

Magically Marvelous

Chapter 10

The ringing of his phone made Harry's eyes flutter open. Blindly feeling for it on his bedside table, he finally grabbed it and hit the answer button. "Yeah?" he sleepily answered.

"Agent Potter ... We need you in Los Angeles ... Immediately," replied the voice of Phil Coulson. Harry blinked his eyes a few times, trying to make sense of it all in his tired state.

"What did Stark do this time?" he suddenly asked.

"We're not exactly sure just yet, but there are two men in mechanical exosuits fighting in and around the Stark Industries building. We've got eyes on the ground, and we need you to end it as fast as possible ... preferably without Tony Stark dying," Phil told him. Harry sighed. It seemed that Stark was born to forever rain on his parade.

"Alright. I'll be there in a moment," Harry said. "Anything I should know?"

After a moment of silence, Phil answered. "Yeah ... Stark's the red robot." The phone cut off. Harry groaned and sat up. The nude redhead that had been draped over him groaned as well.

"Where are you going?" Natasha sleepily asked as Harry got out of bed. She turned over and snuggled into the blanket.

"L.A.," Harry told her. "Hopefully it won't take that long." In reply, he heard her soft snores as she fell back asleep. Harry rolled his eyes and quickly got dressed and armed. He was very glad that Fury had made him travel to different major cities within the US. Having multiple Apparation points at many strategic points of the country could come in handy, or so Fury said. It seemed that the grumpy bastard was right. He took one last look at Natasha curled up in his thick and warm blanket and Apparated away.

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"I can't believe you were dumb enough to leave the schematic for your planned suit in that dank, little cave!" Stane called out, reaching back and swinging his massive arm at Stark. Tony ducked and stepped back out of range. Of course, Stane stepped forward. "Although, I should thank you. If those terrorists hadn't fished it out of the cave, I wouldn't be here right now," he said with a forward kick. Tony barely had time to cross his arms in front of his chest to absorb the insane amount of power Stane's suit was producing. The result was him flying backward and slamming into the side of a truck. The entire side of the vehicle caved him, leaving him in the middle of the crumpled heap.

“You’re welcome, but a gift basket would have sufficed,” came Tony’s smart-mouthed response from the midst of the wreckage. Stane chuckled happily, grabbing the wreckage and splitting it open as though it was nothing, revealing Tony’s battered suit.

“Always the wise guy. Well, Tony, I guess this is the end of the road. I would say that it’s been a pleasure, but why start lying now?” Stane lifted up his mammoth leg. Tony saw his monstrously large, metal foot hovering right above him. With less than one percent power from his old chest piece, he wasn’t sure if he would have enough power to stop it. Just as it was about to come down, a powerful shockwave hit the Iron Monger right in the chest, sending it tumbling down the street.

“If anyone’s going to kick the shit out of Stark, it’s going to be me!” came the voice he didn’t expect to hear. Hearing Stane scream in anger, Tony looked on as Stane pushed himself to his feet while his friend Harry ran toward him. Harry held his hand in front of him and with a deafening crack of thunder, a lightning bolt erupted from his palm, striking the metal beast in the helmet. Stane cried out as his head was jerked backward, sparks flying in every direction.

Obadiah could barely see as his internal HUD flickered from the massive spike in electrical power. He saw a man coming right at him and quickly wondered what kind of idiot this was. He wasn’t wearing a suit like his or Tony’s ... He wasn’t even carrying a gun. ‘His mistake,’ Stane thought with a snarl. Holding his arm out, miniature missiles shot from it and screamed right at the man.

Tony watched as the missiles aimed directly at him. At the last second, he disappeared and reappeared standing directly on top of Stane’s robotic shoulder. After a loud explosion that sent chunks of asphalt flying in every direction, Stane boomed in laughter.

“I guess your savior was just as dumb as you are, Tony,” Stane laughed while Harry stood on his shoulder. Harry leaned over and used his knuckles to knock on Stane’s helmet. “What the ...?” Stane said, leaning back as Harry leaned forward. Stane saw his upside-down face smile at him just as he gently tapped the face of his helmet. He was about to pulverize the idiot when Stane suddenly felt a bit sweaty. He was more than sweaty ... He felt hot ... very, very hot. In fact, his face was beginning to burn.

Tony’s eyes bugged out when Stane’s helmet began to glow cherry red right before Harry jumped off. He screamed and ripped it right off of his head. “You’ll pay for that pipsqueak!” Stane roared and threw the helmet at Harry, who in turn disappeared again. “Stand and fight, you coward!” Stane yelled, spinning around while looking for his attacker. Harry blinked back into existence right in front of him holding his handgun.

“Sure!” Harry chirped, and pressed a rune on his gun. Pointing it at Stane, he began to fire. Knowing that a measly handgun would do nothing to his armor, he used his massive hand to block his uncovered face. He never expected the handgun rounds to hit his armor and explode violently, sending his body stumbling back. Shot after shot hit his suit, ripping holes into it and

tearing off chunks from several places. Warnings were going off in his ears as his suit took massive damage. Finally, when the shots ended, he took his opportunity to fire back. Aiming his hand at the armorless man, a stream of intense flames poured out from the hidden flamethrower and engulfed him. Slowly dipping into madness, Stane didn't stop until his suit ran out of fuel. When the flamethrower cut off, there was still a swirling maelstrom of fire spinning around like a fiery tornado. He never expected the flames to morph into a long whip that was being wielded by the annoying mystery man. He watched the fiery lash swirl about in the air before being swung directly at him.

Stane dodged to the side, barely missing it. He then was forced to roll to the left as the whip impacted the street directly where he had been standing. The blacktop was bubbling and gashed from the brutal impact, and Stane smartly concluded that he should probably avoid being hit by it.

Harry was having the time of his life as he swung his fire whip around. Even as he missed, the violent crack of the whip cutting through the air made his blood sing with excitement. He had been avoiding "playing the hero" for a very long time, and though his life was safer, it was also a lot more boring. As his whip lashed the metal monster's arm, sending molten bits of metal flying, he thought about his life. He had no one. All his old friends had long since passed. He had no family, no wife, and no children. As sad as that was, it was also freeing in a way. While the pain of their loss was still there, it had dulled over the years until it was mostly bearable. Harry no longer felt that he needed to live a dull and ordinary life to protect those around him. Natasha was really the only friend he had, and her life was more dangerous than his. Why not allow himself to feel the thrum of excitement flowing through his veins as the metal man stumbled back, sparks flying, and him screaming? Perhaps, for the first time in a very long time, he should just let himself enjoy kicking ass like the old days, Harry thought as a high-pitched whine began to irritate his ears.

Tony saw Stane's boots ignite as he readied to take flight once again. "We'll meet again!" Stane cried out as he began to ascend. Harry, however, had other ideas. He sent his whip hurling into the air where it wrapped around Stane's ankle. The high-pitched whine of his repulsors began to sputter as Harry gave a mighty pull. Stane's body jerked and lowered a tad. Seeing that he was being pulled back down, he increased the power to his boots. Immediately, Harry's feet began to slide across the ground as Stane pulled him along. Pulling himself to his feet, Tony ordered, "Jarvis, direct all the remaining power to the repulsor in my right hand."

"Sir, even with full power, you won't be able to do much damage," Jarvis responded.

"I'm aware ... Just do it!" Tony said, taking aim as Jarvis did his best to reroute the power throughout the damaged suit.

Harry pulled even harder, resulting in a loud sound of metal twisting. Stane's armored foot was starting to glow and warp from the continued contact with his magical whip. Out of nowhere, an energy blast hit Stane right in his uncovered face. "AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!" he screamed in pain.

Harry gave a huge pull and the mechanical foot ripped right off. Since the repulsor on the other foot was still firing, Stane corkscrewed through the air, screaming along the way. Harry watched as he hit the street some ways down, sending sparks and pieces of the suit into the air. Harry immediately Apparated to him.

Stane's face was a mess. Bloody and burnt, he was nearly unrecognizable. His breathing was shallow, and he appeared to be choking on his own blood. As Harry's eyes drifted down to get a better look at the hulking suit, he saw something that surprised him. "Isn't this Tony's?" Harry asked, gazing at the light-emitting Arc Reactor. All Stane could do was cough. Harry reached into the armor's chest and gave the reactor a twist. Pulling it free, the suit powered down. Deciding to be a decent human being, Harry stunned Stane and Transfigured him into a snake. Reaching in, Harry pulled the unconscious snake out of the suit and laid him on the ground next to it. Harry reversed his magic, letting the snake turn back into the injured man. Within seconds, SHIELD agents were pulling up to take both the man and suit into custody. Harry quickly went back to Tony, letting them do their job.

Tony's red and gold suit was a twisted wreck. Like the other suit, it was also powered down. Just as before, Harry knocked on the helmet. "You okay in there?" he asked.

"Fine and dandy," Tony's pained response came muffled by the dead suit. "If you don't count me slowly and painfully dying from my fried reactor that is," he quickly added.

"Oh, no!" came a feminine cry as the sound of high heels clapping down the street met his ears. Pepper Potts ran up to her boss and tried to get the suit off of him. Tony could hardly move since many of the suit's movements were controlled with powerful servo motors. Harry rolled his eyes and waved his hand. All of the pieces temporarily enlarged enough for them to start falling off of his body. With Pepper's help, he was freed soon after.

"Lose this?" Harry asked, wiggling the Arc Reactor that he had taken from Stane.

"Hey! Give me that, you thief!" Tony cried out, reaching for the reactor. Harry quickly pulled his hand back.

"Say pretty please!" Harry called back. He repeatedly held it out and pulled it away as Tony reached for it and cursed at him.

"Oh, for God's sake!" she cried out and snatched it away from Harry. He watched on as Tony removed his shirt. Pepper removed the burnt-out reactor and gagged.

"Ewww! I didn't want to do this again ..." she squeaked, clearly grossed out as thick, viscous fluid dripped off the old reactor. "I hate pus!"

"It's not pus. It's ... YOW!" he yelped as she accidentally touched the wire to the socket wall.

“Sorry!” she said as she snapped it into place. Tony took a deep breath as his life no longer hung in the balance.

“Thanks, Pepper,” he groaned and got to his feet. “And thank you, H... What the ...?” Tony and Pepper looked around and saw no one.

“Wow!” Pepper said in awe. “He just disappeared before he could be thanked ... like a true hero!” she said quietly. Tony’s eyes narrowed.

“Like a true hero?” he asked, annoyed. “Need I remind you that I was out here first? Fighting for truth and justice and ...”

“That reminds me,” Pepper cut him off. “What do you want me to do with this junk?” she asked, kicking a piece of his crumpled suit. Tony’s eye twitched. First Harry was taking all the heroics. Now he was taking all of the women. Tony needed to get back to the lab to make an even better suit, lest he fell too far behind in the hero business.

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Harry bowed his back until it popped. Groaning, he crawled into bed where his buxom bed partner turned over and threw an arm and leg over him. Back to being surrounded by Natasha’s warmth, he closed his eyes and fell back to sleep.

When he woke the following morning, the spot beside him was empty, and Natasha was nowhere to be seen. This didn’t shock him at all. As per their agreement, she would come and go as she pleased. Harry wasn’t the type to get clingy or jealous. Whether Natasha was or not, he didn’t know. He supposed that he’d find out in due time. At the moment, he had no plans to become a one-woman man. Things were good for now, but if they ended, then that was that. No use worrying about anything. Besides, she was likely called in to help deal with the whole Stane situation. What kind of secrets he held, Harry didn’t know, and it wasn’t his place to ask.

After getting up and taking a shower, Harry went out and got a large cup of coffee with a ham and cheese bagel. He ducked into an alley and went directly to his new workshop that Stark had so generously donated. Once he was done eating, he got to work.

A few hours later, his phone began ringing. He dropped his handgun and the rag he was using to clean it on the table and picked up the phone. Checking who was calling, he saw that it was Stark. Smirking, he answered the phone.

“Well, if it isn’t the damsel in distress. Are you calling to offer your hand in marriage to the brave knight who saved you?”

"I would have had him if Obadiah hadn't stolen the Arc Reactor right from my chest! I had to use the crappy, old one! I was hamstrung right from the start ..." he immediately began making excuses.

"Uh huh ... Sure," Harry rolled his eyes. "You should put some kind of locking mechanism on that chest socket," he added. Hearing nothing but silence for a moment, Harry then heard him sigh.

"As much as it pains me to say this ... That's a good idea. I should probably put some kind of security feature on it to avoid mishaps like the one last night," Tony admitted. "By the way, did you catch my big press conference?"

"No, why?" Harry asked, putting it on speakerphone and setting the phone back down on the table. He picked his gun back up and started cleaning it again.

"I confessed to being Iron Man," he said. This made Harry pause for a moment.

"You better be ready for the consequences that come with it. Anyone you care about will instantly become a potential target," Harry told him.

"I wasn't planning on it. It just came out," Tony said. "I kind of screwed up." Harry sighed.

"What's done is done. It's now your responsibility to keep them safe, and to make sure that they can keep themselves safe."

"That's why I'm calling. I need help making my next version of the Iron Man suit."

"I'm no engineer. I tinker with stuff, but that suit is way beyond my level of expertise," Harry admitted.

"I don't need help designing it. I need help upgrading it," Tony told him. "As I'm sure you saw, my last one took a physical beating. I need to figure out a way to make it more rugged, and I can't do that unless I want to make it heavier and bulkier. And since you have access to magic and are deeply in my debt, I figured that ..."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," Harry snorted. "Where do you want to do it?"

"Meet me at my house in L.A. tonight," he said.

"Fine. I'll meet you there," Harry responded and ended the call. Harry had a feeling that Tony would end up trying something like this. He really didn't mind though. Harry enjoyed mixing technology with magic. On the plus side, if things went well, Tony would end up being dependent on him. Any future use of Harry's abilities would cost him a pretty penny. Maybe Harry would end up learning a thing or two from the experience as well. Checking the time, he

saw that he still had a few more hours before he needed to even think about leaving. He picked his gun up and examined it. It shined as if it were new. He was glad that his firearm was finally battle-tested. He already knew that the normal bullets worked fine, but his newest addition to the gun hadn't been fully tested until then. He was happy to say that it was a success. No doubt Natasha would be asking for an upgrade to hers whenever she saw his in action. Perhaps he'd give it to her ... for a price.