爪子抠入背后的门，把门撕开，逃到更里面。

所幸，战争机器能用红外传感器追踪他。惊奇队长大喊：“他好像朝建筑后面去了。快撤退！这儿马上就会变得一片狼藉！”

惊奇队长借助关节的力量击开建筑，在建筑内快速移动，就好像这

些墙是纸做的。

惊奇队长一层一层地击破厚厚的金属，抵达终点，复仇者联盟成员们紧随其后。深处藏着一个实验室，里头是奇怪的外星发明和半组装设备。

电线、电路板以及其他各种电器都散布在房间里。复仇者们进来后，看见冒牌黑豹正手忙脚乱地在一堆散落的金属盒子里找来找去。最终，他找到了目标设备，攥在手里。听到身后一声爆炸，他猛地回头。



“抱歉吓到你了，混蛋。”惊奇队长边说边自信地将手背在身后，“不幸的是，我们现在就要将你摧毁了。在我看来，黑豹一个人就能够干掉你了，我站在一旁静静地欣赏了就可以了。”

冒牌黑豹眯起了眼，他很担心。他面前的三位复仇者已经准备出击，而他身后是一块巨大的电子屏幕，上面都是复杂的图标。他根本无处可逃。

战争机器环顾四周，很是困惑地问：“大家有看见真的——？”

一瞬间，一双带爪子的双手从屏幕后方朝着冒牌黑豹出击，是黑豹，他用力地朝着冒牌黑豹一击！

冒牌黑豹神志不清地躺在地上。黑豹说：“有你受的。该看看你是谁了。”黑豹说着取下了冒充者的面具，却发现对方长着和他一样的面孔。

“他还活着，是吗？”战争机器问道。

美国队长用好奇的眼神打量着这具尸体，说道：“从未活过。”

“不是吧？！这怎么可能？”战争机器说道，“特查拉，你该不会还有个坏蛋双胞胎兄弟没告诉我们吧！”

“这是神盾局生化机器人替身。”美国队长说着，一瞬间反应过来，他惊住了。

黑豹问：“生化机器人替身是什么？”

美国队长解释道：“是一种非常复杂的机器人，它会说话，也懂得肢体语言，还能模仿人的思维。它甚至还有你的指纹和DNA，这也就解释了为什么它第一次闯入时，留下了你的痕迹。”

惊奇队长问：“为什么会有黑豹的替身机器人？”

美国队长说：“神盾局似乎需要解释解释。至于另一个金属镯子，我在想他们之间是不是有什么联系。”

黑豹沉默着，他正沉浸在对这片混乱的困惑当中。“我需要和尼克·弗瑞谈谈。带我去天空母舰，现在就去！”

第五章



神盾局的天空母舰在云层间移动，观察着下方的世界。穿过长长的走廊时，黑豹清楚地意识到自己不该信任神盾局，因为他们有自己的游戏规则。

“给我解释解释！”黑豹大吼着将冒牌黑豹软弱的身体丢在尼克·弗瑞的脚下。

弗瑞说：“谢谢你把我的东西还给我，我还在想他跑去哪儿了。”

弗瑞示意两位神盾局特工，他们便将他的身体抬了起来，放到了钢桌上。

惊奇队长说：“原来你一直都知道这是怎么回事儿啊！”

弗瑞说：“我也有疑问，但在这件事情上，没人知道接下来会发生什么。”

美国队长说：“这东西想杀我们！”弗瑞说：“控制它的另有其人，不是神盾局。替身机器人没那么容易操控，肯定是个聪明人干的。还有，惊奇队长，我要是你，我说话会注意语气。你今天可毁了不少神盾

局的东西。”

战争机器说：“她是想抓住这个家伙，是你派我们来抓的。”

弗瑞说：“大家都放松，我们是一个团队。”

“够了！”黑豹大吼，“弗瑞，你撒谎，你操控一切来获得你想要的，但是你骗不过瓦坎达的国王。开诚布公吧，告诉我事情的真相。”

弗瑞说：“真相很复杂。我们其实有很多共同点，黑豹。你想象一下，神盾局就像是我的王国，我会不惜一切来保护它，你懂吗？”



一名神盾局特工走了过来。

弗瑞边转身边说：“各位复仇者，请等一下。特工，监狱那边什么情况？克劳适应了新环境吗？”

克劳，这个名字让黑豹浑身起鸡皮疙瘩。黑豹还是个孩子时，他亲眼看见尤利西斯·克劳谋害了他的父亲，当时他正想从瓦坎达偷取大量振金。那触目惊心的一幕深深地刻在了他的脑海中，尽管母亲和妹妹一直支撑着他，但他并没有完全从父亲的过世中恢复过来。冲动之下，年幼的特查拉偷了克劳的一个声波炸弹，用它攻击克劳。这个炸弹废掉了克劳的右手，他后来在右手处安上了一个功能强大的声波武器，一直想找机会报复特查拉。尽管他们许久不曾碰面，克劳的存在仍然令黑豹不安。

黑豹问：“克劳怎么被关在这儿？”

“他是从木筏监狱移监过来的。”弗瑞解释说，“别担心，他哪儿都去不了。”

美国队长说：“我们言归正传。直说吧，尼克。赫尔穆特·泽莫是幕后凶手，对吗？”

弗瑞来回踱步，说道：“我不能肯定或是否定，你知道的，队长。听着，我很感激你们帮我找到遗失的设备，也非常感谢你们前来。接下来我们会处理的。”

黑豹挡住弗瑞的去路，问道：“你为什么要做一个一模一样的我？”

弗瑞回答：“特查拉，因为你很厉害。”

黑豹说：“这屋子里都是厉害的人物。你根本没回答我的问题。”

弗瑞盯着黑豹的眼睛，说道：“只是以防万一，别担心。他不会再一次失控的，相信我。”

黑豹冷笑道：“在这儿我最不该相信的就是‘相信’二字。”

美国队长将被偷的设备放在生化机器人旁边，说：“它就带来了两个金属镯子，不确定它们是做什么用的。”

战争机器人问：“那现在呢？”

弗瑞边思考这个问题边说：“现在我们要弄清楚是谁在控制这个家伙。”弗瑞正要侧身凑近看时，生化机器人突然抓住他的脖子，将他扔向空中。机器人从桌子上弹了下来，双脚平稳落地。随后它拿走了那两个镯子，跃过阳台，朝着走廊往下跑了。

黑豹强压怒火，连忙去追，他借助墙的力量不断向前。

真假两个黑豹的速度越来越快，在空荡荡的走廊上全速往前。他们在这蜿蜒的金属走廊里相互追赶，直到碰上了死胡同。只见机器人纵身一跃，拼命地挥舞着锋利的爪子。黑豹轻松躲过了每一次进攻。

机器人又从地面进攻，但黑豹跳向空中完美地避开了。他们扭打着，紧紧地拉扯着，都试图占上风。复仇者们随即赶到了现场，发现真假两个黑豹正在决斗。

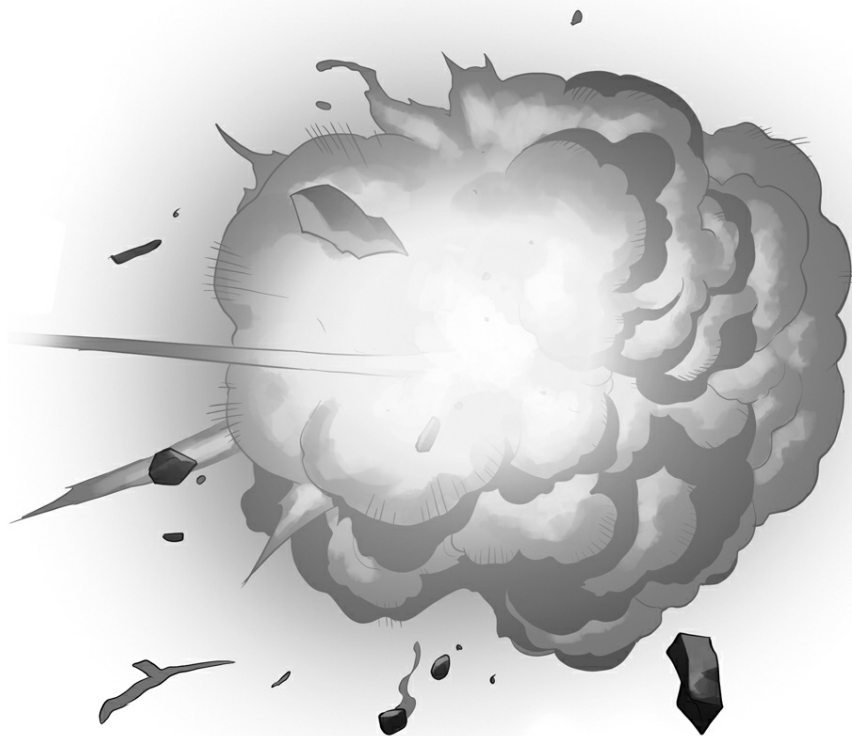
战争机器问：“究竟哪个才是我们的队友？”

美国队长也很难分辨。“我也不知道。”他回答道。

第六章

黑豹拼尽全力同生化机器人打斗。复仇者们完全分不清他俩谁是谁。其中一个黑豹用头撞了对方，即将给对方致命一击。

惊奇队长小声说：“哎哟，我们该怎么办？再观望一会儿？”



战争机器说：“我知道怎么将他们分开了。”说着，他激活了发射器，然后瞄准，发射了一枚导弹，导弹冲破墙，弄了个大窟窿出来。机器人见机赶紧溜了。

战争机器说：“现在见分晓了。”

“他觉得自己能逃到哪儿？”惊奇队长问道，“我们在一个巨大的飞

船上，他并没有太多出路可选。”

战争机器说：“我不知道。黑豹，你还好吗？”

黑豹拍了拍肩上的灰尘，说：“我没事儿。”他说着便顺着洞跳了下去。

生化机器人遇上了一群全副武装的神盾局特工，但它很镇定。它往上一瞧，纵身跃向阳台。特工们朝它开火，但它向下进入了一个小通道，它知道这通向哪儿。紧接着，它跳下来，落在了更低的一个小通道里。复仇者们紧随其后，发现他正在下方。惊奇队长大喊：“他在那儿！”只见机器人跑向了一扇红色的门，打开门就进去了。

战争机器说：“哦，不，情况不妙。”

黑豹问：“这扇门通往哪里？”

“通往监狱。”

生化机器人把每个牢房都检查了一遍，它一找到目标，便把控制面板击碎。牢门打开了，只见那个罪犯一脸神气地走了出来。

黑豹大喊道：“克劳！”

克劳冷笑着说：“花了你不少时间啊！我可一直等着这一刻。”机器人将它偷取的两个镯子交给了克劳，他镇定地将手镯放进了手腕的武器中。随着能量在他的体内聚足，他的眼睛亮了起来。“你可以撤了。”克劳边说边拍着机器人的头，机器人往后退了一步，终结了自己。

这时复仇者们冲了进来。

战争机器连环发射导弹。

克劳用声波击中了导弹，导弹即刻在半空中爆炸了。

“机器人帮我偷来的设备不仅能帮我抵抗振金，还能加强声波的威力。我现在变得更强大了。”

他紧接着从手腕武器中又发出了一系列声波攻击。复仇者们纷纷忍不住剧痛跪倒在地。



克劳定位到监狱的控制台，打开了出口通道，说：“黑豹，告诉我，如果你是来复仇的，那谁在照看你的国家呢？那儿真是个美丽的地方。我猜想，国王丢下子民不管，他们一定十分愤怒。”

黑豹终于意识到了克劳的阴谋，真相让他措手不及。黑豹倒吸一口凉气说：“不要！千万不要！”

克劳说：“再见了。我很期待你向我求饶。”他转身进了声波，消失在了控制台。目的地显示：瓦坎达。

黑豹大喊：“我们必须回瓦坎达，立刻！”

第七章

“舒莉！他们来了！”国王亲卫队的战士们大喊道。

白猿部落带着新的目的冲向巨丘，他们这次可不只是为了制造混乱而来，而是嗜血杀人。



舒莉站在国王亲卫队战士中间，精力充沛地指挥道：“姐妹们，今天我站在这儿，不是公主，而是战士！今日，巨丘绝不会沉沦，瓦坎达

势必崛起！”

白猿部落登陆巨丘，一路都是呼喊声。舒莉两侧站着阿尤和阿尼卡两位战士。另一对战士，娜凯亚和欧可亚，也随时听候舒莉命令。

“战士们，注意。全力击退这些入侵者。欧可亚，负责地面。娜凯亚，盯紧空中！”

人猿部落进攻时，亲卫队奋力抵抗。娜凯亚一跃而起，朝一个白猿出击，只见她迅速将他抓起，一把丢进了附近的坑里。

嘀，嘀，嘀。嘣！

巨丘上发生了爆炸，舒莉发现罪魁祸首正试图逃跑，便快速抡起长绳，长绳的两端系着两个球。舒莉把绳子扔向试图逃跑的恶徒，绊住了他的双脚，他被绳缠着倒在了地上。

亲卫队奋力反击，但时间在一分一秒地流逝，他们即刻需要增援。

啵！啵！啵！

舒莉接到了黑豹的紧急电话。还没来得及接通，一个人猿便朝她出击。舒莉躲避着一个又一个的攻击，她打开耳麦说道：“特查拉，我正被白猿部落围攻，发生了什么？”另一个人猿从舒莉背后突袭，只见他一把将她的耳麦扯下，丢在了地上。舒莉朝他的胸膛快速一击，他便昏倒在地。

黑豹大喊：“克劳来了。你一定要小心。”

舒莉没能听到哥哥的警告，因为她还未抓住接收器，一只巨大的脚就将接收器踩碎了，怪物般的影子落了下来，舒莉抬头一看，发现是令人生畏的白猿部落的首领姆巴库。他冲着舒莉咆哮，如巨兽般喘着气，他的残暴人尽皆知。

姆巴库说：“公主殿下，你现在可该怎么办？”

舒莉说：“这样！”她踢向姆巴库的膝盖，但他稳如泰山。

“哈哈！小女孩儿，有胆量。我要吓破你的胆。”姆巴库笑着说道。他抓起舒莉的肩膀，将脸凑近她。姆巴库呼吸的恶臭味儿让她反胃。

嗷呜！

“你吓唬不了我。”舒莉笑着说。她奋力用头撞向姆巴库，使他松开了手，她便优雅地落在了地上。

“姆巴库！”一个人猿大喊着，指向空中的昆式战斗机。看到黑豹和复仇者们来了，人猿们即刻四处逃窜。



“快回来，你们这些懦夫！”姆巴库吼道，“你们在怕什么？！”

昆式战斗机着陆后，黑豹从座舱内弹了起来。

黑豹大吼：“你们完蛋了。”

黑豹朝着姆巴库跳过去，以惊人的速度一次又一次地发起攻击，让姆巴库防不胜防。

嘣！

白猿人眼睁睁地看着他们的领袖倒地。战争结束了。亲卫队连忙冲过来控制住他们的战俘。

“特查拉！”舒莉喊道，连忙朝哥哥奔去，用力抱住他。

黑豹说：“克劳在瓦坎达。”

舒莉脸色发白，咕哝着：“什么？”

黑豹说：“别怕。听着，现在你得清空巨丘，让所有人离开这里，然后你再来找复仇者联盟。你可以吗？”

舒莉说：“可以。但是克劳在哪儿呢？你打算怎么办？”

黑豹看向黄金城。最后一战已经打响。

第八章



嗞！啾！

克劳深入瓦坎达王宫里，抵达了黑豹的私人工作室。他走在许多设备和发明之间，看到一件就摧毁一件。正是在这间工作室里，黑豹创造了无数推动国家经济发展的发明。正是在这间意义深刻的工作室里，黑豹才感到安全。

黑豹趁乱从一道密门里溜了进去，躲在大铁柱后面，手里拿着发光的振金能量匕首。

克劳说：“你妹妹是个好战士。你走后她会是个优秀的黑豹。别以为我没听见你躲在这儿。就算一丝声音我也能听到，傻蛋！”

嗞！

克劳朝黑豹发出了声波攻击，黑豹在房间里翻着跟斗，从容不迫地避开了所有攻击，克劳生气极了，他俩陷入了僵局。

黑豹说：“我哪儿也不去。”

克劳说：“正合我意，你这个讨人厌的东西。”

黑豹一跃而起，扑向克劳。

哧！哧！哧！

克劳发射出高音调的频率，黑豹头痛欲绝。

“你知道的，我来这儿可不光是为了振金，我还要看看你的子民是如何同你作对的。”

黑豹挣扎着站不起来时，克劳说：“姆巴库和他的白猿部落每次都在你离开瓦坎达之际袭击巨丘，因为是我雇他们这么做的。我希望你的子民都能记住，在他们需要你的时候，你是如何抛弃他们的。瓦坎达就要完了。”

“休想！”黑豹大喊着，朝克劳扑去。

克劳问：“你就这点儿招数？”

克劳调了一下他的手腕武器，发射出毁灭性极大的声波，震动了整个王宫和地基。黑豹研究过克劳的行为举止。黑豹心想：“他速度很快但是并不警觉，那就代表他觉得自己胜券在握。”



克劳说：“你父亲曾告诉我振金不是瓦坎达最宝贵的资源，这儿的子民才是，是他们让瓦坎达强大的。”

黑豹说：“不准提起我的父亲。”

克劳问：“你想念他吗？不用回答，我知道你想念他，他这个国王可比你强多了。”

黑豹说：“别和我玩心理战，要么继续打，要么赶紧滚。”

克劳反击：“你哪儿来的胆子？！是你的愚蠢才让我这样的，都是你的错！”

呜呃！呜呃！

克劳又将脉冲波射向了整个房间。当了多年的英雄，黑豹负伤不少，但都不及这次严重。他要忍痛前行，黑豹开始冥想，这也是父亲教他的。

黑豹每次感到压力巨大时，就会闭上眼睛，理清思绪，专注内在的能量，那是一种平和的沉默。“你并没有我想象的那么强大，太让我失望了。等你变强大了再来找我。你知道在哪儿能找到我。”说着，克劳便消失了。

黑豹睁开双眼，从冥想中缓过神来，说：“我知道自己该做什么了。”

第九章

黑豹看着工作室的残骸，绝望地摇了摇头。他不敢相信这么多杰作居然在他的眼皮子底下被摧毁殆尽，现在都需要修理，然而战斗还没有结束。舒莉完成任务后回来，发现哥哥在一堆废墟中。

黑豹说：“我们没多少时间了。克劳在等我。”他双眼环视着整个房间，好像在找什么东西，随后开始在废墟中翻找起来。



舒莉问：“你还好吗？”

黑豹说：“我会没事儿的。”

舒莉问：“你打算怎么办？”

黑豹说：“我要继续。”他终于找到自己要找的东西了：一根长长的磁管。他反复看着这东西，看起来挺高兴的。接着，他问：“母亲在哪儿？她安全吗？”

舒莉说：“安全。巨丘已经清空了，但子民十分担心。克劳在哪儿？哥哥，你打算怎么办？”

黑豹摘下面具，朝妹妹笑了笑。

“舒莉，无论今天发生什么，我都以你为荣，父亲也会为我们自豪的。”他说道。

舒莉说：“你说得好像一切都已经结束了，特查拉。”

此时，复仇者们走进工作室。

惊奇队长说：“你真应该把你的女仆给开除。”

美国队长没心情开玩笑。他说：“专注点，队友。克劳在巨丘呢。”

舒莉说：“这怎么可能？他若靠近振金，身体会溶解的。”

黑豹说：“他掌握了防卫技术，振金释放的能量都被融入了声波炮。”

美国队长好奇地问：“我想你已经有计划了吧？”

黑豹回答：“当然，但我必须和克劳单独对抗。”

战争机器大喊：“你疯了？”



黑豹说：“我比在场的各位都要了解克劳。要是他大老远看见复仇者联盟来了，他就会有所准备，所以我必须要和他单打独斗。”

惊奇队长说：“他发射声波，并不意味着他势不可当。我们直接炸翻他，结束这一切。”

黑豹说：“克劳杀死了我父亲，我当时并不明白，到底是什么才能驱使一个人夺走他人的生命。后来我很快明白了，尤利西斯·克劳只会相信他自己愿意相信的东西。他的自大必将带他走向灭亡。”

惊奇队长问：“所以，我们能做什么？”

“你们不要被他发现了。所有人，包括舒莉和国王亲卫队，都在一旁武装待命。当我发布讯号时，你们就朝着他的声波手腕武器开火。”

惊奇队长发现黑豹手上拿着的那根磁管，问：“这是做什么用的？”
轰隆隆！

黑豹回答：“你马上就会知道的。”

轰隆隆！

瓦坎达随着声波震动起来。

“我希望你知道自己在做什么。”惊奇队长说道。

“相信我。”黑豹说道。

第十章

嗞呲！

克劳站在巨丘中间，正用声波摧毁巨丘。战争机器和黑豹一同盘旋在空中。

黑豹说：“放我下去。”



战争机器问：“虽然振金能承受重击，但我们现在可是在一千多英尺的高空。你确定？”

黑豹坚定地点了点头。战争机器松开后，黑豹从空中一跃，嘣的一声落在了巨丘的山坡上。

克劳大笑，随着声波能量在他体内激活，空气中充满了机器轰鸣的声音。

咻嘣！

他引爆了黑豹脚下的石头，导致黑豹从一堆石头中间掉下了山坡。

黑豹将自己从石头堆里拉出来，他踉踉跄跄地站了起来，他的大计逐渐成形。

吵哇！

克劳再次发起了攻击，大声喊道：“我要夺走你最珍贵的资源，将你一并摧毁！之后我还要袭击你的子民。”他把手放在地上集中火力，试图制造地震。随着整个瓦坎达地面的震动，地下的振金有了反应，似乎要冲出整个地面，巨丘在猛烈的力量作用下晃动，开始土崩瓦解。

黑豹大叫：“克劳！住手！”

克劳停下来，他狂妄地笑着说：“投降吧，向我投降吧!!!”

黑豹试图在颤抖的地面上保持平衡，震感强烈，地面都要塌陷了。接着，黑豹缓缓举起了双手。这不是投降，而是信号。一瞬间，舒莉、国王亲卫队和复仇者们出现在巨丘，黑豹得意地笑了。

一瞬间，复仇者们纷纷开炮。克劳措手不及，伴随着他那响彻天际的尖叫声，他的手腕武器被摧毁了。他失去防护后，巨丘的振金吞噬了克劳的真身。黑豹抓住磁管，捕捉克劳的声波。

“这根磁管可以使克劳一直处于不安的状态，让他无法还原真身。”黑豹说道。



美国队长还处于震惊当中，他说：“克劳倾其一切想要摧毁你。”

黑豹说：“我赌的就是这个。”

“你为什么要忍受这些？”惊奇队长问道。

“我只能忍受。”黑豹说道。他望向那些山，看到瓦坎达的子民已经集结完毕。

舒莉说：“他们肯定听到了这场暴乱。”

子民看到了国王的勇气，看到了他保卫瓦坎达的决心，他们又重新燃起了希望。接着，发生了一件奇怪的事情，人群散开，才发现后面是特查拉的母亲拉蒙达，她走到黑豹的身边，说：“如你父亲所言，瓦坎达的子民才是我们的强国之本。”

黑豹准备和子民说两句，但在他开始之前，拉蒙达凑近了提醒他：“儿子，摘下你的面具。”

特查拉说：“谢谢提醒，母亲。”他把面具摘了下来，深呼吸，开始发言。

“瓦坎达同胞，我们国家内部的某些力量想用暴力和恐吓在我们心中埋下恐惧的种子。我们已经消灭了他们。我们又安全了。瓦坎达很感

激亲卫队的保护，这也是我的妹妹舒莉将继续为亲卫队效力的原因。”

舒莉瞪大了眼睛，她没想到哥哥会说这些。他又继续讲。

“复仇者们是我的队友，他们为我们保卫祖国，像是为他们的祖国效力一般。我非常荣幸能成为他们的一员。另外，瓦坎达并不是孤立的，我们要架起与其他国家沟通的桥梁。接下来的几周，我会邀请其他国家代表亲自来瓦坎达看看，让别人知道我们的国家并不神秘。最后，我要说说我的父亲，特查卡。许多人都很想念他，包括我。他是一个伟大的人，也是一位卓越的领导者。我不是他，我也不会成为他。是我自己，是我自己的领袖。但有一点是一样的，那就是我和我父亲共同爱着瓦坎达和我们的子民。让我们共同建设我们的国家吧！”

巨丘上响彻欢呼声。黑豹看着人群，欣慰地笑了。瓦坎达子民终于重获新生。

惊奇队长说：“感谢这些呐喊。”

美国队长笑着说：“放心吧，特查拉。不管尼克·弗瑞愿不愿意，我都要去和他谈谈。复仇者们帮助神盾局保卫地球，但我们不会盲目服从命令。只有相互信任才能共同进步，谢谢你提醒我这一点。”

“我能搬来吗？我保证我会是个超好的室友。我发誓我只要有床和窗户就够了，”战争机器开玩笑地说道，“或许还要一间浴室。”



“谢谢你们，谢谢你们所做的一切。”黑豹说道。复仇者们登上昆式战斗机，驶向天空。拉蒙达和特查拉回到王宫，感受这份来之不易的平静和安宁。

拉蒙达问：“儿子，你还好吗？”

特查拉想了一会儿。昨天他同白猿部落战斗，追踪冒牌黑豹，同劲敌厮杀。哪怕他是超级英雄，也经历得够多了。

尽管历尽千险，特查拉也觉得圆满了。

于是特查拉说：“希望永存。”

舒莉冲进了房间。“哦！我不是故意闯进来的。”她说道。

拉蒙达说：“进来吧，亲爱的。”

舒莉说：“我想去悬崖瀑布参加训练。”

特查拉长吁一口气，对她坏笑道：“我们比比谁跑得快？”

“那我只有抢先一步啦。”舒莉说着，冲出了房间。

拉蒙达问：“特查拉，你就不能消停会儿吗？”

特查拉笑着说：“还真不能。”

说着，他戴上面具，从阳台跳进了树丛。瓦坎达子民现在可以放心了，因为黑豹终于回归了。

漫威
超級英雄
雙語故事

美國漫威公司 著
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MARVEL

FALCON
FIGHT OR FLIGHT

獵鷹

地 球 保 衛 戰

華東師範大學出版社

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Tony Stark



ice cream

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FALCON



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story of Falcon

There came a day unlike any other, when Earth's Mightiest Heroes were united against a common threat. On that day, the Avengers were born, and Sam Wilson was their biggest fan. While still in school, Sam followed every one of the Avengers' battles by watching them on TV and reading about them online.

Sam dreamed that one day he, too, could be an Avenger. . . . But how could he? He wasn't a great hero, and he didn't have super powers. However, Sam was extremely smart, and he knew how to work hard. He excelled at his studies, and he spent all his spare time inventing new machines.

While still just a teenager, Sam Wilson found himself trapped with Captain America on a tropical island run by the villainous Red Skull. After a long battle, the two escaped, but barely. Cap was so impressed with Sam's skills, he suggested Sam train with him. Sam was accepted to the S.H.I.E.L.D. training program, and the two trained together and soon became best friends.

During his time at S.H.I.E.L.D., Sam created an amazing invention—a personal wing-suit that gave him the power of flight at high speed. Wearing that suit on dangerous missions earned Sam the code name Falcon.

One day, after an adventure as Falcon, Sam came back to headquarters to find Tony Stark, the Avenger known as Iron Man, waiting for him. Tony explained that the Avengers were adding a few new members to their team. . . . Would Sam be interested in joining?

Join the team that he'd loved since he was a boy? Become an Avenger, one of Earth's Mightiest Heroes? Oh, yeah, Sam was definitely interested. In fact, it was the best day of his life!



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 1

A gentle breeze rippled through the forest of tall, majestic redwoods. From where he sat positioned in the crook of a thick branch at the top of one of the trees, Sam Wilson, the Avenger known as Falcon, could see the forest all around him. It was a fantastic view, but he wasn't really enjoying it, because there was only one thing he was interested in. . . .

Using the heads-up display in his costume's visor, Sam zoomed his vision in on something in one of the other trees. Someone just casually walking through the forest would never have spotted it, it was so well camouflaged—but Sam could see it.

It was a small wooden platform, built into the tree limbs, behind some branches. On that platform was the one thing that Falcon most wanted in the world right then. . . a small blue flag.

Falcon scanned the area. There was no sign of his opponent. No sound, either. He smiled to himself. Finally, after all this time, success was going to be his.

Sam whispered into the Avengers “comm,” or communications unit, in his ear, signaling two S.H.I.E.L.D. agents who were assigned to his team. “Okay,” said Falcon. “It's go time. Converge on the target in three . . . two . . . one . . . now!”

Falcon suddenly leapt out from his tree, spreading out his wings, which let him fly across the forest toward his target. At the same time, the two S.H.I.E.L.D. agents leapt from their hiding places on the ground. All three figures moved quickly, but fastest of all was Falcon. Hours and hours of practice with the wing-suit gave him surprising speed and maneuverability.

Within seconds, Falcon could see the flag almost in front of him. All he had to do was reach out and . . .



Bam! Falcon got slammed in the side so suddenly that it knocked the breath out of him! Someone had jumped out of a hiding place and tackled him in midair.

But it wasn't just "someone." It was none other than Captain America! Falcon tried to push Cap off him, but Cap held firm! With all the added weight, Falcon dropped out of the sky! He and Cap were still grappling when they landed in a barrel roll on the ground.

"Fancy running into you here," joked Cap as he sprang back to his feet and hurled his famous shield. Cap's shield bounced around the forest, ricocheting off of some trees, before first taking down one S.H.I.E.L.D. agent, then the other. Falcon barely had time to rise to his feet before Cap had him covered again. Cap's shield landed effortlessly back in his hands.

"Well, Sam, what do you say?" asked Cap, a smile on his face.

"Yeah, you win, Cap," Falcon admitted, his shoulders drooping.

"Don't feel bad," Cap said, throwing an arm around his friend. "No one's ever beaten me in a 'capture the flag' training exercise."

"I'll be the first," admitted Sam. "J.A.R.V.I.S., end the program."

“Yes, sir,” came a disembodied computer voice out of the sky as the whole forest—the trees, the ground, even the two S.H.I.E.L.D. agents—suddenly shimmered and then disappeared. All that could be seen now were the drab walls of the Avengers Tower's training room.



The whole thing had been a simulation, run by J.A.R.V.I.S., the Avengers Tower's computer system!

Cap and Falcon walked through a now-visible door and out into the hallway, as Cap said to Falcon, “You're really coming along. You got very close, and also, having the two simulated S.H.I.E.L.D. agents on your team makes it a leadership exercise, so—”

Falcon didn't get to hear the end of Cap's thought, because Iron Man interrupted, racing down the hallway toward them. “Cap! Sam!” Iron Man shouted urgently. “Come with me right now. It's an emergency!”

“What is it now?” asked Sam. “Did Thor and Hulk get into another fight over who ate the last pint of ice cream?”

“Worse, much worse,” Iron Man said gravely. “Hurry and see!”

Cap and Sam didn't miss another beat. They took off running after Iron Man.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 2

Sam and Cap raced after Iron Man, following him into his lab. It was a place Sam knew well, having spent hundreds of hours working there on various inventions. His talent for dreaming up new technology was one of the reasons that Sam had wanted to become an Avenger.



One day, when Sam had been aboard the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier when Tony Stark, the man inside the Iron Man armor, had walked right up to him.

“They tell me your name is Sam,” Tony had said. “I want to talk to you about those wings of yours.”

Stark had been so impressed with the wing-pack, as well as Sam's other inventions, that he had invited Sam to come meet with the other Avengers.

Now Sam was eager to find out what this emergency was. *If it had the usually unflappable Iron Man this upset, then it must be something serious,* Sam thought.

“What happened?” asked Hulk, who was already standing in the lab with Thor when Cap, Iron Man, and Sam arrived.

“Yes, Stark, why the alarm?” asked Thor. “I was about to beat Hulk at a game of truck tossing.”

“Beat Hulk? Dream on, blondie,” sneered Hulk.

“An alarm came from one of my deep-space probes that. . .” Iron Man started, then trailed off. “Wait. Did you say ‘truck tossing’? Where did you get the trucks? You haven't been down in the Stark Industries garage again, have you?”

Hulk and Thor quickly looked down, avoiding Iron Man's glare. “Well. . . the thing is. . .” said Thor, sounding guilty.

“Focus,” Cap interrupted. “Tony, what's this emergency?”



Iron Man remembered why they were all there. “The probe picked up interstellar chatter indicating that. . . Thanos is back.”

The air in the room was heavy. Thanos was an intergalactic alien warlord of incredible strength whom the team had tangled with before. The last time they had met Thanos, the Avengers had saved Earth from his plans for its destruction. . . but only barely. If Thanos came back with an army. . . well, it was unthinkable!

“According to the chatter, Thanos is amassing an army of Outriders just outside the orbit of Pluto. Once his invasion fleet is fully assembled, he intends to attack!” continued Iron Man. “We have to go check this trouble out . . . now!”

Iron Man pointed to Cap, Hulk, and Thor as he said, “It should be the four of us to go. Sam can stay here and mind the fort with the others.”

The whole team agreed.

A few minutes later, Sam watched as Iron Man, Cap, Hulk, and Thor

loaded into one of the Quinjets and prepared for launch into space.

“What do I do while you're gone?” Sam asked Cap as he headed up the ship's ramp.

“You do what you think is best. The others will look to you for leadership,” Cap said, referring to the members of the Avengers who weren't going on the space mission. “With us gone, you're in charge, Sam,” Cap concluded as the ship's door shut between them.

In charge. . . Sam thought as he watched the Quinjet disappear into the atmosphere, bound for outer space. *I'm in charge of the Avengers!*



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Chapter 3

After Iron Man, Cap, Hulk, and Thor's ship disappeared into the sky, the first thing Sam did was send a message to the other Avengers, asking them to meet. Within minutes he walked into the Avengers Tower's briefing room to find them already waiting for him.

“Thanks for coming, everybody,” said Sam as he went to the head of the table. Looking around, he was proud to be on a team with each of these heroes.



There was Natasha Romanoff, the Black Widow, a S.H.I.E.L.D. master spy and specialist in infiltration. Next to her was Clint Barton, AKA Hawkeye, not just the best archer in the world but also well-versed in several forms of combat.

Across from Hawkeye were the Twins—two young Avengers who had recently joined the team and who had incredible powers. Pietro Maximoff—Quicksilver—could move with superhuman speed, and his sister, Wanda Maximoff—the Scarlet Witch—could use magic powers to blast back enemies.

Rounding out the team was Vision, an android built with a digital intelligence so advanced that he was actually a form of artificial life. Vision had superhuman strength and superhuman reflexes, as well as the abilities to phase through solid walls, shoot powerful beams, and repair himself when injured.

“What's the story, Sam? Why the emergency message?” asked Hawkeye.

Sam used holo-display to help get his teammates up to speed on the possible threat from space.

“So what will we need to do if Iron Man and the others find this Thanos guy?” asked the Scarlet Witch, nervously.

“We're just going to have to wait for news from the advanced team,” responded Falcon, “but the Avengers have beaten Thanos before, so we know we can again.” Falcon cleared his throat after saying the villain's name. Thanos was feared by everyone, including this Avenger.

“Okay. We wait for information. . . . What do we do in the meantime?” asked Widow.



Falcon had been expecting this question. This group of world-saving heroes—this group of Avengers—was looking to him for leadership. Everything had been happening so quickly that Falcon hadn't had time to put together a plan, but he was quick on his feet.

“I was thinking of something like this . . .” said Sam as he presented a rotating patrol schedule that gave every Avenger duties and also time in the training room, as well as time off.

“With the others out in space, there's more world for each of us to protect,” admitted Sam, “but I know that if we work together, we can handle it.”

Quicksilver reviewed Sam's plan, highly pleased with his organizational skills. “Yeah, I think we can do this,” he confirmed.

Even Vision was impressed: “Your proposal operates at near-peak proficiency, Sam Wilson.” That was really high praise, coming from the android.

As the Avengers ended their meeting and headed off to take care of their various responsibilities, Falcon smiled. He was starting to feel pretty good about this whole “leadership” thing. Maybe Cap was right: maybe he was a natural leader.



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Chapter 4

The next morning Sam woke to loud shouting coming from the common room. He stumbled out of bed, throwing on his wing-pack. What could it be? Could villains have broken into the Avengers Tower? Were they under attack?

But it was nothing of the sort. Sam arrived to find Quicksilver and Hawkeye involved in a screaming match.

“You better step back, archer. Don't forget you're talking to a hero with actual super powers, not just a bent stick with string on it.”

“Hero? Ha, that's a laugh. I've helped save the world. You're just a newbie with an attitude.”

“What's going on here?” Sam asked with genuine surprise as he stepped between the two angry Avengers. Amid the shouted insults, Sam pieced the story together. It turned out Sam's rotating schedule had them both using the training room that morning, and the two couldn't agree on which program to use, target practice or speed practice. The argument started small but quickly heated up to personal insults.



“Your practice schedule, that's what caused all this?” asked Falcon.

“I've got to keep up my skills,” said Hawkeye, waving his bow.

“You sure do. In fact, let's see how well you do without that thing,” said Quicksilver, zipping up at a blurring speed, yanking Hawkeye's bow away from him, and racing around the room with it.



“Hey, give me that!” shouted Hawkeye. “I may not be able to keep up with you, but I can aim more than an arrow!” He started throwing vases, lamps, and anything else he could get his hands on at Quicksilver.

“Stop it, both of you!” shouted Sam. “You're behaving like children!”

“Wait. . . . Do you hear something?” asked Quicksilver.

Sure enough, they all heard more shouting coming from the hallway, but this time it was female voices. Within seconds the door slammed open and in came Black Widow and the Scarlet Witch, yelling at each other.

“You're supposed to use your powers on the bad guys, Wanda. Not your allies. It's called teamwork. You might want to try it sometime!”

“Teamwork also means not blocking your partner's shots, I bet!”

“Now what?” Sam asked them.

Like the schedule said they should be, both Black Widow and the Scarlet Witch were out on patrol when the gang of villains known as the Wrecking Crew were spotted battling a few police officers. Widow and Scarlet Witch both responded, trying to help. The only problem? They both went after the Wrecking Crew's leader, Bulldozer. The Scarlet Witch threw a hex at Bulldozer, but it missed and hit the nearby Widow instead.

The Wrecking Crew were eventually caught, but according to Widow, the situation could have turned out much worse.

“Wanda wasn't watching out for me,” Widow complained to Sam. “I need teammates who have my back, not ones who shoot at my back!”

“It wasn't my fault!” shouted the Scarlet Witch. “Widow jumped in where she wasn't needed and crossed my line of fire!”

“Where she ‘wasn't needed’?” asked Hawkeye incredulously. “Black Widow's always needed in a fight,” he continued, clearly taking Widow's side.

“If my sister says it wasn't her fault, then it wasn't her fault,” shouted Quicksilver, sticking up for the Scarlet Witch.

Before long, Vision entered, watching the whole argument in confusion. It was clear that he didn't understand these very human conflicts.

Soon the argument turned into a four-way shouting fight, with Sam trying to calm everyone down—but he wasn't even able to make himself heard over everyone else!



Oh, man. . .What would Cap do in this situation? Sam asked himself.

But before he could figure it out, the Tower's alarm went off so loudly that everyone stopped and turned to check the wall screen.

“What's the situation, J.A.R.V.I.S.?” Sam asked the computer.

“I'm afraid it's a red alert, sir,” reported the disembodied voice of J.A.R.V.I.S. “Ultron is using his robot troops to attack somewhere in the city!”

Ultron?The evil robot bent on destroying all of mankind?

Oh, great . . .



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Chapter 5

“Avengers. . . Assemble!” shouted Falcon as he, Black Widow, Hawkeye, Quicksilver, the Scarlet Witch, and Vision gathered in front of Horizon Labs. He'd always wanted to be the one to shout that famous Avengers catchphrase, but under these circumstances it just wasn't as cool as he'd hoped it'd be.

“Scans are useless,” reported Vision as he attempted to use his enhanced eyesight to see inside the building. “There's something blocking me.”

“Well, I guess we know where they went in,” said Hawkeye, checking out a massive breach in the side of the building.

“But that's not how they're going to come out,” shouted Quicksilver as he slipped toward the building at super speed.

“Quicksilver, wait!” Falcon shouted after the fleet-footed Avenger, but it was too late. Moving at almost the speed of sound, Quicksilver was already inside the building.

“Doesn't your brother know not to run off on his own during a team mission?” Black Widow demanded of the Scarlet Witch. “If he were a S.H.I.E.L.D. agent, he'd be brought up on charges for taking off like that while under orders.”

“Don't start quoting S.H.I.E.L.D. regulations to me,” the Scarlet Witch said, bristling. “Where we grew up there were no ‘rules of engagement’ . . . There was only survival.”



Black Widow took a step toward Scarlet Witch, but before she could argue, Falcon stepped between the two.

“Avengers! Stop focusing on each other! The real enemy is inside, and he's not—” But before Falcon could finish, there was a loud crash, followed by Quicksilver's body flying through one of the lab's front windows and landing hard on the pavement at their feet.

“Pietro! Are you okay?” shouted the Scarlet Witch as she dropped to her brother's side.

“He is okay but unconscious,” reported Vision, scanning Quicksilver's body.

Suddenly a hail of laser-fire from inside the building sprayed around the Avengers, causing all the heroes to scatter and dive for cover.

Out of the building burst a half dozen identical Ultron units, robot soldiers that Ultron controlled and operated by remote.

“Ah, humanity's so-called heroes. . .How pathetic,” laughed Ultron as he emerged from the building behind his troops. With him were a few more units, all carrying boxes marked “Vibranium.” Ultron continued his rant. “Don't you know by now that humanity is long since outdated? An update is coming!”

As soon as Falcon saw the boxes of Vibranium, he realized Ultron's plan. Vibranium was an extremely rare metal found in the African nation of Wakanda. Cap's shield was mostly made out of Vibranium, because the metal was able to absorb any vibrations or energy directed at it. If Ultron managed to coat his robot army with a skin of this rare metal, it would be practically

indestructible. Nothing could stop it from marching across the face of the country, and eventually the world!

“Avengers, we can't let Ultron get away with those boxes,” shouted Falcon to the other heroes. “Time to get on the defensive!”

Following Falcon's lead, the Avengers jumped into action. Widow bounced and leapt, getting behind the line of Ultron units, and unleashed intense fire from her wrist-mounted stinger weapons.

Nearby, Hawkeye fired off a series of trick arrows—explosive arrows, net arrows, oil-slick arrows—throwing everything he had at the robots!

At the same time, Vision confronted one of the troops, wrestling it and blasting it with his eye blasts.

Falcon took to the air, swooping in and firing from above. His maneuvers drew the attention of a few of the troops, letting the Scarlet Witch get close to Ultron unchallenged, where she loosed magical fire that burst around the maniacal villain!

I think we got this, Falcon thought, watching his team take down the bad guys and realizing that Cap would be proud of their performance.

But seconds later, everything went wrong!



Hawkeye, having just brought down two of Ultron's robot troops, turned and fired an ice arrow at Ultron. But at the same moment, one of the Scarlet Witch's beams blasted across the field of fire, bouncing Hawkeye's arrow back toward him! Seeing this, Widow jumped forward, attempting to shoot the arrow out of the sky, but instead she fired too soon and hit the Scarlet Witch. The Scarlet Witch shouted in pain and fell on the ground. Vision broke off from his fight to run to the Scarlet Witch's side.

At that moment, Hawkeye's ricocheting arrow came right at him and popped, covering him with an instant-freeze fluid that encased him in a shell of ice!

“Excellent!” shouted Ultron as he grabbed the frozen Hawkeye and lifted him up. “You bumbling excuses for Avengers do my work for me. This Avenger is an added prize that I didn't expect to win! Thank you, all.”

Ultron and the robot units carrying the Vibranium suddenly blasted into the sky with boot-jets. Falcon tried to fly after them, but there were too many units firing at him, and he was forced to break off the chase.

Within seconds Ultron was gone. . . and he had both a cache of indestructible metal and one of their teammates with him.



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Chapter 6

Back at the Tower, the customary mission “debriefing” quickly became a shouting match. Black Widow yelled at the Scarlet Witch for deflecting Hawkeye's arrow back in his direction, and the Scarlet Witch yelled at Widow for hitting her with stings.

“Did you do that on purpose?” the Scarlet Witch demanded of Widow. “I accidentally hit you when we were fighting the Wrecking Crew, and so you thought you'd pay me back or something?”

“Of course not,” responded Widow, offended. “I was acting quickly to try to fix your mistake by blowing that arrow out of the air!”

Even Quicksilver and Vision had a heated exchange, or at least as heated as Vision ever got. Quicksilver declared that Vision should have been able to see inside the building, making it unnecessary for Quicksilver to run inside, but Vision pointed out that no one ordered Quicksilver to run inside blind—he'd done it on his own.

“Protocol dictates awaiting approval before entering an enemy site,” Vision pointed out.

Quicksilver just rolled his eyes. “Pft. . . protocol. . .”

Sam tried to control the discussion, but get-ting anyone's attention in all the fuss seemed to be impossible. Finally, he shouted at the top of his lungs: enough!

Suddenly quieted, everyone turned and looked toward Sam in total surprise. Sam never shouted like that.

“There's only one person to blame for what happened today,” said Sam before pausing. Everyone leaned in, interested to see which side of the argument their temporary leader would come down on.



“The person to blame. . .is me. With more guidance and better leadership, you all would have won that battle. . .and Hawkeye would be safe.”

Sam felt like everything would have been different if Cap were there on Earth leading them, instead of on that space mission. *What would Cap have done differently?* he thought. Sam didn't know, but he did know that Cap hardly ever made mistakes. *In fact, maybe Cap's only mistake was leaving me in charge,* he thought.

After Sam's statement, everyone felt awkward. They didn't continue the argument, but they didn't resolve it, either.

“I guess it doesn't matter whose fault it was,” said Widow. “Either way Hawkeye is gone. . .and I'm going to find a way to bring him back.”

“Right,” said Quicksilver. “When do we head out to look for him? I could race around the state in a grid pattern and—”

“Not ‘we,’ just ‘me’ ,” interrupted Widow. “Hawkeye's my old partner from S.H.I.E.L.D., and he's my responsibility. I'm used to doing operations on my own. I don't need anyone from this team to get in my way. . . or to shoot me in the back,” she finished, looking right at the Scarlet Witch.

Before anyone could reply, Widow turned on her heel and stormed out of the room. Everyone else looked back at Sam.

“She can just do that? Go off on her own like that?” asked Quicksilver.



“This isn't the military, this is the Avengers. She can do whatever she wants,” replied Sam.

“But. . . what do we do? Should we just let her go?” asked the Scarlet Witch.

Sam looked back at them. This was what it meant to be the leader. The team asked questions, and Sam had to be prepared to answer them. It was what Cap was counting on him to do. . . . But Sam didn't have an answer ready. What would Cap do if one of his teammates had been kidnapped and another one was planning on going solo to get him back?

After a pause, Sam spoke again.

“I—I don't know what we should do,” he admitted. It wasn't a very good answer, but it was the truth. “Just give me some time to think,” said Sam, and then he, too, left the room.

The Twins, shocked, looked at each other in confusion. Vision, on the other hand, just watched Sam leave, a look of concern on his face.



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Chapter 7

Sam took the elevator straight to the roof of Avengers Tower, extended his Falcon wings, and jumped off the edge. New York City looked so beautiful from above, glass from skyscrapers glinting in the sun like jewels.

But Sam couldn't enjoy the view knowing that somewhere there was an evil robot villain, holding an Avenger hostage—a friend.

Even if he knew where Ultron was, even if he knew how to stop him, he couldn't. If his team wouldn't listen to him, how could he lead them into a dangerous mission? More Avengers could be kidnapped. . . or worse!

Before long Sam found himself landing at his favorite thinking spot, a perch on the top of the Empire State Building.



There he sat, looking out into space, imagining what Cap would say if he knew how badly Sam's first attempt at leadership had gone.

"I hope I am not disturbing you," said Vision as he suddenly phased through the wall behind Sam.

"Augh!" shouted Sam in surprise. Vision's ability to pass through solid objects could be downright spooky! "You scared me half to death."

"Apologies, Sam Wilson," said Vision. "I came to offer you one cent in exchange for your ideas."

"The phrase is 'a penny for your thoughts,'" Sam said, correcting the android.

"Did I not just express that same meaning?" asked Vision.

"Yes, I suppose the words you used meant the same thing"—Sam shrugged—"but it's a saying, and the saying is 'A penny for your thoughts.'"

"There is much about human communication that I still do not understand," admitted Vision.

"Well. . . that's true of me, too, I guess," Sam admitted, "judging by what happened today."

"I wanted to ask you about that," said Vision. "The Avengers are all on the same side, yet they seem to be caught up in nonproductive verbal disputes. Why do they not get along?"

"Yeah, that's just humans," explained Sam. "Most of us want to get along with others, but sometimes personalities just clash. That's why a team needs a good leader to bring them together. If I were a better leader, like Cap, we wouldn't be having this problem."

"Why did Captain America put you in charge of the team if you are incapable of being a good leader?" asked Vision.

"I was just asking myself that," admitted Falcon. "Cap is a natural leader, so maybe he just thought he saw the same thing in me. . . . But he was wrong. I don't always know what to do, like Cap."

"Correction: Captain America didn't always know what to do," stated Vision.

"Yes, he did," said Falcon. "Hello. . . that's why he's Cap!"

"I'm sorry to contradict you, Sam Wilson, but I have all of Captain Steve Rogers's military records, and I can demonstrate to you that your statement is

false. . . .”

With that, Vision raised his palm and projected a hologram of a slightly younger-looking Captain America.

Sam leaned in and looked closely, focusing all of his attention as the hologram started talking.

War journal, day forty-three:

*We're trapped behind enemy lines,
and I just don't know what to do. . . .*



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Chapter 8

It was 1943, and Captain America was leading his elite team of soldiers, known as the Howling Commandos, on a raid deep into enemy territory when their plane was spotted and shelled down by HYDRA anti-aircraft weapons.

Miraculously, Dum Dum Dugan, one of the Howling Commandos, was able to bring the plane in for a crash landing, but it was way more “crash” than it was “landing.” The commandos barely survived. All of them were injured in some way, ranging from cuts and scrapes to broken bones.

“We’re behind enemy lines, near a HYDRA installation, and some of us are too injured to travel,” reported Cap in his private war journal. “This is one of my first missions as team leader, and everyone is asking me what to do To be honest, I’m not sure what to tell them. Should we attempt to make it back to our base on foot? Or will that make us too much of a target? Maybe we should just dig in here, hide, and wait for a rescue mission.”



Cap's next journal entry was even direr. Some of the Howling Commandos, not getting any direction from Cap, were thinking about striking out on their own. Others refused to travel. It was getting more desperate by the minute.

"I'm filled with doubts," Cap admitted to his war journal. "I thought that I was ready to lead this team, but maybe I'm not. Maybe I'm just not cut out to be a leader at all."

But in his darkest moment, Cap found a picture of himself with Dr. Abraham Erskine and Howard Stark, the two brilliant scientists who had created the Super-Soldier process that gave Cap his special abilities.

"Looking at that photo gave me hope," reported Cap. "If those two great men believed in me enough to trust me, then I must be able to do the things they need me to do."

With determination, Cap searched for a solution. While checking the map, he realized that the nearby HYDRA base held fighter planes. The

Commandos might be too injured to make it all the way back to home base on foot, but he knew they could make it as far as the HYDRA base.

The Commandos who were less injured helped move the more seriously injured ones, and in a daring mission, they snuck into the HYDRA base, stole a plane, and flew it back to safety!



That experience led Cap to an important conclusion. Half of leadership, he realized, was about believing in yourself and believing in your team.

As Vision's hologram ended, Sam was surprised. “Cap had to learn to be a leader?” he asked. “I always assumed that he was a natural leader.”

Vision considered this. “Maybe even a natural leader sometimes has difficult moments. Maybe what makes them ‘naturals’ is that they never give up trying, even when they most want to.”

Falcon realized that Vision was right.

“Come on, Vision, we've got to go,” he said, extending his wings.

“Where are we going?” asked the android.

“Back to Avengers Tower. I've got a team to lead.”

Sam got back to Avengers Tower just as Black Widow was heading out on her solo attempt to locate and free Hawkeye. Quicksilver and the Scarlet Witch were quietly watching her go, not sure whether they wanted her to stay or not.

“Wait,” said Sam as he and Vision entered. “You're not going anywhere.”

Widow spun around to face Sam, looking angry. “Who's going to stop me? You? I'm not sitting around here. I'm going after Clint.”

“Yes, you are going after him,” said Sam. “We all are. And we're doing it as a team!”

This took everyone by surprise.

“Look,” said Sam, now with the room's full attention. “I know I haven't been the best leader so far. But the Avengers were originally formed because there came a day, unlike any other, when Earth's Mightiest Heroes found themselves united against a common threat. . . and today, Ultron is that kind of threat.

“If the team were to split apart now, Ultron would be halfway to victory,” Sam pointed out. “So far our team has been focusing on the things that separate us, but now it's time to focus on what unites us: our duty to the planet!”

Everyone looked around the room, realizing that Sam was right. They nodded in agreement at each other.

“Okay,” said Widow. “But how do we find Ultron?”

Sam smiled. “That's where my latest invention is going to come in handy,” he said with a grin. “Follow me. . . .”



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Chapter 9

“A little small for you, isn't it?” asked Widow, looking at the tiny helmet in Sam's hands. They were now in Iron Man's lab, and Sam was showing the rest of the team the invention he'd been working on for the past several months. The helmet was sleek and aerodynamic but had wires and electrodes running along the sides of it.

“It's not for me,” Sam replied with a smile as he led them to the roof.

“This is Redwing.” He opened a massive birdcage and brought out a beautiful bird, a wild falcon with flaming orange, almost red, plumage. “I found him sick in Rio and nursed him back to health. I trained him.”

“Your invention is headgear for a bird?” asked Quicksilver, confused.

“Not just any headgear,” Sam replied. “This helmet links me to Redwing. Everything Redwing sees gets transferred to the display in my visor.”

“You turned your pet bird into a webcam?” asked the Scarlet Witch.

“Not just a webcam,” pointed out Widow. “A spy cam. Redwing would be perfect for covert intelligence gathering.”

“How can this help us locate Hawkeye?” asked Vision.

“It helps because it doesn't stop with just Redwing,” explained Falcon. “Redwing acts as a transceiver, broadcasting what he sees, but he also acts as a receiver. Through him I can actually detect the neurological impulses of other birds within his range.”

“Meaning what, exactly?” asked the Scarlet Witch.



“Meaning when Redwing has this on, I can see everything that is seen by any bird for miles around,” said Sam.

“But there are thousands and thousands of birds in the city,” pointed out Quicksilver.

“All the better to hunt Ultron with,” remarked Widow.

“Basically, you're trying to get all the birds of New York to work together as a team?” asked the Scarlet Witch.

“That's right! This is my first test of the system,” said Sam as he fitted the little helmet on the obedient Redwing. “Fly, Redwing! Show me what you see.” Then Sam released the bird into the sky.

Instantly, inside Sam's visor a window popped open showing him a bird's-eye view of the city. “Huh,” said Sam. “I only have Redwing's transmission, not any other—” But before he could finish his thought, thousands of new windows started popping open, showing him views from every single angle of Manhattan!

“It's working!” Sam shouted, pleased.

Within an hour, Sam's visor computer had sorted through the images from the birds and was searching for signs of Ultron. Soon after that, the computer flagged an image seen by a pigeon under a bridge in a warehouse district north of the city. In the shot Sam could clearly see some of Ultron's robots entering a supposedly abandoned building through a side door.

"We've got him," Sam announced to the team.

Once they arrived at the building, Widow popped the lock, and the team snuck inside. Sure enough, the members of Ultron's robot army were walking the corridors, but using stealth, the Avengers took out several of them without being seen and made their way to a darkened computer center deep inside the building.

"Can you hack into these, Vision?" Sam asked as he pointed to the racks of computers. "Any information you find could give us a clue about the best way to take Ultron down."

"I can utilize any system," said Vision as he raised his hand to one of the terminals. Soon he was downloading the data from Ultron's hard drives. "This data requires your attention," Vision said, pointing to some information on a screen.

Sam bent in closer and took a look. He couldn't believe it. "According to this, there was no signal from space!"

"What do you mean?" asked the Scarlet Witch.

"Thanos isn't putting together an army in space. The evidence was all set up by Ultron!" explained Sam. "Iron Man, Cap, and the others are on a wild goose chase. There's nothing up there for them to find!"

"That's right!" came a booming voice from outside the room. "I knew that if I could trick the core Avengers into leaving the planet, Earth would be mine for the taking. . . . After all, the inferior Avengers units left behind could be easily beaten."

With that Ultron stepped into the room, surrounded by his robot troops.

"Inferior?" Sam looked at Ultron calmly, no fear in his eyes, and then turned to his team and said simply, "Let's show Ultron who's inferior. . . . Avengers: Assemble!"



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Chapter 10

The fight was intense and brutal. Ultron's robots sprang on the Avengers, hacking, slashing, and blasting like the remorseless machines of destruction they were designed to be!

But if Ultron was counting on the team being as disorganized as they'd been during the fight at Horizon Labs, he was sorely disappointed.

“Cover Vision,” directed Falcon, sending Widow, Quicksilver, and the Scarlet Witch straight into combat. “Vision, get Hawkeye's location from Ultron's computer.”

Widow jumped, kicked, and fired stings while the Scarlet Witch fell in behind her, shooting left and right, but being careful to always keep Widow in view.



At the same time, Quicksilver sped around Ultron himself, whipping up a whirlwind that prevented Ultron from even being able to shoot.

As soon as Vision got Hawkeye's location from the computer, Falcon called out a new plan of attack. He sent Vision to phase through Ultron's robots, smashing them, while the Scarlet Witch's magical hexes protected

Black Widow's escape.

Widow made her way to Hawkeye and used her lock-picking skills to free the archer. Once Hawkeye was free, Sam ordered him to provide cover fire to support Quicksilver. With Hawkeye backing him, Quicksilver smashed robot after robot.



Soon all that was left was Ultron himself.

“This does not compute,” exclaimed Ultron. “You are supposed to be the weak members of the Avengers. . . .”

“A team is only as weak as its leader,” said Widow.

“And we've got a strong leader,” said Hawkeye, looking at Falcon. “I can see that now.”

“Thanks, Hawkeye. Thanks, team.” Falcon smiled as he slashed his wing-blades across Ultron's circuits, shutting the maniacal robot down for good. They quickly called in S.H.I.E.L.D., whose agents hauled Ultron off to a top-secret prison designed specifically for Super Villains of his caliber.



Later, the Quinjet zoomed past the moon toward Earth, ready to reenter the atmosphere.

“Hurry,” Captain America urged Iron Man, who was in the pilot's seat. “We need to get back and help the other Avengers!”

“I'm pushing this thing as fast as I can, Cap,” responded Iron Man.

Once they had reached the edge of the solar system and seen that there was no army out there, Cap, Iron Man, Hulk, and Thor quickly realized that the signal had been faked. They didn't know who had done it, but they did know it meant that Falcon and the others were in trouble!

Soon the Quinjet docked at Avengers Tower. Cap and the others rushed

inside and were shocked by what they found: the rest of the team was. . . calmly hanging out, enjoying one another's company!

Hawkeye was giving tips to Quicksilver on how to aim for the bull's-eye as they played darts.

On the other side of the room, the Scarlet Witch and Black Widow were having a bite of lunch together while talking about their favorite locations in Eastern Europe. It turned out they both had been to many of the same places.

Meanwhile, Sam was giving Vision a closer look at the helmet for Redwing. Vision was suitably impressed with the invention.

Everyone looked up as Cap and the others came running in. “Sam, the signal from space, it was a—” started Cap.

But Sam finished Cap's sentence for him, saying, “A trick. We know. Ultron did it. Don't worry, we took care of it.” Sam shrugged it off like it was no big deal. “Hey, you guys hungry? We made tacos.”

Cap and Iron Man looked at each other, relieved. Their concern had clearly been unnecessary. Falcon had it all taken care of.

“I like tacos,” said Iron Man.

That evening Cap was back in the Avengers training room, waiting patiently in the simulated redwood forest's treetops. Sam had asked to make another attempt at beating Cap in the “capture the flag” training exercise, but it looked like Sam was going to lose again.

Cap saw Sam jump from the underbrush and head toward his flag, but Cap sprang into action. “Sorry, Sam, not this time,” said Cap as he again tackled Sam in midair, taking him to the ground.

“I wouldn't be so sure about that,” said Sam, pointing up at the place where Cap's flag was hidden.

Cap looked up just in time to see Black Widow and the Scarlet Witch grabbing his flag and waving it around.

“We did it!” whooped the Scarlet Witch.

Cap was pleasantly surprised. No team had ever beaten him at capture the flag . . . until then. Good for them!

“It's like you said, Cap,” explained Falcon. “This can be a leadership exercise, too.”

“That's true,” said Cap. “I've said it once, and I'll say it again: Sam,

you're a natural leader.”

猎鹰的故事

在一个非比寻常的日子，地球上最强的英雄们团结在一起，对抗共同的威胁，复仇者联盟从此诞生。山姆·威尔逊是他们最忠实的粉丝。其实早在求学阶段，山姆就从电视和网络上密切关注复仇者们的每一场战斗。

山姆梦想有一天，他也能成为一名复仇者.....但是怎样才能做到呢？他并不是什么伟大的英雄，也没有超能力。但是，他异常聪慧，并深知天道酬勤。他的学业非常优秀，课余时间都在研发新机器。



当山姆还只是一个十几岁的孩子时，他发现自己和美国队长被困在一个热带岛屿上，这个岛被邪恶的红骷髅统治着。经过一场漫长的战斗，两人都逃了出来，但险些丧命。队长惊叹于山姆的才能，便建议他一起接受训练。山姆被选中参与神盾局特训项目，两人一起训练，很快就成为好朋友。

在神盾局特训期间，山姆创造了一个神奇的发明——一套让他拥有高速飞翔能力的个人翼行服。山姆穿着这套翼行服完成各种危险的任务，因此获得了“猎鹰”的代号。

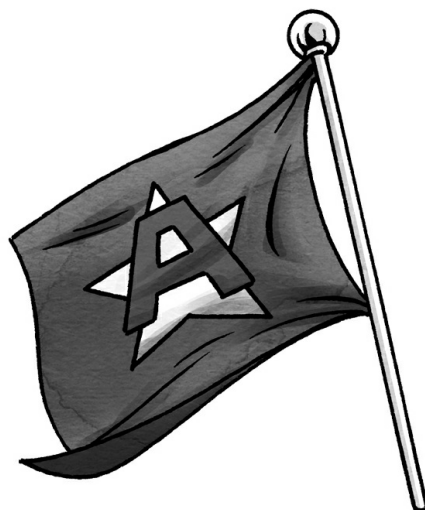
一天，山姆以猎鹰的身份完成一次冒险后回到总部，发现托尼·斯

塔克——复仇者联盟中的钢铁侠，正在等他。托尼告诉他，复仇者联盟打算招募几个新成员……山姆有兴趣加入吗？

加入那个从小就深爱的组织？成为复仇者联盟的一员，成为世界最强英雄中的一员？哦，是的，毫无疑问，山姆太感兴趣了。事实上，这是他一生中最棒的一天！

第一章

一阵微风拂过，高大雄伟的红杉树林如波浪起伏。山姆·威尔逊，代号猎鹰的复仇者坐在树顶一根粗树枝的枝节处，将整片森林尽收眼底。景色美极了，但他却无心欣赏，因为他感兴趣的只有一件事……



通过翼行服遮目镜里的平视显示器，山姆放大聚焦，锁定在其中的一棵树上。它伪装得很好，一个在森林里闲庭信步的人绝不会有这个发现，但却没逃过山姆的法眼。

那是一个小木制平台，嵌在树干上，藏在树枝后。平台上是猎鹰当时最想要的东西……一面小蓝旗。

猎鹰扫视了一下这个区域，没有发现敌人的踪迹，也没有听到任何声响。他暗自发笑，过了这么久，成功终于将非他莫属。

山姆通过耳朵里的复仇者“讯器”或叫通讯装置低声对两名安排在同一队的神盾局特工发送信号。“好了，”猎鹰说，“开始行动，准备锁定

目标，三……二……一……锁定！”

猎鹰突然从树上冲出，在森林中展翅翱翔，直奔目标。与此同时，两名神盾局特工也从地面躲藏点跳出来。三个人快速前进，但猎鹰依然遥遥领先。长时间的翼行服飞行训练使得猎鹰速度惊人，身手敏捷。

几秒钟后，旗帜几乎近在咫尺，猎鹰只需伸手……

“砰！”猎鹰侧面突然遭到撞击，他大吃一惊！某人从伏击地跳出来，在半空中突袭了他。

但这可不是“某人”，而是美国队长本人！猎鹰想要推开他，可是队长却紧抓着不放。附加重量使猎鹰从空中掉了下来！在地上翻滚时，他和队长仍扭打在一起。



“真想不到在这儿碰到你。”队长一边开玩笑地说，一边跳起身来挥舞着他那有名的盾牌。队长的盾在森林里飞来飞去，在树木之间弹来跳去，先击倒了一名神盾局特工，然后又击倒了另一名。在队长再一次按住山姆之前，他几乎没有时间站起来。队长不费吹灰之力又让盾回到了自己手中。

“怎么样，山姆，你想说些什么？”队长面带微笑地问道。

“好吧，你赢了，队长。”猎鹰垂头丧气地说道。

“别难过，”队长一只胳膊搂着他说，“我在‘抢旗帜’训练中还没被打败过呢。”

“我会是第一个，”山姆说道，“贾维斯，终止程序。”

“遵命，长官。”天空中飘来一个虚拟的电脑声音，就在这时，整片森林——树木、地面、甚至包括那两名神盾局特工——突然闪烁微光，随即就消失不见了。现在唯一可见的只有复仇者大厦训练室里那些单调的墙壁。

整个过程都是虚拟的，由复仇者大厦里的电脑系统，贾维斯操控。

队长和猎鹰走过一扇之前隐藏不见的门。当走到过道时，队长对猎鹰说：“你真的在进步了，你已经很接近了，并且，在你的队里安排两名虚拟神盾局特工是为了锻炼你的领导力，所以——”

猎鹰没听到队长想表达的最终想法，因为钢铁侠从过道另一头跑过来，打断了他们的谈话。“队长，山姆，”钢铁侠急促地说，“快跟我来，有紧急情况！”

“现在什么情况？”山姆问，“为了争论谁吃了最后一品脱冰激凌，索尔和绿巨人又打起来了吗？”

“更糟糕，糟糕得多，”钢铁侠严肃地说，“快来看看吧！”

队长和山姆不再迟疑，他们紧跟钢铁侠飞奔起来。

第二章

山姆和队长在后面飞快地跑着，跟随钢铁侠进了他的实验室。山姆太熟悉这个地方了，他曾在此花费成百上千个小时做各种发明创造。这种发明新技术的天赋也是山姆想成为复仇者的原因之一。

一天，当山姆登上神盾局天空母舰，钢铁侠盔甲里的托尼·斯塔克径直走了过来。

“听说你叫山姆，”托尼说，“我想和你谈谈你发明的那些翅膀。”

斯塔克对山姆的翼行套装和其他发明印象非常深刻，他邀请山姆去见其他复仇者成员。

现在，山姆很想知道这次是什么紧急事件。山姆心想，能让平时镇定自若的钢铁侠如此不安，这肯定是一件严重的事情。

“发生了什么事？”队长、钢铁侠和山姆一到实验室，同索尔一起早已到达的绿巨人就问道。

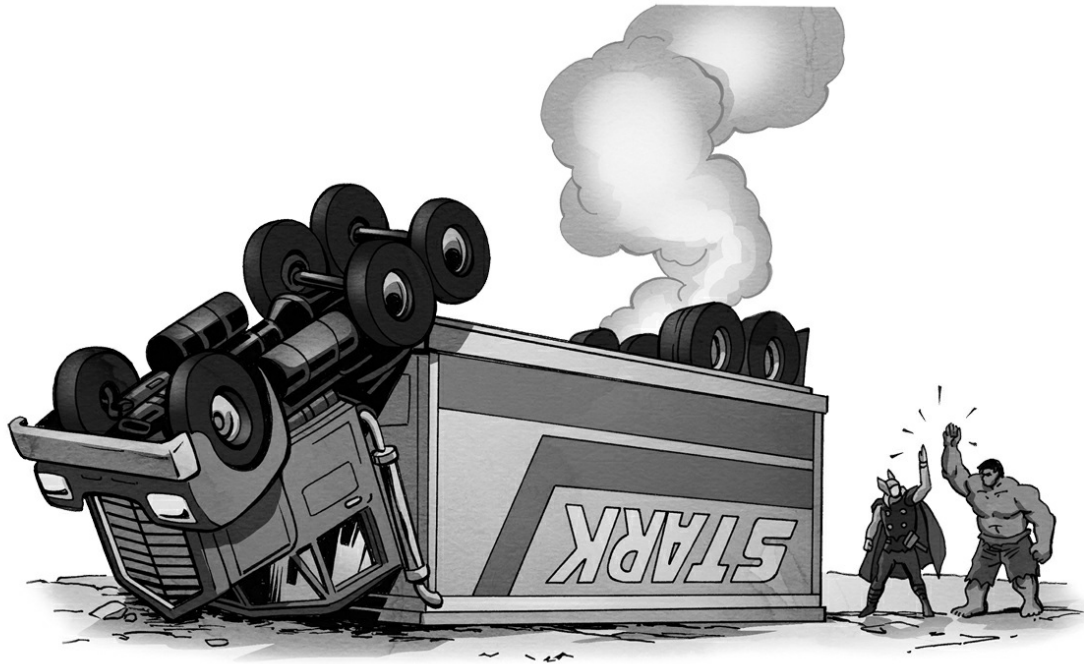
“是啊，斯塔克，为什么发警报啊？”索尔问道，“我们在玩丢卡车的游戏，我都要打败绿巨人了呢。”

“打败绿巨人？你在做梦吧，金发小妞。”绿巨人不屑地说。

“我的一个深空探测器发出警报……”钢铁侠说道，声音越来越轻，“等等，你们是在说‘丢卡车’吗？哪里弄的卡车？你们又去了斯塔克工业的仓库，是不是？”

绿巨人和索尔迅速低头回避钢铁侠的怒目。索尔说：“嗯……事情是这样的……”听起来很内疚的样子。

“说重点，”队长打断他们，“托尼，紧急情况是什么？”



钢铁侠想起了他们聚在这里的原因。“探测器捕捉到一些星际中的闲言碎语……灭霸萨诺斯又回来了。”

房间里的气氛突然变得沉重。灭霸是银河系间的异形军阀，拥有惊人的力量，也是这个团队的劲敌。上一次交手，复仇者们曾从他的毁灭计划中拯救了地球，但死伤惨重。如果，灭霸率领军团回归……唉，不堪设想！

“据说，萨诺斯正在冥王星轨道之外的地方集结外来部队。一旦他的入侵舰队组建完毕，他就马上发动进攻！”钢铁侠继续说道，“我们现在必须去查个究竟！”

钢铁侠指着队长、绿巨人和索尔说：“最好我们四人同去，山姆留下来和其他人看守堡垒。”

全队一致同意。

几分钟后，山姆看着钢铁侠、队长、绿巨人和索尔登上一艘昆式战斗机，准备飞入太空。

“你走了我该做些什么？”当队长登上战斗机的登机舷梯时，山姆急切地问。

队长指着那些不去执行太空任务的复仇者们说：“做你认为最好的事情，其他人会期待你的领导。”机舱门关上的那一刻，队长最后说：“山姆，我们一走，你来做主。”

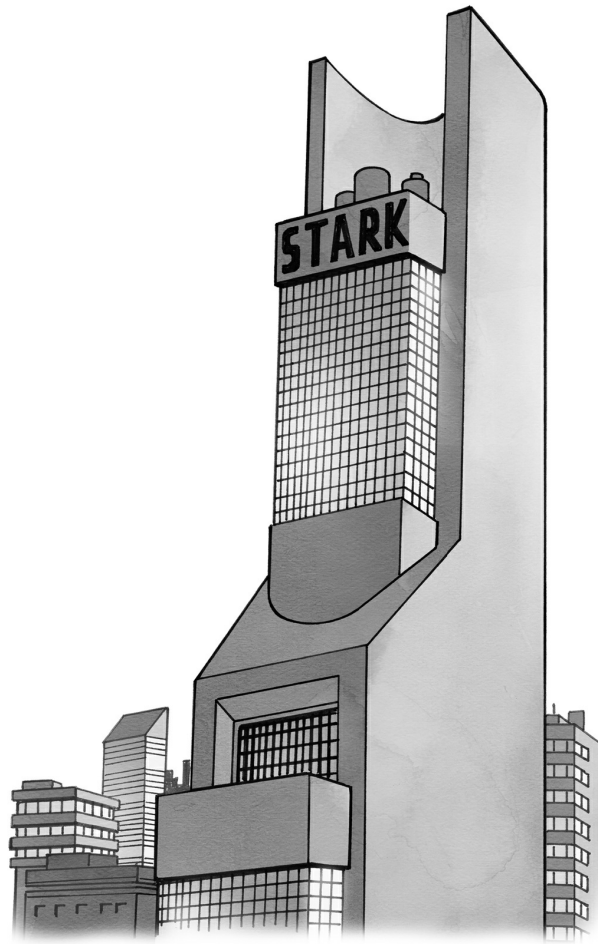
“做主……”看着昆式战斗机消失在大气中，飞往外太空，山姆若有所思，“我是复仇者们的……负责人。”



第三章

钢铁侠一行四人所乘坐的战斗机消失在天空后，山姆做的第一件事就是给其他复仇者发了一条信息，召集他们开会。几分钟后，他走入复仇者大厦指挥室，发现大家都已经在等他了。

“感谢各位的到来。”山姆边说边走到桌子的首座。他环顾四周，与各路英雄为伍让他自豪不已。



娜塔莎·罗曼诺夫，代号黑寡妇，神盾局的间谍大师和渗透专家。她旁边是克林特·巴顿，代号鹰眼，不仅是举世无双的弓箭手，也是格斗战术的专家。

鹰眼的对面是那对双胞胎——两位拥有强大力量、刚加入联盟的年轻人。皮特罗·马克西莫夫——代号快银——能以超人的速度移动，他的姐姐旺达·马克西莫夫——代号绯红女巫——能用魔法力量击退敌人。

站在人群外的是幻视侠，他是一个用先进的数字智能构建的机器人，实际上是一种人工生命。幻视侠拥有超乎寻常的力量和反应力，能够穿墙而过，发射高热射线，以及修复自身伤口。

“山姆，发生了什么事？紧急情况是什么？”鹰眼问道。

借助全息展示，山姆让队员们快速了解来自太空的潜在威胁。

“如果钢铁侠他们找到了这个叫灭霸的家伙，我们需要做什么呢？”绯红女巫紧张地问道。

“我们现在只能等待先锋部队的消息。”猎鹰回应道，“但是复仇者们曾打败过灭霸，所以我们深信可以再胜一次。”说完这个恶棍的名字，猎鹰清了清嗓子。每个人都怕灭霸，猎鹰也一样。

“好吧，那我们等消息吧……与此同时我们做什么呢？”黑寡妇问道。

猎鹰一直都在期待有人提这个问题。这帮拯救世界的英雄——这帮复仇者——正寻求着他的领导。事发突然，猎鹰还没来得及拟订一份计划，但是他很快站起身来。

“我是这样想的……”山姆一边说，一边拿出一张轮流巡逻安排表，表中注明了每位复仇者的职责、训练室值班时间以及休息时间。

“鉴于他们四个去太空执行任务，我们保护世界的担子更重了，”山姆说道，“但我知道，如果我们携手共进，一定能应付。”

快银浏览了一下山姆的安排表，对他的组织能力很满意。“是的，我认为我们可以做到。”他肯定地说。

连幻视侠都被他所折服，说：“山姆·威尔逊，你的提议堪称完美啊。”能得到机器人的认可，那可真是很高的表扬了。

会议结束后，复仇者们开始各司其职，猎鹰不禁面露笑容。他开始对整个领导事件感觉好极了。也许队长说得对，他天生就是个领导者。

第四章

第二天早晨，山姆被公共休息室的大叫声吵醒。他跳下床，快速穿上翼行服。什么情况？敌人攻陷了复仇者大厦？他们被袭击了吗？

但是，根本不是那么回事儿。山姆到公共休息室一看，快银和鹰眼正朝着对方大喊大叫。

“你最好退后，弓箭手。别忘了你在跟一个有真正超能力的英雄说话，可不是什么弯弓搭个弦的主。”

“英雄？哈，是个笑话吧。我可拯救过世界，你不过是个新手菜鸟罢了。”

山姆非常吃惊，他走到两位愤怒的复仇者之间，问道：“怎么回事儿？”在辱骂声中，山姆把故事拼凑了起来。原来，根据山姆的轮流表，他们两人早上都要使用训练室，但是就使用哪个项目无法达成一致，目标训练还是速度训练？开始只是小小的争论，后面就演变成了人身攻击。

“是你们的训练计划引发了这一切？”猎鹰问道。

“我得提升我的技能。”鹰眼边说边挥动着他的弓。

“可不是嘛。让我们来见识下，没有了那玩意儿，你能有多厉害。”快银说道，伸手一拉，速度快得看不见，猛地拉走了鹰眼的弓，拿着它在房间里跑来跑去。



“嘿，还给我！”鹰眼喊道，“我是追不上你，但我能瞄准的不仅仅是箭！”他开始朝快银扔东西，花瓶、台灯，任何其他能够着的东西……

“你们两个都给我住手！”山姆大喊，“你们太幼稚了！”

“等等，你们听到有什么声音了吗？”快银问道。

确实，他们听到过道里传来更大的喊叫声，但这次是女人的声音。几秒的工夫，黑寡妇和绯红女巫对骂着破门而入。

“旺达，你的魔法应该用来对付坏人，而不是你的盟友。这就是团队精神。你也该试着合作！”

“我打赌团队精神可不是堵搭档的枪口吧！”

“又怎么了？”山姆问她们。

按照安排表，黑寡妇和绯红女巫去巡逻，正好碰上那伙叫“拆迁队”的歹徒正和几个警察打斗。黑寡妇和女巫都赶紧行动，试图帮助警察。那么唯一的问题是什么呢？她们都去追赶拆迁队头目，推土机。绯红女巫朝推土机施了一个魔咒，但没有击中，误伤了一旁的黑寡妇。

拆迁队最后被抓住了，但是黑寡妇声称，情况可能会变得更糟。

“旺达根本没有顾及我”，黑寡妇向山姆抱怨，“我需要的是一个在背后支持我，而不是在背后向我开枪的队友！”

“不是我的错！”绯红女巫大喊道，“黑寡妇乱入不需要她的地方，自己撞上了火线！”

“不需要她的地方？”鹰眼问道，怀疑自己听错了，“每场战斗都需要黑寡妇。”他继续说着，明显站在黑寡妇这一边。

“如果我姐姐说不是她的问题，那肯定不是她的问题！”快银大声为女巫辩护。

不一会儿，幻视侠进来了，困惑地看着大家争吵。很明显，他还不太理解这些人类之间的冲突。

很快，争吵变成了四方呐喊战斗，山姆想让每个人都冷静下来，但是他的声音淹没在争吵声中！

“哦，天哪……这种情况下队长会怎么做呢？”山姆不禁自问。

他还没想出办法，大厦的警报突然发出巨响，每个人都停了下来，看着银幕。

“贾维斯，什么情况？”山姆问。

“长官，恐怕是红色警报。”贾维斯用虚拟声音汇报说，“奥创正在集结他的机器人军团，准备攻打这座城市！”

“奥创？那个决心毁灭全人类的邪恶机器人吗？”

“哦，这下好了……”

第五章

猎鹰大喊：“复仇者……集合！”他、黑寡妇、鹰眼、快银、绯红女巫以及幻视侠已集结在地平线实验室门口。山姆一直期待成为复仇者经典语的呼喊者，但在这种情况下，他觉得其实没他所希望的那么酷。

幻视侠试图用他超强的视力来扫视实验室内部，却报告说：“扫视无效，有东西挡住了我。”

鹰眼检测到实验室侧面有一个大缺口，说：“好吧，这下知道他们从哪里进去的了。”

快银大喊道：“但是他们不会从这里出来。”一边以极快的速度滑向实验室。

“等等，快银！”猎鹰在这个手脚超快的复仇者后大喊，但为时已晚。以接近音速前进的快银，此刻早已进入了实验室。

“你弟弟不知道团队任务中不能擅自行动吗？”黑寡妇查问绯红女巫，“他要是个神盾局特工的话，没有命令就那样擅自离开，他会遭到指控的。”

“别在我面前引用神盾局条款。”绯红女巫一副被激怒的样子，“在我们成长的地方可没有什么‘约定规则’……那里只有‘求生法则’。”

黑寡妇向绯红女巫逼近了一步，但她还没来得及争论，猎鹰已经走到两人之间。

“复仇者们，别再盯着对方的不是了！真正的敌人在里面，他可不是——”还没等猎鹰说完，随着一声巨响，快银的身体从实验室的一扇前窗中飞出，重重地落在他们脚下的人行道上。

绯红女巫跪倒在她弟弟的身边，大声喊道：“皮特罗，你还好吧？”

幻视侠扫视了一下快银的身体，回答说：“他还好，就是晕过去了。”

顷刻间，实验室内发出一阵激光炮火，把复仇者们团团围住，逼得他们四下逃散寻找掩护。

六个和奥创一样大小的机器人士兵冲到实验室外，奥创远程控制和操作着它们。

“啊，人类所谓的英雄们……真可怜！”奥创紧随其部队走出实验室，他大笑着说。他旁边还站着几个机器人，都拿着标有“振金”字样的盒子。奥创继续叫嚣着：“难道你们不知道人类早已过时了吗？是时候更新升级了！”

猎鹰一看到那些振金的盒子，他就明白了奥创的计划。振金是在非洲瓦坎达发现的一种极其稀有的金属。美国队长的盾就是用振金制作而成，因为这种金属能吸收任何指向它的振动或能量。如果奥创能成功地给他的机器人军团打造这种稀有金属制作而成的战甲，那么他们几乎是坚不可摧了。没有什么能阻止他的军团横扫这个国家、整个世界了！

“复仇者们，我们决不能让奥创带走这些盒子！”猎鹰向其他英雄们喊道，“准备防御！”

在猎鹰的领导下，复仇者们快速行动起来。黑寡妇一跃而起，跳到奥创的机器人队伍之后，从手腕上的毒刺武器中发射出猛烈的火力。

一旁的鹰眼射出一场夺命箭雨——爆炸箭、网箭、浮油箭——尽其可能朝着机器人开火。

与此同时，幻视侠和其中一个机器人对峙着，把它一摔，用眼睛喷出气流炸弹粉碎了它。

猎鹰飞到半空，猛地一扑，俯冲喷火。他的动作引起了几个士兵的注意，绯红女巫乘机接近奥创，在那疯狂的恶棍周围释放出魔法火焰！

看着他的团队击退了这些坏蛋，想到美国队长将以他们的表现为傲，猎鹰心想：“我觉得我们做到了。”

但是几秒钟后，一切又乱套了！

鹰眼放倒奥创的两个机器人后，转身朝奥创射出一支冰箭。但就在这时，绯红女巫的光束引爆火场，把冰箭弹了回去，朝着鹰眼飞了过去。见此，黑寡妇一跃而前，试图在半空中把箭打掉，但是她开火太快，反而打到了女巫。女巫疼得大叫，倒在地上。幻视侠停止了打斗，跑到女巫身边。

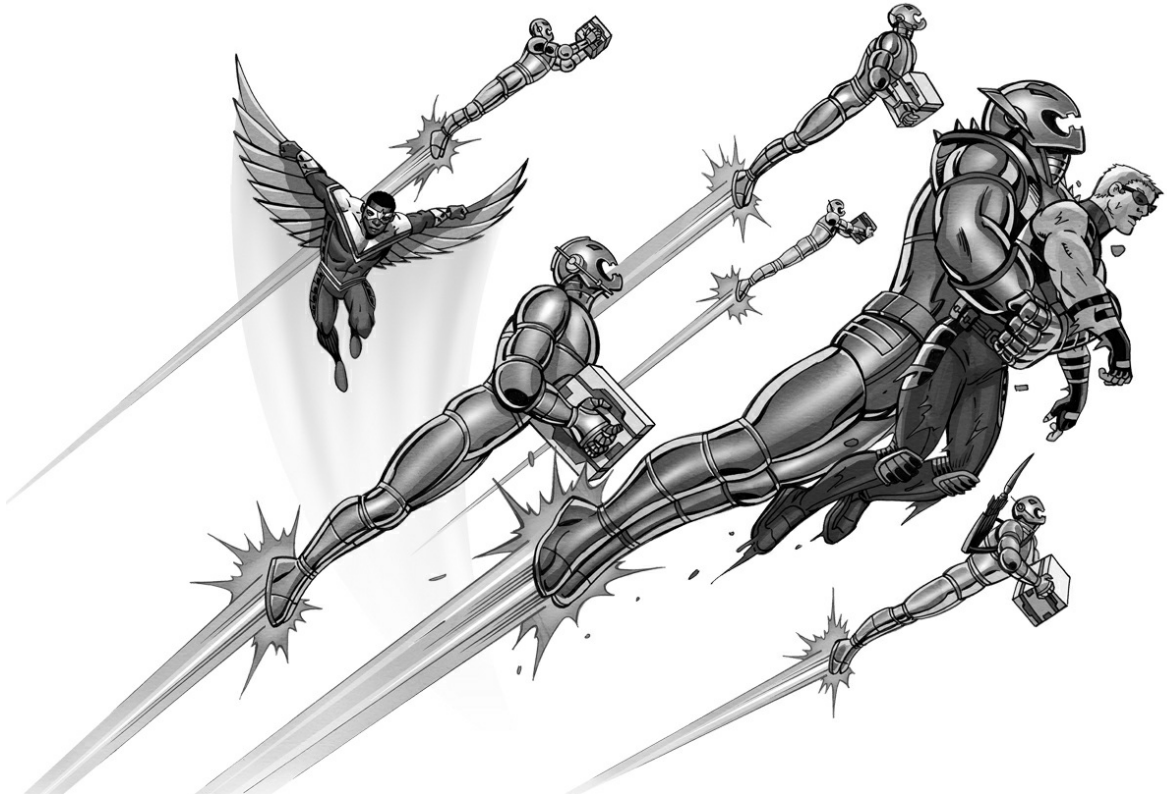


就在这时，鹰眼那支弹回的箭正好射中了他。箭爆炸了，冰冷的液体包裹了鹰眼，将他封锁在了冰壳里！

奥创抓住冻住了的鹰眼，把他举起，大喊道：“真是妙啊！你为复仇者们找借口为我效力呢。这个复仇者是我额外的战利品！谢谢你们大家啦。”

带着振金盒子，奥创和他的机器人部队突然启动靴子喷射器飞上了天。猎鹰试图跟飞，但是朝他开火的机器人太多了，他不得不放弃追踪。

没过几秒钟，奥创就踪迹全无……他带走了一种坚不可摧的金属和他们的一个队友。



第六章

回到复仇者大厦，常规的“汇报”任务很快变成了一场争吵。黑寡妇怒吼绯红女巫，怪她把鹰眼的箭弹了回去；而女巫同样对黑寡妇吼叫着，指责黑寡妇刺到了她。

“你是故意的吧？”绯红女巫质问黑寡妇，“和拆迁队对抗的时候我是误伤了你，所以你觉得应该报复我或者怎么样，是吧？”

“当然不是，”黑寡妇怒气冲冲地回应道，“我想在半路快速打掉那支箭，弥补一下你的错误。”

就连快银和幻视侠都激烈争吵了起来，至少幻视侠从未如此言辞激烈过。快银声称幻视侠本应看清实验室的内部，他就没必要冲进去了，但是幻视侠指出，没有人命令他盲目往里冲——他是擅自行动。

“准则规定，批准之后方可进入敌方据点。”幻视侠指出。

快银白眼一翻：“噗，又谈准则……”

山姆试图控制住场面，但要在这乱糟糟的场面中引起大家的注意几乎是不可能的。终于，他声嘶力竭地大喊：“够了！”

突然一片安静，每个人都转过身，惊讶地看着山姆，他可从来没有这样嘶吼过。

“今天所发生的一切，都怪一个人。”山姆停顿了一下。每个人都向前倾了倾身子，想知道他们的临时领导会斥责哪一方。

“该受责备的人……是我。如果有更多的指导和更好的领导，你们一定能打赢这一仗，鹰眼也不会有危险。”

山姆觉得，要不是队长去了太空执行任务，要是队长留在地球领导他们，这一切都会不一样。他心想：“队长会怎么做呢？”山姆不得而知，但他深知，队长几乎从未犯错。“事实上，或许队长最大的错误就是让我留在这里管理大家吧。”他想。



山姆表完态，大家都感觉尴尬。他们没有继续争论，也没有下什么结论。

“其实，是谁的错，并不重要，”黑寡妇说，“不管怎样，鹰眼不见了……我会想办法带他回来。”

“对，”快银说，“我们什么时候去找他？我可以以网格模式跑遍全国，还有——”

“不是‘我们’，而是‘我’。”黑寡妇打断快银，“鹰眼是我的神盾局老搭档，找他是我的责任。我习惯一个人行动，我不需要任何队员挡我的道……或者，从背后朝我开枪。”说完，她看着绯红女巫。

大家还没来得及回话，黑寡妇就已经转身冲出了房间。大家都回头看着山姆。

“她可以这样吗？就这样一个人走了？”快银问。

“这里不是军队，这里是复仇者联盟。她可以做自己想做的事情。”山姆回答道。

“可是……我们做什么呢？就这样让她走吗？”绯红女巫问。

山姆回头看着他们。这就是领导吧，队员提问，山姆必须准备好回答他们，这也是队长期待他做的事情……但是山姆还没有答案。一名队员被绑架，另一名又计划独自去援救，如果是队长的话，他会怎么做呢？

停顿了一会儿，山姆又开始说话了。

“我——我不知道我们该做什么。”他坦言道。不是一个好的回答，但是却很真实。“给点时间让我思考一下。”山姆说着，也离开了房间。

双胞胎震惊不已，困惑地看着彼此。幻视侠只是看着山姆离开，脸上流露出一丝担忧。

第七章

山姆乘坐电梯直达复仇者大厦楼顶，张开双翅，从屋檐跳了下去。俯瞰之下的纽约市真美啊，摩天大楼上的玻璃在阳光下闪闪发光，像珠宝一样。

山姆却无心欣赏，因为在世界的某个地方藏着一个机器人恶棍，挟持了他的一个朋友，一名复仇者。

即便他知道奥创身在何处，即便他知道如何阻止这个恶棍，他也做不到。如果队员们不听从他的命令，他又如何领导他们完成一次危险的任务呢？也许更多的复仇者会被挟持……也许更糟糕吧！

不一会儿，山姆发现自己着落在了他最喜欢进行思考的地方，那是帝国大厦顶端的一处高地。

山姆坐在那里，望向太空，猜想着，如果队长知道他的第一次领导任务完成得如此糟糕，队长会说什么呢？

“希望没有打扰到你。”幻视侠突然从山姆身后的墙穿过来，说道。

“啊！”山姆惊叫一声，“你把我吓个半死。”幻视侠的穿墙能力有时就像幽灵般！

“抱歉，山姆·威尔逊，”幻视侠说，“我来是想拿一美分买你的想法。”

“谚语里说的可是‘便士’。”山姆纠正说。

“难道不是一个意思吗？”幻视侠问。

“好吧，我猜这俩词指的是同一个意思，”，山姆耸耸肩，“但这是个谚语，谚语里用的是‘便士’。”

幻视侠只好承认：“好吧，关于人类交流我还有很多不懂之处。”

“嗯……，就今天发生的事情来看，我想其实我也如此吧。”山姆也承认。

“我正想问你这个，”幻视侠说，“复仇者们都同仇敌忾，但他们似乎陷入了无用的口头纠纷中。他们为什么不能好好相处呢？”

“对，人类就是如此。”山姆解释说，“我们大多数人都想和别人和平相处，但有时性格使然，导致冲突。这就是为什么一个团队需要一个

好的领导，带领他们团结一致。如果我能像美国队长一样做个好领导，我们就不会有这样的麻烦了。”

“如果你缺乏领导能力，为什么美国队长让你负责领导全队呢？”幻视侠问。

“我也在问我自己。”猎鹰坦言道，“队长是个天生的领导，也许他觉得他在我身上看到了同样的东西……但是他错了，我总是不知所措，我没法像队长一样知晓一切。”

“纠正：美国队长并非总是知晓一切。”幻视侠声称。

“不，他知道。”猎鹰说，“嘿……那就是为什么他是队长！”

“山姆·威尔逊，我可不想针锋相对，但我有史蒂夫·罗杰斯队长的军队纪录，我可以证明你的陈述是错误的……”

说着，幻视侠抬起手掌，投射出一个更年轻的美国队长的全息图。当全息图开始说话时，山姆靠过来，专注地看着。

行军日志（第43天）：
我们被困在敌后，
我不知道该怎么办……



第八章

1943年，美国队长率领精英部队——闻名的咆哮突击队——深入敌境进行突袭时，他们的飞机被九头蛇防空武器发现，并被击落。

神奇的是，咆哮突击队成员达姆弹·杜根能让飞机迫降，但与其说“着陆”还不如说是“坠毁”。突击队员们勉强幸存，所有人都受了不同程度的伤，割伤、擦伤，甚至骨折。

“我们被困在敌后，离九头蛇的一个据点很近，我们当中有些人受伤太重根本没法前进。”队长在他的私人行军日记中写道，“这是我的首次领导任务，每个人都在问我怎么办……坦白说，我不确定怎么回答他们。我们是不是该步行回基地？但是这样会不会让我们更易成为攻击目标？也许，我们应该挖个壕沟，躲起来，等待救援。”

队长下一篇日记记录的情况更严峻。一些咆哮突击队队员还没得到队长的指令，就开始寻思单独行动；有些人则拒绝继续前进。大家越来越绝望了。

“我充满了疑惑。”队长在他的日记里直言，“我本以为我能领导好这支队伍，但我错了，也许，我就不是一个做领导的料。”

但在队长最灰暗的日子里，他发现了一张他和两位伟大科学家亚伯拉罕·厄斯金博士和霍华德·斯塔克的合影，就是他们创造了超级士兵计划赋予了队长特殊能力。

“看着这张照片，我燃起了希望。”队长写道，“如果这两位伟人足够信任我、相信我，那么我一定能做他们需要我做的事情。”

队长开始带着坚定的决心寻找出路。在查看地图时，他发现附近的九头蛇据点里停着战斗机。咆哮突击队队员伤势太重，不太可能走向回基地，但他们还是可以勉强走到据点那里。



在一次大胆的计划中，伤势较轻的队员帮助伤势较重的队员潜入了九头蛇据点，偷了一架飞机，安全地飞回了基地。

那一次，队长得出了一个重要的结论：领导力多半源于相信自己、相信自己的团队。

幻视侠的全息图放完了，山姆很惊讶。“队长也得学着做领导？”他问，“我总是觉得他天生就是个领导。”

幻视侠斟酌了一下，说：“也许，即便有领导天赋的人也有艰难时刻吧。也许所谓的‘天生’就是在他们最想放弃的时候也不会放弃吧。”

猎鹰觉得幻视侠说得太对了。

“来吧，幻视侠，我们该走了。”他展开翅膀，说道。

“我们要去哪里？”机器人问道。

“回复仇者大厦，我还有一个团队要领导。”

山姆回到大厦时，黑寡妇正准备出发，计划独自查找和拯救鹰眼。快银、女巫不知道该让她留还是去，只能默默地看着她走。

“等等，”山姆和幻视侠进入房间，说，“你哪儿也不能去！”

黑寡妇转身看着山姆，怒气冲冲地说：“谁敢拦我？你？我可不会

坐在这里傻等，我要去找克林特。”

“是的，你会去找他，”山姆说，“我们都会去，我们整个团队都会去找他。”

这可让大家都吃了一惊。

“注意，”山姆说，现在整个房间的人都认真听着，“我知道，到目前为止，我不是个合格的领导。但是，复仇者联盟源于那个非比寻常的日子，那天，地球上最强的英雄们团结一起，对抗共同的威胁……而今天，奥创就是那个威胁。”

“如果这个联盟今天四分五裂，那么奥创已经成功一半了。”山姆指出，“目前为止，我们团队关注的都是那些分裂我们的小事，现在是时候聚焦让我们团结一致的事情了，那就是，我们拯救地球的责任！”

大家环顾左右，纷纷点头，对山姆的话表示赞同。

黑寡妇说：“那好，我们怎样找到奥创？”

山姆笑了笑。“是时候拿出我的最新发明了。”他咧嘴一笑，“跟我来……”

第九章

看着山姆手中小小的头盔，黑寡妇不禁问道：“对你来说小了点，是吧？”此刻，他们聚集在钢铁侠的实验室里，山姆正在给队员们展示他过去几个月的发明成果。头盔表面光滑，空气动力驱动，两边有电线和电极。

“这可不是为我定制的。”山姆微笑着回答，一边把队友们带到屋顶。

他打开一个巨大的鸟笼，放出一只漂亮的鸟儿，那是一只长着火红橙色、几近红色羽毛的野生猎鹰。“这是红翼鸮，”他说，“我在里约发现了他，他当时生了病；我治好并训练了他。”

“你的发明就是给鸟用的帽子？”快银困惑地问道。

山姆回答说：“这可不仅仅是个帽子，这个头盔连接着我和红翼鸮，红翼鸮所看到的一切都会转送到我的遮目镜里。”

“你把你的宠物鸟变成了网络摄像头？”绯红女巫问。

“不仅仅是网络摄像头，”黑寡妇说，“是一个侦察摄像头，红翼鸮非常适合收集秘密情报。”

“这个摄像头能怎样帮我们找到鹰眼？”幻视侠问。

“这个摄像头很有用，它不会因为红翼鸮停飞而停止工作。”猎鹰解释着，“红翼鸮就像一个收发器，播放他看到的一切；但他也是一个接收器，通过他我可以探测到附近鸟类的神经冲动。”

“到底是什么啊？”绯红女巫不解地问道。

“就是当红翼鸮戴上这个头盔，我能看到方圆几英里内任何一只鸟所看到的一切。”山姆说。

“但是这座城市有成千上万只鸟啊。”快银说。

“用它来追踪奥创就更好了。”黑寡妇脱口而出。

“简单来说，你是想让整个纽约市的鸟儿像团队一样合作吗？”女巫问。

“对，这是我对系统的第一次测试。”山姆一边说，一边给乖巧的红翼鸮戴上那个小小的头盔，“飞翔吧，红翼鸮！展示给我你所看到的一

切。”随后，山姆把鸟儿放飞了。

马上，山姆的遮目镜突然打开了一个视频窗口，让他鸟瞰全市。“啊，”山姆说，“我只收到了红翼鸫传输的画面，其他鸟儿的……”还没有说完，成千上万个视频窗口一个接一个地突然打开，从各个角度向他展示曼哈顿！

“管用了，管用了！”山姆高兴地大喊道。

不到一个小时，山姆的遮目镜电脑已将鸟儿们传送的图像分类，并且开始搜索奥创的信号。不一会儿，电脑标识出城北仓库区一座桥下的一只鸽子看到的图像。在镜头中，山姆可以清楚地看到一些奥创的机器人通过一扇侧门进入一座废弃的建筑。

“我们找到他了。”山姆向队员们宣布。

一到那里，黑寡妇解开了锁，其他成员立马溜了进去。果然，奥创的机器人部队正在过道里走来走去。复仇者们使用隐身术，在对方毫无知觉的情况下干掉了几个机器人，向大楼深处一个黑暗的电脑中心进发。

“幻视侠，你能侵入这些电脑吗？”山姆指着成堆的电脑问道，“你找到的任何信息都是我们干掉奥创的绝佳线索。”

“我能利用任何电脑系统。”幻视侠一边说一边把手举到一个终端前。不一会儿，他下载了奥创硬盘里的数据，“你可得好好看看这些数据。”幻视侠指着屏幕里的一些信息说。

山姆弯腰凑近一看，惊讶不已。“根据这些信息，根本没有来自太空的信号！”

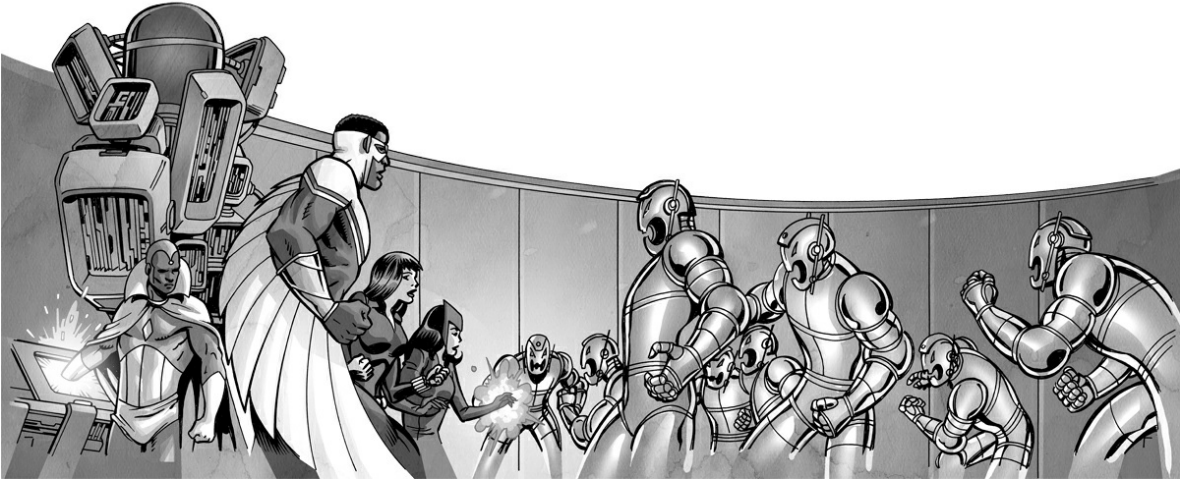
“你说什么？”女巫问。

“灭霸根本没有在宇宙组建部队，那些证据都是由奥创捏造的！”山姆说，“钢铁侠、队长他们的追踪根本就是白费力气！”

“没错！”房间外传来一个低沉而响亮的声音，“我就知道，如果能把复仇者联盟的核心成员骗走，地球就是我的囊中之物了……毕竟啊，留下来的低等复仇者可是不可一世的。”

说着，奥创走进房间，旁边是他的机器人部队。

“低等？”山姆冷冷地看着奥创，毫无惧色，他转身看着他的队员，简单地说，“让奥创看看，谁才是低等……复仇者：集合！”



第十章

这一战激烈而残酷，像那些无情的毁灭机器一样，奥创的机器人扑到复仇者身上，砍啊、削啊、打啊！

但是，如果奥创认为复仇者们还像地平线实验室一战那样缺乏组织，那么他会非常失望。

“掩护幻视侠。”猎鹰发令，黑寡妇、快银和女巫立马投入战斗。“幻视侠，从奥创电脑中定位鹰眼的位置。”



黑寡妇跳起，回踢，发射毒刺；同时，女巫跳到她身后，左右开弓，小心翼翼地随时配合黑寡妇。

与此同时，快银绕着奥创加速奔跑，卷起一股旋风，使得奥创根本无法射击。

幻视侠一从电脑上获得鹰眼的定位，猎鹰就立即发动新的进攻计划。他让幻视侠相位同步奥创的机器人，击碎它们；同时，绯红女巫的魔法阵也保护黑寡妇进行逃脱。

黑寡妇直奔鹰眼所在地，用解锁术给弓箭手松了绑。鹰眼一得救，山姆便命令他掩护快银。有了鹰眼的支援，快银击倒了一个又一个机器人。

不一会儿，只剩下奥创一个了。

“这不符合推算。”奥创惊呼，“你们应该是复仇者当中最弱的……”

“领导弱，则团队弱。”黑寡妇说。

“而我们有一个强大的领导。”鹰眼看着猎鹰说，“我现在知道了。”

“谢谢你，鹰眼。谢谢你们，队友们。”猎鹰笑着，用翼刀划破奥创的电路，永远地终结了这个疯狂的机器人。他们立刻联系神盾局，特工们立即把奥创丢到专门为他这种超级恶棍设计的绝密监狱里。

不久，昆式战斗机急速掠过月球飞向地球，准备重新进入大气层。

“快点，”美国队长催促坐在驾驶位上的钢铁侠，“我们得马上回去帮助其他复仇者！”

“队长，我正在全速前进。”钢铁侠回答道。

队长一行四人到达太阳系的边缘，发现根本没有任何军队的踪影，他们立刻意识到所谓的信息都是假的。他们不知道是谁故意发布了错误的信息，但他们确定猎鹰和其他复仇者肯定遇上了麻烦。

不一会儿，昆式战斗机在复仇者大厦上着陆，队长四人冲入大厦，却被眼前的一幕惊呆了：其他的队员……正平静地待在一起玩，享受着彼此的陪伴。

鹰眼和快银在玩飞镖，鹰眼还教快银如何正中靶心。

房间的另一边，绯红女巫和黑寡妇正一起一边吃着午餐，一边谈论着她们最喜欢的一些东欧地方，结果发现原来她们去过许多相同的地方。



那边，山姆正在给幻视侠看红翼鸫的头盔，幻视侠对这个发明表示惊叹。

当队长一行冲入房间，大家都抬起头，队长说：“山姆，来自外太空的那个信息，只是……”

山姆接过队长的话：“一个阴谋！我们知道啊！奥创干的好事，不过别担心，我们已经处理好了。”山姆耸了耸肩，一副没什么大不了的样子。“嘿，你们饿吗？我们做了墨西哥卷饼。”

队长和钢铁侠对视一下，如释重负。看来他们的担心完全没有必要，猎鹰已经妥善处理了。

“我喜欢吃墨西哥卷饼。”钢铁侠说。

那一晚，队长回到复仇者训练室，耐心地在模拟的红杉树森林的树梢上等着。山姆要求再战一盘“抢旗帜”，立志要打败队长，但是这一次他貌似又要输了。

队长看到山姆从矮树丛中跳起、奔向他的旗帜，他立马采取行动，又一次从半空中截击山姆，把他撞到地上，说：“对不起，山姆，这次还是赢不了。”

“对此我表示怀疑。”山姆指着队长旗帜的隐藏地说。

队长抬头一看，黑寡妇和绯红女巫正拿着他的旗帜朝他挥舞。

“我们赢了！”绯红女巫呐喊道。

队长惊喜不已，在抢旗帜比赛中还没有任何一支队伍打败过他。他们好样的！

“正如你所说，队长，”猎鹰说道，“这也是一个领导力的训练。”

“确实，”队长说，“正如我所说，我也将重述我所说：山姆，你是一个天生的领导。”



漫威
超级英雄
双语故事

美国漫威公司 著
林玉 译



MARVEL

GUARDIANS
OF THE GALAXY

GAMORA'S GALACTIC SHOWDOWN

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES!



Gamora



Rocket



Pip the Troll



Adam Warlock



Nebula



The Collector



Thanos



The Godslayer



A Mysterious Box



The Gegku



The Chitauri



The Kodabaks



A Devil Corker



Groot



Star-Lord



Drax

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**GUARDIANS
OF
THE GALAXY**



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The Story of Gamora

The Zen-Whoberis were a peaceful humanoid race, living in harmony, until a group of violent aliens arrived on their planet. The militaristic creatures invaded, destroying everything in their path and wiping the Zen-Whoberis completely off the cosmic map. When the dust settled, there was a single survivor, an infant known as GAMORA. The child was taken in by the mad Titan THANOS, who sought to turn her into a war machine, molded precisely to do his evil bidding. He delighted in pitting Gamora against her adopted sister, NEBULA, and the two little girls fought for their father's affection. Gamora became an expert fighter and swordswoman, her viciousness earning her quite the bad reputation. But when she realized just how much she'd been manipulated by her villainous father, Gamora rebelled. She decided instead to become a force for good. Thanos was more than displeased, vowing ultimate revenge on Gamora for disobeying his orders. Nebula, however, stood by her father and shamed her sister for her disobedience. Gamora aligned herself with a handful of adventurers over the years until eventually settling down with the Guardians of the Galaxy. Despite her alliances, she remains an outsider searching for kinship in a vast and unsettling universe, struggling to come to terms with her painful past. For the moment, she's content being known as GAMORA: THE DEADLIEST WOMAN IN THE GALAXY.



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Chapter 1

A warm wind blew across the surface of Degenera as four Gegku hunters angrily marched through the planet's spaceship graveyard. They were looking for treasure. The large reptilian brutes lacked finesse in battle, relying on crude weaponry to do their dirty work. On this day, the Gegku came to Degenera equipped with firearms and prepared to challenge anyone that stood in their way.

“Search the area!” Wazzal, the leader, commanded. “Take everything you find and destroy the rest.” The Gegku stormed through the murky cemetery, tossing trash and scrap metal aside as if it were paper. Spaceships often got caught in Degenera's thick, polluted atmosphere, falling from the sky to be scavenged on the ground. The foul environment also made it the perfect place to hide. All of these things made Degenera a hub for criminal activity. But the planet wasn't all bad. There were small communities of harmless wanderers spread out across the surface. “Wazzal, over here!” the Gegku hunter shouted. “I found something.” He used his rifle to poke at a large piece of metal. A tiny rodentlike creature scuttled out from under it.

Wazzal grabbed it by the tail, dangling the terrified beastie back and forth as it tried to escape. “HA-HA-HA! Look at this weak thing wiggle. How pathetic!”

A pair of glowing white eyes opened amid the darkness.

Gamora leaped from her hiding place into the middle of the Gegku hunters, sweeping her leg in a circle and knocking them off their feet. She unsheathed her sword and swiftly sliced the Gegku's weapons into pieces. The soldiers were paralyzed with fear. They'd never seen anyone move so fast.



Gamora turned her attention to Wazzal, grabbing his collar and pulling him close. “Wiggle for me, weak thing,” she whispered in his ear, tossing the lizard man into a pool of bubbling ooze nearby. The hunters didn't dare say a word.

“Without your weapons, you're nothing but sad, ugly creatures,” Gamora taunted. She looked down to see the sheepish alien critter Wazzal had frightened. It was staring at her. “You're safe now,” she said. Then she turned to the Gegku. “But you're not.” She pressed a button on her wrist gauntlet and a hologram appeared.

“Where is this item?” Gamora asked. “Tell me now.”

“Nuh-nuh-nuh...” Wazzal stuttered nervously.

“Spit it out,” Gamora challenged. She was losing patience quickly.

“Nuh-nuh-never seen it before in my life,” Wazzal said, his shaking body sinking into the goop. “There's a place you might be able to find such a thing, but it's just a rumor.”

“Where?” Gamora demanded.

“Zaldrex,” Wazzal replied, still trembling. “I’ve heard the stories about you, Gamora. They said you were just like your father. Now I see the stories are—”



“My blade is called the Godslayer,” Gamora cut him off. “Can you guess what it does?” She brandished her sword, showing the Gegku each and every inch. “If I ever see you hurt another living creature, I will use this blade to chop your fingers off one by one. Do I make myself clear?” she snarled. The Gegku nervously nodded in agreement.

Gamora put away the Godslayer and left them to think deeply about what she had said. Chopping off fingers wasn't usually her style, but the threat always seemed to give her enemies a new perspective. Gamora spotted a small town in the distance and began walking toward it. She'd only been on Degenera a few days, but she was desperate to leave. *Where do I go next?* It had been a while since Gamora had seen her friends. She'd taken a leave of absence from the Guardians of the Galaxy when the universe presented her with an unexpected quest. Was she searching for a simple box, or was her mission much more than that?

Gamora found herself restless and wondered if she might also be searching for peace of mind.

After walking for what seemed like miles, Gamora came upon a dingy diner on the outskirts of a small community. She'd been traveling without a vehicle, hitching rides from transport vessels to get where she needed to go.

Now it was time to find a new ride and leave Degenera for good. She watchfully entered the establishment, scanning every inch of it for danger. The air was thick, and smelled like smoke and meat. There were hordes of cantankerous alien creatures from across the universe, and all of them were giving Gamora the stink-eye. They all knew her reputation. Finding a ride wasn't going to be easy.

"I need a way off this planet," Gamora said to the alien cook in the grease-soaked apron. He silently pointed to someone in the corner. When Gamora turned to see who, she was surprised by a familiar face.

"Well, well, well," said Rocket, spinning himself around in his chair. "Hitching rides? C'mon, Gamora. You know better than that."

Despite her desire for solitude, Gamora was happy to see a friend. Even though he was cranky most of the time, Rocket had a good heart and a warrior's spirit.

"So you found me." Gamora shrugged. "Now what?"

"Why don't you end your vacation and come back to the Guardians? No questions asked," Rocket continued. "Things aren't the same without you. Drax can't stop crying! And you don't want to know what Groot won't stop doing."

Gamora was flattered but in no mood for jokes. "I'm better off alone," she said, looking away, embarrassed.

Just then a group of renegade Kodabaks burst into the diner. The Kodabaks were surly piglike creatures who served many evil masters.

"You're sitting in my seat, animal," griped the alien hog, tapping Rocket on the shoulder. The Kodabak's breath was hot, and it stank like sewage.

"Until you do something about that swamp breath, I'm not moving!" Rocket said. "This is a free planet, and I can sit anywhere I want. Got that?"

Five more Kodabaks closed in on Rocket, and things got serious.

"Okay, okay," he said, rising from his chair. "So maybe it is your seat, after all."

Gamora's body tensed. "Stay seated," she said, pushing Rocket back down.

The Kodabak leader rudely looked Gamora up and down. "You're pretty," he began. "For a green-skin." He and his swinish friends let out a hearty chuckle, and Gamora flew into action. She gently slid her foot under

the table nearby, flipping it up into the air to land safely in her hands. She flung it at the cackling Kodabaks, knocking them down with a thud. The diner erupted into total chaos.

“RUN!” Rocket shouted, grabbing Gamora by the arm and pulling her out the door.



“I hope we're running toward a ship,” Gamora replied.

“Don't you worry. Good ol' Rocket has you covered,” he said, sprinting down a long alleyway and through an encampment. They darted over and around fruit sellers, trinket peddlers, and the occasional pile of animal droppings. Soon the Kodabaks were gaining on them. Gamora spotted a tower of empty barrels and toppled them over to trip up the pudgy hog-men. It only bought them a few moments.

“Almost there!” said Rocket, rounding the corner. He wasn't prepared for what happened next. “WHAT THE KRUTAK?!” he shouted. “My ship is gone!”



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Chapter 2

Gamora was frustrated. She'd been lying low and minding her own business, but now she was on the run from a bunch of angry pig-men with Rocket Raccoon in tow. It wasn't at all what she'd planned for or expected. The ship that was supposed to save them was missing, and they only had moments to figure out what to do next.

“D'AST!” exclaimed Rocket, taking off in another direction. “This way!”

“Where exactly are we going, Rocket?” Gamora asked, darting over the debris-covered streets of Degenera.

“I'll let you know when we get there!” Rocket yelled, his little legs growing more tired by the second. They were moving fast, but they couldn't keep running forever.

“Gamora!” a voice called out from one of the shacks. A small hand belonging to a short hooded figure began furiously waving. “Over here!”

Rocket looked at Gamora wide-eyed. “You got friends here you didn't tell me about?” he asked, sweaty and wheezing. They rushed into the shabby living quarters as the Kodabaks ran by without a glance. Rocket and Gamora breathed a sigh of relief, having escaped their enemies. The shack was damp and smelled of body odor. Its owner slowly removed his hood, revealing a familiar face.

“Welcome to Degenera,” said Pip the Troll. “Sorry about the smell.” Pip had known Gamora for many years. They were once members of the Infinity Watch, a handful of heroes who traveled the galaxy looking for the fabled Infinity Stones.



It was a difficult task that took its toll on the group. Eventually they went their separate ways. Gamora hadn't seen Pip in quite some time, but their reunion was a lot less dramatic than the other one that was taking place.

“My old nemesis!” shouted Rocket, marching up to Pip.

“Keep your voice down, raccoon! You want those Kodabaks to find you?” Pip grunted.

“And, for the record, you are MY old nemesis!”

Pip and Rocket had crossed paths before, many years ago, before either one of them had ever met Gamora. It hadn't gone well.

“I'm not a raccoon, and you know that! YOU KNOW THAT!” Rocket said in a heated whisper.

“Hello, Pip,” Gamora said, eyeing the cramped space. “It's good to see you, even under these strange circumstances.”

“It's weird, all right. But good!” Pip said warmly. “The universe is a small place, I guess.”

“I didn't know you and Rocket had history,” Gamora said. “Will working together be a problem?”

“HA!” cackled Rocket. “No. I'm a professional. I'm here to help you. That's what friends are for, right?”

“Yeah, me too,” added Pip. “Whatever you need, I'm there for you. That's what friends are for.”

“I JUST SAID—” Rocket closed his eyes and took a very deep breath. “Keep it together, Rocket. You're better than this.”

“What brings you to Degenera?” asked Pip. “It's not exactly paradise.”

“I'm searching for an item,” Gamora said, activating her holographic projector. “A box that once belonged to my father, Thanos.” Rocket and Pip shuddered. Thanos was one of the galaxy's most notorious villains, after all. Being Gamora's father didn't make him any less scary.

“What's inside that thing?” Rocket asked.

Gamora paused. “I don't know,” she confessed. “I was told never to touch it. When I was a girl, I always believed it contained something of value to my father, something powerful. He used it as a bargaining chip to gain my obedience. Once, I caught my sister trying to open it, but she was unable to do so. When I grabbed it, snatching the box from her grasp, it began to open. I believe I know why, but before either of us could see inside, Thanos angrily swiped it from my hands. I never saw it again, but I remember what it looks like, every single inch. I know Nebula does as well. It could all be a mind game of my father's design, or it could be... something else.”

“OooOooOoo, you mean like an Infinity Stone?” asked Pip.

“As a girl I dreamed that whatever was in that box could take me far away. Away from the madness... It's silly to think about now,” Gamora confided. “It fell out of Thanos's hands and went missing. For years I've been following rumors and reports of its whereabouts, as if it were a strange myth. Leads always seemed to run dry, and I eventually gave up looking. That's when it reappeared. I received an image from a cosmic trading post that confirmed the box's existence in the region. It's changing hands quickly and I need to find it immediately.”

“So what are we waiting for? Let's go find this thing so you can come on home to the Guardians of the Galaxy. Your real team,” Rocket said, shaking his finger at Pip. “This troll will teleport us anywhere we need to go. It's the

only thing he's good for!”

“Um, well, uh, I've got some bad news,” Pip said sheepishly. “My teleporting powers have been kind of nutty lately.”

“Oh, great. The troll is broken! He's useless!” Rocket said, pacing around the tiny hut in a fervor. “What do we do now? Fly a holo-banner across the Milky Way?”

“I can still track stuff, you mangy beast!” Pip said, sticking his finger in Rocket's face.

“STOP. Both of you. There's more,” Gamora began. “My sources have told me that my sister, Nebula, has also been tracking the box. Although neither of us can confirm its contents, I fear that if that box falls into her hands, the entire universe could be in danger.”

“So, troll, how do we get off this stinky planet? Some flarknard stole my rental ship,” Rocket grumped.

“I'm glad you asked,” Pip said, opening a curtain to reveal a small old spacecraft.

“You want the three of us to fly around in that fossilized hunk of junk?” asked Rocket. “I've seen bathrooms bigger than this! You're out of your mind, stubby.”

“I like to think of it as vintage cozy,” Pip said, patting the spaceship's side. A metal panel fell off, exposing its ancient circuitry. “Heh-heh. Nothing to see here.”

Gamora rolled her eyes and wondered whether involving Rocket and Pip in her quest was the right choice. But there was no time to think about it. They all climbed into the cramped vessel and prepared for takeoff. Pip moved toward the main cabin and was brushed aside by Rocket.

“Beat it, troll. I'm flyin' this thing,” Rocket said, sitting down in the captain's chair.

“Talk to me like that again, raccoon. See what happens,” Pip countered.

“I. AM. NOT. A. RACCOON,” Rocket said, his voice rising.

“That hairy mug of yours has ‘raccoon’ written all over it,” Pip scoffed.

“Why don't you try putting a mask on, tiny? I'm sick of looking at that ugly troll face,” Rocket barked.

“Say it one more time, Raccoon! ” Pip growled.

“ENOUGH!” Gamora boomed. She was getting a headache. “Listen to these words, as I’ll only say them once: settle your differences.”

“Fine,” said Rocket, surrendering his chair. “I’m going to go put my feet up and try to forget that I let a stumpy little troll tell me what to do.”

Pip settled into the captain's chair and began flipping switches. “Strap in!” he said, turning to Gamora. “Where we headed?”

“Zaldrex,” she said.





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Chapter 3

A rumbling snore shook the inside of the tiny metal spacecraft.

“Is that Rocket?!” asked Pip, shaking his head in disbelief. “He sounds like a Varlaxican sludge beast.”

Gamora stared out the window, distracted.

“You look good, kid. Been too long since we've caught up,” Pip said, noticing Gamora's uneasiness. “Whatever you're thinking about, don't let it get to you. We'll grab this box, and you'll be on your way in no time.” He flipped a switch on the control panel, lighting up the monitors in front of them. Alien beings from a hundred worlds filled the screens.

“This is Zaldrex. On the outside it seems like some no-name planet,” Pip explained. “But it's much more than that. You just have to go underground. The Collector runs a top secret thieves' market and auction house in the caverns underneath the planet's surface. He's got all kinds of nasty stuff down there, mostly the junk he doesn't want. I'm betting that's where you'll find what you're looking for. We'll disguise ourselves as riffraff and sneak in. I've got some counterfeit credits we can use to bid on it. They look just like the real thing! No one will ever know the difference.”

Gamora stared intently at the screen. “Nebula will be there,” she muttered. “I can feel it.”

“BLAHG!” shouted Rocket, waking from his nap and rubbing his eyes. “I had the worst nightmare. I was stuck on a spaceship with this chubby little troll, and...” He sputtered, spotting Pip in the captain's chair. “UGH! My nightmare came true!”

“I don't know how you stand that guy,” Pip said to Gamora, pulling back on the ship's throttle. “Prepare for landing. We're here.”

Pip brought the spaceship down on the outskirts of Zaldrex's capital city. Then the trio donned dark cloaks to disguise themselves. If anyone recognized them, it would ruin the entire plan. Following a winding staircase, they traveled down into the thieves' market casually and discreetly. The

market had many alien curiosities, all of which were deadly. There were things like canisters of disease and various cruel weapons for sale. These were things meant to inflict pain and suffering on countless people. It made Gamora angry. Soon she spotted something even worse: a tiny cage containing three alien children. The cage was being guarded by the Collector's thugs, a collection of the galaxy's worst bullies. While the guards were distracted, Gamora took a small bag of rations from inside her cloak and gave it to the children. The tasty treats brought a smile to their faces, and they eagerly scarfed them down as quickly as they could.

How could someone do this? Gamora thought. It boiled her blood to see children separated from their families, kept in cages, and waiting to be sold like slaves. Her body tensed as she considered ways to free them. But suddenly, a siren sounded and an announcement blared from the speakers above.



“THE AUCTION WILL NOW COMMENCE IN THE MAIN AREA!”

“This area is off-limits. Get moving!” one of the Collector's goons shouted, rudely pushing Gamora with the end of his rifle. It took everything she had not to grab his weapon and teach him a lesson, but there was a bigger

plan in motion.

Before she left, Gamora spoke to the children in a whisper. "I will return, I promise," she said, placing her hand on the bars. "Do not be afraid." Still angry, she joined Pip and Rocket in the main hall, where the auction was getting under way.

"Welcome, brutes, devils, fiends, and beasts!" a voice echoed through the bustling chamber. "I am Taneleer Tivan, known to you miscreants as the Collector. This evening I bring to you some of the rarest rubbish in the entire galaxy. One warlord's trash is another warlord's treasure, after all. Settle in, you'll not want to miss out."

"I'm ready," Pip said, holding his bidding paddle tightly.

The Collector had assembled an impressive amount of antiquities over the years, but often found himself with broken or worthless items. Instead of discarding these things, he decided to sell them. He knew his followers were too naive to know none of the items had any real value. They bid with their hopes and dreams. The Collector brought forth numerous salvaged goods, some of which he'd only recently acquired and all of which were snapped up instantly by the assembled scoundrels. Many strange items changed hands until, finally, a black box appeared.

"That's it," Gamora said nervously.

One of the Collector's men brought forth the rectangular metal box. It had been roughed up over the years and was covered in numerous small scrapes. The crowd seemed uninterested. No one knew it once belonged to the mighty Thanos. The Collector stared at it for a moment. He'd never seen it before. His associate leaned in and whispered the details of its retrieval in his ear.

"Ah, yes. This was recovered from a space trawler near Titan. Shall we see what's inside?" teased the Collector, attempting to pry open the lid. The task was giving him some difficulty, and he was not pleased. "Cosmic junk. Who wants it? Bidding begins at one hundred credits!"



“What do I do?” asked Pip, flustered.

“Raise your paddle and bid on it, troll!” Rocket said in a loud whisper.

Pip raised his bidding paddle. The Collector immediately nodded in confirmation.

“Going once... going twice...” The Collector paused, looking around the room. “Sold to the troll in the hood! Pay your one hundred credits and come get this sad piece of trash.” As Pip made his way forward, a familiar blue-skinned figure bounded through the audience, landing squarely onstage. It was Nebula.

She snatched the box out of the Collector's hands and took off in another direction, laughing wildly. The Collector was quite displeased. “Get her and get that ugly box!” he shouted. But before his minions began their chase, a distraction arose in the audience. Rocket was voicing his agitation.

“Un-krutakin'-believable!” Rocket shouted, whipping off his cloak in anger and revealing his plasma cannon. It wasn't the wisest move. The Collector's eyes widened. Rocket had stolen from him in the past. Now was the time to make sure he paid the price.

“Get that animal!” screeched the Collector. As his crew of snarling bodyguards made their way toward Rocket, Gamora swung her leg out into the aisle, tripping them so that they fell like dominoes on top of one another.



“Time to go,” Gamora said, pushing Rocket and Pip toward the exit. They took off after Nebula, but the Collector's goon squad was on their tail soon enough, chasing them wildly through the thieves' market. Laser beams nipped at Rocket's heels as he, Gamora, and Pip rushed to their spaceship.

“D'AST! Watch it with the lasers, flarknard!” Rocket said, charging up his plasma cannon. “You don't know who you're messing with!”

“No, Rocket,” Gamora commanded. “Get in the ship and be ready to take off. There's something I must do first.”

Rocket grumbled to himself, pushing Pip up the ship's staircase. “You heard the lady. In you go, troll! Let's get this garbage plane moving.”

Gamora darted back across the bazaar, throwing her hunters for a loop and losing them momentarily. At last she found the imprisoned alien children she'd encountered earlier. Gamora ripped open the door to their cage and freed them. “Are your parents safe?” she asked as they nodded in unison. “Go to them.” The little ones scurried away to safety and Gamora made a silent vow. She'd one day return to Zaldrex and end the criminal activity that plagued it once and for all. Hearing footsteps furiously approach, she then took off toward the spaceship.



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Chapter 4

The Collector's goons surrounded the spacecraft as Gamora stood defiantly before them. They thought they were more powerful than she was simply because they had weapons, but Gamora knew better. She looked at the assembled hooligans and wondered whether she should go easy on them. As they opened fire, Gamora drew her Godslayer blade and deflected each laser blast with ease. The fearless act left the Collector's thugs speechless. She used their amazement to her advantage. Grabbing their leader by the arms, she swung him like a rag doll, knocking his cohorts out cold. She bent down near the broken bully and left him with a message.

“You got off easy this time. I'm going to return to Zaldrex very soon—and, make no mistake, I will finish what I've started,” she threatened. She took a final look around, boarded the ship, and took off into the stratosphere. As Rocket panted in the corner, Gamora stared out the window, thinking about the cruelty she'd seen in the thieves' market. It gnawed at her so much, she forgot that their mission had been a failure.

“I'm sorry,” Pip said, collapsing into the pilot's seat. “I wasn't fast enough to grab the box. I should have done something!”

“This wasn't your fault. Nebula always appears when you least expect her,” Gamora said comfortingly. The group became silent and reflective.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

“Someone is trying to hail us,” Pip said, flipping a series of switches on the control panel. “The frequency's source is cloaked. I don't know who it is. Should I let the signal through?”

Gamora nodded affirmatively as Pip pressed a series of buttons. Nebula's face appeared on the screen before them.

“Hello, Gamora,” growled Nebula. “When are you coming home? Father and I miss you.” She held up the metal box she'd just stolen, inspecting every inch. “Do you like it? I don't know what could possibly be inside this plain old thing, but it must be something important if you're

chasing after it.”



“That doesn't belong to you,” Gamora snapped.

“As long as my body is drawing breath, I'll see to it that you never get this box back,” Nebula sneered devilishly. She gripped the box tightly, trying desperately to pry it open.

“Having some trouble?” Gamora asked.

Nebula clenched her teeth and tensed her body, but the box wouldn't

budge.

“Only I can open it,” revealed Gamora.

“Don't you recall what happened when we were children? I had my suspicions and now they've been confirmed. Only my touch can activate the mechanism. The box is worthless without me.”

Nebula noticed the small fingerprint lock on the outside of the box and became infuriated. Her frenzied scream filled the ship's cabin before she disappeared from the monitors completely.

Rocket found her reaction endlessly amusing. “HA-HA-HA!” he cackled. “Did you see her face?! Ol' Nebby did NOT like hearing that news. So what do we do now?”

“Nebula knows we'll come for her. She'll be waiting for us,” Gamora responded. “Patch me through to Carol Danvers. I need to talk to Captain Marvel.”

“You got it! I'll just track her down using her Avengers comm link and then hack into whatever camera is nearby so we can see her beautiful smile,” Pip said, pressing buttons and flipping switches on the old console. “This computer might be rickety, but I found her! She's busting up some trouble on the planet Ba-Banis. Patching her through now.” Captain Marvel soon appeared on-screen. She had a Ba-Bani warrior in a headlock.

“Smile, Cap!” Rocket said, waving. “And look up.” Captain Marvel turned, squinting up at the nearby security camera.

“Rocket? I'm kind of busy at the moment,” Carol said, squeezing the squirming Ba-Bani tighter. “Wait a second. Gamora, is that you?”

“Hi, Carol. I could use your help with something,” Gamora began. She rarely asked for assistance, but Captain Marvel was a good friend and a powerful ally.

“I'd love to lend you a hand, but I'm pretty tied up with Avengers business at the moment. You know how it is with alien invasions. I'm definitely in for the next round of butt-kicking, though. Anything for family. Oh, and tell Star-Lord he owes me a mixtape!” Carol said. “Captain Marvel OUT.”

“I'll call the Guardians,” Rocket said. “I think Quill and Groot are running errands on Spartax, but Drax should be around. He won't mind busting a few heads with us.” Rocket pushed into Pip's space to enter a series

of numbers on the keyboard. “This old technology is killing me!”



VIIIIIZZZZZT!

The lights flickered inside the ship as the communication console sent sparks flying onto Pip's hairy troll feet.

“What happened?” Gamora asked.

“The power is going out, and we lost contact. But I can fix this!” Pip said, pressing buttons seemingly at random. Unexpectedly, the lights went out, leaving the ship in complete darkness.

“I knew we couldn't trust a troll,” Rocket huffed, flipping on his flashlight.

“We have just enough power to make it to Morag IV,” Pip said, changing course. “Pray we make it there in one piece.”



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Chapter 5

“Here we are. Morag IV,” Pip sighed. He carefully brought the weakened spacecraft down through a small hole in the roof of an old abandoned temple. “It's about the best thing we can do until I figure out how to recharge this thing.”

“You mean until I figure out how to recharge this thing,” Rocket piped up, pointing his finger in Pip's face.

“Get that hairy digit out of my mug!” Pip countered. “Everyone listen up, because the climate on this planet is harsh. It's cold, dark, and dusty. Stay indoors!” Pip glanced at the back of the ship. The door was open, and Gamora was guardedly making her way through the darkened sanctuary. She wanted to find danger before it found her.

“Hello, old friends,” a familiar voice echoed. Gamora recognized it immediately and was comforted. The empty chamber came alive in a burst of light, illuminating the detailed alien design covering the walls. Adam Warlock emerged from behind a giant column and greeted his guests. “Welcome,” he said warmly. “What brings you around? I assume it's something Pip is to blame for, correct?”

“YES!” Rocket said, marching up to Warlock and shaking his hand. “Thanks for the temporary parking space, Adam.”

Adam Warlock was also once a member of the Infinity Watch. Not only was he a master at manipulating cosmic energies, he was also quite good at helping his friends achieve emotional balance. Gamora greeted him with a hug.

“It's been too long, Adam Warlock,” she said, squeezing him tightly.

“Alone on some crusty old planet?” asked Pip. “It's not exactly the coolest place for a cosmic legend. But it's still good to see an old pal.”

“I needed time away to figure some things out. And I sense I'm not the only one here who's felt that way of late,” Warlock said, staring at Gamora. “Let's talk.” Adam Warlock began walking down one of the long corridors,

knowing Gamora would follow.



“Oh, sure, she gets the grand tour, and I'm stuck here with tiny,” Rocket complained.

“You two go catch up,” Pip said, shooing Gamora and Warlock away. “Don't worry about us. We'll get the ship working even if I have to make Raccoon Boy push it into orbit by hand!”

Gamora and Adam Warlock casually strolled through the cavernous temple, recalling old stories and making small talk. Warlock's presence comforted Gamora, but he could tell that something much more serious was on her mind. “What are you looking for?” he asked abruptly.

Gamora took a long, deep breath. “A box,” she began. “It belonged to my father.”

Warlock let out a small chuckle. “No, no. What you're looking for is something much bigger and more important than a box. Thanos's dark shadow looms over so much of your life that you cannot find harmony.”

Thanos. Her evil father's name stung Gamora's ears every time she heard it. She wondered whether Warlock was right. At first she had believed her quest was simply about a family heirloom, but it was clearly becoming about much more than that.

“Thanos made me who I am. No matter what I do in my life, I'm forever linked to his destructive legacy,” Gamora confided, shaking her head in disbelief. “Maybe I'm looking for this box because I think it will help bring me a sense of peace. I don't seem to know anymore.”

“You aren't defined by your father's evil deeds, Gamora. He manipulated you at a young age. You didn't understand what was happening, but you do now. In order to move forward, you must heal yourself,” Adam continued. “The past can be difficult to deal with, especially when it's painful, but you

can get through this. You're not alone. Myself, Pip, the Guardians—we're your friends. We're your tribe. Let us help you." The duo had circled back around to the main chamber, and they heard Rocket and Pip arguing inside the spaceship. It made Gamora smile.

Adam Warlock's eyes began to glow. His body pulsed with the cosmic energies of a thousand worlds as he began weaving light into a solid form. Soon he produced a bizarre creation.

"This is a healing cocoon. It will allow you to rest; when you emerge again, you'll feel renewed and cleansed of negative energy," Adam explained.

Gamora looked over the incredible cocoon. She was mesmerized by the strange creation before her eyes. *This is my chance to free myself*, she thought. But her natural instincts said something quite different. "If I'm immobilized, it will put you all at risk," she said.

"The process won't take long," Warlock assured her. "We're on a desolate planet in the middle of nowhere. We'll be fine. Just remember: You are who you wish to be. Don't be frightened."

Gamora found Warlock's optimism impressive. She cautiously stepped into the cocoon and lay down, clutching the hilt of her blade tightly against her chest. "Just in case," she whispered. In a swirl of radiance, Warlock used his powers to seal the cocoon, leaving Gamora to her rest. Rocket and Pip peeked their heads out of the spaceship to survey the strange creation.

"Weird," said Rocket.

"That's Adam Warlock for you," Pip responded.

Inside the cocoon, Gamora had entered a dream state. She awoke on a beautiful lush island. Colorful creatures roamed nearby as the gentle sound of a waterfall filled the air. She felt the warm sun on her face, and it made her feel blissful. Gamora was in paradise. A small bird landed in front of her. As she knelt down for a closer look, a giant boot came out of nowhere and violently stomped on the bird. The skies grew dark and stormy. Thanos had arrived.



Gamora was surprised by her father's appearance, and backed away. As the stone-faced villain made his way toward her, the beautiful surroundings began to wither and die. The thriving flora and fauna soon transformed into a cold, barren desert. The relaxing waterfall was replaced by a sharp cliff leading down into a dark cavern. Gamora's peaceful feeling soon turned to rage.

“My unworthy disgrace of a daughter,” Thanos began. “You never thanked me for rescuing you from a life of weakness and defeat. I gave you power beyond your wildest imagination, training you to be a fierce warrior. Now you embarrass yourself by associating with a group of foolish space rangers. You were to be my ultimate weapon of destruction, and you threw it all away!” Thanos stomped his boot, shaking the ground.

“I am no one's weapon!” Gamora shouted, moving into a defensive stance. “For so long I've felt shame over the abuse I suffered at your hands. You made me into a thing to be used only for violence. I was just a child.” She unsheathed her blade. “It's time to settle our differences. You see, those space rangers are my best friends. They deserve your respect. And if you

won't give it to me, I suppose I'll just have to take it.”

“You are an animal, Gamora—obedient and submissive,” Thanos growled. “That is what you were trained to be.”

“I am a warrior. I use the skills I've learned to defend innocents from the likes of you!” Gamora explained. She lunged at Thanos with the Godslayer and the battle began.

In the real world outside the cocoon, Pip and Rocket struggled with the spaceship's ancient battery. Things weren't going well.

WATHOOM!!!

Suddenly, an enormous warship touched down, just outside Adam Warlock's sanctuary. The Collector's goons had arrived.

WATHOOM!!!



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Chapter 6

“Adam Warlock!” the soldier bellowed. “Hand over the fugitives or prepare for combat.” The Collector's thugs surrounded the temple, preparing to strike. Time was running out.

“Wake up Gamora,” Rocket commanded. “We need her NOW!”

“No,” Adam Warlock said firmly, glancing at the nearby cocoon. “She must have her time to heal. We will have to handle this situation ourselves.”

Inside the cocoon, a fierce battle raged between father and daughter.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

The sound of Gamora's blade vibrated through the air as it hit Thanos's gauntlets with blinding fury. He blocked her attacks with ease, but Gamora remained unstoppable. She was a master at physical combat and wasn't about to give up. Thanos, however, preferred mental warfare. He enjoyed getting into his enemies' heads and using their insecurities against them, even when that enemy was his own daughter. “What's in the mystery box, I wonder?” he asked. “Does it contain the most powerful item in the universe, or is it empty? Will your mission be worth it in the end, or will you have risked the lives of yourself and your friends for nothing?”

These were questions Gamora had asked herself but was afraid to answer. What she knew for sure was that getting that box back was only part of her plan. The other part was dealing with her father's legacy of evil. It was time to finish Thanos. Gamora swung her sword around again, but this time Thanos caught it with his bare hands.

“Do you think that what's inside that box will tell you who you are?” Thanos taunted, tossing the Godslayer off a nearby cliff. Gamora could hear her treasured weapon bounce across the rocks as it fell. “Silly girl.”

Fuming, Gamora grabbed Thanos by the arm and whipped him over her shoulder and onto the ground. She held him there, pinned, using every bit of strength she had, her body trembling from exhaustion. “I already know who I am!” she roared into her father's face.



Thanos was entertained. He threw off his daughter and stood, cackling wildly. “HA-HA-HA! You are everything I wanted you to be. You're a cruel warrior. This is what I made you. You'll never escape your heritage, Gamora. You are the daughter of THANOS!”

Gamora lunged at her father, striking him square in the gut. He smiled and she struck him again but this time even harder. That's what he'd trained her to do, after all. *Never yield*, he'd scream during her childhood training sessions. She heard her father's voice echo in her head and it filled her with fury. It no longer mattered that she was tired; she had a job to do. She continued to strike him, over and over again, until he became weary and unsteady. A rumbling tremor shook the ground, and Gamora remembered exactly where she was. She wasn't really fighting her father—it was simply a dream, and she was in control. “This is not your story,” she snarled, charging at Thanos and pushing him off the cliff. He made no sound as he fell, and for the first time in a very long while, Gamora felt a glimmer of peace.



Outside the cocoon, Rocket and Pip were taking fire from the Collector's minions.

“Hey, Warlock! How about you use some of that cosmic baloney and help us out here?” Rocket asked.

“My pleasure,” Warlock said, moving into position. He used his cosmic energies to blast back the Collector's men as they struggled to gain ground.

Suddenly the Godslayer ripped through Warlock's healing cocoon, and Gamora emerged reborn!

Gamora launched herself at the Collector's thugs with confidence and ease. She kicked their leader in the stomach, sending him flying out the door. Two more charged toward her, lasers firing. Gamora deflected their shots with the Godslayer and then sliced their plasma rifles in half. The largest goon aimed his weapon. He approached her slowly, growling like an animal. She scanned him, looking for his weakest points. As he inched closer, Gamora jumped into the air and pinched his neck, causing him to pass out cold. The remaining thugs retreated to their ship and took off. Rocket, Pip, and Adam Warlock came out from behind a large column, safe once again.

“So... how was your nap?” Rocket asked Gamora.

“Good,” said Gamora, breathless. “I'm ready to leave this planet now.”

Adam Warlock smiled. Gamora was back.

WATHOOM!!!

The ground shook as a new spacecraft landed outside the temple. It was Drax. He had received Pip's message before the ship lost power. Drax had tracked the signal and had come as quickly as he could.

“You rang?” Drax asked. “I answered.”



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Chapter 7

“It's time to go,” Pip said, waving everyone toward Drax's ship.

Gamora was taking in the wonders of the ancient citadel before saying good-bye to Adam Warlock. “This temporary home of yours is truly amazing,” she said, running her hand across the wall and feeling its intricate details. “There's so much history here.”

“It's true. Many have come through this sanctuary over the years. Its history gives it definition,” Warlock said. “Does your history give you definition, Gamora?”

Gamora paused to consider the question. *Not anymore*, she thought. Confronting and defeating her father in the dreamscape left Gamora feeling strong and empowered. The healing cocoon had done its job.

“Thank you, Adam. For your advice and for your friendship,” Gamora said.

“We're all on a journey. I'm sure our paths will cross again very soon,” Adam Warlock said.

“Good-bye, Warlock,” added Drax. “Till next time.”

Pip glanced up at Gamora, Adam Warlock, and Drax standing in formation. “Look at us!” he chuckled. “The old crew back together again and kicking butt.”

“Emphasis on OLD,” said Rocket. “C'mon, troll! Stop blubbering about the past. Get in the ship and let's wrap up this adventure already.”

As the group settled into their voyage, Drax took a moment to catch up with Gamora. “I've missed our sparring sessions,” he confided. “You're the only battler on this team that's been able to match me blow for blow.”

“HEY! I'm offended!” Rocket grouched. “I like to think I'm pretty good with my fists.”

“From what I've seen, you only use them to stuff your face with snacks,” Pip said.

“Enough chatter,” Drax said. “Tell me where we're heading, troll.”



“I've tracked Nebula to a place called SAKAAR,” Pip said, activating the ship's holographic projection. “Sakaar is the fourth planet in the Tayo Star System, located in the Fornax Galaxy. If you like giant, nasty monsters, this place is for you. The creatures who live there are savage, and the terrain is hazardous. This won't be a vacation. Don't make the Drammoths angry, or you'll be in big trouble. We'll need to be ready for anything.”

“No. You won't,” said Gamora. “Because I'm going in alone.”

“What?! That's crazy, and you know it,” Rocket exclaimed. “Didn't that freaking cocoon teach you anything?”

“I must confront Nebula by myself. She'll do anything to watch me suffer, and that includes hurting my friends and the people I care for. I won't risk your lives for my own needs,” Gamora explained. “I'm a warrior, and I will complete this task alone. End of story.”

“A warrior can be hard and soft at the same time. This is a lesson I have learned in my life that I will share with you now,” said Drax, placing his hand on Gamora's shoulder. “I lost my family to violence. It gave me much pain. My emotions altered my mind, and I could not think straight. But then I

found hope. It was with you and the Guardians. You are my family now.” Drax powered down the ship's thrusters. “Gamora, you have my respect and admiration. But I will not take you to Sakaar unless we fight together as a family.”

“Yeah. Me too,” Rocket said. “You going in alone? It ain't right.”

“I hate to admit it, but the hairy crybaby is right,” Pip agreed. “We're in this together, kid. For better or for worse, you're stuck with us.”

Gamora took in the moment and realized how lucky she truly was. No matter how alone she may have felt, her friends were there when she needed them. It was time to accept their help and get going. “Let's do this,” she said, unsheathing her blade and moving it gently so it glinted in the light.

“I have a question,” said Drax. “Why are we chasing Nebula?”

“It's all because of some mystery box,” Pip answered.

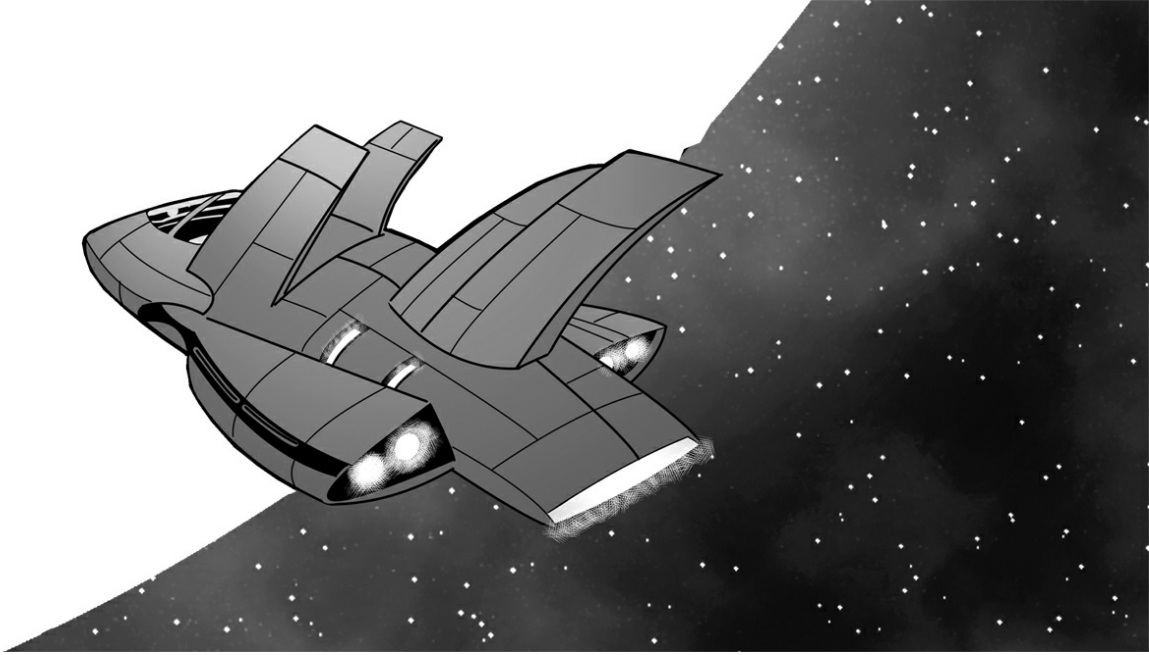
“Hmmm. This all seems very familiar. Are you sure we have not done this before?” asked Drax.

“We're always chasing down mystery boxes, cosmic cubes, and Infinity Stones. That's just what we do. We're the Guardians of the Galaxy!” Rocket said, glancing at Pip and frowning. “And a troll. We're the Guardians of the Galaxy and a troll.”

“If it brings Gamora peace, I will do it. What is our plan?” Drax inquired.

Gamora thoughtfully considered the question. “We're going to find Nebula, retrieve what belongs to me, and stomp any beasts that get in the way,” she said. “How does that sound?”

“Sounds like a good plan to me,” Drax said, firing up the thrusters and rocketing the ship toward Sakaar.





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Chapter 8

“Just once, I want to end up on a planet where no one is trying to kill me,” Rocket said, polishing his plasma blaster. “I don't think that's too much to ask.”

The group touched down on Sakaar and prepared themselves for battle. Drax used his ship's computer to scan the area for danger.

“This planet's terrain is treacherous and unpredictable. Be careful. Do not stray from the group,” Drax explained as a variety of heinous holograms appeared before them: the MawKaw Magkong lava monster, tentacled Amebids, and the great Devil Corker. “These are creatures we might encounter. They will try to do us great harm. But do not worry, I will destroy them all.”

“I appreciate that, Drax,” Gamora said, turning her attention to the group. “I know I haven't said much on this journey, but I want you all to know that your friendship and camaraderie mean a great deal to me. Whatever happens out there, know that all of you are—”

“Don't sweat it, kid!” Rocket interrupted. “No need for mushy stuff. This is what we do. Now let's go kick some butt.”

The ship's door opened as Drax, Rocket, Pip, and Gamora carefully stepped outside. The air was dry, the wind filled with sand. They'd landed in one of Sakaar's flat deserts, surrounded by mountains and gorges. In the distance sat Nebula's fortress, a medium-size cavelike structure. On the outside it seemed harmless enough, but getting there wouldn't be easy.

“So we walk from here to there? That's not dangerous at all! You guys are a bunch of babies,” Pip said, striding proudly toward their objective. Suddenly, the ground below them shook violently. The surface of the planet cracked open, boulders flying in all directions as a gigantic Wildebot emerged from Sakaar's craggy depths. Wildebots were technology-based nonorganic life-forms from the planet Cron whose spaceship crash-landed on Sakaar after being pulled through the Great Portal. They weren't happy about

the relocation. The beast scooped Pip up into his metal hand and scowled at the little troll as if he were a naughty pet.



Drax sighed. “Pip, there is a reason we are no longer on the same team,” he groused, launching himself onto the back of the steel beast. Drax pounded his fists into it over and over again like a jackhammer, pulverizing the creature's metal body into a million little pieces and ripping its circuitry apart until it was completely dismantled. Pip thanked his old friend, and they continued on their path. As they approached their destination, Nebula appeared.

“You're so predictable, Gamora. A troll, an animal, and a sad fighting creature? You've already lost,” Nebula taunted.

“You underestimate my associates,” announced Gamora.

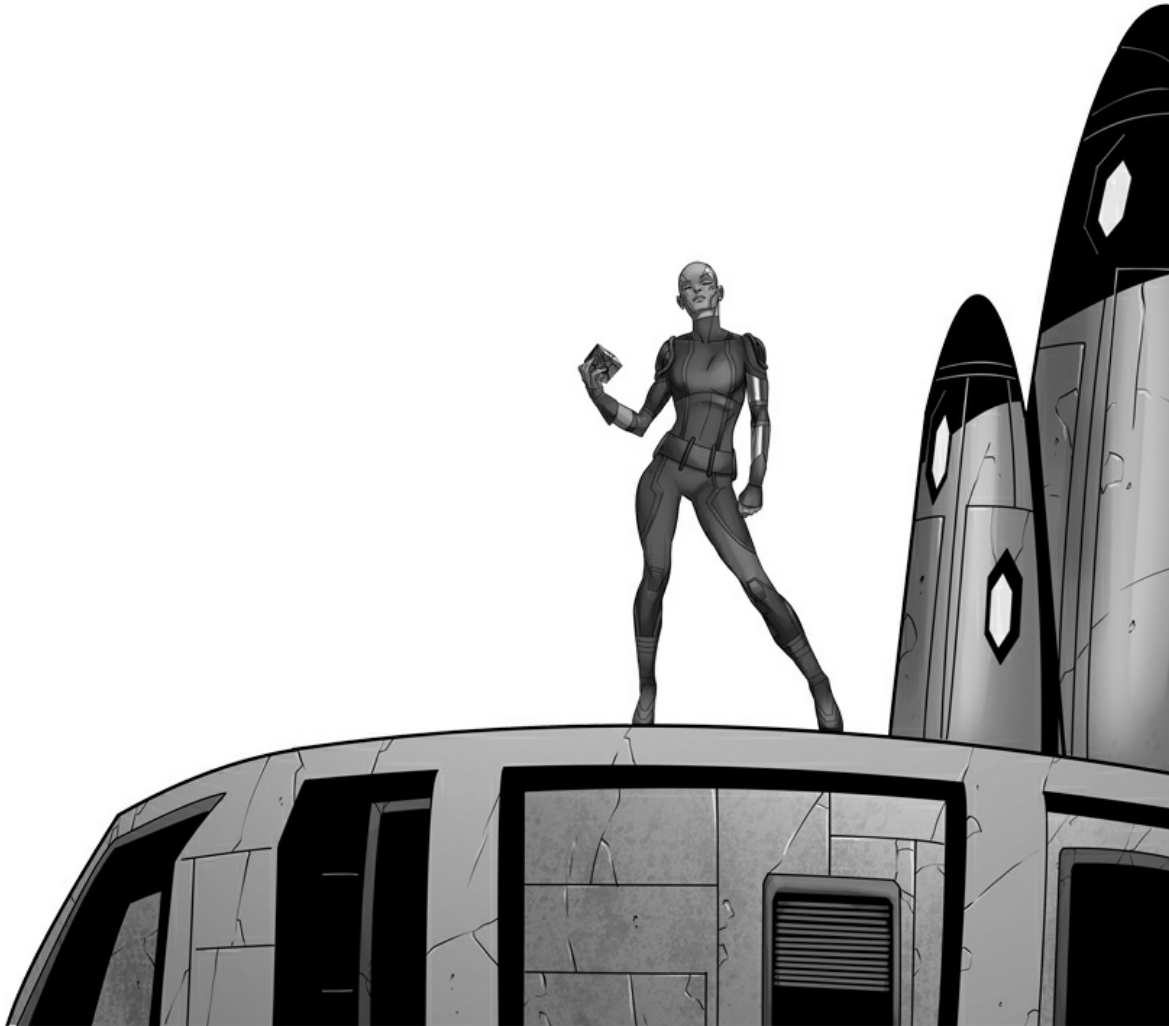
“AND I AM NOT SAD!” Drax shouted.

A gathering army of Chitauri soldiers appeared from inside Nebula's cavern compound. They were ready and waiting to serve her every evil need. “These were a gift from Thanos, to be used for protection, destruction, or whatever I desire. Today I will use them for everything,” she said. “And our father will be so pleased when they end up defeating you.”

“Chitauri?!” whined Rocket. “Those guys are rubes!”

“Thanos cares nothing for life,” Gamora told her sister. “The welfare of

others has no value or meaning to a despot like him. This is your role model? This is the person you seek to please? One day, when he's done using you, Thanos will cast you aside as he has done with everything else. I take no pleasure in what I do here today.”



Nebula's body filled with red rage. “ATTACK!” she commanded as the battalion of Chitauri warriors stormed toward Gamora and her allies. The heroes swiftly ducked for cover behind a group of nearby boulders. The Chitauri blasted them with fire as Nebula disappeared into her stronghold.

“I'm going after Nebula,” Gamora said. “Cover me!” She took off toward her sister, deflecting lasers with her blade.

“MUNCH ON LASER, SKULL FACES!” Rocket said, blasting away at

the incoming army. As the Chitauri descended upon them, Drax ran onto the battlefield, using his body as a battering ram, taking on soldiers left and right. Pip continued to hide.

FZZZZZZZZUUUUUUU!

Rocket's plasma blaster powered down without warning. "My gun!" he exclaimed, tinkering with its settings. "This is bad."



Pip ran to Rocket's aid. "Let me have a look," Pip said, cracking open the weapon. "Here's your problem. Your secondary particle ionization chamber is stuck." He flipped a switch, and the blaster was back up and running.

“Hey, thanks, troll,” Rocket said. “You're not so bad. Still hairy, but not so bad. Now let's take these Chitauri flarknards down!”

Safely away from the battle, Gamora cautiously entered Nebula's cavern fortress. The inside seemed hollow and empty. It reminded her of her father.

“I'm done with these games, sister!” Gamora shouted. “The box belongs to me.”

“You want this so badly,” Nebula sneered, holding up the metal box. “And yet you know nothing of what is inside. It controls you.”

“Nothing controls me. Not anymore,” Gamora said, striking a defensive stance. “Hand over the box.”

“You will open the box for me,” Nebula said, pressing her hand against the wall and activating a control panel. The wall behind her parted to reveal a prison cell containing the unconscious bodies of Star-Lord and Groot.

“Or you will never see your friends again,” Nebula declared.



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Chapter 9

Nebula delighted in unveiling the captive Star-Lord and Groot. Gamora had been preparing herself to confront her sister for a long time. She saw it as her mission to end their conflict once and for all, but she never expected that two of her best friends' lives would hang in the balance. The two sisters were locked in a stare-down. Gamora's silence drove Nebula crazy, and she soon demanded a response.

“What will it be, sister?” Nebula taunted.

Drax, Rocket, and Pip raced into the fortress, out of breath and fresh from battle. They were shocked to see their teammates trapped in Nebula's clutches.

“What the—?!” muttered Rocket. “Our friends got flarknarded!”

“Now I'm angry,” Drax growled.

“And I bet we wouldn't like you when you're angry, right? You know, like that other green guy, the incredible one?” quipped Pip as the assembled group stared flatly. “Sorry, bad joke. Just forget I ever said it.”

“WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER, GAMORA?” Nebula shouted.



“I’ll do it,” Gamora solemnly replied. “I’ll give you what you want.”

“What?! Gamora, don’t do this,” Rocket said in a whispered plea. “Don’t give in! We’ll find another way. Can’t we give the troll to Nebula instead?” Despite the great danger they faced, Gamora’s allies always found comfort in humor.

“It’s okay, Rocket,” Gamora said in a pacifying tone. “It’ll be all right.” She gently made her way toward Nebula, relaxing her body with each step. It was pleasing to finally confront her sister face-to-face. Gamora glanced back at her allies and felt proud. She gave a slight nod to Drax, then turned her attention to the box.

“Open it,” Nebula commanded. “Place your finger on the mark and open it.”

Gamora looked her sister in the eyes and grinned. Everything was going to be all right. In the blink of an eye, she snatched the box right out of Nebula’s hands and, with a swift kick, knocked her sister off her feet. “Follow me if you dare,” Gamora snarled, brandishing her Godslayer and taking off on foot across the wilds of Sakaar.

“RRAAHHHH!” Nebula screamed. She rose from the ground in anger, brushed herself off, and scrambled to chase after Gamora. Rocket and Pip wanted to free Star-Lord and Groot, but there were two problems standing in front of them. Nebula left behind a duo of Chitauri soldiers to guard her prisoners, and they weren't budging. Pip had an idea.

“Distract these two, wouldja?” he whispered to Rocket. “I'm going to try something.” Rocket nodded and began dancing around like a fool, drawing attention to himself.

“YIYIYIYIYIYIYI! I'm a hairy little squirt, ain't I? Please don't hurt me, big scary bad guys!” babbled Rocket as Pip secretly slipped behind the Chitauri. He grabbed them by the shoulders and, in a flash, the burly soldiers disappeared into thin air. “What the what?!” exclaimed Rocket. “Did you just teleport those guys away?!”

Pip grinned. “Huh. Guess my powers aren't as rusty as I thought they were! Now grab your pals,” he said as Rocket rushed to free Star-Lord and Groot, who had just woken up. Both of them were groggy and confused; neither one knew where they were or how they'd gotten there.

“Whahaaaaaa? Where am I?” asked a dizzy Star-Lord. “We were heading to Spartax, and then there was a light, and now we're here?”

“I am Groot?” said a weary Groot, struggling to stay awake. Rocket began trying different combinations to unlock the cell, but nothing was working.

“My head hurts,” said Star-Lord, pointing in the distance. “And there's a monster.”

“Awww. The poor guy must still be dreaming,” said Pip cheerfully.

“ROOOAAARRR!”

An enormous Drammoth had crawled into the chamber, licking its lips and eyeing Pip as if he were a tasty little morsel.

“Not dreaming!” said a frightened Pip.

Drax turned to confront the creature head-on. “I hate Sakaar,” he grumbled, charging the Drammoth with a fiery passion.

Across the desert of Sakaar, Gamora ran for miles through the planet's empty wastelands. She clutched the mystery box tightly as Nebula gave chase. They'd been running for a while, their pace becoming slower as their energy depleted. Gasping for breath, they both stopped to rest at the edge of a

deep gorge.

“Well? OPEN IT!” commanded Nebula. “You have what you want, now do what you came here to do!”

“I came here to offer my hand in peace, Nebula,” confided Gamora. “We’re family.”

“LIAR!” Nebula screamed. “You only care for yourself. Thanos took us in. He gave us our lives, and you thank him by disobeying, by running away from your heritage! Family? Ha! You don’t do that to family.”



“Family doesn’t hurt you,” Gamora began. “Family is about the people who have your back when the odds are stacked against you. I have a family—and they are the Guardians of the Galaxy. I didn’t come here to fight you, but I will.” Gamora tucked the box into the back of her belt and made sure her sword was tightly secured. If she was going to battle her sister, it would be hand-to-hand.

Nebula flung herself, hands outstretched, toward Gamora. But Gamora ducked to avoid her sister's grasp, whipping around to grab Nebula's arm and hold it firmly behind her back. Nebula used all of her strength to flip Gamora over her own body. Nebula raised her leg to stomp her sister into the ground, but Gamora caught her foot and tossed her back hastily. Gamora flung herself up, jumping on top of Nebula and pinning her to the ground. They were growing tired.

“Mercy, sister,” Nebula pleaded. Gamora loosened her grip slightly. Nebula used it to her advantage, grabbing Gamora by the arm and hurling her to the ground. “Fool.”

Gamora lay there in silence. “Maybe I am a fool for believing you'd ask for mercy,” she said. “But that's the difference between us. When someone asks for help, I give it.”

“It wasn't always like this, Gamora,” Nebula said. “Do you remember when we were little girls, battling one another for Father's affection?”

“We didn't know any better,” Gamora said, picking herself up and dusting off her shoulders. “But now we do, and it's time to move on!”

CRREEEECH!

A monstrous Devil Corker burst from the ground, snatching up Nebula with its spiked tongue and tossing her from side to side. Devil Corkers were terrifying creatures, native to the Upper Vandro region of Sakaar. Beastly-looking arachnids, they had a habit of lurking below-ground, waiting for their prey. This particular creature felt movement and swiftly went in for the kill. There was no time for Gamora to think.

She leaped onto the monster's enormous head. Then she pulled her blade from its sheath and punctured the creature, causing it to drop Nebula and cry out in pain. Gamora used her remaining strength to thrust the beast down into the nearby gorge before jumping to safety.

The two lay there on the ground in silence, drained by the unrelenting struggle. They had been through so much together—both as sisters and warriors—but the wounds of the past weren't healing. Perhaps, one day, that would change. Gamora wondered whether today was that day.

SHZZZAK!

Gamora sat up in an instant. Nebula had vanished, using her wrist gauntlets to teleport away. *She'll be back*, Gamora thought, *but I got the box.*

Although she was spent physically, Gamora smiled—she was happy. Change was in the air.





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Chapter 10

The trek back to Nebula's base was long but worth it. It gave Gamora time to think. She'd retrieved what she came for—and, though her sister escaped, she believed Nebula may have been changed for the better. *Only time will tell*, she thought. Rocket, Drax, and Pip were more than happy to see that she'd returned mostly unscathed.

“You got the box! Nice job. Can we leave now?” Rocket said wearily. “Hey, where's Nebby, anyway?”

“She teleported off the planet,” explained Gamora. “She'll appear again, somewhere, someday, and we'll be ready for her.”

“Can someone please explain what's happening?!” Star-Lord pleaded.

“Do not worry about it, Quill,” assured Drax. “Just be quiet.”

“I am Groot!” demanded Groot.

“Don't worry, buddy. We'll definitely get you home,” Rocket assured his friend. “We're all going home, right?” He looked deep into Gamora's eyes, wondering whether she'd end her vacation and rejoin the team. From the looks of it, he wasn't about to take no for an answer.

“There is no place I'd rather be than with my tribe,” Gamora replied.

“This is good news,” Drax said. “Now, everyone get in the ship so we can leave this place behind.” A Drammoth's roar rang out in the distance. “I hate Sakaar.”

“Where is home for you guys?” asked Pip.

“THE GALAXY,” scoffed Rocket. “Duh.”

The group piled into the spacecraft and left Sakaar for good. As they soared high into the sky, Rocket pawed at the mystery box, desperate to see what was inside.

“OooOooOoo! I hope it's an Infinity Stone. Or maybe it's money! We could use some of that. We could also use some troll deodorant,” said Rocket, wincing. “I can barely breathe in here.”

“Leave it alone,” Pip piped in. “It's Gamora's thing, let her do what she wants with it.”

“You know what? The troll is right,” Rocket concluded. “I don't care what's inside of it anymore. As long as Gamora is happy, so am I.”

“WHAT IS GOING ON?!” yelled Star-Lord.

“We'll explain everything,” Gamora assured him. “Someday.”

“Hey, can you drop me off on Degenera?” asked Pip.

“Oh, no. No way am I going back to that stinkin' hole,” Rocket said, scrunching his nose. “They stole my ship! What am I going to tell the rental company? That place is bad news.”

“Then I guess I'll just stay with you guys and become a Guardian of the Galaxy,” joked Pip. “We can hang out forever and ever and ever and—”

“TO DEGENERA!” shouted Rocket.

“No,” said Gamora. “To Zaldrex. We have work to do.”

Rocket remembered the ugliness they'd witnessed at the thieves' market. “Oh, yeah! That's right. We do have some work to do. TO ZALDREX!”

“And call Captain Marvel,” Gamora suggested. “We're going to need all of the help we can get.”



Gamora strolled to the back of the ship by herself. It felt good to be surrounded by her teammates once again, but she needed a moment alone. She gingerly studied the box that had given her so much hope and heartache. It felt lighter than she remembered. Was it a tyrant's trinket, or was it something else? The question no longer mattered. Gamora pulled a tiny explosive device from her pocket. She stuck the small blinking gadget to the box, placed it inside the air lock, and closed the shuttle door tightly. Taking a deep breath, she opened the air lock, and the box was sucked out into the void of space. In a matter of moments, a blinding burst of light flashed before Gamora's eyes. The box had been destroyed. Her quest was finally over. A weight lifted from her shoulders. She realized that once she'd retrieved the box, its contents didn't really matter. She'd lived without knowing for a long time, and now revealing what was inside no longer felt important. What the box represented was the burden of her past. Now, at last, she was free. It was time to move forward. As the ship moved through the cosmos, a sun's bright rays shone through the window, warming Gamora's face. A new day was dawning, and she was spending it with her family.

卡魔拉的故事

真-霍伯利斯是一个爱好和平的类人种族，他们一直和谐地生活着，直到一群暴力的外星人闯入他们的星球。这群武力至上的生物入侵后，将他们所到之处的一切都尽数摧毁，连真-霍伯利斯也被他们从宇宙地图上完全抹去了。当尘埃落定时，只剩下一个幸存者：那是一个名叫卡魔拉的婴儿，她被疯狂的泰坦·萨诺斯掳走了。他试图把卡魔拉变成一台战斗机器，为了让她执行自己的邪恶命令而精心训练她。他喜欢挑唆卡魔拉和同样由他收养的妹妹星云一决高下，两个小女孩为了争夺父爱而对抗。卡魔拉成了一名女武士、一台能力超群的战斗机器，但她的残暴使她名声扫地。然而，当她意识到自己被邪恶的养父所操控的时候，卡魔拉奋起反抗，决定弃恶从善。她的养父非常恼火，发誓要让卡魔拉为违抗父命付出代价。而星云却站在养父这一边，以姐姐的公然抗命为耻。后来，卡魔拉和一些冒险家结盟，并且一结盟就是好多年。最终，她加入了银河护卫队。尽管有了联盟，她仍然是孤单一人，在浩瀚无垠又危机四伏的宇宙中寻找亲情，隐忍着接受她痛苦的过去。如今，她很高兴自己被称为卡魔拉：银河系中最致命的女人。



第一章

当四名蜥蜴人气势汹汹地齐步穿过迪吉娜拉星的宇宙飞船墓地时，一阵温暖的风正吹过这颗星球的表面。他们在寻找宝藏。这种长着大型爬行动物身躯的蜥蜴人缺乏战斗技巧，只能依靠粗制滥造的武器来干些下三烂的勾当。这天，蜥蜴人全副武装地来到了迪吉娜拉星，准备向任何阻碍他们的人发起挑战。



“去搜索这片区域！”他们的首领瓦扎尔命令道，“拿走所有你找到的东西，然后把剩下的都毁掉。”蜥蜴人冲进阴暗的墓地，把垃圾和金

属碎片像扔废纸一样丢到一边。宇宙飞船经常被迪吉娜拉星厚厚的大气层困住，它们从天上掉下来后就被废弃在地上。这里的空气受到了污染，恶劣的环境也使迪吉娜拉星成了一个完美的藏身之地，这里是犯罪分子的乐土。但这颗行星并非一无是处。它的表面上散布着一伙伙无助的流浪者。“瓦扎尔，请过来！”一个蜥蜴人搜寻者喊道，“我找到了一些东西。”他用手里的枪拨动了一大块金属。一只小小的啮齿类动物从金属下面窜了出来。

这小东西试图逃跑，但瓦扎尔拎着它的尾巴，把这只吓坏了的小动物来回摇晃。“哈哈！看看这个弱小的东西。扭来扭去，真可怜！”

这时，一双明亮的眼睛在黑暗中猛然睁开。

卡魔拉纵身一跃，从她的藏身之地跳到了蜥蜴人中间。她用腿横扫一圈，把他们踢倒在地。接着，她拔出剑，迅速地把蜥蜴人的武器切成碎片。这群蜥蜴人吓呆了，他们从没见过动作这么快的人。

卡魔拉转向瓦扎尔，抓住他的领子，把他拉了过来。“扭给我看啊，你这软弱的东西。”她在他耳边低声说着，然后把蜥蜴人首领扔到了附近一个冒泡的池子里。其他蜥蜴人搜寻者吓得一句话也不敢说。

“没有武器，你们不过是群可怜、丑陋的东西。”卡魔拉嘲讽道。她低头看了一眼那只刚才被瓦扎尔吓住的小动物，它正怯生生地盯着她看。“你现在安全了。”她说。然后她转向那群蜥蜴人，说道，“但你们不是。”说着，她按下了手套上的一个按钮，一张全息图立刻出现了。

“这个东西在哪里？”卡魔拉问，“现在就告诉我。”

“在……在……在……”瓦扎尔紧张得嘴巴都不利索了。

“快说！”卡魔拉厉声道。她很快就要失去耐心了。

“我……我从来没有见过它。”瓦扎尔说，他颤抖的身体不由自主地往下滑。“你也许能在某个地方找到这样的东西，但这也只是传言。”

“在哪儿？”卡魔拉问道。

“扎尔德拉克斯。”瓦扎尔颤抖着回答，“我听说过你的故事，卡魔拉。他们说你就像你父亲一样。我现在知道这些故事是——”

“我的剑被称为神剑。”卡魔拉打断了他的话，“你能猜出它是干什么的吗？”她挥舞着自己的剑，让蜥蜴人看得清清楚楚。“如果再让我看到你伤害其他生物，我就会用这把剑把你的手指一根一根地砍掉。听明白了吗？”她咆哮着。蜥蜴人紧张地不断点头。

卡魔拉收起神剑，让他们好好想想她所说的话。砍掉敌人的手指通常不是她的风格，但这种威胁似乎能让他们对她另眼相看。卡魔拉发现远处有一个小镇，于是她向那里走去。她刚来迪吉娜拉星没几天，但她

非常想离开这里。她想：“接下来我该去哪里呢？”卡魔拉已经有一段时间没见到她的朋友们了。她接受了宇宙赋予她的一个令人意想不到的任务，然后就离开了银河护卫队。她的任务只是寻找一个盒子吗？还是说她的任务远不止这个？

卡魔拉觉得自己焦躁不安，所以除了寻找盒子，她也想着要寻找内心的平静。

走了几英里路后，卡魔拉看到了一家脏兮兮的餐厅，这家餐厅在一个小镇的外围。她一直靠搭便车的方式去她需要去的地方。现在，是时候再搭一趟便车，永远地离开迪吉娜拉星了。她警惕地走进餐厅，仔细观察四周是否有危险。餐厅里的空气臭烘烘的，闻起来像烤糊的肉味。这里坐着成群的外星生物，他们来自宇宙的各个星球，而且脾气暴躁，这让卡魔拉感到十分恶心。他们都听说过她的残暴，所以要搭到便车并不容易。

“我需要搭便车离开这个星球。”卡魔拉对那个穿着油腻腻的围裙的外星人厨子说。他默默地指向角落里的一个人。当卡魔拉转身去看那是谁时，她被一张熟悉的面孔吓了一跳。

“嗯，好吧。”火箭说，一边在椅子上转来转去，“搭便车？拜托，卡魔拉。你知道我比便车更靠谱。”



尽管渴望独处，卡魔拉还是很高兴可以在这里见到一位朋友。虽然这个朋友大部分时间都很古怪，但他心地善良，还拥有勇士精神。

“所以你找到我了。”卡魔拉耸耸肩说，“那现在该怎么办？”

“你为什么不结束假期，回到护卫队去？这一点毫无疑问。”火箭继续说，“没有你，事情就都不一样了。德拉克斯哭个不停！还有，你都想不到格鲁特会不停地干什么。”

听到这话，卡魔拉觉得受宠若惊，但却没有心情开玩笑。“我还是独自一人更好些。”说着，她尴尬地看向别处。

就在这时，一群叛变的科达巴克人冲进了餐厅。科达巴克人是一群外形像小猪的外星人，喜欢侍奉各类邪恶的主人。

“你坐在我的座位上了，小动物。”其中一个外星人拍着火箭的肩膀抱怨道。科达巴克人呼出的热气像污水一样臭气熏天。

“除非你能把你的臭味清理干净，否则我才不动呢！”火箭说，“这是一个自由的星球，我可以坐在任何我想坐的地方。明白了吗？”

这时，又有五个科达巴克人靠近了火箭，形势一下子变得很严峻。

“好吧，好吧。”火箭说着，从椅子上站了起来，“说不定那真是你

的座位。”

卡魔拉的身体绷紧了。“坐下来。”她说，一边把火箭推了回去。

科达巴克人首领粗鲁地上下打量着卡魔拉。“你很漂亮。”他开口道，“因为你的皮肤是绿色的。”他和他那些脾气暴躁的朋友们发出了一阵会心的笑声，而卡魔拉则立即行动起来。她轻轻地把脚放到旁边的桌子下面，一脚将它踢翻到空中，并准确地用手接住桌子。接着，她把桌子扔到正在大笑的科达巴克人身上，砰的一声把他们打倒在地。餐厅内顿时一片混乱。

“快跑！”火箭喊道。他抓住卡魔拉的胳膊，把她拉出门去。



“我希望我们正在跑向一艘飞船。”卡魔拉回答。

“别担心，我会罩着你的。”火箭说。他带着卡魔拉冲进一条长长的小巷，又穿过一片营地。他们从水果商贩、小饰品商贩身边飞奔而过，还不小心踩到了零星的动物粪便。很快，科达巴克人就离他们越来越近了。这时，卡魔拉发现了一堆空桶，于是她把它们翻倒在地上，把那些胖乎乎的科达巴克人绊倒了。但这也只给他们两人争取了一点点时间。

“快到了！”火箭喊着，绕过拐角。他惊恐地发现情况不妙。“怎么回事？！”他喊道，“我的飞船不见了！”



第二章

卡魔拉很沮丧。她本来一直很低调，只想着管好自己的事情，但现在她正忙着和一只叫火箭的浣熊一起逃脱一群怒气冲冲的、外形像猪的外星人的追击。这根本不是她计划中应该发生的情况。原本可以解救他们的飞船不见了，而现在他们只有一点点时间来决定下一步该怎么办。

“那儿！”火箭喊道，一边向另一个方向跑去。“这边！”

“我们到底要去哪儿，火箭？”卡魔拉问道。此刻她正飞奔在被废墟覆盖的迪吉娜拉星的街道上。

“到的时候我会告诉你的！”火箭吼叫着，他感到自己的双腿越来越累了。他们跑得很快，但是不能一直这样跑下去。

“卡魔拉！”这时，一个声音从其中一间简陋的棚屋里传来。一个矮小的外星人用头巾遮住脸，正疯狂地冲他们挥手。“在这里！”

火箭睁大了眼睛看着卡魔拉。“你在这里有朋友，而你却没有告诉我？”他汗流浹背，喘着粗气问道。他们冲进了那间破旧的棚屋，科达巴克人从他们旁边跑过去，并没有发现他们。火箭和卡魔拉松了一口气，他们终于躲过了敌人的追击。棚屋内十分潮湿，还散发着臭气。棚屋的主人慢慢地摘下了帽子，一张熟悉的面孔露了出来。

“欢迎来到迪吉娜拉星。”巨魔皮普说，“至于这股臭味，我很抱歉。”皮普认识卡魔拉已经很多年了。他们曾经都是无限守望者的成员，那是一批为了寻找传说中的无限原石而走遍银河的英雄。

寻找无限原石是一项艰巨的任务，这个团队为了完成这项任务付出了巨大的代价。最终，他们分道扬镳了。卡魔拉已经很久没见过皮普了，但他们的相聚与卡魔拉和火箭的相聚比起来，就显得没那么有戏剧性了。



“我的老冤家！”火箭喊着，向皮普大步走去。

“小点声儿，浣熊！你是想要那些科达巴克人找到你吗？”皮普咕哝了一声。

“说实话，你就是我的老冤家！”

皮普和火箭在许多年前就已经见过面，那时候他们都还不认识卡魔拉。不过，当时他们相处得并不太好。

“我不是浣熊，你知道的！你知道的！”火箭生气地低声说。

“你好，皮普。”卡魔拉边说边看着这狭窄的地方，“很高兴见到你，即使是在这种奇怪的情况下。”

“的确有点怪怪的，好吧。但是见到你太棒了！”皮普热情地说，“我想宇宙这地方并不大。”

“我不知道你和火箭也认识。”卡魔拉说，“你们在一起工作会有问题吗？”

“哈！”火箭笑着说，“没有问题，我可是个专业人士。我是来帮助

你的。朋友就该这样，对吧？”

“是的，我也是。”皮普补充道，“无论你需要什么，我都在你身边。朋友就该这样。”

“我刚才是说——”火箭闭上眼睛，深深地吸了一口气。“让我们团结协作，火箭。这样你就会比现在更好。”

“你怎么会来迪吉娜拉星？”皮普问，“这又不是什么好地方。”

“我正在找一个东西。”卡魔拉说，一边激活了她的全息投影仪，“一个曾经属于我父亲萨诺斯的盒子。”火箭和皮普浑身发抖。毕竟，萨诺斯是银河系臭名昭著的恶棍之一。即使他是卡魔拉的父亲，但听到他的名字，依然让人觉得毛骨悚然。

“那东西里面有什么？”火箭问道。

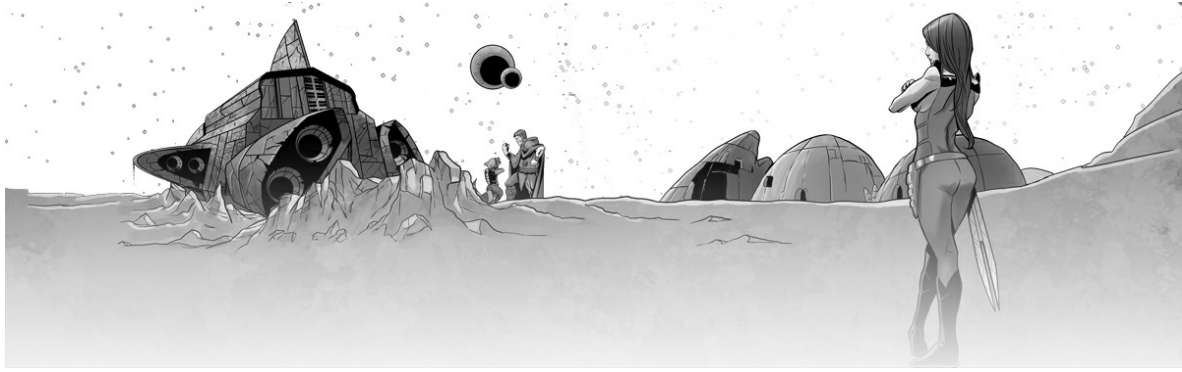
卡魔拉停顿了一下。“我不知道。”她坦白地说，“他告诉我永远不要碰它。当我还是一个小女孩的时候，我总是相信它对我父亲来说是一样很有价值的东西。他用它作为讨价还价的筹码，来赢得我的服从。有一次，我发现我妹妹试图打开它，可是却打不开。当我从她手里抓起那个盒子的时候，盒子却打开了。我觉得我知道这是为什么。但是在我们俩都还没看见里面有什么的时候，萨诺斯就愤怒地从我手中夺过了那个盒子。在那之后，我再也没见过那个盒子，但我记得它的样子，记得清清楚楚。我知道星云也和我一样。这可能是我父亲设计的智力游戏，或者可能是别的什么东西。”

“哦，你的意思是，像无限原石那样的东西吗？”皮普问。

“作为一个小女孩，我梦想着不管盒子里装着什么东西，它都能带我离开，远离那些疯狂的事情……现在想想真是愚蠢极了。”卡魔拉诉说着，“这个盒子从萨诺斯手中消失不见了。多年来，我一直密切关注着有关它的传言和消息，寻找它的下落，仿佛这是一个奇怪的神话。可线索总是找着找着就断了，所以我最终放弃了寻找。但就在这时，它又出现了。我从一个宇宙贸易站收到了一张照片，确认了这个盒子就在这个地区。因为它很快又会被易手到别的地方，所以我必须马上找到它。”

“那么我们还等什么呢？我们现在就去找这个东西，这样你就可以回到银河护卫队了。那才是你真正的家。”火箭边说边冲皮普摇摇手指，“这个巨魔会把我们传送到任何一个我们想去的地方。这是和他在一起唯一的好处！”

“嗯，好吧，我不得不告诉你们一些坏消息。”皮普羞怯地说，“最近我的传送能力好像出了点儿问题。”



“哦，太好了。巨魔坏了！他没用了！”火箭说。他在这狭窄的小屋里来回踱着步。“我们现在该怎么办？打着横幅穿过银河吗？”

“我还可以追踪东西，你这讨厌的浣熊！”皮普说。他用手指戳了戳火箭的脸。

“停下来，你们两个。还有一件事。”卡魔拉说道，“我的线人通知我，说我的妹妹星云也一直在追踪这个盒子。虽然我们谁也不能确定那里面是什么东西，但我担心如果那个盒子落到她手里，整个宇宙都会陷入危险之中。”

“那么，巨魔，我们怎么离开这个臭星球？一些坏蛋偷了我租来的飞船。”火箭发着牢骚。

“我很高兴你这么问。”皮普说。他打开了窗帘，窗外有一艘小小的、破旧的宇宙飞船。

“你想让我们三个乘着这个化石一样的废物在宇宙中飞来飞去吗？”火箭问，“我看到浴室都比这玩意儿大！你真是疯了，笨蛋。”

“我喜欢把它看作一件舒适的古董。”皮普说着，拍了拍飞船的舷侧。这时，一块金属板脱落了，露出了飞船内部古老的电路。“嘿嘿。这里没什么可看的。”

卡魔拉翻了个白眼，她不知道让火箭和皮普参与是不是正确的选择。但是已经没有时间再考虑了。他们都爬上了那艘破旧的小飞船，准备起飞。皮普朝主舱走去，但被火箭挤到了一边。

“走开，巨魔。我来开。”火箭说着，坐在了船长的位子上。

“再给我说一遍，浣熊。看看会发生什么。”皮普愤怒地喊道。

“我——不是——浣熊！”火箭抬高声音说。

“你那毛茸茸的脸上就写着‘浣熊’两个字。”皮普嘲讽道。

“你为什么不去试着戴上面具，小个子？我讨厌看你那张丑陋的巨魔

脸。”火箭咆哮着。

“再说一次，浣熊！”皮普也咆哮了起来。

“够了！”卡魔拉头疼得要命，她勃然大怒道，“听着，这些话我只说一次：放下你们的分歧。”

“很好。”火箭说着，把椅子让了出去，“我走开，我会学着忘记我竟然让一个矮胖的小不点儿告诉我该怎么做。”

皮普坐在船长的位子上，开始转动开关。“系好安全带！”他说，然后转向卡魔拉问道，“我们去哪儿？”

“扎尔德拉克斯。”她说。

第三章

一阵隆隆的鼾声震动着小飞船的船舱。

“那真是火箭吗？！”皮普不相信地摇摇头，问道，“听起来像是一只野兽。”

卡魔拉心烦意乱地盯着窗外。

“你看起来不错，孩子。我们很久没见了。”皮普说。他注意到了卡魔拉的不安，“不管你在想什么，都不要让它影响你。我们会找到这个盒子，你的生活很快就会重回正轨。”他打开控制面板上的开关，点亮了前面的监视器。来自数百颗星球的外来生物一下子布满了屏幕。



“这是扎尔德拉克斯。从表面看，它像是一颗普通的行星。”皮普说，“但事实不是这样。你需要去地下才能一探究竟。收藏家在这颗星球的地下洞穴里经营着一家绝密的窃贼市场和拍卖行。他有很多奇怪的东西，大部分都是他不想要的垃圾。我敢打赌，你可以在那儿找到你想要的。我们会伪装成痞子偷偷溜进去。我有一些假信用证可以用来投

标，它们看起来就像真的一样！没有人知道这两者的区别。”

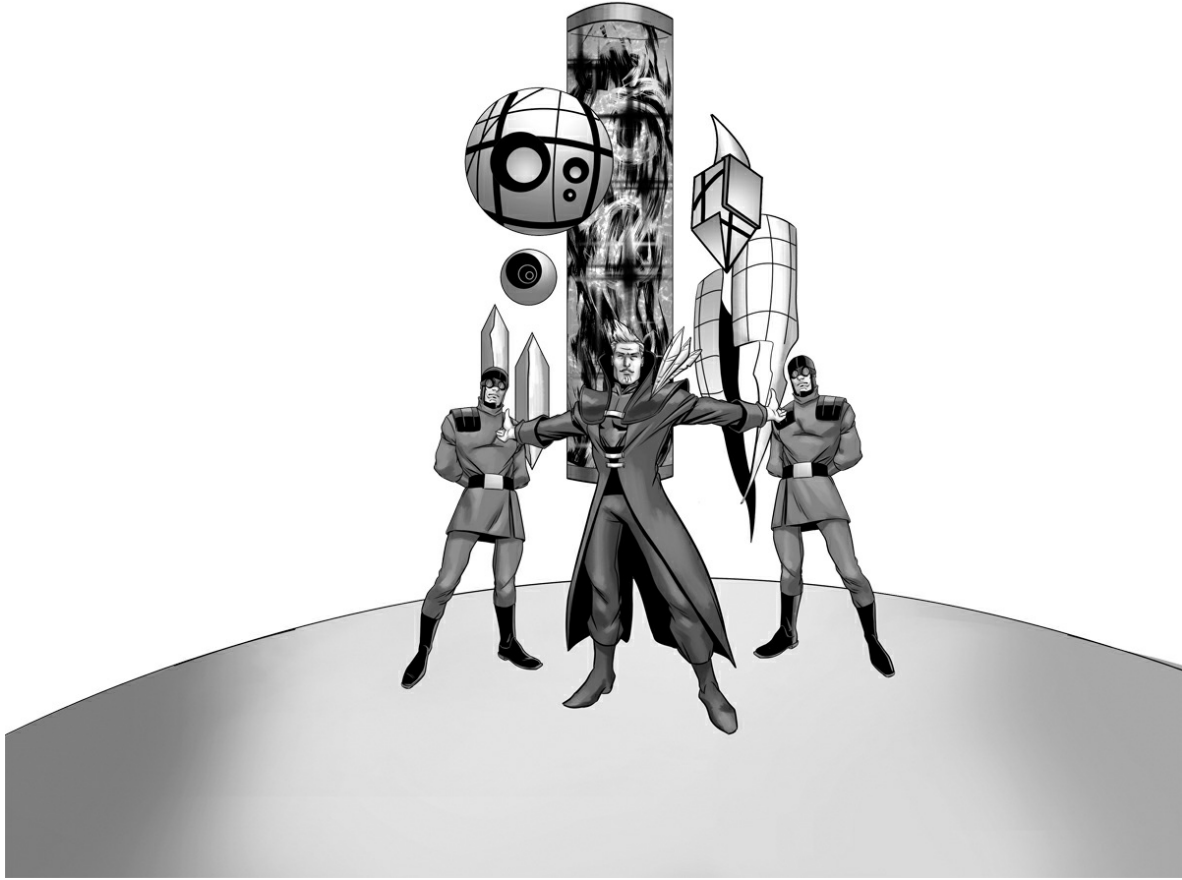
卡魔拉目不转睛地盯着屏幕。“星云就在那儿。”她喃喃自语道，“我能感觉得到。”

“哦！”火箭喊道。他睡醒了，边揉眼睛边说，“我做了一个可怕的噩梦：我被一个胖乎乎的小巨魔困在宇宙飞船上……”说着，他一眼瞥见了坐在船长位子上的皮普，“呸！我的噩梦成真了！”

“我真不知道你怎么能忍受那个家伙。”皮普对卡魔拉说。他拉停了飞船的推进器，“准备着陆。我们到了。”

皮普把宇宙飞船降落在扎尔德拉克斯首都的郊区，然后三人穿上黑斗篷来伪装自己。一旦有人认出他们，就会破坏整个计划。他们沿着蜿蜒的楼梯，看似随意却又万分小心地走进了窃贼市场。市场上有许多外星人的古董，这些东西都会造成致命的危害。还有像疾病罐和各种致命武器这样的东西出售，它们都会给无数人带来痛苦和折磨。这让卡魔拉很生气。不久，她发现了一样更糟糕的东西：一个装有三个外星人孩子的小笼子。收藏家的卫兵正看守着这个笼子，他们是银河系里罪大恶极的欺凌者。趁着卫兵们分心的时候，卡魔拉从斗篷里拿出一小袋口粮递给孩子们。美味的食物让他们露出了笑容，他们狼吞虎咽地吃了起来。

“怎么会有人这样做呢？”卡魔拉想。当她看到孩子们和家人分开，被关在笼子里，像奴隶一样等着被卖掉时，她的血液沸腾了。她挺直身体，想要设法解救他们。然而，一声警笛突然响起。紧接着，喇叭发出一阵响亮的声音。



“拍卖会现在在主场地正式开始！”

“这是禁区。快走啊！”收藏家的一名卫兵高喊着，粗鲁地用步枪的末端推搡着卡魔拉。卡魔拉强忍着没有抓住他的武器教训他，因为她的心中正酝酿着一个更大的计划。

临走前，卡魔拉低声对孩子们说：“我会回来的，我保证。”说着，她把手放在栏杆上，“别害怕。”她带着怒气，与皮普和火箭一起来到主厅，那里正在进行拍卖。

“欢迎各位畜生、魔鬼、恶魔、野兽！”一个声音回荡在熙熙攘攘的房间里，“我是谭利尔·提万。你们这些恶棍都说我是收藏家。今天晚上，我给你们带来了整个银河系中最稀有的垃圾。一个人的垃圾，将是另一个人的宝藏。安静下来，你们不会想错过的。”

“我准备好了。”皮普说，一边紧紧地握住他的竞标牌。

多年来，这位收藏家收集了数量可观的古董，但他经常发现到自己手上的都是些破铜烂铁，或者毫无价值的东西。可他没有丢弃这些东西，而是决定把它们卖掉。他知道他的追随者们都太天真了，不知道这

这些东西没有一样是真正值钱的。他们把自己的希望和梦想寄托在投标上。收藏家拿出了许多他打捞上来的货物，其中一些是他最近才得到的，而这些东西立即就被聚集起来的买家们竞拍走了。许多奇怪的物品一件件转手于他人。最后，一个黑色的盒子出现了。

“就是这个。”卡魔拉紧张地说。

收藏家的一个助手拿出了这个长方形的金属盒子。经历了多年的风雨，它变得很粗糙，被无数的小碎片覆盖着。人们似乎对它不感兴趣。没有人知道它曾经属于强大的萨诺斯。收藏家盯着它看了一会儿，他以前从未见过这个盒子。他的助手附在他耳边轻轻地说出了自己知道的细节。

“啊，是的。这是从泰坦附近的太空拖网渔船上找到的。让我们看看里面有什么吧。”收藏家笑着说。他试图撬开盖子，但没有成功，所以他觉得有些扫兴，“宇宙垃圾。谁想要它？投标从一百积分开始！”

“我该怎么办？”皮普慌慌张张地问。

“举起你的牌，竞价啊，巨魔！”火箭着急地低声说。

皮普举起竞标牌。收藏家立即点头确认。

“一次……两次……”收藏家顿了顿，环视了一下房间，说道，“这个盒子卖给这位戴头巾的巨魔！付一百个积分，请你来拿走这块可悲的垃圾。”当皮普向前走时，一个熟悉的蓝皮肤人从观众中跳了出来，正好落在舞台上。是星云。

她从收藏家手中夺过盒子，朝另一个方向狂笑着跑去。收藏家十分恼怒。“抓住她，拿回那个难看的盒子！”他喊道。但在他的手下要去追星云之前，发生了一件让所有人分心的事：火箭在那里兴奋地吆喝着。

“快看这儿啊！”火箭高声喊着，怒气冲冲地掀开斗篷，露出自己的武器。此时，这样做并不是最明智的举动。收藏家的眼睛睁得大大的，那是火箭过去从他那里偷走的。现在到他为此付出代价的时候了。

“抓住那只动物！”收藏家尖叫着。当他那群暴怒的手下冲向火箭时，卡魔拉把她的腿伸到过道里，绊倒了他们。于是，他们像多米诺骨牌一样接二连三地摔倒了。

“该走了。”卡魔拉说。她把火箭和皮普推向出口。他们去追星云，但收藏家的猎犬队很快就跟在了他们身后。它们穿过窃贼市场，疯狂地追逐着卡魔拉一行人。当火箭、卡魔拉及皮普冲进宇宙飞船时，一道激光射中了火箭的脚后跟。



“太可气了！小心激光！这群混蛋！”火箭说。他举起自己的等离子炮，说道，“你们不知道自己是在找谁的麻烦！”

“不，火箭。”卡魔拉命令道，“到船上去准备起飞吧。我必须先做一件事。”

火箭咕哝着，把皮普推上了船的舷梯。“你听到那位女士说的了。快走吧，巨魔！赶快启动这艘破飞船。”

卡魔拉飞奔回集市上，把收藏家的卫兵们扔到一个圈子里，暂时不理睬他们。最后，她发现了自己早些时候遇到的那几个被囚禁的外星人孩子。卡魔拉撕开了笼子的门，把他们放了出来。“你们的父母安全吗？”她问道。他们一齐点点头。“去找他们吧。”小家伙们匆匆跑向安全地带。卡魔拉默默地发誓，有朝一日她一定会回到扎尔德拉克斯，彻底结束这些犯罪活动。这时，她听到有脚步声靠近，于是拔腿向宇宙飞船跑去。

第四章

当卡魔拉站在收藏家的卫兵们面前时，他们已经围住了宇宙飞船。他们自认为比她更强大，因为他们有武器，但卡魔拉清楚自己比他们更有实力。她看着那些聚集的卫兵，想着自己是否应该对他们宽容些。当他们开火时，卡魔拉用她的剑轻松地化解了每一道激光的攻击。她无畏的行为使卫兵们哑口无言。趁着他们还惊讶得没有回过神来，她抓住了他们的首领，像挥动一个破旧的布娃娃一样挥舞着他的身体，把他的同伴们吓得不敢动弹。她弯下身子站在那个受伤的首领身边，给他留了个口信。



“这次放过你。我很快就会回扎尔德拉克斯的。还有，别搞错了，我一定会终止你们的恶行。”她威胁说。卡魔拉环顾四周，登上了飞船。飞船驶向了平流层。当火箭气喘吁吁地躺在角落里时，卡魔拉则凝视着窗外，想着她在窃贼市场上看到的那残酷的一幕。这对她来说是一种折磨，以至于使她忘了他们的任务已经失败了。

“对不起。”皮普说着，瘫倒在飞行员座椅上，“我的动作还不够快，没有拿到盒子。我本来可以拿到的！”

“这不是你的错。每次你最不想见到星云的时候，她总会出现。”卡魔拉安慰他说。三个人都安静下来，陷入了沉思。



嘟嘟！嘟嘟！嘟嘟！嘟嘟！嘟嘟！

“有人试图向我们打招呼。”皮普说着，在控制面板上转动了一系列开关，“频率的来源是加密的，我不知道是谁。我该接通信号吗？”

卡魔拉肯定地点了点头。于是皮普按下了一串按钮，星云的脸出现在他们面前的屏幕上。

“你好，卡魔拉。”星云抱怨道，“你什么时候回家？爸爸和我都很想你。”她举起了自己刚刚偷来的那个金属盒子，仔细地打量着它。“你喜欢吗？我不知道这个老旧的东西里面会藏着什么，但是如果你在寻找它的话，那就说明它一定很重要。”

“那不属于你。”卡魔拉厉声说道。

“只要我还活着，我就保证你永远拿不回这个盒子。”星云恶魔般地嘲笑道。她紧紧地抓住盒子，拼命地想要撬开它。

“碰到麻烦了？”卡魔拉问。

星云紧咬着牙，紧绷着身体，但盒子却纹丝不动。

“只有我能打开它。”卡魔拉透露道。

“你不记得我们小时候发生了什么事吗？我曾经有过怀疑，但现在这些疑问已经得到了证实。只有我的触摸才能触发这个盒子的机关。没有我，这个盒子就没有任何价值。”

星云注意到盒子外面的小指纹锁，变得愤怒起来。她狂怒的尖叫声响彻船舱，然后她的形象完全从监视器的屏幕上消失了。

火箭觉得她的反应太有趣了。“哈哈！”他咯咯地笑了起来，“你看到她的脸了吗？！噢，看来星云不喜欢听到那个消息。那么我们现在该怎么办？”

“星云知道我们会去找她。她会等我们的。”卡魔拉回答，“帮我接通卡罗尔·丹佛斯。我需要和惊奇队长谈谈。”

“你说对了！我只要用复仇者通信信号追踪她，然后侵入周围的任何一个摄像头，这样我们就能看到她美丽的笑容了。”皮普边说边在老旧的控制台上按着按钮，“这台电脑可能非常落后，但我找到她了！她在巴-巴尼斯星球上制造了一些麻烦。现在让我们接通她。”皮普的话音刚落，惊奇队长就出现在了屏幕上。她正在和一个巴-巴尼斯战士打

斗。

“笑一下，队长！”火箭挥挥手说，“抬起头来。”惊奇队长转过身来，眯起眼睛看着附近的摄像头。

“火箭吗？我现在有点忙。”卡罗尔边说边挤压着那个蠕动着的巴-巴尼斯人，“等一下。卡魔拉，是你吗？”

“嗨，卡罗尔。我需要你的帮助。”卡魔拉开口道。她很少向他人寻求帮助，但惊奇队长是她的一个好朋友，也是一个强有力的盟友。

“我很想帮你一把，但复仇者们现在有些忙。你知道外星人入侵是怎么回事吧。不过，我肯定会参加下一轮的战斗。我做任何事都是为了家人。哦，告诉星爵，他欠我一个东西！”卡罗尔说，“我走了。”

“我会通知银河护卫队的。”火箭说，“我想奎尔和格鲁特现在正在往斯巴达跑，但德拉克斯应该在附近。他不会介意跟我们一起打几个坏蛋的。”火箭挤到皮普身边，在键盘上输入了一连串数字。“这老古董真要命！”他咕哝道。

呜呜呜兹兹兹兹兹兹！

通信控制台火花四溅，飞溅的火花落到了皮普毛茸茸的巨魔脚上。飞船内的灯光忽明忽暗。

“发生了什么事？”卡魔拉问。

“能量正在消失，我们失去了联系。但我能解决这个问题！”皮普说。他看似随意地按了一下按钮。出人意料的是，灯熄灭了，飞船里面一片漆黑。

“我就知道我们不能相信一个巨魔！”火箭怒吼着，打开了手电筒。

“我们的能量刚好够去莫拉格四号星。”皮普说，“祈祷我们一次成功。”

第五章

“我们到了。莫拉格四号星。”皮普叹了口气。他小心翼翼地驾驶着破旧的宇宙飞船，通过一座废弃的旧寺庙屋顶上的一个小洞。他们的飞船降落了。“这是在我知道如何恢复能量之前能做的最好的事情。”

“你的意思是，在我想出如何充电之前，你都要停在这里。”火箭指着皮普的脸大声说。

“把你那毛茸茸的东西从我的脸上拿开。”皮普反驳说，“大家听着，因为这个星球上的气候很恶劣——这里寒冷、昏暗，尘土飞扬——所以我们必须待在飞船里面！”皮普瞥了一眼飞船的后部。门开着，卡魔拉正在穿过这黑暗的避难所，严阵以待。她想在危险出现之前先把它解决掉。

“你们好，老朋友们。”一个熟悉的声音回响着。卡魔拉立刻听出了这是谁的声音，心里放松了些。空空的舱内一阵闪光过后恢复了生机。在这道光束的照射下，大家看清了在墙上的那个外星人的模样。亚当·沃洛克从一根巨大的柱子后面走了出来，迎接他的客人们。“欢迎你们。”他热情地说，“是什么风把你们吹来了？我猜一定是皮普犯错误了，对吗？”

“是的！”火箭说着，向沃洛克走去，握住他的手，“谢谢你临时收留我们，亚当。”

亚当·沃洛克也曾是无限守望者的成员。他不仅善于操纵宇宙能量，还善于帮助朋友达到情感平衡。卡魔拉拥抱了他。

“好久不见，亚当·沃洛克。”她紧紧地拥抱着他说。

“你就这样独自生活在一颗硬壳的旧星球上？”皮普问，“这并不是宇宙传说中最酷的地方。但能见到一个老朋友还是挺开心的。”

“我需要时间来解决一些问题。而且我觉得我不是唯一一个有这种感觉的人。”沃洛克凝视着卡魔拉说道，“我们谈谈吧。”亚当·沃洛克开始沿着一条长长的走廊向前走，他知道卡魔拉会跟上来。

“哦，当然。她开启了伟大的旅行，而我却被困在这里，无能为力。”火箭抱怨道。

“你们俩去吧。”皮普说着，把卡魔拉和沃洛克赶走了，“别担心我

们。我们得让飞船重新启动，即使我必须让这个浣熊徒手把它推入轨道！”

卡魔拉和亚当·沃洛克漫不经心地空旷的寺庙里走着，一边回忆着以前的故事，一边闲聊着。沃洛克的出现使卡魔拉有了些许安慰，但他可以看出，卡魔拉还在想着一些更严重的事情。“你在找什么？”他突然问道。

卡魔拉深吸了一口气。“一个盒子。”她开口道，“是我父亲的。”

沃洛克轻轻地笑了笑。“不，不，你要找的是比盒子更大、更重要的东西。萨诺斯的黑暗阴影笼罩着你的生活，使你无法找到内心的和谐。”

萨诺斯。她父亲那邪恶的名字一次次刺痛了她的耳朵。她想知道沃洛克的话是否正确。起初，她相信自己所追求的只是个传家宝，但显然远不止这个。

“萨诺斯造就了我。无论我做什么，我永远都和他遗留下来的那些被毁灭的东西联系在一起。”卡魔拉向他吐露着心声，可她也摇着头，不相信自己所说的话，“也许我想找到这个盒子，是因为我认为它会给我带来一种平静的感觉。我好像也不知道其他的办法了。”

“你没有被你父亲的邪恶行为打上烙印，卡魔拉。你很小的时候他就操纵了你。那时你不明白发生了什么，但是现在你明白了。为了前进，你必须治愈自己。”亚当继续说，“过去很难忘记，特别是痛苦的过去，但你可以渡过难关。你并不孤单。我、皮普、护卫队——我们都是你的朋友。我们是一起的。让我们来帮你吧。”两人绕回了主舱。听到火箭和皮普在飞船里争吵，卡魔拉笑了。

亚当·沃洛克的眼睛开始迸发出光束。他身体里的宇宙能量在涌动，将光束凝聚成固体形态。很快，他就创造出一个奇异的东西。

“这是治愈茧。它会让你休息；当你再次出现时，你会感到精力充沛，并且你体内的负能量也会被清除。”亚当解释说。

卡魔拉看着这个不可思议的治愈茧。她被眼前这个奇特的东西迷住了。“这是我释放自我的机会。”她想。但她的天性使她说出了完全不同的话。“如果我被固定了，那会让你们都处于危险之中的。”她说。



“这个过程不会花太长时间。”沃洛克向她保证道，“我们正在一个荒芜的星球上，不会有事的。你只要记住：你就是你想成为的人。不要害怕。”

卡魔拉觉得沃洛克的乐观十分令人钦佩。她小心翼翼地踏进茧中躺下，紧紧地抓住她的剑，把它贴在胸前。“以防万一。”她低声说。在一个发光的旋涡中，沃洛克用自己的力量封住了茧，让卡魔拉安静地休息。火箭和皮普从宇宙飞船上探出头来，看着这个奇怪的东西。

“真奇怪。”火箭说。

“这是亚当·沃洛克为你打造的。”皮普回答。

在茧里面，卡魔拉进入了梦境。她在一个美丽的岛上醒来，周围飘荡着柔和的瀑布声，五彩缤纷的动物在附近漫步。她感到温暖的阳光照在脸上，这让她觉得很幸福。卡魔拉觉得自己置身天堂。一只小鸟落在她面前。当她跪下来仔细观察时，一只巨大的靴子不知从哪儿冒了出来，猛地踩在小鸟身上。天空变得黑暗，暴风雨来袭。萨诺斯已经到了。

卡魔拉对她父亲的出现感到惊讶，不禁向后退了几步。当那个面无表情的恶棍向她走来时，美丽的环境开始枯萎、消失，原本由生机勃勃的动植物组成的景象很快就变成了一片寒冷、贫瘠的沙漠。令人放松的瀑布被陡峭的悬崖取代，悬崖连接着一个黑暗的洞穴。卡魔拉平静的心情很快变成了愤怒。

“你这个不肖的女儿，把我的脸都丢尽了。”萨诺斯开口道，“你不感谢我救你脱离软弱和失败的生活。我给了你超乎想象的力量，把你训练成一个勇猛的战士。现在你却和一群愚蠢的太空散兵混在一起，让自己难堪。你是我毁灭计划里的终极武器，而你却把这一切资源都浪费了！”萨诺斯跺着靴子，地面也跟着晃动起来。

“我不是任何人的武器！”卡魔拉喊道。她摆出防御的姿态，“这么长时间以来，我一直为遭受你的虐待感到羞耻。你把我变成了一个只用于暴力的东西，可我只是个孩子。”她拔出了剑，“现在是解决我们之间分歧的时候了。你看，那些太空散兵是我最好的朋友。他们应该得到你的尊重。如果你不能尊重我，我想我也不会尊重你。”

“你是一个动物，卡魔拉——动物就该听话、顺从。”萨诺斯咆哮道，“我就是要把你训练成这个样子。”

“我是一名战士。我用我所学到的技巧来保护无辜的人不受你们这些人的伤害！”卡魔拉争辩道。她挥剑猛扑向萨诺斯，战斗开始了。

而此时，在茧外的真实世界中，皮普和火箭正在与宇宙飞船那古老的电池较劲，而事情进展得并不顺利。

轰！！

突然，一艘巨大的飞船在亚当·沃洛克的藏身地外边着陆了。收藏家的卫兵们已经到了。

轰！！



第六章

“亚当·沃洛克！”士兵们咆哮着，“要么交出逃犯，要么准备战斗！”收藏家的暴徒们包围了寺庙，准备开战。时间不多了。

“唤醒卡魔拉吧。”火箭命令道，“我们现在需要她！”



“不。”亚当瞥了一眼附近的茧，坚定地说，“她需要时间痊愈。我们必须自己应付这种情况。”

在茧里，父女之间发生了一场激战。

砰！砰！砰！

卡魔拉的剑击中了萨诺斯的护手，两者撞击时发出的声音在空气中颤动。萨诺斯轻而易举地挡住了她的攻击，但卡魔拉仍然没有停手。她是近身搏斗的高手，而且永远不会放弃。然而，萨诺斯更倾向于心理战。他喜欢深入敌人的头脑，利用他们的不安全感来对付他们，即使敌人是他自己的女儿。“我想知道神秘盒子里是什么。”他问道，“它里面藏着宇宙中最强大的力量，还是这个盒子是空的？完成你的使命到底是值得的，还是你将冒着牺牲自己和朋友们的性命的危险，却什么也没有得到？”

这些问题卡魔拉也问过自己，但她不敢回答。她可以确定的是，把

那个盒子拿回来只是她计划中的一部分。另一部分是处理她父亲的邪恶遗产。是时候结束萨诺斯的生命了。卡魔拉再次举起手中的剑，但这次萨诺斯赤手空拳地抓住了它。

“你认为盒子里的东西会告诉你你是谁吗？”萨诺斯嘲讽着，把她的剑扔到了附近的悬崖下。卡魔拉甚至可以听到她珍贵的武器碰到岩石上发出的声音。“傻丫头。”

卡魔拉怒气冲冲地抓住萨诺斯的胳膊，把他甩过肩膀，萨诺斯摔倒在地。她用尽全身力气把他困在地上，她的身体因筋疲力尽而颤抖。“我已经知道我是谁了！”她冲着父亲的脸怒吼着。

听到这话，萨诺斯觉得很好笑。他甩开女儿，站在那里，疯狂地笑着：“哈哈！我想让你是谁，你就是谁。你是一个残酷的战士。这就是我创造的你。你永远逃不过你的宿命，卡魔拉。你是萨诺斯的女儿！”

卡魔拉向父亲猛扑过去，在他的肚子上击打。萨诺斯笑了，于是卡魔拉更加用力地又打了他一拳。这是他训练她做的动作。“永不屈服。”在她童年上过的那些训练课上，他总会这样高喊。她听到父亲的声音在脑海中回响，这使她心中充满了愤怒。她累了，但这已不再重要，因为她还有使命要完成。她继续打他，一遍又一遍，直到他疲惫不堪，身体东摇西晃。这时，一阵隆隆的颤抖震动了地面，卡魔拉清楚地记起自己身在何处。她并不是真的在和父亲战斗，那只是一个梦，而且这个梦是由她主导的。“你的故事该结束了。”她咆哮着，朝着萨诺斯冲过去，把他推下悬崖。他跌下悬崖时没有发出声音。经过这么长一段时间，卡魔拉第一次感到一丝安宁。

在茧外面，火箭和皮普正在和收藏家的手下们开战。

“嘿，沃洛克！用你的宇宙力量帮我们一把，怎么样？”火箭问道。

“乐意效劳。”沃洛克说着，走入了阵地。他用自己的宇宙能量把正在向前冲的收藏家的手下们打退了。

突然，一道剑光撕开了沃洛克的治愈茧，卡魔拉重生了！



卡魔拉自信、轻松地向收藏家的暴徒们发起了攻击。她一脚踢向他们首领的肚子，把他踢出门去。这时，又有两个人向她冲过来，并用手中的武器开火。卡魔拉用剑挡住了他们的射击，然后将他们的武器劈成两半。还有一个笨蛋举起他的武器，瞄准卡魔拉。他慢慢地走近她，像只野兽一样咆哮着。她打量着他，寻找他的弱点。当他逐渐靠近时，卡魔拉跳到空中，掐住他的脖子，他便倒地不省人事了。剩下的暴徒们撤退到他们的飞船上逃走了。火箭、皮普和亚当·沃洛克从一根大柱子后面走了出来，他们又一次化险为夷。

“所以……你休息得怎么样？”火箭问卡魔拉。

“不错。”卡魔拉气喘吁吁地说，“我已经准备好离开这个星球了。”

亚当·沃洛克笑了。卡魔拉回来了。

轰！！

一艘新的飞船降落在寺庙外，地面也随之震动。是德拉克斯。在旧飞船失去动力之前，他收到了皮普的信息。德拉克斯跟踪着那个信号，尽快赶来了。

“是你给我打的电话吗？”德拉克斯问，“所以我来了。”

第七章

“是时候出发了。”皮普说。他挥手示意大家登上德拉克斯的飞船。

在向亚当·沃洛克告别之前，卡魔拉看了一眼这座奇迹般的古堡，赞叹道：“你这个临时住所真是太神奇了。”她边说边用手抚摸着墙，感受着墙上那些错综复杂的细节纹理，“这里有太多的历史了。”

“说得没错。多年来，许多人都来过这个避难所。正是它的过去定义了它现在的模样。”沃洛克说，“你的过去定义了现在的你吗，卡魔拉？”



卡魔拉停下来思考这个问题。“再也不会了。”她心想。在梦中直面

父亲并击败他让卡魔拉感到自己的坚强和力量。治愈茧已经完成了它的使命。

“谢谢你，亚当。谢谢你的忠告和友谊。”卡魔拉说。

“我们都在自己的旅途中。但我相信我们的道路很快就会再次相交。”亚当·沃洛克说。

“再见，沃洛克。”德拉克斯补充道，“下次见。”

皮普瞥了一眼卡魔拉和亚当·沃洛克，以及和他们站在一起的德拉克斯。“看看我们！”他笑着说，“以前的老队友又聚在一起了。”

“重点是‘以前的’。”火箭说，“来吧，巨魔！别再对过去夸夸其谈了。赶紧到飞船上去，让我们结束这次冒险吧。”

当他们再次开始航行时，德拉克斯抓住机会对卡魔拉说：“我错过了我们的拳击比赛。”他向卡魔拉吐露心声，“你是这个队里唯一能击败我的人。”

“嘿！你们看不起我！”火箭喊道，“我的拳头也很厉害。”

“在我看来，你只是用它们来胡吃海塞的。”皮普说。

“够了。”德拉克斯说，“告诉我，我们要去哪里，巨魔？”

“我已经追踪到星云在一个叫作萨卡星的地方。”皮普说着，激活了飞船的全息投影，“萨卡星是泰约恒星系统中的第四颗行星，位于福拿克斯星系中。如果你喜欢巨人和讨人厌的怪物，这个地方就很适合你。居住在那里的生物十分野蛮，而且那里的地形很危险。这绝对不是去度假。不要惹他们生气，否则你会遇到大麻烦的。我们需要为任何事情做好准备。”

“不，你们不需要准备。”卡魔拉说，“我要一个人去。”



“什么？！你疯了！你知道这么做有多么疯狂。”火箭喊道，“那茧难道没有教会你什么吗？”

“我必须自己去面对星云。她会做出任何让我遭罪的事来，就为了看着我受苦，包括伤害我的朋友和我关心的人。我不会为了满足自己的需要而让你们去冒生命危险的。”卡魔拉说，“我是一名战士，我会独立完成这项任务，然后结束这一切。”

“一个战士可以既坚强又脆弱。这是我在生活中学到的一个教训，现在我说出来和大家分享。”德拉克斯说着，把手放在卡魔拉的肩膀上，“我因为暴力而失去了家人，这使我感到很痛苦。我的情绪左右了我的想法，使我无法思考。但后来我找到了希望，就是因为有你和护卫队的成员们。你们现在就是我的家人。”德拉克斯将飞船推进器断了电，继续道，“卡魔拉，我非常敬佩你。但我不会带你去萨卡星，除非我们像一家人那样一起战斗。”

“是的，我也是。”火箭说，“你想一个人去吗？这是不对的。”

“虽然我不愿意承认，但这个毛茸茸的小宝贝说得对。”皮普同意道，“我们要在一起，孩子。不管是好是坏，你都要和我们在一起。”

这一刻，卡魔拉很感动，她意识到自己是多么幸运。不管她感到有多孤独，她的朋友们都会在她需要的时候出现。那么，是时候接受他们的帮助了。“我们一起去。”她说。她取出自己的剑，轻轻地挥了挥，剑在灯光下闪着光芒。

“我有个问题。”德拉克斯说，“我们为什么要去追星云？”

“都是因为一个神秘的盒子。”皮普回答。

“嗯，这一切感觉都很熟悉。你确定我们以前没有做过这样的事吗？”德拉克斯问。

“我们总是在追寻神秘盒子、宇宙立方体和无限原石。这正是我们所做的。我们是银河护卫队！”火箭说着，瞥了一眼皮普，然后皱了皱眉头，“还有一个巨魔。我们是银河护卫队和巨魔。”

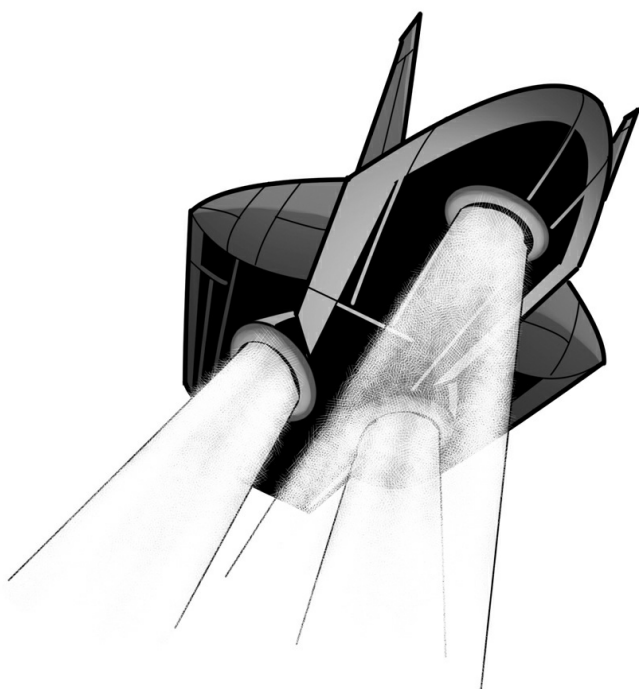
“如果这样做能给卡魔拉带来平静，我就会去做。那么我们的计划是什么？”德拉克斯问道。

卡魔拉认真地想了想，然后说道：“我们要找到星云，找回属于我的东西，击败任何阻挡我们的野兽。这个计划听起来怎么样？”

“我觉得这计划听起来不错。”德拉克斯说。他发射推进器，将飞船开向了萨卡星。

第八章

“只有一次，我想在一个没有人试图杀死我的星球上结束生命。”火箭擦拭着他的武器说道，“我不认为这是非分之想。”



一行人在萨卡星降落，准备战斗。德拉克斯用飞船上的电脑扫描出了危险区域。

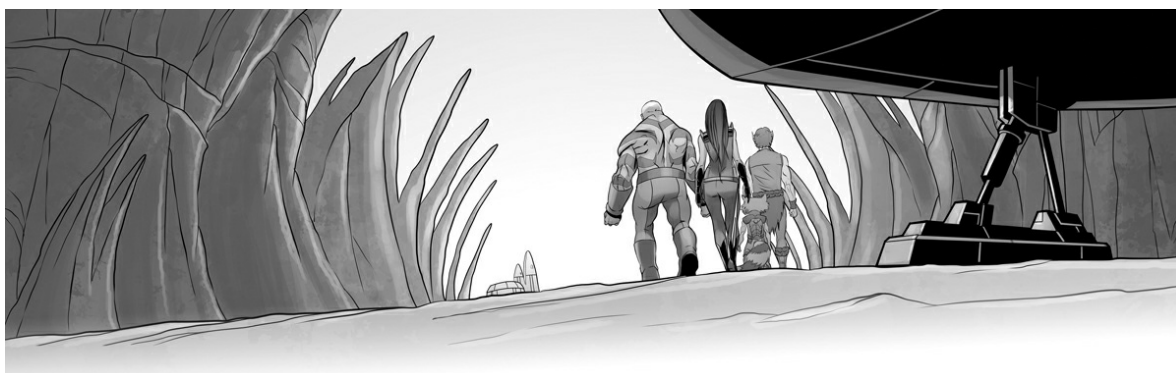
“这个星球的地形十分危险，而且不可预知。大家要小心，不要走散了。”德拉克斯说道。这时，在他们面前出现了各种各样可怕的全息图：矛考马恐熔岩怪兽、触角状的阿比德人和巨大的魔鬼考克。“这些是我们可能遇到的生物。他们可能会伤到我们。但别担心，我会把他们

全部摧毁。”

“太谢谢你了，德拉克斯。”说完，卡魔拉转身面向大家继续道，“我知道我在这次任务中说得不多，但我想让你们知道，你们的友谊和关爱对我来说意义重大。我想让你们知道，无论发生什么事，你们都是——”

“别放在心上，孩子！”火箭打断了卡魔拉的话，“别这么多愁善感。这就是我们要做的。现在，让我们去打败他们吧。”

飞船的门打开了，德拉克斯、火箭、皮普和卡魔拉小心地走到外面。外面空气干燥，风中全是沙子。他们降落在萨卡星上一片平坦的沙漠中，四周是高山和峡谷。远处是星云的堡垒——一座中等大小的、像洞穴一样的建筑。从外面看，这座堡垒的构造似乎很简单，但要到达那里并不容易。



“所以我们就从这里走到那里吗？那根本就不危险！你们真是一群胆小鬼。”皮普说着，自豪地大步走向他们的目标。突然，他们脚下的地面剧烈地震动起来。这颗行星的表面裂开了，巨石向四面八方飞去，一只巨大的野生动物从萨卡星崎岖的深渊中爬了出来。这种野生动物是来自克伦星球的非有机生物，它们的宇宙飞船在被拉过传送门后坠落在萨卡星上。这种野生动物不喜欢迁徙。那只野兽把皮普抓到自己的金属手上，皱着眉头看着他，好像他是只淘气的宠物似的。

德拉克斯叹了口气。“皮普，我们不在同一个队里，这是有原因的。”他抱怨着，跳到那只金属野兽的背上。德拉克斯像千斤顶一样一遍又一遍地用拳头砸它，把这只野兽的金属身体砸成无数小碎片，然后又把它的电路拆开，直到它完全解体。皮普谢了他的这位老朋友，然后他们便继续向前。就在他们快接近目的地时，星云出现了。

“卡魔拉，你能不能换几个搭档？这样太没有新鲜感了，永远都是

一只巨魔、一只动物，还有一个悲伤的战斗生物。你已经输了。”星云嘲笑道。

“你低估了我的同伴。”卡魔拉大喊道。

“而且我可不是悲伤的战斗生物！”德拉克斯喊道。

这时，一批齐塔瑞士兵从星云的洞窟里出现了。他们已经准备好了，随时为她的邪恶需求冲锋陷阵。“这些都是萨诺斯送给我的礼物，用来保护我，以及毁灭我要毁灭的或是得到所有我想要的。今天我会用这批士兵来做任何事情。”她说，“如果他们最终打败你的话，我们的父亲会很高兴的。”

“齐塔瑞？！”火箭嘟囔道，“那都是些乡巴佬！”

“萨诺斯根本不关心生命。”卡魔拉对妹妹说，“别人的安宁对他这样的暴君而言没有任何价值或意义。这就是你的榜样？这就是你想要取悦的人？有一天，当他利用完你的时候，就会把你扔到一边，就像他对待其他的东西一样。这不是我想看到的。”

星云的身体里充满了怒火。“进攻！”她命令道。齐塔瑞士兵向卡魔拉和她的队友发起了进攻。他们迅速躲藏到附近的巨石堆后面。当齐塔瑞人用火烧他们的时候，星云消失在了自己的堡垒里。

“我去追星云。”卡魔拉说，“掩护我！”说着，她朝妹妹跑去，用自己的剑抵挡着激光的攻击。

“尽管来吧！骷髅脸们！”火箭边说边向冲过来的军队开炮。当齐塔瑞人突然袭击他们时，德拉克斯加入了战斗，用他的身体作为攻击用的冲车，对付左右的士兵。皮普则继续躲在巨石堆后面。

兹兹兹！战斗激烈地进行着。

火箭的武器毫无预警地断电了。“我的枪！”他惊叫着，摆弄着枪上的各种装置，“这太糟糕了。”



皮普跑过来帮助火箭。“让我看一看。”皮普说着，打开了武器，“这是你的问题。你的次级粒子电离室被卡住了。”他翻转了一个开关，枪又可以用了！

“嘿，谢谢你，巨魔。”火箭说，“你很棒。虽然你长得毛茸茸的，但还不错。现在，让我们把这些齐塔瑞人放倒！”

卡魔拉安全地离开了战场，又小心翼翼地进入了星云的洞穴堡垒。堡垒里面十分空旷，这番景象使她想起了她的父亲。

“我已经受够这些游戏了，妹妹！”卡魔拉大声喊道，“这个盒子是属于我的。”

“你就这么想得到它。”星云嗤笑道，一边举起了金属盒子，“但你不知道里面装的是什么。它控制着你。”

“没有什么能控制我。再也没有了。”卡魔拉边防御边说，“把盒子给我。”

“你替我打开这个盒子。”说着，星云把手按在了墙上，激活了一个控制面板。她身后的墙立即朝两边分开，一间牢房随即出现。星爵和格鲁特被囚禁在里面，已经不省人事。

“否则你就再也见不到你的朋友了。”星云说。

第九章

星云得意地揭开星爵和格鲁特的面纱。为了和妹妹对峙，卡魔拉已经准备了很久。她把彻底结束她们之间的冲突当作自己的使命，但是她从来没有想过自己最好的两个朋友的生命会因此悬而未决。姐妹俩陷入沉默的对视中。卡魔拉的沉默使星云疯狂。很快，她就忍不住了。

“怎么样，姐姐？”星云嘲笑道。



德拉克斯、火箭和皮普刚从战场上下来，就上气不接下气地冲进堡垒。看到自己的队友被困在星云的牢笼中，他们感到十分震惊。

“什么？！”火箭咕哝道，“我们的朋友被抓了！”

“现在我很生气！”德拉克斯咆哮道。

“我敢打赌，你生气的时候，我们是不会喜欢你的，对吧？你知道的，就像绿巨人，那个不可思议的家伙那样？”皮普笑着说道，而其他的人都面无表情。他只好说，“对不起，这个笑话不好笑。就当我没说。”

“你怎么说，卡魔拉？”星云喊道。

“我答应你。”卡魔拉郑重其事地回答，“我会给你你想要的东西。”

“什么？！卡魔拉，不能这么做。”火箭轻声地请求道，“不要屈服！我们会想到其他办法的。难道我们不能把巨魔送给星云做交换吗？”尽管他们面临着巨大的危险，但卡魔拉的盟友总是能在幽默中找到安慰。

“没关系，火箭。”卡魔拉安慰道，“会没事的。”她轻轻地朝星云走去，每走一步，她就感到轻松一些。终于能面对面地与她的妹妹对阵了，这真是令人高兴。卡魔拉回头看了看她的盟友，倍感自豪。她轻轻地向德拉克斯点了下头，然后把注意力转向盒子。



“打开它。”星云命令道，“把你的手指放在指纹锁上，然后打开它。”

卡魔拉看着她妹妹的眼睛笑了笑。一切都会好起来的。眨眼间，她从星云手中夺过了盒子，并迅速地抬脚一踢，把妹妹踢倒在地。“有胆子你就跟来。”卡魔拉喊着，挥舞着她的神剑，徒步穿过萨卡星的荒野。

“啊！！！”星云尖叫着。她怒气冲冲地从地上爬起来，拼命追赶卡魔拉。火箭和皮普想要救星爵和格鲁特，但是在他们面前有两个问题：星云留下了两个齐塔瑞士兵来看守她的俘虏，而且他们并没有让步的意思。就在这时，皮普想到了一个主意。

“你能分散那两个人的注意力吗？”他低声对火箭说，“这样我就可以试着干点什么。”火箭点点头，然后像傻瓜一样开始跳舞，将那两个人的注意力引到自己身上。

“啧啧啧！我是个毛茸茸的小东西，不是吗？请不要伤害我，你们这些可怕的坏人！”火箭喋喋不休地说着，而皮普则偷偷溜到齐塔瑞人的后面。他一把抓住他们的肩膀，魁梧的士兵瞬间消失在稀薄的空气中。“你做了什么？！”火箭喊道，“你把那些家伙瞬间转移了吗？！”

皮普咧嘴笑了笑。“哦。我猜我的力量并不像我想象的那么微不足道！现在去救你的伙伴们吧。”他说。当火箭冲去解救星爵和格鲁特时，他们两个刚刚醒过来。两人都晕头转向的，根本不知道自己在哪里，也不知道自己是如何来到这里的。

“天啊！我这是在哪里？”晕乎乎的星爵问道，“我们要去斯巴达，然后出现了一道亮光，所以现在我们就到这里了？”

“我是格鲁特吗？”疲倦的格鲁特说，他努力保持清醒。火箭开始尝试用不同的数字组合来打开这个牢笼，但不起任何作用。

“我的头受伤了。”星爵指着远处说，“那里还有一个怪物。”

“啊！那个可怜的家伙一定还在做梦。”皮普高兴地说。

“嗷！”

一个巨大的怪物爬进了房间里。它舔着嘴唇，眼睛盯着皮普，好像他是一个可口的小点心。

“别做梦了！”皮普吓坏了。

德拉克斯转过身来面对这个生物。“我讨厌萨卡星！”他嘟囔着，愤怒地冲向这个怪物。

穿过萨卡星的沙漠之后，卡魔拉跑了好几英里，穿过了空荡荡的荒原。星云追她的时候，她紧紧地抓住那个盒子。她们已经跑了一段时间，随着能量的消耗，两人的步伐都变慢了。她们喘着气，停在一个深深的峡谷边上休息。

“怎么样？打开它！”星云命令道，“你拿到了你想要的，现在就得做你该做的！”

“我来这里是为了寻找平静，星云。”卡魔拉向星云吐露心声，“我们是家人。”

“你撒谎！”星云尖叫着，“你只关心自己。萨诺斯收留了我们，他给了我们生命，而你却用你的背叛报答他！家人？哈！你不会对家人这么做。”

“家人不会伤害你。”卡魔拉说，“家人是当你遇到困难的时候，仍然支持你的人。我有家人，他们是银河护卫队。我来不是为了和你打架，但我现在必须与你一决高下。”卡魔拉把盒子塞进腰带后面，确保她的剑被紧紧地固定住。如果她要和她妹妹对打，那就只能是徒手。

星云伸手要抓住卡魔拉。但是卡魔拉躲了一下，没让星云抓住。她挥手紧紧地将星云的双手扭在自己背后。星云则使出全身力气将卡魔拉拉到自己身上。她抬起腿想把姐姐踩在地上，但卡魔拉抓住了她的脚，一把将她甩了回去。卡魔拉猛地跳起来，压在星云身上，把她困在地上。她们都感到筋疲力尽。

“放过我吧，姐姐。”星云恳求道。卡魔拉轻轻地松开了她的手。星云利用这个机会抓住卡魔拉的胳膊，把她摔在地上。“傻瓜。”

卡魔拉静静地躺在那里。“也许我是个傻瓜，因为我相信你会请求宽恕。”她说，“但这就是我们之间的区别。当有人请求帮助时，我就给予帮助。”



“但事情并非总是这样，卡魔拉。”星云说，“你还记得我们小时候为了得到父亲的爱而互相争斗吗？”

“我们不知道还有什么更好的选择。”卡魔拉说着，站起身来掸去肩膀上的灰尘，“但是现在我们知道了，所以是时候继续前进了！”

喀喀喀！

这时，一个可怕的怪物从地下钻了出来，用尖尖的舌头卷起星云，把她从一边甩到了另一边。这是一种可怕的动物，生长在萨卡星的凡德罗地区。它们是蜘蛛形的，看上去像野兽一样，并且有潜伏在地下的习惯，等待着猎物的到来。这个特殊的生物感知到了周围的动静，便迅速开始狩猎。卡魔拉根本来不及多想。

她跳到怪物巨大的脑袋上，然后从剑鞘中抽出神剑，刺穿了这个怪物的身体，使它因为疼痛而放开了星云。卡魔拉用尽最后的力气把野兽赶到附近的峡谷里，然后跳到了安全的地方。

两人静静地躺在地上，所有的力气都被无情的斗争所耗尽。不管是作为姐妹还是作为战士，她们都一起经历了很多磨难，但过去的创伤并

没有愈合。也许总有一天，这种情况会改变。卡魔拉想知道今天是不是就是那一天。

嘘！

听到响声，卡魔拉立刻坐了起来。星云消失了，她用手上的护腕瞬间转移了。“她会回来的，”卡魔拉想，“而我得到了盒子。”虽然卡魔拉体力耗尽，但她笑了——她很高兴，甚至觉得连空气中也发生了些许变化。

第十章

回到星云堡垒的路途很遥远，但卡魔拉在这一路上想了许多，所以这番跋涉十分值得。她已经找回了自己想要的东西，尽管妹妹逃跑了，但她相信星云可能已经弃恶从善了。“时间能证明一切。”她想。火箭、德拉克斯和皮普看到她几乎毫发无损地回来都很高兴。

“你拿到盒子了！干得好。我们现在可以走了吗？”火箭疲倦地说，“嘿，星云呢？”

“她已经从这个星球上瞬间转移了。”卡魔拉解释道，“有一天她会再次出现在某处，所以我们要为再次见到她做好准备。”

“有人能解释一下发生了什么事吗？！”星爵恳求道。

“别担心，奎尔。”德拉克斯向他保证道，“你就安静点儿吧。”

“我是格鲁特！”格鲁特大叫道。

“别担心，伙计。我们一定会送你回家的。”火箭向他的朋友保证，“我们都要回家了，对吧？”他盯着卡魔拉的眼睛，想知道她是否打算结束她的假期，重新回到他们的队伍当中。从他的眼神看，他并不打算接受“不”这个回答。

“没有什么地方比银河护卫队更适合我了。”卡魔拉回答。

“这真是个好消息。”德拉克斯说，“现在，所有人都坐上飞船，我们可以离开这个地方了。”就在这时，远处传来一声巨响。“我讨厌萨卡星。”

“你们的家在哪里？”皮普问。

“嗯，银河！”火箭回答道。

一行人挤进了宇宙飞船，永远离开了萨卡星。当他们飞向天空时，火箭在那个神秘的盒子上扒着，拼命想看看里面是什么。

“哎哟！我希望这里面是一块无限原石，或者也可以是钱！我们可以拿些出来花，也可以使用类似巨魔除臭剂之类的东西。”火箭说，“我几乎都不能呼吸了。”

“放下它。”皮普插嘴说，“这是卡魔拉的东西，让她做她想做的事情。”

“你知道吗？巨魔说得对。”火箭说道，“我再也不在乎盒子里面是什么了。只要卡魔拉高兴，我就高兴。”

“到底发生了什么事？！”星爵喊道。

“我们早晚会把一切向你解释清楚的。”卡魔拉向他保证。

“嘿，你能在迪吉娜拉星上把我放下来吗？”皮普问。

“哦，不。我再也不会回到那个臭洞里去了。”火箭边说边揉着自己的鼻子，“他们偷了我的飞船！我该怎么跟出租公司说？那个地方糟透了。”

“那么，我想我会和你们待在一起，成为银河护卫队的一员。”皮普开玩笑说，“这样我们就可以永远永远地在一起了——”

“去迪吉娜拉星！”火箭喊道。

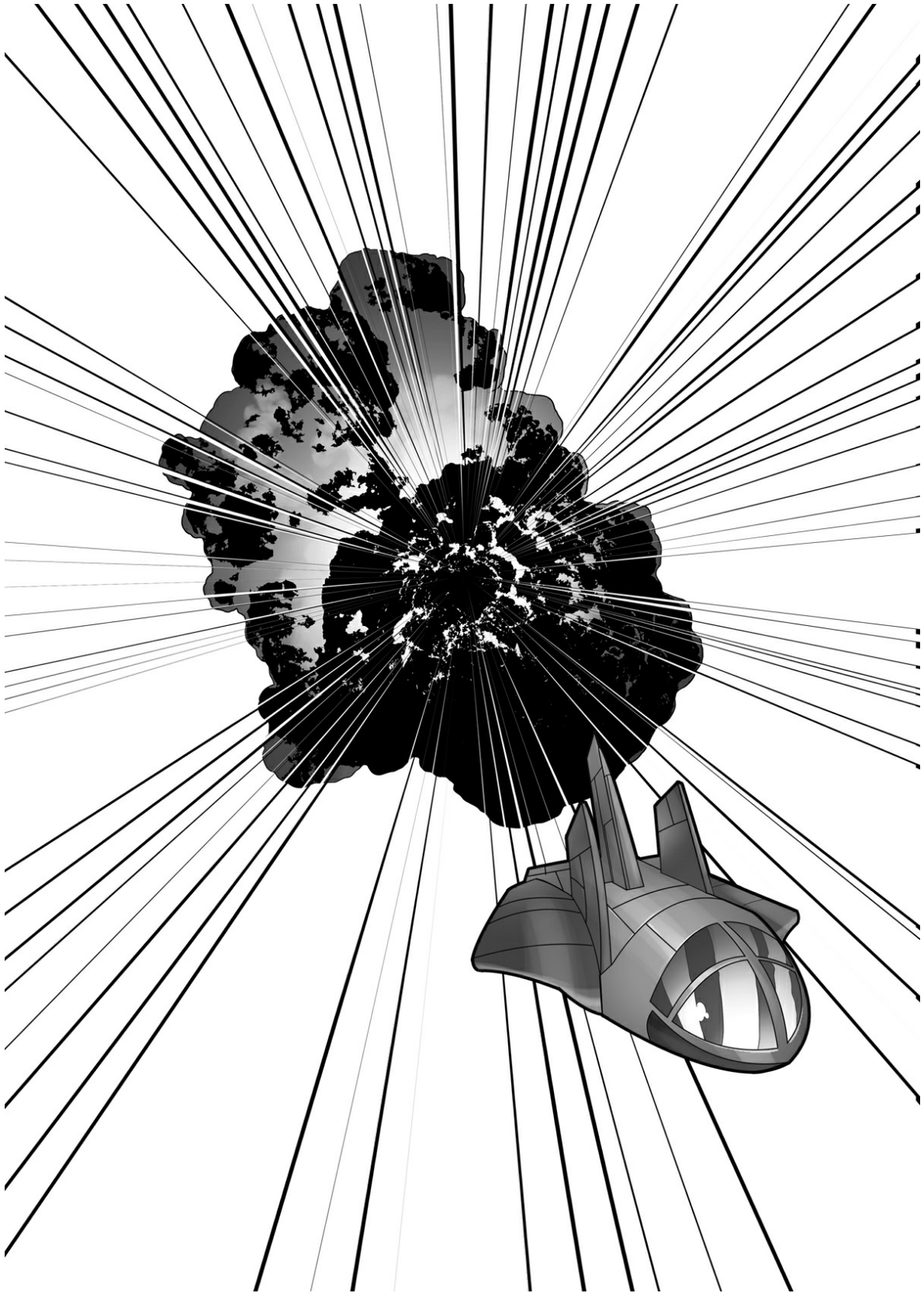
“不。”卡魔拉说，“去扎尔德拉克斯。我们在那儿还有事要做。”



火箭想起了他们在窃贼市场上看到的那丑陋的一幕。“哦，是的！没错。我们确实还有一些事要做。去扎尔德拉克斯！”

“呼叫惊奇队长。”卡魔拉提议，“我们需要所有我们能得到的帮助。”

卡魔拉独自一人走到飞船的尾部。能够再次回到队友身边，让她感觉很开心，但她想要单独待一会儿。她小心翼翼地研究着那个给了她这么多希望和心痛的盒子。这个盒子感觉比她印象中的要轻。这是暴君的小玩意儿，还是别的什么东西呢？这个问题已经不再重要了。卡魔拉从口袋里掏出一个小小的爆炸装置，把它粘在盒子上，放进气闸里，然后紧紧地关上了穿梭门。她深吸一口气，打开了气闸，盒子立即被吸进了宇宙空间中。刹那间，卡魔拉眼前闪现出一道耀眼的光。盒子被毁坏了，她所追求的一切终于结束了。她感觉到肩上一下子轻松了。她意识到一旦拿回了盒子，它里面是什么就不重要了。她曾经懵懵懂懂地活了这么久，而现在，她已经不想知道盒子里面是什么了。盒子代表的是她过去的包袱。现在，她终于自由了。是时候向前迈进了。当飞船在宇宙中穿梭的时候，阳光透过窗户照进来，温暖了卡魔拉的脸。新的一天开始了，她会和家人一起度过。





漫威
超级英雄
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MARVEL

DOCTOR
STRANGE

MYSTERY OF THE DARK MAGIC

奇异博士

黑 魔 法 之 谜

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES



Doctor Strange



Wong



The Ancient One



Brother Voodoo



Scarlet Witch



Iron Fist



White Tiger



Thor



Loki



Iron Man



Captain Marvel



Falcon



Nightmare



Eye of Agamotto



Wand of Watoomb



Cloak of Levitation

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**DOCTOR
STRANGE**



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story Of Doctor Strange

As a young man, Stephen Strange always believed in himself first and foremost. After graduating medical school with honors, Strange became one of the most gifted surgeons in the world. His practice thrived, garnering him wealth and attention. It also brought out his selfishness and arrogance.

As a doctor, Strange was known for his skill and precision, but in his personal life, he was reckless and irresponsible. One evening he took his favorite car out for a spin, only to lose control and crash it into a tree. His colleagues saved his life, but Strange's hands were damaged beyond repair. His amazing gifts were lost, and he would never be able to perform surgery again.



Instead of allowing anger and frustration to consume him, Strange went on a spiritual journey to the mountains of Tibet, where he encountered the Ancient One, a being with vast magical powers. The Ancient One taught Strange humility and caution, training him in a new discipline—the mystic arts.

When the time came, the Ancient One passed on to a new plane of existence and bestowed on Stephen Strange the mantle of Sorcerer Supreme. Though his life didn't turn out exactly how he expected, he found fulfillment in his work as Doctor Stranger.



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CHAPTER 1

“Coming through!” shouted Falcon as he zoomed through the Long Island Mall. During his adventures as Falcon, Sam Wilson had seen some pretty crazy things. He had fought Super-Androids, alien armies, and even rock trolls. Now a group of werewolf-lizard creatures was invading, and he couldn't believe his weird luck. Falcon landed safely in the middle of the mall, where he met Iron Man, Captain Marvel, Thor, and Scarlet Witch. “Everyone has been safely evacuated. The coast is clear,” he said. “Let's go kick some werelizard butt. Avengers, assemble!”

“Not so fast, Sam,” said Iron Man. “We've got to figure out what these things are first. That way we know exactly what we're dealing with.”

“They're big, ugly, and they stink,” Sam said. “What more do we need to know?”

A group of crazed werelizards emerged from the food court, where they'd been snacking on tacos. The glint in their eyes said they were still hungry, and the Avengers looked like they could be the creatures' next meal.



“Back, monsters!” hollered Thor. He swung his mighty hammer, Mjolnir, and launched it directly at the werelizards, knocking down a row of them with a single blow.

“Help!” someone cried from nearby.

“It sounds like we missed someone during the evacuation,” said Carol Danvers, known to her teammates as Captain Marvel. “I’ll handle this one.”

She followed the voice to Poloski’s Department Store, where a little girl was hiding behind a rack of clothing. “Don’t worry, sweetheart, you’re safe now,” Captain Marvel assured her.

“Look out!” the little girl said, pointing at an approaching werelizard.

Captain Marvel kicked the werelizard, causing it to stumble backward and get disoriented. “And now for the big finish,” she said, grabbing the beast by its scruff and tossing it into the air. “Gotcha!” said Falcon, catching the werelizard and flying away with it. “Let’s find a good place for you to take a bath.” He dropped the creature in the mall fountain, and returned to his friends.



“Thanks for the assist, Sam,” said Captain Marvel.

“That’s what teamwork is all about,” Falcon said. Sam was so preoccupied that he didn’t notice two hungry werelizards sneaking up behind him.

“I guess it’s up to the handsome, super-intelligent Tony Stark to save the

day, as usual,” Iron Man said, using his repulsor rays to blast away the sneaky werelizards and save Falcon. “At least I’m good at it. Hey, Wanda, what do you make of these things?”

“These beasts are unnatural,” said Wanda Maximoff, the Scarlet Witch. She tried using her chaos magic to decipher the origin of the werelizards, but came up empty. “They’ve been enchanted with a strange magic even my power can’t seem to figure out,” she confessed.

“Magic. My favorite,” Iron Man said, rolling his eyes. It was widely known that technology lover Iron Man despised magic.

But there was one person who would know exactly where the werelizards came from. The only problem was that he didn’t always see eye to eye with the Avengers—or any other heroes, for that matter—since they called him only when they needed something. He had a reputation for being aloof and difficult, though his power was undeniable. He was Doctor Strange, a master of the mystic arts. And it was only a matter of time before he showed up.

As the Avengers continued to fight the werelizards, a familiar voice echoed through the mall: “These are curious little monsters. I wonder who made them.”

“Show yourself, Loki,” snarled Thor. “We haven’t time for your games!”

In a puff of mist, Loki, Asgardian god of mischief, appeared. He hovered above the heroes, watching them battle and smirking.

“These disgusting creatures are your doing, aren’t they, Brother?” said Thor.

“I would never create beasts this primitive. I simply came here to watch.” Loki cackled.

Thor charged at his brother. He wasn’t in the mood for this. “Defend yourself!” he shouted.

“Perhaps I’ll visit again when you’re less busy,” said Loki, before disappearing in a burst of thin smoke.

Suddenly, the mall fell completely dark and a rumbling shook the structure to its foundation.



In a flash of lightning, each one disappeared right before their eyes, leaving behind only a wisp of vapor. The werelizards were gone at last, and things could return to normal. The Avengers stood amazed. Doctor Strange was quite impressive.

“It took you long enough,” said Iron Man. “But thanks for the wacky magic mumbo jumbo. That was a close one.”

“Believe it or not, Mr. Stark, I have matters of my own to attend to,” said Doctor Strange. “You should know that magic is nothing to be trifled with.”

“What were those things?” asked Captain Marvel.

“They were innocent animals who had been fused together,” Strange explained. “I used a spell to transport them to another dimension, where they’ll do no harm. When the spell wears off, they will return to their true forms and rejoin our world.”

“It was Loki!” declared Thor.

Doctor Strange closed his eyes. He used his power as Sorcerer Supreme to reach out across the enchanted realms and find information on the werelizards. Strange opened his eyes and they glowed bright yellow.

“This wasn't Loki's doing,” he said. “It's a dark magic I cannot identify.” Strange was very knowledgeable about magic in all its forms. If he couldn't identify the source of the disturbance, it did not bode well.

“Join the Avengers and we shall find this evil sorcery together,” said Thor.

Strange brushed aside the offer. “No, thank you. You do not know the mystic arts like I do. The world of magic can be very dangerous, as you have seen today. If we were to work together, you'd just be in the way,” he said, using his Cloak of Levitation to rise into the air.

“But we're so fun to hang out with!” joked Iron Man. “I'll even let you teach me a card trick or two.”

“Mr. Stark, I prefer to handle magical affairs on my own. Farewell, Avengers,” Doctor Strange declared, then disappeared into thin air.

Iron Man shook his head in disbelief. “Who turns down help from the Avengers?” he asked. “Oh well. Good luck, Doc. If something bad really is happening in the world of magic, you're going to need it.”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

CHAPTER 2

“I'm covered in the foul stench of dark magic!” shouted Doctor Strange, brushing himself off. He'd returned home with many questions. Someone was using magic for evil purposes, and he intended to find out who.

Doctor Strange's home, the Sanctum Sanctorum, was an enchanted mansion on a quiet street in Manhattan's Greenwich Village. No one would ever suspect it was filled with mysteries. Doctor Strange felt quite at home among its many magical curiosities.

As he made his way down a long hallway toward the library, he passed numerous mystical wonders. Each door in the Sanctum led to a different realm—some of them peaceful, some of them dangerous. Opening the wrong one could unleash a fleet of tentacled demons or the restless spirits of the undead.

“By the Vishanti!” exclaimed Doctor Strange as a small beastie scurried across his feet. The Sanctum also played host to bizarre creatures from time to time. At last Strange arrived at the library and was greeted by his comrade and faithful assistant, Wong.

“Wong, one of the naked soul rats has gotten loose,” said Doctor Strange. “I thought we'd gotten them all since their invasion. See that it's found and disposed of properly. It's very dangerous to have such a creature running around.”

“I'll put on my haunted gloves and look for it after lunch,” said Wong, sighing. “Welcome home, Stephen. How was the mall?”

Wong knew Doctor Strange better than anyone. They'd been confidants for many years, and Wong was always there to listen or offer advice when the world of magic was too much for Doctor Strange to handle. Wong was also an expert martial artist and master of all trades who cataloged Doctor Strange's many magical artifacts from across the multiverse.

“Something bad is happening, Wong. The world of magic is in danger. Dark forces are at work, and I must find the source before it's too late!”

declared a frustrated Doctor Strange.

“I hope you didn't track ectoplasm across the floor when you arrived,” said Wong. “I just cleaned all the rugs by hand.” Wong was also the Sanctum's housekeeper.

“No, no, no,” muttered Doctor Strange under his breath. It had been a long day, and he was getting extremely cranky. Strange's Cloak of Levitation whipped off of his body and hung itself neatly on a coat-rack nearby as he began searching the bookshelves for information that could help.

“Relax. Take a hot bath. Are you hungry?” asked Wong. “I made some soup.” Wong made a very tasty chicken noodle soup.

Strange wasn't having any of it. “I don't have time for baths and soup!” he exclaimed, furiously scanning his library. With so much information at his disposal, surely he'd be able to find the answers to his questions.



An idea occurred to him. “I must travel to the Astral Plane and speak with my mentor, the Ancient One. He'll be able to tell me about these dimensional fluctuations.”

The Astral Plane was an alternate dimension beyond the earth, filled with magical energies both light and dark. To reach the Astral Plane, a magician must separate mind from body through a process called astral projection. It required focus and concentration.

Doctor Strange sat, legs crossed, in the middle of the room. He closed his eyes tightly, took two deep breaths, and cleared his mind. His journey to the spirit world had begun.

“Be careful,” warned Wong.

“I’m always careful,” Doctor Strange assured him as his glowing blue spirit left his physical body and rose into the air.

Wong left Strange to his business. “I’ll go see if I can find that soul rat,” he said, leaving the room and closing the door behind him.

“Welcome, Stephen. It’s been a long time. You’re looking agitated,” said the Ancient One, joining Doctor Strange on the Astral Plane. The Ancient One was a powerful magician of the highest order. He had been the Sorcerer Supreme before Doctor Strange inherited the title. When the Ancient One’s mortal body passed on, his spirit moved to the Astral Plane for all eternity. Now whenever Doctor Strange needed advice, he visited his former instructor. They had an amiable but complicated relationship.



“I have no time for small talk. I need your guidance, Ancient One. Magic is being used unnaturally. Evil forces are at work,” explained Doctor

Strange. "What do you know of it?"

"Hmmm. You have many tools at your disposal. Look at all these spell books and enchanted weapons," the Ancient One said. "Why not use them?"

"I will," answered Strange. "But first I need help in finding the source of these troubles. I can sense danger, but I don't know where it's coming from."

"You have many enemies," offered the Ancient One.

"This is true. Loki could be a suspect, though the creatures I fought today aren't his style," said Strange. "I need more information."

"Have you tried asking your friends for assistance?" inquired the Ancient One. Doctor Strange bristled at the question.

"The Avengers are brightly colored Super Heroes whom I greatly respect," Strange explained, "but they don't understand the world of magic as I do. And I prefer to work alone."

The Ancient One eyed Strange's brightly colored Cloak of Levitation and let out a hearty chuckle. "Ha-ha! Says the man with the dramatic living cape." He smirked. "I wasn't referring to the Avengers. Friends come in many shapes and sizes. You may need some in the near future."

Doctor Strange disagreed. "I prefer to handle issues of magic by myself!" he demanded. "I come to you with important questions, and you answer me in riddles!"

"Calm yourself, master of the mystic arts. The Astral Plane is crawling with spirits who would take advantage of your emotion," warned the Ancient One. "You face many enemies, Stephen. Look around you and remain guarded. Life is a journey. Be patient and careful."

The Ancient One's spirit disappeared, and Doctor Strange was left alone on the Astral Plane. He thought his wise mentor would give him answers, but Strange was just left with more questions. As he prepared to return to the Earthly Plane, he sensed something was wrong. The Astral Plane grew cold, and a shiver shot up his spine. He was not alone.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

CHAPTER 3

“How many lives have you saved, Stephen?” a soft voice whispered into Doctor Strange's ear, startling him. He turned to see who it could be, but no one was there. Someone new was with him on the Astral Plane. The voice grew angry. “Master of the mystic arts? Ha! You are not worthy of the power you wield!”

Doctor Strange felt uneasy. The voice sounded familiar but he couldn't quite place it. Even in his astral form, Strange could feel the room getting colder. Dark shadows danced across the walls in front of him. “Show yourself, whoever you are!” he shouted. Soon the shadows began peeling away to become slithering snakelike creatures. “By the Vishanti,” he muttered under his breath.

“The Vishanti can't help you now,” the mysterious voice replied.

The shadow creatures taunted Strange as their hissing grew louder and louder. Sensing danger, the Cloak of Levitation quickly surrounded Doctor Strange's physical body, shielding it from danger. “Let the light of the all-seeing Eye of Agamotto blind you, creatures of the dark!” Strange ordered sternly. The cloak's amulet released a flash of blinding white light, burning the shadow creatures and causing them to sizzle. They scattered back into the walls, but the whispers continued.

“You doubt yourself, Strange. I see magic is taking its toll on you,” the voice said. “Why not relax and take the vacation of your dreams?”

At last! Doctor Strange knew exactly who he was dealing with: Nightmare, ruler of the Dream Dimension. Nightmare was a ghoulish villain who delighted in tormenting his enemies with their deepest and darkest fears. He wished to feed on those fears and use them to increase his power. He often hid on the Astral Plane, lying in wait to strike Strange at his weakest moment. He was close to getting his wish.

“Do not mock me, Nightmare!” commanded Doctor Strange. The shadow creatures appeared again, swarming Strange's astral form from

behind and grabbing him tightly. He struggled to break free, but their grip tightened.



At last, Nightmare showed himself. He stared at Doctor Strange, tilting his head ever so slightly. He was looking for fear. Nightmare snapped his fingers and a vision of the past appeared in front of Doctor Strange. It was an image of his early days as a young doctor. It had brought him great joy to save lives using the skills he learned in medical school, but a terrible accident had changed all that. He lost the use of his hands and was no longer able to perform surgery. It hurt Strange to be reminded of his past in such a way.

“My powers have grown since last we tangled,” Nightmare sneered. “Look at your past, Stephen. See your fear. See your pain!” The happy visions swiftly became darker. Doctor Strange watched his younger self grow frustrated, struggling to hold a scalpel. It made him angry.

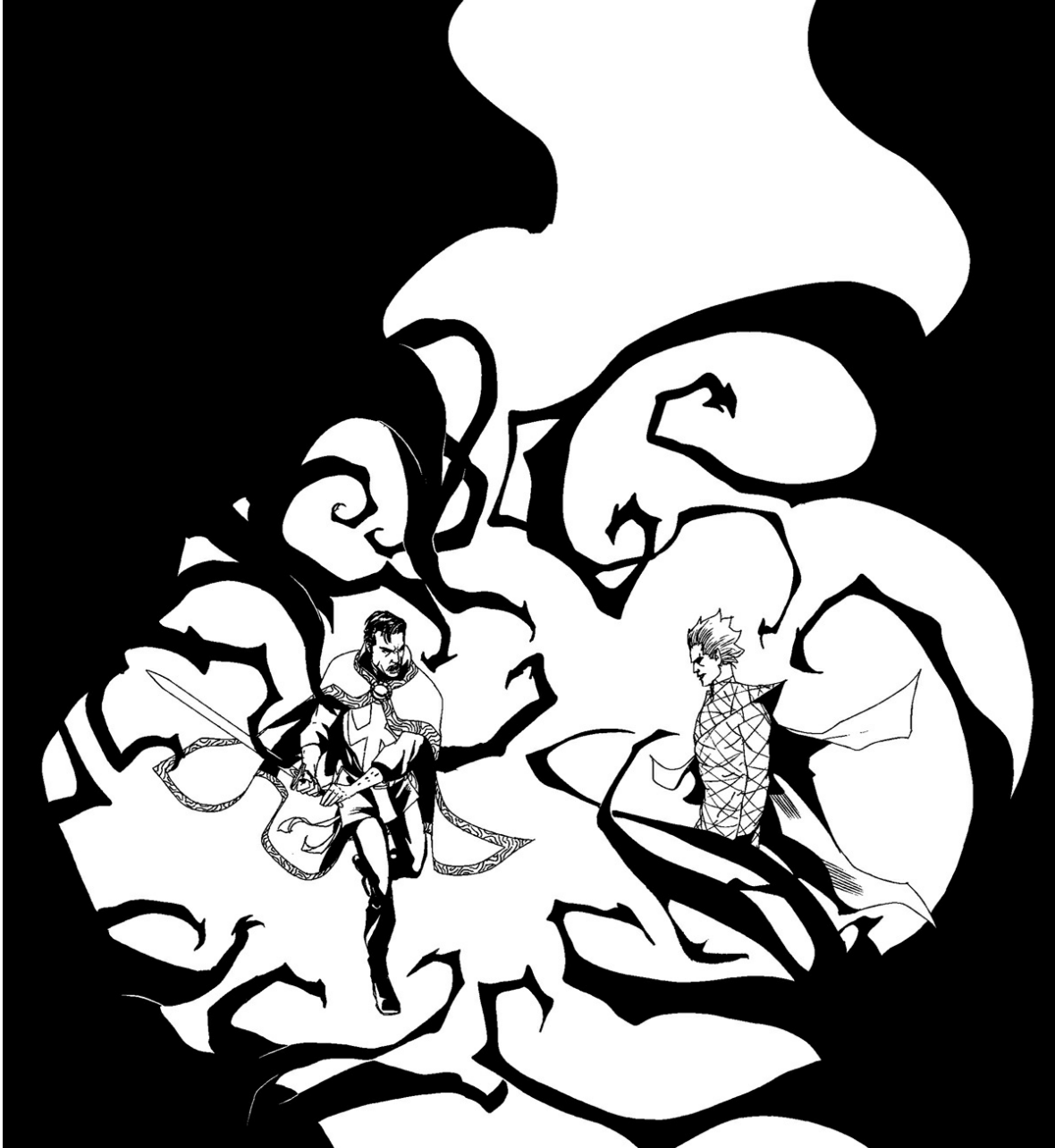
“You won't scare me, Nightmare. I fought through my pain. It made me stronger,” Strange growled. “And when I break free, I'll show you just how strong I've become.”

Nightmare let out a loud belly laugh, savoring the moment. Strange, however, saw an opportunity. He looked around the room, scanning it for items he could use to escape. Aha! The Sword of Ultimate Shadow would do the trick. It was housed in a glass case nearby. Strange focused his mental energies and commanded the sword to leap from the case and cut him out of

the shadow creatures' grip. The sword did just that, and soon Doctor Strange's astral form was free at last. He grabbed the weapon and gripped it tightly, preparing for battle.

“Clever, clever,” said Nightmare. “Your magical items come in quite handy. I hope no one ever steals them. Then you'd be in real trouble.”

Could Nightmare be behind the dark magic Doctor Strange had sensed? He was certainly powerful enough; that much was obvious. “The world of magic is unbalanced. What do you know of it?” demanded Strange.



Nightmare cackled heartily once again. “Ha-ha-ha! Magic is always unbalanced! Magic is always uncertain! That is its nature, fool!”

Doctor Strange became impatient. “Why are you here, Nightmare? Reveal your true intentions or leave the Astral Plane at once!”

“My intentions were simply to test your mettle,” said Nightmare. “You’ll soon face a much bigger challenge than I present. The question remains: Will you rise to the occasion?”

Nightmare slithered his thin frame through the air toward Doctor Strange. “Your fears were delicious. I look forward to dining on them again soon,” he said before evaporating.

Doctor Strange's astral form soon rejoined his physical body as he returned to the Earthly Plane. He was exhausted by Nightmare's taunting. In fact, it had made him quite hungry.

Wong sensed his friend was in need and rushed into the room to check on him. “Are you all right?” he asked. “I heard some commotion.”

“I'm fine,” replied Strange, out of breath. “I think I'll have some of that soup now.”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

CHAPTER 4

“You have visitors!” yelled Wong.

Doctor Strange had been reading the *Book of the Vishanti* for days. It contained powerful spells that Strange could use to defend himself against a variety of attacks, but would it be enough? The same question had been bothering him since the incident with the werelizards: What is happening to magic? For the moment, it would remain unanswered as he attended to some unexpected guests.

“May I present the Scarlet Witch and Iron Fist,” announced Wong, taking an extravagant bow. “Welcome to the Sanctum Sanctorum.”

“I guess we're pretty important, huh?” said Iron Fist.

“Wong is putting on a show for you,” said Strange. Wong had quite a sense of humor. “Daniel Rand, otherwise known as Iron Fist, Zen student of the K'un Lun. It's a pleasure to meet you. Wanda Maximoff, the Scarlet Witch, good to see you again. What brings you by? I'm very busy.”

“We were just in the neighborhood and wanted to hang out. Let's order pizza!” said Iron Fist, plopping down in a chair and putting up his feet.

The Scarlet Witch smiled. “Your home is truly amazing, Stephen. My powers aren't nearly as developed as yours, but I'd love to spend some time in your library,” she said, gazing at the many marvels that surrounded her. “I envy your commitment.”

“You are an incredible illusionist, Wanda,” complimented Strange. “Focus on your strengths and not your weaknesses. Only then can you grow.”

The arms of Iron Fist's chair reared up and grabbed him by the wrists, causing him to jump. “Whoa!” he exclaimed. “That chair is alive!”

“Indeed it is,” said Doctor Strange. “The Sanctum is filled with many enchanted relics from my adventures across the dimensional planes. And yet even with all of these items, I can't find the answers I currently need.”

Iron Fist picked up a bizarre-looking cylinder and began to play with it as if he were a pirate with a sword.

“What's this do?” he asked. “I bet it's a magic toilet plunger!”

“Put that down. That is the Wand of Watoomb, and it is not a toy,” warned Doctor Strange. “What is the purpose of the visit, Scarlet Witch? I needn't be a magician to sense that you're not here to merely hang out.”



Scarlet Witch was a little embarrassed. She couldn't fool Doctor Strange. “Someone is manipulating mystic forces beyond our control,” she said. “You and I have both sensed it, as has Iron Fist. I know you don't like working with others, but we want to help.”

“I am the Sorcerer Supreme and a master of the mystic arts,” replied Strange. “I don't need help, thank you.”

“That doesn't protect you from everything,” said Iron Fist. “What do you do when a bad guy tries to give you a good old-fashioned punch to the face?”

“Why don't we spar a bit, and I can show you?” Strange offered.

“No way. You'd probably use some magic on me when I wasn't

looking,” said Iron Fist.

Doctor Strange's Cloak of Levitation—with its amulet, the Eye of Agamotto—gently removed itself from his body and floated over to the corner, where it hovered patiently. “Now I'm without my magic vestments. Does this put your mind at ease?” he asked.

“That sounds like a challenge to me,” said Scarlet Witch.

Iron Fist looked Doctor Strange square in the eye. They both nodded and the match began. The heroes circled each other patiently, considering exactly how to strike. It had been a while since Strange had sparred with someone other than Wong. It gave him quite a thrill.

“I like the gray streaks in your hair, Steve,” said Iron Fist, smiling. “How old are you again?”

“I'm old enough to know what trash talking sounds like,” Strange countered. “And don't call me Steve.”

The two heroes sparred for quite a while, jabbing, hooking, and avoiding each other with relative ease.



Strange swept the leg of Iron Fist and forced him to the ground.

“Uncle?” asked Strange.

“Uncle!” replied Iron Fist. Strange released him, and Iron Fist rose to his feet. “You're good, Doc. I didn't see that one coming.”

“And I didn't even have to use the Bolts of Balthakk to subdue you,” said Strange with a smile. “Words of advice—both magic and fighting are about misdirection.”

“Pretty wise stuff. Where'd you learn those moves, anyway?” asked Iron Fist.

“Wong isn't just a good cook; he's also a superb hand-to-hand combatant,” offered Strange.

“Ah, so there's a right way and a Wong way?” joked Iron Fist.

Scarlet Witch had a curious look on her face as she glanced around the room at Doctor Strange's enchanted weaponry. “With so many powerful items in one place, how do you keep the Sanctum safe from outside forces?” she asked.

“I've installed numerous magical protections in order to safeguard the Sanctum from extradimensional danger. No one can enter the Sanctum unless given permission by myself or Wong,” said Doctor Strange. “One should be prepared for the unexpected.”

Wong rushed into the room with news. “I hate to interrupt, but vampires are attacking Grand Central Station. I thought you might want to do something about it,” he said. “I also made some tea if anyone is thirsty.”

“Another disturbance I couldn't foresee!” exclaimed Doctor Strange. “I've got to get to Grand Central at once.”

“We'll join you,” offered Scarlet Witch.

“No,” countered Doctor Strange. “That won't be necessary. Stay here. Have a cup of Wong's tea.” Doctor Strange held out his arms, welcoming the Cloak of Levitation and Eye of Agamotto back onto his body. “It's time for me to get to work.”



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CHAPTER 5

“By the Hoary Hosts of Hoggoth!” exclaimed Doctor Strange. He had arrived at Grand Central Station to find vampires frightening travelers and wreaking havoc. Strange despised vampires and considered them nasty, ruthless bloodsuckers.

He scanned the area with his mystic power and noticed something peculiar. These vampires weren't looking for blood at all. They were focused only on scaring people. This is bizarre, he thought.

Doctor Strange created a protective barrier, shielding the frightened passengers. The vampires struck the shield and, realizing it was impossible to break through, ran away in defeat.

“Thank you, Mister Magic,” a boy said.

“You're welcome. Now be a hero and help your grandmother, young man,” said Strange. “You'll be safe outside.”



The young boy took off as Strange heard the sound of battle nearby. Someone was fighting vampires alone.

As he moved to get a closer look, Strange discovered it was the hero known as White Tiger. She'd been taking down vampires for a while and was losing steam quickly.

“How about a hand over here?” White Tiger asked, punching a vampire right in the face.

“The mystical tiger amulet, is it yours?” asked Strange.

“It sure is,” said White Tiger. “How about some magic, if you don't mind?”



Doctor Strange raised his hands high in the air as his eyes glowed a bright yellow.

Crystals of Cyndriarr! he bellowed, and hundreds of dagger-like crystals rained down on the attacking vampires, causing them to flee.

“Thanks,” said White Tiger, brushing herself off and taking a moment to catch her breath. “These things just appeared out of nowhere and started causing trouble. They're not biting anyone on the neck, so that's good. I think someone is just trying to wear us out.”

Doctor Strange was impressed. “That's a keen observation,” he said. “There is disorder in the world of magic. Someone or something is meddling in forces beyond their control.” White Tiger's amulet began to glow. “The talisman that you wear. It's very curious and powerful.”

“It's how I get my powers,” explained White Tiger. “You can take a look at it sometime, but only if you promise to give me some magical training.”

The idea excited Doctor Strange. “Attune yourself to the amulet's power. Use it to clear your mind and focus your abilities. Then you'll be able to—” He hesitated, sensing trouble nearby.

“Ahhh!” A cry rang out. Vampires were closing in again, and someone needed help.

White Tiger scanned the area. Her enhanced senses came in handy during situations like this. “I'd love to stay and chat, but I've got work to do,” she said, before diving into a sea of angry vampires.

Strange studied White Tiger as she fought. Her amulet not only gave her

strength and agility, but it allowed her to focus on tasks without distraction. *That's a valuable asset, especially for someone as young as she,* he thought.

The vampires were dwindling in number, but it was time for the big finish. Doctor Strange wondered how he could take them all out at once. He used his mystic power to scan them again. This time something astonishing was revealed. The vampires were actually hollow shells made entirely of magic. Since they weren't living creatures, Strange could do anything he wanted to destroy them.

Seven Suns of Cinnibus! he shouted, calling forth a rain of heat and light. It zapped all the vampires with sharp bolts of lightning, causing them to crumble into ash. Grand Central Station was at last vampire-free.

White Tiger was impressed. "That was awesome!" she said. "I hope I never have to fight a bunch of gross vampires again. Thanks for the help."

"Be glad they weren't Mind Maggots," Strange said. "And you're welcome."

"I'm not used to working with other Super Heroes," White Tiger explained. "Well, except Spider-Man. And Nova. Oh, and Iron Fist. I guess what I mean to say is, thanks. I couldn't have done this without your help. We should do it again sometime."

"Perhaps we should. Anyone who can stand the company of Iron Fist deserves my respect and admiration," Strange joked. As he left White Tiger and headed back to the Sanctum, Strange wondered if maybe he'd been wrong about working with other heroes.

Was it time for a change?



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CHAPTER 6

Doctor Strange was exhausted. He calmly soared through the clouds above New York City, but his mind was racing. He was puzzled by the sudden and bizarre assaults that had been happening in and around the city. Strange's magical senses were thrown off, and he couldn't make sense of things. Every time he thought he had the answer, a new question arose.

It was time once again for him to visit the Astral Plane and seek the counsel of the Ancient One. Strange found a nice quiet place behind a cloud where no one would bother him. Clearing his mind as best he could, his spirit form awoke and joined the Astral Plane. The Ancient One was waiting for him.



“It's good to see you again, Stephen,” he said. “I imagine you have more questions for me that I cannot possibly answer.”

“I demand answers!” commanded Strange.

“Do not make demands of me, Sorcerer Supreme!” boomed the Ancient One. The loud outburst shook even the peaceful clouds. The Ancient One was a benevolent being, but he also had a temper, especially when his authority was questioned.

Doctor Strange sighed. He hadn't meant to snap at his trusted mentor, but he was simply at his wits' end. “The bridge between the natural world and the world of magic is breaking down,” he said. “I've fought animals that were crudely fused together and hollow vampires who attacked without purpose. Nightmare showed me my greatest fears, and Loki may be involved. What does it all mean? Is this a test, Ancient One? Are these incidents connected? Nothing makes sense.” Strange was deeply frustrated, and it showed.

“Such dramatic talk for a doctor,” said the Ancient One. “Everything is

a test, Stephen. Calm yourself. Clear your mind. You're looking for obvious answers where none may be found.”

“More riddles,” grumbled Strange. “I should have expected more riddles. You're one of the most powerful magicians I have ever known. You are wise beyond recollection, and yet you have no answers!”

“You are correct!” agreed the Ancient One. “It's up to you to take a hard look at the patterns and figure out how the pieces fit together. Only you can provide the answers. You are surrounded by allies and yet you resist their assistance. Why?”

Doctor Strange was getting frustrated again. “I don't need their assistance! I don't need anyone's assistance. I am the Sorcerer Supreme and a master of the mystic arts. I should be able to handle anything and everything that concerns the world of magic on my own.”

“And yet, here you are,” the Ancient One stated firmly.

He has a point, thought Strange. If I were really so powerful, I would have been able to find a way to solve this problem already.

“Do not resist the counsel of your colleagues and friends. Their advice is valuable,” said the Ancient One. “New perspectives must always be welcomed. You may find them in the least likely of places.”

Strange considered the Ancient One's words as an astral earthquake shook them both. Strange focused on locating the source of the trouble. “The Museum of Natural History!” he exclaimed. It was time to take care of business. “Thank you, Ancient One. I believe the path is becoming clearer to me.”

“A wise man knows there's always something new to learn.” And with that, the Ancient One's spirit form evaporated.

Doctor Strange thought deeply about what the Ancient One had said. A new perspective was just what he needed.

Strange used his consciousness to search the Astral Plane for someone who could help. Finally, he found the person he was looking for: Jericho Drumm, otherwise known as Brother Voodoo.

Strange had met Brother Voodoo many years before, when they were young magicians. Much had changed in their lives since then.

“Pardon me, Jericho,” Strange interrupted. “It's been a long time.”

“It has indeed. Hello, Doctor Strange,” said Brother Voodoo. “If the

Sorcerer Supreme is reaching out to me, something big must be happening. What can I do for you?"

"Meet me at the Museum of Natural History," answered Strange. "You and I are going demon hunting."





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CHAPTER 7

Doctor Strange was standing in the middle of the Museum, feeling out of place. He'd been waiting for Brother Voodoo for over ten minutes and was beginning to get annoyed.

“Excuse me, but do you work here?” a tourist woman asked him. Her little boy looked him up and down, admiring the Cloak of Levitation.

“No, madam, I do not work here. I am a doctor,” said Strange, forcing a smile. *I should have made myself invisible*, he thought. “If you'll excuse me, I must attend to some business.”

Doctor Strange grew nervous as the woman reached into her purse. With so many unexpected occurrences lately, she could've very well been an evil sorceress in disguise. He braced himself for whatever was coming next.

“Would you mind taking a photo of me and my son?” the woman asked sheepishly. “Mom, can the doctor be in the photo, too?” the boy asked. “I like his cape!”

Doctor Strange awkwardly posed with the woman and her son. They thanked him and went on their merry way. *That wasn't so bad*, Strange thought. He received a few lingering stares, but was otherwise ignored by the museum-goers. In New York City, a man wearing a flowing red cloak wasn't as weird as people might've thought.

“Taking photographs with fans?” said Brother Voodoo, appearing out of thin air. “I had no idea that a master of the mystic arts did such things.”



Brother Voodoo had known Doctor Strange for many years. Their paths, though often very different, had crossed numerous times. Jericho Drumm gained his powers by joining himself to the spirit of his dying brother and studying voodoo under a mystic priest known as a houngan. He eventually became an expert in dark magic and used his powers to communicate with the spirits of the dead, an ability Strange had trouble mastering. Voodoo's powers could be unpredictable, which made Strange slightly uneasy. But the

two heroes had much to offer each other and delighted in the opportunity to work together.

“It's good to see you, Voodoo,” said Strange. “I want you to know that any competition we may have had in the past is of little consequence now. We are both experts in the field of magic, and I respect you very much.” Strange paused. He looked around and saw that no one seemed to notice Brother Voodoo's presence.

“I'm invisible to everyone in the museum except for you. It's better this way,” explained Voodoo. He'd brought along a host of mystical items, including shrunken heads, the Staff of Legba, and assorted magic powders. “It's not so easy for someone dressed like I am to walk right through the front door. How'd you get in?”

“I'm a member, of course. I have always found natural history to be quite fascinating,” clarified Strange. He waved his hand fancifully, making himself invisible. “Now we're both cloaked and can focus on the task at hand. Did you bring your powders?”

Voodoo motioned to his utility belt, filled with trinkets and magic dusts. “I brought them all,” he said. He poured a thimbleful of sparkling red powder into Strange's hand.

Strange tossed the powder into the air and blew it across the crowd. As it settled, his suspicions were confirmed. The museum was crawling with demon elves. They'd been skulking around in secret and seemed confused.

“Can they see us?” asked Voodoo.

“No,” replied Strange. “They seem to be trapped between realms, with no means of escape. I believe they came here, to the museum, looking for something they could use to return home.”

“Are they dangerous?” asked Voodoo.

“They're demon elves,” offered Strange. “They're certainly not our friends.”

Voodoo pondered the predicament. “This is a tricky situation indeed. These creatures are lost, without a way home,” he said. “They may be demons, but so far they haven't hurt anyone or caused trouble. It would be foolish to engage them in battle at this point. We must remove them from this plane of existence without revealing ourselves. First and foremost, we'll need to keep the people safe.”

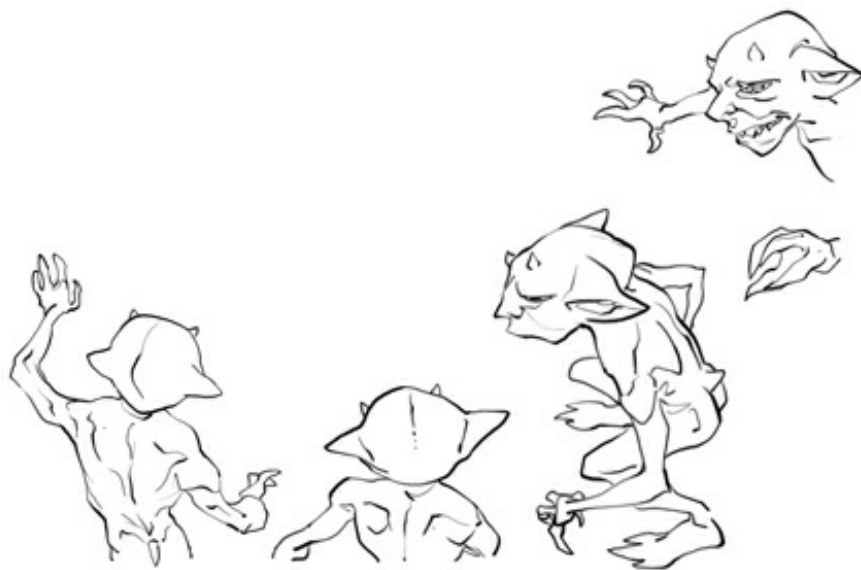
Doctor Strange was very impressed with Brother Voodoo. Normally, Strange followed his own instincts and did things his way. It was rare for him to listen to the advice of others. Perhaps working together wasn't so bad after all. It gave him an idea.

“I know a spell we can use to remove the demon elves,” said Strange. “It's quite unpleasant and could frighten the creatures into violence. I'll need your help to control it and make sure that doesn't happen.”

“And you shall have it, Doctor,” assured Voodoo. “I'll hypnotize these beasts so they remain silent and peaceful.”

Voodoo began to murmur secret spells. He raised the Staff of Legba in the air and shook it vigorously. As it glowed bright with mystic power, the demons stopped in their tracks to look at its radiant light.

Now it was time for Doctor Strange to work his magic. His body pulsed with mystic energies ready to be harnessed. The spell he had in mind was usually used for attacking demons. Using it to help demons would take every ounce of control he had. Strange was nervous as he focused his power. The barrier between realms was fragile, and they both knew how important it was to protect it. Voodoo noticed Strange trembling and sweating quite a bit. His magic was breaking down.



Suddenly, a headstrong demon elf shook itself out of its peaceful trance and shrieked deafeningly. The screech soon roused the other demon elves from their daze. They were awake, and they were not happy. Neither was Doctor Strange.

“Blast it!” Strange said angrily. “I couldn't sustain my power. The barrier between worlds has broken down.” Strange didn't like being so emotional in front of Voodoo, but he didn't have time to think about it—not with a horde of fuming demon elves standing before them.

“Take a moment to collect your thoughts, Stephen,” said Voodoo. “Loa conceal us!” A dense fog swept into the room, camouflaging the magic heroes. But not before a nasty demon elf spotted them and charged at the weakened Doctor Strange. Brother Voodoo waved the Staff of Legba, creating a cage of protective fire and stopping the demon elf in its tracks.

“Now that these creatures are aware of our presence, we do not have much time, Doctor Strange,” said Voodoo. Strange nodded. It was now or never.

Keep it together, Stephen, he thought. A gigantic glowing hand appeared above the demon elves. It carefully scooped them up and returned them to the dimension from which they had come. Doctor Strange let out a well-deserved sigh of relief. The process had gone smoother than he could have imagined.

“Thank you, Jericho. I truly appreciate your help,” said Strange.

Without Brother Voodoo's expertise, the situation might've been much worse. It gave Strange an idea. It was time to end the magical assaults once and for all. “Join me on a new adventure, Brother Voodoo?” he asked. “I'll share a spell with you on the way there.”

Brother Voodoo smiled. “Anything for a friend.”



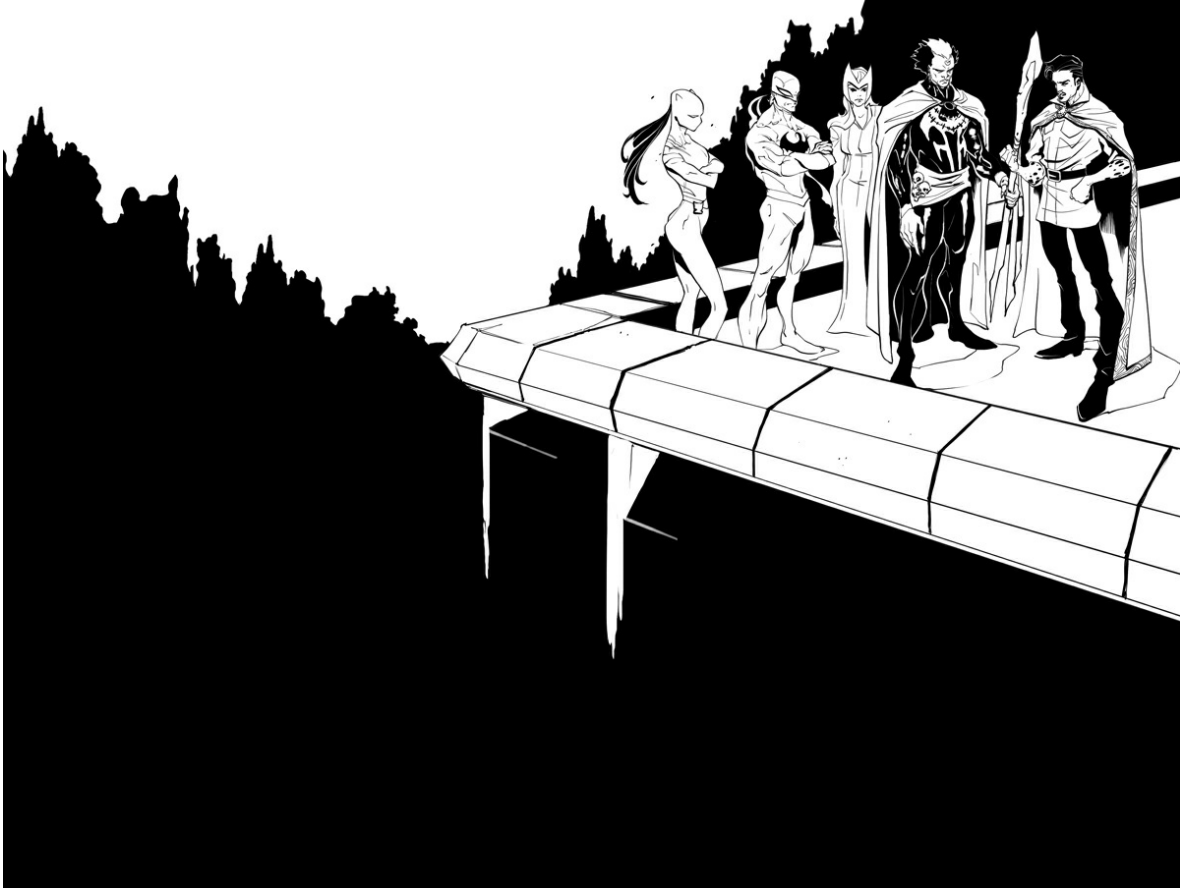
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CHAPTER 8

Belvedere Castle sat peacefully in the middle of Central Park, unaware that it would soon be the base of operations for a very important mission. Doctor Strange had sent out a magical message to his comrades, asking them to join him there. He wasn't quite sure if they would show up, but one by one they soon arrived: Scarlet Witch, Iron Fist, White Tiger, and Brother Voodoo.

The assembled heroes stood together as Doctor Strange addressed them. “As you know, there have been unexplained breaches in the barrier between our world and the beyond. Someone has been abusing creatures of magic. This must stop. I will continue to investigate the source of these crimes, but in the meantime, we must send all of these creatures back from whence they came.”

The heroes looked at one another. It was an enormous responsibility. Doctor Strange continued. “Each of you is here because you have something special and important to share. You're heroes, and I can't think of anyone else whom I would rather work with to end this nightmare.”



“I've got a question,” said Iron Fist, raising his hand. “I thought you didn't like working with other people. What made you change your mind?”

White Tiger lightly jabbed Iron Fist in the ribs with her elbow. “Rude,” she said. “This guy is a doctor. Show him some respect.”

“The truth is that I didn't think I needed any help. But then each of you showed me that sometimes solving problems requires teamwork,” Strange answered. “You all have something unique to share, and together I believe we can accomplish great things.”

“Sounds good to me!” said Iron Fist, smiling.

“What can we do to help?” asked Scarlet Witch.

“We're going to draw every single magical beast in New York City out of the darkness and assemble them right here. Then we're going to open a portal and drive them back from whence they came,” Doctor Strange explained. “First Brother Voodoo will use his Staff of Legba to cast a spell, creating a beacon that draws all the beasts to this area. I will lend him some

of my power to accomplish this. Then Scarlet Witch will use her chaos magic to open a dimensional portal that will send them all home.” He turned to Scarlet Witch. “Wanda, you'll need to keep the portal open until every single creature has exited our world. It will be difficult to maintain and may put a strain on your powers. Are you up for it?”

“I'll do whatever it takes,” she said confidently.

“What about White Tiger and me?” asked Iron Fist. “How are we going to help?”

“You both have a very important role,” explained Strange. “Once the creatures begin to arrive, it's up to you to make sure they go straight through that portal. Your job requires patience and, most likely, force. Some of these beasts may resist, and things could become problematic. Thankfully, you're both skilled fighters.”

“We won't let you down, Doc.”

“If you'll all move into formation now, we can begin the process,” Doctor Strange declared. “Vapors of Valtorr!” A protective fog rolled in, shielding the heroes from prying eyes.

Brother Voodoo began his mystical chants. He held the Staff of Legba high as Doctor Strange infused it with some of his own power. Lightning from the heavens struck the staff as a loud boom echoed throughout the city. The magic staff pulsed with the power of one thousand suns. The magic flare began to draw out each and every enchanted beast in New York City. There were werelizards, vampires, and shadow snakes. Tiny fairies descended from the sky, and zombies rose from the ground. Ghouls of all kinds swarmed the park.

“Wanda, stand by to open the portal,” Strange commanded. “Now!”

Scarlet Witch focused her chaos magic, opening a rift in time and space.

“All right, big guy, in you go!” said White Tiger, grabbing an angry troll and tossing him in. When a fight erupted between the were-lizards and the vampires, Iron Fist broke it up, sending all the creatures through the portal as well. Doctor Strange's plan seemed to be a success. But he wondered if perhaps it was all too good to be true.

Then the sky grew dark as an evil presence swept across the city. The doctor looked up to see a glowing message written in the clouds: WHERE IS WONG? Strange panicked. “I must go!”



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CHAPTER 9

Doctor Strange burst through the doors of the Sanctum Sanctorum and was met with silence.

“Wong?” he shouted at the top of his lungs. Strange was worried. He frantically searched each room, using his powers to scan every inch of his home. Wong was nowhere to be found. Suddenly, the silence was broken. Laughter echoed throughout the Sanctum, and it had a familiar tone. Loki had arrived!

“Loki! It was you all along,” accused Strange.

“No, Sorcerer Supreme. I'm not the one who has been causing you so much trouble, but I know who has,” Loki admitted. “He's about to arrive, and you will bow before his dark power!”

Doctor Strange was confused. “Why are you here, Loki? What's in it for you?”



Loki guffawed loudly. He was enjoying this. “My role was to distract you. I’m a trickster, after all. I desire that beautiful ax of yours,” he said, motioning to the Ax of Angarrumus, hanging on the wall. “I need something big and threatening that will scare Thor.” Loki sensed a change in the air. “Ah, yes. He’s here now, and I must go. Good-bye, Doctor Strange. I look forward to your defeat.” He vanished.

Doctor Strange felt the Sanctum getting hotter. Sweat began to drip from his brow. Now he knew exactly whom he was dealing with. It was one of his oldest and most dangerous enemies. “Reveal yourself, Spawn of Evil!”

shouted Strange.

A deep and frightening voice called out from beyond. "It's over, Doctor Strange." The Flames of the Faltine covered the walls of the Sanctum as the Lord of Darkness, Eater of Souls, emerged from the Dark Dimension. Strange's true enemy was revealed at last. Dormammu!

"How did you get past the Sanctum's magical protections?" asked Strange.

"Simple trickery. Magic is about misdirection; didn't you know?" taunted Dormammu. "I disguised myself as you and showed up on the doorstep of the Sanctum wounded. Surely Wong wouldn't turn away his master when he needed him most."

"Where is Wong?" asked Strange. He was angry but focused. To find Wong and save the Sanctum, he needed to calm himself and learn Dormammu's master plan.

"He's right here," said Dormammu, revealing Wong's lifeless body hanging in the air beside him. "Wong lives, but his spirit is trapped on the Astral Plane and you will never get it back!"

Doctor Strange was boiling with anger. "And you were behind it all?" he asked. "The werelizards, the vampires, and the demon elves—those were all your doing?"

"Yes, Doctor. It was I who created the numerous magical distractions across the city. I used my power to control weaker beings that would attack your world out of fear. I knew that attending to all of these bizarre occurrences would exhaust, frustrate, and confuse you. Then I could strike you at your weakest point."

"You're as clever and devious as ever," said Strange. "So why summon me back here? Why not simply destroy my friend and my home and be done with it?"

"Because I want you to watch me take everything you have!" said Dormammu, firing a flaming bolt of energy at Doctor Strange. "I want your Sanctum. I want your weapons. And once I get those, I will take control of the Earthly Plane," he threatened.

The heat intensified. Dormammu used his dark power to open a gateway to bring through an army of Mindless Ones, who began smashing the Sanctum to bits. The Mindless Ones were giant, silent creatures with one

purpose: Total destruction.

Dormammu cackled as he watched them ravage everything in sight. “I will plunge this world into darkness and rule it for all of eternity while you watch. There is no escape. It's over, Stephen Strange!”

“Quiet!” shouted Doctor Strange. He paused for a moment, and a sly smile appeared on his face. He had sensed a shift in the magical realm.



“What are you smiling about?” growled Dormammu.

“My friends are here and you're in trouble,” said Doctor Strange. A rumbling shook the Sanctum, and in a brilliant flash of light, Scarlet Witch, Brother Voodoo, Iron Fist, and White Tiger appeared, ready for battle. “Let us help you finish this.”

“It's not over yet, Dormammu,” said Doctor Strange. He calmly walked over to the Ax of Angarruumus and removed it from its perch. “Shall we dance?”



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CHAPTER 10

Doctor Strange and his friends stood tall against Dormammu and the Mindless Ones. Scarlet Witch, Brother Voodoo, Iron Fist, White Tiger, and Doctor Strange were a team, and together they were ready to take on the lord of the Dark Dimension once and for all.

Dormammu gazed at the assembled heroes and cackled. “Scarlet Witch? You are nothing,” he said dismissively. Many villains had underestimated Scarlet Witch over the years.

She had defeated all of them. They believed she was delicate and sensitive, traits they viewed as weaknesses. In reality, Scarlet Witch was a powerful sorceress who used her mysterious hex bolts in a variety of ways.

She fired one at Dormammu as he recoiled in surprise. He wasn't expecting such raw, unpredictable power. She blasted him again and again in quick succession. Dormammu was angry. Lucky for him, he had an army of creatures at his command. “Mindless Ones, shatter these heroes beyond repair!”

Doctor Strange wasn't having it. He leaped into the middle of a battalion of Mindless Ones and swung the Ax of Angarruumus in a complete circle, knocking back the attacking beasts. For a moment it even looked as if he was enjoying himself.

Scarlet Witch took the lead, steering each hero in the right direction. “White Tiger, you'll need to subdue the Mindless Ones as best you can,” she said. “Keep them busy and prevent them from destroying the Sanctum.”



“You got it,” said White Tiger, jumping into action and attuning herself to the tiger amulet's power. “Time to take down some Mindless Ones!” She launched herself into the air and kicked one right in the face.

Two of them charged White Tiger from either side as a third attacked from the front. A normal hero might've felt trapped, but the nimble White Tiger flipped into the air and the three Mindless Ones crashed into one another. “I love it when the bad guys do your job for you,” she said, moving on to the next challenge.

“Iron Fist, grab all the weapons and relics so Dormammu can't get his hands on them,” instructed Scarlet Witch.

Iron Fist was excited but also nervous. Handling a bunch of magic weapons sounded pretty cool, but one mistake and he might accidentally open a portal to doom. He leaped across a group of attacking Mindless Ones and began swiping pieces of Doctor Strange's collection.



“This is actually kind of fun. I don't even have to use my powers,” said Iron Fist as a Mindless One lumbered up behind him. It raised its giant hands, ready to smash its enemy into a million pieces, but Iron Fist's acute mystical senses alerted him to the situation. He summoned the power of the mystical dragon Shou-Lao, and his fist glowed bright with energy. In the blink of an eye, the young hero had turned and unleashed the full power of his Iron Fist punch on the Mindless One, knocking it down with a giant boom! “Oh well. I guess I spoke too soon. Nighty-night!” He gently stepped over the beast.

Dormammu saw his minions being defeated and decided to turn up the heat. “Flames of the Faltine, swallow this Sanctum whole!” he commanded, and the ceiling began to drip with fire. A loud belch shook the heroes as a pit of flames opened in the middle of the room.

“I can't access the Astral Plane. Dormammu is blocking my entry,” Doctor Strange confessed.

“Let me handle this,” said Brother Voodoo. “Doctor Strange, get ready to grab Wong.”

“Ha-ha-ha! You cannot be serious, Brother Voodoo.” Dormammu cackled. “I rule an entire dimension, and you are just a man wearing a necklace of skulls. Do you really think you're powerful enough to stop me?”

“Maybe I'm not powerful enough to stop you,” countered Voodoo, “but thankfully, I have friends like Doctor Strange. And he happened to share a special spell with me for just this sort of occasion.”

“The icy tendrils of ikthalon!”

Brother Voodoo reached toward Dormammu and fired a massive bolt of freezing energy, trapping the demon in a block of ice.

Scarlet Witch hastily ran to retrieve Wong and keep his body safe from harm. “Now, Stephen! While Dormammu is frozen!” she shouted.

Doctor Strange entered the Astral Plane and quickly located Wong. “Hello, old friend,” Strange said. “It's good to see you.”

“I'd like to go home now,” Wong replied.

Strange used his magic to pull Wong's spirit back to the Earthly Plane, where he awoke safely in his body. Wong took a look around at all the chaos occurring within the Sanctum. “I'm going to need help cleaning this up,” he joked.



Dormammu burst free of his icy prison. He spotted Iron Fist with Doctor Strange's prized Wand of Watoomb and used his power to snatch it out of his hands. “Now I will end this battle and rule the universe.”

With a smile, Iron Fist pulled another Wand of Watoomb from behind

his back. “Does this look familiar?”

“Silly human. You know nothing of magic!” said Dormammu. “Prepare to meet your doom.” In an instant the wand in his hand disappeared, leaving Dormammu confused and angry.

“I know a little something about magic, Dormy. Can I call you Dormy?” asked Iron Fist. “You see, a wise man once told me magic is all about misdirection.” He handed his wand to Doctor Strange. “Would you do the honors, Sorcerer Supreme?”

“Gladly,” said Doctor Strange, smiling. “By the Wand of Watoomb, begone from this realm, foul demon!”

“You have not defeated me, Stephen Strange! I will return when you least expect it, and I will consume your soul.”

In a blaze of light, Dormammu and the Mindless Ones were gone. The battle was over, and everyone was safe at last.

Scarlet Witch smiled.

“Thanks for the illusion, Wanda. Old Dormy thought he had the real thing,” said Iron Fist. “And nice wand work, Doc.”

Doctor Strange glanced around the room, overwhelmed. “I cannot thank you all enough,” he said. “I owe each of you a debt of gratitude.” “No, Stephen,” replied Brother Voodoo. “We owe you. Without your advice and guidance, we might not have been able to defeat Dormammu.” A naked soul rat scurried across Iron Fist's feet.

“Yikes!” he cried out.

“Well, if you don't mind,” said Doctor Strange, “there is a bit of cleaning to be done.”

The heroes began using their powers to repair the damage. Scarlet Witch used her hex abilities to heal the burnt areas of the Sanctum. Iron Fist focused his senses, eliminating all traces of Dormammu's evil presence. Brother Voodoo blew magic dusts into the air, adding a new layer of protection to the Sanctum. White Tiger used super strength to reassemble parts of Strange's damaged home.

“Dark magic,” grumbled Doctor Strange. “I imagine the scent will linger.”

“I'll light a fragrant candle. It'll be gone soon enough,” said Wong. “Now, more important, who wants soup?”

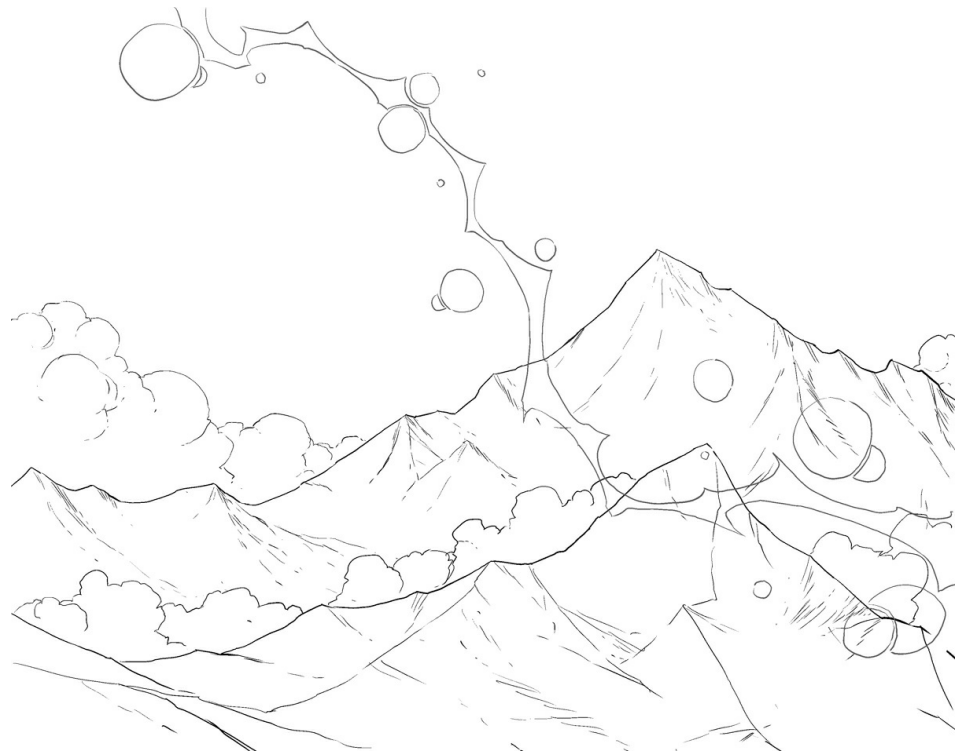
奇异博士的故事

史蒂芬·斯特兰奇年轻时，不论何时何地都自信无比。他以优异成绩从医学院毕业后，成了世界上最天赋异禀的外科医生之一。他的外科事业蒸蒸日上，这为他赢得了财富和关注，不过，他也因此变得自私而傲慢。

工作中，斯特兰奇医术高超，从无差错，声名远播；但生活中，他行事鲁莽，不负责任。一天晚上，他驾着爱车，一路疾驰，岂料车身失控，一下撞到了树上。好在同事救了他一命，但其双手却伤势过重，难以恢复。他失去了惊人的天赋，再也无法进行手术了。

然而，愤怒和沮丧并没有使斯特兰奇一蹶不振，相反，他前往西藏山地，开启了一场精神之旅。在那里，他遇到了古一，一位拥有强大魔法能力的法师。古一教导斯特兰奇要谦卑谨慎，并在一门新学科——秘术领域对他进行训练。

当契机到来时，古一超凡入圣，并赐予了斯特兰奇一件至尊魔法师的斗篷。对斯特兰奇来说，虽然生活不如预期圆满，但以奇异博士的身份工作，倒也让他满足。



第一章



“快跟上！”猎鹰边喊边疾速穿过长岛购物中心。山姆·威尔逊以猎鹰的身份经历了种种冒险之旅，见证过一些极度疯狂之事。他曾经与超级机器人、外星军队，甚至是岩石巨魔都进行过战斗。现在又有一群狼蜥生物正在入侵，猎鹰简直不敢相信自己的运气如此之背。猎鹰安全地降落在商场中央，他发现钢铁侠、惊奇队长、雷神托尔和绯红女巫也在这里。“所有人都已经安全撤离，危机已过。”他说，“我们去好好教训狼蜥一番。复仇者们，集合！”

“别着急，山姆。”钢铁侠说，“我们得先弄清楚这些怪物到底是什么，否则都不知道我们要对付的是谁。”

“这群怪物又大又丑，还很臭。”山姆说，“知道这些还不够吗？”

一群狼蜥刚刚啃完墨西哥卷饼，从美食广场出来，迎面撞上了复仇者们。它们眼中闪着凶光，一看就知道还没吃饱，仿佛下顿就要把复仇者们给吃了。

“滚开，你们这些怪物！”托尔怒喊道。他挥舞着他那威力无比的神锤，对着它们轻轻一挥，一排狼蜥便应声倒地。

“救命啊！”附近传来了呼救声。

“听声音像是我们撤离时漏掉了一个人，我去救他。”卡罗尔·丹弗斯说。她正是队友们口中的“惊奇队长”。

她循着呼救声追到了波罗士奇的百货大楼，只见一个小女孩躲在衣架后面。“别担心，亲爱的，你现在安全了。”惊奇队长向她保证道。

“小心！”小女孩指着一只正在靠近的狼蜥叫道。

惊奇队长一脚踢向狼蜥，将它踢了个四脚朝天，眼冒金星。“现在真的没事儿了。”她说着，一把抓住怪物的后颈，把它抛向了空中。“交给我了！”猎鹰边说边截住了那只狼蜥，拽着它一起飞了起来，“让我们给你找个好地方洗洗澡吧！”说着便一把将那怪物扔进了商场的喷泉里，然后返回与朋友们会合了。

“谢谢你赶来帮忙，山姆。”惊奇队长说道。



“这正是团队合作的意义所在。”猎鹰答道。这时，两只饥饿的狼蜥正从其身后偷偷靠近，但他过于专注，根本没有察觉。

“我想，就像往常一样，还是由英俊帅气、智慧超群的托尼·史塔克来挽救危局吧，”钢铁侠边说边用冲击光束轰炸偷偷靠近的狼蜥，救下了猎鹰，“至少我擅长拯救世界。嘿，旺达，你对这些怪物了解多少？”

“这些野兽不是自然物种。”绯红女巫旺达·马克西莫夫说。她尝试过用混沌魔法破译狼蜥的起源，但一无所获。“它们被施了一种奇怪的魔法，就算是用我的混沌魔法也破解不了。”她坦言道。

“魔法，那可是我的最爱啊。”钢铁侠翻了个白眼讽刺道。众所周

知，钢铁侠向来崇尚科技，鄙视魔法。

但有个人一定清楚狼蜥的来历。唯一的问题是，他与复仇者或任何其他英雄都格格不入。他们只有在有需要时才会叫他前来相助。虽然众所周知，他既冷漠又不合群，但其能力之强却无可否认。此人正是秘术大师奇异博士。如今这种情况下，相信他早晚会出现的。

复仇者们与狼蜥继续交战，突然听到一个熟悉的声音回荡在商场：“真是群奇异的小怪物。我想知道是谁创造了它们。”

“出来吧，洛基，我们可没时间陪你玩。”托尔咆哮道。

在一阵薄雾中，阿斯加德诡计之神洛基现身了。他在英雄们上空徘徊，一边看着他们战斗一边大笑。

“老弟，这群恶心的怪物是你造的，对吧？”托尔问道。

“我才不会造出这种原始野兽。我只是来这儿看看。”洛基咯咯地笑着说道。

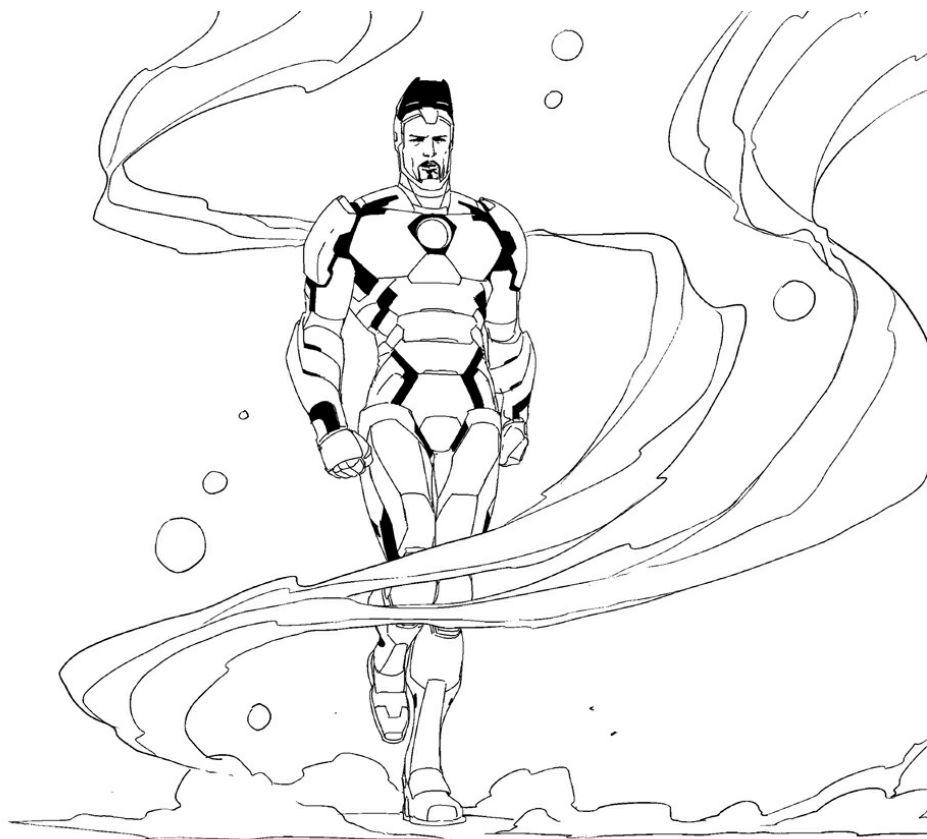
托尔径直冲到他跟前，根本无心玩笑，只是对他喊道：“保护好你自己！”

“等你下次不忙了我再来看你。”洛基一说完，即刻消失在一股薄烟中。

霎时间，商场一片漆黑，一声轰鸣撼动了大楼的根基。

一道闪电劈来，眼前的狼蜥瞬间全都消失不见了，只留下一缕薄烟。狼蜥终于消失了，一切重回正轨。对此，复仇者们惊讶不已，不由得对奇异博士深感佩服。

“耽误了你不少时间，”钢铁侠说，“但还是要感谢你那古怪的魔法巫术，不然我们差点遇上麻烦。”



“史塔克先生，信不信由你，我有我自己的事情要办，”奇异博士说，“你应该知道魔法没有什么好取笑的。”

“那群怪物究竟是什么？”惊奇队长问道。

“它们本是无辜的动物，却被强行融为一体。”奇异博士解释道，“我用法术将它们送往另一个维度，在那里它们不会再受到伤害。一旦法力消失，它们便会恢复原来的样子，重新加入我们的世界。”

“是洛基干的！”托尔断言道。

奇异博士闭上了眼睛，用至尊魔法师的力量，跨越魔法领域，寻找有关狼蜥的信息。随后，他睁开双眼，眼中闪烁着明黄色的光芒。

“这不是洛基所为。”他说，“这种黑魔法我也无法识别。”奇异博士对各种形式的魔法无一不知。如果连他都无法确定骚乱的来源，那就不是好兆头了。

“加入复仇者联盟吧，我们一起去查明这种邪恶的巫术。”托尔说。

奇异博士对他的邀请无动于衷。“不了，谢谢。你和我不一样，你不了解秘术。正如你今日所见，魔法世界非常危险。如果我们一起工

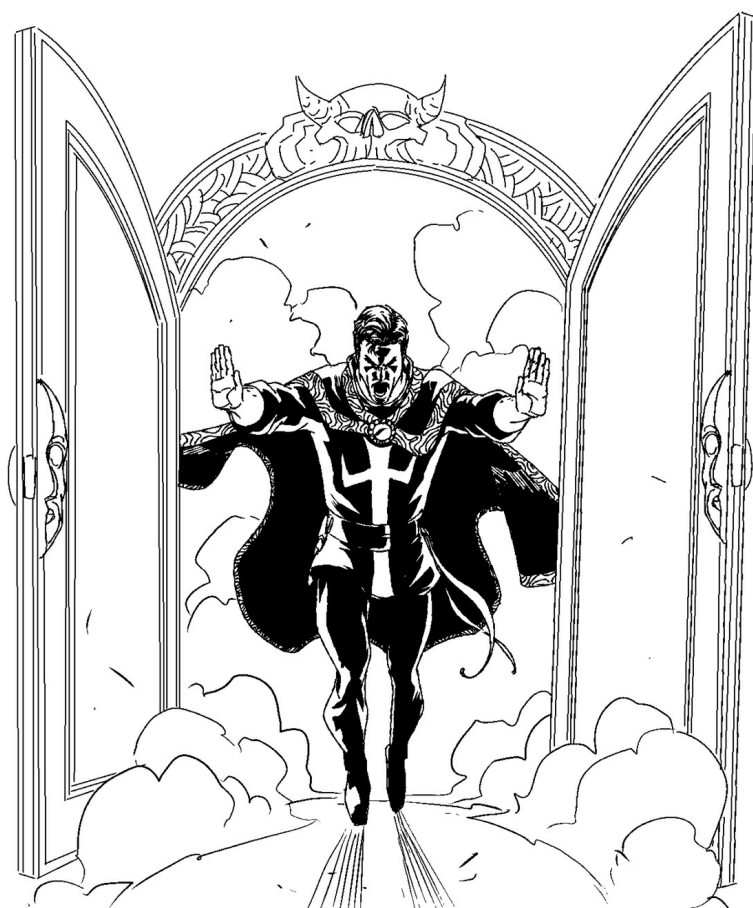
作，你只会碍手碍脚的。”说着，他使用魔浮斗篷升到了空中。

“但是和我们一起会玩得很开心！”钢铁侠开玩笑说，“我甚至还想让你教我一两招。”

“史塔克先生，我更喜欢独自处理魔法上的事务。再见，复仇者们。”奇异博士喊道，随后，便消失得无影无踪。

钢铁侠难以置信地摇了摇头。“谁会拒绝复仇者们的帮助？”他问道，“那好吧，祝你好运，奇异博士。如果魔法世界里真的发生了些什么不好的事情，我想你会需要我们的。”

第二章



“我浑身都沾染了黑魔法的恶臭！”奇异博士边高声喊着边扬长而去。他带着种种疑团回到了家。有人为了邪恶的目的使用魔法，他打算找出幕后黑手。

奇异博士的家，即至圣所，是一座施了魔法的宅邸，坐落在曼哈顿格林尼治村一条安静的街道上。所有人都坚信这里充满了神秘。奇异博士身处众多魔法神器之中，惬意无比。

他沿着长长的走廊走向藏书阁，一路经过了无数的神秘奇观。圣殿的每扇门都通往不同的领域——有些是和平之地，有些是危险之所。一

一旦开启错误之门，就会释放出一群长有触角的恶魔或是不死生灵的不安亡魂。

“万能的维山帝！”奇异博士呐喊着，一只小野怪从他脚边匆匆溜走。圣殿时不时会接待一些奇怪的生物。最后，奇异博士来到了藏书阁，受到了知心伙伴兼忠实助手王的欢迎。

“王，其中一只光溜溜的灵鼠已经挣脱了防守。”奇异博士说，“我原以为自它们入侵以来，我们一直把它们看得死死的。务必找到那只灵鼠，妥善处理好，让这样的生物跑来跑去实在太危险了。”

“吃完午饭，我就戴上捉鬼手套去找。”王说着，叹了口气，“欢迎回家，史蒂芬。商场那边情况怎么样？”

没有人比王更了解奇异博士。他们是多年的知己，每当魔法世界出现异况，奇异博士力不从心时，王总在那里，听他倾诉烦恼，给他提建议。王不仅是一位专业的武术家，在各行各业都堪称大师，奇异博士的很多魔法神器也都是他从多元宇宙收集而来的。



“目前情况很糟糕，王。魔法世界处于危险之中。黑暗势力正在行动，我必须尽快找到问题的根源！”奇异博士沮丧地说道。

“希望你回来的时候没在地板上留下一地脚印。”王说，“我刚刚手动清理了所有的地毯。”王也是圣殿的管家。

“没，没，没。”奇异博士喃喃低语道。今天太过漫长，他开始变得极其暴躁。奇异博士在书架上搜寻可能有用的信息，他的魔浮斗篷自动脱了下来，整齐地挂在旁边的衣帽架上。

“洗个热水澡放松一下。你饿不饿？”王问道，“我炖了点汤。”王做了一道非常好吃的鸡汤面。

奇异博士毫无胃口。“我没有时间洗澡、喝汤！”他大声说道，在藏书阁中暴躁地翻阅着典籍。他坚信，有这么多信息在手，自己肯定能找到问题的答案。

突然，奇异博士心生一计。他说：“我必须前往星界，向师父古一请教。他能告诉我这些维度的异动。”

星界是地球之外的另一个维度，那里充满了光明与黑暗的神秘能量。要想到达星界，魔法师必须经过一种叫作星体投射的过程，将灵魂与肉体分开。这需要他集中精力、全神贯注。

奇异博士盘腿坐在屋子的中央，他紧闭双眼，深吸了两口气，清空了大脑。随后开始了他的灵界之旅。

“小心点儿。”王告诫道。

“我向来小心谨慎。”奇异博士向他保证道，只见他的灵魂发出蓝光，离开了躯体，升向空中。

王离开了奇异博士的躯体，去忙自己的事儿了。“我去看看能否找到灵鼠。”他说着便关上门，离开了房间。

“欢迎你，史蒂芬。好久不见了。你看起来很激动。”古一说着，将奇异博士带入星界。古一是最高级别的强大魔法师。在奇异博士继承这个头衔之前，他一直是至尊魔法师。古一的肉身去世后，他的灵魂飞往星界，永世不灭。现在，每当奇异博士需要建议时，都会去拜访他曾经的师父。他们之间的关系，亲切而复杂。

“我没有时间闲聊，亟须您的指导，古一。有人在违规使用魔法，邪恶势力正在行动。”奇异博士解释道，“您了解这种怪物吗？”

“嗯。你有很多神器可用。看，所有这些符咒书和魔法神器都能用。”古一继续说道，“为什么不用它们呢？”

“我会用的，”奇异博士答道，“但首先，我需要您帮我找到问题的根源。我能感觉到危险，但我不知道危险来自何方。”

“你有很多敌人。”古一说道。

“确实如此。虽然今天和我交手的生物不像是洛基所为，但他也难逃嫌疑。”奇异博士说，“我需要更多信息。”

“你有没有想过请朋友们帮忙？”古一问道。奇异博士对这个问题感到愤怒。

“复仇者们造型靓丽炫酷，是我非常尊敬的超级英雄，”奇异博士解释道，“但他们并不像我一样了解魔法世界。我更喜欢独自工作。”

看着奇异博士那色彩鲜艳的魔浮斗篷，古一发出一声爽朗的笑声。“哈哈！这话竟然出自一位穿着靓丽披风的人之口。”他戏谑地笑道，“我说的朋友也不一定指复仇者。朋友应该是各有所长，各不相同的。在不久的将来，你也许会需要一些朋友。”

奇异博士不以为然。“我更喜欢一个人处理魔法问题！”他说道，“我带着重要的问题来找你，你却用谜语来搪塞我！”

“让自己冷静下来，才能掌握秘术。整个星界满是那些懂得利用你情绪的生灵。”古一警告道，“你面临着很多敌人，史蒂芬。你必须眼观六路，耳听八方，时刻警惕。人生是一场旅程，你务必小心谨慎。”

话音刚落，古一的元灵消失了，只剩下奇异博士一人独留星界。他本以为师父高深睿智，能给自己答案，没想到反而留给自己更多的谜团。他刚准备返回地球，却感觉到有些不对劲。星界的温度在逐渐降低，他的脊柱冷得打战。原来，这里不止他一人。

第三章

“你救过多少人，史蒂芬？”一个柔和的声音在他的耳边低声问道，吓了他一跳。他转过身想看看究竟是谁，却空无一人。在星界，有个神秘人一直跟着他。他的声音由柔和逐渐变得愤怒起来。“秘术大师？可笑！你根本配不上你所拥有的力量！”

奇异博士感到惴惴不安。这声音听起来有些耳熟，但他却始终想不起来到底是谁。即使只是元灵形态，奇异博士也能感觉到屋里越来越冷。暗影在他身前的墙壁上跳舞。“不管你是谁，快出来吧！”他喊道。很快，暗影开始剥落，变成滑行的蛇形生物。“维山帝保佑。”他低声咕哝道。

“现在就算是维山帝也救不了你。”神秘的声音回应道。

暗影怪物一边嘲笑着奇异博士，一边发出越来越响的嘶嘶声。魔浮斗篷察觉到危险，迅速包裹着奇异博士，使其免受其害。“暗影怪物！在阿戈摩托的全能眼的光芒下灭亡吧！”奇异博士厉声命令道。魔浮斗篷的护身符发出一道炫目的白光，烧得这群暗影怪物发出嘶嘶的叫喊声。怪物在墙壁上四散奔逃，但那神秘的低语声依然在耳边回响。

“奇异博士，你怀疑自己。我看到魔法正对你造成伤害。”那神秘的声音传来，“为什么不放松一下，享受你梦中的假期呢？”

奇异博士终于明白自己要对付的是谁！是梦魇——梦境维度的统治者。梦魇是一个残忍的恶魔，喜欢用敌人内心最深处、最黑暗的恐惧折磨他们。他渴望以这些恐惧为食，并以此增强自身的力量。他经常躲在星界中，伺机而动，等着在奇异博士最脆弱的时候将其击败。现在，他离这个愿望越来越近了。

“少奚落我，梦魇！”奇异博士命令道。那群暗影怪物再次出现，从背后蜂拥而至，紧紧地困住奇异博士的元灵。他努力挣脱，但它们将他困得更紧了。

最终，梦魇现身了。他微微侧着头，打量着奇异博士，寻找着他的恐惧之源。梦魇打了个响指，曾经的画面便浮现在奇异博士眼前。画面里，他还是一名年轻的医生，利用在医学院学到的技术救死扶伤，这给他带来了巨大的快乐，但是一场可怕的事故改变了这一切。他的双手不

能再灵活使用，更无法进行手术了。梦魇以这种方式让他想起过去，他心痛不已。

“自从我们上次交手以来，我的力量已经有所增长。”梦魇冷笑道，“看看你的过去，史蒂芬，看看你的恐惧！你的痛苦！”快乐的幻景顿时变得愈加黑暗。奇异博士看着年轻的自己挣扎地握住手术刀，挫败感丛生。看到这一幕，他气愤不已。

“你吓不住我的，梦魇。在痛苦中挣扎只会让我变得更强大。”奇异博士吼道，“等我挣脱束缚，我会让你见识到我有多强大。”

梦魇不禁捧腹大笑，尽情享受着这个瞬间。但就在此刻，奇异博士却发现了取胜的机会。他环顾整个房间，扫视着可以帮他逃脱的法器。啊哈！终极暗影之剑可以担此重任。此剑储藏在附近的玻璃橱窗中。奇异博士集中全部心力，控制该剑跳出橱窗，并斩断暗影怪物的重重束缚。终极暗影之剑听令行事，奇异博士的元灵终于重获自由。他一把接住利剑，紧紧握住，准备战斗。



“聪明，聪明。”梦魇说，“你法器用得真是得心应手。我希望没人能偷走它们，否则你可就遇到大麻烦了。”

奇异博士察觉到黑魔法在被人操控，梦魇会不会就是那个幕后黑手呢？当然，他足够强大，这再明显不过了。“魔法世界是不平衡的。你对它了解多少呢？”奇异博士问道。

梦魇又恣意地放声大笑起来。“哈哈！魔法永远是不平衡的！永远是不确定的！这就是它的本质，蠢货！”

奇异博士变得焦躁不安。“你为什么来这里，梦魇？要么说出你的真正意图，要么立刻滚出星界！”



“我只是想试试你的身手。”梦魇说，“你很快就会遇到比我更大的挑战。还是那个问题：你能应付自如吗？”

梦魇那瘦削的身躯从空中蜿蜒滑向奇异博士。“你的恐惧很美味。我很期待早日再饱餐一顿。”说完，梦魇就消失不见了。

奇异博士回到地球，元灵便迅速与肉身合为一体。经过梦魇的一番

嘲弄，他早已精疲力竭，饥饿难耐。

王感觉奇异博士需要帮助，急忙冲进房间看个究竟。“你还好吗？”王问道，“我听到了一阵骚动。”

“我没事儿。”奇异博士气喘吁吁地回答，“我现在想喝点汤。”

第四章

“你有访客来了！”王喊道。

这些天，奇异博士一直在读《维山帝之书》。书中涵盖了多种强大的法术咒语，可以用来抵御各种各样的攻击，但这就够了吗？自从与狼蜥交手以来，同一个问题一直困扰着他：魔法世界到底发生了什么？眼下，这个问题依然苦思无果，而他得去接待一些不速之客。

“请允许我介绍绯红女巫和铁拳。”王郑重地说道，同时夸张地鞠了一躬，“欢迎来到至圣所。”

“我就说我们是贵客，对吧？”铁拳说道。

“王就是客气客气。”奇异博士说。王颇有幽默感地说：“丹尼尔·兰德，也被称为铁拳，昆仑的禅宗学生。很高兴见到你。绯红女巫旺达·马克西莫夫，很高兴又见面了。什么风把你们吹来了？不像你们，我倒是忙得很。”

“我们只是刚好在附近，随便溜达溜达。我们点点儿比萨吧！”铁拳说着，扑通一声坐在椅子上，抬起双脚。

绯红女巫笑了笑。“你家真是太棒了，史蒂芬。我的力量并没有你那样强大，但我想在你家的藏书阁里待一段时间。”她凝视着周围许多神迹说，“我真羡慕你的使命。”

“旺达，你是一位令人赞叹的幻术师。”奇异博士称赞道，“专注你的优势，而不是你的弱点。只有这样，你才能成长。”

此时，铁拳坐的那把椅子突然抬起“胳膊”，紧紧抓住了铁拳的手腕，吓得他一跃而起。“哇！”他喊道，“这把椅子是活的！”

“确实如此。”奇异博士说道，“圣殿里充满了许多魔法遗珍，这些珍宝都是我在各个维度冒险所得。然而，即使拥有这里的一切，我也找不到眼下需要的答案。”

铁拳捡起了一个造型怪异的圆柱，开始玩弄起来，好像自己是一个佩带宝剑的海盗。

“这是做什么的？”他问道，“我打赌这是一个魔法马桶泵！”

“放下！这是瓦托姆博魔杖，不是玩具。”奇异博士警告说，“绯红

女巫，你们此行的目的是什么？就算不懂魔法，我都能感觉到你们此行不单单是为了闲逛。”

绯红女巫有点儿尴尬，她知道自己骗不了奇异博士，便坦言道：“有人操纵着我们无法控制的魔法力量，我们，还有铁拳，都觉察到了。我知道你不喜欢与他人合作，但我们真心想帮你。”



“我是至尊魔法师，是各种秘术的掌控者。”斯特兰奇回答道，“我不需要帮助，谢谢。”

“但这并不能保护你免受一切伤害。”铁拳说，“当坏人试图用一招娴熟的老式拳法打你脸时，你会怎么做？”

“我们何不轻拳切磋一下？那样我就可以告诉你了。”奇异博士提议

道。

“没门儿。也许你会趁我不备对我施魔法。”铁拳答道。

奇异博士的魔浮斗篷、护身符以及阿戈摩托之眼，都缓缓离开他的身体，漂浮到墙角边，在那里不疾不徐地盘旋。“现在我没有魔法衣了。你放心了吧？”他问道。

“在我听来，他是在向你挑战。”绯红女巫说。

铁拳直勾勾地望着奇异博士。两人都点头同意后，比赛开始了。英雄们颇有耐心地相互周旋，考虑着如何精准地攻击对方。距离上次和王以外的人切磋，已经很久了，这让奇异博士大为兴奋。

“我喜欢你头上的缕缕银发，史蒂夫。”铁拳笑着说道，“再问一遍，你多大了？”

“我活了那么久，哪些是废话一听就明白。”奇异博士反驳道，“还有，别叫我史蒂夫。”



两位英雄切磋了好一会儿，时而出拳猛击，时而勾住对方，时而避开攻击，都能轻松应对。

突然，奇异博士来了一记扫堂腿，将铁拳撂倒在地。

“服不服输？”奇异博士问道。

“服！”铁拳答道。奇异博士放开了他，铁拳站起身来，说：“你真厉害，奇异博士。我真没料到你会来一招扫堂腿。”

“我甚至不需要锁喉擒拿术就能制服你。”奇异博士笑着说，“给你一点忠告——魔法和搏斗一样，都只是障眼法而已。”

“你很聪明。话说，你在哪里学的这些招式？”铁拳问道。

“王不仅仅是一个好厨师，还是一位出色的徒手战士。”奇异博士答道。

“啊，所以王的招式就是‘王道’？”铁拳开玩笑说。

绯红女巫环顾房间，看到了奇异博士的众多魔法神器，脸上流露出好奇的神色。“圣殿里集中了这么多强大的神器，你如何保护它不受外界力量的影响？”她问道。

“我已经布下了许多魔法防护结界，以免圣殿受到其他维度的威胁。除非得到我或王的许可，否则谁也不能进入圣殿。”奇异博士说，“毕竟有备无患。”

王冲进了房间，说有重大消息。“我本无意打扰，但吸血蝠正在攻击中央车站。我想你可能会采取一些行动。”他说，“还有，如果有人口渴的话，我已经备好了茶。”

“又有一场骚乱，我竟然没料到！”奇异博士惊呼道，“我必须即刻赶往中央车站。”

“我们和你一起去。”绯红女巫说道。

“不，”奇异博士反驳道，“没必要。待在这儿，喝一杯王沏的茶。”奇异博士展开双臂，迎接魔浮斗篷和阿戈摩托之眼重新回到身上。“是时候干点正事儿了。”他说道。

第五章



“万能的霍戈斯！”奇异博士惊呼道。他到达中央车站，发现吸血蝠吓坏了旅行者，造成了严重的破坏。奇异博士极其鄙视吸血蝠，觉得它们肮脏下流，冷血无情。

他用魔法力量扫描该区域后，察觉到一些异常。原来，这些吸血蝠根本没有去寻找血液，只是在恐吓人群。他觉得这太匪夷所思了。

奇异博士创造出一道保护屏障，庇护着受惊的乘客。吸血蝠攻击着屏障，自知无法攻破，便落荒而逃。

“谢谢你，魔法先生。”一个男孩说道。

“别客气。从现在开始，孩子，你要做一名英雄，帮助你的奶奶，”奇异博士说，“这样你们在外面才能安全。”

小男孩离开时，奇异博士听到不远处传来一阵打斗的声音。有人正单枪匹马大战吸血蝠。

奇异博士凑近一看，发现正是那位人称白虎的英雄。她已经与吸血蝠僵持了一会儿，精力正在迅速消失。

“帮我一把如何？”白虎问道，一拳打在了吸血蝠脸上。

“那个神秘的白虎护身符是你的吗？”奇异博士问道。

“当然。”白虎说，“如果你不介意的话，施点魔法怎么样？”



奇异博士双手高举到空中，眼中闪着明黄色的光。

“水晶风暴！”他怒吼着，刹那间，数百把匕首状的水晶如大雨一般刺向进攻的吸血蝠，逼得它们四散奔逃。

“谢谢。”白虎说道，她拍了拍身上的灰尘，停下来歇口气儿，“这些怪物不知是从哪儿冒出来的，一出来就开始制造麻烦。但它们没咬任何人的脖子，也算万幸。我想对方只是想折磨折磨我们。”

白虎能做出此番分析，倒让奇异博士眼前一亮。“这一观察非常敏锐，”他说，“魔法世界出现了混乱。某些人或某些怪物正在干涉他们控制不了的力量。”这时，白虎的护身符开始发光。“你戴的护身符，异常奇特，强大无比。”

“这就是我获得力量的方式。”白虎解释道，“如果你答应给我一些魔法训练的话，有机会你也可以看看我的护身符。”

这个提议让奇异博士异常兴奋。他说：“让自己适应护身符的力量。用它来摒除杂念，集中注意力。然后你就能够——”他犹豫了一

下，感觉到附近有麻烦。

“啊！”一声尖叫传来。吸血蝠再次逼近，有人亟须帮助。

白虎扫视了这片区域。她的感官已经强化，在这种情况下，正好能派上用场。“我也想留下来和你聊聊，但我还有正事儿要做。”话音刚落，她就钻入了茫茫一片愤怒的吸血蝠之中。

在白虎战斗时，奇异博士仔细研究了她的招数。原来，她的护身符不仅让她更有力，更敏捷，还让她专注于任务而不分心。“这是一件贵重无比的珍宝，特别是对像她一样年轻的英雄来说。”他心想。



吸血蝠的数量正在减少，很快就要大功告成了。奇异博士寻思着，如何才能将它们一网打尽。于是，他用魔法力量再次扫描它们。这一次，真相终于浮出水面，令人震惊。实际上，吸血蝠是完全由魔法制成的空心贝壳。因为它们不是活物，奇异博士可以用任何方式毁灭它们。

“七曜临空！”他喊道，引来一阵强光热浪。强烈的闪电箭击溃了所有吸血蝠，它们瞬间化为灰烬。中央车站里的吸血蝠终于全部消灭了。

看到奇异博士的魔法，白虎惊呆了。“太棒了！”她说，“我希望以后再也不用和一群恶心的吸血蝠战斗了。谢谢你的帮忙。”

“万幸他们不是脑蛆，不用谢。”奇异博士说。

“我不习惯和其他超级英雄一起工作。”白虎解释道，“好吧，除了蜘蛛侠和诺瓦。对了，还有铁拳。我就是想对你说声谢谢。没有你帮我，我这次不可能成功。我们以后应该还会合作的。”

“也许我应该与你合作。如果谁受得了铁拳，肯跟他合作，我真的佩服得五体投地。”奇异博士开玩笑地说。离开白虎返回圣殿时，奇异

博士突然怀疑自己当初是不是做错了，是不是不应该拒绝与其他英雄合作。

“是时候改变了吗？”他心想。

第六章

奇异博士筋疲力尽了。他在纽约市上空的云层中平静地翱翔，但大脑却在高速运转。城市内外的袭击事件来势汹汹，古怪离奇，令他困惑不已。随着魔法思维逐渐消失，他真的弄不明白这件事了。每当他认为有了答案时，新的问题就会出现。

现在是时候再次去星界拜访古一，寻求他的建议了。在一片云的后面，奇异博士发现了一处安静的地方，在那里没有人能打扰他。他尽力摒除杂念，唤醒自己的元灵，进入了星界。古一正在那里等他。

“很高兴又见面了，史蒂芬。”古一说道，“我想你有了更多我可能回答不了的问题。”

“我需要答案！”斯特兰奇命令道。



“不要向我提要求，至尊魔法师！”古一的声音一下子高了八度。这句高声的宣泄震动了平静的云层。古一是一位慈祥的长者，但他也有脾气，尤其是当自己的权威遭到质疑时。

奇异博士叹了口气。对信任有加的师父厉声叫嚷并非他的本意，他只是无计可施了。“自然世界和魔法世界之间的桥梁正在坍塌。”他说，“几种动物被粗暴地合为一种新的怪物，空有皮囊的吸血蝠毫无目的地攻击，我和这些怪物交过手。梦魇揭露了我内心深处的恐惧，洛基可能也脱不了干系。所有这一切究竟意味着什么？是一场考验吗，古一？这一系列事件是否相互关联？这些都说不通啊。”从奇异博士的言语中看出，他陷入了深深的沮丧之中。

“一个博士竟说出如此戏剧性的话。”古一说，“史蒂芬，一切都是考验。静下心来，摒弃杂念。你寻找的答案其实显而易见，但找到了也无济于事。”

“你的哑谜更多了。”奇异博士抱怨道，“我早该料到你会打更多的哑谜。你是我知道的最强大的魔法师之一。你的智慧前无古人，但你竟然找不到答案！”

“你说得对！”古一赞同道，“你应该仔细思量每个环节，弄明白它们是如何环环相扣的。只有你才能给自己答案。盟友就在你身边，你却拒绝他们的帮助。为什么？”

奇异博士又变得沮丧起来。“我不需要他们的帮助！我不需要任何人的帮助。我是至尊魔法师兼秘术大师。我可以独立处理任何与魔法世界相关的事情。”

“然而，你现在却在这里求助。”古一严厉说道。

“他说得有道理。如果我真有那么强大，我早就已经找到解决问题的方法了。”奇异博士心想。



“不要拒绝同事和朋友们的建议。他们的建议很有价值。”古一说，“你要随时接纳新观点。越是不可能的地方，越会有新发现。”

奇异博士觉得古一的话就像星界地震一样，让彼此都大为震撼。奇异博士专注于找到问题的根源。“自然历史博物馆！”他大声说道。是时

候忙正事儿了。“谢谢你，古一。我相信对我来说，这条道路越来越清晰了。”

“聪明人知道，不论何时，总有新东西要学习。”说完，古一的元灵消失了。

奇异博士深入思考了古一刚刚说的话。的确，新观点正是他需要的。

奇异博士用意识搜索星界能帮到他的人。最后，他终于找到了自己要找的人：杰里科·德拉姆，也就是所谓的巫毒兄弟。

多年前，奇异博士就见过巫毒兄弟。那时候，他们都还是年轻的魔法师。从那以后，他们的生活经历了太多变化。

“原谅我冒昧打扰，杰里科，”奇异博士开口说道，“好久不见。”

“确实如此。你好，奇异博士。”巫毒兄弟说，“如果至尊魔法师来找我，那一定是发生了什么大事。我能为你做什么吗？”

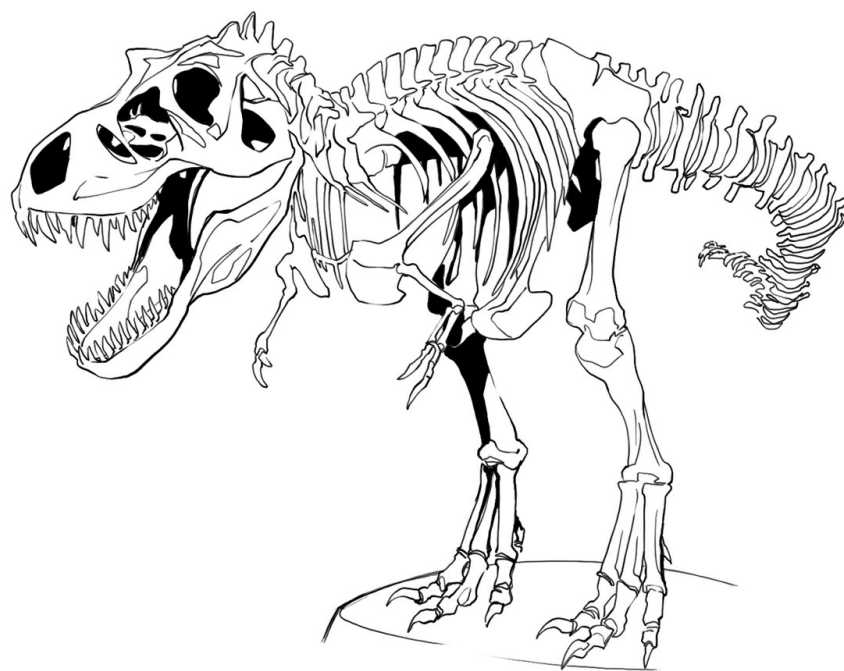
“在自然历史博物馆等我。”奇异博士回答，“你和我要去寻找恶魔。”

第七章

奇异博士站在博物馆中央，觉得很不自在。他已经等了巫毒兄弟十几分钟了，开始气不打一处来。

“打扰一下，请问您在这里工作吗？”一名女游客问他。她的小儿子上下打量着奇异博士，非常艳羡他的魔浮斗篷。

“不，女士，我不在这里工作。我是一名医生。”奇异博士强作欢颜地说。他心想：“早知道就隐身了。”他又说：“请原谅，我得去处理一些事情。”



看到那名女士伸手去翻手提袋，奇异博士不禁紧张起来。由于最近发生了太多的意外，他觉得这名女士很可能是伪装的邪恶女巫。他为即将来临的恶仗做好了准备。

“您介意帮我和我儿子拍张照片吗？”女士羞怯地问。“妈妈，可以让这位医生和我们合照吗？”男孩问道，“我喜欢他的斗篷！”

奇异博士站在那对母子身旁，尴尬地摆好了姿势拍照。他们谢过奇异博士后，继续开心地参观博物馆。奇异博士心想：“一切其实并没有那么糟糕。”虽然有几道目光在他身上停留，但他总的来说是被参观博物馆的人群给忽略了。毕竟在纽约市，一个身披飘逸的红色斗篷的男人并没有人们想得那么奇怪。

“和粉丝一起拍照？”巫毒兄弟从天而降，戏谑道，“真没想到秘术大师会做这种事。”

巫毒兄弟与奇异博士相识多年。虽然他们选择的道路常常大相径庭，却也多次有所交叉。杰里科·德拉姆与他垂死的兄弟的灵魂合为一体，在一位人称厚安的神秘牧师的指导下学习巫毒，以此获得自己的力量。最终，他成了黑魔法专家，并利用自己的力量与死者的亡灵进行交流，这是奇异博士难以掌握的能力。巫毒兄弟的力量可能深不可测，这让奇异博士略感不安。但是这两位英雄对彼此都大有帮助，并且很高兴能有机会一起工作。

“很高兴见到你，巫毒兄弟。”奇异博士说，“我想让你知道，虽然我们曾经有过各种竞争，但都不会对当下造成任何影响。我们都是魔法领域的专家，我也非常敬重你。”奇异博士顿了顿。他环顾四周，似乎没有人注意到巫毒兄弟的存在。



“除了你，我对博物馆里的所有人都隐身了。这样更方便。”巫毒兄弟解释道，他带了很多魔法神器过来，包括缩头龟、格巴之杖和各种魔法粉末，“对像我这身打扮的人来说，通过前门可没那么容易。你是怎么进来的？”

“当然啦，我可是这里的会员。我一直觉得自然历史魅力无穷。”奇异博士说明原委，他挥手施展魔法，让自己隐身，“现在我们都隐身了，可以专注于手头的任务。你带了魔法粉末吗？”

巫毒兄弟指着自己的功能腰带，里面装满了小玩意儿和魔法粉末。“我把所有的都带来了。”说着，他将一小撮闪亮的红色粉末倒在奇异博士的手中。

奇异博士将魔法粉末撒到空中，吹过人群。粉末落下时，他的怀疑

得到了证实。博物馆里果然爬满了恶魔精灵。它们鬼鬼祟祟，偷偷潜行，看起来似乎困惑不已。

“它们能看到我们吗？”巫毒问道。

“不能。”奇异博士答道，“它们似乎被困在各领域之间，无法逃脱。我相信它们之所以来到博物馆，是为了寻找可以帮它们回家的东西。”

“它们危险吗？”巫毒问道。

“它们是恶魔精灵，当然不是善类。”奇异博士回答道。

巫毒思索着眼下的困境。“这种情况的确棘手。这些生物迷失了，找不到回家的路。”他说，“它们可能是恶魔，但到目前为止，它们没有伤害任何人，也没制造过任何麻烦。此时与它们交战未免愚蠢了些。我们必须将它们从这个维度驱逐出去，但不能暴露自己。首先，我们要保护人们的安全。”

巫毒兄弟给奇异博士留下了极其深刻的印象。通常，奇异博士会遵循自己的直觉，按照自己的方式行事，很少听取别人的建议。或许两人携手工作也没有那么糟糕。突然，他计上心来。

“我知道一道咒语，我们可以用它来驱逐恶魔精灵。”奇异博士说，“不过，这样会使这些怪物相当难受，惊恐万状，狂暴不安。需要你帮我控制局面，确保乱象不会发生。”

“我会帮你的，博士。”巫毒兄弟保证道，“我会催眠这些怪物，让它们保持沉默平静。”

巫毒兄弟开始默念秘密咒语，他将格巴之杖高举到空中，用力地挥舞着。有了魔法的力量，魔杖散发出耀眼的光辉，只见恶魔停驻在各自的轨道上，望着四射的光芒。

到了奇异博士施展魔法的时候了。他体内集聚了神秘的能量，早已蓄势待发。他牢记的那道咒语通常用于攻击恶魔。如果用它来帮助恶魔的话，这道咒语会慢慢失效。集中力量时，奇异博士紧张难安。各领域之间的屏障十分脆弱，他俩都知道保护屏障至关重要。巫毒兄弟觉察到奇异博士浑身打战，大汗淋漓。他的魔力正在散失。

突然，一个顽固的恶魔精灵从昏昏沉沉中挣脱了出来，发出了震耳欲聋的尖叫。刺耳的尖叫声很快唤醒了其他被催眠的恶魔精灵。它们苏醒了，非常不悦。这下，奇异博士也恼了。

“见鬼！”奇异博士生气地吼道，“我的力量已经撑不住了。各领域之间的屏障已经破裂。”奇异博士不想在巫毒面前如此情绪化，但他没有时间去思考了——尤其是一大群气得冒烟的恶魔精灵就站在他们面前

时。



“史蒂芬，花点时间理一理思绪。”巫毒兄弟说，“洛亚迷雾掩护！”浓雾顿时笼罩了整个屋子，遮住了两位魔法英雄。但很快，一个讨厌的恶魔精灵发现了他们，并向力量受损的奇异博士发起了攻击。巫毒兄弟挥舞着格巴之杖，创造了一个保护火笼，阻止了恶魔精灵的步伐。

“现在这些怪物已经察觉到我们的存在，我们的时间不多了，奇异博士。”巫毒说。奇异博士点点头，绝对不能错失良机。

“史蒂芬，振作起来。”他心想。这时，一个发光的巨手出现在恶魔

精灵上方，小心翼翼地把它们捞起来，将它们送回原来的维度。奇异博士松了一口气，感觉如释重负。整个过程比他想象的要顺畅。

“谢谢你，杰里科。真的非常感谢你的帮助。”奇异博士说。

如果没有巫毒兄弟的独门秘技，情况可能会更糟。这让奇异博士产生了一个想法。是时候一劳永逸，彻底结束魔法攻击了。“和我一起加入新的冒险之旅吧，巫毒兄弟？”他问道，“在路上我会再教你一个咒语。”

巫毒兄弟笑了笑，说：“愿为朋友赴汤蹈火。”

第八章

贝尔韦代雷城堡安静地坐落在中央公园内，丝毫不知自己很快就会成为一项重要的任务的作战基地。奇异博士向伙伴们发出了一条魔法信号，请求他们一起加入。他不太确定这些伙伴会不会出现，但他们很快就一个接一个地来了，有绯红女巫、铁拳、白虎，还有巫毒兄弟。

英雄们齐刷刷地站在一起，听候奇异博士的指示：“如你们所知，我们身处的世界与其他世界之间的那道屏障出现了无法解释的缺口。有人一直在滥用魔法生物。不能再这样下去了。我会继续调查这些罪恶之源，同时，我们必须将这些生物通通送回原处。”

英雄们面面相觑，深感责任重大。奇异博士继续说道：“你们每个人之所以会站在这里，是因为你们都身怀绝技，可以出一份力。你们都是英雄，除了你们，我想不出还有谁能和我一起结束这场噩梦。”

“我有一个问题，”铁拳举手说道，“我以为你不喜欢和别人一起工作。是什么让你改变了主意？”

白虎用手肘轻轻戳了一下铁拳的肋骨。“无礼，”她说，“他是一位博士。请对他尊重点。”

“老实说，我认为自己不需要任何帮助。但你们每个人都告诉我，有时解决问题需要团队合作。”奇异博士答道，“你们都身怀绝技，我相信我们可以共创伟业。”

“听起来不错！”铁拳笑着说道。

“我们能帮你做些什么呢？”绯红女巫问道。

“我们要在纽约市找到黑暗中的每一只魔法野兽，然后将它们带到此地集合。接着，我们要打开传送门，将其送回属于它们的地方。”奇异博士解释道，“首先，巫毒兄弟用他的格巴之杖施咒，创造一个灯塔，将所有野兽都吸引到这个区域。我会借给他一些力量来实现这一目标。然后绯红女巫用她的混沌魔法打开一个维度的传送门，把这些怪物送回家。”他转身面向绯红女巫，说道：“旺达，你要让传送门持续开放，直到每个生物都离开我们的世界。这个过程会很难维持，你可能要拼尽全力。你准备好了吗？”

“我会竭尽所能。”绯红女巫信心满满地说道。

“白虎和我做什么呢？”铁拳问道，“我们能帮什么忙？”

“你们俩的角色都非常重要。”奇异博士解释道，“一旦那些生物到达，你们要确保他们直接穿过传送门。你们的工作需要耐心，很可能还需要武力。如果遭到部分野兽的抵抗，事情会变得麻烦起来。幸好你们都是技术娴熟的战士。”

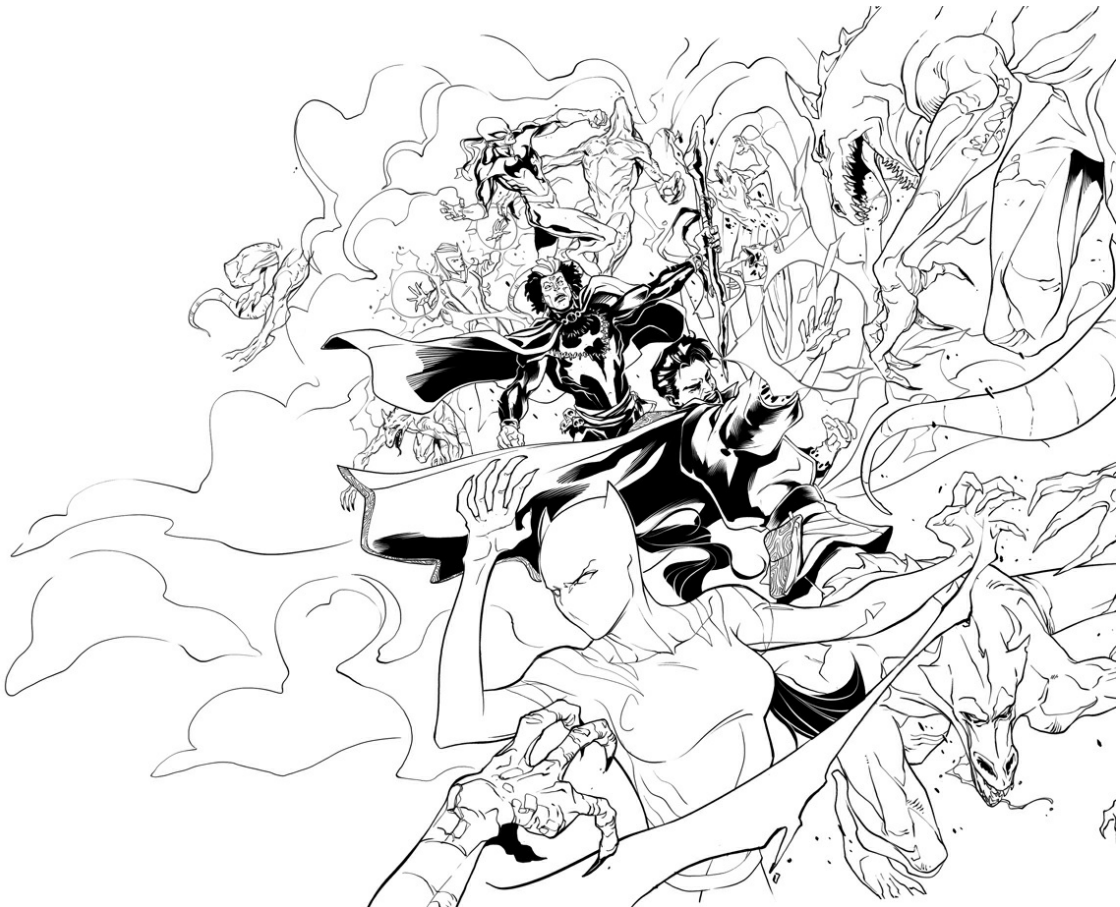
“我们不会让你失望的，博士。”

“你们现在都已就位，我们可以开始整个流程了。”奇异博士宣布道，“瓦尔托尔迷雾！”一阵防护烟雾滚滚而来，保护英雄们不被窥视。

巫毒兄弟念起了神秘的咒语。他高举格巴之杖，让奇异博士给它注入部分自己的力量。天上的闪电击中了魔杖，一声巨响响彻了整座城市。魔杖的能量堪比一千个太阳。神奇的光点开始标记出纽约市每一只被施了魔法的野兽。有狼蜥、吸血蝠和暗影蛇。小精灵从天而降，僵尸从地上爬起。各种各样的食尸鬼涌入公园。

“旺达，准备打开传送门。”奇异博士指挥道，“好了，打开！”

绯红女巫集中精力施展混沌魔法，打开了一个时空裂缝。



“好了，大块头，进去吧！”白虎边说边抓起一只愤怒的巨魔扔了进去。当狼蜥和吸血蝠之间的战斗爆发时，铁拳阻止了打斗，并护送所有生物通过传送门。奇异博士的计划似乎取得了成功。但他怀疑这一切是否太顺利了，顺利得有点不真实。

紧接着，天空变得一片漆黑，邪恶的气息笼罩着整座城市。奇异博士抬起头来，只见云上闪着一条消息：王在哪儿？见此，奇异博士立刻惊慌失措地说：“我得走了！”

第九章

奇异博士推开了至圣所的门，却只见一片沉寂。

“王？”他声嘶力竭地呼喊。奇异博士担心极了。他疯狂地搜查每个房间，用自己的力量扫描家里的每一寸土地，却无奈怎么也找不到王的踪影。霎时间，整个圣殿的沉默被打破了。笑声在圣殿中回荡，带着一种熟悉的音调。洛基来了！

“洛基！这一切自始至终都是你干的。”奇异博士控诉道。



“不，至尊魔法师。我不是那个给你带来这么多麻烦的人，但我知

道是谁干的。”洛基坦言，“他即将到来，你会向他的黑暗势力低头的！”

奇异博士心生狐疑地说：“你为什么在这里，洛基？这对你有什么好处？”

洛基大声笑了起来，十分享受这一切。“我的作用是分散你的注意力。毕竟，我是个骗术大师。我想要你那把漂亮的斧头。”他指着挂在墙上的那把安加卢姆斯之斧说道，“我需要一些有威胁性的大件，可以震慑住雷神。”随即，洛基嗅出了空气中的异常。“好了，他已经到这了，我得走了。再见，奇异博士。我期待你的失败。”说完，洛基就消失了。

奇异博士觉得圣殿越来越热了，汗水开始从眉毛上滴下来。现在，他清楚地知道，谁才是始作俑者了。那是他的宿敌，也是最危险的敌人之一。“现身吧，邪恶之子！”奇异博士喊道。

远处传来一阵深沉而可怕的声音：“结束了，奇异博士。”法尔特之火覆盖了圣殿的墙壁，黑暗维度的统治者，灵魂噬者，从黑暗维度中出现。奇异博士真正的敌人终于露出了真面目，是多玛姆！

“你是如何通过圣殿的魔法结界的？”奇异博士问道。

“这太小儿科了。魔法只是障眼法而已，你不懂吗？”多玛姆嘲讽道，“我把自己伪装成身受重伤的你，出现在圣殿门口。当你最需要王的时候，王当然不会拒绝他的主人。”

“王在哪儿？”奇异博士问道。他非常生气，却很专注。为了找到王并拯救圣殿，他需要让自己平静下来，去了解多玛姆的总计划。

“他就在这里。”多玛姆说着，露出王毫无生命气息的躯体，将其悬在身旁，“王还活着，但他的灵魂被困在星界，你永远都找不回来！”

奇异博士不禁怒火中烧。“你就是幕后黑手？”他问道，“那些狼蜥、吸血蝠和恶魔精灵都是你的杰作？”

“正是，博士。是我在整个城市创造了无数的魔法干扰。我用自己的力量控制那些弱势生灵，让它们因恐惧攻击你所所处的世界。我知道，卷入所有这些怪事会让你筋疲力尽，沮丧灰心，困惑难安。然后我就可以在你最脆弱的时候攻击你。”

“你还是那么聪明而狡猾。”奇异博士说，“那你为什么要召唤我回到这里？为什么不干脆杀了我朋友，毁灭我的家，终结这一切呢？”



“因为我想让你眼睁睁地看着我夺走你拥有的一切！”说着，多玛姆向奇异博士发射了一道炽热的能量光束。“我想要你的圣殿，你的武器。一旦我得到了这一切，我将控制整个地球。”他威胁道。

圣殿的温度急剧攀升。多玛姆利用他的黑暗力量打开了一扇门，将一支无脑怪大军放了进来，它们开始将圣殿砸得粉碎。无脑怪体型庞大，它们沉默不语，只为一个目的而来：彻底毁灭圣殿。

看到无脑怪蹂躏着圣殿的一切，多玛姆放声大笑道：“我会让整个
世界陷入黑暗之中，让你看着我永远统治着这一切。你跑不了的。一切
都结束了，奇异博士！”

“闭嘴！”奇异博士喊道。他停顿了一会儿，察觉到了魔法领域的异
变，脸上不禁露出了狡黠的笑容。

“你笑什么？”多玛姆吼道。

“我朋友在这儿，你有麻烦了。”奇异博士话音刚落，一阵隆隆声震
动了圣殿，在一道闪亮的光芒中，绯红女巫、巫毒兄弟、铁拳和白虎都
出现了，他们随时准备战斗。“让我们帮你结束这一切。”他们说道。

“还没有结束，多玛姆。”说着，奇异博士平静地走向安加卢姆斯之
斧，握起神斧，准备战斗，“我们来决一死战吧？”

第十章

奇异博士和他的朋友们昂首挺立的多玛姆和无脑怪们面前。绯红女巫、巫毒兄弟、铁拳、白虎和奇异博士组成了一个战队，准备联手一劳永逸地击溃这个黑暗维度的主宰。

多玛姆注视着齐聚的英雄，放声大笑。“绯红女巫？不值一提。”他轻蔑地说道。多年来，许多恶棍都低估了绯红女巫。

但她将那些看轻她的人都一一击败了。他们觉得绯红女巫柔弱而敏感，并认为这些特征是她的弱点。实际上，绯红女巫力量强大，能以各种手势操控着那神秘的六角型魔法球。

绯红女巫朝着多玛姆发射魔法球，多玛姆诧异地向后退缩。他没想到竟有这样原始而深不可测的力量。她一鼓作气，乘胜进攻，让多玛姆愤怒不已。幸运的是，他有一支生物大军听凭指挥。“无脑怪，干掉这些所谓的超级英雄！”他指挥道。



奇异博士对多玛姆的话毫不在意。他跳到无脑怪大军中央，拿着安加卢姆斯之斧横劈一圈，击退了进攻的怪物。有那么一刻，他看起来甚至在享受战斗。

绯红女巫为首指挥，引导每位英雄往正确的方向进攻。“白虎，你要竭尽全力制服无脑怪，”她说道，“让它们无暇分心，以防它们摧毁圣殿。”

“放心吧。”说着，白虎就开始行动，并与护身符的力量配合得天衣无缝，“是时候收拾这帮无脑怪了！”她腾空一跃，径直朝着一只无脑怪的脸上踢去。

其中两只无脑怪从两侧夹击，第三只从前方进攻。见此情形，一般的英雄可能觉得自己被困住了，但白虎身手敏捷，一下翻到空中，三个无脑怪立刻撞在了一起。“坏人来帮你的忙，我很喜欢。”说着，她继续接下来的战斗。

“铁拳，抓住所有的神器和遗珍，让多玛姆抢不到它们。”绯红女巫指示道。

这时，铁拳既兴奋又紧张。负责一大堆魔法神器听起来很酷，但只要稍有不慎，就可能打开厄运之门，造成意外。他跳过一群进攻的无脑怪，开始守护奇异博士的藏品。

“其实这活儿也挺有趣的。我都没必要用自己的力量。”铁拳说道。这时，一个无脑怪在他身后蹒跚而行，只见它扬起一双巨手，准备将铁拳撕成粉碎，但铁拳浑身散发着凛冽的神秘感，令无脑怪战战兢兢。铁拳召唤出神龙寿老的力量，这种能量让他的拳头熠熠闪光。瞬间，这位年轻的英雄突然转身，将铁拳全部的力量打在无脑怪身上，随着一声巨响，无脑怪倒地身亡。“好吧。我想我言之过早了。晚安！”说着，他轻轻跨过怪物的尸体。

看到自己的手下溃败，多玛姆决定提高魔法火焰的热度。“法尔特之火，吞没整个圣殿！”他命令道，只见天花板燃起了烈焰。当一道烈焰打开了中间的房间时，一声巨响使英雄们都晃了一下。

“我无法进入星界。多玛姆一直在阻止我。”奇异博士坦言道。

“我来挡住他。”巫毒兄弟说，“奇异博士，准备好夺回王的元灵。”

“哈哈！巫毒兄弟，你开什么玩笑。”多玛姆放声大笑道，“我统治整个维度，你只是一个戴着头骨项链的人。你真以为自己有足够的力量可以阻止我？”

“或许我没有足够的力量阻止你，”巫毒说道，“但幸运的是，我有奇异博士这样的朋友。在这种情况下，他刚好和我分享了一个特别的咒语。”

“圣雪冰须！”

巫毒兄弟冲向多玛姆，发射出无数冰冻能量，将他困在了冰块中。

绯红女巫急忙跑去取回王的肉身，保护他不受伤害。“快，史蒂芬！趁着现在多玛姆被冻结了！”她喊道。

奇异博士进入星界，很快找到了王的元灵。“你好啊，老朋友，”奇异博士说，“很高兴见到你。”

“我现在好想回家。”王答道。

奇异博士用魔法将王的元灵拉回地球，元灵安全回到躯体内，王醒了过来。王扫了一眼殿内种种混乱的痕迹，开玩笑地说：“看来，需要你帮忙打扫打扫了。”



多玛姆挣脱了冰块的束缚。他看到铁拳手握奇异博士那根珍贵的瓦托姆博魔杖，就用自己的力量从铁拳手中夺了去。“现在，我要结束这场战斗，统治全宇宙。”他说道。

铁拳笑了笑，从背后又拿出一根瓦托姆博魔杖，说：“这根是不是眼熟？”

“愚蠢的人类。你对魔法一无所知！”多玛姆说，“准备受死吧！”多玛姆手中的魔杖顿时消失了，他不禁火冒三丈，困惑不已。

“我对魔法了解不多，多米。我能叫你多米吗？”铁拳问道，“有个聪明人曾经对我说魔法就是障眼法。”说着，便将手中的魔杖交给了奇异博士，他说：“至尊魔法师，您来完成这份荣耀的使命吧！”

“荣幸之至。”奇异博士微笑着说，“万能的瓦托姆博魔杖！恶灵退散！”

“你还没有打败我，奇异博士！在你最意想不到的时候，我会卷土重来的！我定会让你生不如死！”

在一束火光之中，多玛姆和无脑怪们都消失了。战斗结束了，最

终，所有人都安然无恙。

绯红女巫微微一笑。

“旺达，谢谢你制造的幻象，老多米以为自己拿到了真的瓦托姆博魔杖。”铁拳说，“博士，你的魔杖真是好用。”

环顾整个房间，奇异博士觉得受宠若惊。“在下感激不尽。”他说，“我欠你们每个人一份人情。”“不，史蒂芬，”巫毒兄弟答道，“多亏了你。没有你的建议和指导，我们可能无法击败多玛姆。”这时，一只光溜溜的灵鼠从铁拳的脚边匆匆溜过。

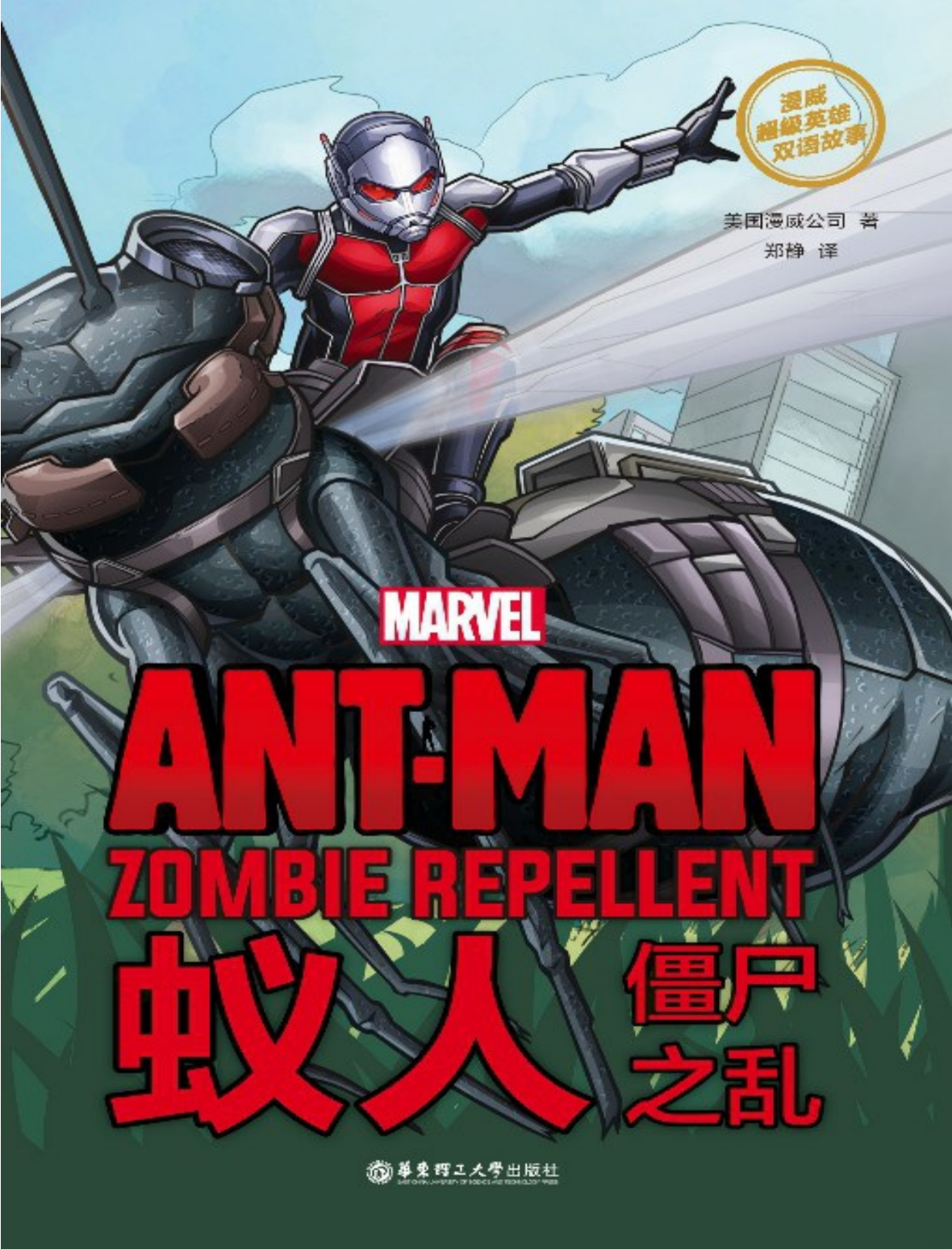
“哎呀！”铁拳喊道。

“好吧，如果你不介意的话，”奇异博士说，“还有一些清洁工作要做。”

说罢，英雄们就开始利用各自的力量修复圣殿的损伤。绯红女巫用她的魔力修复圣殿的烧焦区域。铁拳集中意念，消除了多玛姆恶势力存在的所有痕迹。巫毒兄弟将魔法粉末吹向空中，为圣殿增添了一层新的防护结界。白虎利用超强能力重塑了奇异博士圣殿中受损的部分。

“黑魔法，”奇异博士喃喃自语，“我想这气味会久久不散。”

“我会点支香烛，相信黑魔法的气味很快就会消散的。”王说，“眼下更重要的是，有谁想喝汤吗？”



漫威
超級英雄
雙語故事

美國漫威公司 著
鄭靜 譯

MARVEL

ANT-MAN

ZOMBIE REPELLENT

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES!



Ant-man



Euclid



Captain America



Iron Man



Hulk



Bruce Banner



Hawkeye



Black Widow



Falcon



Thor



Helicarrier



Robot



The Living Undead



Ant Zombies



Count Nefaria



Zombie Virus

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ANT-MAN



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story of Ant-Man

Life has never been easy for Scott Lang, an electronics expert who was forced into a career of crime to help his family. Scott always regretted breaking the law and only wanted to do what was right.

One day the famous scientist Dr. Hank Pym reached out to Scott and provided a way for him to put an end to his life of crime. Using gear invented by Dr. Pym, Scott became the astonishing Ant-Man, a hero capable of shrinking to the size of an ant, with the power of a hundred men.

Dr. Pym's technology revolves around the use of “Pym Particles”—an unusual set of subatomic particles capable of reducing the mass of any object. Scott, using the Pym Particles, has the ability to shrink not only himself, but also anyone or anything else. Using the Pym Particles, he can even sometimes enlarge things.

In addition, Scott can use other technology to communicate with ants and even summon them when they might be helpful. Since he's an electronics expert, Scott is continually modifying and expanding Dr. Pym's equipment, making it his own.

A dedicated hero, Scott Lang has put his past far behind him. Now he fights crime and protects the innocent as the astonishing Ant-Man!



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Chapter 1

It was a beautiful day in New York City, and Central Park was filled with the regular crowds. There were tourists strolling around, taking pictures. There were joggers steadily exercising their way down the sidewalks. There were picnickers, kids on school field trips, and artists painting landscapes. There were even a few celebrities, keeping their collars up and sunglasses on, hoping not to get noticed.

And yet almost none of the hundreds of people walking around the park even thought about the fact that there was a whole other world beneath their feet—the world of insects!

Millions of insects made the dirt under Central Park their home, and on a nice warm day like that one, the bugs were even busier than the humans were!

There was, however, one person who was paying very close attention to the insects, and he didn't like what he saw.



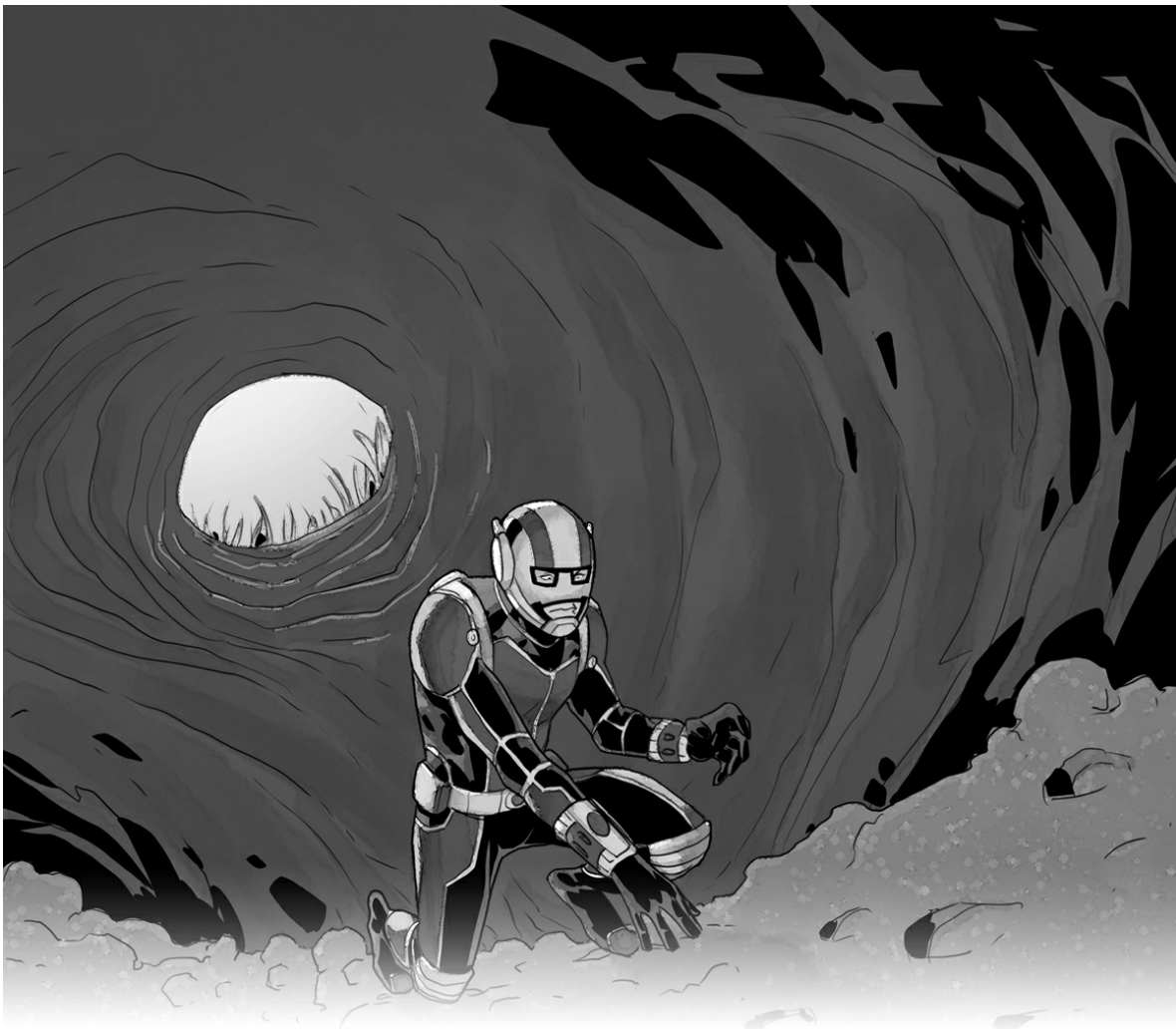
“That's strange,” said Scott Lang, the Astonishing Ant-Man, as he crouched to examine the tracks made by some ants that had recently passed through. “These aren't the traffic patterns I'd expect,” he mumbled to himself.

Of course, it was easier for Ant-Man to notice what the insects were up to because of his amazing power. He did have the ability to shrink to the size of an ant!

Right then he was no bigger than a bug, and he was standing in the tunnel entrance of an anthill.

“I need to find out what's happening,” Scott said to himself as he followed the ant tracks deeper down the tunnel. To better understand ants, Ant-Man had been studying their behavior up close for years. He'd come to that particular anthill several times. And he could tell that something just wasn't right.

When he reached one of the anthill's main chambers, he was surprised to find most members of the ant colony lined up in a perfect row, standing at attention like little soldiers.



“What are you doing, guys?” Ant-Man asked out loud. Usually there was as much commotion in one of these chambers as in a New York subway

station during rush hour, so it was eerie to see all the ants standing completely still. “Are you sick or something?”

Of course, the ants didn't understand English, but Ant-Man did have the ability to communicate with them. Ant-Man's equipment could release pheromone scents. Ants, which had a much stronger sense of smell than humans did, used those kinds of odors to send messages to one another.

But even when Ant-Man released pheromones, the ants still didn't respond; they just stood there in a trance. They weren't asleep, but it wasn't like they were fully awake, either!

“I have to get to the bottom of this,” said Ant-Man as he used a syringe to get a sample of an ant's hemolymph, the clear fluid ants had instead of blood.

Ant-Man stuck the sample in his handheld device, which clicked and beeped before flashing a report across its screen.

“A virus?” said Ant-Man, reading from the device. “I've never seen this kind before, but according to these readings, I suspect it could be passed to humans!”

“This could be extremely serious,” said Ant-Man, “like the time that space virus quickly ripped through a S.H.I.E.L.D. moon base. All one hundred and twenty agents were infected within hours!”

The space station incident had been different, because the station was contained, so the virus couldn't spread to Earth. Ant-Man didn't even want to think about what could happen if some unknown virus started to infect people across New York. It could quickly become an epidemic that could get millions sick. . .or worse!

Ant-Man knew immediately that he had to take his information to the best Super Hero team in the world. “I have to find the Avengers,” said Ant-Man. “I might be able to research a cure for this by myself, but if the virus starts to spread, it will take a whole team to manage containment. The Avengers will know what to do!”

Ant-Man rushed from the anthill. . .but as soon as he was gone, the ants he had been examining started to move.

Reaching the surface, Ant-Man sized himself up to his normal human height and rushed off to find Iron Man and the other Avengers.

As he left, he passed a couple picnicking on a blanket in the grass.

“Boy, the ants really are out today,” said the man.

“Yeah, they're everywhere,” agreed the woman. “Ouch! I think one just bit me. . .”



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Chapter 2

It was easy for Ant-Man to find the Avengers. All he had to do was follow the sound of explosions and look for plumes of smoke. The heroes were clearly in the middle of a big battle.

“That way, Euclid!” Ant-Man shouted to the giant flying ant he was riding.

Not only did Ant-Man have the ability to shrink himself to the size of an ant; he also had the power to enlarge ants to human scale. Whenever he needed to get across the city quickly, he used a pheromone scent to summon Euclid, his favorite ant friend, and hitch a ride.

“The Avengers are fighting the Maggia,” Ant-Man said as Euclid landed on the wall of a building that looked down on the block where the entire Avengers team was engaged in combat with the criminals.

The Maggia, a criminal organization under the control of the evil Count Nefaria, had been caught red-handed breaking into a S.H.I.E.L.D. warehouse that held experimental weapons, but it looked like the fight was almost over. The Hulk was holding down four Maggia soldiers, Thor had knocked out several others, and an energy cage built by Falcon held most of the rest.

“Face it, Count,” shouted Captain America to Nefaria, “this little heist attempt has failed!”

“The Maggia never give up!” yelled back Nefaria as he used a laser rifle to blow a hole through the warehouse wall and dash inside.

“Oh, no!” shouted Iron Man, who knew what kind of weapons were stored in that warehouse. “Grab him before he can get the—”

BOOM! It was too late! A giant robot, piloted by Count Nefaria, burst through the warehouse wall, firing a barrage of missiles at the Avengers!

“Thanks to this S.H.I.E.L.D. robotic mecharmor, nothing can stop me now!” Count Nefaria Shouted.

Seeing all this, Ant-Man knew he needed to help. “Get me down there, Euclid,” he said, and Euclid took off toward the battle scene. As Nefaria's

missiles blasted Hawkeye and Cap, Hulk leapt to his feet. “HULK SMASH!” he shouted as he charged like a steam train at the giant robot.

“I don't think so!” shouted Nefaria, using the robot's claws to bat Hulk away. Hulk went sailing through the air!

Hawkeye shot explosive arrows, and Thor aimed bolts of lightning at the robot, but it still kept coming, knocking back Cap and Black Widow!

“How do we stop it?” Hawkeye shouted to Iron Man.

“I'm not sure,” Iron Man replied. “It's based on my own designs, and I'm a pretty great designer! Maybe it doesn't have any weaknesses.”

At that moment, Nefaria reached out with the robot's arms and plucked Falcon out of the sky, then slammed him to the ground!

The robot raised its giant foot, about to CRUSH HIM!

“Say good-bye to falcon!” Nefaria said.

“No, say hello to Ant-Man!” Ant-Man replied as he grew larger from out of nowhere. He was right behind the count, inside the robot's cockpit!

“What? Who?” asked a confused Nefaria as Ant-Man's fist knocked him back into the robot's controls.

Falcon and the other Avengers peered through the robot's cockpit window, shocked to see Ant-Man inside. They had no idea that Ant-Man, shrunk down to a tiny size, had been able to slip into the robot's armor through an exhaust vent. Climbing along the robot's cables, he'd made his way into the cockpit, where he grew to normal size and attacked!

After knocking Count Nefaria out, Ant-Man shut the robot down and opened the cockpit. Then he threw the villain to the ground at the Avengers' feet.

“Thanks,” said Falcon as Ant-Man climbed down from the robot.

“Good work, soldier,” Cap said, patting Ant-Man on the back.

“So they do have a weakness,” observed Iron Man as he examined the unpowered robot's exhaust vent. “I'll have to work on the design more.”



“If your design was any better, I don't know if we would have survived,” Black Widow told Iron Man.

Hawkeye walked up to Ant-Man. “Thanks for the assist and everything, bug-boy, but what are you doing here?”

“Right! I can't believe I forgot. I have vital information!” Ant-Man said urgently, taking out a high-tech device.





扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 3

“You're showing us ant blood?” asked Hawkeye, confused.

“I'm showing you an image of the virus,” replied Ant-Man, pointing to the scan on his handheld device.

“What did this . . . virus do to the ants?” asked Captain America.

“They weren't acting like themselves,” replied Ant-Man. “They weren't moving around.”

“Maybe they're just lazy ants,” Hawkeye said, shrugging.

“No, it was like they were in a trance,” replied Ant-Man. It didn't seem like the Avengers understood how dangerous the virus could be. “In tropical areas, there's a fungal infection that ants can get. This fungus turns them into zombie ants. My worry is that this virus might act like that fungus.”

Hawkeye snorted. “Zombie ants?”

“It's real,” protested Ant-Man. “Look it up.”

“Can this virus spread to humans?” asked Falcon.

“It looks like it,” Ant-Man responded.

Hawkeye sneered. “But you don't know for sure?”

Ant-Man shrugged. “No.”

“This is all very interesting, but I'm going to have to cut it short,” interrupted Iron Man. “I just got a call from Jarvis. A.I.M. is attacking in Battery Park. We have to get down there. . . Avengers, assemble!” he shouted.

The Avengers dashed off, leaving Ant-Man alone. Ant-Man knew that if A.I.M., an organization of evil geniuses, was up to no good, then the Avengers had to respond. But he'd thought they would help him with the virus problem, and they didn't even seem to believe him.

“It's like they weren't even listening,” complained Ant-Man out loud.

“I'll listen.”

Ant-Man turned to see a man in tattered clothes standing nearby. It took

a second for Ant-Man to realize it was Dr. Bruce Banner, the world-renowned scientist. Behind him, several S.H.I.E.L.D. agents were arriving to clean up the aftermath of the fight.

“Bruce, it's you. I thought you'd still be the . . . other guy,” said Scott, referring to the Incredible Hulk, whom Banner transformed into when he grew angry.

“Sometimes he calms down quickly after a battle, and then . . . I come back,” explained Banner. “But tell me about this insect virus you discovered.”

“I thought it was important, but the other Avengers didn't seem to think it was . . . so maybe it isn't,” said Scott.

“Always trust your instincts, Scott,” said Banner. “Even if others don't believe in you, you should believe in yourself. Especially if those instincts could save lives.”



Scott nodded, understanding. He knew Banner was right. Working by himself, Scott sometimes felt unimportant, but Banner's words gave him a spark of confidence.

“So, what kind of virus is it?” asked Banner.

“Here, see for yourself,” said Scott, handing Banner his device.

“Hmmm. . .You got samples?” asked Banner as he studied the data.

“Sure,” said Scott. “Why?”

“There are a few more tests we should do,” Banner replied. “Come back to my lab.”

Banner's private lab was on board a S.H.I.E.L.D. floating fortress called the Helicarrier. Scott had never been on the giant airship and was excited to be there, but that excitement turned to concern as Banner showed him the new test results.

Banner wasn't an expert on disease, but he knew a lot about blood reactions because of his work in gamma radiation.

“It's just as you suspected. This virus can be caught by humans very easily. A bug bite is all it would take.” said Banner.

“That means any human bit by the ants in central park might start acting like a zombie.” Scott said.



“Great, that's the last thing we need,” said Banner, “a bunch of living undead making their way around Manhattan, like a B-grade horror movie. . . I

need to let the others know how serious this is.”

Banner called the communicator in Iron Man's helmet. Every Avenger had one of these “comm units” in or near one of their ears so they could easily coordinate with one another, even from different locations during battle.

“Little busy, Bruce,” Iron Man responded over the sound of laser fire.

“I'm here with Ant-Man,” Banner responded. “That virus of his? It's a big deal.”

“Even if it is, we can't deal with it right now. We're under heavy fire!” Iron Man shouted. “These A.I.M. guys are acting strangely—more viciously than usual! And they just keep coming!”

“Iron Man, this disease could become a massive outbreak unless—” But Banner wasn't able to finish his thought, because he was interrupted by the sound of an explosion.

“Gonna have to call you back,” said Iron Man as he cut communications.

Banner leveled a significant look at Scott.

“Well, for now, we're on our own,” he said.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 4

“I've been with the Avengers for a while now,” Banner shouted to Ant-Man over the rush of the wind. “In that time I've done a lot of strange things. I've fought alien creatures from space. I've visited other planets and helped defend a city of people who live under the ocean. . . And yet I can honestly say this is one of the strangest things I've ever done.”

Banner was saying this while clutching tightly to Euclid's back. When Ant-Man and Banner realized that the other Avengers weren't able to help, they decided to head back to Central Park to reexamine the infected ants, hoping there would be a way to develop a cure. All the S.H.I.E.L.D. shuttles were currently in use, so Ant-Man suggested they fly on the back of his ant friend.

“You get used to it,” Ant-Man shouted. “Thank you for believing me when no one else did.”

“Sure,” said Banner. “I don't know why the others didn't pay enough attention.”

“I do,” Ant-Man replied. “It's me. I talk to bugs. I shrink. Those aren't really super powers. I mean, they are kind of, I guess. But Thor's a near-immortal Asgardian, Captain America's a living legend Super-Soldier, and Iron Man has more firepower than a small army. Hawkeye and Black Widow don't have powers, but they have years of super-spy experience with S.H.I.E.L.D. And what do I have? Bugs! If I were them, I don't think I'd take me very seriously, either. Let's face it, I'm no big strong hero like the Hulk.”

“You think people look up to the Hulk?” Banner asked sharply. “When I become the Hulk, people only think of me as a monster. The Hulk is a hero and wants to help. But people don't understand that. They run from him, even when he's trying to save them. Everything runs from the Hulk.”

“And it's not just when I'm Hulk—it's when I'm Bruce Banner, too,” he continued. “Even when I'm human, some people still think of me as a monster. I went to a conference last month to present some of my research,

but no one listened to my presentation. They spent the whole time worrying about making me angry.”

Ant-Man knew what Banner meant. It was difficult being misjudged by people who hadn't gotten to know you yet.

“I started to correspond with some other electronics specialists I met online,” Ant-Man said to Banner. “We traded ideas, brainstormed new inventions, that kind of thing. But when they found out I was a Super Hero, things got awkward. They stopped talking to me. I guess it was all just too strange for them.”

Banner nodded, understanding, but their conversation was interrupted as Euclid came in for a landing. Ant-Man used his Pym Particle gun to shrink himself and Banner, but when they went into the same anthill Ant-Man had investigated a few hours earlier, all the ants were gone.

“That's really strange,” Ant-Man said. “Usually there are at least some ants left to guard the tunnels. It's like this place has been completely abandoned.”

When the two left the anthill and enlarged back to human size, Banner looked around. “Hey, where is everybody?”



Ant-Man saw what Banner meant. When he had been there earlier, the park had been busy, packed with hundreds of people. . . Now there was no one.

“Look at this,” Ant-Man said to Banner, pointing at a picnic blanket that had been abandoned. “The sandwiches are half eaten, as if these people left right in the middle of their lunch.”

“There are some people,” Banner said, spotting across the park a crowd standing with their backs to the heroes. When Ant-Man and Banner got closer, the people turned on them and snarled!

Ant-Man was shocked!

Something was horribly wrong! Everyone in the group had webs of pulsing blue veins bulging out all over their pale-green-tinted skin! Their eyes were a sickly mucus yellow and had no pupils!

“What happened to them?” asked Banner urgently.

“The undead virus! They've been infected!” shouted Ant-Man. “They've become the living undead!”

Suddenly, the whole group of undead jumped at the heroes, growling and snapping their teeth! “This makes me miss hanging out with insects!” Ant-Man shouted as he dodged their bites.





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Chapter 5

These “living undead” didn't move slowly, like zombies in old movies. Their arms and legs were stiff, but they could move very fast! In no time, the undead had Ant-Man and Banner backed up against a stand of trees.

“Don't let them bite you!” warned Ant-Man, trying to push the undead off him. “You'll get infected, too.”

“What can we do?” asked Banner. “We don't want to hurt them. They're not bad guys, just sick humans. We have to help them!”

But as the undead roared and scratched at him, Banner felt himself getting angry. . . and starting to change.

Ant-Man looked at his friend. Oh, no! If Banner changed into Hulk, Hulk might lash out against his attackers, hurting them—or much worse. Ant-Man had only seconds to figure out how to stop Banner from changing. . .

That was when he spotted something on the ground he could use to solve the problem. To anyone else, this thing wouldn't have seemed like much, but because of Ant-Man's particular skills, it was exactly what was needed.

It was an earthworm.

Ant-Man dodged the grabbing hands of the living undead and snatched up the worm.

Quickly, he tossed it between the undead and Banner, then enlarged it!

The earthworm was suddenly huge, and it became a living wall, with Ant-Man and Banner on one side and the living undead on the other!

“Are you okay, Bruce?” asked Ant-Man, putting an arm around the scientist.

“Yeah . . .yeah.” Banner assured him, calming down. His transformation stopped. “But what do we do now?”

They could hear frustrated howls coming from the other side of the earthworm.



“I’ll call Euclid,” Ant-Man said as he released a pheromone scent. “We have something to show the other Avengers now.”

“We do?” asked Banner.

Ant-Man pointed to his wrist, where a small wearable camera was mounted. “I got it all on video!”

Back in Banner’s lab aboard the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier, Scott uploaded the video files to the Avengers’ server. Out in the field, the Avengers were able to use their hand-held devices to stream the footage of the living undead attacking Scott and Bruce.

“I’m sorry I didn’t take this more seriously,” said Iron Man grimly. He and the other Avengers were still in Battery Park, having finally just stopped the A.I.M. attack.

“How far has it spread?” asked Black Widow.

“We don’t know exactly,” Banner said to them over comms. “But S.H.I.E.L.D. is starting to get alarm calls from midtown. That seems to be the epicenter. We’re in the lab now, because there’s a chance that Scott and I can work up a cure.”

“We’ve already got most of the materials we need,” said Scott, “but the virus is spreading already. The Avengers can help by trying to find the infected civilians and quarantining them so they can’t bite more people!”

“Look, you may have been the first person to find this virus,” said

Hawkeye, “but that doesn't mean you get to tell us what we should be doing —”

Captain America cut off Hawkeye's comment before the archer could even finish his thought.

“We understand,” said Captain America directly to Scott. “We Avengers will head to Central Park and try to separate the living undead from people who haven't been infected. We want to stop the spread of this thing.”

“It could already have gone farther than we think,” said Iron Man seriously. “It might explain the behavior of these A.I.M. agents. We can't see their faces, because of the A.I.M. uniform masks. But they were fighting strangely, just like those living undead in Scott's video.”

“If those A.I.M. guys are infected, then be careful that you don't get infected, too,” warned Scott. “It spreads through bites.”

“We'll be fine,” Hawkeye assured Ant-Man. “Like Iron Man said, the A.I.M. guys are wearing masks, so they can't bite us.”

“Yes, but something must have bitten them to infect them in the first place,” Scott pointed out.

“He's right. Everyone, check your skin and clothes. Make sure no ants have gotten on you,” Warned Cap.

“Watch out!” Falcon called, spotting an ant on Iron Man, but it slipped between two metal armor plates before Falcon could reach it.

“Don't worry, this isn't the first time I've had a ‘bug’ in my systems,” Iron Man joked as he quickly pulled off pieces of armor, trying to get to the ant. Despite what he was saying, Iron Man was clearly a little freaked out.

“Uh-oh,” said Iron Man, suddenly stopping. “I'm . . . I'm . . . feeling strange . . .” Then he dropped to the ground!

Falcon rushed to his side and scanned for the ant where Tony had removed part of his armor. “Gotcha,” said Falcon as he crushed the infected ant . . . but it was too late. The ant had already bitten Iron Man!

Iron Man's limbs grew stiff, and he started to moan.

“Tony? Tony? Can you still hear me?” asked Falcon. He got no response, but Iron Man started to aim his repulsors at the others.

“Scatter!” Cap commanded as Iron Man fired at him and the others. All the Avengers dove for cover!

Horrified, Scott and Banner, on the Helicarrier, could only listen as the living undead Iron Man blasted at his teammates!





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Chapter 6

Banner and Scott listened anxiously on comms to everything that was happening in Battery Park. Captain America, Black Widow, Hawkeye, Thor, and Falcon scattered, avoiding the repulsor blasts from the living undead Iron Man!

“We have to take Iron Man down without hurting him,” shouted Cap as he raised his shield to deflect one of the blasts. “Even alone, an undead Iron Man could destroy half the city. We have to give Ant-Man and Bruce time to come up with a cure.”

“My lightning will slow him down!” Thor said as he spun his war hammer, Mjolnir, in the air. Lightning shot from the hammer, slamming into Iron Man.

“No, Thor! Wait!” shouted Falcon . . . but it was too late!

The lightning hit Iron Man, then blasted straight back out of him, pounding Thor to the ground!

Falcon quickly explained to the astonished Avengers, “Tony insulated the armor, designing it to be able to redirect lightning strikes!”

As Iron Man zapped the ground around the other Avengers, everyone ducked and rolled to safety.

“Did you see the raw power of that blast?” asked Widow. “It's like the lightning has supercharged Tony's armor!”

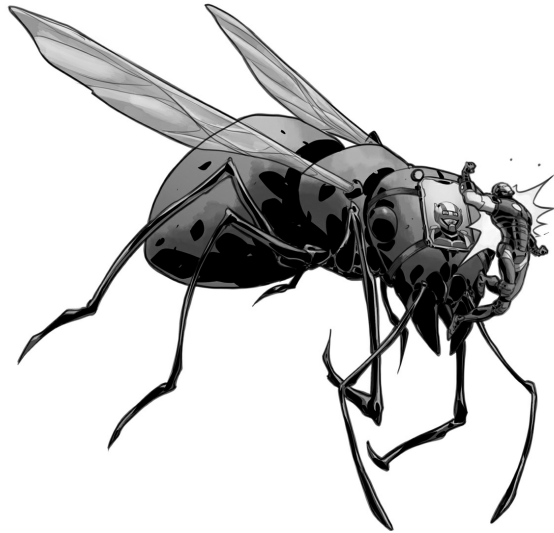
“Oh, great!” shouted Hawkeye. “With Thor down, what can we do?”

In his lab on the Helicarrier, a worried Banner looked urgently at Scott. “We have to get down there and help!”

“No, we can't help anyone until we find a cure to this zombie virus!” Scott replied.

“There's got to be something we can do,” said Banner.

“There is,” said Scott. “I can send a friend.”



Only minutes later, undead Iron Man had Cap, Falcon, and Widow pinned down by fire when they heard Ant-Man's voice: "Sorry about this, Iron Man, but you'll thank me once you're back to your old self!"

Confused about the source of Ant-Man's voice, the heroes looked up just as an ant the size of a truck slammed into Iron Man, knocking him away!

"Now I've seen everything!" shouted Hawkeye.

But when the ant turned back to them, they could see a video screen strapped to its head. On-screen, Ant-Man explained: "Look, I'm still in the lab with Dr. Banner, but we sent this guy to help."

It was Ant-Man's ant friend Euclid. Ant-Man had increased his size even more than usual and then strapped some gear to him, including the video screen. "I have a pheromone box attached to his harness," Ant-Man said. "I can send him scent messages remotely in order to communicate with him and control what he does."

Undead Iron Man swung back around, and Euclid wasted no time jumping into the fight with him. Iron Man's repulsor blasts bounced off the energy deflectors Ant-Man had built into the ant's harness. It charged at Iron Man.

"I never expected to find myself saying this," said Cap, "but come on, everyone, let's give that ant some backup!"

In the lab, Scott watched on the screen as Euclid and the Avengers battled undead Iron Man. Then he turned back to his work with Dr. Banner.

“This last batch might be the solution we need. Let's check,” said Banner, using an eyedropper to put some chemicals on a slide, then examining the results under a microscope.

As Banner watched, the chemicals attacked the sample viruses on the microscope slide.

“It seems to be working,” Banner said, but then added, “Wait, wait. . . No . . .”



To Banner's disappointment, each of the sample viruses was able to repel the chemicals.

“It's as if the cure wants to work but has trouble bonding with the virus,” complained a frustrated Banner.

“Hmmm. . .This all started with the ants in Central Park,” Scott said. “Maybe the virus is more adapted to ant physiology. Let's try using ant hemolymph as the bonding agent!”

“Brilliant,” said Banner. Quickly the two men prepared another slide and stuck it under the microscope. Peering through the lens, Banner watched as the new version of the cure killed all the sample viruses on the slide.

“We did it!” shouted Banner, excited.

“Well, it works in the lab, anyway,” said Scott. “But now we're going to need to test it on humans.”

“For that we'll need a test subject,” Banner said. “We're going to have to catch one of the living undead and bring it back here.”

“Oh, I got your test subject right here,” said Hawkeye as he and Cap

entered the lab, carrying an unconscious Tony Stark between them.

“With Euclid's help we were able to knock Iron Man out,” said Cap. “If there's a chance you can cure Tony, we need to take it.”

“All right,” agreed Scott. “Let's get him up on the table, remove his armor and hope that we can turn him back to normal.”





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Chapter 7

“Are you sure we have to do this?” asked Banner.

Cap and Hawkeye watched as Banner and Scott prepped to test the cure on Tony Stark. The other Avengers were out in the streets, doing their best to protect bystanders from the growing crowds of infected people who were turning into the living undead.

“I'm sorry, Doctor, but we do,” Scott replied. “If we're going to mass-produce the cure, we're going to need to take readings from the moment the chemicals first touch the virus. In this lab, we don't have instruments sensitive enough to get those readings from outside his body. With what we have available, the only way I know how to do it is to literally shrink someone down and send him in with the cure. So I'll use my Pym Particles to micro-size you, then inject you into Tony's bloodstream.”

“Me?” asked Banner, surprised.



“Yes,” confirmed Scott. “As you deliver the cure to the virus, you'll also operate a probe to take the readings. Remember: we need that data if we want to have any hope of helping New York!”

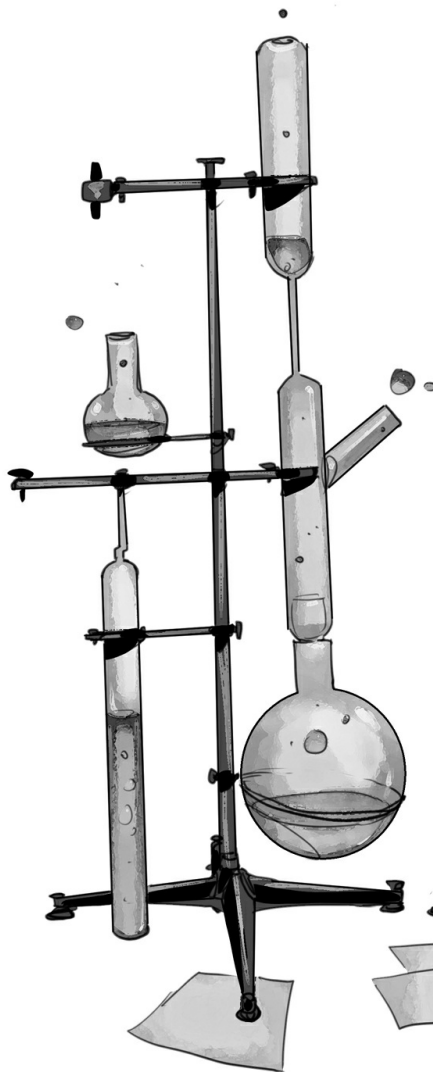
“You have to send someone else,” insisted Banner. “Being inside Tony, curing him, getting the vital readings . . . that's a lot of pressure. If something pushes me over the edge, I could turn into the Hulk. . .”

Scott nodded grimly. He knew exactly what could happen if a confused and angry Hulk rampaged through Tony Stark's bloodstream. Imagine having a tiny Hulk swim into your heart . . . not a pretty picture.

“Bruce is right. Send one of us,” suggested Cap, referring to Hawkeye and himself.

“I wish I could,” Scott said. “But you two don't know how to work the probe. Neither do I. I understand the electrical systems, but it requires specialized operation that I've just never trained for. Dr. Banner uses this probe all the time in his gamma research. It has to be him.”

Cap, Banner, and Hawkeye all shared uncomfortable looks.



Scott sighed, then looked at Banner. “I understand why you're uncomfortable, but, Dr. Banner, earlier you told me I needed to believe in myself. Well, now it's your turn to do just that. You can do this. . .You have to.”

Banner looked at Scott and knew he was right. He nodded. “Okay,” the scientist said. “If we're really going to do this, let's move quickly. The undead virus must be spreading through the city like wildfire.”

Working quickly, Banner got suited up in breathing gear, and Scott shrank him and a canister of the new cure down to microscopic size. Scott then injected Banner right into Tony Stark's arm.

Dr. Banner had been to a lot of strange places as an Avenger: an antimatter universe called the Negative Zone, a subatomic dimension called the Microverse, and a couple of different possible future Earths. He'd even ridden on a flying ant named Euclid with Scott! And he'd thought that was as weird as it got . . . Nope, Tony's bloodstream was definitely the weirdest place of all.

“Where am I headed?” Banner asked Scott via his comm.

“Just move forward—there should be copies of the virus all through his blood,” Scott replied.

Suddenly, a small round white object slammed into Banner, knocking him back.

“What was that?” he asked.

“It must have been one of Tony's white blood cells,” Scott said. “Tony's immune system thinks you're a disease.”

“Not pleasant,” said Dr. Banner. “I hope more aren't coming my way.”

He looked up to see that, yes, more were coming—a lot more! Within seconds Banner was getting pelted by tons of white blood cells, as if a couple of teams of vicious dodgeball players were letting loose on him. He was being battered and beaten!

“You've got to help me!” Banner called to Scott.

Scott could hear by the tone of Banner's voice that he was getting angry: he was only moments away from turning into the Hulk!

“Dr. Banner, listen to me,” said Scott calmly. “Once I was shrunk down and inside an empty beehive. I was surprised when the whole swarm suddenly came back. It was terrifying. Beestings hurt when you're normal size, but when you're tiny, they can easily kill you.”



Ant-Man paused for a second. Was Banner listening?

“Bees can smell fear,” Ant-Man continued. “And if that swarm had smelled my fear pheromones, they would have attacked me. If I wanted to stay alive, I had to stay calm enough not to give off the scent of fear in my sweat. By focusing on how I would feel once I was out, I was able to control my fear for hours, until the Pym Particles wore off and I went back to normal size.”

Now Banner's breathing seemed more normal, like he was back in control.

“If I could do it, you can, too, Dr. Banner,” Ant-Man finished.

“It's time you start calling me Bruce, Scott,” Banner said calmly.

Anger-free, Banner struggled through the white blood cells and implanted the cure in one of the floating zombie viruses nearby.

“You did it!” shouted Scott, capturing the data that rolled in. “We have

what we need to mass-produce the cure!”

But then the lab door burst open, and in poured a team of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. . .a team of infected, living undead S.H.I.E.L.D. agents!



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Chapter 8

“I'll take left, you take right!” Cap shouted to Hawkeye as he sprang forward.

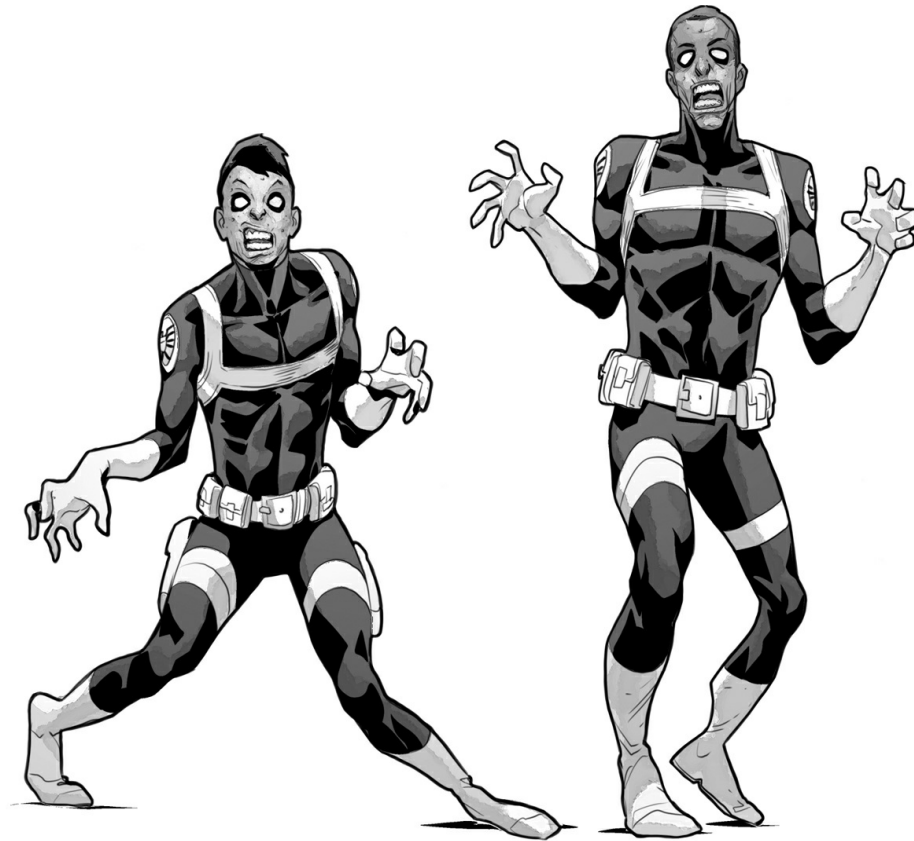
Hawkeye instantly obeyed Cap's order, leaping into action by his side. The two were a blur of activity, knocking out one zombified S.H.I.E.L.D. agent after another! But there were just too many of them! Living undead agents slipped past Cap and Hawkeye and instantly ran toward Ant-Man.

“I've still got to get Bruce out of there!” Ant-Man shouted to the others as he dodged the snapping jaws of the agents who came at him.

“Do it as quickly as you can, soldier!” Cap shouted back to him.

Between Ant-Man and Tony Stark's body, where Banner was still trapped, were three snarling and growling undead!

“Here goes nothing,” Ant-Man said as he flung himself at the undead. In midair, he shrank. The shrinking moved him out of the way of some grasping zombie hands! Ant-Man quickly shrank or grew to different sizes as needed to dodge the arms of the agents who desperately snatched at him.



“Move it, Ant-Man!” shouted Hawkeye as he knocked out two more of the agents. “We can't keep this up forever!”

Finally reaching the table where Tony Stark was lying, Ant-Man shrank down to about a foot and ran across the surface, grabbing the device needed to extract Banner.

“Hold on, Bruce!” shouted Ant-Man into his comm. “You're coming out, but we've got company.”

Using the device, Ant-Man withdrew Banner from Tony's body, then hit him with Pym Particles. Banner grew to normal size next to Ant-Man. Ant-Man, too, returned to his usual height.

“That's what you mean by company?” Banner asked, seeing the advancing S.H.I.E.L.D. undead.

“Let's draw them away from Tony's unconscious body!” Ant-Man said, grabbing Bruce and pulling him toward the door, where Cap and Hawkeye were trying to make a path for them to get through.

At exactly that moment, Ant-Man's comms carried a message from

Falcon. “Ant-Man, are you there?” Falcon asked.

“In the middle of something,” Ant-Man answered, still pulling Banner through the room crowded with living undead.



“Fine—but we need that cure now!” Falcon replied. “We just lost Black Widow to the undead team.”

Out in the street, Falcon and Thor were trying to push back a horde of living undead that was attempting to enter an apartment building filled with uninfected people. Euclid was still with them, bucking and knocking down rows of zombies, but there were too many of them.

“The cure is developed! We’ll get it out to you as soon as we can!” Ant-Man promised Falcon. “But we have to get ourselves out of here first! It looks like the whole population of the Helicarrier has become infected!”

Ant-Man and Banner were now only a few feet away from Cap and Hawkeye, who had cleared a zombie-free path down the corridor to freedom.

“We’re counting on you,” Falcon called. “Stay safe!”

“We will!” shouted Banner, when suddenly a group of infected S.H.I.E.L.D. agents broke past Cap and slammed into Ant-Man and Banner, knocking them to the ground.

“Or maybe we won’t!” said Ant-Man as the living undead fell on them.

“No!” Banner screamed as one of the living undead bit him. “They got me!”



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Chapter 9

Ant-Man pushed the living undead away from them, reaching out to Banner, who had just been bitten.

“I’m . . . already starting. . . to feel the change,” Banner said as blue veins began to bulge out of his skin.

“Bruce, no!” cried Ant-Man as he kicked back more infected agents.

“It was great . . . working with you . . . Scott,” said Banner.

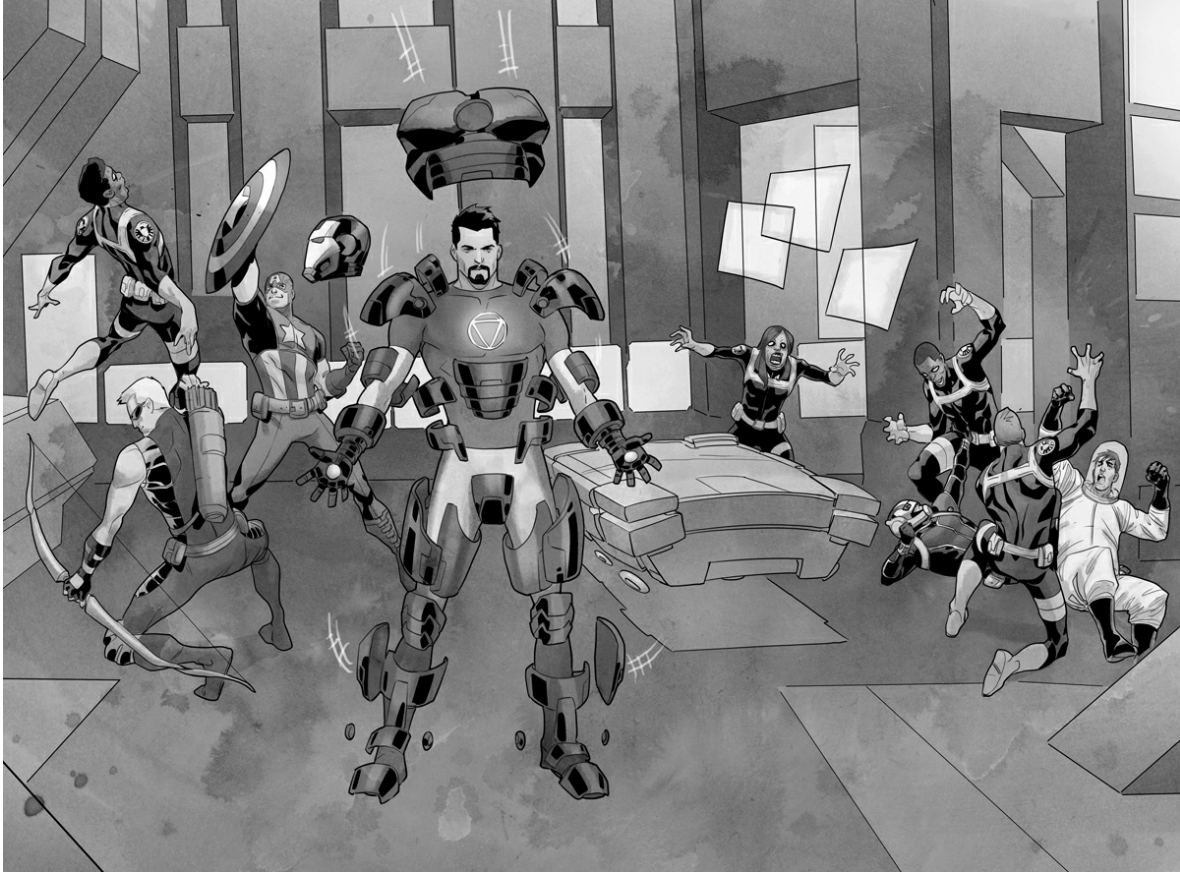
“No, this can’t be how it ends!” shouted Ant-Man.

“Oh, I don’t think it will be,” came a voice from the other side of the room.

Ant-Man and Banner looked past the crowd of zombies on top of them to see Tony Stark getting up from the lab table.

“The cure works!” shouted Ant-Man, a smile leaping to his face. “Iron Man’s back with us!”

“Armor, to me!” Tony shouted.



Within seconds, pieces of the Iron Man suit flew through the door past Cap and Hawkeye.

“What a beautiful sight,” said Hawkeye as the Iron Man helmet zoomed by.

Piece by piece, the armor slammed onto Tony Stark's body. In the blink of an eye, Tony had become the Incredible Iron Man!

“These S.H.I.E.L.D. agents have terrible people skills,” Iron Man joked. “Let's teach them some manners!”

BAM-BAM! Iron Man blasted the living undead around Ant-Man and Banner. The zombies went flying, landing unconscious nearby. Ant-Man was no longer cornered!

He ran to the lab table and grabbed some of the cure that had just been tested on Iron Man. “This will do the job, Bruce,” he said, injecting Banner.

“That was . . . as close as they come . . .” said Banner, his skin already turning back to normal.

Nearby, Iron Man blasted more of the S.H.I.E.L.D. agents.

“Don't worry,” Iron Man called out. “I'm using the stun setting on these guys. They're good agents, and I want them to have a chance to get back to normal, just like I did.”

“Thank you for saving us, Tony!” said a relieved Ant-Man.

“Well, the memories of my time as a member of the living undead aren't very clear,” said Iron Man, “but I can tell that I must owe you and Bruce a favor or two, Ant-Man. And I had this crazy dream that a mini Hulk was in my bloodstream.”

“Yeah. . .dream. . .” said Banner, his voice trailing off.

Iron Man looked confused for a second, then shrugged, saying, “Well, whatever you did, since I'm back to my handsome self, I take it you were able to create an effective cure?”

“We did,” Ant-Man confirmed, “and thanks to data we received by testing it on you, we can turn the cure into a medical mist. It will turn the infected back to normal just by being sprayed on them.”

“What do you need from me?” asked Iron Man.

“For now, if you could keep any more infected people from making it into the lab, that would be enough,” explained Banner. “We just need time to make the mist.”



“Consider it done!” said Iron Man as he zipped off to help Cap and Hawkeye fight.

Ant-Man and Banner immediately began programming the lab's medical equipment to produce as much of the cure in mist form as possible.

“Let's load the mist into canisters,” Ant-Man suggested. “We'll create as much as we can before we run out of raw materials.”

With Cap, Hawkeye, and Iron Man all working together, they had no problem keeping the infected S.H.I.E.L.D. agents out of the lab. It wasn't long before Ant-Man and Banner had created a stockpile of medical mist.

“That's all we can make for now,” Ant-Man said, looking over the canisters. “Let's get this out to the streets and hope it's enough.”

Soon Ant-Man and the other Avengers were spraying the medical mist on the crowds of living undead walking the streets of New York. The citizens started transforming back to normal within seconds, shaking their heads in confusion, as if they were waking from a dream.

“It's working!” said Falcon happily as he sprayed Black Widow, turning her back to normal.

Hawkeye had loaded the medical mist into his gas arrows and was firing them left and right into crowds of living undead. As the arrowheads popped, the gas sprayed out and cured whole groups.

Iron Man was flying over alleys packed with living undead, swooping in low and opening the canisters so that the mist spread over everyone. “I feel like I've turned into a crop duster,” Iron Man joked.

Thor threw a canister into Central Park, zapping it with a bolt of lightning and creating a mist shower. “There!” shouted Thor. “Now even Ant-Man's insect comrades-in-arms will be relieved of the sickness!”

The plan was working, but Ant-Man and Banner checked out the remaining supply of mist, which was getting low.

“We can't run out of mist before we cure everyone,” Ant-Man said. “If even one zombie is still out there, it'll infect more, and this will all start over again.”



Banner nodded. “If only there was a way to get all of the remaining undead in one central place so that we could use the mist that's left to cure everyone at the same time.”

“But how? What would draw them all together?” Ant-Man wondered out loud.

“They want to bite more people, so maybe we could use ourselves as bait,” suggested Banner. “Get them to follow us somewhere that we can trap them.”

“It's a good idea, but there are people all over the city that they could bite. Why would they be drawn to us?” Ant-Man replied. “We have to try something else. . . If we can't draw them out. . .then maybe. . .”

Suddenly, Ant-Man remembered something Banner had told him earlier in the day. . . and it gave him an idea he thought just might work.



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Chapter 10

“Are you sure about this?” asked a skeptical Banner when he heard Ant-Man's plan.

“Not entirely,” admitted Ant-Man. “However, I can't think of anything else.”

“But we've been trying to stop me from turning into the Hulk all day,” Banner pointed out.

Ant-Man's idea was simple. “When we were talking earlier, and you were telling me how the Hulk is often misunderstood, you said, ‘Everything runs from the Hulk,’ ” Ant-Man explained. “I get why that's normally a problem, but now we can turn it into a strength.”

Banner had to admit that Ant-Man was right: the living undead would attack everything that moved, trying to bite and pass on their infection . . . but if anything could get them to run, it would be a rampaging Hulk.

“Okay, but if the Hulk winds up busting up the city, I'm telling the mayor it was your fault,” said Banner.

Banner nervously walked straight into a crowd of the living undead. It was easy for the scientist to let himself grow angry as the infected grabbed at him and tried to bite him. Moments later Banner's body started to grow and turn green.



His clothes ripped as his body mass doubled, then tripled, then quadrupled. By the time the transformation was complete, nothing recognizable was left of Banner. Instead, there was just. . . the Incredible Hulk!

The Hulk roared, and all the living undead around him stopped advancing for a second. Even the sound of him was giving them pause.

“Hey, Hulk!” shouted Ant-Man, shrinking and jumping onto his shoulder. “Can you hear me?”

Hulk looked at Ant-Man. “Little man Hulk's friend?” the green Goliath asked.

“Yes, but you see the zombie people? You have to chase them to this place.” Ant-Man used a holo-projector to show Hulk a picture of Madison Square Garden, an arena big enough to hold all the remaining living undead.

“Hulk just smash zombie people?” Hulk suggested with a roar. “Hulk smash zombies!!!”

“No, the zombie people are Hulk's friends, too,” Ant-Man answered quickly. “They're just sick. Round them up, okay?”

“Okay,” said Hulk. “Hulk like chase!”

And with that, he was off!

Ant-Man's plan worked like a charm. When the living undead saw Hulk coming, they ran as fast as their diseased zombie legs would carry them! It was just like Banner had said: everything ran from the Hulk.

“I was skeptical,” said Iron Man to Ant-Man as he watched the Hulk chase the last of the remaining living undead into Madison Square Garden. “But it looks like this is going to work.”



Black Widow and Thor helped load the remaining medical mist canisters into the building's ventilation system, opening them before sealing the outside vents shut. They expected the ventilation fans to spread the mist through the arena, delivering the cure to all inside.

“You spoke too soon, Iron Man,” said Falcon, scanning the building. “It's not working. The mist isn't circulating!”

Inside, Ant-Man could see that some of the living undead were already banging on the now closed Madison Square Garden entrance. A crack started to spread across one of the glass doors. It wouldn't hold for long.

“I'm on it,” said Ant-Man. “Just tell me where the blockage is, Falcon!”

“I can do better than tell you,” said Falcon as he projected a 3-D hologram from his handheld device. It featured a rotating image of the building's ventilation system, highlighting the problem spot in red.

Ant-Man studied the hologram for a second, looking at it with an eye for

detail honed by hours spent poring over schematics of electrical systems.

“Got it. Wish me luck!” Ant-Man said as he shrank down to ant size and slipped into the arena's air ducts.

He scurried through the ducts, growing and shrinking as needed to fit through the different corridors and quickly making it to the jammed fan indicated by Falcon's hologram.

“Found it,” he said, giving the fan a push to try to start it moving again. But it didn't work.

“It's not moving,” Ant-Man said, trying again.

“Maybe it's not a simple jam after all,” suggested Falcon over his comm.

Ant-Man looked around and spotted the electrical wires that fed into the fan's motor. He popped off an access hatch and rooted around in the system.

“You're right, not a jam . . . we've got an electrical problem,” Ant-Man announced. “Good thing we've also got an electrical engineer!”

Ant-Man patched together two wires. He instantly knew it had worked.

“Gotcha!” Ant-Man shouted as the air flowed past him.

As the mist circulated through the system and started to cure the remaining infected New Yorkers, Ant-Man jumped back out of the air vent and sized up. All the Avengers cheered and gathered around him.

“Tiny man now less tiny,” observed a confused Hulk.

“I have to admit, you did great today,” Hawkeye said to Ant-Man.

“And we owe you an apology,” said Falcon. “If we had taken you more seriously right away, things would never have gotten this bad.”

“That's not a mistake we'll make again,” Cap stated.

“Definitely not,” agreed Black Widow.

Ant-Man smiled. “Thanks, everybody,” he said. “That means a lot coming from Earth's Mightiest Heroes!”

Later, after Hulk had calmed down and turned back into Banner, Ant-Man got a message to meet the doctor in his Helicarrier lab.

“Hey, Bruce, what's up?” asked Scott when he walked in.

“Nothing. I needed you here so you could get a S.H.I.E.L.D. security pass to our lab,” said Banner.

Scott didn't think he'd heard that right. “Our lab?”

“Yep,” said Banner. “You can’t do all your scientific work in an anthill, so I hope you’ll join me here from time to time.”

“Are you sure?” asked Scott. “I mean, I’m not sure the other Avengers would want me around. . . .”

“You’re right,” said Iron Man, entering the lab. “I usually don’t like having competition in the genius department . . . but in your case, I’ll make an exception.”

“Genius?” asked Scott, surprised.



“What else would you call the guy who cured me, and half of New York, even after all the other so-called heroes had written him off?” asked Iron Man.

Ant-Man smiled from ear to ear.

“So what do you say?” asked Bruce. “Lab partners?”

“count on it!”

蚁人的故事

对于电气专家斯科特·朗来说，生活从来都不是一件容易的事，为了帮助家人，他被迫从事犯罪活动。斯科特总是后悔触犯了法律，只想做正确的事。

一天，著名的科学家汉克·皮姆博士向斯科特伸出援助之手，为他提供了一个结束犯罪生活的途径。斯科特用皮姆博士发明的装备，变身成神奇的蚁人。他能收缩到蚂蚁那么小，拥有相当于一百个人的力量。

皮姆博士的技术围绕着“皮姆粒子”展开——那是一组不寻常的亚原子粒子，能够减少任何物体的质量。斯科特使用皮姆粒子，不仅能缩小自己，也能缩小其他任何人、任何东西。有时他还可以使用皮姆粒子放大物体。

此外，斯科特还可以用其他技术与蚂蚁交流，甚至在需要蚂蚁帮助时召唤它们。作为一位电气专家，斯科特不断修改和完善皮姆博士的装备，为自己所用。

斯科特·朗是一位有献身精神的英雄，他把过去远远抛在脑后。现在，他是神奇的蚁人，与犯罪做斗争，保护无辜者！



第一章



这是美丽的一天，纽约市中央公园和往常一样人山人海。游客四处闲逛，拍照。慢跑的人在人行道上稳步地运动。有野餐的人，有学校派来实地考察的孩子们，还有画风景的艺术家们。甚至还有几个名人，戴着墨镜，竖着衣领，不想引人注目。

然而，在公园里行走的几百人中，几乎没有人想到他们脚下还有一个完全不同的世界——昆虫世界！

数以百万计的昆虫居住在中央公园下的泥土里，在这样温暖的日子，虫子比人类还要忙碌！

然而，有一个人在密切关注着昆虫，他不喜欢自己看到的这一幕。

“太奇怪了，”神奇的蚁人斯科特·朗边说边蹲下来检查刚经过的一些蚂蚁留下的痕迹，“这不是我期待的交通模式，”他自言自语道。

当然，蚁人更容易注意到昆虫在做些什么，因为他有惊人的力量。他确实有能力缩小到蚂蚁的大小！

现在，他只有一只虫子那么大，正站在一个蚁巢的通道入口。

“我需要弄清楚到底发生了什么。”斯科特自言自语，他跟着蚂蚁的足迹走到了更深的通道里。为了更好地熟悉蚂蚁，蚁人已经近距离研究蚂蚁的行为好几年了。他去过那个蚁巢好几次，能看出有些地方不对劲。



抵达蚁巢的一个主穴后，他惊讶地发现，大多数蚁群成员排成一排，像小兵一样全神贯注地站着。

“你们在干什么？”蚁人大声问道。通常情况下，这些蚁穴就像交通高峰期的纽约地铁站一样骚动，所以蚂蚁完全静止不动的情况是非常怪异的。“你们病了还是怎么了？”

当然，蚂蚁不懂英语，但蚁人确实有能力与它们交流。蚁人的装备可以释放信息素的气味。蚂蚁比人类的嗅觉更灵敏，它们用这种气味传递信息。

可即使蚁人释放出信息素，蚂蚁也没有反应，只是恍惚地站在那里。它们没有睡着，但也不是完全清醒！

“我必须弄清楚这件事。”蚁人边说边用注射器采集了一只蚂蚁的血淋巴样本，蚂蚁只有这种干净的液体，没有血液。

蚁人将样本插入手持装备，“咔嚓”一声嵌入后装备发出嗡嗡声，接着屏幕闪出一篇报告。

“病毒？”蚁人一边说，一边从装备上读取信息，“我从未见过这种病毒，但根据这些读数，我怀疑它可能会传染给人类！”

“后果可能非常严重。”蚁人说道，“就像那次太空病毒迅速席卷神盾局的一个月球基地一样，一百二十名特工在短短几个小时内就全部被感染了！”

那次空间站的情况有所不同，因为空间站后来被控制住了，病毒无法传播到地球。蚁人甚至不敢想象，如果某个未知的病毒蔓延至整个纽约，将会有怎样的后果。它可能很快成为一种流行病，可能导致数百万人患病……或者更糟！

蚁人立刻意识到他必须把消息带给世界上最厉害的超级英雄战队。“我必须找到复仇者们。”蚁人说道，“我也许自己就能找到处理这个病毒的方法，但如果病毒开始传播，需要整个团队来控制。复仇者们知道该怎么做！”



蚁人从蚁巢里冲了出来……但是他一走，他之前一直在调查的那批蚂蚁就开始移动了。

蚁人抵达地面，恢复到正常的人类体型，赶紧去找钢铁侠和其他复仇者们。

他离开时，经过了一对夫妇，只见他们在草地上的毯子上野餐。

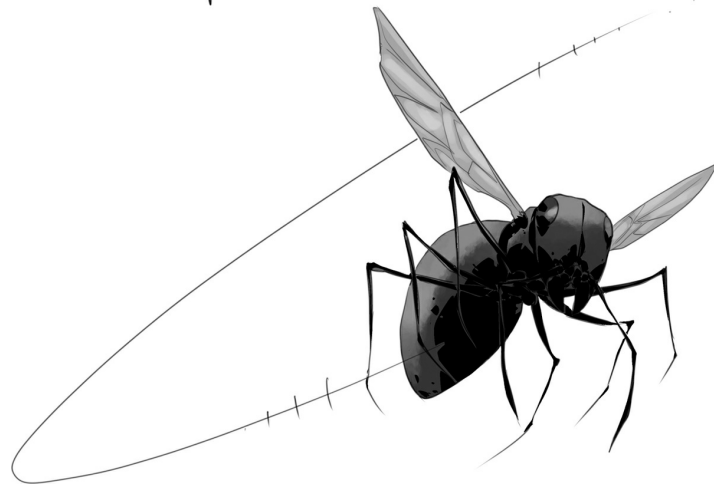
“天啊，蚂蚁今天真的都出来了。”男士说道。

“是啊，到处都是。”女士同意道，“噢！好像有只蚂蚁咬了我……”

第二章

蚁人很容易找到复仇者们。他只要跟着爆炸声寻找烟雾就可以了。只见英雄们正在进行一场大战。

“那边，欧几里德！”蚁人骑在一只会飞的巨型蚂蚁上，对它喊道。



蚁人不仅有能力收缩到蚂蚁那么小，也有能力将蚂蚁膨胀到人类的体型。每当需要迅速穿过城市时，他就用信息素的气味召唤他最喜欢的蚂蚁朋友欧几里德，然后搭个便车。

“复仇者们正在与马贾组织战斗。”蚁人说道。这时，欧几里德降落在一座建筑物的墙上，俯瞰着整个街区，那里复仇者联盟正与罪犯作战。

马贾，是邪恶的尼法利亚伯爵控制下的犯罪组织。他们在闯入一个藏有实验武器的神盾局仓库时，被当场抓住了。看起来这次战斗快结束了。绿巨人击倒了四名马贾成员，雷神击倒了其他几名成员，猎鹰造了个能量笼，将剩余的人关在了里面。

“面对现实吧，伯爵。”美国队长对尼法利亚喊道，“这次小小的抢劫已经失败了！”

“马贾永不言弃！”尼法利亚喊道。这个时候，他用激光枪在仓库墙

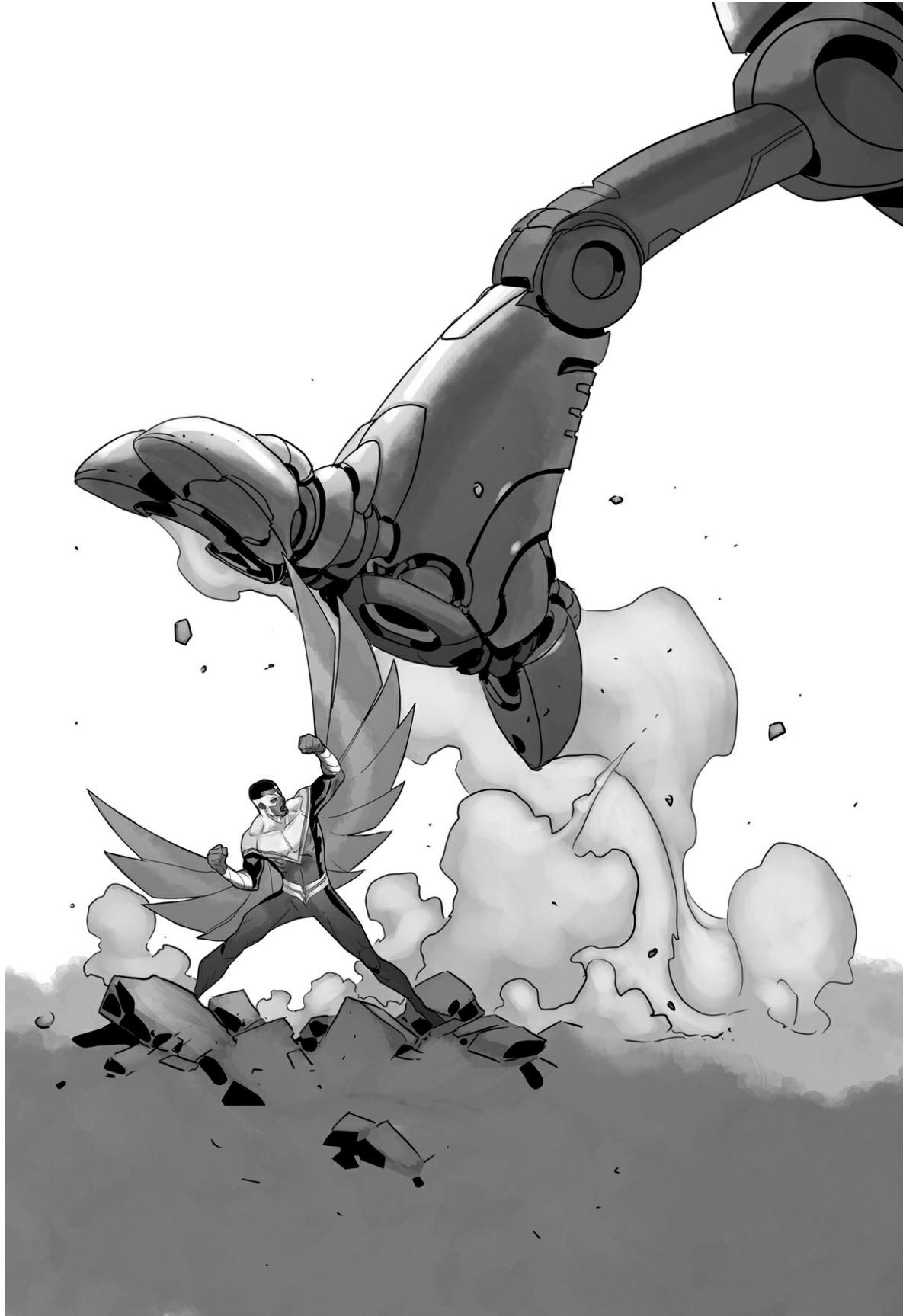
壁上打出一个洞，冲进了仓库里面。

“哦，不！”钢铁侠喊道，他知道仓库里储存着什么样的武器。“抓住他，趁他还没——”

砰！太晚了！一个由尼法利亚伯爵控制的巨型机器人冲破了仓库墙壁，不断向复仇者们发射导弹！

“多亏了这个神盾局机器人机械装置，现在没有什么能阻止我了！”尼法利亚伯爵叫嚣道。

看到这一切，蚁人知道他必须帮助大家。“带我下去，欧几里德。”蚁人说道。于是，欧几里德朝战斗地点飞去。当尼法利亚的导弹击中鹰眼和美国队长时，绿巨人一跃而起。“绿巨人出击！”他边喊边像蒸汽火车一样充满了能量，冲向巨大的机器人。



“你能奈我何！”尼法利亚喊道，试图用机器人的爪子把绿巨人赶走了。只见绿巨人一下就被打飞了！

鹰眼射出了具有爆炸性的箭，雷神把闪电对准了机器人，但它还是不停攻击，击倒了美国队长和黑寡妇！

“我们怎样才能阻止它？”鹰眼对钢铁侠大叫道。

“我不知道。”钢铁侠回答，“这是我自己的设计，我的设计可厉害了！它应该没有任何弱点。”

就在那一刻，尼法利亚伸出了机器人的手臂，把猎鹰从空中拽下来，重重摔在地上！

机器人抬起它的巨脚，马上要把他碾碎了！

“再见了，猎鹰！”尼法利亚说道。

“不，你该向蚁人问好！”蚁人回应道。他突然冒了出来，变大了，出现在机器人驾驶舱里，伯爵的身后！

“什么？谁？”尼法利亚正困惑不已，蚁人就一拳把他击倒，重新控制了机器人。

猎鹰和其他复仇者透过机器人驾驶舱的窗口，看到蚁人在里面，大吃一惊。他们不知道蚁人居然能缩小到这种程度，竟然穿过了排气口进入了机器人的盔甲里。他沿着机器人的电缆爬进驾驶舱，在那里恢复了体型，发起进攻！

在击倒尼法利亚伯爵之后，蚁人关闭机器人，打开了驾驶舱，然后把尼法利亚这个恶棍扔到了复仇者们的脚边。

“谢谢。”当蚁人从机器人身上爬下来时，猎鹰说道。

“干得好，勇士。”美国队长说着拍了拍蚁人的背说道。

“所以这些机器人确实有弱点。”钢铁侠在检查关机状态的机器人排气口时说道，“我得改进一下设计。”

“如果你以前设计得好些，我们现在可能已经挂了。”黑寡妇对钢铁侠说道。

鹰眼走向蚁人说：“兄弟，谢谢你帮忙，但你为什么会来这儿？”

“对了！我差点儿忘了。我有重要消息！”蚁人急切地说着，拿出了一台高科技设备。

第三章

“你在给我们看蚂蚁的血吗？”鹰眼困惑地问道。

“我给你们看的是一张病毒的图片。”蚁人指着他的手持设备上的扫描结果回答道。

“这个……病毒把蚂蚁怎么了？”美国队长问道。



“它们的行为变得反常。”蚁人回答，“它们不再到处走动了。”

“也许它们只是懒。”鹰眼耸耸肩说道。

“不，它们仿佛丢了魂。”蚁人回答道。复仇者们似乎不理解这种病毒有多危险。“在热带地区，蚂蚁会感染一种真菌。这种真菌把它们变成僵尸蚂蚁。我担心这种病毒可能就像那种真菌一样。”

鹰眼哼了一声：“僵尸蚂蚁？”

“这是真的。”蚁人强调，“你查一查就知道了。”

“这种病毒会传染给人类吗？”猎鹰问道。

“很有可能。”蚁人回答道。

鹰眼嗤之以鼻：“但你不确定？”

蚁人耸耸肩：“是的。”

“这一切都很有趣，但我得长话短说。”钢铁侠打断道，“我刚接到贾维斯的电话，先锋科技正在炮台公园发动攻击。我们得过去……复仇者们，集合！”他喊道。

复仇者们冲了出去，只留下蚁人。蚁人知道如果先锋科技这个邪恶组织图谋不轨，复仇者们必须马上出动。但蚁人之前认为他们会帮助他解决病毒问题，而现在看来他们似乎都不相信他。

蚁人大声抱怨道：“他们好像根本没在听啊！”

“我会听的。”

蚁人转过身来，看见一个穿着破衣服的人站在旁边。蚁人过了一会儿才意识到，这是世界著名的科学家布鲁斯·班纳博士。在他身后，有几个神盾局的特工来清理战斗后的摊子。

“布鲁斯，居然是你。我以为你还是……另一个你。”蚁人斯科特说。他指的是绿巨人，因为班纳愤怒时就会变成绿巨人。

“有时他在战斗后会很快平静下来，然后……我就回来了。”班纳解释道，“跟我说说你发现的这种昆虫病毒吧。”

斯科特说：“我认为这很重要，但其他复仇者们似乎并不认同……所以这也许不重要吧。”

“永远相信你的直觉，斯科特。”班纳说，“即使别人不相信你，你也应该相信自己，尤其在这些直觉可以拯救生命的情况下。”

斯科特点头表示理解。他知道班纳说得对。斯科特向来独来独往，有时觉得自己并不重要，但班纳的话给了他一丝信心。

“所以，这是一种什么病毒？”班纳问道。

“来，你自己看看。”斯科特说着把设备递给了班纳。

“嗯……你有样品吗？”班纳一边研究数据一边问。

“当然有。”斯科特说。“怎么了？”

“我们还得做一些测试。”班纳回答说，“到我的实验室来。”

班纳的私人实验室建在一个神盾局的悬浮堡垒上，这个堡垒名为“天空母舰”。斯科特从来没有上过那艘巨大的战舰，所以在那里他很兴奋。但是班纳给他看了新的测试结果后，这种兴奋很快变成了担忧。

班纳不是研究疾病方面的专家，但由于他在伽马射线方面的研究，他对血液反应了解很多。

“正如你所怀疑的，人类很容易感染这种病毒，只要被虫子咬一口就会感染。”班纳说道。

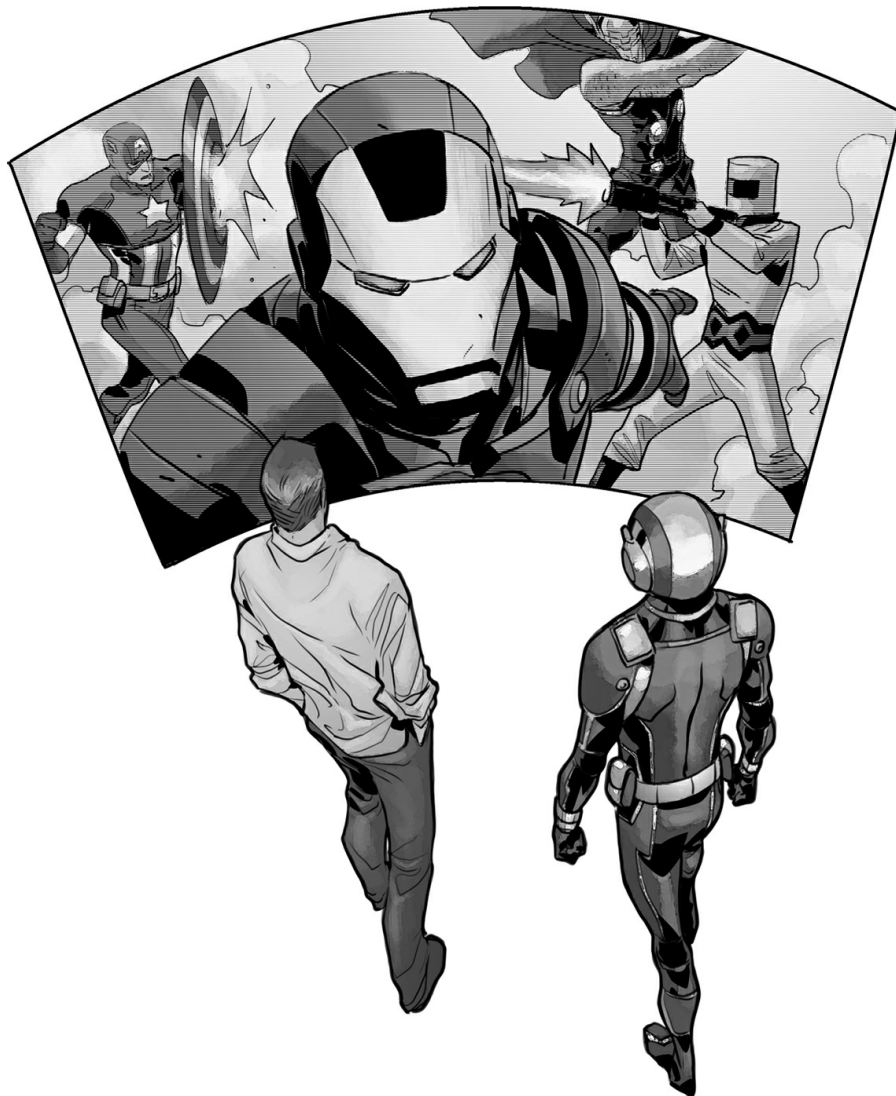
“这意味着，如果被中央公园里的蚂蚁咬到，任何人都可能变得像僵尸一样。”斯科特说道。

“是的，这是我们最不想要的。”班纳说，“一群活生生的僵尸在曼哈顿四处奔走，就像一部B级恐怖片……我得让队友们知道这有多严重。”

班纳呼叫了钢铁侠头盔中的通信器。每个复仇者都有一个这样的“通讯设备”，安装在他们的耳朵内或耳朵附近，这样他们就能很容易地相互协调，甚至当他们在战斗中处于不同位置时。

“我有点忙，布鲁斯。”钢铁侠答道，伴着激光射击的声音。

“我和蚁人在一起。”班纳回答，“他发现的那个病毒事关重大。”



“即使是这样，我们现在也没法处理。我们正受到猛烈的炮火攻击！”钢铁侠喊道，“这些邪恶组织的家伙表现得很奇怪——比平时更恶毒！他们一直在进攻！”

“钢铁侠，这种疾病可能会大规模爆发，除非——”但是班纳没法说下去了，因为他被爆炸声打断了。

“我之后回你。”钢铁侠说着切断了通讯。

班纳意味深长地看着斯科特。

“好吧，现在我们只能靠自己了。”他说道。

第四章

“我已经在复仇者联盟待了一段时间了。”班纳在狂风中对蚁人喊道，“在这段时间里，我做了很多奇怪的事情。我曾经和来自太空的外星人作战。我去过其他行星，帮忙保卫了整座城市的人，他们生活在海洋下……但老实说，现在这事是我做过的最奇怪的事情之一。”

班纳说这话的时候紧紧抓住欧几里德的背。当蚁人和班纳意识到其他复仇者帮不上忙时，他们决定回到中央公园重新检查被感染的蚂蚁，希望能找到一种治疗方法。神盾局所有的航天器目前都在使用，所以蚁人建议坐在他的蚂蚁朋友背上飞行。

“你会习惯的。”蚁人喊道，“谢谢你在别人都不相信我的时候相信我。”

“不客气。”班纳说道，“我不知道为什么其他人都没那么关心。”

“我知道，”蚁人回答，“是我的原因。我和虫子说话。我会缩小身形。那些并不是真正的超能力。我的意思是，那些或许只是某种程度上的超能力。但雷神是个近乎永生的阿斯加德人，美国队长是活生生的传奇超级战士，钢铁侠拥有比一支小型军队更强大的火力。鹰眼和黑寡妇没有超能力，但他们在神盾局有多年的超级间谍经验。我又有什么呢？不过是虫子而已！如果我是他们，我也不会把我当回事。面对现实吧，我不是绿巨人那样强大的英雄。”

“你认为人们尊敬绿巨人吗？”班纳一针见血地问道，“我变成绿巨人时，人们只把我当成一个怪物。绿巨人是个英雄，他想帮助大家，但人们不明白。人们纷纷远离他，甚至在他试图救他们的时候也要远离他。一切生物都远离绿巨人。”

“不只是我成为绿巨人时，就算我是布鲁斯·班纳的时候也是如此。”他继续说，“即使我是人，也有人认为我是怪物。上个月，我参加了一个会议，展示一些我的研究，但没人听我的报告。他们一直在担心我会暴怒。”



蚁人知道班纳的意思。被那些还不了解你的人误解是很难受的。

“于是我开始在网络上和其他电气专家交流。”蚁人对班纳说，“我们交换想法，集思广益，创造新事物等。可一旦他们发现我是个超级英雄，情况就变得很尴尬，他们就不再跟我说话了。我想这对他们来说太奇怪了。”

班纳点点头，表示理解，但他们的谈话随着欧几里德着陆被打断了。蚁人用皮姆粒子枪缩小自己和班纳，但当他们进入蚁人几个小时前来过的这个蚁巢，发现所有的蚂蚁都不见了。

“太奇怪了。”蚁人说，“一般情况下，至少会有一些蚂蚁留在通道内守卫，而现在这个地方像被完全废弃了一样。”

于是他俩离开蚁巢，恢复到了人类的大小，这时，班纳环顾四周，说：“嘿，大家都去哪儿了？”

蚁人明白了班纳的意思。他早些时候在这里时，公园一直很热闹，挤满了成百上千的人……现在却一个人都没有了。

“看看这个，”蚁人指着一条被遗弃的野餐毯对班纳说，“三明治才吃了一半，这些人好像午餐没吃完就走了。”

“有人。”班纳说道。他发现公园对面站着一群人，背对着他俩。当蚁人和班纳走近时，这些人竟然转向他们，咆哮起来！

蚁人震惊了！

大事不好！这群人的皮肤都是浅绿色，皮肤上遍布着跳动的蓝色静脉！他们的眼睛都是病态的黄色黏液，没有瞳孔！

“他们怎么了？”班纳急切地问道。

“僵尸病毒！他们被感染了！”蚁人喊道，“他们都成了僵尸！”

突然，这群僵尸扑向他俩，一边咆哮，一边咬牙切齿！“我真怀念

和昆虫在一起玩儿的时光！”蚁人一边喊一边躲避他们的啃咬。



第五章

这些“僵尸”并不像老电影中的僵尸那样行动缓慢。虽然他们的手臂和腿都僵硬了，但他们可以非常快速地移动！不一会儿，僵尸们就将蚁人和班纳围住，他们背后是一片树林。

“别让他们咬到你！”蚁人警告道，试图把僵尸们从班纳身上推开，“否则你也会感染的。”

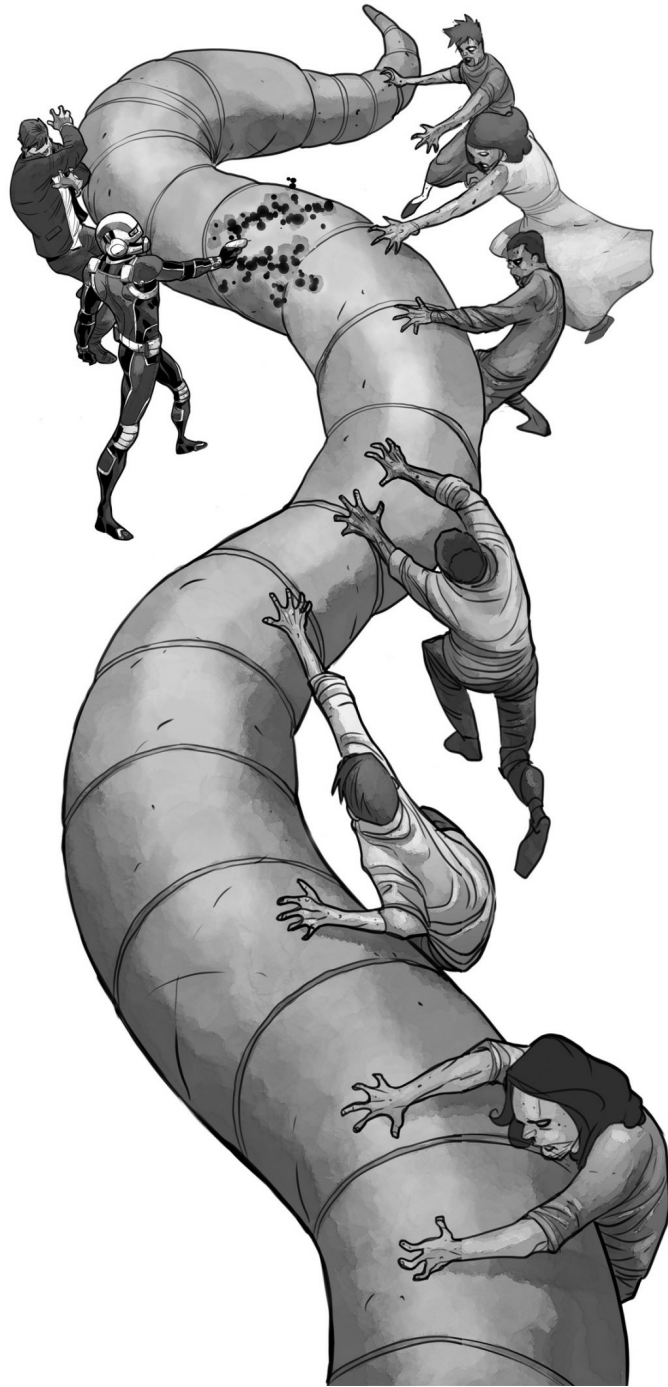
“我们该怎么做？”班纳问道，“我们不想伤害他们。他们不是坏人，只是生病的人。我们必须帮助他们！”

但是当僵尸咆哮着、乱抓他的时候，班纳开始发怒……并且开始变身了。

蚁人看着班纳。不行！如果班纳变成绿巨人，绿巨人可能会攻击他们，伤害他们——甚至更糟。蚁人只有很短的时间想办法阻止班纳变身……

就在那时，他在地面上发现了可以用来解决问题的东西。对其他人来说，这东西看上去不太起眼，但由于蚁人的特殊技能，它正是蚁人所需要的。

它是一条蚯蚓。



蚁人躲开僵尸乱抓的手，一把抓住蚯蚓。
他快速地把虫子扔在僵尸和班纳之间，然后又把它放大了！
蚯蚓突然变得巨大，像一堵活生生的墙，一边是蚁人和班纳，另一边是僵尸！

“你没事吧，布鲁斯？”蚁人问道，伸出一只手臂环着班纳。

“没事……没事了。”班纳平静下来，向他确认。他的变身停止了。“但我们现在该怎么办？”

他们能听到蚯蚓另一边传来沮丧的嚎叫声。

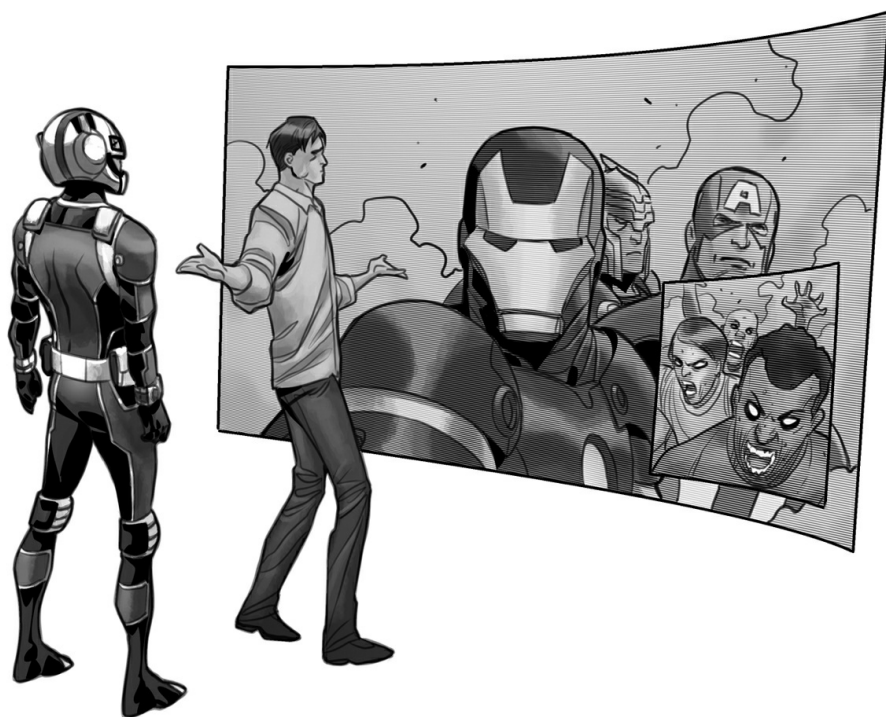
“我要呼叫欧几里德。”蚁人一边说，一边释放出一种信息素的气味，“我们现在有东西要给其他复仇者们看。”

“是吗？”班纳问道。

蚁人指着他的手腕，那里装着一个小型便携相机。“我把全程都录下来了！”

回到了班纳在神盾局天空母舰上的实验室，斯科特把视频文件上传到复仇者们的服务器上。另一边战场上，复仇者们用他们的手持设备接收到了僵尸们袭击斯科特和班纳的录像。

“对不起，我之前没有认真对待这件事。”钢铁侠严肃地说道。他和其他复仇者们还在炮台公园，好不容易才制止了邪恶组织的攻击。



“病毒扩散到了哪儿？”黑寡妇问道。

“我们不确定，”班纳通过通信器对他们说，“但是神盾局开始接到市中心的报警电话。那里似乎是发源。我们现在在实验室，因为我和斯

科特应该可以研制出解药。”

“我们已经拿到大部分所需的原材料，”斯科特说道，“但是病毒已经在传播了。复仇者们可以帮助找到被感染的市民，然后隔离他们，防止他们咬伤更多人！”

“听着，你可能是第一个发现这种病毒的人，”鹰眼说道，“但这并不代表你可以指挥我们做什么——”

鹰眼还没说完，美国队长就打断了他的话。

“我们明白。”美国队长直接对斯科特说道，“我们复仇者将前往中央公园，尽量把僵尸和没被感染的人分开。我们要阻止病毒扩散。”

“病毒可能已经比我们想象中传播得更快。”钢铁侠严肃地说道，“这也许能解释这些邪恶组织特工的行为。我们看不见他们的脸，因为他们穿戴了制服面具。但他们的打法很奇怪，就像斯科特视频里那些僵尸一样。”

“如果那些邪恶组织人员被感染了，那么你们要小心，不要被感染。”斯科特警告说，“病毒是通过叮咬传播的。”

“我们不会有事的，”鹰眼向蚁人保证，“就像钢铁侠说的，邪恶组织的人戴着面具，他们不可能咬我们。”

“是的，但一开始一定有东西咬了他们，才能感染他们。”斯科特说道。

“他说得对。大家检查一下你们的皮肤和衣服。确保没有蚂蚁在你们身上。”美国队长警告说。

“小心！”猎鹰叫了起来，他在钢铁侠身上发现了一只蚂蚁，但在猎鹰抓住蚂蚁之前，它就在两个金属装甲板之间滑落了。

“别担心，我的系统不是第一次有‘毛病’了。”钢铁侠开玩笑说，他很快脱下了盔甲，试图抓住蚂蚁。可不管他说什么，钢铁侠明显有点惊慌。

“噢噢。”钢铁侠说着突然停了下来，“我……我感觉很奇怪……”他说着便倒在了地上！

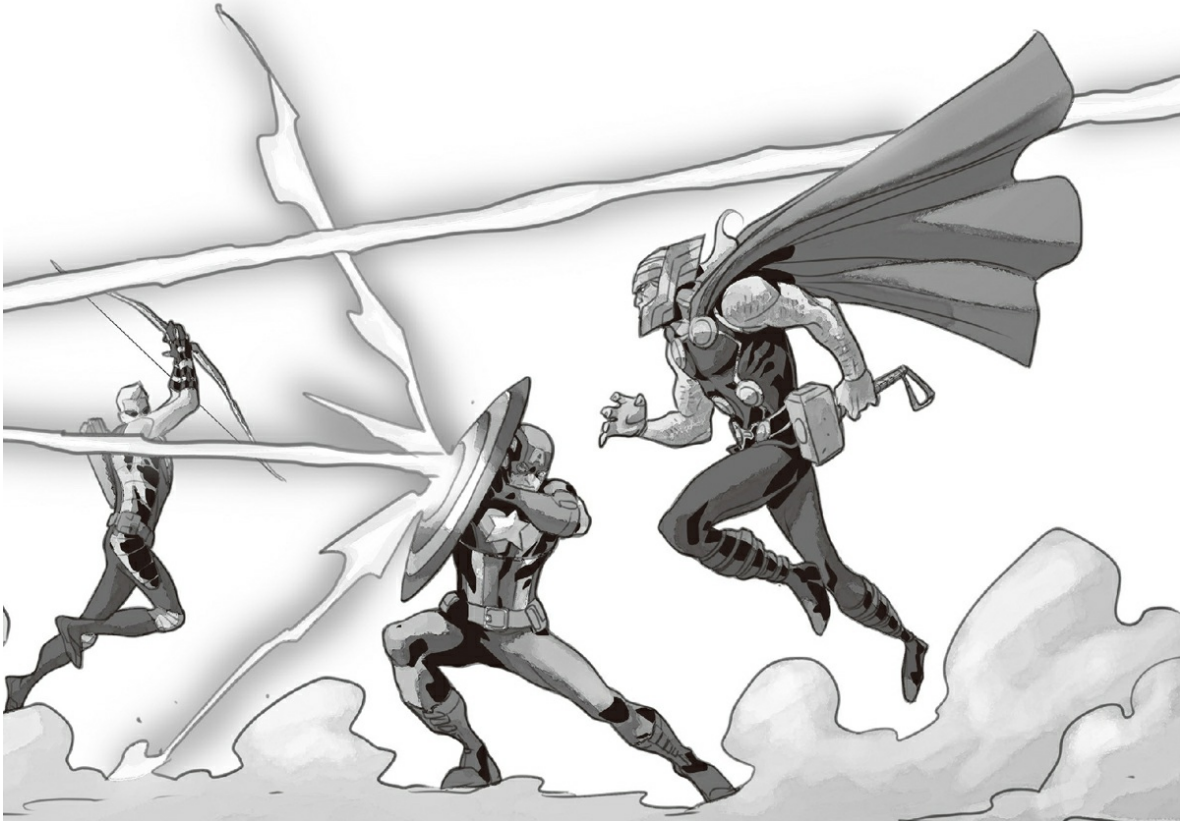
猎鹰冲到钢铁侠的身边，在钢铁侠卸掉部分盔甲后的皮肤上扫描那只蚂蚁。“抓住了。”猎鹰说着，捏死了那只被感染的蚂蚁……但是已经太迟了。那只蚂蚁已经咬了钢铁侠！

钢铁侠的四肢变得僵硬，他开始呻吟。

“托尼？托尼？你还能听到我说话吗？”猎鹰问道。钢铁侠没有回应，但他已经开始把武器瞄准其他同伴。

“散开！”当钢铁侠向复仇者们开火时，美国队长命令说。所有的复仇者立刻寻找掩护！

斯科特和班纳在天空母舰上惊呆了，只能通过通信器听着僵尸钢铁侠对他的队友开炮！



第六章

班纳和斯科特在通信器上焦急地听着在炮台公园发生的一切。美国队长、黑寡妇、鹰眼、雷神和猎鹰分散开，躲避着僵尸钢铁侠发射的能量波！

“我们必须在不伤害钢铁侠的情况下拿下他。”美国队长举起盾牌喊道，又避开了一次爆炸。“即使一个人，僵尸钢铁侠就能摧毁半个城市。我们得给蚁人和班纳留时间做出解药。”

“我的闪电会减慢他的速度！”雷神一边说，一边在空中挥舞着他的战锤，雷神之锤。闪电从铁锤中射出，向钢铁侠猛击过去。



“不，托尔！等等！”猎鹰喊道……但为时已晚！

只见闪电一击中钢铁侠便从他身上反弹，把雷神击倒在地！

猎鹰迅速向瞠目结舌的复仇者们解释道：“托尼使盔甲绝缘，这个

设计可以改变雷击的方向！”

钢铁侠向其他复仇者周围的地面快速扫射，每个人都立刻躲避开，向安全的地方滚去。

“你看到那爆炸的原始力了吗？”黑寡妇问，“就像闪电给托尼的盔甲快速充电了一样！”

“哦，好家伙！”鹰眼喊道，“雷神倒下了，我们该怎么办？”

在天空母舰的实验室里，班纳忧心忡忡，急切地看着斯科特，说：“我们得下去帮忙！”

“不行，在我们找到治愈僵尸病毒的方法之前，我们帮不了任何人！”斯科特回答说。

“我们一定能做点什么。”班纳说道。

“有办法了，”斯科特说，“我派个朋友过去。”

就在几分钟后，僵尸钢铁侠使用火力将美国队长、猎鹰和黑寡妇压制住了，这时他们听到蚁人的声音：“对不住了，钢铁侠，但是等你变回原来的自己，你就会感谢我的！”

复仇者们对蚁人说的话感到困惑，他们抬起头来，看到一只像一辆卡车那么大的蚂蚁撞上了钢铁侠，一头把他撞远了！

“现在我知道了！”鹰眼喊道。

蚂蚁转过身来时，他们看到了绑在蚂蚁头上的视频屏幕。屏幕上，蚁人解释道：“是这样的，我和班纳博士还在实验室里，但是我们派了这个家伙去帮忙。”

这个家伙就是蚁人的蚂蚁朋友欧几里德。蚁人把他的体型放到比平时更大，然后给他系上了一些装备，包括这个视频屏幕。“我把一个信息素盒子附在了他的身上，”蚁人说，“我可以远程向他发送气味信息，以便与他沟通，控制他的一举一动。”

僵尸钢铁侠摇晃着回来，欧几里德立即投入战斗。钢铁侠用能量波将蚁人装在蚂蚁身上的能量反射器弹出。反射器正瞄准钢铁侠。

“我从没想过自己会说这些。”美国队长说，“但是大家来吧，我们给那只蚂蚁一些援助吧！”

实验室里，斯科特在屏幕上看见欧几里德和复仇者们携手共击僵尸钢铁侠。于是，他继续与班纳博士工作。

“最后一批可能是我们需要的。我们检查一下吧。”班纳说着，用滴管将一些化学物质滴在玻璃片上，然后在显微镜下检查结果。

班纳观察着，发现这些化学物质攻击了显微镜玻片上的病毒样本。

“似乎起作用了。”班纳说，但又补充道，“等等，等等……不……”
让班纳失望的是，每个病毒样本都能击退这些化学物质。

班纳失落地抱怨道：“这就好像治疗方法就要奏效，但与病毒的结合却出了困难。”

“嗯……这一切都是从中央公园的蚂蚁开始的。”斯科特说道，“也许这种病毒更适应蚂蚁的生理条件。我们试试用蚂蚁血淋巴做黏结剂吧！”

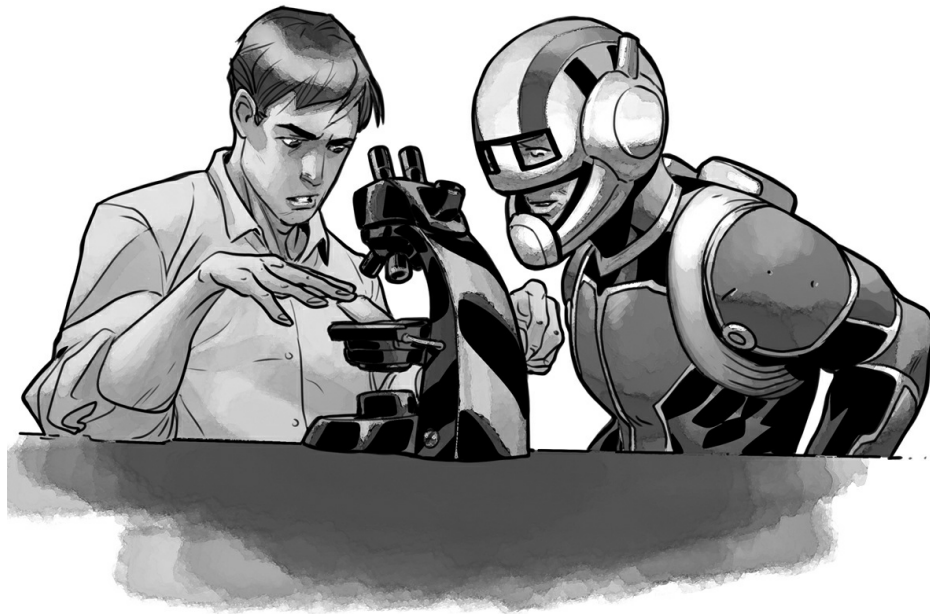
“好主意。”班纳说道。很快，他俩又准备了一块玻璃片，放在显微镜下。通过镜头，班纳看着新版本的解药杀死了玻璃片上所有的样本病毒。

“我们做到了！”班纳激动地喊道。

“不管怎样，它在实验室里起作用了。”斯科特说道，“但现在我们需要对人类进行测试。”

“为此，我们需要一个测试对象。”班纳说道，“我们得抓到一个僵尸，把他带回来。”

“哦，我把你的测试对象带来了。”鹰眼说道，他和美国队长正好带着昏迷的托尼·斯塔克进入实验室。



“在欧几里德的帮助下，我们击倒了钢铁侠。”美国队长说道，“如

果有机会治好托尼，我们必须抓住。”

“好吧，”斯科特同意，“把他放到桌上，脱掉他的盔甲，希望我们能让他恢复正常吧。”

第七章

“你确定我们必须这么做吗？”班纳问道。

班纳和斯科特准备在托尼·斯塔克身上测试解药时，美国队长和鹰眼在一旁看着。其他复仇者们则走上街头，尽可能保护路人不被越来越多的病毒携带者所感染，这些携带者正在向僵尸转变。

“对不起，博士，我们必须这么做。”斯科特回答道，“如果我们要大规模生产解药，我们需要从化学物质开始接触病毒的那一刻起就进行读数。这个实验室里，没有足够灵敏的仪器能从他的身体外获取这些读数。以我们现有的设备，我知道的唯一方法就是把人缩小，将他和解药一起送进人体。所以我要用皮姆粒子把你缩小，然后把你注射到托尼的血液中。”

“我？”班纳惊讶地问道。

“是的，”斯科特确认道，“你把解药投递给病毒时，还要用一个探测器来记录读数。记住：如果想解救纽约，我们就必须得到这些数据！”

“你得派别人去，”班纳坚持说道，“在托尼体内治疗他，得到重要的读数……压力很大。如果有什么东西让我抓狂，我可能会变成绿巨人……”

斯科特严肃地点点头。他清楚地知道，如果一个困惑、愤怒的绿巨人在托尼·斯塔克的血液中横冲直撞会是什么样。想象一下，一只小小的绿巨人游进你的心房……这个画面并不美好。

“布鲁斯说得对。让我们中的一个去吧。”美国队长建议，他指的是鹰眼和他自己。

“我也希望能让你们去，”斯科特说道，“但你们两个不知道怎么用探测器。我也不明白。我了解电气系统，而这次需要特殊操作，我又从未受过训练。班纳博士在伽马研究中一直使用这个探测器，只能是他去。”

美国队长、班纳和鹰眼的神情都很沉重。

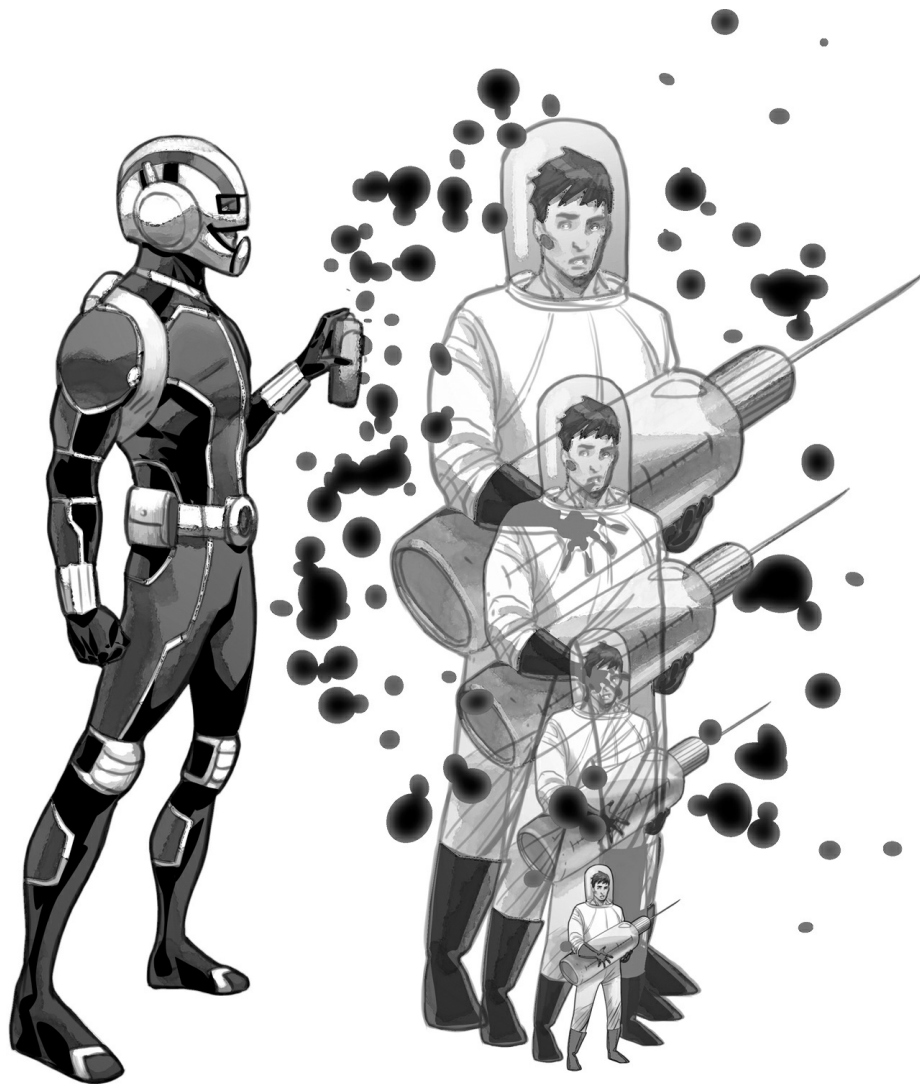
斯科特叹了口气，然后看着班纳，说：“我明白你为什么不舒服，但是班纳博士，你早些时候告诉我，需要相信自己。现在轮到你这么做

了。你可以做到.....你也必须做到。”

班纳看着斯科特，知道他是对的。于是他点点头。“好吧，”班纳说道，“如果我们真的要这么做，那就赶紧行动吧。僵尸病毒一定正像野火般在城市里传播。”

很快，班纳戴上呼吸装备，斯科特把他和一个新的解药罐缩小到了微型尺寸。然后斯科特把班纳注射到托尼·斯塔克的手臂里。

作为一名复仇者，班纳博士曾去过许多奇怪的地方：一个叫做负带的反物质宇宙，一个叫做微宇宙的亚原子维度，以及几个不同的未来地球。他甚至和斯科特一起骑在一只会飞的、叫做欧几里德的蚂蚁身上！他觉得这已经够奇怪了.....不，托尼的血液才是最奇怪的地方。



“我要去哪里？”班纳通过通信器问斯科特。

“只要往前走就可以了，他的血液里到处都有病毒。”斯科特回答。突然，一个又小又圆的白色物体撞上了班纳，撞得他后退了几步。“那是什么？”他问道。

“这一定是托尼的一个白细胞，”斯科特说道，“托尼的免疫系统认为你是一种疾病。”

“真不舒服，”班纳博士说道，“但愿不会再有白细胞撞我了。”

他抬头看了看，还真被他说中了，又有白细胞来了——非常多！没过多久，班纳被大量的白细胞打中了，就像有几支凶狠的躲避球队员在往他身上用力碰撞。他正被暴打！

“你得帮帮我！”班纳呼叫斯科特。

斯科特从班纳的声音中听到他开始发火：离他变成绿巨人没多久时间了！

“班纳博士，听我说，”斯科特平静地说，“有一次，我也缩小，进了一个空荡荡的蜂窝。整个蜂群突然回来时，我很惊讶。那太可怕了。当你是正常体型时，蜜蜂叮咬会让你难受，可当你变得很微小时，叮咬简直能轻易杀死你。”

蚁人停了一会儿。心想班纳在听吗？

“蜜蜂能闻到恐惧情绪的味道。”蚁人继续说，“如果那群蜜蜂闻到了我害怕时放出的信息素，他们就会攻击我。如果我想活下去，我必须保持足够的冷静，不要释放恐惧的味道。当我专注于我释放的情绪时，我便能控制自己的恐惧情绪长达数小时，直到皮姆粒子消失，我又恢复了体型。”

现在班纳的呼吸似乎正常了，好像回到了稳定的状态。

“如果我能做到，你也可以，班纳博士。”蚁人说完了。

“斯科特，你该叫我布鲁斯了。”班纳平静地说道。

班纳没有愤怒，他在白细胞中挣扎着前进，将解药植入到了附近一个漂浮的僵尸病毒中。

“你做到了！”斯科特喊道，他捕捉到了滚入的数据。“我们拿到了需要的东西，可以大量生产解药了！”

但就在这时，实验室的门“砰”的一声被打开了，冲进来一队神盾局特工……那是一队被感染的神盾局僵尸特工！



第八章

“我负责左边，你负责右边！”美国队长向鹰眼喊道，冲向前去。

鹰眼立即服从了美国队长的命令，负责右方作战。他俩动作连贯，打倒一个又一个神盾局僵尸特工！但是对方人数太多了！僵尸特工从美国队长和鹰眼身边溜了过去，立即向蚁人跑去。

“我还得把布鲁斯弄出来！”蚁人一边向其他人喊道，一边避开向他扑来的特工们的撕咬。

“抓紧时间，战士！”美国队长对他喊道。

班纳依然被困在托尼·斯塔克的身体里，而在蚁人和托尼之间，有三个僵尸在嘶吼长嚎！

“没问题。”蚁人说道，朝僵尸冲了过去。在半空中，他缩小了，这让他远离了僵尸抓人的手！那些特工纷纷伸出手臂，拼命想抓住他，为了躲避，蚁人迅速缩小或扩大到不同的体型。

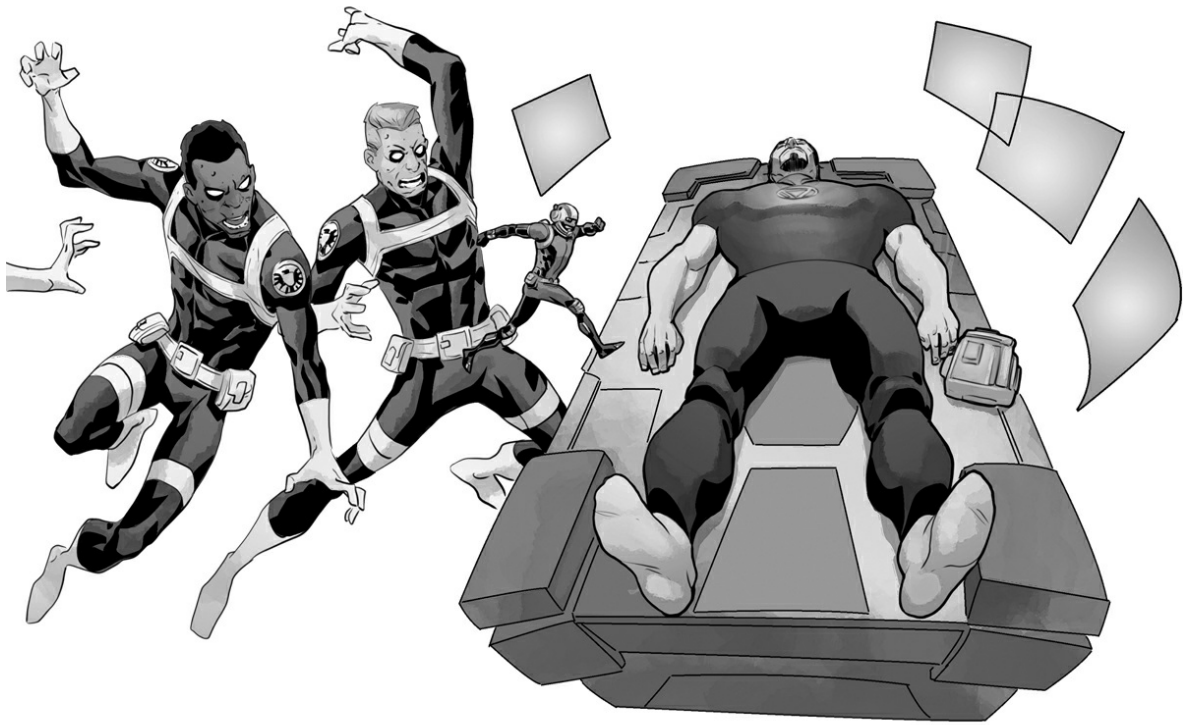
“麻利点儿，蚁人！”鹰眼又打倒了两名特工，喊道，“我们不能一直这样下去！”

蚁人终于抵达托尼·斯塔克躺着的台上，他把自己缩小到大约一英尺，在台上奔跑，拿到了可以释放班纳的装置。

“坚持住，布鲁斯！”蚁人对着通信器喊道，“你马上就可以出来了，但我们这儿有些客人。”

蚁人用这个装置把班纳从托尼的身体里提取出来，然后将皮姆粒子打到他身上。于是班纳回到原来的尺寸，站在蚁人身旁，蚁人也恢复了体型。

“这就是你说的客人？”班纳看着进击的神盾局僵尸，问道。



“托尼还没醒来，我们把僵尸引开！”蚁人说着，抓住布鲁斯，把他拉向门口。那里美国队长和鹰眼试图为他们开辟一条路，让他们通过。

就在这时，蚁人的通信器传来了猎鹰的讯息。“蚁人，你在吗？”猎鹰问道。

“在忙呢。”蚁人回答道，继续拉着班纳穿过满是僵尸的房间。

“好吧——但我们现在就需要解药！”猎鹰回答道，“黑寡妇刚变成僵尸了。”

街道上，猎鹰和雷神正努力击退一群想要进入公寓楼的僵尸，那栋楼里都是没被感染的人。欧几里德依然和他们一起作战，打倒了一排排僵尸，但僵尸太多了。

“解药已经研制出来了！我们会尽快把解药送给你们！”蚁人答应猎鹰，“但我们得先离开这里！天空母舰的全体成员看起来都被感染了！”



蚁人和班纳现在离美国队长和鹰眼只有几英尺远，他们已经沿着走廊，清出了一条路，这条路没有僵尸，畅通无阻。

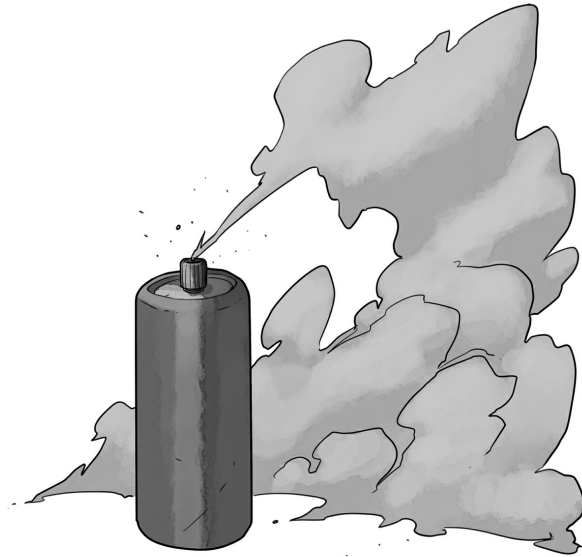
“我们都指望你们了。”猎鹰喊道，“注意安全！”

“我们会的！”班纳喊道。突然，一群被感染的神盾局特工冲过美国队长，冲向蚁人和班纳，把他们撞倒在地。

“我们可能不安全了！”僵尸们落在他们身上时，蚁人说道。

“不！”一个僵尸咬到班纳的时候，他尖叫起来，“他们咬到我了！”

第九章



蚁人把僵尸从他们身边推开，向刚刚被咬过的班纳伸出手来。

“我.....已经开始.....感受到变化了。”班纳说道。此时，他的皮肤上开始凸显出蓝色的静脉。

“布鲁斯，不！”蚁人一边大叫，一边打退僵尸特工们。

“和你一起工作.....真好.....斯科特。”班纳说道。

“不，不能就这样结束啊！”蚁人喊道。

“哦，我想不会的。”房间的另一边传来一个声音。

蚁人和班纳从他们上面的僵尸人群旁边看过去，看到托尼·斯塔克从实验室的台上起来了。

“解药起作用了！”蚁人喊道，他脸上绽放出微笑，“钢铁侠回来了！”

“盔甲，回到我这儿！”托尼喊道。

即刻，钢铁侠盔甲的各个部分就飞过门，经过了美国队长和鹰眼身边。

“多美的景象啊。”鹰眼一边说，一边看着钢铁侠的头盔飞驰而过。

盔甲一片片地落在托尼·斯塔克的身上。眨眼之间，托尼就变身成了不可思议的钢铁侠！

“这些神盾局特工的人际交往能力太差了。”钢铁侠开玩笑说，“让我们教他们一些规矩吧！”

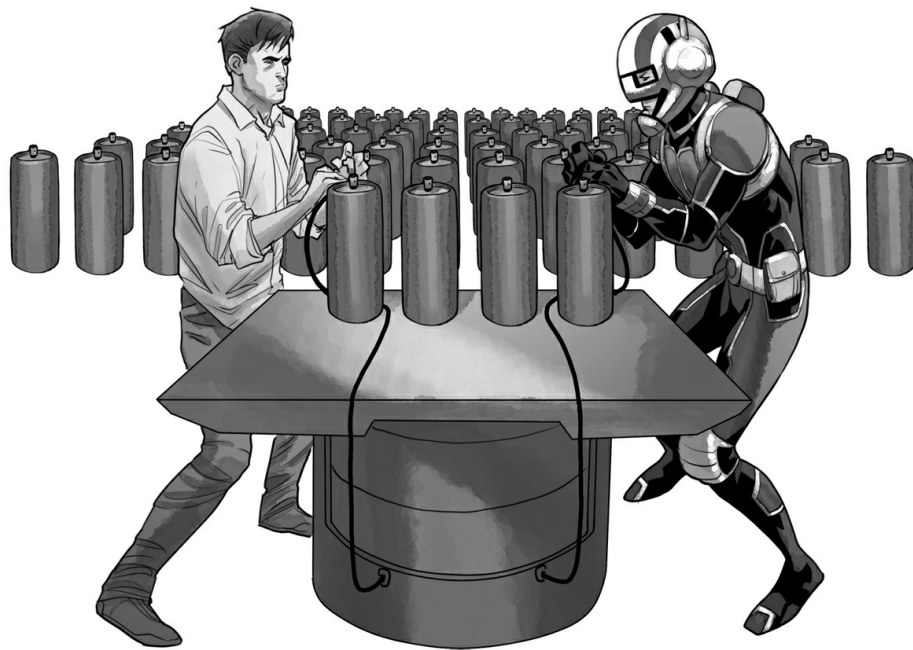
砰砰！钢铁侠开始攻击蚁人和班纳周围的僵尸。僵尸被炸飞起来，落在周围的地上，不省人事。蚁人不再被困了！

蚁人跑到实验台子前，抓起了刚在钢铁侠身上测试过的一些解药。“布鲁斯，这就行了。”他说着，给班纳注射。

“这个……真是恰到好处……”他说道，他的皮肤正在恢复正常。

附近，钢铁侠又攻击了几个神盾局特工。

“别担心。”钢铁侠喊道，“我在用眩晕装置来对付这些家伙。他们是优秀的特工，我希望他们有机会恢复正常，就像我那样。”



“谢谢你救了我们，托尼！”蚁人松了一口气。

“嗯，有关我作为僵尸的记忆有些模糊，”钢铁侠说，“但我知道，蚁人，我一定欠你和布鲁斯一点人情。而且我做了个怪梦，梦见一个迷你绿巨人在我的血液里。”

“是的……梦里……”班纳说，他的声音越来越小。

钢铁侠一时很困惑，然后耸了耸肩说：“好吧，不管你做了什么，既然我又回到了原来帅气逼人的模样，相信你应该已经研制出了解药吧？”

“是的，”蚁人肯定地说道，“多亏了我们在你身上测试得到的数据，我们才能把这个解药制成医用喷雾。只要喷在僵尸身上，他们就会恢复正常。”

“需要我做什么吗？”钢铁侠问道。

“现在，如果你能阻止其他感染者进入实验室，那就足够了，”班纳解释道，“我们只是需要时间来制作喷雾。”

“包在我身上！”钢铁侠说完，闪电般地离开，去帮助美国队长和鹰眼作战了。

蚁人和班纳立即开始对实验室的医疗设备进行编程，尽可能多地将解药做成喷雾形式。

“我们把喷雾装进罐子里，”蚁人建议道，“我们要把所有原材料都用来制作喷雾。”

美国队长、鹰眼和钢铁侠共同努力，没有让任何被感染的神盾局特工进入实验室。不久，蚁人和班纳就制成了一批喷雾。

“这是我们现在所能做的。”蚁人看着喷雾罐说，“我们把这些搬上街头，希望够用。”

很快，蚁人和其他复仇者们在纽约街道上向僵尸群喷了喷雾。市民们马上开始恢复正常，他们困惑地摇着头，仿佛从梦中醒来。

“起作用了！”猎鹰一边给黑寡妇喷喷雾，一边高兴地说，她恢复正常了。

鹰眼把喷雾装进了气箭里，然后从左、右方向分别射向成群的僵尸。箭头爆裂后，气体喷出，治愈了这一整群人。

钢铁侠飞过布满僵尸的小巷，俯冲着，打开罐子，让雾气扩散到每个人身上。“我觉得自己变成了一个喷洒杀虫剂的飞行员。”钢铁侠开玩笑说道。

雷神把一个罐子扔进中央公园，用闪电敲击它，制造了一场薄雾阵雨。“好了！”托尔喊道，“现在，即使是蚁人的昆虫战友们也能被治愈了！”



计划奏效了，但蚁人和班纳检查了剩余的雾气库存，发现量越来越少了。

“在治愈所有人之前，我们不能耗尽雾气。”蚁人说，“哪怕外面还有一个僵尸，也会让更多的人感染，这一切又要重新开始。”

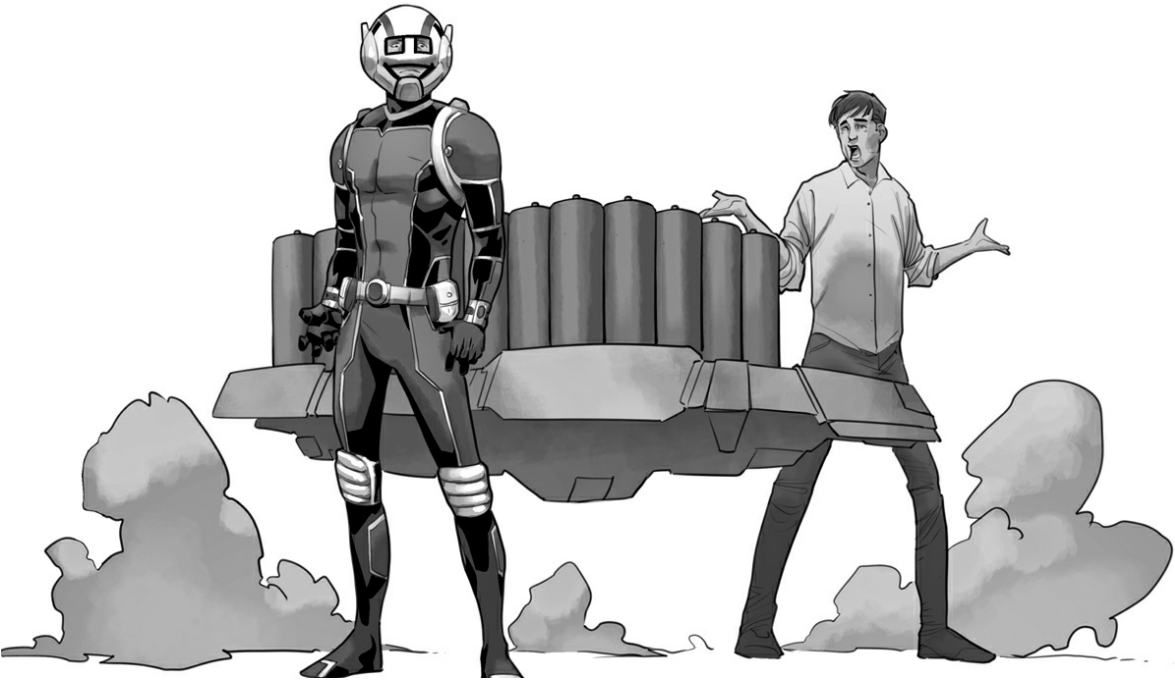
班纳点了点头。“如果有办法把剩下的僵尸都集中在一个地方，我们就能利用剩下的雾气在同一时间治愈所有人。”

“但要怎么做？什么可以把他们聚集在一起？”蚁人把自己的想法说了出来。

“他们想咬更多的人，所以也许我们可以把自己当成诱饵。”班纳建议，“让他们跟着我们去目的地，我们再将他们困住。”

“这是个好主意，但城里到处都有他们可以咬的人，他们怎么会被我们吸引？”蚁人回答说，“我们得试试别的……万一不能把他们引出来……那就可能……”

突然，蚁人想起了班纳那天早些时候告诉他的一些事情……这让他想到了一个或许可行的办法。



第十章

“你确定吗？”班纳听到蚁人的计划时，迟疑地问道。

“不完全确定。”蚁人承认，“但是，我想不出别的办法了。”

“但是大家整天都在阻止我变成绿巨人。”班纳指出。

蚁人的想法很简单。“我们之前谈话的时候，你告诉我绿巨人是如何经常被误解的，你说，‘一切生物都远离绿巨人，’”蚁人解释道，“我明白为什么这通常是个麻烦，但现在我们可以把它变成优势。”

班纳不得不承认蚁人是对的：僵尸会攻击所有移动的东西，试图啃咬并传染给他们……但是如果有什么东西能让他们落荒而逃的话，那就是横冲直撞的绿巨人。

“好吧，但是如果绿巨人最终摧毁了这个城市，我会告诉市长这是你的错。”班纳说道。

班纳紧张地径直走进一群僵尸中。当僵尸抓住他并试图咬他时，班纳很容易生气。过了一会儿，班纳的身体就开始变大，变绿了。

他的身体重量变成原来的两倍，然后是三倍、四倍，他的衣服被撑破了。当变身完成时，已经认不出班纳了，取而代之的是神奇的绿巨人！

绿巨人咆哮着，周围所有的僵尸都停止了前进。就连他行动的声音也让他们停了下来。

“嘿，绿巨人！”蚁人喊着，缩小后跳到绿巨人的肩膀上，“你能听见我说话吗？”

绿巨人看着蚁人。“你是绿巨人的小个子朋友吗？”绿巨人问道。

“是的，但你看到僵尸人了吗？你得把他们追到这个地方去。”蚁人用全息放映机给绿巨人看了一张麦迪逊广场花园的照片，这个场地足以容纳所有剩余僵尸。

“绿巨人只要粉碎僵尸就可以了么？”绿巨人咆哮着说，“绿巨人要粉碎僵尸啦！”

“不，僵尸也是绿巨人的朋友。”蚁人迅速回答，“他们只是生病了。你只要把他们围起来就可以了，好吗？”

“好吧。”绿巨人说道，“绿巨人喜欢追逐！”

就这样，他开始跑了！

蚁人的计划很有效果。僵尸看见绿巨人来了，急忙迈开自己的僵尸腿，能跑得多快就跑得多快。就像班纳说过的：一切生物都远离绿巨人。

“我本来还不相信。”钢铁侠对蚁人说。一边看着绿巨人把剩下的僵尸驱赶到麦迪逊广场花园。“但这看起来挺管用。”

黑寡妇和雷神帮忙将剩下的医疗雾气罐装进建筑中的通风系统，然后打开罐子，再关闭外部通风口。他们期望通风系统将薄雾洒到整个花园，把解药送给里面所有的人。

“你话说得太早了，钢铁侠。”猎鹰扫描着建筑说，“这不管用，雾气没有流通！”

在里面，蚁人可以看到，一些僵尸已经在敲击麦迪逊广场花园紧闭的大门。一道裂缝开始蔓延到其中一扇玻璃门上。坚持不了多久了。

“我来处理。”蚁人说道，“告诉我阻塞点在哪里，猎鹰！”

“比起告诉你，我可以做得更好。”猎鹰一边说，一边从手提设备上投射出一个3D全息图，是建筑物的通风系统的旋转图像，上面红色的地方就是有问题的地点。



蚁人快速地研究了全息图，敏锐地观察到了细节。这项能力是他平时成天研究电气系统原理图磨练出来的。

“明白了。祝我好运吧！”蚁人说着便缩小到了蚂蚁的大小，滑进了花园的空气管道里。

他急匆匆地穿过管道，在需要的时候进行扩大和缩小，以适应不同的走道，迅速到达了猎鹰的全息图上显示堵塞的风扇边。

“找到了。”他说着推了一下风扇，试着让它重新动起来。

但是它没反应。

“它不动了。”蚁人说着，又试了一次。

“也许这压根不是一个简单的堵塞。”猎鹰在通讯器一头建议道。

蚁人环顾四周，发现了通入风扇电动机的电线。他打开了一个入口舱门，在系统里到处穿行。

“你说得对，不是堵塞……是电气问题。”蚁人宣布，“幸好我们还有个电气工程师！”

蚁人把两根电线拼在一起，立刻知道问题解决了。

“好了！”蚁人呼喊，空气从他身边流过。

雾气在整个系统中流通，开始治愈剩余受感染的纽约市民。蚁人从通风口跳了出来，恢复了自己的体型。复仇者们欢呼雀跃，聚集在他身边。

“小个子人现在不那么小了。”绿巨人有点困惑地说道。

“我必须承认，你今天做得很好。”鹰眼对蚁人说道。

“我们应该向你道歉。”猎鹰说道，“如果我们早一些重视你说的话，事情就不会这么糟糕了。”

“我们不会再犯这样的错误了。”美国队长说道。

“绝对不会。”黑寡妇同意。

蚁人笑了。“谢谢大家。”他说，“获得地球上最强大的英雄们的认同，对我来说很重要！”

不久之后，绿巨人平静下来，变回了班纳。蚁人收到了一条信息，让他去天空母舰实验室见班纳博士。

“嘿，布鲁斯，怎么了？”斯科特走进来问。

“没什么。你得来这里，这样你才能拿到我们实验室的神盾局安全通行证。”班纳说道。



斯科特以为自己听错了：“我们的实验室？”

“是的。”班纳说，“你总不能在蚁巢里完成所有的科研工作吧，所以我希望你能不时地来我这儿工作。”

“你确定吗？”斯科特问道，“我是说，我不确定其他复仇者们会不会希望我在这儿……”

“你说得对。”钢铁侠走进实验室说。“我通常不喜欢天才之间的竞争……但因为是你，我就破例一次吧。”

“天才？”斯科特惊讶地问道。

“有一个人，他治愈了我，还治愈了一半的纽约市民，而且在那些所谓的英雄们都不理他的情况下，你会如何称呼这个人？”钢铁侠问道。

蚁人笑得合不拢嘴了。

“你觉得呢？”布鲁斯问，“实验室搭档？”

“就这么愉快地决定了！”



漫威
超级英雄
双语故事

美国漫威公司 著
余洁 译

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STAR-LORD

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FEATURING YOUR FAVORITES!



Star-Lord



Captain Marvel



Cosmo



Gamora



Rocket



Groot



Drax



Orlani



Earth



Knowhere



the Skrull



Starlord's ship



Shi'ar



Yon-Rogg



robotic lions!?!?



Ultimate Nullifier

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STAR-LORD



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The Story Of Star-Lord

Even when Peter Quill was a little boy on Earth, he always defended people in need. If someone was being picked on at school, Peter stood up for them, even if it meant getting in fights with bullies who were bigger than he was. Peter just seemed to have been born with a strong sense of justice.

When he was a little older, Peter finally learned from his mother the truth about his father. Peter's dad was from another planet, called Spartax. His father and mother had met and fallen in love when his father's ship had crashed on Earth.

Knowing that he had a father out in the galaxy drove Peter to reach for the stars. He studied hard in school, designed his own spaceship, and eventually took off from Earth to explore the galaxy!

Many things were very different on the alien worlds Peter visited, but one thing remained the same. . . . Wherever Peter went he found that there was always some bully who wanted to pick on the little guys. Peter wasn't going to let that happen, no matter what planet he happened to be on.

Peter chose to be a hero! He became Star-Lord!

While fighting to protect the innocent, Star-Lord joined with other heroes from other parts of the cosmos, and together this group became known as the Guardians of the Galaxy!



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Chapter 1

For the earthling known as Peter Quill, life was pretty good on board the space station Knowhere. It was an amazing place, after all. Unlike normal space stations, it wasn't made out of metal or a rare space element. It was made out of bone!

How was that possible? The station was built inside the skull of a long-dead giant celestial being. "I live inside a massive floating alien skull," Peter would say. "How cool is that?!"

The station was filled with strange and wonderful beings. Peter got to meet people and do things that no other human being ever had, or ever would. It was a pretty special feeling.

But the very best thing about Knowhere was that it served as home base for the Guardians of the Galaxy, an intergalactic Super Hero team that Peter was proud to be a part of!

There were four other members of the team: Drax, the green-skinned, alien strongman; Groot, a living tree monster from space; Rocket, a furry little weapons specialist who looked almost exactly like a large Earth raccoon; and Gamora, an intergalactic warrior trained in several dozen forms of combat. And, of course, there was the leader of the group, Star-Lord.

When he wasn't out in space doing awesome (if sometimes super-dangerous) missions with his team, Peter spent his time doing fun stuff on Knowhere. Take today for example:

This morning Peter went to the Celestial Boot (a restaurant where the Guardians love to hang out) and played space darts with Rocket. "This is going to be a bull's-eye," Rocket shouted as he held up his dart.



“But you’re not even aiming at the target,” Peter pointed out, holding his dart up as well.

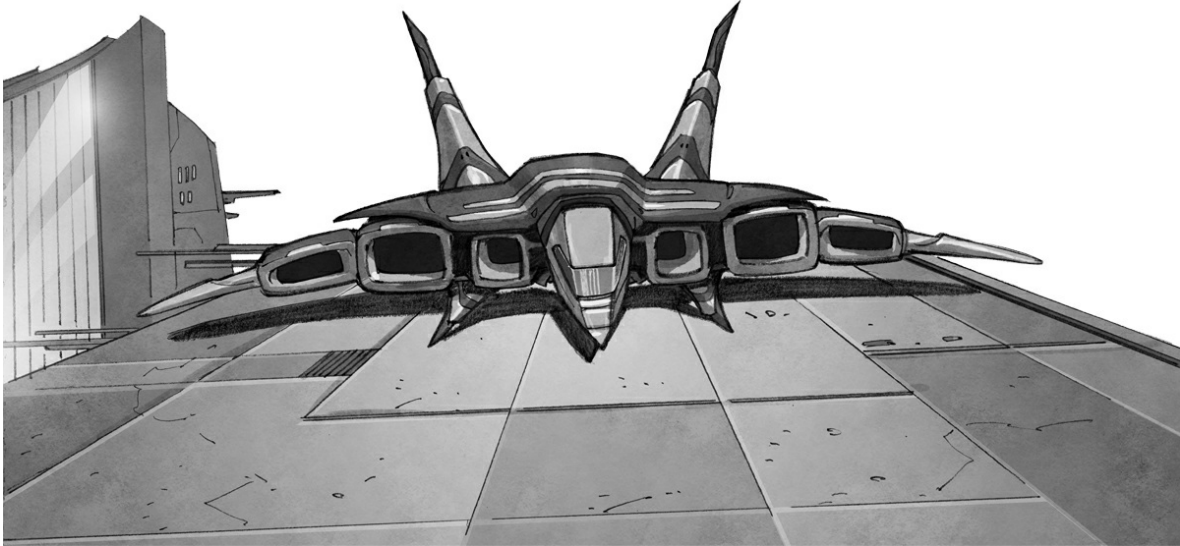
“You’ll see,” Rocket said. He released his dart, and it zipped around the room, bouncing off walls and knocking over people’s drinks before landing dead in the target’s center. “Hey, how did you do that?” Peter asked.

Rocket showed Peter a tiny device on the tip of his dart. “Homing beacon,” Rocket explained. “It will always go where I tell it to, no matter what direction I throw it in—I designed it myself!”



“Always?” asked Peter. “Let’s see about that!” He took the whole box of darts and threw them all at once, scattering them in the air! The darts whooshed around the restaurant in all directions, causing patrons to duck as they pinged and poned off the plates, the tables, the floor, and the ceiling before. . .

. . . all landed, clustered perfectly, in the bull’s-eye of the target!



“Awesome!” shouted Peter and Rocket together, high-fiving.

Later that day, Peter hung out with all of his other friends. He did a space race with Drax, ran some cool Zero-G training exercises with Gamora, and even tried meditating in a garden with Groot.

All in all, it was a pretty incredible day. When it was over, Peter headed back home to his bedroom on board his spaceship, which was docked semi-permanently on Knowhere. On his way he walked past the only other earthling living on the Knowhere: Cosmo.

“Good evening, Peter,” Cosmo said as he walked past Peter going in the other direction down a sidewalk.

“You too, Cosmo,” said Peter to the animal. Cosmo was the only other earthling, but Cosmo wasn’t a human being. He was a dog! Born in Russia in the 1960s, Cosmo was launched into the galaxy as a cosmonaut, part of the Russian government’s experiments in space travel. But Cosmo fell into a wormhole, and he wound up gaining advanced intelligence and mental abilities—including the power to communicate with humans. Now he was head of security on Knowhere.

“Oh, by the way. . . happy birthday, peter!” said Cosmo.

That stopped Peter in his tracks. “What?”

“I know that the calendar is different here on Knowhere,” said Cosmo. “The days and weeks are different lengths, and there are only eight months in the year and everything. . . . But I keep an Earth calendar on my desk at

work, because it reminds me of home, and I happened to notice that on Earth, right now, it's your birthday."

It was Peter's birthday and he hadn't even realized it!



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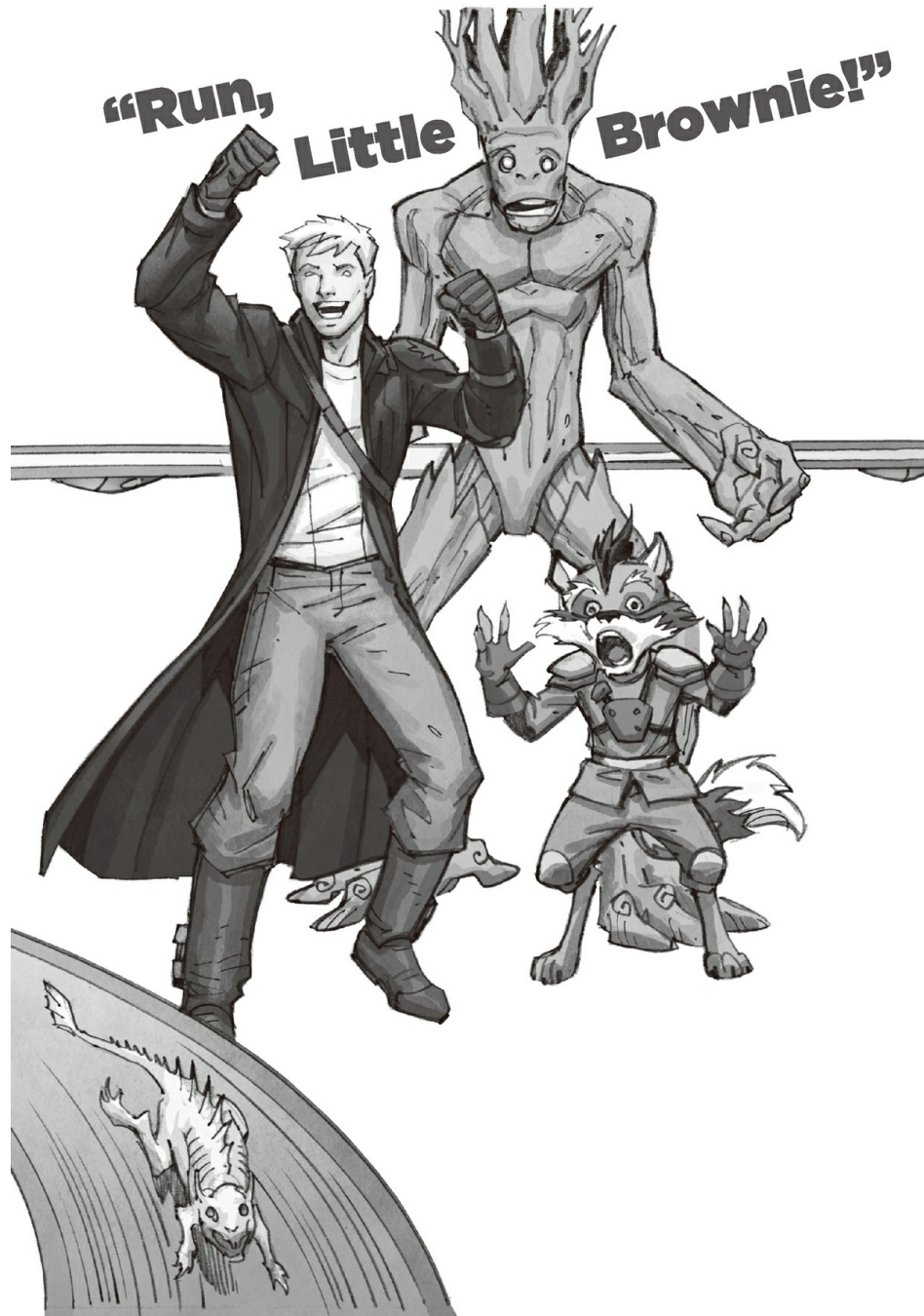
Chapter 2

Peter was bummed out. Back on Earth, he'd loved his birthdays. His mother had always made a lot of fuss for Peter on what she called his "big day." There was a party filled with cake, music, and, of course, presents. But more than anything else, there was that warm feeling of being surrounded by friends and family who clearly loved him and wanted to make things special on his "big day."

And now, so far from home, Peter didn't even notice that his birthday was happening. It had been years since Peter had gone back to Earth to see anyone he remembered. Yep, there was no denying it—Peter was homesick.

The next day Peter's friends the Guardians, could tell he was down, and they tried to cheer him up. Rocket and Groot took him to the Orlani races.

"Nobody can feel bad at the Orlani races," declared Rocket.



“I am Groot,” Groot agreed with a slight nod. He really was agreeing with Rocket, but all he ever said was “I am Groot.” His best friend, Rocket, always knew what he meant anyway.

“See? He agrees with me.” Rocket confirmed.

Orlani were little creatures—kind of like the alien versions of muskrats

or ferrets. For fun, the Orlani were put in little tracks and on “go,” they raced each other toward the finish line as the spectators watched and cheered them on! Everyone picked their favorites and cheered them on.

When the race started, Rocket shouted, “Run, Little Brownie!” at the Orlani he liked. “I am Groot,” Groot shouted, also trying to encourage Little Brownie.

Despite himself, Peter started to cheer up. But then Little Brownie jumped out of the track, and ran straight into the crowd.

“Hey, where’s it going?” Peter asked. Suddenly, he felt something weird. Little Brownie was running straight up the leg of Peter’s pants! “Ahh—Ohhh—Awww—”

Peter shouted as he jumped around! The Orlani’s little claws were scratching and tickling him all at once! “Get this thing off of meeeee!” Peter yelled at Rocket and Groot!

It took several minutes to get the Orlani out of his pants, and the job involved Peter stripping down to his boxers and tank top in public. When it was all over, Peter was in a worse mood than ever.

“Okay, I was wrong,” Rocket admitted. “Some people might be able to feel bad at the Orlani races.”

Peter’s friends didn’t give up trying to cheer him up. Gamora took Peter to the space dojo to show him some cool new fighting moves. But when Peter tried them, he fell flat on his face!

Later, hoping to treat Peter’s homesickness, Drax tried cooking an Earth recipe. There was just one problem: having never made or even tasted Earth food before, Drax got the ingredients all mixed up. He ended up making an eggplant-chocolate-chicken cake with oyster frosting. Which, while disgusting to Peter, just so happened to be something Rocket enjoyed eating!

“Thanks for trying.” Peter said to Drax—once he stopped gagging.

Cosmo told Peter that he had just gotten a shipment of “special treats” from Earth that he always ate when he wanted to be reminded of home. The considerate canine wanted to share one with Peter, which got Star-Lord excited—until the special treats turned out to be dog treats.

I should have realized, Peter thought as he politely choked down the dry, bone-shaped animal snack.

It was really nice that everyone wanted to help, but Peter put it to them

bluntly: “Since none of you are even human, you just can’t understand what I need.” Focusing on his own disappointment, he walked back home to his ship, not realizing that he had just hurt his friends’ feelings.

But that evening, while on his parked ship, Peter heard a knock on the door. He opened it and saw the last thing he ever expected to see another human!!!



It was Captain Marvel, a Super Hero from Earth!

“Star-Lord, I’m so happy I found you,” she said. “I need your help. In fact, everyone on Earth needs your help!”



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Chapter 3

Peter had met Captain Marvel a few times while Iron Man and some of the other Avengers were on a mission against Thanos. He knew that Captain Marvel's real name was Carol Danvers. She used to be in the United States Air Force, but after receiving an infusion of alien DNA, she developed super powers, including super strength, endurance, stamina, and even the power of flight! She soon joined the Avengers and battled alongside Earth's Mightiest Heroes.

Whether she had part-alien DNA or not, Peter was so happy to see a fellow human being! He invited her inside immediately.



Once on board his ship, Captain Marvel explained why she was there.

“Back on earth, a few of the other Avengers and I were chasing a strike force of Skrulls.”

Peter knew the Skrulls all too well. They were aliens, and many of them were evil and loved war. They had tried to invade Earth on multiple occasions but had always been beaten back by the Avengers and other powerful heroes, such as Spider-Man and Wolverine.

“These Skrulls were a small team, and they had been searching for something,” Captain Marvel went on. “Eventually the Avengers discovered what the alien agents had been after: the pieces needed to rebuild the . . . Ultimate Nullifier!”



“The Ultimate Nulli-wha?” Peter asked. “Do you mean the weapon capable of destroying entire solar systems?”

Peter had never seen the Ultimate Nullifier, but he knew that even some of the biggest bad guys in the Universe—like Galactus, Ronan, and even

Thanos himself—were actually afraid of it. To protect the universe, the heroes of Earth had found it and broken it into several pieces, scattering them in secret locations. But if the Skrulls were able to put those pieces together again, they'd cause big trouble for sure!

“We captured the whole Skrull team . . . except one,” said Captain Marvel.

“Let me guess,” Peter replied, a chill going down his spine. “The Skrull who got away is the one who had the pieces to the Ultimate Nullifier.”

“Yes,” Captain Marvel confirmed. “And I've tracked him—to planet Knowhere! If that Skrull agent gets the parts back to his home planet, I'm positive the scientists of his world will be able to put it together again. Once they have a working Ultimate Nullifier, they'll be able to destroy Earth with a single shot!

The words hit Peter like a ton of bricks. His memories of being a child rushed back: playing kickball in his yard; battling imaginary monsters from his tree house; reading comic books down by the stream. All of these places would be destroyed. His friends—his family—gone. Peter made a tight fist. He wasn't going to let that happen. “We have to stop him before it's too late.”



“So, you’ll help me, Star-Lord?” Captain Marvel asked.

“You bet I will,” Peter responded, grabbing his blaster and helmet.

“Where do we start?”

“Well, that’s where it gets tricky,” she responded. “Don’t forget—Skrulls are shape-shifters!”

“Oh. . . right,” said Peter, remembering. It was true. Every Skrull alien had the natural ability to change their bodies and make them look like anyone or anything they wanted. It was a form of camouflage that made them great at their work as spies and secret agents.

“We need to be looking for anyone—or anything—that seems out of place, like they don’t belong,” said Captain Marvel.

Sometimes I’m the one who feels like I don’t belong, Peter thought as he remembered the loneliness he sometimes experienced.

“Sounds like you need to talk to someone who is very familiar with this station and everyone who lives on it,” Peter said. “I know just the individual! Someone who knows this place like the back of his hand—well. . . not hand, but paw. . . .”

Captain Marvel gave Peter a confused look.



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Chapter 4

Early the next morning, Peter picked up Captain Marvel and they went to see Cosmo at his office. To Captain Marvel's credit, if she was surprised that the entire space station's security was the responsibility of a talking Earth dog, she didn't show it. But then again, she was probably used to seeing a lot of strange stuff during her work with the Avengers.

"Nice to make your acquaintance, Carol," Cosmo said. "May I call you Carol?"

"Uh, yes, feel free," Captain Marvel responded as she shook Cosmo's paw.

"Thank you. Would you like some kibble?" Cosmo asked as he pushed a little dish of dog food across the desk to Captain Marvel.

"Oh, no, thank you," Captain Marvel replied politely.

"So. How can I help you?" asked Cosmo as he gnawed away on a bone.

But before Captain Marvel would say anything about the mission, she told Peter to ask his friend a few questions that only the real Cosmo would know the answer to.

"Where did I get this scratch last week?" asked Peter, pointing to a small abrasion on his arm.

"That probably happened when we were forced to give Rocket a bath," said Cosmo, "on account of those radioactive space ticks that he picked up."

"It's true," Peter confirmed. "Rocket hates baths. He was scratching and biting the whole time."

"Ask him one more, please," Captain Marvel requested. "Just to be sure."



“What game do you like to play in the hologram video game system?” Peter asked.

“The one where you get to chase a mailman with rocket-boots,” Cosmo replied.

It was true. Peter had played that game with him before. It was pretty boring. You just chased the mailman, caught him, and chased him again—over and over.

“That’s Cosmo for sure,” Peter confirmed.

“Now what’s with all the strange questions?” asked Cosmo.

Captain Marvel filled him in about the missing Skrull agent and the pieces of the Ultimate Nullifier.

“So you asked those questions to make sure a Skrull hadn’t taken my shape and was pretending to be me,” Cosmo realized. “Very smart.”

Cosmo took the Skrull threat very seriously. He didn’t want to be known as the head of security who let a dangerous criminal get away with one of the most powerful weapons in the universe. How would that look on his résumé? Not very good!

Cosmo assigned his best security officer, Deputy Yon-Rogg, to work with them. Yon-Rogghad lived on Knowhere for many years and knew everyone who made their home there. If someone was acting strangely, or something was out of place, Yon-Rogg would be able to spot it.

“We’ll find your dirty Skrull spy,” said Yon-Rogg, who was a member of the alien race known as the Kree. The Kree didn’t usually like the Skrull very much, because there had been a long Kree-Skrull War that left both sides angry and bitter.

As they set off to search for the spy, Cosmo warned Peter not to tell anyone about their mission. “The only advantage you have is that the Skrull spy probably doesn’t know that you’re looking for them yet,” Cosmo pointed out. “So don’t mention it to anyone. Not even your closest friends, the other Guardians of the Galaxy. Because if word gets around, your Skrull will probably run somewhere else.”

Peter reluctantly agreed. He saw the importance of Cosmo’s advice, but he didn’t like the idea of hiding things from his best friends.

Star-Lord, Captain Marvel, and Yon-Rogg set out right away, looking for anything suspicious. They searched the restaurants, they searched the stores, they searched the streets. But after hours of hard work, their search of Knowhere was going. . . Nowhere.

“Nothing. Still nothing!!”

“You must enjoy living here.” said Captain Marvel to Peter as they searched. “It’s such an interesting place.”

“I do. . . .” replied Peter. “Well, usually I do. Recently I’ve been feeling homesick. It’s been a long time since I left Earth, and sometimes I feel so different from everyone around me.”

“I know what you mean,” said Captain Marvel.



“You do?” asked Peter, surprised. “But you live on Earth.”

“Yes, but ever since I absorbed alien DNA, I’ve only actually been half human,” explained Captain Marvel. “That’s something some people on Earth don’t understand. When they find out I’m not fully human, they always look at me a little differently, and I don’t always feel like I fit in.”

Before she could finish, Yon-Rogg ran up to the pair of earthlings, interrupting the conversation.

“Star-Lord, Captain Marvel, come with me! I think we’ve found something!”



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Chapter 5

Star-Lord raced down the street after Yon-Rogg and Captain Marvel. Just as he was passing the Celestial Boot's front door, the other Guardians of the Galaxy stepped out.

“Oh, Quill, there you are,” said Rocket. “Just in time, come on! The Cosmic Circus just landed on the station, and we’re going to go see the robotic lion tamers.”

“Wait. . . . Are they robotic lions that are being tamed, or are robotic tamers doing the taming?” asked Peter, confused.



“Both!” Drax shouted in delight. He was always up for a good robot side show act.

“I am Groot,” Groot added.

“He’s right,” Rocket confirmed. “It is supposed to be awesome!”

“I’m more interested in the living tightrope walkers.” remarked Gamora.

“Wait. . . . Are the tightrope walkers alive, or the tightrope itself?” Peter asked.

“Again, both!” Rocket shouted. “You’ve gotta come!”

Peter wanted to. A crazy alien circus with robot lions and living tightropes. . . . Yeah, that sounded like it would be just up his alley. Plus, some hang time with the Guardians was never a bad thing.

But no. . . the fate of Earth, and even the galaxy, was in the balance. He had to work now and play later.

“Sorry, guys. I want to, but I just can’t,” Peter said reluctantly.

“Why not?” Gamora asked. “What do you need to do that’s so important?”

“I bet I know what it is,” Rocket said. “Another human from Earth came to the station last night, and now you would rather hangout with her instead of us.”

Gamora gasped. “Peter, is that really what it is?”

“No. . .” Peter started. He was about to explain the whole situation, about the Skrull and the missing parts for the Ultimate Nullifier, but then he remembered the warning from Cosmo not to tell anyone about his secret mission. This also went for his best friends.



“It is good to see another earthling, but that’s not why I can’t hang out right now. It’s just that I’m . . . not . . . feeling . . . very . . . good,” Peter lied. “I’ve been, like, throwing up everywhere and stuff. Something I ate maybe? I’m going to head back to the ship and rest in bed.”

Rocket eyeballed him. “Well, you are looking a little feverish, I guess.”

“Okay,” Gamora said. “You go lie down and feel better.”

“I am Groot,” Groot agreed.

“Thanks, guys. Sorry to miss it,” Peter said, and he waved and wandered away. But as soon as he was around the corner and out of view, he raced in the direction that Yon-Rogg and Captain Marvel had gone.

Later, as Gamora, Drax, Rocket, and Groot stood in line to enter the Cosmic Circus Rocket tent, they could look down to see most of Knowhere. The Rocket tent was docked and hovering near the ceiling of the station, so anyone standing on the waiting platforms had a great view of the streets below.

“I hope Peter feels better soon,” Gamora said.

“I am Groot,” Groot remarked.

“What are you talking about, Groot?” Rocket asked his friend. “Quill’s not down there. Didn’t you hear him? He’s back at the ship, trying to sleep off his cold.”

But Groot insisted, pointing down to the streets of Knowhere below. Rocket, using his special cybernetic eyes, zoomed in to see what Groot was trying to show them.

“Why that little. . .” he mumbled to himself. “Groot’s right. That’s Quill down there. He’s standing at some warehouse. And sure enough, he ’s with Captain Marvel!”

Everyone was shocked! “But I thought he was supposed to be lying down in his ship,” Drax remarked.

“Oh, he’s lying all right,” Rocket said. “Lying to us, his so-called friends.”

“Oh, Peter. . .” Gamora murmured sadly.





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Chapter 6

After leaving the Guardians at the Celestial Boot, Peter caught up with Yon-Rogg and Captain Marvel at a section of Knowhere that was mostly used for storage. All around them were old broken-down ships and pieces of large mining equipment that were smashed and rusting. The perfect place for a Skrull agent to hide out, Peter thought.

The heroes finally came to a stop in front of an old warehouse that was practically falling down.

“Our security department intercepted chatter that some heavy-duty weapons were being smuggled through an illegal teleport node set up in this warehouse,” Yon-Rogg explained to the others. “Knowhere isn’t a very large station, so there aren’t that many illegal arms deals going down at any one time. The guy you’re looking for has to be involved.”

The three peered through the window.



“These two are Shi’ar,” Peter said, naming the race of aliens he saw inside. “Not Skrulls.” Skrulls looked completely different. They were green and kind of lizard-like.

“Yes, but your Skrull is a shape-shifter,” Yon-Rogg reminded them. “He could be disguised as a Shi’ar for all we know.”

“True,” Captain Marvel admitted.

Peter and his companions watched at the window as the two Shi’ar pulled in several large crates. “The weapons must be in those crates,” Yon-Rogg remarked.

The Shi’ar turned a button on a teleporter device, and as soon as it came on, they began pushing crates through the portal that it created.

“This is happening right now!” Yon-Rogg shouted. “They’re already teleporting the weapons out!”

“Move in!” Captain Marvel shouted.

“Put your hands up! By the authority of the Knowhere Security Office, you are under arrest!”

But the Shi’ar didn’t have any plans to be captured. They fired blasters of their own and everyone jumped into action!

Captain Marvel flew at one of the Shi’ar, using her super powers to shoot bolts of energy from her fingertips. At the same time, Star-Lord and Yon-Rogg both attacked the other Shi’ar.



The first Shi'ar landed a blast on Captain Marvel that knocked her across the room, where she smashed into a pile of old equipment. Free of her attack, the Shi'ar pulled open one of the crates in front of him. The opened crate held a wide variety of exotic weapons, including some that looked like long tubes with little hoses on the end.

While the first Shi'ar pulled out the tube-weapons, the second Shi'ar kicked and punched at Yon-Rogg and Star-Lord with dangerously powerful blows!

"You're going to wish you just let us arrest you," said Star-Lord as he punched back at the second Shi'ar.

"I doubt that," said the first Shi'ar as he sprayed Star-Lord and Yon-Rogg with the tube-like weapon in his hand.

Star-Lord and Yon-Rogg were splashed back against the warehouse wall, where the fluid they were sprayed with hardened instantly into an unbreakable foam! No matter how much the two struggled, they couldn't break free.

“And I have something good planned for your friend,” the Shi’ar said. He watched as Captain Marvel pulled herself from the pile of twisted metal where she ’d landed and prepared to launch a new attack.

“This is a teleport grenade,” the alien said. “When it goes off, it’ll teleport anyone near it.”

“Teleport them where?” Peter asked desperately.

“Into the heart of a sun,” the Shi’ar laughed.

“Say good-bye to your friend!” He threw the teleport grenade right at Captain Marvel.

Oh, no! Peter thought. *Captain Marvel’s going to be destroyed!*



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Chapter 7

Peter watched in horror as the Shi'ar criminal threw his teleport grenade at Captain Marvel. And because he couldn't move, there was nothing he could do to save his fellow hero.

Or was there?

Peter's fingertips, the only little part of himself free from the foam, brushed across something in his pocket. It was one of the Space Darts that Rocket had invented—the ones that used homing beacons to go wherever you told them to go, even if you threw them in the wrong direction.



That was it! I've only got one chance, Peter thought.

Using only his fingers, he quickly worked the Space Dart out of his pocket and weakly tossed it out—but not before telling it: “Teleport grenade!”

The dart beeped and whooshed off.

Even though Peter had tossed it in the wrong direction, and with fingertip force, it still shot straight for the target.

The dart caught up with the teleport grenade, slammed into it, and set it off in midair, before it had chance to reach Captain Marvel!

The grenade burst into a ball of teleport energy, but it wasn't close enough to Captain Marvel to teleport her away. Instead, it was close to the crates of Shi'ar weapons. It sucked them in and then instantly disappeared!

"Our weapons. No!" the Shi'ar shouted as he realized that all the illegal cargo had just been whisked into the heart of a sun—and all by his own grenade.



But he didn't have much time to be upset, because within seconds Captain Marvel had rushed over and delivered a devastating punch, knocking him out. Captain Marvel then made short work of the second Shi'ar and used

her energy blasts to free Peter and Yon-Rogg from the trapping foam.

“Thank you, Star-Lord,” Captain Marvel said to Peter. “You saved my life.”

“You returned the favor,” Peter replied. “If you hadn’t gotten the Shi’ar, I’d still be stuck to that wall, and who knows what they would have done to me. So, thanks.”

“Now that we’ve saved each others’ lives,” Captain Marvel said, “I think you can go ahead and start calling me Carol.”

“And you can call me Peter,” he said, smiling.

Within minutes, Cosmo arrived with more officers from the security office, and the Shi’ars’ whole operation was cleaned up.

“So. . .” said Cosmo, “did you get what you were after?”

“I think so,” Yon-Rogg said. “All of the weapons crates were teleported into the heart of a sun. If the parts of the Ultimate Nullifier were in those crates, then they were destroyed.”

“Yes. . . if they were in there,” said Captain Marvel. “But that’s a big if. We didn’t see inside most of the crates, so we can’t know if the parts were in there or not.”

“Plus, we were looking for one Skrull agent,” Peter reminded them, “but these are two Shi’ar agents. We’ve examined their unconscious bodies, and they definitely are real Shi’ar, not Skrulls disguised as Shi’ar.”

“Yes,” admitted Yon-Rogg, “but like I said before, Knowhere isn’t that big. The odds that two sets of illegal weapons were being smuggled through here on the same day must be very high. We can’t know for sure, but chances are that the stuff we were looking for was in those crates.”

“Yeah, maybe. . .” Captain Marvel said, deep in thought.

“But if the nullifier parts were in there, where’s our Skrull agent?” Peter asked. “And why would he have given his cargo over to the Shi’ar?”

“A tough dilemma,” Cosmo admitted. “Maybe you completed your mission. . . and maybe you didn’t.”



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Chapter 8

That evening, after all the commotion of the day was over, Captain Marvel walked with Peter back to the ship.

“What are you going to do now?” Peter asked.

“I don’t know,” Captain Marvel said. “I know Yon-Rogg thinks the pieces of the Ultimate Nullifier were destroyed, but how can I be sure? The fate of the earth might depend on this.”

“By morning, we ’ll probably be able to question those Shi’ar,” Peter pointed out. “If they don’t know anything about a Skrull agent, then we probably have to keep looking.”



“Agreed,” Carol said as they reached the front door of Peter’s ship. “No matter what we do tomorrow, I’m beat for the night. Good night, Peter.”

“Goodnight, Carol.”

“Thanks again for your help today. I can see why the Guardians value you so much.” Carol said.

Later, Peter was about to head to bed when there was a buzz at the ship’s door. “Who is it?” Peter asked as he opened the door to find the rest of the Guardians in a group outside.

“We need to talk.”

“I am Groot!”

“Oh. . . Uh. . . I was just about to get some sleep,” Peter stuttered as he moved aside, letting the other Guardians through. “It’s been along day.”

“A long day of lying in bed?” Gamora asked. “I hope you’re not still feeling ill.”

Ill? What was she talking about?. . . Oh, yeah. . . Peter suddenly remembered his lie from earlier. He put his hand to his stomach as if it were hurting him. “I’m feeling a little better—”

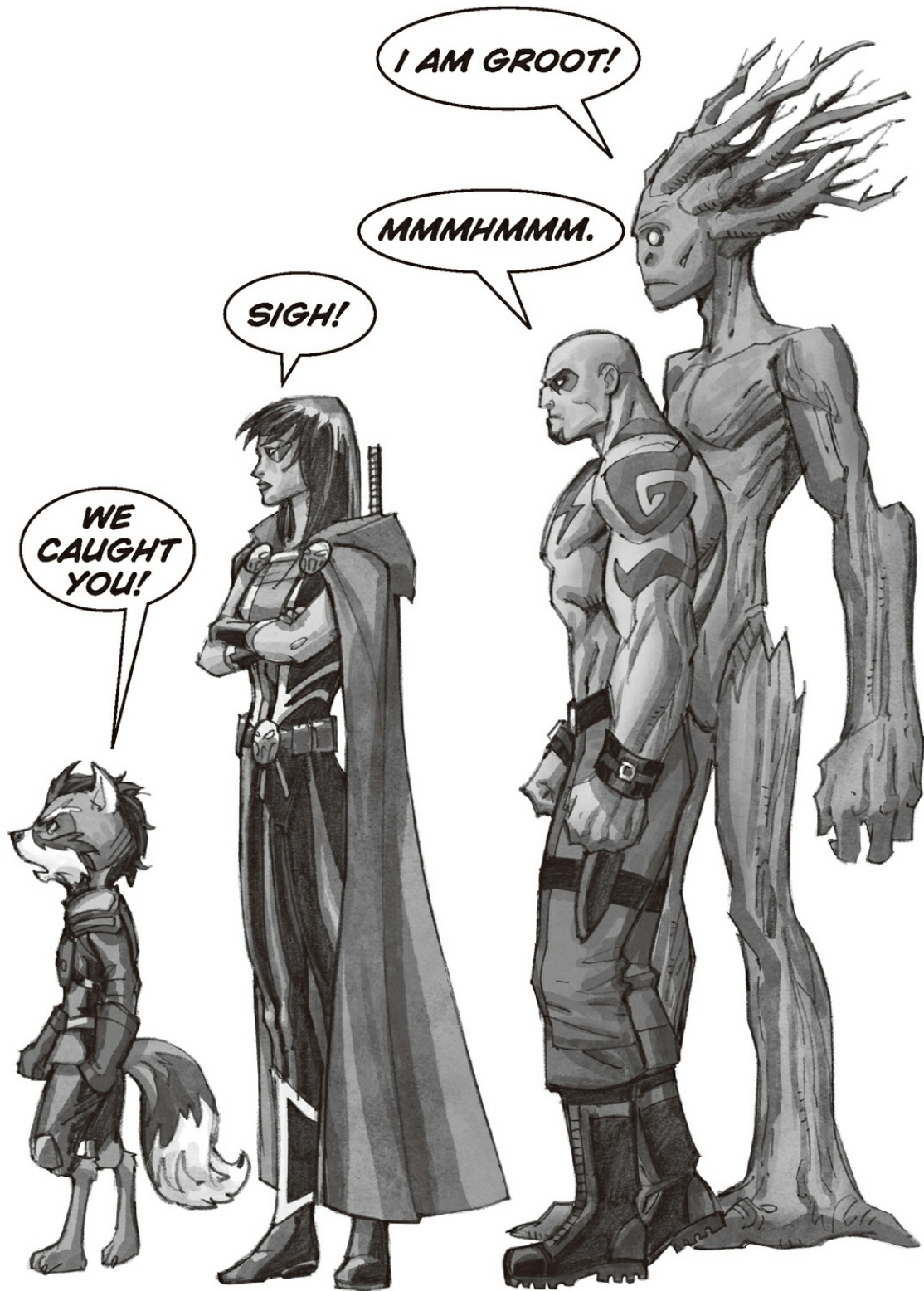
“Stop there,” Drax said. “We know you lied about being sick.”

“I am Groot,” Groot said, nodding.

“We saw you hanging out with Captain Marvel.” Rocket reported.

“Oh,” Peter said, surprised to be caught in his lie.

“If you didn’t want to hang out with us, you could have just told us,” Gamora said, clearly hurt by Peter’s deception.



“No, I did want to hang out with you,” Peter assured them. “It’s just that

something came up and I couldn't tell you what it was."

"We caught you!"

"I am Groot!"

"Mmmhmmm."

"Sigh!"

"I am Groot?" Groot asked.

"Yeah," Rocket agreed. "Why not?"

"I promised that I wouldn't tell anyone what I was doing," Peter tried to explain, feeling backed into a corner at this point. "So I had to make up that story about being sick. Really, I would much rather have gone to the circus with you guys."

"Peter," Gamora said, frowning, "you know you can tell us anything."

"Yeah, what was so important that you had to lie about it?" Rocket asked. But Peter was stuck. It wasn't clear if they'd actually found the Ultimate Nullifier pieces yet, and the escaped Skrull agent was still out there somewhere. In fact, it was even possible that one of the Guardians was kidnapped and trapped somewhere, and that one of the people in his ship right now was a Skrull impostor. This whole mess wasn't over yet, so his promise to Cosmo still held. He couldn't tell his friends anything.

"I . . . I'd better not say," Peter replied. As he said it, he could see the hurt in his friends' eyes. They felt betrayed.

"I thought you were our friend, Peter Quill," Rocket said angrily. "I guess you never really know someone, do you? Come on, Guardians, let's get out of here."

The rest of the Guardians followed Rocket out the door, leaving Peter alone. He felt terrible about lying to his friends. If only he could explain! Surely they'd forgive him if they knew the circumstances.

But there was nothing he could do about that now, so he went ahead and climbed into bed to finally get some rest.

That night, inspiration struck Peter! The next morning, bright and early, he burst into Cosmo's office, where Captain Marvel and Yon-Rogg were already speaking with the canine security chief.

"Stop everything," Peter shouted. "I know how to find the Skrull agent!"

"You do?" everyone asked as they jumped excitedly to their feet.

“Yes, but you’re not going to like it.” said Peter.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 9

“Tell us how to find him, Star-Lord!” Cosmo demanded as he, Yon-Rogg, and Captain Marvel anxiously looked on.

“It was something Rocket said to me last night,” Peter explained. “He said, ‘You never really know someone.’ That means that even though you’ve spent time with someone, there might still be things you don’t know about them.”

“Yes. . . and?” Captain Marvel asked.

“Well, Captain Marvel is the one who told us there was a Skrull, so it’s obviously not her,” Peter noted. “And when we first talked to Cosmo, we asked him questions that only he would know the answers to, so it’s clearly not him—”

“Where is this going?” Yon-Rogg asked.

“It’s going to you, Yon-Rogg,” Peter said. “We never asked you any questions.”

“I told you, he’s one of my most trusted officers,” Cosmo explained.

“Sure, you trust the real Yon-Rogg,” Star-Lord said, “but what if this is a Skrull who has replaced your officer? What if the Yon-Rogg you know is prisoner somewhere, while this person lives his life?”

“Yon-Rogg isn’t just my best officer, he’s one of my best friends,” Cosmo said. “Don’t you think I’d know him?”

“Skrulls are good mimics,” Peter pointed out. “Think about it. He ’s the one who is trying to convince us that the Ultimate Nullifier must have been in those Shi’ar crates that were destroyed.”

“This is ridiculous!!!” shouted an outraged Yon-Rogg. “I think the Ultimate Nullifier pieces were in those crates because they probably were. Where else on the station would they be?”

“There’s an easy way to solve this,” Captain Marvel pointed out. “Cosmo, ask Yon-Rogg some questions that only he’d know the answers to.”

“Okay. . . Ronny, what did you get me for my birthday last year?” Cosmo asked.



“What? You’re buying this?” Yon-Rogg asked Cosmo, hurt. “You’ve known me for years.”

“Of course not,” the dog assured him. “Just tell me what you got me last year. We’ll prove Star-Lord wrong and be done with it.”

“I’m not sure I even remember what I got you,” Yon-Rogg protested.

“Oh, no, you’ll remember this,” Cosmo said, encouraging him. “Just think about it.”

Yon-Rogg was quiet for a moment, as all eyes were on him. Was he really just trying to remember something. . . or was it more than that? Finally, he said, “Well, Star-Lord is wrong. Because I’m not your average Skrull.”

And in that moment Yon-Rogg transformed into a green-skinned alien with pointed ears and scales! The other three jumped out of their chairs with surprise.



“At least, I’m not just a Skrull,” Yon-Rogg continued.

Peter had never fought a Super Skrull before, but he knew that just as on Earth there were human Super Heroes with special powers, on the planet of the Skrulls there were individuals with exceptional abilities!

Moving incredibly quickly, the Skrull pounded Captain Marvel with a blast of pure fire and knocked Cosmo away with a fist that turned into a giant hammer! Peter blasted the Super Skrull, but before the lasers reached him, the alien Super Villain raised an invisible energy shield that deflected the shots. The Super Skrull laughed. “Tricking you was fun. I’m sorry that it’s over. But that’s okay. Killing you will be fun, too!”

The Super Skrull, still pinning Captain Marvel to the ground with fire, used his hammer-hand to slam Peter into the wall.

“I never expected your tiny brains to figure it out, Earthlings.”

“Oft!” The breath went out of Peter with the impact. He tried to get to his feet, but when he looked up, he saw that giant hammer raised and about to come down on him again—for what might be the last time.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 10

Just as the Super Skrull's powerful hammer-fist was about to hit the already battered Peter, a giant wooden shield appeared above him! The shield took the heavy blow, protecting Peter.

Wait. . . that wasn't a shield. It was Groot!

"I am Groot," Groot shouted as splinters flew off his body!

The rest of the Guardians of the Galaxy then burst through the door to Cosmo's office.

"Hey, ugly!" Rocket said as he raised a hyper-blaster he'd just built. "I never thought I'd see a face as revolting as Drax's, but you take the cake!" He fired at the attacking alien.

The force of the blast knocked the Super Skrull back, making him lose his aim. He couldn't focus his fire blast at Captain Marvel anymore. She was able to spring back up and shoot blasts from her fingertips at him!

"Rocket's right!" Drax shouted. He launched himself into the air at the Super Skrull. "You are uglier than me!"

As Drax swung his blades at one side of the Super Skrull, Gamora came up on the other side, chopping with her sword!

"You mess with Star-Lord and you mess with all the Guardians of the Galaxy!" Gamora shouted.

Peter watched all this with amazement. Even though he'd been so bad to his friends, avoiding them and lying to them, they still didn't hesitate to help him when he was in trouble.

Between the blows from Drax and Gamora and the blasts from Rocket and Captain Marvel, the Super Skrull was on the ground in seconds.

"Nighty-night," said Drax as he knocked the alien agent out.

Later, a quick search of Yon-Rogg's apartment turned up both the real Yon-Rogg, tied up in a closet, and also the pieces of the Ultimate Nullifier that Captain Marvel had come to Knowhere to find. With the Super Skrull

now her prisoner, her mission was complete. “The earth is now safe—thanks to you, Peter, and to the other Guardians,” Captain Marvel said.



“And thanks to you,” Peter reminded her.

“I’m headed back now to return these pieces to S.H.I.E.L.D. and Nick Fury,” Captain Marvel said. “I know you’ve been missing earth and feeling homesick. Why don’t you come back with me?”

Peter smiled at this offer.

Nearby, the other Guardians, who had heard everything, turned and walked away.

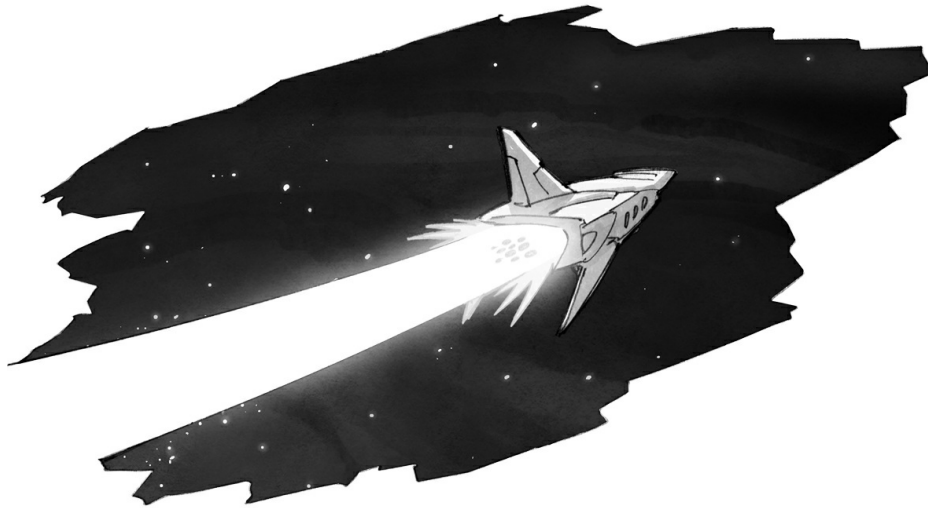
“Well, that’s it,” Rocket said to the others. “We won’t see Quill again.” “What do you mean?” Gamora asked. “Even if he goes with her, he’ll come back soon, I’m sure.”

“No way,” Rocket said. “Once he gets comfortable on Earth, he’ll have no reason to come back here again.”

“It’s bad for us to lose him from the team,” Drax said, “but maybe it’s what’s best for him. He has been unhappy here lately.”

Later, watching from afar, the Guardians saw Captain Marvel’s ship leave the space dock and head out of Knowhere through one of the skull-shaped station’s eyeholes.

“Good-bye, you stinking meat-bag,” Rocket said, waving to the ship. All of the Guardians lowered their heads. They would miss their friend.



“It was good knowing you, Quill, even though you smelled like a human.”

“Hey, why are you guys acting so weird?” asked a voice behind them. They turned. It was Peter!

“Quill, what are you doing here?” Drax asked.

“Yeah, we thought you were on that ship for Earth,” Gamora said.

“What? Why would I be?” Peter asked.

“Because you were all homesick and mopey and everything,” Rocket pointed out.

“Well, true,” Peter admitted, looking at them. “I’m sorry I lied to you. But even though I hadn’t been treating you very well, you still were all willing to jump in and risk yourselves to rescue me.” Peter gave them a significant look. “And that. . . is what a family does.”

“But. . . but. . . Peter. . .” Gamora stammered. “Don’t you want to go home?”

“You know what I’ve finally figured out, Gamora?” Peter asked. “I’m already home.”

They all smiled at each other.

“All right, enough with this mushy stuff,” Rocket said, pretending like he was too much of a tough guy to be moved by Peter’s words. “With that settled, let’s go to the Orlani races!”

“I am Groot!” Groot shouted excitedly.

That night, their favorite Orlani lost the race, but they didn’t mind. They were together.

"YOU'RE WINNING!!!"

"ALMOST TO THE
FINISH LINE."



星爵的故事

彼得·奎尔小时候还生活在地球时，他就经常帮助别人。要是碰到有同学在学校里被欺负了，哪怕是要和比自己的块头大一圈儿的恶霸干上一架小彼得都会挺身而出。他似乎天生就有着超强的正义感。

稍微长大些后，彼得终于从妈妈那儿知道了爸爸的身份。爸爸来自另一个星球，叫斯巴达克斯国。当年爸爸的飞船坠落在地球上，他和妈妈相遇了，并坠入了爱河。

知道爸爸在外星后，彼得就对宇宙产生了浓厚的兴趣。他在学校努力地学习，设计出自己的宇宙飞船，最终离开地球去探索银河系。



彼得到访的外星各有不同，但都有个共同点，那就是无论到哪儿，都有坏人欺凌弱小。不管霸凌事件发生在哪个星球上，彼得绝不会听之任之。

彼得立志做一个英雄！终于，他成为星爵！

在保护弱小的同时，星爵联合一批星际超级英雄，组成了一支团队，也就是大名鼎鼎的银河护卫队！

第一章

对于地球人彼得·奎尔来说，在虚无知地生活太棒了。这是个神奇的地方，不像一般的空间站，它既不是用金属建的，也不是用任何一种特殊的元素，而是用骨头造的！



这怎么可能呢？这个空间站建在一位远古时期的巨型天神被砍掉的脑袋中。“我住在一个漂浮着的巨型外星人头骨里，”彼得总是说，“这太酷了！”

空间站里满是稀奇古怪的东西。彼得所见到的人、做过的事，其他人类过去没有机会，而且将来也不会有机会涉猎。这种感觉太特别啦。

虚无知地最棒的一点在于，它是银河护卫队的大本营，这是一个星际超级英雄联盟，作为其中一员，彼得感到十分骄傲！

团队中还有另外四位成员：德拉克斯，有着绿色皮肤的外星壮汉；格鲁特，树形外星人；火箭，毛茸茸的武器专家，看起来和地球上的浣熊无异；卡魔拉，精通多种格斗术的星际战士。当然，还有他们的领袖——星爵。

彼得和伙伴们不用执行——很酷，有时甚至很危险——的太空任务时，那他就会在虚无知地做些有意思的事儿，就拿今天来说：

一大早，彼得就去了天靴（银河护卫队成员们都喜欢去的一家餐厅），和火箭浣熊一起玩太空飞镖。“这回绝对射中靶心。”火箭掏出飞镖时喊道。

“可你根本没瞄准。”彼得不太服气，同时也拿起了飞镖。

“瞧好了。”火箭一边说着就把飞镖扔了出去，飞镖在屋子里上蹿下跳，从墙壁上弹回来又打翻了客人们的饮料，最后竟然不偏不倚命中靶心。“咦，你怎么做到的？”彼得问。

火箭给彼得展示了镖针上的一个小装置，“这个是归航信标，”火箭解释道。“我让它去哪儿，它就得去哪儿，随便怎么扔都行——我自己设计的！”

“随便扔都行？”彼得问。“我们来试试看！”他一把抱起整盒的飞镖全扔了出去！一时间，数不清的飞镖在餐厅里四散开来，一路撞上盘子、桌子、地板、天花板后……

……全都完美命中靶心！

“太棒了！”彼得和火箭一齐惊呼，击掌庆祝。

下午，彼得和其他伙伴一起玩。他和德拉克斯在太空竞速，和卡魔拉做了超酷的零重力训练，还和格鲁特在花园里尝试了冥想。

总的来说，这是很快乐的一天。夜幕降临，彼得慢慢走回他在飞船上的卧室，飞船暂时停靠在虚无地。回去的路上，他碰到了在这儿除了他之外唯一一个地球生物：科斯莫。

“晚上好呀，彼得，”他们在过道相遇，科斯莫向彼得打招呼。

“晚上好，科斯莫，”彼得对这只小动物说。科斯莫是虚无地上除了他以外仅有的地球生物，但他可不是人类，而是一条狗！科斯莫于1960年代出生在苏联，作为宇航员被送进太空，是当时苏联政府的太空旅行实验的一部分。但科斯莫掉入虫洞，获得了高级智商和心智能力——包括和人类沟通的能力。现在他是虚无地的安全主管。

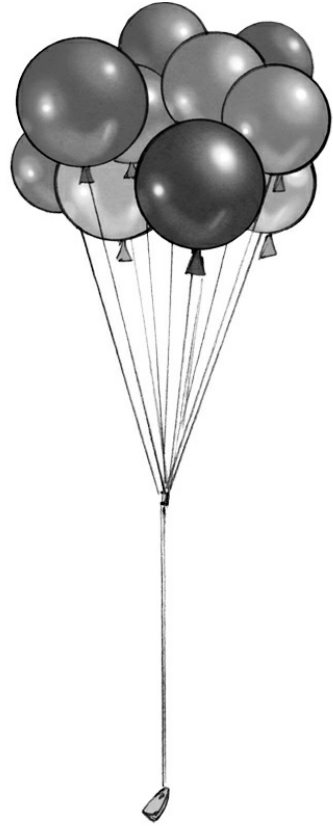


“噢，对了……生日快乐，彼得！”科斯莫说。

彼得顿时停住了脚步。“什么？”

“我知道在地球上计算日期的方式和虚无知地不同，”科斯莫说，“一天和一周的时长都不一样，这儿每年只有八个月……但我办公室的桌上一直留着一本地球的日历，因为这会让我想起家乡。我刚刚发现地球上的今天正是你的生日。”

今天是彼得的生日，他自己都不记得了。



第二章

彼得感到很沮丧。原来在地球的时候，他可喜欢过生日了。妈妈说这一天是很重要的日子，总是热热闹闹地为他庆祝。生日派对上有好吃的蛋糕，欢快的音乐，当然还少不了生日礼物。但最幸福的是被朋友和家人包围，他们真真切切关爱着他，都想让他度过特别的一天。

然而此时此刻，远离家乡，彼得都忘了自己的生日。他很久没有回地球去见他记忆中的那些人了。好吧，不必否认——彼得想家了。

第二天，彼得的朋友们看出他情绪低落，想让他振奋起来。火箭和格鲁特决定带他去看奥洛尼兽赛跑。

“没人不喜欢看奥洛尼兽赛跑。”火箭信誓旦旦地说。

“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特点点头，表示同意。他的确赞同火箭的说法，但他只会说“我是格鲁特。”而他最好的朋友，火箭，总是明白他要说什么。

“看到了吗？他也这么想。”火箭更加坚定了。

奥洛尼兽体型小小的，有点像外星版的麝鼠或者白鼬。奥洛尼兽常被放在小小的赛道上赛跑以供人娱乐，一声令下，它们就冲向终点，观众们在一旁欢呼叫好，为自己看好的奥洛尼兽打气。

“快跑啊，布朗尼！”比赛一开始，火箭就呐喊了起来，为他选中的奥洛尼兽助威。“我是格鲁特，”格鲁特也喊了起来，鼓励布朗尼向前冲。

虽然有些想家，但在这热闹的氛围下，彼得也慢慢开心起来。但就在这时，布朗尼突然跳出赛道，向人群冲了过来。

“咦，它去哪儿了？”彼得问。突然，他觉得身上有些异样。布朗尼竟然顺着彼得的腿钻进了他的裤子里！“啊——哦——啊——”

彼得尖叫着跳了起来！奥洛尼兽的小爪子对他又抓又挠！“快把这玩意儿弄走！”彼得急得冲火箭和格鲁特嚷嚷。



他们花了好几分钟才把这只奥洛尼兽从彼得裤子里弄出来。手忙脚乱中，彼得当众脱了短裤和背心。好不容易搞定了，彼得的心情更糟了。

“好啦，我错啦，”火箭不情愿地承认，“有些人的确不喜欢奥洛尼兽赛跑。”

彼得的朋友们并没有放弃，还想让他开心起来。卡魔拉带他去了太空道场，示范了一些新的格斗招式，但轮到彼得做同样的动作时，他却狠狠地摔了个嘴啃泥。

后来，为了安抚彼得的思乡之情，德拉克斯想尝试做些地球上的料理。问题是他从来没有做过也没有尝过地球上的食物，结果他把所有的食材混在一起，做了一份茄子巧克力鸡肉蛋糕，还盖了一层牡蛎。彼得觉得这味道太恶心了，而火箭竟然觉得无比美味！

“还是要谢谢你。”彼得好不容易止住了干呕，就对德拉克斯表示了感谢。

科斯莫告诉彼得，他刚刚收到来自地球的“特别美食”，每次他想家的时候就会吃一点。这条体贴的狗狗想要和彼得一起分享。星爵兴致勃

勃，却发现所谓的“特别美食”其实是狗粮。

“我早就该想到的。”彼得一边礼貌性地干咽下骨头形状的狗饼干一边想。

大家都好心好意，想要让彼得心情好些，但他却有些不领情：“你们连人类都不是，怎么会了解我需要什么。”他沉溺在失望中，一步一步走回他的飞船，却没有意识到已经伤了朋友们的心。

当晚，彼得在飞船里听到有人敲门，没料到打开门后外面竟站着一个人类！

原来是惊奇队长，来自地球的超级英雄！

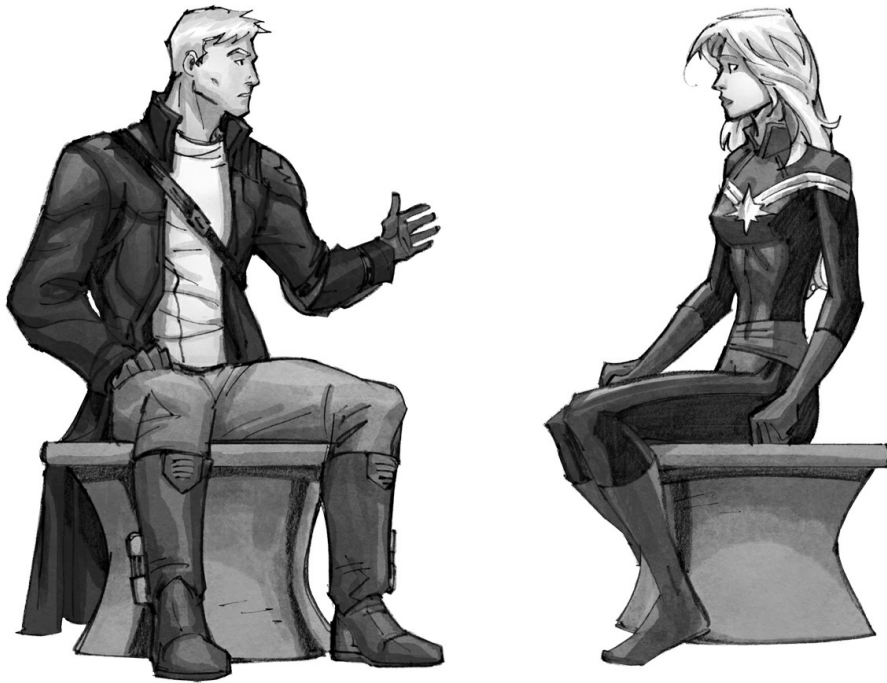
“星爵，终于找到你了，我真高兴，”她说，“我需要你的帮助。其实，地球上的所有人都需要你的帮助！”



第三章

彼得之前见过几次惊奇队长，那时他和钢铁侠，还有其他一众复仇者联盟成员一起对抗灭霸。他知道惊奇队长的真实姓名是卡罗尔·丹弗斯，曾是美国空军，在注入外星基因后，拥有了超能力，力大无穷，耐力惊人，甚至还会飞！她很快就加入了复仇者联盟，和地球上最强大的英雄们并肩作战。

不管她是否有着一部分外星基因，彼得还是很高兴能见到人类同胞的！他赶紧邀请她登船。



一上飞船，惊奇队长就说明了来意。

“在地球上，我和另外几个复联成员一直在追踪一支斯克鲁尔人的突击队。”

彼得太了解斯克鲁尔人了。他们是外星人，而且很多人都邪恶好

战。他们曾多次入侵地球，都被复仇者以及包括蜘蛛侠和金刚狼在内的其他超级英雄们一一击退。

“这些斯克鲁尔人有一支小分队，他们在找一件东西，”惊奇队长接着说，“复仇者们发现了他们的目的，他们在找组建终极抹除者的碎片！”

“终极抹什么？”彼得问，“你是说那个可以毁灭整个太阳系的武器？”

彼得从未见过终极抹除者，但他知道即便是宇宙中出了名的几大恶棍，像行星吞噬者、罗南、甚至灭霸都对这个武器闻风丧胆。为维护宇宙和平，地球上的超级英雄们找到了终极抹除者，将其打碎，分散在隐秘之处。但如果斯克鲁尔人把这些碎片再次拼合，一定会带来大麻烦！

“我们抓住了这队斯克鲁尔人……就跑了一个，”惊奇队长说。

“我没猜错的话，”彼得脊背一凉，“跑了的那个有终极抹除者的碎片。”

“嗯，”惊奇队长确认了他的猜测，“我一路追踪，追来了虚无知地！如果那个斯克鲁尔人带着碎片回到他的母星，我肯定他们的科学家一定能把碎片拼合。一旦他们有了终极抹除者，就能一举摧毁地球！”

听了这些话对彼得如遭重击。儿时的记忆浮现眼前：在院子里踢球；在树屋里和想象中的怪兽打斗；在小溪边看连环画。如果地球毁灭，所有的这些都会被摧毁，他的家人朋友都将不复存在。彼得捏紧了拳头，他绝不会让这一切发生。“趁现在还来得及，我们一定要阻止他。”

“所以，你会帮我的吧，星爵？”惊奇队长问。

“那当然，”彼得准备好枪和头盔，“我们现在要做什么？”

“有些棘手，”她说，“别忘了——斯克鲁尔人可以变换外貌！”

“哦……是的，”彼得想起来了。还真是，每个斯克鲁尔人天生具有改变外貌的能力，他们可以随心所欲地变成任何人或者任何东西。这种伪装能力特别适合做间谍和密探。



“我们得找出那些看起来和这儿格格不入的人或者东西”惊奇队长说。

“有的时候我就挺格格不入的。”彼得想到自己时不时感到很孤独。

“我觉得你应该和对这个空间站以及其所有居民都非常熟悉的人聊一聊，”彼得说，“巧了，我还真就知道有这么个人！他对这儿了如指掌——呃……其实不是掌，而是爪。”

惊奇队长疑惑地看着彼得。

第四章

第二天一大早，彼得带着惊奇队长去了科斯莫的办公室。看到这么大的空间站的安保工作竟是由一条来自地球的狗负责的，惊奇队长内心非常惊讶，但却没有表现出来，也许是这么多年来和复仇者们并肩作战，很多事儿都见怪不怪了。

“很高兴认识你，卡罗尔，”科斯莫打着招呼，“我可以叫你卡罗尔吗？”

“嗯，好呀，都行。”惊奇队长握了握科斯莫的爪子。

“谢谢，要不要来点儿零食？”科斯莫推过一小盘狗粮给惊奇队长。



“不用了，还是谢谢你。”惊奇队长礼貌地拒绝了。

“那么，我能为你做些什么？”科斯莫啃着根骨头说。

在惊奇队长透露任务之前，她让彼得去打听打听，准备几个只有真正的科斯莫才会知道答案的问题。

“上周我这儿是怎么划伤的？”彼得指着手臂上的一处小伤口问。

“可能是我们迫不得已给火箭洗澡那回，”科斯莫说，“他不是长了

有放射性的太空虱子嘛。”

“是的，”彼得确认道，“火箭他最讨厌洗澡了，所以一直都在抓啊挠啊咬啊。”

“再问个问题吧，”惊奇队长建议，“以防万一。”

“你最喜欢玩的全息电子游戏是什么？”彼得问。

“就那个用火箭靴去追邮递员的。”科斯莫答道。

没错。这游戏彼得之前和他玩过几次，其实挺无聊的，就一路追邮递员，追上了抓住他，再接着追——没完没了。

“这肯定是真的科斯莫。”彼得十分确定。

“干吗要问这些奇怪的问题？”科斯莫很疑惑。

惊奇队长赶紧告诉他关于逃走的斯克鲁尔人和终极抹除者碎片的事儿。

“所以你才问我这些问题，确认斯克鲁尔人没有变成我的模样假装是我，”科斯莫反应过来，“很机智嘛。”

科斯莫很严肃地对待这次斯克鲁尔人的威胁。他可不想做个无能的安全主管，让犯罪分子在眼皮子底下溜走，更何况还携带着宇宙中最危险的一件武器。这一笔要是写进档案可不好，很不好！

科斯莫马上指派他最得力的助手，副官约恩-罗格协助工作。约恩-罗格在虚无知地上生活多年，对这里的常住居民十分熟悉。如果有人形迹可疑，或者这里多出了什么东西，他定能一眼看出。

“我们一定会把这些可恶的斯克鲁尔间谍找出来。”约恩-罗格是克里人，和斯克鲁尔人是宿敌，当年克里人与斯克鲁尔人之间的战争旷日持久，给两族人都带来了无尽的愤怒和痛苦。

他们出发前，科斯莫提醒彼得千万不要把这次任务透露给任何人。“你唯一的优势就是这个斯克鲁尔间谍可能还不知道你们正在找他，”科斯莫指出，“所以千万别跟任何人说，再亲密的朋友都不行，银河护卫队其他成员也不行。要是走漏了风声，你们要找的斯克鲁尔人很可能就跑啦。”

彼得不情愿地答应了。科斯莫的建议很中肯，但是他并不想瞒着他的好朋友们。

星爵、惊奇队长和约恩-罗格立马动身，调查一切可疑事物。他们搜查了餐厅、商店、大街小巷。几个小时后，他们在虚无知地的搜查毫无进展。

“没找着，什么都没找着！！”

“你在这里一定过得很开心吧，”惊奇队长问彼得，“这是个很有意思的地方。”

“的确是……”彼得说，“大部分时间都很开心。但我最近老想家，离开地球太久了，在这儿有时我会觉得格格不入。”

“我理解你的心情。”惊奇队长说。



“你理解？”彼得很惊讶，“但你不是生活在地球嘛。”

“对啊，但是自从我体内吸收了外星基因，我其实就只能算半个人类了，”惊奇队长解释道，“这种感觉地球人不能理解。当他们发现我并不完全是人类时，看待我的眼神都不一样了，所以有时我也觉得格格不入。”

她还没说完，约恩-罗格就跑了过来，打断了他们的谈话。

“星爵，惊奇队长，跟我来！我想我们有线索了！”

第五章

星爵跟着约恩-罗格和惊奇队长跑了出去。经过天靴餐厅的前门时，银河护卫队的其他伙伴正好走出来。

“噢，奎尔，你在这儿啊，”火箭打着招呼，“时间刚好，来吧！宇宙马戏团刚刚抵达空间站，我们正要去看机械驯狮表演。”

“等等……到底是狮子是机器狮，还是驯兽师是机器人？”彼得疑惑地问。

“都是机器的！”德拉克斯兴奋地高呼。他特别喜欢这种机器人杂耍表演。

“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特也很兴奋。

“他说的没错，”火箭也同意，“演出肯定会很棒！”

“我更想看走钢丝活体表演，”卡魔拉说。

“等等……到底是走钢丝的人是活人，还是钢丝是活的？”彼得问。

“都是活的！”火箭兴奋不已，“你一定得来！”

彼得也想去。一个有着机器狮子和活钢丝的外星马戏团……哇，这一听就是他的菜。另外和伙伴们一起玩也不赖啊。

但不行。地球的命运，甚至银河系的命运都悬而未决。他必须抛开享乐，专注于完成任务。

“不好意思啊大家，我很想去，但不行。”彼得无奈地说。

“为什么？”卡魔拉问，“有什么要紧的事儿吗？”

“我知道了，”火箭说，“昨晚有一个人类从地球来了空间站，现在你就想抛下我们和她一起玩了。”

卡魔拉倒抽了口气：“彼得，这是真的吗？”

“不是……”彼得刚想解释清楚斯克鲁尔人还有终极抹除者碎片的事儿，但突然想起来科斯莫之前提醒他，绝不能把这秘密任务泄露出去，最好的朋友也不行。

“能见到另一个地球人当然很好，但这并不是我不能和你们一起去玩的原因。只是我……觉得……不太……舒服，”彼得撒了个谎，“我吐得实在厉害，可能是今天吃坏了肚子？我要回飞船躺会儿。”

火箭上上下下打量着星爵。“嗯，我觉得，你看起来有点发烧了。”
“好吧，”卡魔拉说，“回去躺下会舒服些。”
“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特也同意。



“谢啦，伙计们。错过演出我也很遗憾。”彼得挥手道别，慢慢走到拐角，在确认伙伴们看不见他后，赶紧一溜烟儿地朝着惊奇队长和约恩-罗格的方向跑去。

过了一会儿，卡魔拉、德拉克斯、火箭和格鲁特都来排队入场观看宇宙马戏团表演，在这里，他们可以俯瞰虚无知地。因为马戏帐篷悬在半空，靠近空间站的顶层，在等候区便可以清晰地看到下面的街景。

“希望彼得好些了。”卡魔拉说。

“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特突然叫了出来。

“你说什么，格鲁特？”火箭问，“奎尔怎么可能在下面。你没听他说吗？他要回飞船睡会儿，让感冒快些好起来。”

但格鲁特坚持自己看到了彼得，一直指着下面。火箭用他的机械眼放大了街景才看到了格鲁特所指的地方。



“咦，那个是……”火箭嘟囔着，“格鲁特说的没错。奎尔真的在下面，在一个仓库边。而且可以确认的是，他和惊奇队长在一起！”

所有人都震惊了！“我还以为他在飞船里好好躺着呢。”德拉克斯很失落。

“哼，躺着说瞎话吧，”火箭气鼓鼓地说，“这个骗子对我们说谎，不把我们当真正的朋友。”

“唉，彼得……”卡魔拉难过地叹了一口气。

第六章

在天靴餐厅和银河护卫队成员们分开后，彼得在一个经常当仓库用的地方赶上了约恩-罗格和惊奇队长。周围都是些破败的船只和大型采矿设备生锈的零部件。彼得心想，这儿对于斯克鲁尔间谍来说应该是完美的藏身之处了。

他们最后停在一间老旧的仓库前，这房子看起来都要塌了。

“我们的安保部门收到线报，有人在这间仓库里通过非法传送门走私重型武器，”约恩-罗格解释道，“虚无知地这个空间站并不大，一般不会有太多非法武器交易。你们要找的人肯定在里面。”

他们三人偷偷朝窗子里看去。

“这两个是希阿人，”彼得认出了里面外星人的种族，“不是斯克鲁尔人。”斯克鲁尔人看起来完全不一样，他们是绿色的，有点像蜥蜴。

“是的，但别忘了斯克鲁尔人善于变换形态，”约恩-罗格提醒他们。“他完全可以伪装成希阿人的模样。”

“的确，”惊奇队长承认道。

彼得和同伴透过窗户看到这两个希阿人在搬几个大板条箱。“武器一定在这些箱子里，”约恩-罗格斩钉截铁地说。



只见其中一个希阿人按下传送装置上的按钮，传送门一出现，他们就开始往里搬箱子。

“就是现在！”约恩-罗格大叫一声，“他们正在把武器传送出去！”

“行动！”惊奇队长下达指令。

“举起手来！以虚无知地安保部的权力！你们被捕了！”

但这些希阿人完全没有打算束手就擒，他们开始激烈反抗，朝星爵一众开火。

惊奇队长用超能力从指尖发射能量波，飞身对其中一个希阿人发起攻击。与此同时，星爵和约恩-罗格则对付另一个希阿人。

惊奇队长不慎被第一个希阿人的弹药击中，整个人都飞了出去，狠狠摔进一堆旧设备里。这个希阿人趁机打开他面前的一个板条箱，里面

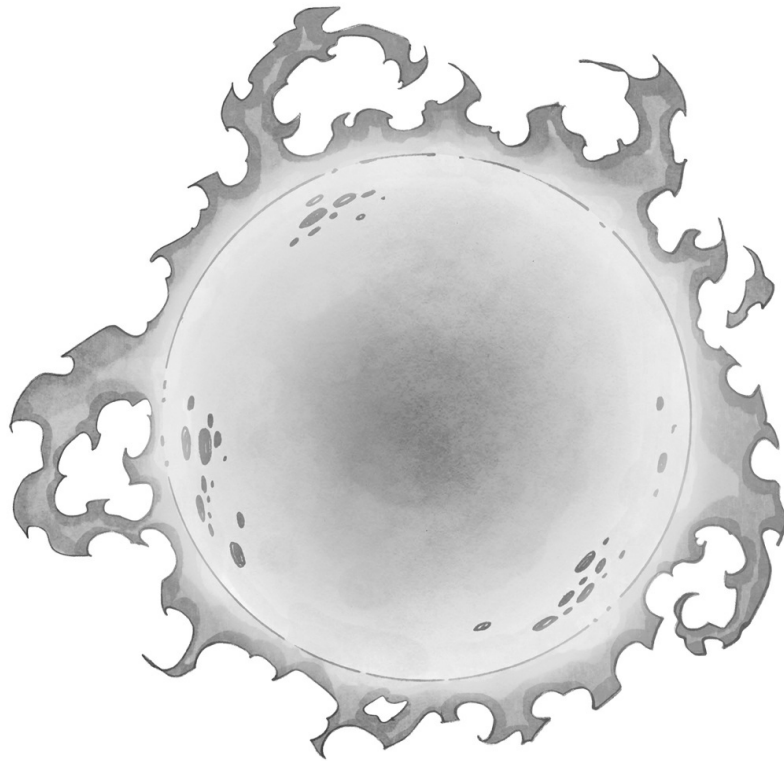
满满当当都是各式外星武器，有的看起来像是长长的管子，尾部还装着软管。

当第一个希阿人翻出这个管状武器时，第二个希阿人正和约恩-罗格和星爵搏斗，招招致命。

“待会儿你就会后悔怎么一开始没有束手就擒。”星爵反击时吼道。

“后悔才怪。”第一个希阿人将那个管状武器对准星爵和约恩-罗格，朝他们扫射。

星爵和约恩-罗格被这武器射出的液体冲上了仓库的墙壁，液体瞬间变成坚硬的泡沫，无论他俩如何挣扎，都动弹不得。



“我想好怎么对付你们的朋友了，”希阿人看见惊奇队长从一堆扭曲的金属废料中爬出来，正准备发起新一轮攻击。

“这个手榴弹可以开启传送门，”这个希阿人很得意，“一旦引爆，附近的人就会被传送出去。”

“传送到哪儿？”彼得有不祥的预感。

“太阳的内核。”希阿人一阵狂笑。

“和你们的朋友道别吧！”他瞄准惊奇队长扔出了手榴弹。

哦不！彼得心急如焚。惊奇队长难道要命丧于此了！

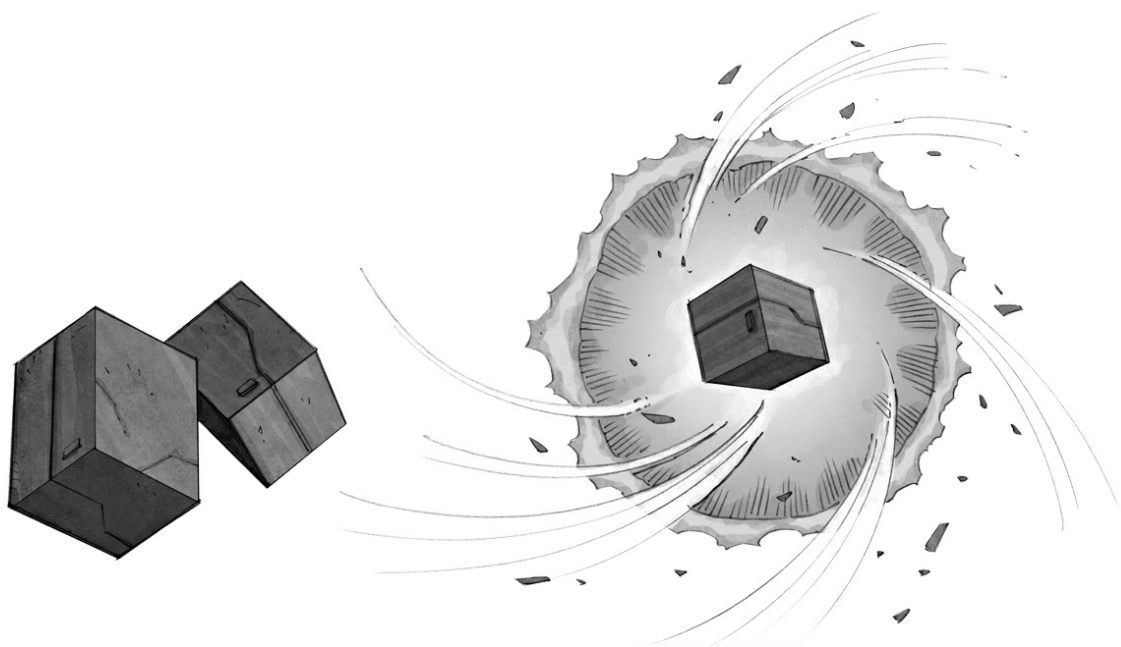
第七章

彼得惊恐地看着这个希阿败类把手榴弹投向了惊奇队长。因为他全身都被定住了，也无力去救他的英雄伙伴。

全身？

彼得的手指是唯一没有被定住的部位，他偷偷在衣服口袋里摸索，竟然摸到了火箭发明的太空飞镖。飞镖装有归航信标，指哪儿打哪儿，哪怕你扔去的是反方向都行。

“就是它了！成败在此一举。”彼得暗暗地想。



彼得动了动手指，很快把太空飞镖掏了出来，虚弱地射了出去，当然射出飞镖之前，彼得已给出指令：“瞄准传送手榴弹！”

飞镖“嗖”的一声飞了出去。

尽管扔的方向不对，力道也不够，但飞镖还是准确地朝目标飞去。

哐当！飞镖射中了手榴弹，在半空中就将其引爆了，幸好手榴弹还

没有击中惊奇队长！

爆炸的手榴弹开启了一团传送能量，惊奇队长在安全范围内，但希阿人装满武器的箱子却全被传送门吸了进去，瞬间就消失啦！

“我们的武器啊……不！”希阿人痛苦不堪，所有的非法货物都被瞬间传送到太阳的核心，还是被他自己的武器销毁的。

但他也没有时间自怨自艾，因为几秒钟后惊奇队长就冲过来给了他致命一击，将他打倒在地。很快，第二个希阿人也被惊奇队长制服了。接下来惊奇队长用能量波把彼得和约恩-罗格解救出来。

“谢谢你，星爵，”惊奇队长对彼得说，“你救了我。”

“这个人情你刚刚还了，”彼得笑笑，“如果你没制服那个希阿人，我还被定在墙上呢，天晓得他们还会怎么折磨我。所以谢谢啦。”

“既然我们都救过对方了，”惊奇队长说，“你以后就叫我卡罗尔吧。”

“那你也可以直接叫我彼得。”彼得笑着说。

几分钟后，科斯莫带着更多安保警力赶来，希阿人的计划被一举捣毁。

“所以，”科斯莫问，“你们找到要找的人了吗？”

“我想是的，”约恩-罗格说。“所有装武器的板条箱都被传送到太阳内核了，如果终极抹除者的碎片也在箱子里，应该也被销毁了。”

“对……如果碎片在箱子里的话，”惊奇队长有些迟疑，“但这只是如果，箱子里有什么我们也没看仔细，所以无法确认是不是真在里面。”

“另外，我们要找的是一个斯克鲁尔间谍，”彼得提醒他们，“但这两都是希阿人，刚刚趁着他们昏迷，我们已经确认过了，如假包换的希阿人，不是斯克鲁尔人假冒的。”

“是的，”约恩-罗格也承认，“但像我之前所说，虚无知地就这么点儿地方。同一天有两伙人走私武器，这概率未免也太高了。我们也不确定，但是不排除我们要找的东西就在那些箱子里。”

“是的，也许吧……”惊奇队长陷入沉思。

“就算终极抹除者的碎片在里面，我们要找的斯克鲁尔间谍呢？”彼得问，“还有，为什么他们要把这么重要的东西给希阿人？”

“这是个问题，”科斯莫承认。“也许危机解除了，也许并没有。”



第八章

当天晚上，一切归于平静后，惊奇队长和彼得一起走回飞船。

“接下来你打算做什么？”彼得问。

“我也不知道，”惊奇队长说，“约恩-罗格认为终极抹除者的碎片已被销毁，但我怎么能肯定呢？这关系到地球的存亡。”

“明天一早，我们就能审问这两个希阿人，”彼得说，“如果他们根本不知道什么斯克鲁尔间谍，那我们就得继续调查了。”

他们走到了飞船的入口，“我同意，”卡罗尔说，“不管明天迎接我们的是什么，今天我够累了。晚安，彼得。”

“晚安，卡罗尔。”

“再次感谢你今天的帮助。我现在知道为什么银河护卫队的成员们这么信任你了。”卡罗尔说。

过了一会儿，彼得刚准备睡觉就听到有人在敲门，“谁啊？”彼得打开舱门，发现银河护卫队的成员们齐刷刷地站在外面。

“我们得谈谈。”

“我是格鲁特！”

“啊……我正打算睡觉呢，”彼得心虚地退到一边，让朋友们进来，“今天又是漫长的一天。”

“在床上躺了整整一天？”卡魔拉质疑道，“我希望你现在没觉得不舒服了。”

不舒服？她说啥呢？哦，对了……彼得突然想起来他之前撒的谎。他赶紧按住肚子假装肚子疼。“我现在觉得好多了——”

“拉倒吧，”德拉克斯说道，“我们知道你骗我们了，你根本就没有病。”

“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特也点着头。

“我们看见你和惊奇队长在一起玩，”火箭毫不客气。

“噢。”彼得很惊讶，没想到暴露了。

“如果你不想和我们一起玩，直接说就好了。”卡魔拉明显因为彼得的欺骗而难过。

“不是这样的，我很想和你们一起玩，”彼得解释道，“只是事发突然，我也不能告诉你们。”

“果然！”

“我是格鲁特！”

“唔……”

“唉！”

“我是格鲁特？”格鲁特问。

“是啊，”火箭同意，“为什么不能告诉我们？”

“因为我答应了不会跟任何人说的，”彼得想要解释，但一切解释都显得很苍白，“所以我只能编个故事说我病了。真的，我其实更想和你们一起去看马戏表演。”

“彼得，”卡魔拉皱了皱眉头，“你知道我们之间没什么是不能说的。”



“是啊，到底什么事这么重要，你竟然要对我们撒谎？”火箭问。但是彼得却什么都不能说。现在还不清楚他们是否已经找到终极抹除者，

那个逃走的斯克鲁尔间谍依然逍遥法外。甚至，有可能银河护卫队成员中有人被绑架拘禁，而这个斯克鲁尔间谍伪装成他朋友的样子站在他面前。这一切还没有结束，他必须严守对科斯莫的承诺，什么都不能说。

“我……我还是不能说。”彼得很为难。话音刚落，他就看到朋友们失望的眼神，他们肯定觉得被背叛了。

“我还以为你是我们的朋友呢，彼得·奎尔，”火箭生气地说，“我猜你从来没有和我们交心，是吧？走吧，伙伴们，我们一起走吧。”

银河护卫队的成员们都跟着火箭走了，留下彼得一人孤零零的。向朋友们撒谎让他心情糟透了。要是能解释清楚就好了！如果知道实情，他们一定会原谅他的。

但是现在他什么也做不了，所以他干脆上床睡觉，好好休息。

就在这个晚上，彼得突然有了主意！第二天一大早，他就急匆匆进了科斯莫的办公室，惊奇队长和约恩·罗格已经在和这位安全主管商谈了。

“停止一切行动，”彼得大声说，“我知道怎么找出这个斯克鲁尔间谍了！”

“你知道怎么办了？”大家都激动地站了起来。

“是的，但是你们也许不会喜欢这个办法的。”彼得说。

第九章

“星爵，快告诉我们怎么抓到他！”科斯莫、约恩-罗格和惊奇队长都焦急地看着他。

“我想起昨晚火箭对我说的话，”彼得继续说，“他说，‘你从来没有和我们交心。’这话的意思是，即使你认识某人，但他也许有你不知道的事儿。”

“嗯……然后呢？”惊奇队长问。

“你看，是惊奇队长最早告诉我们要抓的是斯克鲁尔人，所以排除她的嫌疑，”彼得说，“我们后来和科斯莫谈了一次，问了他一些只有他知道答案的问题，所以也排除他的嫌疑——”

“那接下来就是？”约恩-罗格问。

“接下来就是你了，约恩-罗格，”彼得说。“我们还没问过你任何问题呢。”

“我告诉过你，他是最信任的得力助手。”科斯莫赶紧说。

“当然，你信任的是真正的约恩-罗格，”星爵说，“但是如果他是斯克鲁尔间谍假冒的呢？要是真的约恩-罗格被囚禁起来了，而这个人冒充的呢？”

“约恩-罗格不只是我最得力的助手，而且是我最好的朋友，”科斯莫说，“你觉得我会认不出他来吗？”

“斯克鲁尔人最擅长伪装，”彼得指出，“想想吧，就是他千方百计想要说服我们，终极抹除者就在那些被销毁的箱子里。”

“不可理喻！！！”约恩-罗格大发雷霆道，“我认为终极抹除者的碎片在箱子里是因为这的确是有可能的，不然还会在哪儿？”

“有一个很简单的方法，”惊奇队长提议说，“科斯莫，来问问他一个只有真正的约恩-罗格才能回答的问题。”

“好吧……罗尼，去年我生日你送了我什么？”科斯莫问。

“什么？你竟然相信他们这一套？”约恩-罗格反问道，看起来很伤心的样子，“我们都认识这么多年了。”

“我当然不信，”狗主管安慰他，“只要告诉我，去年你送了我什么

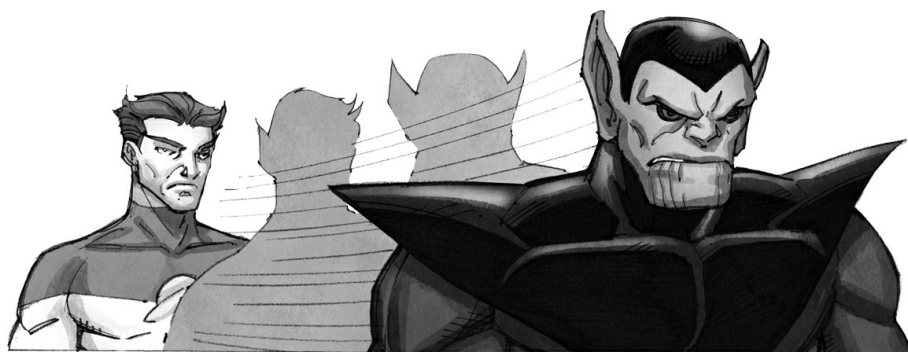
生日礼物，我们就可以证明星爵是错的，一切都会真相大白。”

“可我不记得送了什么。”约恩-罗格狡辩道。

“哦不，你肯定记得，”科斯莫鼓励着他，“好好想想。”

约恩-罗格沉默了一阵，所有眼睛都盯着他。他到底是在努力回想，还是在想别的什么事？终于，他开了口：“好吧，星爵的确错了。因为我可不是你们要找的普通斯克鲁尔人。”

瞬间，约恩-罗格变身成一个长着尖耳朵，满身鳞片，绿色皮肤的外星人！另外三个人震惊地从凳子上弹了起来。



“至少，我可不是个一般的斯克鲁尔人。”约恩-罗格继续说道。

彼得之前从未和超级斯克鲁尔人交过手，但他知道就像地球上有些人类拥有超能力一样，在斯克鲁尔星，同样也有天赋异禀的斯克鲁尔人。

这个超级斯克鲁尔人行动速度惊人，先是对惊奇队长进行火力攻击，之后拳头瞬间变成一个巨大的锤子，将科斯莫一拳打飞！彼得瞄准超级斯克鲁尔人射击，但是激光枪还没击中他，就被他的隐性能量防御盾反弹了回来。超级斯克鲁尔人得意扬扬。“之前捉弄你们的确很有意思。很抱歉，一切到此为止。没关系，其实把你们通通干掉更有意思！”

超级斯克鲁尔人此时仍对惊奇队长火力全开，她倒在地上苦苦支撑，而他另一只锤子般的拳头又一拳把彼得锤到墙上。

“我没想到，竟然是你这小脑袋让我露出破绽，地球人。”

“又来了！”猛烈的撞击让彼得喘不过气，他想要站起来，但一抬头，却看到巨大的拳头再次向他砸来——也许这就是致命一击。



第十章

正当超级斯克鲁尔人的拳头即将砸到奄奄一息的彼得时，一个巨大的木头盾牌挡在他面前！盾牌承受住了强力的打击，护住了彼得。

等等……那不是盾牌。是格鲁特！

“我是格鲁特。”格鲁特怒吼着，身上的小碎木被震得飞了起来。

银河护卫队的其他成员迅速冲进科斯莫的办公室。

“嗨，丑八怪！”火箭举起刚刚组装的超级爆能枪，“我从没想到这辈子还能看到一张比德拉克斯还恶心的脸，今天真是中奖了！”火箭一边讥讽一边向这个外星人射击。

爆能枪的火力击退了超级斯克鲁尔人，他失去了准头，没法一直对准惊奇队长开火。惊奇队长趁机一跃而起，用指尖对准超级斯克鲁尔人发射能量波！

“火箭说的没错！”德拉克斯咆哮着扑向超级斯克鲁尔人发动攻击，“你比我丑多了！”

德拉克斯用刀从一侧攻击超级斯克鲁尔人，卡魔拉挥剑从另一侧砍来！

“敢和星爵作对，就是和我们整个银河护卫队作对！”卡魔拉喊道。

彼得惊讶地看着这一切。尽管他最近对朋友们很不好，避开他们，欺骗他们，但他们仍然不离不弃，在他陷入困境时毫不犹豫地伸出援手。

德拉克斯和卡魔拉两面夹击，火箭和惊奇队长火力全开，几秒钟后，超级斯克鲁尔人就被击倒在地。

“晚安哦，”德拉克斯一拳将外星间谍打晕过去。

刻不容缓，他们地毯式搜查了约恩-罗格的公寓，找出了被绑在橱子里的约恩-罗格本尊，以及惊奇队长此次前来虚无知地要找的终极抹除者碎片。既然超级斯克鲁尔人已被俘虏，惊奇队长的任务也顺利完成。“地球安全了——真的要谢谢你，彼得，还有银河护卫队的伙伴们。”惊奇队长连声道谢。



“也谢谢你。”彼得对她说。

“我现在得赶紧回去，把这些碎片交给神盾局的尼克·弗瑞局长，”惊奇队长说，“我知道你很想念地球，很想家。为什么不和我一起回去呢？”

听到这个邀请彼得笑了笑没说话。

银河护卫队的小伙伴们在不远处听到了，转身默默离开了。

“好吧，就这样吧，”火箭说，“我们以后都见不到奎尔喽。”

“你什么意思？”卡魔拉问，“就算他跟她回去了，很快就会回来的，我确定。”

“不可能，”火箭坚称，“他要是在地球上待舒服了，才不会回来呢。”

“我们团队没了他可不行啊，”德拉克斯说，“但也许这才是对他最好的安排，毕竟最近他在这儿都不太开心。”

不一会儿，银河护卫队成员们就从不远处看到惊奇队长的飞船从空间站出口起飞，穿过巨型头骨的眼窝，离开了虚无知地。

“永别了，你这个臭人类。”火箭说着，挥手向飞船告别。银河护卫队所有成员都低下了头。他们一定会想念他们的朋友的。

“认识你很高兴，奎尔，尽管你闻起来像人类。”

“咦，你们怎么都看起来怪怪的？”背后传来一个声音。

他们一转身，竟然是彼得！

“奎尔，你怎么在这儿？”德拉克斯惊呆了。

“是啊，我们还以为你乘飞船回地球了呢！”卡魔拉也很激动。

“什么？我为什么要回去啊？”彼得一脸茫然。

“因为你最近那么想家，还老闷闷不乐的。”火箭说。

“好吧，这话的确没错，”彼得也承认。他认真地看着他们说：“对不起，我之前骗了你们。虽然我最近对你们并不好，但你们还是这么讲义气，冒着生命危险来救我。”彼得脸色很庄重，“那个，家人才会这么做吧。”

“但是……但是……彼得……”卡魔拉一时有些语塞，“你难道不想回家吗？”

“卡魔拉，你知道我后来想通了什么吗？”彼得说，“我已经在家啦。”大家都会心地笑了。

“好啦，别再这么煽情啦，”火箭做出一副硬汉的样子，假装没有被彼得的话感动，“既然一切都搞定了，那我们一起去看看奥洛尼兽赛跑吧！”

“我是格鲁特！”格鲁特兴奋地叫了出来

那天夜里，他们最喜欢的奥洛尼兽输了比赛，但他们丝毫不介意。因为银河护卫队在一起，一个也不少。



漫威
超级英雄
双语故事

美国漫威公司 著
高玲玲 译

MARVEL

IRON MAN

INVASION OF THE SPACE PHANTOMS

钢铁侠

太空幽灵的入侵

重庆理工大学出版社

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Iron Man



Tony Stark



Captain America



Falcon



Hulk



M.O.D.O.K.



Nick Fury



Black Widow



A.I.M. agents



robot sharks



Phantoms



Outpost 13



S.H.I.E.L.D. agents



alien dogs



living snowmen
(not really)



Cosmic Bridge Generator

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IRON MAN™



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

The Story of Iron Man

Inventor. Pioneer. Genius. Tony Stark is all of the above, and he'd be the first to say so! In fact, he's much more. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

After the unfortunate death of his father, Howard Stark, Tony became responsible for his father's mega successful company, STARK INDUSTRIES, at only twenty-one years old! Stark Industries developed and built state-of-the-art weapons and sold them around the world. Tony didn't care what happened to the weapons after they were sold; he just wanted to be rich!

Then one fateful day, during a top-secret weapons test, Stark was ambushed by a gang of heavily armed criminals and taken prisoner. He was critically wounded and told he had only a short time to live. With Stark weakened, the criminals forced him to build a weapon for them—a weapon of mass destruction. But Stark had other plans! He forged an incredible suit of armor and a miniature arc reactor to power it and keep his heart beating.

With his new arsenal, Stark defeated the criminals and escaped. He vowed from that day forward that he would use his scientific knowledge to help people all over the world. He upgraded the suit of armor and became the invincible Iron Man!

Iron Man joined Black Widow, Captain America, Hawkeye, the Hulk, and Thor to form the Avengers—a team of Earth's Mightiest Heroes dedicated to saving the world.





扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

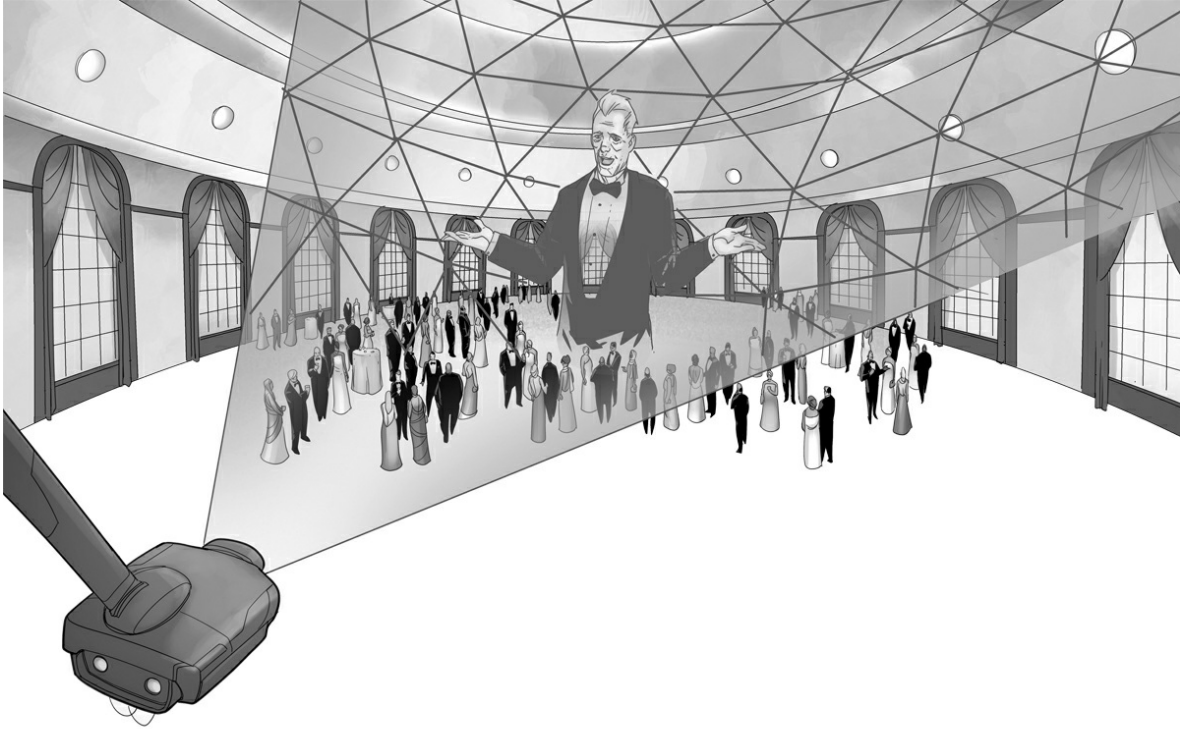
Chapter 1

“Is my bow tie straight? Tell me my bow tie is straight,” Tony said with a groan. *Standing around shaking hands and saying, “Great to see you!” to people I don't even know is hardly my idea of a good time, he thought. I'd rather armor up and throw down with the Crimson Dynamo!*

Happy Hogan, Tony's bodyguard, let out a loud sigh. “You aren't wearing a bow tie, Boss. Remember? You said you didn't want to look like me.” Happy fidgeted in his tuxedo, nervously fixing his own crooked bow tie.

“Right, right. So, remind me why I agreed to come to this thing?” said Tony. Just then, a voice thundered through the ballroom's public-address system.

“Welcome, everyone, and thank you for attending the inaugural benefit for the Holistic Plan for Tomorrow!” The crowd of well-dressed partygoers burst into applause as a large hologram of an older man appeared in the center of the room.



“While I am sorry that I am unable to attend in person, I wanted to thank you all for coming. As you know, the Holistic Plan for Tomorrow—H.P.T.—is dedicated to opening new doors for the future. With your generous donations, we will create a world the likes of which no one has ever seen!”

The hologram's voice and face belonged to the mysterious Elton Traggeore, a reclusive billionaire who was the president of H.P.T.

“Hey, he's a rich guy, just like you,” said Happy, laughing. “Do you know him?”

“It's not like there's some rich-guy club, Happy,” said Tony, rolling his eyes. Happy raised an eyebrow. “Besides, no one's ever met Elton Traggeore.”

Before Happy could reply, he and Tony heard a familiar voice. “Mr. Stark?”

Turning around, Tony found himself face to face with Agent Phil Coulson, a member of the top-secret organization known as S.H.I.E.L.D. Coulson smiled at Tony and Happy, gesturing toward the ballroom's exit doors.

“I know that smile,” said Tony with a sigh. “That's your ‘I'm smiling but

I'm not really smiling' smile.”

“Would you mind coming with me?” asked Coulson. He pointed once again to the exit.

Tony nodded for Happy to stay as he and Coulson walked out of the ballroom and into the long, crowded entrance hall. Tony spoke quietly. “So what does S.H.I.E.L.D. want with Mr. Doesn't-Play-Well-with-Others?” asked Tony. “You guys lose the Hulk?”

Coulson looked at Tony. There was no longer a smile on his face, forced or otherwise.

“No,” replied Coulson. “Black Widow and Falcon.”

“Wait, what? Really?” said Tony loudly. People in the hallway turned his way suddenly.

Coulson looked down at the ground and whispered, “We have a . . . problem at Outpost 13.”

To the public, it was known as U.S. Science Foundation Outpost 13. The scientists there, tucked away in the wastelands of Antarctica, claimed to be studying astronomy and surveying the vast shelves of ice. In reality, Outpost 13 was home to an ultra-secret S.H.I.E.L.D. research lab.

And that research lab was currently testing a marvelous new device . . . invented by Tony Stark.



“Define ‘problem’,” said Tony, his curiosity piqued.

“We hadn't received a transmission from Outpost 13 in over a week—but then one came. They kept repeating the words monster and help. Director Fury sent Black Widow and Falcon to investigate, but we haven't heard from either of them in forty-eight hours.”

Tony stared at Coulson. Falcon and Black Widow were his friends. They were also forces to be reckoned with. Now they were missing. . .

“I'll go,” said Tony. “I can get there faster than anyone.”

“Not just you. You and Captain America. You'll rendezvous with Steve Rogers at approximately—”

Before Coulson could finish, Tony headed toward the parking lot, where a STARK INDUSTRIES vehicle waited. As Coulson picked up his pace in pursuit, Tony opened the trunk of the shiny red car.

“I hear you, Coulson,” said Tony, without looking back. “You have

really loud shoes.”

“Mr. Stark, it's vital that you combine your efforts with Captain America,” said Coulson as he approached. “This is more than one Avenger can handle . . . even you. We sent both Black Widow and Falcon—two of S.H.I.E.L.D.'s best—and now they're MIA. You'll need Rogers on this.” Coulson shifted his feet uncomfortably. “Maybe even the Hulk.”

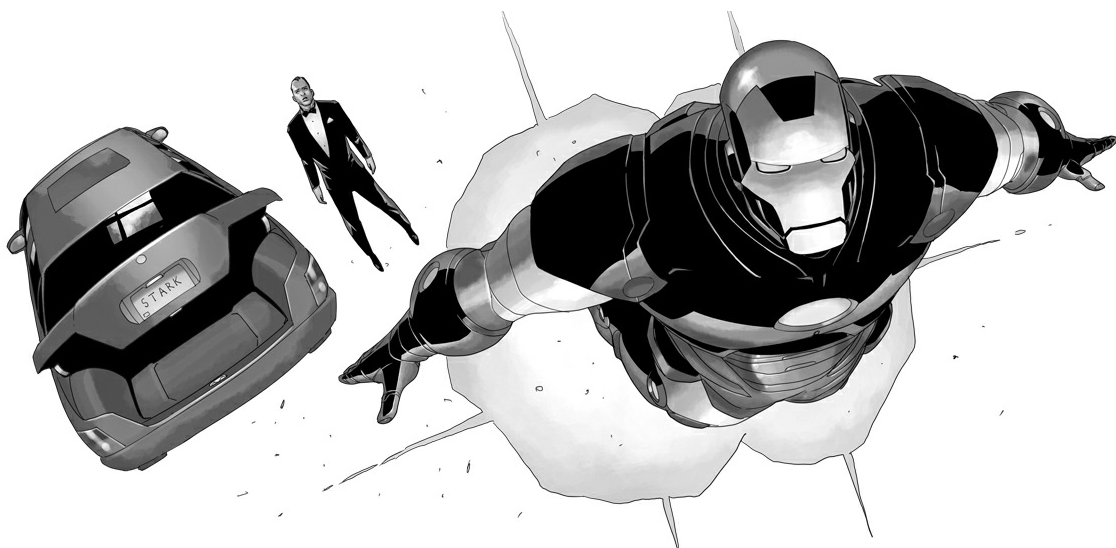
Without warning, various pieces of metal flew from the trunk toward Tony, attaching themselves to his hands and feet. Within seconds, Tony was encased in a nearly impervious suit of armor.

“The research being conducted at Outpost 13 . . . if it should fall into the wrong hands . . .” said Coulson. He glared at Stark, as if he knew exactly what the genius inventor would say.

“I know all about the research, Coulson. They're using my technology. And if Widow, Falcon, or anyone else is hurt because of me, it's my job to make things right.”

Where there once stood a billionaire inventor now stood the invincible Iron Man!

As the armor powered up, Tony's mind raced. Years before, he had become Iron Man when he realized STARK INDUSTRIES' technology could be used to hurt others. He had since dedicated his life to helping humanity. And now he was faced with a situation where all his efforts could be undone.



“Mr. Stark, wait!” yelled Coulson, but his plea was ignored.

“The right hands will make sure the wrong hands don't get away with anything. Tell your boss not to worry. It's nothing Iron Man can't handle!”
With that, he activated his boot jets and blasted into the night sky.



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Chapter 2

It took Tony a little under six hours' flight time to reach snowy Antarctica. He surveyed the desolate surroundings via his helmet's heads-up display and asked J.A.R.V.I.S. to give him the lowdown on the area.

“Temperature: zero degrees Fahrenheit. Atmospheric conditions: currently snowing. Expected snowfall: six inches. Barometer holding st—”

“J.A.R.V.I.S.,” said Tony. “Scratch the weatherman bit. How about we start with signs of life?”

A brief humming followed, and J.A.R.V.I.S. spoke once more. “Approximately three point two miles southwest.

“Multiple heartbeats detected—”

Black Widow, Falcon, the scientists . . . and what else?

“—life-forms unknown. I'm receiving significant signal interference,” finished J.A.R.V.I.S.

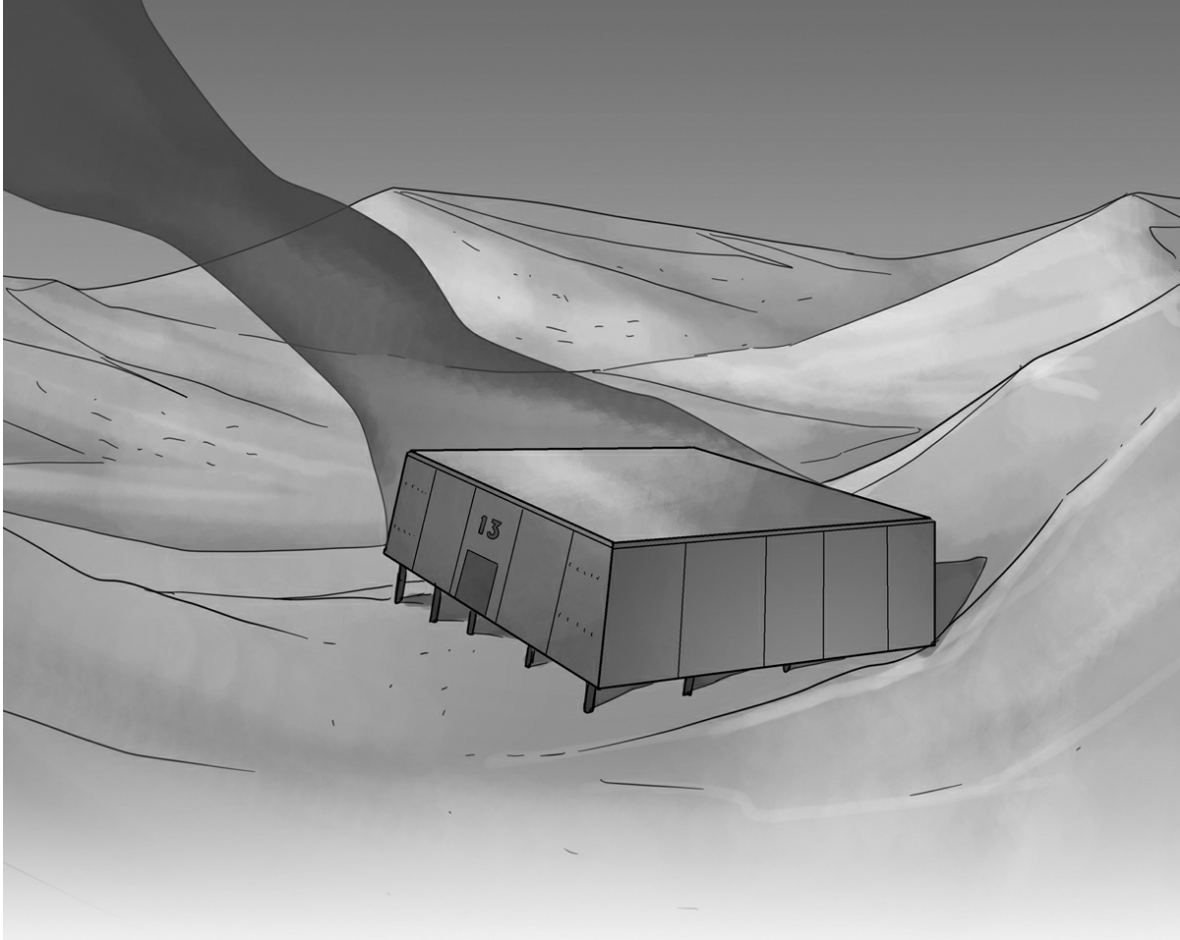
“Don't tell me,” Tony continued. “It's the night of the living snowmen, right?”



“Impossible. It is currently four p.m. local time. And snowmen are not living entities,” J.A.R.V.I.S. answered.

Ignoring his armor's operating system, Tony activated his boot jets and unleashed a chemical thrust that propelled him into the air. He used his hand repulsors to stabilize and took off in the direction J.A.R.V.I.S. had indicated. The heavy snowfall made flying by sight nearly impossible, but his armor's navigation systems quickly took over. Tony zeroed in on a small clearing, where the burnt remains of a rectangular building, with portholes placed every few feet, stood on scorched stilts.

Outpost 13.



Tony's armored boots crunched through the snow as he approached the main entrance to the outpost. A chill crept up Tony's spine, and it wasn't from the cold.

No smoke, thought Tony. This fire happened at least a day ago. Immediately, his thoughts went to Black Widow and Falcon. Without the proper gear, surviving the harsh Antarctic environment even an hour is a challenge, let alone two days. . . .

As Tony approached Outpost 13, his audio sensors picked up a sound . . . distant and muffled tapping, gaining speed and getting louder, something—somethings—slamming into the metal interior walls with tremendous force. Suddenly, the door flung off its hinges and three large sled dogs burst from the entrance to Outpost 13. The canines barked aggressively and bared their fangs.

Their eyes glowed a sinister deep red.

“Whoa, nice doggies!” said Tony, holding his palms out toward the canines. “Uh, roll over! Fetch?” *Where's a stick when you need one?* he thought, moving forward. Before he could take another step, one of the dogs jumped and slammed into his armor, knocking him down. Tony scrambled to his feet as another dog smashed his helmet with its giant front paws. Then the remaining dog started vibrating and shaking, and one of its large forepaws morphed into a long tentacle! The appendage wrapped around Tony's right arm and squeezed the armor so tightly that it started to bow and bend under the pressure.

“I don't have dogs, but they don't usually have tentacles, right, J.A.R.V.I.S.?” asked Tony.

“Affirmative, sir.”



At the speed of light, Tony sent a volley of repulsor blasts from his wrist gauntlets in all directions, causing two of the dogs to scatter behind the outpost, howling. Meanwhile, the third dog continued to squeeze Tony's right arm with its snakelike appendage.

“You can . . . let go . . . anytime you want!” said Tony as he held his left gauntlet right above the dog's limb and emitted a controlled repulsor burst from his palm. The dog let out a shrill squeal and uncoiled its tentacle from

Tony's arm.

I'm beginning to see why Coulson was so worried, Tony thought. If this is just the welcoming committee . . .

The canines continued to change shape, growing in mass until they were nearly three times their original size, with eight tentacles each. They were greenish yellow in color, with glowing red eyes, and their mouths had barbed tongue-like projections.

As Tony struggled with his foes, he caught a fleeting look at a face gazing out from one of the outpost portholes. Then another. He looked again and they were gone.

Tony was only minutes into the mission, and the situation was deteriorating rapidly. Dogs that evolved into weird octopus creatures? He worried that these were the threats Black Widow and Falcon had faced. And could those faces he'd seen belong to some of the missing scientists?

Thinking fast, Tony fired rapid repulsor bursts at the ice mounds the creatures were using as protection, causing them to dive out of the way. Next he fired a blast at a metallic cylinder that extended from Outpost 13 into the ice below, ripping open an Iron Man-size hole. Then he activated his boot jets, thrust himself past the beasts, and soared into the cylinder.

“Finishing touch . . .” said Tony as a brilliant blast of heat issued from his armor's unibeam, sealing the cylinder from the inside.

“This was either a really good idea or a terribly bad one,” he said with a laugh. He proceeded through the cylinder and into the darkness below . . . alone.



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Chapter 3

Iron Man landed at the bottom of the metallic cylinder and found an opening that led to a hallway of corrugated metal. Dim yellow lights dotted either side of the hallway.

“J.A.R.V.I.S., those things back there. Any idea what they were?” said Tony as he entered the below-freezing hallway.

“Scanning database. Result: negative. It must be something we haven't encountered yet,” replied J.A.R.V.I.S.

“It must be,” said Tony, sighing heavily as he continued down the hallway. He reached a door with a sign above it that read Van Wall Research Center. Curious, he entered, using his helmet's visual scanners to assess the large room. Heavy machinery lined the walls, and a bank of computers that rivaled anything on the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier stood in the middle. The scanners revealed energy wavelengths that were familiar to him.



As Tony walked toward the computers, J.A.R.V.I.S. blared in his ears: “Life-form detected.”

Whirling around, Tony zeroed in on a metal storage unit in a far corner. He was getting a little tired of this game of hide-and-seek.

“Whoever's in that cabinet can come on out,” called Tony. “It'll save us both some time.”

The cabinet door whipped open, and out staggered a frumpy middle-aged man.

“Iron Man!” he said, running toward the armored Avenger.



Iron Man steadied the man, bracing his shoulders with both hands. Tony decided to slide his metal visor back, revealing his face. “Take it easy, Dr. . . Blair,” said Tony as he read the badge on the man's lab coat. “Where are the missing scientists? Where—”

Blair grabbed Iron Man's wrist, tugging him in the opposite direction. “I'm the only one! We need to leave, now!”

“You're safe, Dr. Blair,” said Tony, trying his best to sound reassuring. “I need some answers. Where is everyone? What were you working on?”

The doctor wrung his hands nervously, sweating profusely. “Our—our research . . .” he stammered. “The Cosmic Bridge Generator—”

“A portal,” interrupted Tony, “to another, unseen dimension. A way of harnessing extraterrestrial power sources for the benefit of everyone on Earth.”

Blair nodded. “The first test knocked out our communications. We spent days trying to get them up and running. That's when Black Widow and Falcon arrived. Without warning, they attacked us!”

J.A.R.V.I.S. suddenly spoke in Tony's ear. “I am detecting a rise in Dr. Blair's blood pressure and heart rate.”

He's lying, thought Tony. Why would Black Widow and Falcon respond to the distress call only to turn around and attack a bunch of scientists? Something is not right. . . .

Suddenly, a blast of energy hit Tony squarely in the chest plate, knocking him off balance. A glance at the doorway revealed the source of the attack—Black Widow. It must have been Tony's imagination, but she seemed so angry her eyes glowed red! Swooping in above her came Falcon.

“Black Widow! Falcon!” Tony faced his teammates. “Coulson's been looking everywhere for you two. What is going on here?”

“Ease up, it's me!”

Without a word, Widow fired more bursts from the Widow's Bite gauntlets she wore on her wrists. Intense electric bolts attacked Tony's armor. Various internal alarms sounded, and Tony glanced at his helmet's heads-up display. “Power cell A compromised?”



“That can't be good,” said Tony as he crouched in a defensive posture.

“I just had this suit polished!” Tony shouted at Black Widow. His faceplate slid into place, forming the visage of Iron Man. Black Widow said nothing, keeping her glare and her gauntlets trained on him. Falcon's shadow circled them.

“I thought we were fighting on the same team, or am I wrong about that?” Iron Man said, trying to reason with them. But he was met with only an eerie silence and red eyes. Those piercing red eyes. *It's like they're not themselves! Black Widow and Falcon would never attack a friend like this. What happened? Or . . . what happened to them?*

“Get behind me, Doc!” shouted Iron Man.

The room seemed to spin as Black Widow and Falcon circled Iron Man and Dr. Blair. Tony took a big gulp. *“It's nothing Iron Man can't handle.” Me and my big mouth.*



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Chapter 4

In the confines of the Van Wall Research Center, Tony was at a disadvantage. Between Black Widow's blasts and Falcon's swooping, circling, and smashing, Tony was getting crushed. Just as he'd right himself, he'd be hit with another attack.

The ceiling was high but not high enough for powered flight. Falcon could glide, so he had the tactical advantage. Black Widow used her expert acrobatics and leapt across the enormous machines that lined the walls.

Tony just couldn't match the speed and agility of Black Widow or Falcon. On top of that, the only way he could defend himself was to hurt his friends. But what kind of friends attacked their own?

"Multiple life-forms detected," declared J.A.R.V.I.S., distracting Tony for a moment . . . which was all Falcon needed to swoop down and grab Iron Man. Falcon flung Tony into a solid granite wall.



Then came the sound of something hurtling through the air, followed by metal hitting metal.

Tony looked up to see a familiar red, white, and blue uniform standing before him. Captain America! Black Widow and Falcon turned their combined gaze on Cap.



Cap adjusted the shield on his left arm, deflecting one of Widow's blasts. "I was supposed to catch a ride with you," Cap said.

"I was just on my way to pick you up," Tony said with a sigh of relief.

"I'm glad to see you found Black Widow and Falcon. They just don't look too glad to see you. . . . Did you find the scientists?"

"Negative," Tony answered. "Not sure if you noticed, but I've been a little busy fighting our 'friends.'"

"Point taken . . ." replied Cap.

Falcon and Black Widow charged toward them. Cap used his mighty shield to block the two and send them flying.

"Those two seem very interested in this," said Cap, motioning to a circular framework at the center of the room. Inside the framework was a large gateway—big enough to fit the Hulk—surrounded by a series of metal beams that protruded at odd angles. Within the gateway was a swirl of light against dark, color against black. It looked like the universe itself was contained there.



“Oh, no! It's the Cosmic Bridge Generator,” Tony said. “I invented it.”

“They haven't taken their eyes off it,” said Cap.

Eyes . . . eyes . . . thought Tony. *Eyes! That's it!*

“Cap! You notice something off about Widow and Falcon?” he asked.

The sentinel of liberty stood his ground, deflecting Widow's attack while taking note of everything around him. It was a skill honed in combat, from his days battling Red Skull and Hydra to his time fighting alongside the mighty Avengers. “Their eyes,” Cap answered with authority. “They're red!”

“Good guess!” said Tony. “I owe you shawarma when we're back in New York. Now I've got a hunch. . . .”

Without skipping a beat, Captain America extended his right arm with incredible force, throwing his shield directly at Falcon's hard-light wings. “Play your hunch!” he called. “I'll draw their fire!”

That's when Tony heard it—a distant thumping, mixed in with what

sounded like moans or cries for help. *The scientists? Maybe I did see their faces before. They must be nearby!*

While Captain America fought, Iron Man moved to the metal gateway in the middle of the room. Tony flipped up the cuff on his right gauntlet to access a touch pad. Moving his index finger along the pad, he hacked into the generator's controls. Tony was now in command of the machine.

It glowed purple, then green, and finally red, crackling with orbs of black energy.

“Hey! Bad teammates! Over here!” shouted Iron Man, waving at Black Widow and Falcon.

The generator pulsed, red light illuminating everything in the room. Bathed in the light, Black Widow and Falcon cringed, their shapes shifting then returning to normal. The red light glowed stronger and stronger, and its effect on Black Widow and Falcon grew stronger, too!

Without warning, Iron Man zapped Black Widow and Falcon with his repulsors, knocking them in front of the Cosmic Bridge Generator. In a flash, they both vanished from view.

“Did we just lose Black Widow and Falcon . . . again?” Cap said, shaking his head. “Fury won't like this. What's going on, Tony?”

Iron Man looked at Cap, then at the generator. He had gambled with the lives of people he had known for years. If he was right, then everything would be fine. But what if . . .

What if I was wrong? he thought. What if I made a mistake? What if I have lost Black Widow and Falcon . . . forever?



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Chapter 5

The Cosmic Bridge Generator quivered and hummed, its crimson glow permeating everything around it. Captain America ducked behind his shield, eyes closed tightly. Even then he could see the brilliant red light coming from the generator. Tony lowered polarized lenses over the eye ports on his helmet. He couldn't escape the otherworldly red, either.

“There!” said Iron Man as he tapped a sequence into the keypad on his right gauntlet. He sounded more confident than he felt. Just as quickly as it had started, the generator powered down. The quivering and humming stopped, and the red glow faded. Raising the polarized lenses inside his helmet, Tony looked toward the generator. Standing before it were two figures. *What if I just made everything worse?*

“Anyone get the license plate of that truck?” asked Falcon, rubbing his head. Beside him stood Black Widow. Both heroes looked stunned, unsure of their surroundings.



“You guys all right?” asked Iron Man as he turned to face Widow. He was relieved to see that her eyes were back to normal. Tony Stark raised his visor and grinned. *That was close. . . .*

“I'm fine, Tony,” answered Widow. “I just can't remember anything that happened since we arrived at Outpost 13 and were attacked.”

Falcon nodded. “Last thing I remember is entering Outpost 13. We were ambushed by a beast with lots of long slimy arms. Then there was a flash of red, and the next minute—wham—here we are!”

“Someone activated the generator and it knocked you guys out and sucked you inside . . . into another dimension,” Tony explained. “The Falcon and Black Widow who attacked me and Cap? Doppelgängers. Duplicates. Imitations.”

The heroes swiveled their heads in unison as they heard the generator hum back to life. Standing in the breached wall was Dr. Blair, looking panicked. He was moving his finger over a device that resembled a wristwatch.

“Can you shut that down, Doc?” groaned Tony. “We've had enough fun with this doohickey today.”

“You have to stop them, Iron Man!” blurted Dr. Blair, sounding hysterical. “Those two destroyed Outpost 13! They captured all the S.H.I.E.L.D. scientists!”

“Who's this quack?” asked Falcon, jerking a thumb at the doctor.



Black Widow studied Dr. Blair carefully. "I've never seen you before," she said warily.

Dr. Blair looked at Tony, shaking his head. "Don't trust them, Iron Man! They were so quick to turn on us before, so ready to attack! What if they do it again?" He slowly started walking toward Tony.

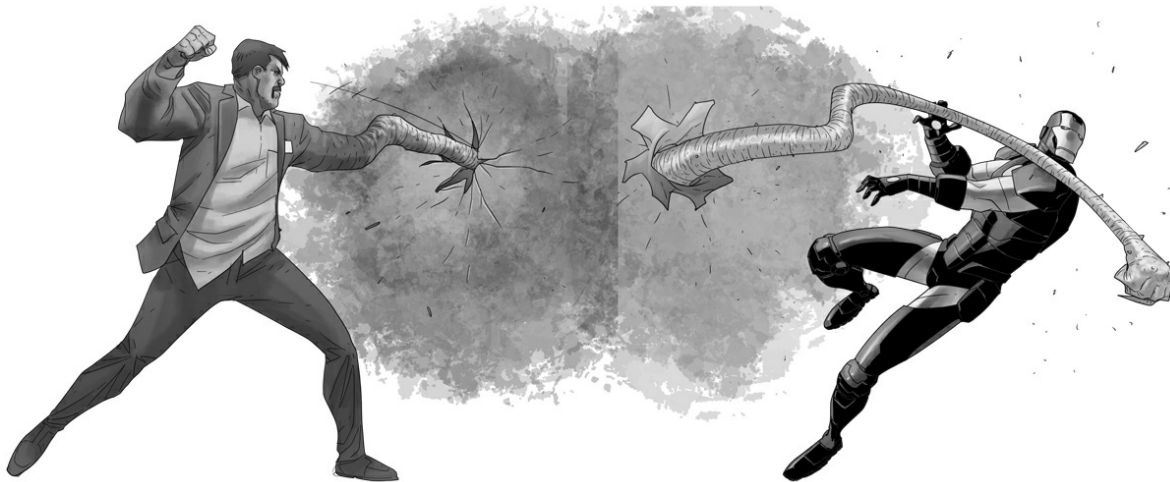
"Take a deep breath, Doc," said Tony.

The doctor eyed Black Widow and Falcon with suspicion. "You have to destroy them, Iron Man—while we still can!"

"Doc, you really need to relax! The Black Widow and Falcon we were fighting before were imitations. These are the real deal."

"Yes, they are," grunted Dr. Blair.

Blair's arm suddenly turned into a tentacle and grabbed Iron Man, smacking him to the ground! The appendage dripped with thick slime and left a sticky green residue on everything it touched. Wrapping around Iron Man's helmet, the tentacle began to squeeze tighter and tighter.



As Tony struggled to free himself, the Avengers raced to his side. More tentacles exploded from Blair's body and snaked out in all directions, stopping the heroes dead in their tracks. Unleashing two repulsor blasts that hit Blair in the stomach, Iron Man knocked the doctor back into the massive machinery. Blair eased his grip just enough for Tony to escape.

Dr. Blair's shape began to swell and deform like a marshmallow in a microwave oven. The mass reformed until it was a large yellow-green blob with eight long appendages. Its eyes glowed red with hate.

“That's something you don't see every day,” said Falcon.

The creature unleashed two arms at Black Widow, trying to wrap them around her wrists. But her lightning-fast reflexes kicked in, and she fired off several shots from her Widow's Bite gauntlets. The electric bolts hit the creature and scorched its tentacles.

The beast lashed out once more, this time at Captain America. In one fluid motion, Cap hurled his shield at the creature's head and then hit the ground in a somersault, ducking below its eight limbs. Cap came out of the roll and firmly planted his fist in its face.

The pulsating mass towered over the Avengers and spoke with venom. “I am not of this world.”

Tony walked closer to the creature as the other Avengers closed in behind him, ready for battle. The Cosmic Bridge Generator hummed. “This,” began Tony, nodding toward the apparatus, “is pretty important to you, huh?”

The twisted shape spat out its barbed tongue in disgust. “You'll have no

answer from me, human.”

Its raspy voice made Tony's flesh crawl.

“Fair enough,” Tony concluded, then whirled around and blasted the generator to pieces with his repulsors. Captain America hurled his shield, smashing the flying debris. As Tony's visor slid into place, Iron Man and the creature continued their face-off.

The creature smiled. “Do you think that is it?” it hissed. “We are great in number, human! Even as I speak, we near the completion of a new Cosmic Bridge Generator, large enough to bring all of my kind to this pitiful speck of a planet. We will destroy anything in our way!”



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Chapter 6

The room fell silent. The Avengers stared at the monster before them. No one said anything, but Tony knew what they were thinking: if he hadn't invented the Cosmic Bridge Generator, Tony and his teammates wouldn't be staring down the barrel of the end of the world.

I created the generator to do good, Tony thought. Now it's being turned into something terrible. All right, Mr. Guy-Who-Can-Fix- Anything. How do you fix this?

Before he could continue his thoughts, Tony heard a banging sound once more and what could have been a muffled cry for help. *The S.H.I.E.L.D. scientists!* Tony finally pieced together what had happened at Outpost 13. *These creatures must have captured the scientists and kept them around in case anything went wrong with the generator. They're here somewhere!*

Tony turned to Black Widow and Falcon and with a nod motioned them to the slimy yellow-green beast's side. "Mind telling us what that sound is, gruesome? I'm betting it's the missing S.H.I.E.L.D. scientists. Be a good little monster and show us where they are."

"It matters little," sneered the creature as it folded two of its tentacles together. "You cannot stop us."

"Yeah," said Falcon. "We've heard that one before."

Black Widow and Falcon grabbed the hideous monster and pushed it into the hallway outside, demanding that it lead them toward the captured scientists.

Iron Man stared at the smoldering ruins of the generator. "The more I think about it, there was no way the scientists and that creature could pull this off alone," he mused. "They had to have had help. Someone good at sci crime, maybe."

"Sci crime?" said Cap, puzzled.

"Short for science crime. Word games like that keep my mind . . ." Tony trailed off.

Cap looked at his friend and tilted his head. “What is it?” “Word games. H.P.T. . . . ‘opening new doors’ . . . Elton Traggeore,” Tony chattered, his words all jumbled. “I was at this super-boring charity party tonight thrown by Elton Traggeore. What if that’s an anagram?”

“Rearrange the letters in Elton Traggeore and you get another name: George Tarleton. George Tarleton, as in . . .”

Cap and Iron Man looked at each other and spoke in unison: “M.O.D.O.K.”

By the time Iron Man and Captain America caught up with Black Widow and Falcon, the two heroes had found and freed the missing S.H.I.E.L.D. scientists. Two of the scientists, Agent MacReady and Agent Childs, were prepping a cryo-containment unit to hold the creature. The unit—a sleek translucent tube with metal caps—would keep its occupant in a state of suspended animation: alive, asleep, and unable to do any damage.



The monster fixed its eyes on Agents Childs and MacReady. Tony approached from behind and opened his chest unibeam, which unleashed a blast that knocked the monster into the cryo-containment unit. The creature bounced back immediately, and Tony gulped. *No one gets up from a full unibeam hit that fast. Not even Thor.* “Pathetic earthling. Nothing you do can stop us. Nothing!”

“Childs, MacReady, get this thing out of here!” said Tony.

“With pleasure,” Childs replied as she activated the cryo-containment unit. With a whoosh, the unit sealed itself, flash-freezing the monster inside. Anti-gravity discs beneath the unit turned on and the capsule hovered just above the floor.

“One alien on ice ready for transport,” said MacReady. He and Childs gave the unit a push and slowly maneuvered it out the door.

Tony's mind turned to M.O.D.O.K. The villain never worked alone.

A.I.M. and M.O.D.O.K. Two of Iron Man's oldest enemies.

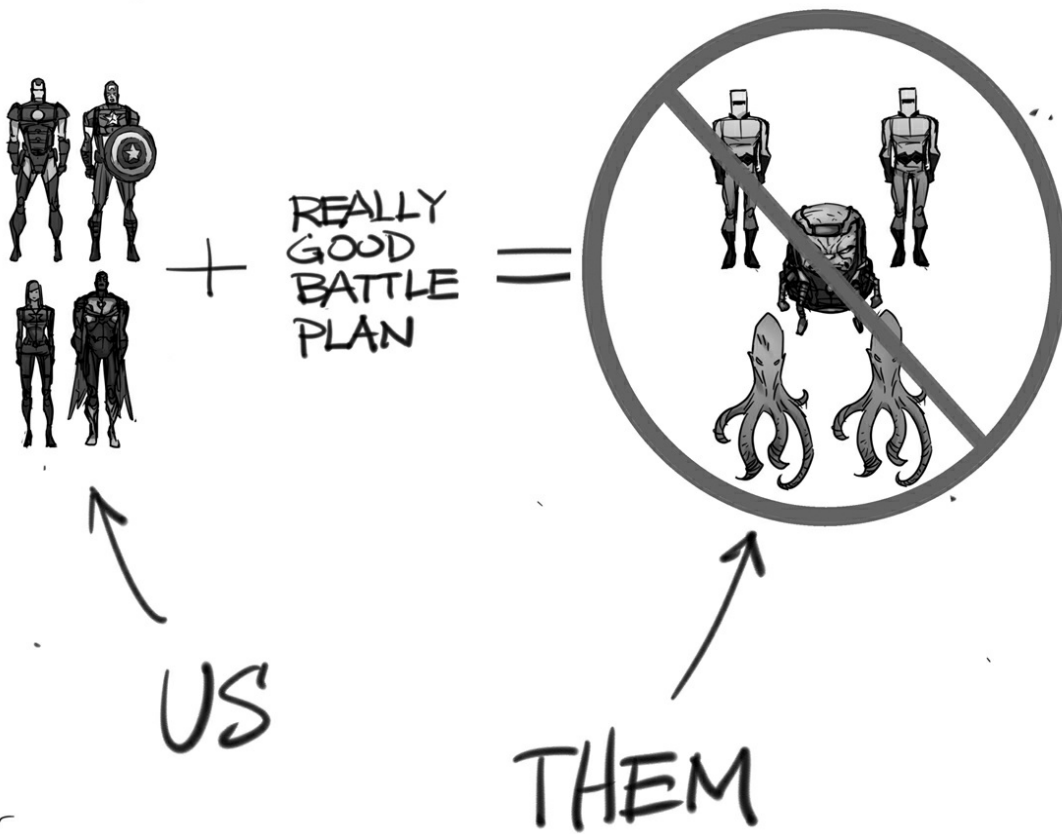
A.I.M. (Advanced Idea Mechanics) was a criminal organization that used science for evil. It was that science that had transformed a lowly A.I.M. agent named George Tarleton into M.O.D.O.K. He had then turned the tables on A.I.M., using his superintelligent brain to take over the organization. M.O.D.O.K.'s mind powers could be deadly, and everyone knew it. The A.I.M. agents obeyed his every order. Luckily, sensitive scanners in Iron Man's armor could locate M.O.D.O.K.'s energy signature and track him anywhere.

Tony paused and looked down at his armor-covered hands—the brilliant crimson gloves that could forge reality from dreams. But dreams could become nightmares. An unfamiliar feeling seized him: guilt.

I invented the generator. And now the bad guys are going to use it to mess with the earth. This is all my fault. I have to fix this mess myself.

“All right, people,” Cap ordered. “We need a battle plan and—”

BATTLE PLAN:



“Plan whatever you want,” said Tony, cutting off Captain America. “I’m taking M.O.D.O.K. down. Now.”

“This is too big for any one of us, Tony!” The high-pitched whine of Iron Man's boot jets kicked in, and Cap jumped back. He yelled over the sound of chemical thrust, “You can't defeat M.O.D.O.K. by yourself!”

But Tony wasn't listening. The armored Avenger blasted off, arms outstretched, and used his repulsors to smash through the roof above.

Iron Man was gone!



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Chapter 7

“ETA, J.A.R.V.I.S.?” asked Tony, sweating inside his armor despite the temperature control.

“Estimated time of arrival three minutes, three seconds,” J.A.R.V.I.S. replied.

Tony checked his visual scanners as he skimmed the surface of the Atlantic Ocean—low enough to evade any A.I.M. radar. Almost as if on cue, A.I.M. Island appeared on the horizon.

“Let's go for a swim, J.A.R.V.I.S.,” said Tony. In response, J.A.R.V.I.S. immediately prepped the armor for underwater maneuvers. All openings were sealed; carbon dioxide exhaust ports were activated.



Tony plunged into the ocean.

Why did I snap at Cap back there? he thought.

Tiny caterpillar drives—silent engines—turned in Tony's boots, propelling him toward A.I.M. Island with stunning speed. In the quiet ocean void, Tony gave himself over to his thoughts. *I wasn't angry with him. I was angry with myself. None of this is his fault. If I hadn't built the generator in the first place, those aliens wouldn't be trying to take over the earth. And M.O.D.O.K. and A.I.M. wouldn't be helping them.*

Once again, Tony was overwhelmed with guilt. How could he continue to invent advanced technologies but also guarantee they would be used only for good and not evil—to help others, not hurt them?

He checked his oxygen supply—85 percent. So far, so good. The armor's motion detectors revealed three objects circling in the distance. Sharks, maybe? But J.A.R.V.I.S. hadn't detected any life-forms. *Robot sharks, I bet. Of course A.I.M. would have robot sharks. Why didn't I listen to Cap instead of running off on my own?*

Tony activated his armor's underwater countermeasures, and several small robotic beacons ejected from his shoulder launcher. Each mimicked the sounds of Tony's armor and drew two of the robot sharks away. The third shark was hungry . . . for metal! It attacked Tony from below and almost swallowed him whole! The metal teeth ground against his armor, and his suit began to fizzle and cave in on him. Tony quickly grabbed the robotic jaws and activated his elbow thrusters, tearing the metal mouth in two.

Really? Tony thought. *I almost bit the bullet because of a robo-fish?* He rocketed like a torpedo toward his destination.

Beneath the ocean, A.I.M. Island looked like a large geodesic dome constructed of foreign materials—nothing like the islands Tony was used to vacationing at.

This is where Cap would say, "We need a plan. We need to act as a team," thought Tony. *And here I am with neither. Well done, Stark, well done.*

"Okay," Tony said to himself, "time to make a door."

"They kind of give me the creeps," said the A.I.M. agent with a shudder. She stood with another agent at the door of a large control room.

"Shhhh," the second agent replied softly. "Don't let the boss hear you talking like that!"

ZAAAAAAK! The wall ripped open, torn apart by a massive repulsor blast! In rushed a torrent of seawater and, along with it, Iron Man! The agents were knocked unconscious. An alarm wailed for only a second before it was silenced by Iron Man's repulsor.



Let's hope I didn't wake anybody up, he thought.

Within minutes, the wall had resealed, leaving no sign of Iron Man's entrance. "Self-healing polymer walls," said Tony. "We'll have to look into those for Stark Tower. Save a fortune every time the Hulk busts a wall."

Iron Man was inside A.I.M.'s hidden base, in a corridor. Activating his boot jets, Tony took off, continuing to follow M.O.D.O.K.'s energy signature.

The master control room is enormous, Tony thought. He was up in an air shaft, looking down at the room through a grate. He saw an assembly of A.I.M. agents—all armed—surrounding an enormous duplicate Cosmic Bridge Generator.

“You are too cautious,” said a spine-chilling voice.

“And you are not cautious enough!” came the reply, silencing everyone in the room.

Tony took a second to place the first voice, but he knew the second one.
... M.O.D.O.K.



Iron Man smirked. He was confident he had the element of surprise. He prepared to blast through the grate, but before he could act, an explosion struck Tony's hiding spot. He fell to the floor of the master control room, hard.

“You're late, Iron Man,” M.O.D.O.K. intoned. He almost sounded bored. “I expected you approximately thirty-four seconds ago.”

Iron Man righted himself and was greeted by the army of A.I.M. agents. Floating beside them in his hover chair was M.O.D.O.K. His head was impossibly huge and his limbs tiny, almost useless. In the center of his vast forehead was a glowing beam, the source of his immense psionic powers.

“I would have been here sooner, but the traffic was terrible,” Tony joked. He tried to sound like his usual devil-may-care self, but the odds were against him. Things didn't look good for one lone Iron Man.

M.O.D.O.K. ignored Iron Man and hovered over to the generator's control panels. Iron Man saw the familiar yellow-green blobs, their many arms reaching, grabbing, constructing. This new Cosmic Bridge Generator dwarfed the one Tony had destroyed at Outpost 13.

“That thing looks big enough to, I don't know, bring a whole planet of slimy, scummy creatures to Earth,” said Tony. Channeling as much power as he could to his repulsors, he unleashed a barrage of devastating blasts at the generator. Well, they should have been devastating. Unlike the generator at Outpost 13, this one was unaffected by his repulsors.

One of the beasts let out a bitter laugh, then slowly shuffled its mass toward Iron Man. Its writhing arms shot out and grabbed Tony by the neck. Then, without warning, it dropped him and began to change shape.

Its features slowly morphed, going from altogether alien to a little more . . . familiar. Two arms, two legs. Tall. Elongated facial features. Almost human.

Something Tony had seen years before.

“Phantoms?” said Tony in disbelief. Back when the Avengers had first joined together to fight evil, he had encountered a strange being who called himself the Space Phantom. He could change his shape to mimic almost anyone or anything. He imitated the different members of the Avengers, pitting the heroes against one another.

“Yes, that is what your kind call us,” snarled the alien, its voice practically dripping with slime. “Our own world has become . . . inhospitable. But your world . . . your Earth . . . will make a glorious new home. Once you and your miserable kind have been . . . displaced.”

“Slow down, sloppy joe. What about all the nice people who already live here?” Tony asked. The A.I.M. agents began to circle Iron Man. Tony's audio sensors detected the sound of their weapons heating up.

“The Phantoms shall first replace all those humans in positions of power,” M.O.D.O.K. explained. “Your Cosmic Bridge Generator will transport the Phantoms here and send their human counterparts to their destroyed home world.”

That explains why they needed the generator! Every time a Phantom imitates someone, that person is sent to the Phantom's world. But when a Phantom changes its shape again, the person returns. They would need some other method to send people away permanently . . . like the generator!

“And what's in it for you and A.I.M.?” Tony asked M.O.D.O.K.

M.O.D.O.K. threw Tony a look of annoyance. “Is it not obvious? I desire complete control of this world. With the Phantoms, that goal is within my grasp.”

Tony had heard enough. He ordered J.A.R.V.I.S. to switch all energy reserves to his repulsors. But just as he was about to unleash all the force he could muster, he was struck by the A.I.M. agents! They fired at once, encasing him in a field of hard light. Then J.A.R.V.I.S. came online with more bad news: “Power now operating at reserve levels.”

M.O.D.O.K. and the Phantoms closed in on Tony.

He struggled against the onslaught, but he could still hear Cap's words echoing in his head: This is too big for any one of us, Tony.



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 8

The heads-up display inside Tony Stark's helmet was full of alarms, warnings, and worse. Systems were malfunctioning. Circuits were overloading. Tony knew his armor was crashing.

“You delay the inevitable,” muttered M.O.D.O.K., who hadn't even bothered to join the fight. The A.I.M. agents' new weapons were doing a good job of destroying Iron Man's armor all on their own. And the Space Phantom smirked at Tony all the while, confident that soon his comrades would begin their takeover of Earth.

“J.A.R.V.I.S.! Reroute all remaining power to the unibeam!” shouted Tony.

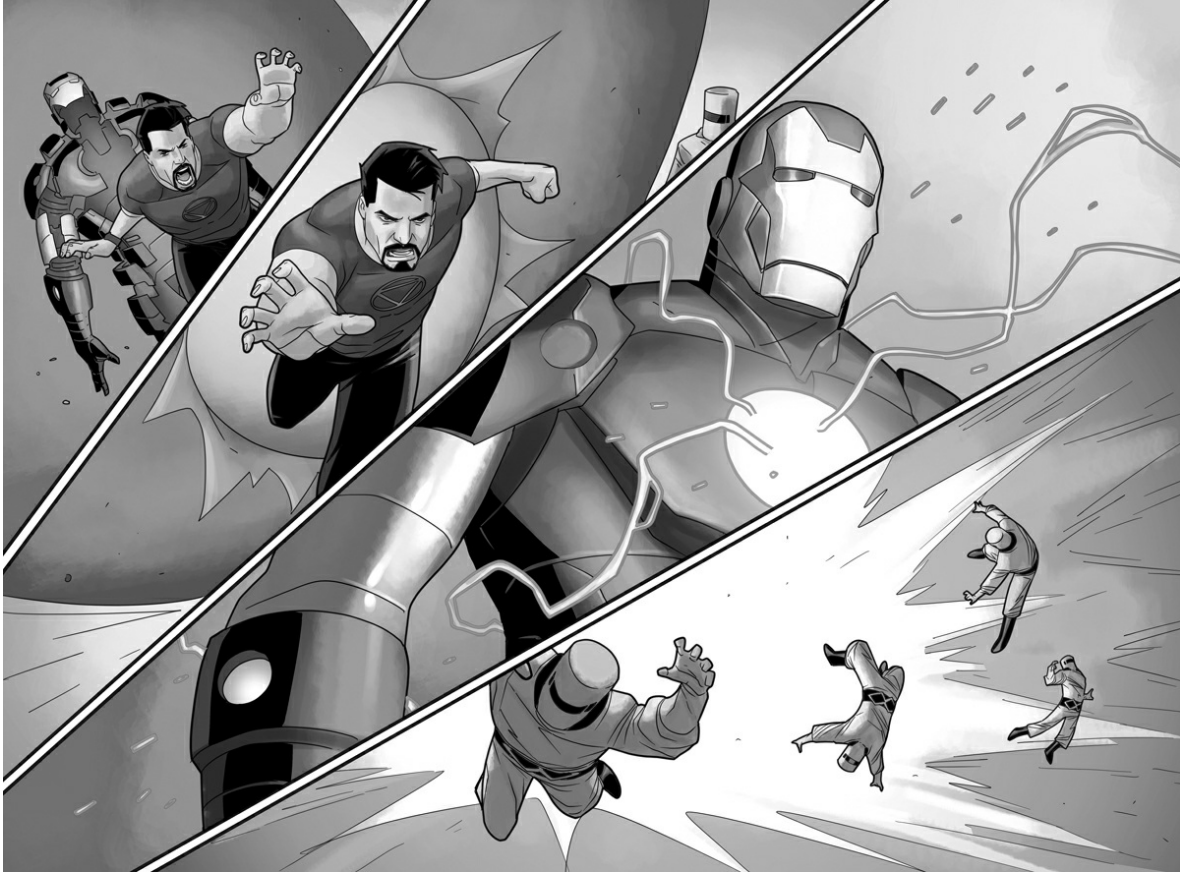
“Remaining power rerouted,” said J.A.R.V.I.S.

“Good. Stand by to detonate unibeam on my mark!”

Then it happened—so fast that neither M.O.D.O.K., the Phantoms, nor the A.I.M. agents could process it:

Tony ejected himself from the Iron Man armor and threw himself across the room, clear of the hard-light bubble and away from his foes.

The armor remained inside the bubble and the unibeam exploded with pent-up energy, shattering its hard-light prison and bathing the room in a shockwave that floored everyone and everything.



A dazed Tony Stark was the only one who had seen the explosion coming, and even he was surprised. *Who knew it would work that well?* thought Tony. He had deduced that the hard-light bubble was keyed to his armor and his armor only—so ejecting himself from the armor effectively freed him. And by rerouting all the power to his unibeam, Tony overloaded the armor, causing it to self-destruct.

He had bought himself precious time but at a price.

He was now armor-less—Tony Stark, alone against the evil of A.I.M.

“An impressive gambit, Stark,” said M.O.D.O.K. as the smoke cleared. “But you are still here, without your mighty Iron Man armor. Surely a man as smart as you knows when to admit defeat.”

Tony crouched behind a rack in the corner of the room. *I may not have my armor, but I'm still Tony Stark*, he thought. *And the day I let a bunch of beekeepers, goofy aliens, and a giant head stop me will be the day I can't memorize pi to seventy thousand places.*

“Show yourself, Stark!” called M.O.D.O.K. “It is hopeless! Surrender

now and I promise you a slow, agonizing death.”

“That all sounds great, M.O.D.O.K.!” Tony yelled. “It's a tempting offer, but I'll pass!”

Tony was in trouble and he knew it. If only he had listened to Cap.

And that's when he heard it—a distant rumbling. The rumbling got louder and louder. Everything in the room began to shake. Tiles fell from the ceiling and pillars toppled. Behind M.O.D.O.K., the wall burst in a great explosion!

Standing in the ruin was a large brutish figure, dripping wet, fists clenched. Through gritted teeth, the green-skinned monster snarled, “Puny wall.”





扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 9

“Hulk!” yelled Tony. The giant looked at Tony and grimaced. Or maybe it was a smile. It was kind of hard to tell. “Smash!”

The Hulk ran head-on into the sea of A.I.M. agents, their weapons blazing. The Hulk shrugged and tossed agents left and right. One landed next to Tony.

“Enough!” commanded M.O.D.O.K., and his voice seemed to fill every part of the room. A beam of light issued from his headband, blasting the Hulk in the face. The Hulk roared in anger, then collapsed to the ground, holding his head.

A Phantom turned toward the Cosmic Bridge Generator. It moved its fingers over the watch on its wrist and the generator came to life. It glowed red, and creepy humanoid shapes began to emerge from within.



More Phantoms.

“Good to see you guys!” said Tony as the Phantoms advanced toward him.

“Who are you talking to, human?” asked a Phantom as it morphed its arm into a tentacle and wrapped it around Tony.

Tony gasped, “Over . . . there.”

The Phantom sneered, “What are y—” then caught Captain America's shield in the face and lost its grip on Tony.

“We didn't follow you all the way from Antarctica to let one of those things get you,” said Cap as Falcon and Black Widow took the fight to A.I.M. Tony smiled at his teammates. *I'm one lucky shellhead*, he thought, *lucky to have friends who've always got my back.*

“Never mind that,” replied Tony. “These aliens plan on using this generator to invade our world!”

“So let's blow it to pieces!” said Black Widow, knocking an A.I.M. agent to the ground.



“Tried it. It's made out of some kind of material that isn't blow-up-able.”

“Is that even a word?” asked Falcon, punching an A.I.M. agent through the helmet.

Cap smiled at Tony. “So if force alone won't do it, what will?”

“Teamwork,” offered Tony. “We can start by helping the Hulk. Can you take out M.O.D.O.K.'s psi-beam?”

After assessing the situation, Captain America had only to look at Falcon.

With the speed of his namesake, Falcon swooped in from above, raking one of his hard-light wings against M.O.D.O.K.'s face. His attack against the Hulk cut short, M.O.D.O.K. found himself face to face with Falcon's fury!

The A.I.M. agents scrambled to aid their fallen leader, but they had their own problem in the form of Black Widow! Like a one-woman wrecking crew, she tore through the agents. Using all the martial arts prowess at her

command, Widow attacked relentlessly, never slowing.

“Cap! I know how we can stop these guys . . . but I'm gonna need your help,” said Tony. The two raced toward their green-skinned teammate.

“That's what friends are for,” said Cap.

Cap and Tony were cut off from the Hulk. A line of Phantoms formed between them, shape-shifting into gruesome monsters. They looked like dinosaurs gone horribly wrong. Sharp talons, fangs, spiked tails, and long sinewy limbs. The creatures let loose an unearthly sound and continued to close in on the heroes.

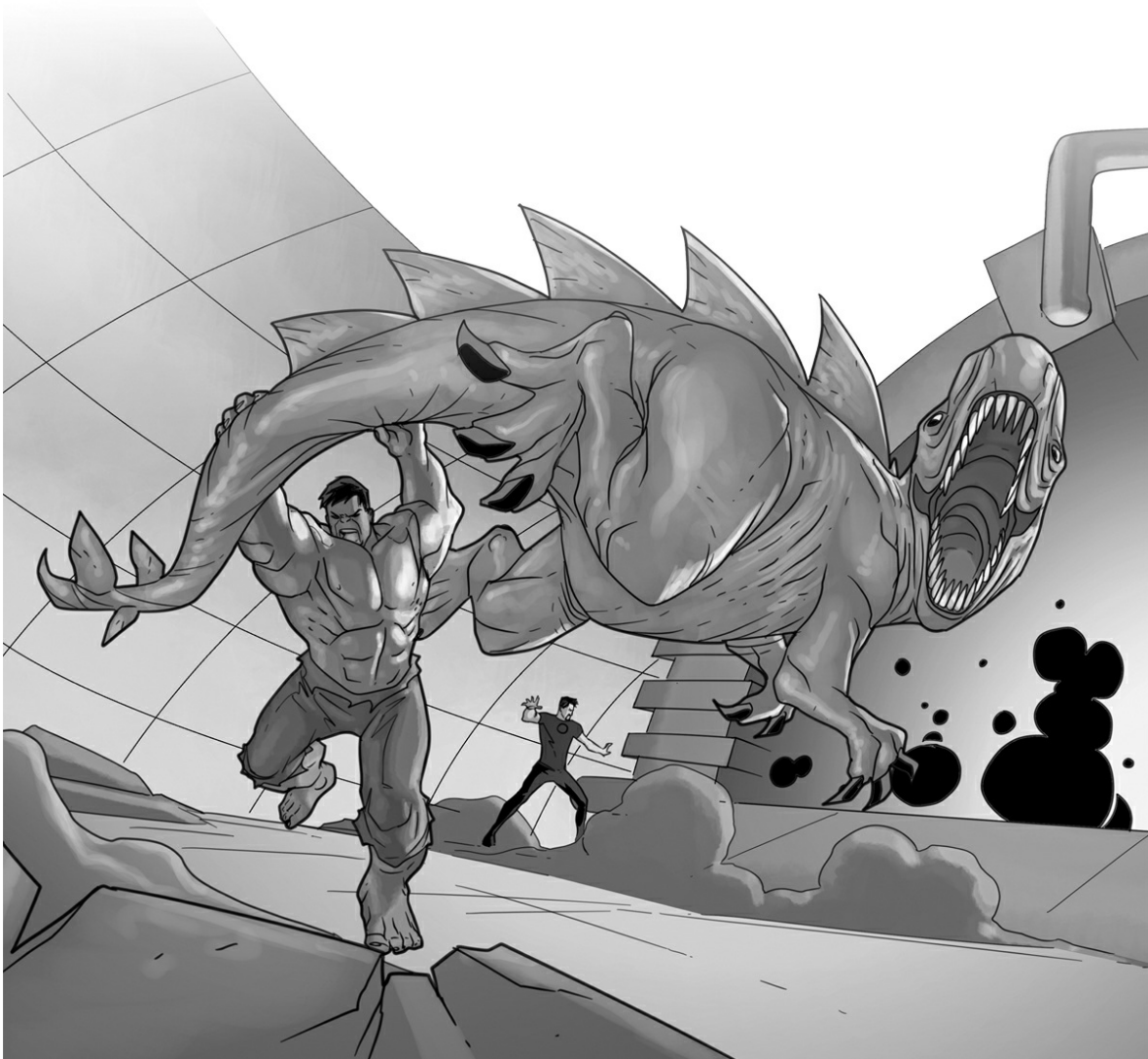
“Puny monsters,” growled the Hulk, smashing his enormous fists into the ground and sending the creatures flying.

“Can you keep these things busy, Hulk?” asked Tony. The Hulk grunted, grabbing one of the Phantoms by its tail. He whirled it around his head, then let go.

“So that's a yes,” said Tony. “Come with me, Cap!”

Captain America ran alongside Tony and they slid to a stop at the base of the generator.

Tony shook his head. “The generator can transport things from the Phantoms' home world to Earth and vice versa. But what happens if we program the generator to transport itself?”



“I give up,” Cap said. “What happens?”

“I don't know,” replied Tony. “But I'll bet you a brand-new space bike the Phantoms will hate it.”

A no-holds-barred brawl raged in A.I.M. headquarters. M.O.D.O.K. tried in vain to hit Falcon with his psi-beam as the winged hero circled above. Black Widow continued her assault against the A.I.M. agents. There were only a few left standing at that point. Meanwhile, the Hulk smashed monster after monster.

“I'll need you to throw your shield into the generator on my mark!” shouted Tony. Cap just looked at him. “Don't worry, you'll get it back!”

The star-spangled Avenger moved like a red-white-and-blue blur,

knocking back the alien invaders. “Whatever you're going to do, do it fast!”

Tony's fingers raced along the generator's controls. *Just a few seconds*, thought Tony. *Just a few seconds . . .*

“Now!” cried Tony, and Cap hurled his shield into the Cosmic Bridge Generator just as the giant machine hummed to life. The shield hit the crackling red energy, and the entire room glowed red.

As the red veil lifted from the room, Tony Stark looked around. He saw Cap's shield resting on the floor. The generator was gone—and along with it, every last trace of the Phantoms . . . and M.O.D.O.K., too. All that remained were the Avengers and the defeated agents of A.I.M.

“Well, what do you know,” Tony said. “It worked!”

“What did you do?” asked Cap, picking up his shield.

“I used your Vibranium shield to reflect the generator's energies on itself,” Tony explained. “The generator has transported itself, along with the Phantoms and M.O.D.O.K. . . . somewhere in space and time.”



扫一扫，收听本节英语音频

Chapter 10



A few hours later, Tony Stark and Steve Rogers found themselves in an elevator aboard the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier. As the doors to the Helicarrier bridge opened, Tony and Steve walked inside. As usual, the place was buzzing with activity. Standing in the middle of it all was Nick Fury, the director of S.H.I.E.L.D.

“What happened to my Cosmic Bridge Generator, Stark?” Fury fumed.

“Hi, Nick. How was your day?” Tony replied. Fury just stared at him.

“Technically, it's my generator. I made it,” said Tony. “Since nobody could play with it nicely, I did the responsible thing. I took my ball and went

home—so to speak.”



“You're just lucky you stopped another alien invasion,” Fury responded, turning his attention back to the bridge. “Otherwise, I might be mad. Plus, you saved all of those brainwashed scientists.”

“At first those scientists were creepy, but they were actually an impressive bunch. Oh, and I hate to correct you again, but I didn't stop another alien invasion and save Earth. We did. You know, teamwork?” Tony said.

Tony took in the view from the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier's observation deck. He could see all of New York City. Among the skyscrapers, he saw Stark Tower. Home.

Amazing, thought Tony. All of this would have been ruled by a bunch of pointy-headed aliens because I had to do everything on my own. Without the Avengers, my invention could have wiped out our planet.

“Can I join you?” Steve Rogers walked onto the observation deck. “We got lucky today. We saved everyone at Outpost 13, and S.H.I.E.L.D. has taken the A.I.M. agents into custody. All that and we sent M.O.D.O.K. and an army of evil aliens packing.”

“M.O.D.O.K. will be back. He always comes back,” said Tony softly. “We would have been luckier if I had listened to you and Coulson.”

Steve grinned warmly. “It never hurts to have a plan, and friends to

make it happen.”

“Y’know, Rogers, if this Super Hero thing doesn’t work out, you could make a lot of money writing greeting cards,” Tony said with a laugh.

It sounded lame, but Steve was right. Some problems couldn’t be solved by Iron Man alone. Tony was part of a team—the mighty Avengers. He had their backs, and they had his.

There just might be something to this teamwork thing, he thought.

Motioning with his thumb toward the door, Steve said, “Come on. You owe me shawarma and a new space bike.”

钢铁侠的故事

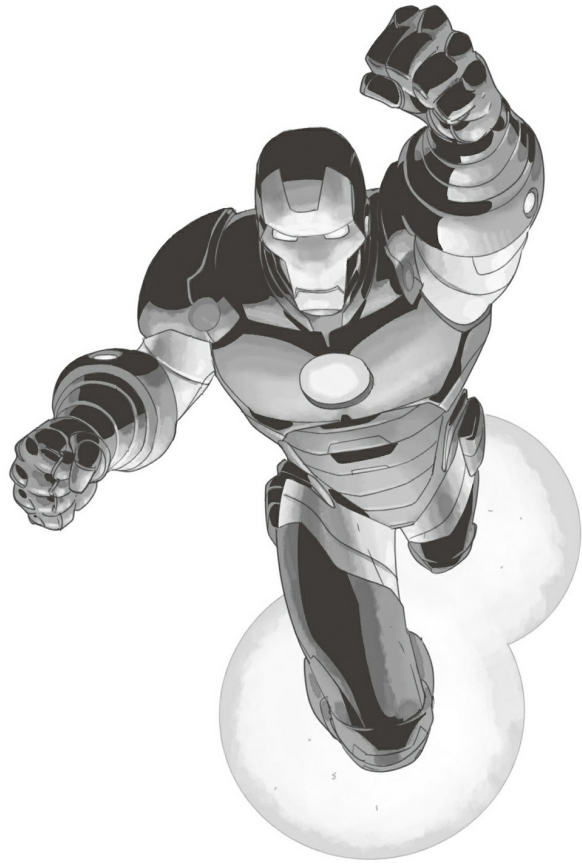
托尼·斯塔克是发明家、先驱、天才。他也是第一个这么看待自己的人。事实上，他还有更多身份。不过我们还是不要急着下定论。

他的父亲，霍华德·斯塔克不幸离世后，仅仅21岁的托尼就开始接管父亲极为成功的公司——斯塔克工业。斯塔克工业研发制造了最先进的武器，并将它们销往世界各地。托尼并不在意武器出售后会发生什么事，他只想要变得富有！

命运性的一天来临了，斯塔克在进行一场绝密武器测试的时候，遭遇一群全副武装罪犯的伏击，并被俘虏。他受了重伤，并被告知只能活很短的时间。斯塔克越来越虚弱，绑匪强迫他们制造一种武器——大规模杀伤性武器。但是斯塔克另有计划！他制造了一副不可思议的盔甲，用一个微型方舟反应炉为其供电，来让他的心脏继续跳动。

斯塔克借助自己的新武器打败了罪犯，逃了出来。自那天起，他发誓要利用自己的科学知识帮助全世界的人。他升级了盔甲，成了所向无敌的钢铁侠！

钢铁侠与黑寡妇、美国队长、鹰眼、绿巨人、雷神一起，组成了复仇者联盟——地球最强英雄联盟，致力于拯救全世界。



第一章



“我的领结是正的吗？告诉我，我的领结是正的。”托尼抱怨道。他想：“站在那里和我几乎不认识的人握手，说‘很高兴见到你’，真不是一件享受的事。我宁愿全副武装，去打倒绯红机甲。”

托尼的保镖，哈皮·霍根，大声叹了口气，说道：“老板，你并没有打领结。还记得吗？你说你不想看起来和我一样。”哈皮穿着燕尾服坐立不安，紧张地摆弄自己的歪领结。

“是的是的，所以，请告诉我，我为什么会同意做这样一件事？”托尼说。就在这时，舞厅的公共广播系统中响起一个声音。

“欢迎大家，感谢各位莅临‘明日整体计划’首届效益大会！”一幅巨

大的老人全息图出现在房间中央，衣着考究的人群爆发出掌声。

“抱歉我无法亲自参加此次聚会，但我要感谢你们的到来。众所周知，明日整体计划——H.P.T.——致力于为未来打开新大门。得益于你们的慷慨捐助，我们将会创造一个前所未有的世界！”

全息画中的声音和面孔属于一位隐居的亿万富翁，H.P.T.主席，神秘的埃尔顿·特拉戈雷。

“嘿，他和你一样，是个有钱人。”哈皮笑着说，“你认识他吗？”

“哈皮，并没有什么富人俱乐部。”托尼翻了个白眼。哈皮挑了挑眉。（托尼接着说道：）“此外，目前为止还没有人见过埃尔顿·特拉戈雷本人。”

哈皮还没来得及回答，他和托尼就听见一个熟悉的声音。“斯塔克先生？”

转过身，托尼发现自己正对着绝密机构神盾局的特工菲尔·科尔森。科尔森朝托尼和哈皮笑了笑，同时指了指舞厅的出口。

“我知道那个微笑，”托尼叹了口气说，“这就是典型的‘皮笑肉不笑’。”

“你介意和我一起去吗？”科尔森问道。他再次指了指出口。

托尼对着哈皮点了点头，示意他留下，他和科尔森一同走出舞厅，走向长而拥挤的门厅。托尼轻声说着：“所以，神盾局想从难相处先生这里得到什么呢？”托尼接着问道：“你们失去了绿巨人浩克？”

科尔森看着托尼。他的脸上已经没有笑容了，甚至连勉强的笑容都消失了。

“不，”科尔森回答道，“是黑寡妇和猎鹰。”

“等等，什么？真的吗？”托尼大声说道。门厅里的人们突然看向他。

科尔森看着地板，低语道：“13号哨所.....出了点问题。”

对外，这是美国科学基金会13号哨所。这个哨所的科学家们藏在南极洲的荒岛上，自称是在研究天文学，观察巨大的冰架。但事实上，13号哨所是极端机密机构神盾局的实验室。

该实验室最近正在测试一个由托尼·斯塔克发明的神奇新设备。



“来谈谈是什么问题吧。”托尼说，他的好奇心被激起了。

“我们有一个多星期没收到13号哨所的信号了——但是随后传来一个信号。他们不断重复‘怪物’和‘帮忙’这两个词。弗瑞局长派黑寡妇和猎鹰去调查，但是48小时过去了，我们还没有收到他们任何一人的消息。”

托尼盯着科尔森。猎鹰和黑寡妇是他的朋友。他们同时也是不可忽视的力量。现在他们失踪了……

“我会去处理这件事。”托尼说，“我可以比其他任何人更迅速地到达那里。”

“不仅是你，美国队长也会去。你将会和史蒂夫·罗杰斯会面，大概在——”

科尔森话还未说完，托尼就已经赶往停车场，那儿停着一辆斯塔克

工业的汽车。当科尔森不断加快步伐追赶时，托尼打开了那辆亮红色汽车的后备箱。

“我听见你了，科尔森。”托尼头也不回地说道，“你鞋子的声音真的很大。”

“斯塔克先生，你应该和美国队长合作，这很重要。”科尔森走近说道，“单靠一个复仇者是无法解决这件事的，即便是你。我们派出了神盾局最好的两位队员，黑寡妇和猎鹰，现在他们都失踪了。你现在需要罗杰斯。”科尔森别扭地动了动脚，“也许你还需要绿巨人浩克。”

没有任何预兆，各种大小的金属片从后备箱飞向托尼，贴附在他的手脚上。仅仅数秒，托尼就穿上了一套无懈可击的盔甲。



“实验是在13号哨所进行的……如果落入了坏人……”科尔森说

道。他盯着斯塔克，就好像他完全知道这个天才发明者要说什么。

“我很清楚这个研究，科尔森。他们用的是我的科技。如果黑寡妇、猎鹰或者其他任何人因我而受伤，我有责任处理好这件事情。”

一秒之前站在这里的是亿万富翁发明家，而现在是无敌的钢铁侠！

随着盔甲起动，托尼的思想开始活动起来。数年之前，他意识到斯塔克工业的技术可以用来伤人，他便成了钢铁侠。自此之后，他发誓要竭尽全力保护人类。而现在他正面临的处境会让他所有努力白费。

“斯塔克先生，等一下！”科尔森喊道，但托尼没有理会他。

“正义之手将不会让坏人逃脱。让你老板不要担心。没有什么事是钢铁侠解决不了的！”说完这些，他发动喷气机，飞向夜空。

第二章

大约经过六个小时的飞行，托尼到达了白雪皑皑的南极洲。他用头盔的平视显示器勘察了附近荒凉的环境，并询问贾维斯周围的情况。

“温度：零华氏度。大气状况：目前正在下雪。预计雪量：6英寸。气压保持在——”

“贾维斯，”托尼说，“关掉天气预报吧，我们先看看有没有生命迹象如何？”

短暂的嗡嗡声之后，贾维斯再一次开口说道：“西南方向大约三点二英里。

“检测到多重心跳——”

黑寡妇、猎鹰、科学家们.....还是什么人？

“——生命形式未知。我现在受到了严重的信号干扰。” 贾维斯说道。

“不要告诉我，”托尼继续，“这是活雪人之夜，对吗？”

“不可能，现在是当地时间下午四点。而且雪人不是生命体。”贾维斯回答道。

托尼无视盔甲的操作系统，启动他的靴子喷射器，释放出的化学推力将他推向空中。他开启手心的冲击光束装置来使自己保持稳定，同时飞向贾维斯指示的方向。大雪使得在视线范围内飞行变得几乎不可能，但他的盔甲导航系统迅速控制了一切。托尼瞄准了一小块空地：烧毁的长方形建筑物遗骸立在烧焦的支柱上，每隔几英尺就散落着一些舷窗。

13号哨所。

托尼走向通往哨所的主入口，装甲靴在雪地里嘎嘎作响。托尼脊背一阵发凉，却不是因为冷。

“没有烟。”托尼思索着。至少在一天前就发生了火灾。他立刻想到了黑寡妇和猎鹰。“没有合适的装备，想要在恶劣的南极环境中存活哪怕一个小时都是个挑战，何况是两天.....”

当托尼靠近13号哨所时，他的音频传感器接收到了一个遥远而低沉的敲击声，速度越来越快，声音越来越大，有东西以极大的力气撞上了

金属内墙。突然，门上的铰链被甩掉了，三只大雪橇犬从13号哨所的入口处冲了出来。这群雪橇犬狂吠着，露出了它们的尖牙。

它们的眼睛里闪烁着不祥的深红色。



“喔哦，乖狗狗！”托尼说道，将手掌向外翻出伸向雪橇犬们，“嗯……快滚一边去，去捡东西？”“当你需要一条棍子时，它在哪儿呢？”他想着，向前走。在他迈出下一步之前，一只狗跳过来，撞向他的盔甲，将他撞倒。当另一只狗要用它巨大的前爪打碎他的头盔之时，托尼奋力爬了起来。接着，剩下的那只狗开始振动、颤抖，它的一只大前爪变成了一条长长的触手！这个附肢缠绕着托尼的右臂，用力挤压着盔甲，在压力下，托尼的盔甲开始弯曲。

“我没有养过狗，但通常它们是没有触手的，对吧，贾维斯？”托尼问道。

“肯定的，先生。”



托尼从他的铠甲铁手套里光速地向四面八方发射一连串冲击光束，两只狗遭受袭击后，站在哨所后嚎叫。与此同时，第三只狗继续用它蛇状的附肢挤压托尼的右臂。

“你可以在任何你希望的时候放手！”托尼一边说一边把他的左铁手套举到那条狗附肢的正上方，从掌心发射出可控的冲击光束。那只狗发出一声刺耳的尖叫，从托尼手臂上松开了它的触手。

“我开始明白为何科尔森如此担心了，”托尼心想，“如果这仅仅只是欢迎仪式.....”

三只狗继续变换着形状，不断变大直到几乎是它们原先大小的三倍，每一只都有八条触手。它们呈黄绿色，眼睛愈发通红，嘴巴有带刺的舌头状的突出物。

当托尼与他的敌人们搏斗时，他瞥见一张从前哨舷窗上向外凝视的脸。接着，出现另一张脸。他再次看过去时，却都消失了。

托尼加入任务才短短几分钟，情况就迅速恶化。狗进化成了奇怪的章鱼生物？他担心这正是黑寡妇和猎鹰所面临过的威胁。而他看见的那些面孔会是消失的科学家们吗？

快速思考后，托尼对着这些生物用来当作防护物的冰丘发射冲击光束，逼迫它们俯冲到一旁。接着，他对着从13号哨所延伸至地下冰层中的金属气缸开了一枪，气缸破开了一个与他等身的洞。然后，他启动了靴子喷射器，从野兽身边冲过，飞进了气缸里。

“最后一击.....”托尼说着，从盔甲的胸口单束光炮中发射出剧烈的热量，从内部封锁了气缸。

“这要么是个极好的主意，要么糟糕透顶。”他笑着说，独自一人穿过气缸进入黑暗中.....

第三章

钢铁侠降落到金属气缸底部，发现了一个通向波纹金属走廊的入口。走廊两边散布着昏暗的黄色灯光。

“贾维斯，你知道刚刚那些东西是什么吗？”托尼走进冰冷的走廊，问道。

“正在扫描数据库。结果：未知。那一定是我们从未遇到过的东西。”贾维斯回答。

“肯定是。”托尼说道，重重叹了口气，继续沿着走廊向前走。他走到一扇门前，门上有一个牌子写着“范沃尔研究中心”。他很好奇，走了进去，使用头盔的视觉扫描仪来打量这个大房间。墙上排列着重型机械，房间中央还竖立着一系列可以与神盾局天空母舰里任何东西媲美的电脑。扫描仪显示出他所熟悉的能量波长。



当托尼走向那些电脑时，贾维斯在他耳边鸣响：“检测到生命形态。”

托尼转过身，瞄准了远处角落里的一个金属仓库。他已经有点厌烦了这类捉迷藏游戏。

“不论是谁躲在柜子里，都可以出来了。”托尼说道，“节省我们双方时间吧。”

柜子门突然打开，一个邋遢的中年男子摇摇晃晃地走了出来。

“钢铁侠！”他说道，跑向装甲复仇者。

钢铁侠双手托着他的肩膀，稳住了这个男人。托尼决定向后滑开他的金属面罩，露出自己的脸。“放松，布莱尔……博士，”托尼看着男人实验室外套上的名牌说，“消失的科学家们在哪里？”

布莱尔抓住钢铁侠的手腕，一边把他拉向相反的方向，一边说道：“我是唯一的科学家！我们需要离开这里，立刻！”

“你很安全，布莱尔博士。”托尼说，尽量让自己听起来可信，“我需要知道他们在哪里？你们当时在做什么？”

博士紧张地握紧了手，大汗淋漓。“我们……我们的研究……”他结结巴巴地说，“宇宙连接生成器……”

“一个传送门，”托尼打断他，“通往另一个不可见空间。利用外星能源来造福地球上的每个人。”

布莱尔点点头。“第一次测试破坏了我们的通信。我们花费数日试图让它们运行。接着黑寡妇和猎鹰来了，没有任何预警，他们开始攻击我们！”

突然贾维斯在托尼的耳边说道：“我检测到布莱尔博士的血压和心率都在上升。”

“他在说谎。”托尼心想，“黑寡妇和猎鹰是前来救援的，为何会反过来袭击一群科学家？这有问题……”

突然，一股能量击中了托尼的胸板，让他失去了平衡。他瞥了一眼门口，发现袭击者是黑寡妇。这一定是托尼的想象，但是她看上去很生气，眼睛通红。在她上方俯冲过来的是猎鹰。

“黑寡妇！猎鹰！”托尼面朝他的队友说，“科尔森到处找你俩。这里发生了什么事？”

“冷静，是我！”

没有说一句话，黑寡妇用她手腕上的寡妇蜚又开了几枪。强力电动螺旋击中了托尼的盔甲。盔甲内部各式警报响起，托尼瞥了一眼他头盔的平视显示器：“A电池受损？”



“糟糕。”托尼做出防御的姿势，说道。

“我刚把这身衣服擦亮！”托尼冲着黑寡妇喊道。他把面罩滑回原

位，转换成钢铁侠的样子。黑寡妇一言不发，怒视着钢铁侠，用寡妇蜚瞄准着他。猎鹰的影子笼罩着他们。

“我以为我们是一个队伍里奋战的队友，还是我想错了？”钢铁侠说，试图与他们理论。但是他面对的仅仅是可怕的沉默和发红的双眼。这些犀利的、发红的双眼。“就好像换了个人！黑寡妇和猎鹰从来没有这样攻击过朋友。发生了什么？或者说，他们遇到了什么事？”

“躲到我身后，博士！”钢铁侠喊道。

黑寡妇和猎鹰围绕着钢铁侠和布莱尔博士，这间屋子似乎开始旋转起来。托尼深吸了一口气。“‘没有什么是钢铁侠解决不了的。’都怪我多嘴。”

第四章

受限于范沃尔研究中心，托尼处于劣势。在黑寡妇的猛攻，猎鹰猛扑、盘旋、粉碎的夹击下，托尼要崩溃了。他刚爬起来，就又一次受到了袭击。

天花板很高，但还没有高到可以让人在屋子里动力飞行。猎鹰可以滑翔，所以在战略上占据优势。黑寡妇利用自己高超的身体特技，穿梭于墙上巨大的机器间。

托尼无法跟上黑寡妇或猎鹰的速度和敏捷度。此外，唯一可以保护自己的方法是伤害自己的朋友。但是什么样的朋友会攻击自己朋友？

“检测到多种生命形式。”贾维斯说道，分散了托尼的注意力。猎鹰正等着这一刻，俯冲下来，抓住了钢铁侠，把他扔到了一堵坚硬的花岗岩墙上。

接着传来了某个东西在空中疾驰的声音，然后是金属撞击金属的声音。

托尼抬头，看见熟悉的红、白、蓝色制服站在他面前。美国队长！黑寡妇和猎鹰把目光集中在了队长身上。

队长调了调左臂上的盾牌，抵挡了寡妇的一次攻击。“我原本准备搭你的顺风车的。”队长说道。

“我正准备去接你。”托尼松了口气说。



“我很开心你找到了黑寡妇和猎鹰。只是他们好像不太乐意见到你，你找到科学家们了吗？”

“没有。”托尼说，“不知道你是否注意到了，我忙于和我们的‘朋友们’作战。”

“我明白了……”队长答道。

猎鹰和黑寡妇一起朝向他们发起攻击。队长用强大的盾牌挡住他们，将他们击飞。

“他们两个似乎对这个很感兴趣。”队长说道，移动到房间中央的圆形框架旁。框架内部是一个大入口，大到足以让绿巨人通过，周围环绕着一系列角度奇怪的金属光束。入口里是一团漩涡、光亮、黑暗、色彩、单调共存，似乎宇宙本身就包含其中。

“哦，不！这是宇宙连接生成器，”托尼说，“我发明的。”

“他们一直在盯着看。”队长说。

“眼睛……眼睛……”托尼想，“眼睛！就是眼睛！”

“队长！你注意到黑寡妇和猎鹰有什么变化吗？”他问道。

这个自由的哨兵坚守阵地，一边留意周围的一切，一边避开黑寡妇的攻击。这是在战斗中磨炼出来的技能，从他与红骷髅、九头蛇搏斗到

与强大的复仇者们并肩作战的日子中磨炼出来的。“他们的眼睛，”队长肯定地说，“眼睛是红色的！”

“对！”托尼说，“我欠你一个人情，等回到纽约再还你吧。现在我有一个直觉……”

美国队长没有停止战斗，以无可匹敌的力量伸长右臂，将其盾牌扔向猎鹰坚硬的翅膀。“发挥你的直觉吧！”他喊道，“我来引开他们的火力！”

就在这时，托尼听到了遥远的砰砰声，混杂着听起来像是呜咽求救的哭声。“科学家们？也许我之前的确看到过他们。他们一定就在附近！”

当美国队长继续战斗时，钢铁侠移动到房间中央的金属入口。托尼打开右铁手套，以便接触内嵌的触摸板。他用食指操作平板电脑，黑进了生成器的控制器。现在托尼控制了这台机器。

它发出了紫色的光，接着是绿色，最后是红色，与黑色能量球碰撞。

“嘿，坏队友们！这里！”钢铁侠喊叫着，朝黑寡妇和猎鹰挥手。

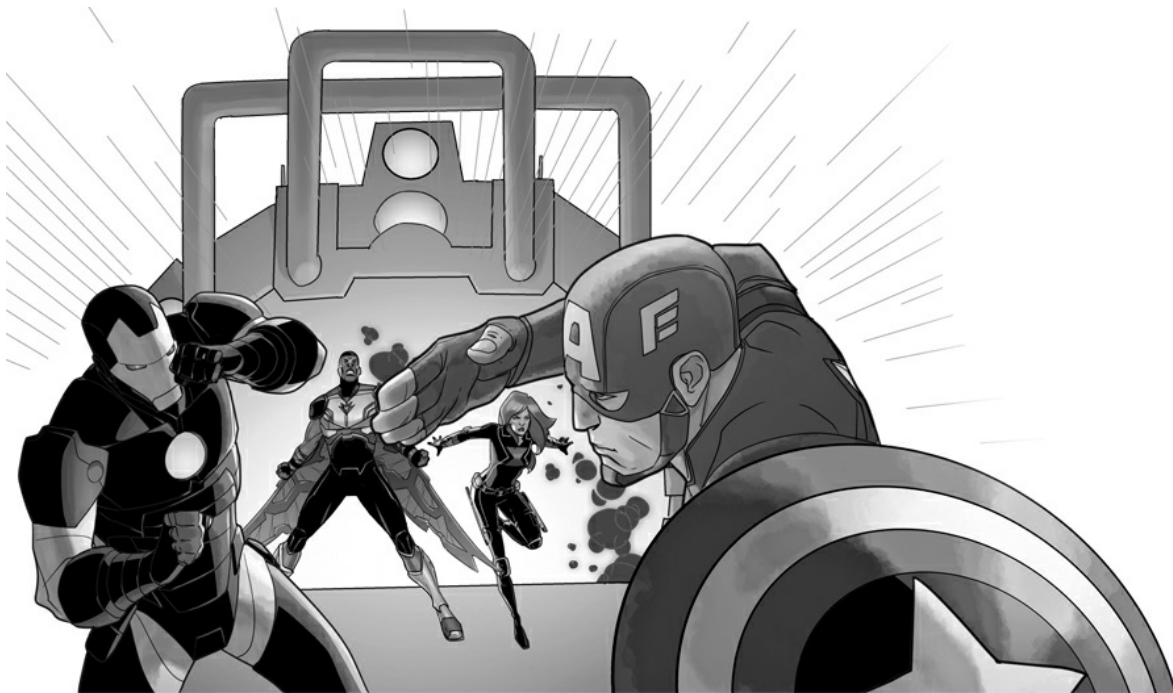
生成器开始振动，红光照亮了屋子里的一切。光线中，黑寡妇和猎鹰开始畏缩，他们的形状开始改变，接着又恢复正常。红色光线越来越强，对黑寡妇和猎鹰的影响也越来越大。

没有任何预兆，钢铁侠开始用他的冲击光束攻击黑寡妇和猎鹰，将他们击打到宇宙连接生成器前。瞬间，他们都从眼前消失了。

“我们是再次失去黑寡妇和猎鹰了吗？”队长说，摇了摇头，“费瑞局长不会喜欢这样。到底怎么了，托尼？”

钢铁侠看了看队长，又看了看生成器。他用自己认识多年的朋友的生命做赌注。如果他是对的，一切都会恢复正常。但是如果……

“如果我错了怎么办？”他想，“如果我犯错了怎么办？如果我永远失去了黑寡妇、猎鹰……怎么办？”



第五章

宇宙连接生成器颤抖着，发出嗡嗡声，深红色光穿透着它周围的一切。美国队长躲在盾牌之后，紧闭双眼。即便如此，他也可以看见生成器发出的耀眼光芒。托尼把偏光镜放在头盔的眼窝处，也无法躲避这超俗的红色光芒。

“就是现在！”钢铁侠说，他在右手套的键盘上敲了一个序列。他听起来比自己感觉的更加自信。和启动时一样快，生成器断了电。颤抖和嗡嗡声停止了，红色闪光消退了。托尼抬起他头盔里的偏光镜，看向生成器。它的前面站着两个人。“如果我让一切变得更糟糕了怎么办？”

“有人拿到了那辆卡车的牌照吗？”猎鹰揉了揉他的头问道。黑寡妇站在他旁边。两个英雄看起来都有点震惊，不清楚周围的环境。

“你们还好吗？”托尼看着黑寡妇问道。看到她的眼睛恢复正常，他放心了。托尼·斯塔克抬起面具，咧嘴一笑。“差点就……”



“我很好，托尼。”黑寡妇回答，“只是从我们到达13号哨所并被袭击之后的事情，我都不记得了。”

猎鹰点点头。“我记得的最后一件事是走进13号哨所。我们遭遇了一个有着许多长而黏糊手臂的怪兽的伏击。接着是一道红光，再下一分钟——嘭的一下——我们就在这了！”

“有人启动了生成器，击中了你们，将你们带入另一个空间维度。”托尼解释道，“袭击了我和队长的猎鹰和黑寡妇到底是谁？其实是分身、复制品、仿制品。”

当听到生成器的嗡嗡声又响起时，英雄们一起转过头。站在破墙边上的是布莱尔博士，一脸惊恐。他的手指在一个形似腕表的设备上活动着。

“你可以关闭它吗，博士？”托尼叹了口气，“我们今天和这东西可玩够了。”

“你必须阻止他们，钢铁侠！”布莱尔博士歇斯底里地脱口而出，“这两个人毁灭了13号哨所！他们抓了神盾局所有的科学家！”

“这个庸医是谁？”猎鹰问道，用大拇指指了指博士。

黑寡妇仔细看了看布莱尔博士。“我从没有见过你。”她警惕地说。

布莱尔博士看着托尼，摇了摇头。“不要相信他们，钢铁侠！他们之前那么快就攻击了我们，准备好战斗！如果他们再一次攻击我们怎么办？”他慢慢走向托尼。

“放轻松，博士。”托尼说道。

博士怀疑地看着黑寡妇和猎鹰。“你必须毁灭他们，钢铁侠——趁我们还有这个能力！”

“博士，你真的需要放松些！之前与我们作战的黑寡妇和猎鹰只是仿制品而已。现在才是他们自己。”

“是的，的确。”布莱尔博士哼了一声。

布莱尔博士的手臂突然变成了触手，紧紧抓住了钢铁侠，将他扑倒在地！附肢上滴下浓浓的黏液，并在接触到的一切上留下了黏稠的绿色残渣。触手环绕着钢铁侠的头盔，挤压得越来越紧。

当托尼挣扎着自救时，复仇者们冲到他身边。布莱尔身体里突然爆发出更多的触手，向四面八方延伸，阻止英雄们行动。钢铁侠释放出两次冲击光束，击中布莱尔的腹部，将博士击回巨大的机器里。布莱尔放松了控制，托尼得以逃脱。

布莱尔博士的身形开始膨胀，像微波炉里的棉花糖一样开始变形，

直至变成了一团带有八个长附肢的巨大黄绿色物体。它的眼里泛着带有恨意的红光。

“这可不是你每天都能见到的事。”猎鹰说。

这个生物朝着黑寡妇伸出两只手臂，试图围住她的手腕。但是她以闪电般的速度回击，从寡妇蜚里发射出几发子弹。电动机枪击中那生物，烧焦了它的触手。

怪兽又朝着美国队长伸出触手。在流畅的移动中，队长将盾牌对准怪兽的头用力掷出，空翻着躲到怪物八条肢体的下方。队长跳起来，对着怪兽的脸就是一拳。

这团抖动的物体堆在复仇者前方，口含毒液地说：“我不属于这个世界。”

托尼走近这个怪物，其他复仇者们也靠近托尼，随时准备战斗。宇宙连接生成器发出嗡嗡声。“这个，”托尼头朝着仪器点了点，说道，“对你很重要，是吗？”

这个扭曲的怪物伸出恶心的带刺的舌头。“我不会告诉你答案的，人类。”

它刺耳的声音使托尼浑身起了鸡皮疙瘩。



“好吧。”托尼说着，转过身，用冲击光束将生成器击成碎片。美国队长投掷盾牌，将空中的残骸粉碎。托尼拉下面罩，开始和这个怪物持续对峙。

怪物笑了。“你认为这就结束了吗？”它发出嘘声，“有数以万计的
我们存在，人类！就在我说话的同时，我们即将完成一个新的宇宙连接
生成器，大到足以将所有我的同类带到这个可怜的小星球上。我们将以
自己的方式毁灭一切！”

第六章

房间陷入沉寂。复仇者们盯着眼前的怪兽。没有人说话，但是托尼知道大家在想什么：如果他没有发明宇宙连接生成器，托尼和队友就不会盯着这世界末日的危机。

“我创造生成器是为了做好事。”托尼想，“现在却弄巧成拙。好吧，无所不能先生，现在怎么解决这件事呢？”

托尼没能继续思考，他再一次听到敲打声，那种可能是闷声呼救的声音。神盾局科学家们！托尼终于拼凑出了在13号哨所发生的事。“这群生物一定抓了科学家们，扣住他们以防生成器出现什么问题。他们就在这附近。”

托尼转向黑寡妇和猎鹰，点头示意他们到黏糊糊的黄绿色野兽身边。“介意告诉我们这声音是什么吗，丑怪？我打赌是消失的神盾局科学家们。做一个善良的小怪物带我们找到他们吧。”

“这无关紧要。”怪物讥笑着，它将两个触手折叠在一起，“你们无法阻止我们。”

“的确，”猎鹰说道，“我们以前也经常听到这句话。”

黑寡妇和猎鹰抓住这个丑恶的怪物，将它推出走廊外，要求它带他们去找被抓住的科学家。

钢铁侠盯着生成器冒着烟的废墟。“我越想越觉得，科学家和那个生物不可能独自完成这个。”他沉思着，“他们必须得到帮助。也许是一个擅长sci犯罪的人。”

“sci犯罪？”队长疑惑地问道。

“‘科技犯罪’的缩写。这样的文字游戏让我.....”托尼的声音逐渐变弱。

队长看着他的朋友，歪着头。“这是什么？”“文字游戏。H.P.T.....‘打开新大门’..... 埃尔顿·特拉戈雷，”托尼念念有词，他的话很混乱，“我今晚参加了由埃尔顿·特拉戈雷举办的超级无聊的慈善聚会。如果这是一个文字游戏呢？”

“重新排列Elton Traggore的字母，你会得到另一个名字：George Tarleton. George Tarleton，好像是在.....”

队长和钢铁侠看向彼此，异口同声说：“魔多客。”

当钢铁侠和美国队长赶上黑寡妇和猎鹰时，两位英雄已经找到并且解救了失踪的神盾局科学家们。其中两位科学家，特工麦克雷迪及特工蔡尔兹，正在准备冷冻装置来控制这个生物。这个带有金属帽和光滑半透明管的装置，会让身处其中者处于假死状态：仍活着但沉睡着，无法带来任何伤害。

怪物死死地盯着特工麦克雷迪及特工蔡尔兹。托尼从后面靠近，打开胸口的单束光炮，释放出一股冲击波，将怪物击入冷冻装置内。怪物立刻恢复过来，托尼倒吸了一口气。没人能从一个完整的单束光炮中那么快地爬起来，就连雷神也不行。“可怜的人类。你们无论做什么都阻止不了我们。无论什么！”

“蔡尔兹，麦克雷迪，把这东西弄出去吧！”托尼说道。

“是我的荣幸。”蔡尔兹一边回答，一边启动冷冻装置。嗖的一声，装置自行封闭，将怪物迅速冷冻。装置下的反重力盘开启，这个容器从地板上浮了起来。

“囚禁的外星物体已经做好转移准备。”麦克雷迪说。他和蔡尔兹推了下装置，缓慢操纵，将其推出门外。

托尼开始思考魔多客，这个恶棍从来不单独行动。

先锋科技和魔多客是钢铁侠的老对头了。

先锋科技是利用科技作恶的犯罪组织。就是这种科技将名为乔治·塔尔顿的低等先锋科技特工转化成了魔多客。接着他转变了先锋科技的局势，利用他智慧超常的大脑控制了该组织。大家都知道魔多客的脑力是致命的。先锋科技特工们听从他的每一个指令。幸运的是，钢铁侠盔甲上敏锐的扫描器可以定位魔多客的能量标志，在任何地方都可以追踪到他。

托尼停了下来，看着他穿着盔甲的双手——那双明亮的深红色手套，它可以将梦想变成现实。但是梦想也会变成噩梦。一种不熟悉的感覺攫住了他：愧疚。

“是我发明了生成器。现在坏人们企图利用它去毁灭世界。这全是我的错。我必须自己解决这件事。”

“好了，大家，”队长指挥着，“我们需要一个战斗计划以及……”

“你尽管计划好了，”托尼打断美国队长说，“但我现在就要去打倒魔多客。”

“托尼，这对我们任何一个人来说都是件难事！”钢铁侠的靴子喷射器发出尖锐的声音，队长往后跳了跳。他对着化学推力的声音喊

着：“你无法一个人打败魔多客！”

但是托尼没有听到。这个身穿盔甲的复仇者飞向空中，伸开手臂，用他的冲击光束装置冲破了屋顶。

钢铁侠走了！



第七章

“预计到达时间，贾维斯？”托尼问道，尽管控制了温度，穿着盔甲，还是流着汗。

“预计到达时间为三分三秒。”贾维斯答道。

托尼在掠过大西洋表面时，顺便检查了下他的视觉扫描器——低到足以躲避任何先锋科技的电磁雷达。几乎就在这时，先锋科技岛出现在地平线上。

“贾维斯，去游个泳吧。”托尼说。作为回应，贾维斯立刻将盔甲转换为水下装置，封住了所有出口，并且启动了二氧化碳排气口。

托尼潜入海洋里。

“为什么我在那要突然打断队长呢？”他心想。

微小的履带推进器——静音引擎——在托尼的靴子中运作着，推着他以惊人的速度前往先锋科技岛。在安静的海洋虚空中，托尼陷入了沉思。“我没有生他的气。我只是生自己的气。他什么错都没有。如果一开始我没有发明生成器，这些外星生物就不会试图控制地球。魔多客和先锋科技也不会帮助他们。”

托尼又一次深感愧疚。他怎么才能够继续发明先进科技，并且保证它们可以用来造福人类，而不是供坏人作恶，伤害人类呢？

他检查了自己的供氧系统——百分之八十五。目前为止，还很充足。盔甲的移动探测器检测到有三个物体在远处盘旋。也许是鲨鱼？但是贾维斯没有探测到任何生命形式。“我打赌是机器人鲨鱼。当然先锋科技会有机器人鲨鱼。为什么我没有听队长的建议，要自己单独行动呢？”

托尼启动了盔甲的水下应对装置，几个小的机器信标从他的肩扛发射器中射出。每一个都模仿托尼盔甲的声音，将两个机器人鲨鱼引开了。第三个鲨鱼对……金属极其渴望！它从底部攻击托尼，几乎要把他整个吞入口中。金属牙齿紧贴着他的盔甲，他的衣服开始发出嘶嘶声，向内塌陷。托尼迅速抓住机器人下颚，并激活了他的肘部推进器，将它的金属嘴撕成两半。

“真的吗？”托尼心想，“仅仅一个机器鱼就几乎让我遭受了巨大的

痛苦？”他像鱼雷一样向目的地疾驰。

在海洋之下，先锋科技岛形似由异域材料建成的大型网格状球顶，一点也不像托尼之前度假的岛屿。

“这就是队长所说的，‘我们需要一个计划。我们需要团队作战。’”托尼想，“现在我一个人在这，既没有计划也没有团队。很好，斯塔克，这很好。”

“好的，”托尼对自己说，“是时候造个门了。”

“他们有点让我毛骨悚然。”先锋科技的特工打了个寒战说。她和另一位特工站在巨大的控制室门口。

“嘘，”第二位特工轻声回答，“不要让老板听到你这样说！”

咔——咔！墙被一束巨大的冲击光束劈开了！冲进来一股海水，还有钢铁侠！特工们被打昏了。警报仅仅响了一秒钟，就被钢铁侠的冲击光束关闭了。

“希望我没有吵醒任何人。”他想。

几分钟后，墙壁自动恢复原样，丝毫看不出钢铁侠的入侵。“自我修复高分子墙壁。”托尼说，“我们要将它用在斯塔克大楼上，这样每次绿巨人撞坏墙，都可以省下一笔钱。”

钢铁侠进入先锋科技秘密基地内的通道。托尼激活他的靴子喷射器，飞了起来，继续跟踪魔多客能量标记。

“主控室很大。”托尼心想。他在一个通风井上方，通过格栅看向这个房间。他看见一场先锋科技特工会议——全都全副武装——围绕着一个巨大的宇宙连接生成器的复制品。

“你太小心翼翼了。”一个令人毛骨悚然的声音说道。

“而你太不小心了！”另一个声音答道，房间里每个人都安静下来。

托尼花了一些时间来确定第一个声音来源，但是他清楚第二个声音是……魔多客。

钢铁侠笑了笑。他确信自己可以带来一份惊喜。他准备炸开栅栏，但是在他动手前，一次爆炸袭击了托尼的藏身之处。他重重地跌入主控室的地板上。

“你迟到了，钢铁侠。”魔多客缓慢地说道。他听起来很无聊。“34秒之前你就该到了。”

钢铁侠让自己站直，先锋科技特工军队就迎了上来。漂浮在他们周围，坐在悬停椅子上的是魔多客。他的头不可思议的大，四肢却极小，几乎无用。在他广阔前额的中央有一束发光光束，那是他巨大能量的来

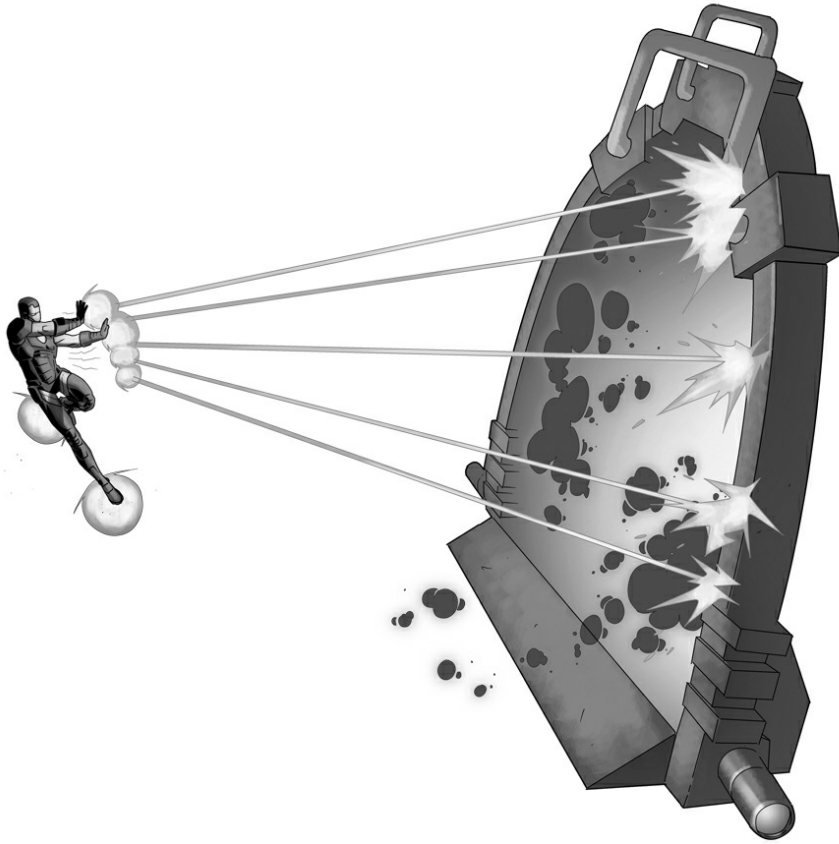
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“我原本可以早一点到的，交通太堵了。”托尼开玩笑地说。他试图让自己听起来像往常一样无所忌惮，但是胜算对他来说并不大。当前情形对于只身前来的钢铁侠来说不太乐观。



魔多客没有理会钢铁侠，而是盘旋到生成器控制面板上方。钢铁侠看到熟悉的黄绿色团状物，许多手臂伸出来，抢夺、构建。这个全新的宇宙连接生成器相较于托尼在13号哨所摧毁的那个有些矮小。

“那个东西似乎大到足以，我不知道，将整个行星的黏糊糊的生物带到地球上。”托尼说。他尽其所能转移能量至冲击光束装置，对着生成器释放出毁灭性的爆炸波。好吧，照说应该是毁灭性的。但不同于13号哨所的生成器，这个丝毫不受他冲击光束的影响。



其中一个怪物发出一声嘲笑，接着慢慢地移向钢铁侠。它伸出扭动的手臂，抓住钢铁侠的脖子，毫无预兆地把他摔下来，接着它开始改变形状。

它的身体开始缓慢变形，从外星人转变为有些熟悉的体型。两只手臂，两条腿，高大、瘦长的面孔，几乎成为人形。

托尼多年前遇见过这类事。

“幽灵？”托尼不可思议地说。他的思绪回到最开始，复仇者们齐力与恶魔作战时，他曾遇到过一个奇怪的生物，称自己为太空幽灵。它可以改变自己的形状来模仿几乎任何人任何事。它将自己仿造成不同的复仇者，让英雄们自相残杀。

“是的，你们人类就是这样称呼我们的。”外星人咆哮道，它的声音几乎是黏糊糊的。“我们的世界不再适合居住。但是你们的世界，只要我们可以取代你和你们可怜的人类，你们的地球将会是我们极好的全新家园。”

“等一等，邋邋乔。那些早就居住在这里的好人们怎么办呢？”托尼问道。先锋科技特工开始包围钢铁侠。托尼的音频传感器检测到他们启

动了武器。

“幽灵们会首先取代那些掌权者。”魔多客解释道，“你的宇宙连接生成器会将幽灵们带至地球，将人类送到幽灵们已遭毁灭的世界。”

“他们需要生成器原来是因为这个！幽灵每次仿制出一个人，被仿制的人就会被送去幽灵的世界。但是当幽灵再次转变身形，这个人就会回到地球。他们需要其他方法，可以将人类永远地送走，比如利用生成器！”

“那你和先锋科技会得到什么好处？”托尼问魔多客。

魔多客恼怒地看了眼托尼。“这还不够明显吗？我希望控制整个世界。有幽灵在，一切都在我掌握之中。”



托尼受够了。他命令贾维斯将所有能量聚集到他的冲击光束装置上。但是正当他准备释放所有他能聚集的能量之时，先锋科技的特工击中了他！他们立即开战，把他包裹在强光中。接着，贾维斯带来了更多坏消息：“电力正以备用水平运作。”

魔多客和幽灵们靠近托尼。

他艰难地对抗袭击，但是队长的话仍然回荡在他脑海里：托尼，这对我们任何一个人来说都是件难事。

第八章



托尼·斯塔克头盔内部的平视显示器里全是警报、警告以及更糟糕的事。系统出现故障。电路超载。托尼知道自己的盔甲要崩溃了。

“这是不可避免的事，你的拖延是没用的。”魔多客低声说道，他甚至不用加入战斗。先锋科技特工们凭借新式武器完全可以独自摧毁钢铁侠的盔甲。太空幽灵一直对着托尼得意地笑，相信它的同类们很快就可以占领地球。

“贾维斯！把剩下的能量都转移到单束光炮上！”托尼喊道。

“剩余能量已转移。”贾维斯说。

“很好。准备在我的盔甲上引爆光炮！”

接着发生的一切如此迅速，魔多客，幽灵以及特工们都未能反应过来：

托尼从钢铁侠盔甲中喷射出来，穿过房间，避开了强光气泡，远离了他的敌人。

盔甲仍留在气泡中，单束光炮爆发出压抑的能量，粉碎了强光牢

笼，将房间笼罩在冲击波中，击倒每个人、每个物体。

神志不清的托尼·斯塔克是唯一看见爆炸来临的人，即使是他也很惊讶。“谁知道威力如此之大？”托尼心想。他推测强光气泡锁定了，也仅仅锁定了他的盔甲——因此将自己从盔甲中弹射出来有效地解救了他。而所有能量聚集到单束光炮上使盔甲不堪重负，从而自毁爆炸。

他为自己赢得了宝贵的时间，但是也付出了代价。

现在他是赤手空拳、独自一人的托尼·斯塔克，对抗邪恶的先锋科技。

“斯塔克，真是一个令人印象深刻的对策。”烟雾开始消散，魔多客说，“但是你还在这里，却没有了强大的钢铁侠盔甲。我相信如你这般聪明的人知道该何时认输。”

托尼蹲在房间角落里的架子后面。“我也许是没有了盔甲，但是我仍然是托尼·斯塔克。”他心想，“让一群养蜂人，愚蠢的外星人以及一个大头怪打败我，除非我不记得圆周率后七万位数字。”

“出来吧，斯塔克！”魔多客说道，“你没有希望了！现在投降，我会让你慢慢痛苦地死去。”

“听起来很不错，魔多客！”托尼大喊，“是个极具诱惑的建议，但是我拒绝！”

托尼知道自己现在境况不妙。要是听了队长的话该多好。

就在这时，他听到一个遥远低沉的隆隆声。这声音越来越大。房间里的一切开始震动。瓦片从天花板落下，柱子倒塌。魔多客身后的墙壁突然爆炸了！

站在废墟中的是一个大块头的野蛮人，浑身湿透，拳头紧握。紧咬的牙齿间，绿肤色的怪兽咆哮道：“真是堵弱不禁风的墙。”

第九章



“浩克！”托尼喊道。巨人看着托尼，做了个鬼脸。有点难分辨是鬼脸还是微笑。“打碎！”

绿巨人径直跑到先锋科技特工中，他们猛烈开火。绿巨人耸耸肩，左右投掷着特工。其中一个落在托尼旁边。

“够了！”魔多客命令道，他的声音似乎填满了房间的每个角落。一束光从他的头带中发射出来，在绿巨人脸上炸开。绿巨人怒吼，捂着头倒在了地上。

一个幽灵转向宇宙连接生成器。它的手指在手腕上的手表中移动着，激活了生成器。生成器发出红光，内部开始出现令人毛骨悚然的人形。

更多幽灵出现了。

“很高兴见到你们！”当幽灵慢慢向他走来时，托尼说道。

“你在和谁说话，人类？”一个幽灵问道，它把手臂变成触手，环绕着托尼。

托尼喘息着：“在……那边。”

幽灵冷笑一声，“你在——”却被美国队长的盾牌打中脸，失去了对托尼的控制。

“我们从南极洲一路跟着你，不是为了让那些东西抓住你，”队长说，与此同时，猎鹰和黑寡妇也开始对抗先锋科技。托尼对着队友微笑。“我真是幸运的铁头王。”他想，“幸运有一群永远支持我的朋友。”

“不要再提了。”托尼答道，“这些外星生物企图利用这个生成器入侵我们的世界！”

“那么让我们粉碎它吧！”黑寡妇说着，一边将一个特工击倒在地。

“试过了。它是由某种根本无法摧毁的材料制成的。”

“你说的是一个词吗？”猎鹰问道，朝着头盔给了特工一拳。

队长对着托尼笑了笑，说：“所以如果一个人的力量做不到，什么能办到？”

“团队合作。”托尼答道，“我们可以先从帮助绿巨人开始。你能取下魔多客的能量光束吗？”

分析境况后，美国队长只有求助于猎鹰。

正如这个名字所说，猎鹰从上空猛扑过来，用一个强光翅膀掠过魔多客的脸。魔多客中断对绿巨人的攻击，发现自己正面临着猎鹰暴怒的狂击！

先锋科技的特工迅速聚集过来帮助倒下的领袖，但是他们自己还要应付黑寡妇的攻击！就像一支营救队，仅有一个女人，在特工中厮杀着。黑寡妇使出她的所有绝技，无情地攻击敌人，毫不犹豫。



“队长！我知道我们应该怎么阻止这些人……但是我需要你的帮助。”托尼说道。两人向伙伴绿巨人冲去。

“这就是朋友的意义。”队长说。

队长和托尼与绿巨人被隔开。一群幽灵挡在他们之间，变换着成为可怕的怪物。他们看起来像是进化严重失误的恐龙。锋利的爪子，尖

牙，尖刺尾巴和长而结实的四肢。这些生物发出怪异的声音，继续靠近英雄们。

“微不足道的怪物。”绿巨人吼叫着，把他巨大的拳头砸在地上，将怪物全都送上了空中。

“你能帮忙困住这些生物吗，浩克？”托尼问道。绿巨人咕哝了一声，抓住其中一个幽灵的尾巴，绕着他的头转了几圈，接着扔向空中。

“那就是没问题了。”托尼说，“跟我来，队长！”

美国队长跟着托尼一起跑，他们滑到生成器的基座处停了下来。

托尼摇了摇头。“生成器可以将幽灵世界里的的事物转移到地球上，反之亦可。但是如果我们编程让生成器输送它自己会怎么样呢？”

“我放弃（思考），”队长说，“会发生什么？”

“我不知道，”托尼回答，“但我跟你赌一辆全新的太空自行车，幽灵们一定会憎恨这个想法。”

一场无限制的战争在先锋科技总部肆虐。魔多客试图用能量光束袭击猎鹰，但是这个长翅膀的英雄在上方飞来飞去，使袭击都失败了。黑寡妇继续攻击特工。只剩下为数不多的特工了。与此同时，绿巨人击败了一个又一个怪兽。

“我需要你听我口令，把你的盾牌扔进生成器里！”托尼大喊着。队长只是看着他。“别担心，你的盾牌会还给你的！”

美国队长迅速移动着，只能看见模糊的红白蓝色身影击倒了外星入侵者。“不论你要做什么，一定要迅速！”

托尼的手指沿着生成器的控制装置来回移动。“只要几秒钟，”托尼心想，“只要几秒钟……”

“就是现在！”托尼大叫着，巨大的生成器刚准备启动，队长就将盾牌投向它。盾牌击中噼啪作响的红色能量，整个房间都散发着红光。

红色面纱从房间里升起，托尼·斯塔克看向四周。他看见队长的盾牌躺在地上。生成器不见了，与之一起消失的是幽灵以及魔多客。房间里只剩复仇者们以及战败的先锋科技的特工们。

“你知道吗，”托尼说，“我们成功了！”

“你做了什么？”队长问道，同时捡起他的盾牌。

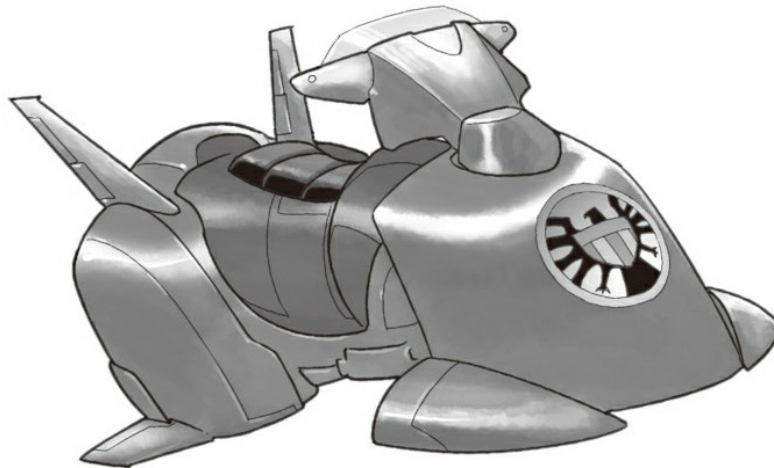
“我用你的振金盾牌让生成器的能量反作用在自己身上。”托尼解释道，“生成器将自己以及幽灵、魔多客输送到了时空中的某处。”



第十章

几小时后，托尼·斯塔克和史蒂夫·罗杰斯发现自己正在前往神盾局天空母舰的电梯里。天空母舰的舱门打开，托尼和史蒂夫一同走了进去。和往常一样，这个地方全是热闹的活动。站在最中间的是神盾局局长尼克·弗瑞。

“我的宇宙连接生成器发生了什么，斯塔克？”弗瑞愤怒地问道。



“嘿，尼克。今天过得怎么样？”托尼答道。弗瑞只是紧紧盯着他。

“严格意义上来说，是我的生成器。我发明的。”托尼说，“没有人能够很好地操控它，所以我要对它负责。可以这么说，我拿走我的东西，然后回家了。”

“你只是幸运地阻止了又一外星入侵。”弗瑞答道，将注意力重新转回到宇宙连接上，“否则，我也许会生气。另外，你拯救了所有被洗脑的科学家们。”

“一开始这些科学家令人恐惧，但是实际上他们是一群令人印象深刻的人。哦，我讨厌再次纠正你，但是，不是我阻止了又一场外星入侵，也不是我拯救了地球。这是我们所有人的功劳。团队合作，你懂

吗？”托尼说。

托尼从神盾局天空母舰的观测甲板看出去。他可以看见纽约全景。在摩天大楼之间，他看到了斯塔克大楼，他的家。

“太令人惊奇了。”托尼想，“就因为我试图只靠自己解决一切，尖头外星人差点控制了这一切。要不是复仇者们，我的发明会毁掉我们的星球。”

“我可以加入你吗？”史蒂夫·罗杰斯走上观测甲板，“我们今天运气很好。我们拯救了13号哨所的每个人，神盾局监禁了先锋科技的特工。最重要的是我们将魔多客和外星敌人击退了。”

“魔多客还会回来的。他战败后总是会回来。”托尼轻声说道，“如果我听了你和科尔森的建议，我们会更加幸运的。”

史蒂夫热情地笑了：“制定一个计划总不会有错的，朋友们会来实现这个计划。”

“你知道吗，罗杰斯，如果不再需要超级英雄了，你写贺卡就可以赚很多钱。”托尼笑着说。

听起来没什么说服力，但是史蒂夫是对的。有时候钢铁侠一个人是没有办法解决某些问题的。托尼是团队——强大的复仇者联盟的一部分。他们总是会支持他，而他也会支持这个团队。

他想：“这可能就是所谓的团队合作。”

史蒂夫手指向门口，说：“来吧，你还欠我一份沙威玛和一辆全新的太空自行车呢。”

