

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

A/N: Arriving back a few seconds later...

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He's back in the storage locker. Had any of that even been real? Cameron doesn't really have the time to figure that out, because the next thing he knows the door of the locker is being flung open and there's a gun put in his face.

Reacting purely on instincts drilled into him by six months of training under the infamous Black Cat, Cameron lashes out with the only thing he has on hand... a horse-headed cane that definitely hadn't been there before. Technically he has the cat statuette in his other hand still, but the cane has longer reach.

It smacks into the side of the rifle, thrusting it out of the way and Cameron immediately turns that into a follow up by leaning back and mule kicking the rifle's owner in the chest. He anticipates the kick to send the other man staggering back so he can hopefully get a little bit of breathing room and perhaps follow up with a disabling attack of some kind before the rifle can be trained back on him.

What Cameron is decidedly *not* expecting is for the mule kick to send the SWAT officer flying back across the room so that he actually lands on some of his fellow SWAT team, sending them all sprawling out on the floor. As he steps out of the storage locker and glances down at himself, Cameron's breath hitches... because there's no denying that the encounter with some female version of Loki had definitely happened. The horse figurine he'd

picked up has indeed transformed into a cane and the outfit he'd been wearing before has become a green and gold set of fantasy battle armor.

The sound of half a dozen rifles being pointed at him pulls Cameron's attention off of himself though and brings to light the fact that he'd only disabled a handful of the SWAT team that have flooded into the room. For a moment he wonders if he'll have to surrender in spite of everything. But then...

"Hold your fire, it's Loki! He's bullet proof! Pull back, pull back now!"

The authoritative voice calls out over the din and though there's a heartbeat of hesitation, they all follow their superior's orders all the same. Cameron just stands there, a little stupefied, as the officer he mule kicked is dragged backwards by those he'd knocked over as they scramble to their feet and retreat from the room and back down the corridor.

Suddenly, the Department of Scandinavian Studies is quiet and dark as he's left all alone, the numerous flashlights retreating down the hallway along with their owners. And yet, while it's almost pitch black... it's not as dark as it once was. He can see better than he previously could... what the hell had 'Lady Loki' done to him, exactly?

I made you my Champion, of course. That means giving you the tools you'll need to carry out my will upon this and any other realms you find yourself in. You are stronger, faster, and altogether More than you were previously.

Cameron shivers a little bit, able to easily hear the capitalization in 'More' even as he's forced to come to terms with the fact that his new benefactor is apparently in his head.

Not to worry. I won't peep every waking moment or anything like that. But... you are my first source of entertainment in at least several centuries from the look of things. Besides... you seem to be in something of a situation. I assume you might want my advice on how you might proceed?

That was... a fair bet. Because even if he'd managed to scare off SWAT by being mistaken for Loki, Cameron wasn't an idiot. It wasn't like the police would just flee the scene entirely. No, they'd pull back... and they'd call for reinforcements. And in the case of someone like Loki, the only reinforcements they probably could call... were the Avengers.

Yeah, suffice to say, Cameron really didn't want to come face to face with the Avengers tonight.

And you shan't. Simply focus on your new power... my magic flowing through you. And let yourself do what comes intuitively.

Furrowing his brow at that, Cameron reaches inward... and feels what the Goddess is talking about. It's like she's reaching out a hand to him in the darkness and when he reaches back and clasps it... he does indeed do what comes intuitively.

A moment later and he looks down to find that his entire person has disappeared from view, including the objects in his hands.

Invisibility. This should see you to safety, no? So long as you are not... foolish about it.

You know, you never think about how much you take being able to see your own body for granted until you can't. Still, Lady Loki is right. Cameron can definitely use this to get out and that's exactly what he's going to do. He

does stumble a couple of times, forcing him to tuck the cat statuette away safely so he has a hand free.

From there... he invisibly makes his way out of the museum. It's not as easy as it sounds truth be told, he's really not used to being invisible. However, the Avengers haven't had the time to show up yet and wherever Ghost-Spider is, she's clearly busy with Felicia. Cameron can only hope Felicia got away clean too, because as he puts the museum behind him, he heads over to her apartment, ignoring all the sirens and what not.

See? Simple enough.

Yes, yes. Just... he definitely needed to stay invisible for the time being, because what she'd put him in wasn't exactly period appropriate attire. Without the light of day and in the heat of the moment, pretty much anyone was going to mistake him as Loki at this rate... and not only would that be bad if word got back to someone like Thor, but it would also be even worse if word got back to Loki himself. He had no desire to be hunted by the male version for being an impersonator.

Hm. Fair enough. Though talking to my male self might be your best bet at finding out the state of the Nine Realms and whether or not Odin is still ascendant and capable of... dealing with me should I poke my head out again.

Yeah, well... they could hopefully manage that without Loki thinking he was ripping off his whole vibe.

You Midgardians think so strangely, hah. Still, through our connection I believe I can get you into something a bit more... mundane.

He's just arriving back at Felicia's place when he feels something changing beneath the invisibility. He can't actually see what's happening, but his

clothing is definitely morphing again. As he slips onto the roof of Felicia's building, Cameron wills the invisibility to turn off and looks down at himself... before going deadpan. Seriously?

What? I took this idea directly from your mind. Is it not appropriate?

That depends on who you ask. The green and gold are still very prevalent... but rather than wearing Loki's fantasy Asgardian Armor anymore, Cameron is now wearing an extremely expensive looking four-piece suit. Pants, button up shirt, vest, jacket, and of course, an emerald cravat.

It's easily the most fancy attire he's ever worn, something Cameron would never have been able to afford under normal circumstances. It's also still undeniably Loki in its aesthetic.

*Well, you **are** my Champion. You should look the part, no?*

Not when Loki was a hunted entity by half the superhero teams on Earth, no. He didn't look like he was trying to impersonate Loki anymore at least, but he would still stick out like a sore thumb like this. It wouldn't be so bad if he could change his features and use this as attire for his thief identity he supposed, but...

Ah well, that's simple enough.

A shimmer runs across his vision and Cameron blinks before looking over at the nearest metal surface, an air duct sticking up out of the roof. Peering at himself in it using the light of the moon overhead, he can see that his features are indeed changed now... he doesn't look anything like himself.

Hm, this could work yeah...

Just as that thought is crossing his mind, however, his instincts scream at him to pull back out of the way, just as a long, familiar leg is coming down where his head was. He then has to take another step back to dodge a set of claws that try to swipe at him... but the follow up claw attack, Cameron outright catches by the wrist, his reaction time and perception of things much faster than it was previously.

“Whoa! Felicia, it’s me!”

Narrowing her eyes at him from under her mask, Felicia Hardy frowns.

“Wha- Cameron? What the fuck happened?”

Could he just... put away all of the fancy clothes and illusionary faces and go back to how he looked before? It would be really helpful. Cameron reaches out, trying to focus on just looking normal... or at least as normal as a burglar about to rob a museum would look.

Fortunately, while he does hear a disgruntled whine from Lady Loki in the back of his mind, she doesn’t try to fight him on it. The emerald eyes of his horse-headed cane glow and his attire transforms yet again. At the same time, Cameron feels his balaclava returning as well, covering his face once more.

Felicia looks bewildered... but Cameron figures he knows how best to placate her. Pulling out the cat statuette, he holds it out to his mentor.

“I believe this belongs to you now, Cat.”

The infamous cat burglar only hesitates for a single moment before snatching the statuette from his grasp. She looks it over for a moment

before looking back to him... and the cane he's holding in his other hand, the only remaining element of his strange transformation.

"... Seriously Crow, what the hell happened to you? They were talking about *Loki* showing up back at the museum..."

Cameron winces.

"Yeah... about that. It's a long story. Let's head inside first?"

Felicia slowly nods.

"Fine. But I expect you to tell me everything. No secrets, got it?"

Mm, I like her...

Oh well that was good. At least the Goddess who'd decided to flip his life on its head in the present liked the woman who had already flipped his life on its head in the past...

As Cameron and Felicia make their way down off of the rooftop, he can't help but internally sigh. What a damn mess tonight had turned out to be.

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"Ugh, tonight was a damned mess!"

Gwen Stacey drops down onto the fire escape with barely a sound except for the griping heralding her arrival. She slips into a seated position beside the man that's already hanging out there, pulling off her mask and leaning back so she can rest her head against the brickwork behind her.

Looking over at her, Peter Parker arches an amused brow.

“Wanna talk about it?”

The question is sort of pointless... Gwen wouldn't be here complaining to him if she didn't want to talk about it. Still, she appreciates that he asks.

“Black Cat has a fucking protégé named Crow and they robbed the Met tonight. And I didn't stop them.”

Peter frowns at that.

“A protégé, huh? Interesting...”

Gwen gives her own mentor some serious side eye at that. She knew full well that Peter's relationship with Black Cat went deep... deeper than he would probably ever let her know. Hell, she was pretty sure that he knew Black Cat's secret identity, but of course, he wasn't about to tell. Especially since if he knew who she was, she probably knew who he was right back... mutually assured destruction.

“Still, I thought you knew Black Cat was likely to try and make a play for that statuette in the Egyptian Exhibit this week. They were practically asking for it when they put something cat themed in a museum in her backyard. Was this protégé of hers really enough to stop you?”

Gwen scoffs, rolling her eyes.

“As if. She sent him running off early. No... it was all Black Cat. That bad luck of hers is seriously no joke. I swear, she got me with it multiple times.”

Peter hums a commiserating tone, nodding along. Black Cat wasn't as fast or strong as them, she didn't have a superhuman physique even if she was extremely athletic and fit... but what she did have was some sort of bad luck voodoo she could at least partially control.

Gwen was pretty sure that was why she'd landed so damn awkwardly and lost the cat statuette in the first place... and why she'd not been able to web that newbie Crow before he'd managed to slip away into the back of the museum. Of course, all of that wouldn't have mattered if the NYPD had done their damn jobs!

"I'm pretty sure SWAT would have caught Crow if they hadn't gotten cold feet though."

Peter arches a brow at that, prompting Gwen to groan as she explains.

"They claimed Loki showed up or something! Fucking Loki! And of course, NYPD policy is to back off and let the Avengers or whatever handle it when he shows up. But them backing off is probably what let Crow get away clean... after Black Cat made a fool of me and slipped away too."

Making a noise of understanding in the back of his throat, Peter shrugs.

"Was Loki there?"

Rolling her eyes, Gwen shrugs right back.

"Like I would know? I didn't stick around to wait for the Avengers to show up. But given the Met is still in one piece and we aren't seeing fire in the distance, I doubt it was actually Loki. Wouldn't surprise me if one of the SWAT team saw a life-sized statue and made a bad call..."

Peter chuckles at that mental image and Gwen grins. Her grin is half-hearted at best though as she leans over and bumps her mentor's shoulder with her own.

"Could have really used you tonight, you know. Together, we would have kicked ass. Black Cat and this Crow guy wouldn't have had a chance."

Here, Peter sighs and fixes Gwen with a distinct 'look'.

"You know that I'm retired, Gwen. Spider-Man doesn't come out unless the stakes are big enough to need him. And when the stakes are big enough to need him, there are bigger and better heroes who can usually take the reins."

Gwen grimaces but at least has the good grace to not try and push the point. She knows better. Peter can't help but expand anyways, perhaps because he sometimes feels the guilt of not being out there himself.

"I've got MJ and little May to look after now. And I've got you to tackle what I used to. Though I will say, you might want to spend less time worrying about Black Cat and more time focused on the big picture."

That causes Gwen to throw her hands up in the air.

"What? I'm just supposed to let her get away with stealing whatever she wants whenever she wants?! We both agreed she was likely to go after that museum piece this week!"

"We did... but we disagreed about whether that was your problem or not. I'm not saying you just let her do whatever she like... but I am saying she might not have been a priority. Neither Black Cat nor any protégé she's

trained up is likely to be a threat to the innocent people of New York City, Gwen.”

Gwen groans, running a hand down her face. She knew Peter had a point... but that didn't mean she liked it. Black Cat had started this shit, hating on her ever since Peter retired and she took over in his stead. Taking down the bitch and putting her behind bars tonight would have been so fucking satisfying. Even more so if she'd taken down the cat burglar's protégé at the same time.

Instead, here she was, egg on her face and a complete defeat on her hands. Ugh.

“... What should I do now?”

Peter shrugs.

“What feels right, Gwen. You should always do what feels right.”

Gwen glowers at the older man for that.

“Yeah? Well hunting down Black Cat and Crow and bringing them to justice is what feels right at this point.”

But Peter just gives her a knowing smile.

“Does it?”

Damn him and his ‘old wise mentor’ act. Damn it to the pit of hell!

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