

**(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)**

**A/N: Going after Apocalypse.**

**-x-X-x-**

She wishes that she could say it wasn't her fault. That there was some outside force that had driven her to do what she'd done. But that would be a lie and Carol knew it. The fact was, she was just that weak and lonely. First to watch from her hiding place of her own volition, and then to beg to join in when Emma Frost caught her.

... Worse still, Carol couldn't really bring herself to regret it. Not any of it. The sex had been quite frankly out of this world, like nothing she'd ever experienced. It had been akin to a religious experience, something Carol already longed to experience again. Sure she'd been treated like nothing more than a set of holes. Sure she's been bent over and banged like a two-cent whore... and yet... and yet...

She would give anything for another round. And the best part was, she knew she wouldn't have to. A man like Thaddeus enjoyed it. Both the sex and lording his superiority over them. Oh, he probably didn't do the second part consciously... she got the impression he was actually a relatively decent guy when he almost wasn't willing to let her and Emma join in out of consideration for Storm's preferences.

All of her suspicion, all of her doubts... whatever of that had remained had started to wash away around that time. If he was anywhere close to the monster that she'd feared he was, then he wouldn't have bothered to keep Storm's desire for privacy in mind. No, the moment he saw Emma fondling Carol and Carol ready to submit, he would have simply let it happen without paying the dark-skinned mutant a second thought.

Of course, in the end it hadn't mattered. Storm had made it clear she didn't mind and from there... everything had unfolded exactly as Carol had desperately, shamefully wanted it to.

As ashamed as she was though, she couldn't bring herself to feel even an ounce of regret. After all, the sex wasn't just amazing... it was also incredibly productive.

Ever since she'd been exposed to the Psyche-Magnitron machine, an extremely technical device fueled by the cosmic Nega-Bands, Carol had been powerful. Forget being a strong and independent woman, she'd become a true powerhouse, a heroine capable of flying through the air as well as acting with superhuman strength, speed, stamina, and durability.

However... the her of a week ago had nothing on the Carol of now. Fucking Thaddeus wasn't just intoxicating because he had a perfectly sized cock and knew how to use it perfectly. No, it was also intoxicating because every time he came inside of you, you gained more power. And someone like Carol who had already started out powerful... she got so much stronger it wasn't even funny.

Storm was much the same way; she was pretty sure. The Avengers kept dossiers on even their allies, especially the more powerful members of certain teams like the X-Men. Carol, of course, was read up on all of them. Storm was a true powerhouse, easily among the top three or five most powerful X-Men of all time.

Now she was even more powerful. And wasn't that positively exhilarating to think about? After all, they were going into battle... they were going to need all the firepower they could get.

"Can't believe after everything, he was this easy to find."

"... Apocalypse has never been very subtle. Whatever he's up to, he's not trying to hide it. If he was, he would have killed everyone at the mansion when he came to retrieve Charles. But that's not really his style. He prefers big bold moves. And he definitely likes to have an audience."

Storm's words are met with a grunt from Thaddeus, who stands there with his arms crossed over his chest. Carol can't blame the young man for being a little disgruntled... it is, after all, very sandy and very windy as they all congregate outside of the fortress that Apocalypse has raised in the middle of the Sahara Desert.

It was the X-Men who had suggested that Apocalypse would probably return to his ancient homeland of Egypt for his next move. According to them he seemed to love to come back here, to the 'cradle of civilization'. Of course, Carol had had to bite her tongue to keep from correcting the one who had mentioned that.

There were plenty of 'cradles of civilization' out there really, and Ancient Egypt even was one. However, the middle of the Sahara Desert was not it. The Ancient Egyptian Cradle of Civilization was focused around the Nile River and that was hundreds of miles East of where they were now.

Close on a map if they were throwing darts, not so close in real life though. But whatever. Carol knew when her pedantry wouldn't be appreciated so she'd kept her mouth shut.

Now they were all assembled. And by 'all', Carol did not mean the rest of the Avengers. Maybe she should have contacted them. After all, it was sort of supposed to be her job to keep an eye on Thaddeus Cummings and Emma Frost and make sure they didn't get into trouble.

But that was the thing... she was already here, right? So the other Avengers weren't necessary, especially when they had Thaddeus and Emma and their allies, plus Storm and the other X-Men desperate to get their leader back. Not to mention, Carol had it on good authority that SHIELD knew about this operation through their liaison and that was pretty much as good as the Avengers knowing... right?

... Or maybe she just didn't want to have to share Thaddeus with Walters if she didn't have to...

“Do your people understand their role in the plan, Storm?”

Carol’s eyes flick over to the dark-skinned mutant as Thaddeus asks a very important question. Then, her eyes flick over to the contingent of X-Men standing off to the side, far enough away that they could barely even be considered to be the same group.

Ironic that they’d gone from being Thaddeus and Emma’s greatest detractors last week to needing their help against Apocalypse this week. But then, having been a heroine for decades at this point, Carol could safely say that was exactly how it worked most of the time. A world-ending threat one month could turn out to be your ally against another world-ending threat the next.

Storm is still the only X-Men over here that hadn’t outright sided with Thaddeus back at the Avengers Compound last week though. So Carol can tell there’s still a divide there. It was fine though because...

“Yes, they all understand. All they really care about is freeing Charles anyways. And none of us have a grudge against Apocalypse at the moment. So we’re fine leaving him to you if that’s your wish. You’re sure you can handle him, Thaddeus?”

The way Thaddeus stretches, tilting his head from side to side and limbering up like he’s getting ready for a jog rather than a fight against a five thousand year old mutant... Carol would have called it pure arrogance if she didn’t know better at this point.

“As sure as I can be, yeah. If I can’t handle this after my most recent powerups, then I’ve really fucked up somewhere along the way.”

Right. Because it wasn’t just Carol and Storm who had benefited... not by a long shot. They’d empowered Thaddeus at the same time that he’d empowered them, all through copious amounts of sex. And then he’d gone on to empower Emma some more. He hadn’t even tried to hide it.

Frankly, the relationship between Thaddeus Cummings and Emma Frost was enough to make a girl green with envy... but Carol knew she didn't stand a chance of toppling Emma at this point. She was too damn late to the goddamn race.

Still, at least she was in the race. That had to be worth something and as Storm says her goodbyes and makes her way back over to the other X-Men, Thaddeus turns to Carol.

"Are you clear on the plan still, Ms. Marvel? Storm and the X-Men will handle whatever sort of horseman Apocalypse has turned their Professor into. Emma and my girls will team up to take on two of the others. I want you to pick out which of the four seem the most doable for you to handle on your own and take them down. Got it?"

Having already heard all of this, Carol just nods, shifting from foot to foot. Frankly, she hated all of this sand and the dry air was doing a number on her skin... but needs must and all that.

"I've got it. I won't let you down."

And yes, she knows how silly it is that she's gone from being his and Emma's detractor to saying she 'won't let him down' in less than a week. But that's the power of Thaddeus fucking Cummings and his big fat cock...

Of course, the smile that graces his face isn't too bad either. Grinning at her, he nods.

"I know you won't. And none of you will either."

Carol barely pays the others any mind. All of them had joined the race ahead of her obviously... but Emma Frost was the only one who she considered truly impossible to surpass. The others... well, anything could happen, right?

Now wasn't the time to be distracted though. After a couple more minutes, its time. Storm signals from where she's with the other X-Men and Thaddeus

signals back before directing them forward. The two groups move in parallel up to the massive fortress that Apocalypse has created in the middle of the desert, Carol lifting off the ground to fly forward with eyes narrowed and a determined look on her face.

Honestly, she's expecting an army to be waiting for them. Instead... the fortress is empty. For a moment she fears they're too late, knowing full well at this point that Thaddeus and Emma are hunting that Selene woman and hoping Apocalypse might be a lead on that front. If Selene got here first though...

But no, thankfully that's not the case. Rather... instead they're too early, it would seem.

**“Interesting. A whelp disrupts my work.”**

As they enter the fortress palace's innermost courtyard, they find people. Specifically five people. One of them is obviously Apocalypse, who stands at the top of a set of grandiose steps upon a dais, his arms clasped behind his back and his gaze appropriately imperious as he stares down at them.

Then there are the four at the bottom of the dais arrayed before them. Carol narrows her eyes, recognizing two and not recognizing the others. First there's who can only be Charles Xavier, though obviously at this point he's been transformed into one of the Four Horsemen of Apocalypse. They'll have to fight him and beat Apocalypse to save him, same as the others.

The second that Carol recognizes... is Juggernaut. The man is decidedly larger than life and mercenary enough to have crossed paths with the Avengers once or twice. More than that, he tends to leave a trail of destruction wherever he goes, his movements and his impact on the world more obvious than most.

Seeing him now... he's also been transformed, but the general shape of him, from his dome-like head and beefy body, is simply too hard to ignore. It's definitely the Juggernaut, albeit one under the control of Apocalypse.

Finally, there are the two Carol simply doesn't recognize. Two women, one of them in green armor and the other in red, both of them covered from head to toe to hide their identities. Looking around at her allies, Carol doesn't see anyone who recognizes the two women either.

Frowning, Carol makes a decision, even as Thaddeus steps forward and calls out.

"Apocalypse! Stand down and free those you've taken. Then we can talk about Selene."

From what Carol knows, that's a calculated name drop there. Thaddeus has stated by now that he doesn't know for sure that there's a connection between Selene and Apocalypse but he's certainly hoping there is one. Of course, if Apocalypse is caught off guard, he doesn't show it. He still gives Thaddeus the confirmation he's seeking though, even as he chuckles.

**"Ah, Selene. Yes... I felt when she took Garbha-Hsien's energy. It forced me to accelerate my own plans, as I knew she would eventually come for me. But now that you're here..."**

For a split second, Carol wonders if Apocalypse is actually considering standing down. It would be quite surprising if he did, admittedly, but then she'd seen a lot of surprising things both before and after meeting Thaddeus Cummings. But... no.

**"You will give me all the power I need to deal with her machinations! My Horsemen! Bring me the whelp!"**

Yeah, that was more in line with what Carol was expecting. Apocalypse's command causes battle to be joined, but perhaps not in the way the ancient mutant was expecting. Even as his Horsemen start to move forward, Thaddeus scoffs... and all but teleports past them, reappearing inches from Apocalypse with a fist rears back.

"No need! I'll bring myself!"

Apocalypse's own hand comes up and catches Thaddeus' punch... however, the force behind the blow drives him back several steps, carving a furrow in the top of the dais as the ancient mutant is forced to grit his teeth.

That's about all Carol gets to watch because with Thaddeus engaging Apocalypse it falls to the rest of them to do their part and keep Apocalypse's Horsemen off of Thaddeus' back. And Carol has already picked out her target.

"Marko!"

Despite his transformation, Juggernaut's head still twitches in her direction at the sound. Grinning, Carol summons every iota of power she has as she flies forward.

"Let's go!"

Juggernaut takes a step... but he's not fast enough. Carol is well aware that even with her power boost she probably wouldn't be able to stop the Juggernaut once he was in motion. Which is why she doesn't let him build up his momentum.

Instead, she vanishes and reappears behind him, bringing her hands together in a fist and slamming it down into the back of his helmeted head hard enough to send him face planting into the floor.

As fighting is joined all around her, Carol can't help but grin a little savagely. Always nice to get the chance to stress test new powers... especially after such a significant upgrade~

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**A/N: Remember to Vote, leave a Like, and let me know what you think!**