

In the end I didn't go far. While part of me wanted to go into town and see if I could find Jane Foster, mostly because I knew Thor would probably stumble into her at some point, I knew someone would absolutely come for the hammer, probably Thor if this was some sort of redemption story.

So instead of seaking Dr. Foster out, I passed the time by helping out around the site, lifting heavy things and using the deck to get everything in place. When I was finally ready to call it a day, the sun was beginning to set. As I sat down for a minute to recover from the work, Ema came out to me with two trays of food.

"Hey, we need to find somewhere private to eat if we want to pretend I ate too." She said softly, passing me one of the trays.

I nodded and we walked off site, finding a rock outcropping a few hundred feet from the camp. I ate slowly, Ema "eating" beside me as she would bite something and force it down through her leg and out onto the ground. Every once in a while I would card the pile and tear it, destroying the evidence. Anyone focusing on us for long enough would have probably noticed a pattern despite my best efforts to seem random but it worked well enough, especially since we could play off odd behavior as being worried about our identities.

When we finished the light from the sun was almost completely gone. I was about to ask Ema if we should just jump the fence rather than go all the way around when a distant roll of thunder rumbled through. Ema and I shared a look.

"Think that means...?"

"Yeah, let's go hang out by the hammer." I said, taking a look around before leaping over the fence.

We got a few looks but by now everyone had learned about the special consultant. We got halfway to the hammer when red lights started flashing and a klaxon alarm sounded. With a look Ema and I rushed through the plastic temporary structure, heading right for the Hammer.

"Alright, still there." I said with a sigh as we looked down at the hammer. "Now we wait."

As I spoke the rain began to slowly fall on the plastic above us. It made listening for any important details impossible, though distant shouts were audible. I looked over at a rather large Shield agent coming our way and gestured with my head.

"I've got this side, cover the other entrance." I said, watching him hesitate before nodding, walking around to the other side.

As we stood there waiting I carded my jacket and with two button presses activated my armor. The now familiar pressure of my armor encompassing me made me smile, and I double

checked everything. I caught the large Shield agent watching, his mouth open as he watched me get ready. I smirked and shrugged before focusing down the entrance, the clanging sound of heavy footsteps echoed down the corridor. When the source of the footsteps came around the corner I couldn't help but smile wider. That was a pretty obvious Thor.

"Hello." I said, holding both my hands out, open palmed. "Everyone seems so eager to fight today. Perhaps we could talk first?"

"I have no interest in talking young warrior." He said, slowing down but still walking with a confident swagger that was immediately obnoxious "You cannot keep me from what is rightfully mine! I am Thor, son of Odin and-"

I activated my helmet and squared up, lifting both of my arms into a defensive position as my torc extended around my head. Immediately I heard the tone of Ema connecting to my bluetooth connection.

"Get back and cover me." I explained softly. "I'm pretty sure he is just at human strength without his hammer, but don't let him kick my ass too much if I'm wrong."

Before I could continue Thor seemed to finish with his speech, finally coming at me. He reached out, as if to try and grapple me, but I slapped his hand away, slamming my fist into his shoulder. He looked at me with surprise, before smirking, rubbing where I had hit him.

"You're a strong one." He admitted, but smirked. "I've fought stronger."

He rushed me, shoulder lowered in an attempt to slam into me and drive me off my feet. I stepped back, giving myself better footing to knock his foot out of place with a kick. I pulled it considerably, worried that without his hammer I would shatter his leg. The kick threw his charge off, stumbling slightly but quickly recovering. He used his momentum to throw a right hook, attempting to catch me in my jaw. Unfortunately for him it did seem as if he was much weaker without his hammer as I had plenty of time to block his punch, grabbing him by the wrist and pulling him off center.

I drove a punch into his side as I used his arm as leverage. Pouring on the extra strength I locked my hand around his wrist and pulled it behind him.

"You said your name was Thor?" I asked, ignoring the elbows he was throwing back at me with his free arm. "Why don't we sit down and have a chat? There is no reason to-"

"Maker! Coulson is saying to throw the fight." Ema suddenly said into my ear. "He wants to see what happens."

I cursed under my breath and waited for Thor to try and break free again, releasing him and stumbling back. The blonde Asgardian whirled around and kicked me in the chest. I barely felt it

through my chest and under armor, but I stumbled back even further, sprawling out. Slowly I began to try and sit up but Thor wound up and booted me across the face. I fell again, this time actually feeling it.

“Ema... make a note... impact absorption.” I said softly as I played dead, watching Thor climb down into the pit where his hammer was.

As he climbed down I lost sight of him, my head pointed in the wrong direction.

“Describe what he is doing.” I asked Ema under my breath.

“He is trying to lift it.” She answered. “It’s not going so well...”

I could hear him groaning and grunting as he tried to lift the hammer, struggling against what I assumed was an enchantment by Odin. Eventually he stopped and shouted in frustration... and loss.

“Okay, Agents are moving in, you can get up.”

I easily stood up, clicking the button on my helmet, letting it collapse back down, around my neck. Agents made their way down, slapping restraints on Thor's arms, putting his hands behind his back.

“He looks broken.” Ema said, having made her way to my side.

“He looks like he is learning a lesson he doesn't like.” I added with a nod.

I watched as they led him away, the once strong fighter not even resisting in the slightest. Once they had led him up and around I followed behind them, nodding to Coulson as he joined us in the back of the group. Eventually he was sat in a simple empty room, the cuffs were taken off and the room emptied.

“Hard to fake that kind of emotion.” I pointed out, a dozen or so feet from the door. “Not impossible, but hard.”

“I’m aware.” Coulson answered before stepping into the room alone and beginning his interrogation.

Ema and I both watched as Coulson asked him question after question, posing ideas about where he thought he came from, where he got his training. It was good, and I'm pretty sure he was trying to bait him into bragging, which would have probably worked if Thor hadn't been broken so much by being unable to lift Mjolnir. Eventually Coulson got a message on some kind of beeper, stepping out of the room.

“My turn.” I said, smirking as Ema blocked him just enough for me to slide into the room.

I stood in front of the probable Asgardian for a moment before flicking a card to my hand and pushing my chair out. Thor’s eyes narrowed as he saw what I did, but did not freak out. Instead he stayed silent. As I sat I surreptitiously pressed my lie detecting belt.

“So... You said your name was Thor.” I said simply. “I apologize but I’m unable to give you my real name. You can call me Maker.”

He said nothing, though I did seem to have his attention.

“If you’re Thor, that must make a hammer out there Mjolnir, correct?” I asked, continuing when he didn’t answer. “Why can’t you lift your hammer Thor? You rushed in here, cocksure and arrogant, broke half a dozen bones of innocent guards whose only crime was protecting the people trying to figure out what the hell is going on. And you couldn’t lift it. So... what’s going on?”

“I... I am not worthy.” He finally admitted, looking down at his hands.

“Why are you and the hammer here on Earth? On Midgard?”

“I was banished.” He finally said, after a long few moments of silence. “My father stripped me of my title and banished me to Midgard.”

“Why?” I asked, frowning now. “What happened?”

“Asgard was attacked. Father... he insisted that we not retaliate but...”

“You did?”

“Aye. My friends and I went to Jotunheim. We attacked the ice giants but... were nearly overwhelmed. Father had to save us.”

“And then he banished you. Called you unworthy?”

“Aye.” He responded, his voice hollow.

“Why did he not want to retaliate?”

“I do not know... I thought he must have grown too attached to peace, too focused on building and improving to not see that violence was necessary but... I am no longer sure.”

“Is Midgard in danger? Will the ice giants attempt to seek you out?” I asked.

“How would they find me?” He countered. “Like this... I am mortal. How would they find me among all of you? Besides, my father would not let them disturb Midgard.”

A knock echoed through the room and we both looked to the windows. Coulson was standing outside, gesturing for me to come out. I stood and carded my chair, pressing my belt as I did, before nodding to Thor and leaving.

“Are you actually buying that?” Clint asked, hiding around the corner of the room. “Sounds like he has a few screws loose.”

“Maybe. But I've seen stranger. Hell I might be stranger. Not to mention we have a hammer behaving strangely not a hundred feet away.” I pointed out before turning to Coulson.

“We are letting him go.” He explained. “Erik Slevig is here claiming his name is Donald Blake, his drunk nephew.”

“Uhh... and you believe him?”

“No, he looks nothing like the actual Donald Blake.” He explained. “We have agents on route to check but...”

Coulson motioned for a few agents to step past me into the room. They entered and after a moment they exited with the large blonde in tow. He nodded to me before walking out of the area, steered by two agents. We watched as I exited the small computer filled structure before Coulson turned to another agent.

“Follow them.” He ordered before turning to me. “I didn't realize you knew so much about mythology.”

“I don't, just a few bits and pieces.” I said with a shrug. “I don't know what's really going on. But maybe there is some truth under his crazy? He didn't set my belt off once.”

“Are you suggesting that he really is Thor?”

“I'm suggesting that he has something to do with the Hammer. Whether he is crazy, telling the truth or a mixture of both.”

“I agree.” Coulson said finally. “That's why he is being followed.”

----- *The Next Morning* -----

Ema and I stayed up a few hours longer, listening to the chatter of the agents tailing Thor and his friend. After it became clear that they didn't plan on leaving the bar any time soon we

commandeered two bed rolls and two sleeping bags and slept in the super trucks bed, outside of the perimeter. We talked for a while, hopefully out of range of any curious Shield agent ears.

“Thor deserves his chance at redemption.” I explained, looking up at the stars. “Besides, there isn’t much I could do anyway. I can’t force him to be worthy.”

“So what’s the plan then?”

“Early tomorrow we are going into town to get some more answers from Thor.” I answered. “Then I’m gonna stick as close to him as possible. I can’t imagine that the action happens anywhere other than around him.”

“Alright. When should I wake you up?”

“Seven sounds like a good time.”

It was surprisingly easy to fall asleep in the truck bed, and it was a shockingly good night’s rest as well. When Ema woke me up the next morning I felt refreshed.

“That might be something to put on the list.” I said to Ema as I put the bed rolls away in the back of the truck before putting my jacket back on. “Some sort of safe sleep enhancer.”

She nodded and agreed to put it on the list, before walking off to the closest patrolling agent to let Coulson know where we were going. He talked into his radio for a moment before passing it to me.

“Agent Coulson?” I asked into the handheld radio. “What-”

“Take the radio with you.” He said, cutting me off. “Feel free to go into town and mingle. Play good cop to our bad.”

“Yeah, I’ll keep you in the loop if I learn anything big.” I agreed. “Any idea where they are?”

“Some sort of fancy looking garage on the main road.” He answered.

“Alright. We will check in periodically either way.” I added before shrugging to the agent and handing the radio to Ema.

Ten minutes later we were rolling into town in the super truck. Thankfully it was early enough that there were very few people to stare at our admittedly unique vehicle. When we pulled into the garage parking lot we saw an older guy stumbling from a trailer to the gas station. He looked unsteady and queasy. Seeing a way to start the conversation I parked the truck and stepped out, motioning for Ema to hold on.

“Hello... Looking a little rough.” I said as I walked closer.

“I feel a little rough.” He responded. “Who are you?”

“Names Jack, I’m a Shield consultant.” I admitted.

He stiffened and looked up at the main entrance to the garage, then back down to me.

“Erik Selvig.” He responded reflexively. “What else does Shield want?”

“I have no idea.” I answered. “World peace maybe? I’m a consultant, not a toadie. They brought me in as an expert of... Well an expert in weird stuff.”

“Which means?”

“It means that Shield can get bent if they are keeping me from weird stuff.” I explained with a confident smile.

Before the man could say anything he stumbled and I stepped forward to catch him, though he probably wasn't really going to fall. I smirked and pulled off my necklace, pulling it down around his neck.

“Here, I’ll show you an example of the weirdness. Seems like you could use some healing.”

He fought for a moment, flailing like only a severely hungover person can. But after a moment he looked at me, his eyes going wide.

“Cmon, you can wear it until we get to the door, should clear it all up.” I said, walking ahead slowly.

“What... what is this?” He asked, following behind.

“Something of my own creation.” I explained. “Making weird stuff is my thing. Look, I have a companion in the truck. She is my partner but at the moment she is wearing something else I made, a stealth suit of sorts. Do you mind if I invite her as well? We just want to talk about what's going on.”

“Will you leave if we ask?” He asked after a few moments of thinking.

“As long as no one is getting or going to get hurt? Yeah, you have my word.” I said solemnly, before gesturing for Ema to come out.

She hopped out of the truck and made her way to me, the effect of the suit thankfully dulled quite a bit by the direct sunlight.

“That... that is very interesting.” Erik said as Ema got closer. “And I don’t recognize the truck you are driving either.”

“Custom built.” I said simply, smiling at the obviously more alert man. “C’mon, let’s go inside.”

After basically bum rushing the quickly recovering scientist and steam rolling his complaints we headed inside, stopping by the door with my hand out. He nodded and pulled off my healing amulet, which I immediately put back on. Before I could thank him the door next to us opened, revealing Thor and a young woman. Thor looked worried and ready to step in front of the woman.

“Hello Maker... Have you come to take me back to your Shield?” He asked.

“No, I’m just here to talk.” I assured him, sticking out my hand. “You have my word, I am not here to harm anyone, or take anyone in.”

Thor looked at me for a moment before nodding and reaching out his own arm, grasping my forearm in a warriors handshake. The woman next to him though, she looked like she was building up steam.

“Jane Foster?” I asked, holding my hand out to her. “Before you say anything I’m only a consultant for Shield, I had nothing to do with them taking your stuff. The first thing I did was tell them they were being idiots.”

For a moment I was pretty sure she was going to tell me to leave, and probably not very politely. After a moment though she let out a sigh and shook my hand.

“I’m not happy about it.” She finally said. “They took my life's work.”

“I know. If it helps, I think Agent Coulson never intended to keep your data.” I explained, hoping I was correct. “He may be Shield to the core but he is still a good person. At least from my experience. If I’m wrong I’ll do my best to get you your stuff back.”

That I knew wouldn’t be a problem. If Shield had to pick between bending their rules a bit and access to me, in all modesty it was a no brainer.

“... Alright, come in. With a promise like that, the least we could do is offer you some coffee.”