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Without A Word

A short story set in the fictional world
of Warehouse 13

Author's notes:

This tale could be interpreted as an alternative version of
Warehouse 13's Season 3 Episode 2 "Trials".

Prologue

Out of nowhere Pete got hit by a big one; a foreboding like a viperish kick to his guts, leaving him with the feeling he had just been run over by a freight train. All of a sudden his stomach had started to cramp, and for what felt like minutes, his lungs were not allowing him to catch a single breath. His knees shaking, he stumbled in the direction of the nearest wall, desperately trying to find something to hold on to.

The first thought crossing his mind, "Those damn chocolate chip pancakes! They must have gone bad..." He didn't even know why he had ordered them in the first place; he had just felt like pancakes this morning. But that meal certainly was not the cause for his malaise. Apparently it was something else, something of a more existential nature; but he couldn't figure it out just yet.

As he slowly came back to his senses, still numbed and all but baffled, Pete tried to understand what had happened. Yes, he had experienced bad, horrifying vibes before, but this one...? "Dude, what the hell was that...?" This one was different, disturbingly different. And he instinctively knew it was about Myka...

Chapter One

"Vegas... Why did it have to be Vegas? Why that stupid honeymoon suite? And why the heck with Pete? Oh, this is all just perfect!" Myka grumbled at herself, her features showing a cold grin as to emphasize the irony embedded in that statement. Not for the first time since their arrival in Sin City, she thought of that incident nearly a year ago, when she had been trapped in Lewis Carroll's mirror, and Alice, in possession of Myka's body, had paltered with Pete, had almost gotten the better of him.

Myka was hurting. Now that she had actually set foot in the infamous city where all of that had taken place, she couldn't stand it. And this was not even the real reason for her despair. It was only a trigger...

The thoughts in her mind began to run amok as she remembered this morning's breakfast and the empty chair opposite of her. In an attempt to make it up to her partner, somehow, she had ordered two large stacks of chocolate chip pancakes for both of them. But Pete had left minutes before room service arrived. Ok, he was in the shower when she placed the order and maybe he just missed it, but at least he could have spoken to her before he left, instead of sneaking out like that.

Myka held a hand to her forehead, "We haven't really spoken since..." She couldn't finish the sentence, not even in her head. Tears of desperation and self-reproach welled up in her eyes as she wandered about the Strip all by herself. She wasn't able to think of anything else, fewest of the case they were supposed to be working on. The only thing that mattered right now was the mess between her and her partner.

She came back to what she had said to Artie before they left for Vegas. I am his partner. I go where he goes. Definitely she had not thought of it as a lie, but at this point, in all honesty, Myka could not deny that it just wasn't the truth. And only she - nobody else - was to blame for it.

Myka got overwhelmed as she stumbled forward. She couldn't hold back neither her emotions, nor her tears, letting them stream down her features, as she made her way down the crowded boulevard, passers-by looking at her pitying. She didn't care.

This was the first time the two agents were assigned to a mission together after she had come back from leaving the Warehouse, from leaving Pete. Before she had made that horrible mistake, turning away from The World of Endless Wonder, even more, turning her back on Pete, who had been her partner, her best friend, and eventually her lover. He had managed to worm his way right into her heart, and she in turn had ripped his apart.

Writing that letter, that monosyllabic note, was painful and agonizing enough. Quietly slipping away seemed easier than telling him he deserved better, and that she didn't deserve him, especially after the chaos that one H.G. Wells had wrought. Oh, they had saved the world indeed, but she still left a damaging mark upon the team, especially the relationship with her partner. And now, its state more closely resembled that of a shattered vase, its pieces scattered everywhere upon the floor, much like the pieces of her heart.

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Some hours later, Myka found herself in the ground floor casino of the Mirage, the world famous hotel, where she and Pete had been given a honeymoon suite due to a mix up at the booking counter. She had now freshened up and was trying to focus again on the mission.

After having put a little thought in how she could blend in best at a casino, she had decided to go with a more elegant look. Eventually she had picked a rather simple long-sleeved black mini-dress with a plunging neckline. The sleeves were sheer, almost translucent, the rest of the dress done up in a metallic mesh giving it a soft shimmer. Black peep toe heels and a silvery bracelet completed her appearance. For a moment there she actually felt good...

A half-finished virgin margarita rested nearby on the counter, Myka's notepad on the bar's counter top, her pen in her hand as she stared down at a blank page. She wasn't sure why, but coming back here to where they started off with this case seemed like her next best bet, having accomplished all but nothing in the past few days.

Lifting up her head, she cast a glance around as she sipped on her drink. Earlier, hotel security had reported a suspect fitting the description Myka had given them, but the man could be anywhere on the casino's spacious floors, or for that matter, anywhere else in the city. Still they told her they'd keep their eyes open for suspicious activity, and for right now all she could do was sit back, and quietly observe.

A long hour and a half later a young couple of newly-weds, their arms linked around each other's waist, smiling and laughing happily, passed by her. Myka shook her head. Oh, screw it! Whatcha think you're doing here, Bering? Did she really think she could solve the case all by herself, sitting at a casino bar, trying to blend in, sipping cocktails? Turning around she ordered another drink.

"Same as before, miss?" asked the bartender.

"No, give me a regular margarita this time, extra salt, and don't skimp on the liquor."

The bartender only shrugged as he retrieved a fresh glass, "You got it."

Turning back towards the floor, Myka sighed sadly and straightened the hem of her dress. Pete had once said he thought the dress looked adorable on her. Yes, there was that time when he used to call her stunningly beautiful, and now? It seemed to matter little to her anymore. Why should it? She clearly wasn't his girl, and likely wouldn't be again anytime soon, that bridge had long since burned, and crashed into the sea. She wondered if he even cared for her anymore, or considered her a friend, let alone his partner.

Shifting, she turned back towards the bar and retrieved her drink, all but knocking it back in one fell swoop.

As she ordered another margarita she noticed a man had taken the empty stool next to her, apparently having just as bad a night as her. She remembered having spotted him earlier; dark hair, dark eyes, very handsome in a rugged sort of way. He was also staying at the hotel, likely to be in town on business.

She didn't discuss the case, at least not in a we-have-to-save-the-world-or-it-will-blow-up kind of way. By the time the mysterious stranger started detailing on his own misery she was on margarita number three, which turned to four, then five. It mattered little to her, she could hold her liquor, and she could handle herself, and Pete certainly seemed to think as much.

Lazily, she traced the salt from the rim of her glass, casting a glance in her companion's direction, "The thing is, my partner, I don't understand him," licking the salt from her finger, her deep green eyes flashing a sparkle, she shook her head, "I tried apologizing, but even that doesn't seem to be good enough, it's like he hardly cares, like he wants nothing to do with me."

"Who was it that ended the relationship? You or your partner, Paul?" replied her companion, Vincent, as he took a sip from his own drink, his hand coming to rest lightly atop her knee.

"Pete," Myka corrected him, she shook her head, "No, no I mean, I suppose you could say I ended the relationship," she remarked as she turned towards the bar, her tone sorrowful, "Threw it all away," the effects of the alcohol only ramped up her emotions, making the memories that much more painful for her. "My career, my best friend, my lover, everything," she looked up briefly casting a glance his way.

"Office relationships never work out, people start coming between other people," replied Vincent, his hand drifting along her thigh, and Myka nodded, "You could say it was another woman that made me leave," Vincent only nodded in understanding, "Left you for her, did he?"

Propping herself up, Myka shook her head sadly, a wry smile on her features, "It's far more complicated than that, much more complicated...now it seems like he wants nothing more to do with me, let alone call me his friend...," Myka slumped back on her stool and sipped her drink, "...or anything more than that, ever again."

Chapter Two

Heavily breathing, Pete sprinted along the crowded streets of Las Vegas. He didn't even bother with hailing a cab; he just ran and did not stop, could not stop, not even for a second. After Pete had got hit by that giant vibe, instinctively knowing that something was terribly off, he all but rushed back to the Mirage. Just now arriving at the sight he walked into the hotel lobby.

His suit smelling of sweat, he felt exasperated and leached out, but he was also heavily fevered, his anxiety overwhelming...

He started for the bank of elevators to go up to the room, looking for Myka, when he shot a glance towards the casino area of the hotel. He froze dead in his tracks for just an instant, and then he felt a rush of primal energy as his anger rose like hungry flames from a new fire. He turned and walked right into the casino.

"MYKA!" he shouted.

Myka glanced up briefly at hearing her name being called out, "Oh, it's the guy who refuses to acknowledge I exist. What's wrong? Did that security officer you were gonna meet get tired of you, too?" Huffing, she turned back towards the bar, "I can't blame her if she did," she remarked icily.

Pete let her comments bounce off of him. He was far too angry already.

"Let's go upstairs, Myka," said Pete. "I think you've had enough already."

"Unlike you, I can still hold my liquor," she replied acidly, "Besides I wasn't aware you even gave a damn, much less act like I exist!" she remarked shoving him away before she turned towards Vincent. "So, Vinny..."

Pete, of course, was sensitive about his alcoholism; he couldn't believe what Myka had just said, and his anger topped out into the red. It took him a few seconds before he could speak again.

"I know you didn't... mean that, Myka," Pete had to fight to stay even halfway calm. "Now... come on."

"Hey wise guy, leave the lady alone," interjected Vinny as he glanced Pete's way, "Typical grunt, don't know their own ass from a hole in the ground," he remarked before he turned his attention back to Myka, and grasped hold of her hand, leaning closer to whisper something in her ear.

Pete stiff-armed the guy back, away from Myka.

"You keep your mouth shut and out of our business, pal," exclaimed Pete, his voice menacing, something Myka had not heard before... She only looked away, her expression tormented, and hurt, intermixed with shades of anger.

Vincent pushed Pete back, "Hey, get your own damn woman; clearly this one doesn't want anything more to do with you."

"I said...", growled Pete before he pulled the man into a right cross, sending him front first to the floor. "Mind your own business!"

Slightly dazed, Vincent made a move to get back on his feet. Anticipating his actions Pete

quickly bent down as he shoved his knee between Vinny's shoulders, holding him to the ground. Close to the guy's ear, Pete hissed furiously, "Better stay down. Or I'll lay you the fuck out!"

Myka managed to stand up, fairly stumbling, as it was clear that Vinny was done for. She shoved Pete off the man's back, yelling, "Pete, what the Hell! You're such an idiot!"

As Pete got up he stared at her, his eyes filled with bitterness.

"Jesus Christ, Myka! How far were you going to let him put his hand up your dress?" shouted Pete, grabbing her arm. "We're going upstairs, now!"

Pete headed for the lobby, dragging Myka along towards the elevators.

Myka practically stumbled as she glared at Pete; now that she was on her feet she could feel the buzz taking its toll on the rest of her body. Begrudgingly she held onto the back of Pete's jacket for support as he dragged her into the first available elevator.

Pete hit the call button and the doors opened immediately. Pete dragged Myka inside and hit the button for their floor. The doors closed a moment later and they moved up three floors before Pete spoke again.

"You are unbelievable...," he said, his tone harsh.

"I could handle myself just fine, you know that," interjected Myka, her head pounding.

"Oh, clearly!" Pete shouted. "Apparently HE could HANDLE you, too!"

"Maybe I'd have been better off spending the night with him, than a Grade-A jackass!" She shouted back.

"No, I think you got yourself a two-fer on that one," Pete responded, his sarcasm evident.

As he looked Myka straight in the eye, seeing her all filling up with fury, Pete didn't care if he was insulting her, concluding, "Maybe you and that slimy Vinny-guy deserve each other after all? Well, I wish you two nothing but the best, dwelling together in self-pity!"

"You bastard!" Myka screamed frantically. As hard as she could she slapped Pete across the face, stumbling considerably as she did. "Oh you bastard..."

Pete was shocked... thunderstruck with consternation. Considering the many long training hours she spent with hand-to-hand combat, Myka was a force to be reckoned with. In her state of anger and drunkenness, things could possibly get bad for Pete, knowing he could never use force on a woman.

"...to think there was a time I found your wiseass antics amusing, charming even," She hissed sarcastically, "I don't know what I was thinking... How could you even say that?"

Her tone eerily cold, she concluded, "You really are a jackass! I should have stayed in Colorado with my parents; clearly you wouldn't have missed me!"

Pete couldn't take it anymore. It didn't matter if she hit him again; even if she beat him up he had to confront her...

Hitting the stop button for the elevator, he pushed her back away from him, hard, but at the same time applying a certain cautiousness to his move so she did not slam backward into the wall.

"You're the one who left ME, Myka," replied Pete, his tone like a saw blade. "Now I see it's becoming a habit!"

For a wonder Myka turned away, tears welling up in her eyes, "Pete, that's not..." shaking she choked back a sob, her body trembling, both from a combination of alcohol and emotions.

"Not WHAT?" Pete shouted, his anger close to topping out again, "Huh, Myka? Not what?"

Myka turned around, looking straight at Pete, not caring if he saw her cry anymore, or that her makeup had started to likely run, "I left, I left because..." sniffing she steeled her nerves, though it did little to stop her from shaking, "...I failed everyone, the Warehouse, Artie, I failed you. You didn't deserve me, not as your partner, and I didn't deserve you, not as my partner or my lover. You deserved better than me."

"I failed myself," she whispered, barely audible to her own ears, "H.G. betrayed me, she used me, and I was too blind to see it, and you wouldn't admit it to me."

"You should have talked to me, Myka," said Pete, his voice still sounding enraged. "Why didn't you talk to me? You just left, making the decision that I was not good enough to help you through that. You leave and then you blithely return and impress the Regents and think it's all okay again."

Pete started the car again and shook his head.

"Like I said, unbelievable."

"You make it all sound so easy," she replied as she shook her head, "It wasn't. Not for me, none of it was..." Myka spoke quietly as her heart felt like it was on the verge of breaking.

Leaning against the elevator wall, she closed her eyes as she held a hand to her head, wishing as though she could just quietly disappear, melt away.

"I don't know what more I can say to make this right..." she whispered.

"I just know I miss my partner... my friend... my..."

"Clearly," said Pete as the ping sounded, indicating they were on their floor and covering Myka's last comment.

The doors opened abruptly. "Last time, you just left. That is easy. Doesn't require you to say a damn thing."

Myka moved to step past Pete, wanting nothing more than to be out of the elevator, the space suddenly feeling smaller. She tripped, all but taking a nosedive towards the floor. Pete caught her on instinct and she grasped hold of the lapels of his jacket for support. Unable to hold her tears back any longer she collapsed against him and shook, sobbing heart-wrenchingly.

What more could she do, could she say to make him see that she wanted to prove him wrong? That she desperately wanted a second chance to prove her worth, to prove how much she needed him as her partner... her friend... and her lover. It was bad enough

when she had lost Sam, when she had seen what her leaving had done to Pete it was twice as bad. Honestly, much worse.

Chapter Three

Pete, surprisingly, held Myka gently in his arms as they stood in the hallway. He did not know exactly what to say at this moment, so he remained silent.

"I-I'm sorry, so sorry... for everything," Myka mumbled through her tears, "I didn't mean to slap you... I didn't..."

"Let it go, Myka," said Pete, his voice quiet and gentle now. "I was a Grade-A jackass for treating you like I did. I got angry and didn't see what you were going through."

Myka hugged Pete tight, nodding meekly, "Take me back to the room, I've made a big enough fool of myself tonight already, I just wanna get some sleep."

"Okay," said Pete. "Come on."

Pete aided Myka in walking to their room and then opened the door. He picked her up at the threshold and carried her to the bedroom, setting her on the bed.

"Sleep it off," said Pete. "I'll see you in the morning."

Myka gently grasped hold of Pete's hand as he moved to exit the room, "Don't go, please."

"What's up?"

Blushing, Myka bowed her head, "I... I...", swallowing a lump in her throat she lifted her head up; even in the half-light his dark brown eyes seemed to radiate with a gentle warmth. She desperately wanted to ask him to stay, wrap her up in his arms, and hold her close as she fell asleep...

She reminded herself that things were different between them, that she was no longer his. Even now she wondered how he felt about her, if his feelings still ran as deep.

"Myka?" asked Pete, tilting his head to one side.

"Wait for me, tomorrow?" she whispered softly as she glimpsed into his eyes, her dark green gaze clouded over with unshed tears.

Pete looked away for a moment, the glitter of a nearby building just slipping through the room's curtains. In the quiet stillness of the room, he could make out the sounds of traffic below, but just barely.

His thoughts ran to the rough nights they had probably both spent since they arrived in Las Vegas. He cared for her, but he was not sure how she felt about him. She had left without a word before, and he had never quite forgiven her for that. He wanted to take her into his arms, hold her, kiss her, feel her body against his own. He wanted this, badly, but he just could not do it. He did not know if he could trust her again as he had before. The situation was different, she was different. Or was she?

Exhaling slowly, Pete looked down at the floor for a few moments and then back to Myka. He could still smell the alcohol from here. He wondered how much of her was talking and how much was the booze. Even still, he felt he carried the burden of her state. Their current relationship had obviously taken a toll on her to get her to drink that heavily. Maybe it was time for him to take at least a small step towards building a bridge.

A small one.

"Ok Myka," said Pete.

Turning away from her, Pete walked out of the bedroom and closed the door. He then made his way to the bed he had made on the floor since the couch had proven to be uncomfortable. Things were bad enough without the two-piece sofa slipping apart in the middle of the night and dropping him on the floor. Lying down, Pete stared up at the ceiling, thoughts drifting about in his brain until he fell asleep.

The moon came out from behind a cloud and the moment the light spilled across her face, she all but leaped out of bed, lining straight for the bathroom...

Flushing the toilet, Myka laid her head against her forearms for support, her entire skull pounding like a war drum. After a while she looked up and slowly leaned back against the bathtub, the cool ceramic felt heavenly against her skin. Shakily she grasped the edge of the bathtub and stood up slowly, the room spun and she found herself retching once again, spilling out the contents of her stomach.

"You okay?" came a voice from behind her. Pete took Myka's hair in his hands and held it out of the way for her.

Sitting up slowly, she cast a glance Pete's way as she flushed the toilet, "I'm okay, just my head, and my stomach, and everything else," tiredly she fell back against the bathtub, her entire body felt as though it was in tatters.

"You're still in your dress."

"Too tired to change, I slept on top of the blankets last night," she replied wearily. "If at all." Closing her eyes she shook her head with a wry, humorless laugh. "I'm such a mess, look at me!" Letting her head fall against her knees her laughter turned to tears. "Once the Regents hear of this, th-they'll..."

"They'll what?" asked Pete. "What's the big deal?"

Shaking her head, Myka wiped away her tears using the back of her hand, "I proved to them, I proved to them that I could be a competent agent," she whispered quietly. "Now look at me, some agent I make."

"We all have our moments, Myka," said Pete quietly.

He, perhaps, knew that better than anybody. Pete sat on the bathroom floor next to Myka and softly rubbed her back. She looked tired and spent. He had seen that face many times in the mirror when he was still seeing the neon rain. A lot of times he did not have anyone to help him pick up the pieces though.

Reflexively, Myka leaned into Pete for support as she shifted positions, her head coming to rest lightly against his chest. The two sat quietly like that for a lengthened moment, neither saying anything, merely silently acknowledging the other's presence.

"What time is it?" asked Myka quietly.

"It's about a quarter after four in the morning," said Pete.

Taking a clean washcloth off a nearby shelf, Pete turned on the cold water from the tub faucet and soaked the cloth. He then wrung it out and handed it to Myka.

"Come on, Myka," said Pete. "Try and get some more rest. I'll see about breakfast tomorrow. I know a few hangover cures we can try."

"I'm not sure I even want to think about food right now," mumbled Myka, her stomach rolling at the mere thought.

"At least you have the virtue of learning from my mistakes."

Pete helped Myka to bed and put the cold washcloth over her eyes. He then returned to the bathroom and grabbed the empty garbage can, placing it by Myka's bed. At least now she would not have to jump up and run.

Turning, Pete headed for the door of the bedroom.

"Pete?" called out Myka, her voice a low hoarse whisper.

"Yeah?"

"Thank you."

"For what?"

"Taking care of me."

"Get some rest, Mykes," said Pete, stopping there for a second, wondering why he had called her by her nickname just now, then closing the door behind him.

Burrowing into the bed, she pulled the blankets closely around her form, wrapping herself in a protective cocoon. She'd likely need to have her dress dry-cleaned, but right now she didn't care, all she wanted to do was sleep. She heard the shower sputter to life, briefly, the sound growing fainter and fainter as sleep slowly pulled her into its comforting embrace.

Pete had returned to the bathroom and started the shower. He felt that he needed one, particularly after hustling through half the city; and even more after that blow to his face. He rubbed his chin, feeling how bad it was, he knew he would have memories of that for weeks to come...

After he had showered and dried off, Pete felt one hundred percent better. He got dressed to get back into bed for a couple of hours. Exiting the bathroom, Pete stopped by Myka's bed to check on her. She was twisted up in the blankets, so Pete straightened them out for her. He shook his head slightly as he brushed a strand of hair from Myka's eyes. Patting her shoulder, Pete turned and left the bedroom.

Myka smiled dreamily as a hand lightly touched her face, then that same hand very gently brushed across her shoulders, and she snuggled into her blankets, strong, warm arms held her close as sleep consumed her.

Chapter Four

Pete awoke at eight in the morning, feeling like he had overslept. He opened the sliding glass door that led to the balcony; the brisk rush of fresh air was inviting and he did not even mind the early-morning sounds of life stirring in the city below.

He started off his morning with a bottle of water before he engaged himself in some exercises to loosen his cramped muscles. At nine, Pete finished. He freshened up briefly and got dressed, throwing on a pair of loose-fitting blue jeans, a white polo shirt, and his favorite black Adidas sneakers. Then he went into the bedroom to check on Myka. She was still alive and breathing, sleeping soundly and with a quiet smile on her face. Pete did not disturb her just yet.

Returning to the living room, Pete rolled up his bed for the day and put it away in a closet. Picking up the phone, he ordered room service. A stack of chocolate chip pancakes, a western omelet, pumpkin bread, coffee and orange juice for him. For Myka he ordered coffee, orange juice, multi-grain toast, eggs Benedict, bacon and a banana milkshake with honey.

After hanging up the phone, Pete walked back into the bedroom and sat down on the bed next to Myka. He brushed the back of his fingers against her cheek before moving his hand to her shoulder and gently coaxing her awake.

"Myka," said Pete softly. "Myka, time to get up."

Myka opened her eyes groggily, her lips felt dry, but thankfully her stomach felt better, if exceedingly empty, "Pete? What time is it?" she asked as she rubbed the sleep from her eyes.

"Take it easy," said Pete, a hand on her shoulder. "You need to take it easy for a while. I ordered breakfast. Go shower and get ready."

"You ordered breakfast?" she replied as she pinched the bridge of her nose.

"I did," said Pete, slowly rubbing his hand up and down her arm. "I said I would take care of you, right?"

Myka smiled shyly, "You did," leaning into him, Myka wrapped her arms around him, letting her head come to rest lightly on his shoulder. "Thank you, Pete."

"I always will," said Pete in a whisper, mainly to himself.

He leaned his head on hers and softly stroked her hair for a moment.

"Ok, time to get ready," said Pete. "We still have us an artifact to find."

Myka nodded, "Ok," she whispered. Turning her head slightly, she bashfully brushed her cheek against his before she pulled away and stood up. "I'll go get cleaned up."

Pete watched Myka as she walked to the bathroom, yet a little shaky, and she was still wearing that dress from last night. He shook his head. Even after a rough night she looked adorable in that dress. When she closed the bathroom door, Pete walked back out to the balcony to wait for room service.

Myka was in the shower for quite some time, the hot steam rejuvenated her, reviving her after the long night she'd had previously. Once she had finished with her shower she

pulled on a large, fluffy bathrobe and dried her hair off, quietly musing over what Pete had said earlier. Had she imagined it, but he said he would always look after her? The thought warmed her heart; Pete had shown a softer, more caring side to her, it was a side of him she had missed.

Walking back into the bedroom, she grabbed a clean change of clothes and dressed, pulling on a pair of casual shorts the color of a light tan, a white short-sleeved blouse, and a pair of simple white lace-up sandals. She stepped out into the living room, a brush in one hand, a scrunchy in the other. She smiled slightly as she spied Pete standing out on the balcony, and she approached him.

"So, what are we having?" she questioned him as she stopped next to him.

Pete turned around, seeing her all cleaned up; it almost was as though the night before had not happened. He smiled slightly at her before he ran down what he had ordered.

"Eggs Benedict? That's really rich," remarked Myka as she brushed out her hair. She fidgeted a little with the brush as she worked, recently she had been straightening her hair out after she washed it, but she hadn't bothered with it all today, not seeing very much point. Turning around, she held out the scrunchy.

"You mind?"

"Not at all," said Pete.

Pete took the scrunchy and helped Myka conquer her auburn curls, securing her ponytail. He rested his hands on her hips as he checked it. Man, I missed this...

He did miss what they had, though he didn't know if it was possible anymore. She had left without a single word. Did she just consider him a fling? A 'jock boyfriend' or something. Pete shook involuntarily as he turned around. He stepped away and walked to the kitchen, getting a bottle of water.

Myka watched as Pete retrieved a bottle of water from the fridge. Absentmindedly she licked her lips as she watched him uncap the bottle of water before taking a swig, her eyes lingering on his hands, the same hands that had just rested on her hips. Conflicting emotions or not, it was hard to forget a lover's touch. Blushing, she cleared her throat as she sensed Pete glancing her way.

"You want a water?" he asked.

"Please?" replied Myka.

Pete opened the fridge and got a water for Myka, handing it to her.

"Take it easy at first," said Pete. "Don't down it like you're shotgunning a beer."

Nodding, Myka unscrewed the cap from her bottle of water and took a long, slow swig. She paused as Pete glanced her way, "Sorry, just thirsty."

At that moment, a knock sounded at the door followed by a voice. "Room service!"

"Excellent," said Pete as he walked to the door. He opened it and let the man with the cart inside.

"For the honeymoon couple," the waiter said. "Bon appetite."

"Thanks," Pete replied without missing a beat. He slipped the waiter a twenty and closed the door after him. "Shall we, my love?"

Myka froze in her steps, not sure if she had heard Pete right, "What did you say?"

She knew Pete was very jesting in his nature, though right now the offhanded remark only served to confuse her.

"The guy said 'honeymoon' couple," said Pete, also not missing a beat. "Get it?"

He inwardly sighed. He had let that slip by accident. Hopefully he dodged the bullet and she would laugh it off as well.

Managing a slight smile, she lightly touched his arm, "Come my dear; let's eat before breakfast goes cold." She replied, deciding to humor him.

Pete pulled a chair out for her from the table and then spoke in a Shakespearean accent.

"Lady Ophelia."

Grasping hold of his hand, Myka sat down, "Sir Knight."

Pete then placed Myka's dishes on the table in front of her, the last of which was the banana milkshake.

"Enjoy."

Taking the cover off of her plate, Myka felt her stomach rumble at the sight of her meal.

It had been quite some time since she had last had Eggs Benedict, and with good reason; it was a very, very rich dish. Still, right now it smelled heavenly to her, and frankly she was starving. Turning towards Pete she smiled as he handed her a folded white cloth napkin.

As Myka reached out for it, Pete absently, instinctively kissed her hand.

"P-P-Pete.....?" stuttered Myka in sheer bafflement, her features reddening considerably.

Chapter Five

Pete had moved to take up his dishes and set them on the table when he paused, realizing what he had done. He was just beginning to silently curse himself when Myka spoke his name. There was no dodging this bullet.

As Pete turned to look at her, Myka had a sad, confused and almost upset look in her eyes. Her voice sounding so delicate, so hurt, so close to the verge of madness, he knew, now it was all or nothing.

"Myka...", said Pete quietly, near to stuttering, "I... I'm sorry... I..."

Pete turned away, looking at his food, unable to finish his sentence.

Myka brushed a stray strand of hair behind her ear as she looked down at her plate, she wondered absently for some time if there had been someone else in Pete's life, though now she was skeptical. His actions only served to confuse her, she had always known him to be a natural flirt, even before they had started dating he had hit on her often.

"Pete," she started slowly, "Where are we, where do we stand?" she spoke quietly.

There was silence for quite some time, and then Pete spoke, just barely above a whisper.

"I love you, Myka."

Pete cursed himself inwardly. Why had he done that? Said that? Idiot. She wasn't into him. He was just a fling. Too many times under fire and they had just fallen into each other. It wasn't anything real.

Myka felt faint, not certain as to what to say.

She whispered quietly in reply, her voice barely audible to her own ears, "I always will."

"Will you?" said Pete, turning more towards her.

Her lips. He had read them, if purely by accident.

"How do you feel about me, Myka?" asked Pete. "The man you left without even saying a word."

Myka gave a nervous half laugh; she had forgotten he could read lips.

As she turned in his direction, she softly touched his cheek, "I love you, I always will, but...", ducking her head she bit her lip. "I don't know if we can ever have what we had before, especially after what I did, leaving you like I did. What kind of woman you must think me." She remarked with a shake of her head.

"You love me?" asked Pete. "Truly?"

"I never stopped loving you," she replied, her thumb absently stroking the side of his face as she looked up into his eyes. "Not once."

"Then why did you leave like that?" asked Pete quietly.

"It was too unbearable, I felt ashamed that I had failed you," she replied looking away, her heart clenching in pain. "Like I didn't deserve you, I wonder now if I still do, especially after last night."

"Myka...", said Pete slowly.

Putting his hands around Myka's arms he gently pulled her up so she stood right in front of him. Guiding his arms around her waist, Pete kissed her deeply, passionately, holding her close.

Immediately he had to think of their first kiss, recalling how he took that leap of faith, holding up the mistletoe. Then as now the only thing he could do was try and hope...

His actions caught her off guard, but just briefly. Myka wound her arms tightly around Pete as she returned his kiss, cautiously at first, then more and more avidly. As she felt his hands softly caressing her sides, holding her close, Myka instantly knew she was back at that place where she could feel safe and secure.

As the pair felt they were closer together than they had ever been, in this moment, the two of them were one.

At length they separated, if only to catch their breath. "I have missed you."

Myka nodded feebly, clearly breathless, "So have I." she remarked as she kissed him again. As Pete returned her kiss, his hands tenderly massaged the small of her back.

The minutes seemed stretch endlessly until Myka finally pulled away, and she nuzzled his nose, "Pete," she remarked breathy as he began to trail kisses along her neck, "I hate to break the moment, but I think our breakfast is getting cold."

"Not being near us," said Pete. "It couldn't possibly have gotten cold."

Myka giggled as he dotted her collarbone with kisses, and she cupped his face in her hands, her eyes meeting his, "My dear knight, thy lady is starving, and not merely for thy affections."

"Then let us feast," said Pete. "For milady will require her strength."

The two pulled away from each other, but not before sharing one more kiss, and then finally sat down to breakfast. Myka unfolded her napkin and hungrily dug into her food, thankfully it was still quite warm. She blushed as she looked up and spied Pete glancing her way. "I didn't eat at all last night, if not much of anything." She replied sheepishly.

"It's fine," said Pete, smiling. He then turned to his food.

Taking a sip of her milkshake, Myka found it to not be that altogether unpleasant; it reminded her of a much thicker smoothie, at least a little. Setting down her milkshake, she turned back to her breakfast, careful not to eat too quickly, she didn't want to risk upsetting her stomach even as hungry as she was.

"I'm going to need to see if I can get the dress dry-cleaned, though I doubt it can be salvaged, that sleaze spilled his drink on me after you punched him out last night. I didn't notice it until later." Sighing, she continued to eat her breakfast. "I'm so sorry about last night, Pete."

"Me too," said Pete.

For a moment Myka paused as if she was in search for an adequate phrasing, before she went ahead, "You should know that since you, I haven't been with anyone else." Quietly she set down her fork and reached across the table to grasp his hand in hers. "I mean that."

Pete stopped eating for a second. He had pushed that thought away, denying it, every time it had crossed his mind. Myka being with someone else... Fortunately it was not relevant any longer.

"Me neither," he replied.

Myka's features showed a flattered smile, her thumb lightly caressed the back of his hand, as both held each other's gaze in comfortable silence.

Pete speared a piece of Myka's Eggs Benedict and fed her.

Myka smiled moonily, forgetting about the food in her mouth as she momentarily lost herself in his eyes. She gave his hand a gentle squeeze and softly kissed his cheek after Pete had lowered his fork, giving her a questioning look. "Alright, alright, I'll eat." She chuckled as she turned her attention back to her breakfast.

The pair finished their meals and then placed the dishes on the cart, covering them with their lids. Pete wheeled the cart to the door and placed it outside in the hallway. Closing the door, he turned back to face Myka.

"Thanks for staying for breakfast with me, Pete." Remarked Myka as she softly stroked his cheek.

Wrapping her arms around his waist she lightly rested her head against his chest. "I missed this, I missed us." she whispered quietly.

"I'm just sorry that things got like that between us," said Pete. "Maybe we'll have more luck with our case now that we are working together. We sure did not have any luck the other way."

Lifting her head up, Myka stared into his eyes, "Remember what I told Artie before we left? I'm your partner, I go where you go."

"I would have no one else by my side," said Pete.

He knew they would always be together. He had felt it when they first entered the Warehouse. Whatever happened to one would happen to both because he would always be at her side.

Epilogue

As Pete exited from the bathroom and walked over to Myka, the toothbrush still in his mouth, he mumbled, "So, whatcha think, Mykes? Now that we had this delicious breakfast, shall we snag, bag and tag us an artifact?" Some of the toothpaste bubbled in the corners of his mouth...

Myka instantly burst into a loud laugh. It took her several seconds before she was able to frame a response. Grasping his hands in hers she smiled at him, "Sure thing, partner."

"I'm down if you are," said Pete.

"Then let's review our notes," replied Myka.

She watched after Pete as he turned around and walked back towards the bathroom. Her thoughts drifted away as she stood absently in the middle of the room. Right now she felt stupid. Why did she even leave? Leave HIM?

A few minutes later Pete returned, wondering why his partner was still standing there, right where he had left her. "Hey Myka, what's up? You're alright?" asked Pete, pulling her from her state of absence.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm fine... I'll go get... my stuff," replied Myka, struggling with bafflement.

Trying to focus on the task at hand, she turned and walked into the bedroom to retrieve her notes and the laptop, Pete trailing behind her. She chuckled as she turned around abruptly, "Living room, not here! I can't have you getting distracted," She teased.

"Too late." replied Pete, his voice sounding just a little lower than before.

As Myka noticed the slight shift in his tone, she was overtaken by it. Her features reddening, she bowed her head, staring at the floor. She remembered only too well what these mood swings of his usually meant. Myka hesitated for a prolonged moment, barely able to keep her cool, as she mentally questioned herself. Am I ready for this? What if I just...

Before she could finish that thought, Pete approached her, attempting to wrap his arms around her waist. Myka managed to flash a chaste smile up at him, as she gently warded off his grip, taking a step back.

In an attempt to get him back on track, even more to convince herself, she said, "Listen, Pete, we really, really need to get on top of this mission. You know how far behind we are, right?" Myka tried hard to sound as if she meant it, "So, what you say, we grab our notes and go about it?"

Suddenly Pete's spider sense started tingling. He closed his eyes instantly, preparing himself. Here comes another vibe... Surprisingly it was a good one for a change. A wonderful one, actually. Now, he knew it was the time, and he knew what to do.

Pete smiled confidently as he leaned in to kiss her. "Not just yet..." He whispered passionately as his lips found hers.

Overwhelmed by the sheer amount of Pete's self-confidence Myka just stood there, unable to move nor think. A few lengthened moments passed before she finally closed the distance between them. Her lips slowly came to life as she gently traced his features with her fingertips.

Pete pulled Myka into his arms as she returned his kiss in growing desire. He hooked his arms under her thighs as she wrapped her legs around his waist, their kisses turning more impassioned with each passing second.

Myka, short of breath, leaned her head back, her arms looping around Pete's neck. Then she pulled his face close against her breast. Yeah, I'm ready...

Holding her captivating form in his arms, Pete headed in the direction of the bed. As she shifted her kisses to his neck, more and more involving her tongue, Myka gave way to her burning emotions. He practically purred as she ran her fingers through his hair, leaving a trail of kisses in her wake along his neck and up his jawline. Pete tightened his hold on her as she friskily pulled on his earlobe with her teeth, the action causing him to stumble considerably, "Myka!" Pete chuckled.

"You drop me..." She started warningly.

"I know, I know, you'll kick my ass." He replied with a playful grin.

All extremities of Myka's body winding around Pete's form, she leaned in to kiss him in a way that reminded him of a blazing fire, as her hands ran under his shirt and up his back. Pete flinched slightly, and he reluctantly broke off the kiss. Gazing at her, he slowly set her back down on her feet.

"Be gentle with me."

Myka, suggestively smirking, locked on to Pete's gaze, "Aren't I always?"

Pete could only grin as she nearly ripped his shirt apart, tugging it off over his head, before she proceeded to wrap her arms around his neck, and he kissed her fervently. Myka, all but dragging him along, stepped backwards; she yelped as the back of her legs made contact with the mattress, throwing off her balance, and sent them both crashing atop the bed.

"You call this being gentle?" Pete teased. Myka nipped at his lips as she propped herself up on her elbows. "Shut up marine."

As Pete tried to open his mouth to respond, she quickly moved closer to kiss him, letting the tip of her tongue come to trace his lips, leaving him speechless. Playfully Myka imitated a cat's meow before she resumed kissing him with all her fiery passion.

Her fingers threaded through Pete's hair as he returned the kiss. She could feel his heart beating excitedly as he rolled onto his side, pulling her closer. As the embrace slowly intensified, their hands came to caress each other's body, feeling, touching each other's form. Myka leaned over; her curves slowly gliding over Pete's chest, she came to rest on top of him. At once both had to catch their breath, allowing themselves to share a brief moment of calm...

...Pete softly stroked the side of her face as he gazed deep into her emerald green eyes. Myka nuzzled his nose, planting a soft kiss against his lips.

"I love you."

Pete smiled, gently kissing her eyelids as he tightened the embrace. He followed her jawline with his lips, before they finally came to rest upon hers.

Slightly pulling back, but only by a fraction of an inch, he whispered...

"I love you, Myka."