

CRUSADERS  
#10: THE CREW

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**TEASER**

EXT. SPACE

We open on the pitch blackness of space, which is suddenly disrupted by flashes of bright lights, flying through the emptiness. In the midst of the laser fire, for that is what it is, flies the Running Shot, twisting and turning, doing everything that it can to avoid being blasted out of existence.

Right behind it are three Avengers, they are the ones firing the space lasers, it's kind of what they do.

INT. RUNNING SHOT - COCKPIT

Inside the cramped cockpit sits VIC at the controls, the joystick in his vice like grip as his eyes narrow in concentration. He knows that if he slips up even a little, and it's all over.

Not far from him, sits LUKE, with a headgear pulled down over his head, and the weapons controls in his hand.

VIC

You plan on pulling the trigger at any point?

LUKE

I'm sorry, should I just be shooting wildly? Because I thought the point was to actually hit something.

VIC

They don't seem to mind shooting wildly into space.

LUKE

They got money, they can afford to waste the energy cells, we on the other hand, have fucking cargo that we can't unload. Doesn't do us a whole lot of fucking good, now does it?

VIC

Just shoot something!

Vic screams as he pulls the stick hard to the left.

EXT. SPACE

We see the Running Shot spin to the left, as it opens fire on the nearest of the Avengers, missing all but the last shot, which caused the fighter ship to explode. The one nearest it, spins to the left, and collides with the final Avenger.

INT. RUNNING SHOT - COCKPIT

Luke pulls the headgear off his head as Vic rights the ship.

LUKE  
How's that?

VIC  
Took you fucking long enough!

LUKE  
What's your problem?

VIC  
What's my problem? What's my  
problem?  
(he jumps to his feet)  
Are you fucking kidding me right  
now?

Luke lets out a sigh.

LUKE  
Just relax, we have some breathing  
room.

Vic falls back into his chair.

VIC  
For how long? Huh? Every time we  
stop moving, even for a few  
seconds, they are on us.  
(snaps his fingers)  
Just like that.

LUKE  
And you know how to solve that  
problem, same as me.

VIC  
We are not dumping the weapons!

LUKE  
If we don't, they'll catch us. You  
know that's what they are tracking.

VIC

It's the biggest score we've ever had, and you want to just flush it out the airlock? Do you even fucking hear yourself?

LUKE

Yeah, yeah I do. I'm saying that I'd rather be poor and alive, than poor and dead. Because we aren't unloading the weapons, that's a fact.

Vic sits there in silence for a few moments, as if truly considering what Luke had just said.

VIC

What if we get someone to unload the weapons for us?

**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

EXT. SALVATION

The Phoenix landed in the midst of the ruins, a few blocks off from the resistance old headquarters.

Erica leads Phoebe and James through what used to be a beautiful city.

PHOEBE

I still think this is a mistake.

Her voice cracks as she attempts for the umptieth time to move them away from this reckless course of action.

ERICA

(pissed)

Noted.

PHOEBE

The League is all around Serenity, how do we hope to get back in?

JAMES

That's a fair question. We just got out of that hell, I don't fancy us going back in. At least not without a plan.

ERICA

I have a plan.

JAMES

Care to share it with the class?

ERICA

Not really, no.

She speeds up as she leads them into the former command center and down into the secret room. James and Phoebe have to rush to follow along.

INT. HIDDEN BASE

Erica leads them across the room, doing her best to ignore all the horrors that is spread out before them. Phoebe lets out a low scream, James pulls her close.

JAMES

It's okay.

PHOEBE

How can you say that! Look what  
they did. It looks like. . .like. .

.

JAMES

Home.

Phoebe breaks down into tears as James hugs her. He does his best to keep his face clear of emotion, but the pain comes through his eyes. The sight is breaking him just as much as it is Phoebe.

INT. HIDDEN BASE - VAULT

Erica stands in the middle of the room that was once filled with weapons, a look of pure fury on her face.

EXT. SALVATION

The Shooting Star sits behind a ruined skyscraper, a few blocks off from the hidden base.

Outside of the ship, Xander is laying on the ruins of what looks to be a corner store, he throws a ball into the air and catches it. David stands next to the entrance of the ship, a worried look on his face as Zack scans the sky, looking for any sight of another ship.

ZACK

This was a mistake.

XANDER

You don't say.

DAVID

Enough! They are on their way. They are just running late.

Xander catches the ball and sits up.

XANDER

Running late to the meeting they set up, so they can give us back the weapons they stole from us in the first place.

DAVID

They were not our weapons.

ZACK

They weren't anyone's weapons. This whole waste of a planet is dead! Those weapons were just sitting there for the taking, our taking!

XANDER

The man has a point.

David says nothing, merely steps out of the shadow of his ship and looks up to the sky.

ZACK

And can we talk about why they suddenly want to work out some kind of deal with us? I mean, they have the weapons, they sell them, that's money in their pockets, now all the sudden, they want to cut us in? Why?

DAVID

Perhaps they do not know anyone willing to buy the weapons?

XANDER

(laughs)  
And we do?

DAVID

We will find someone!

ZACK

So why don't they?

Once again, David says nothing.

ZACK (CONT'D)

This feels wrong to me.

XANDER

Like some kind of set up?

ZACK

You disagree?

XANDER

Not in the least.

DAVID

This is too good an opportunity for us to pass up.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

After the mess that was made with our dealings with Peter, we need a win. If they are offering, who are we to refuse?

XANDER

Sane?

ZACK

We can't blindly walk into a trap.

DAVID

We have our eyes fully open. If they attempt to do anything underhanded. . .

XANDER

Like tie us up and steal our money.

DAVID

(sigh)

We shall be on guard. We can at least hear what they have to say.

ZACK

This is a mistake.

DAVID

As you have said.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF HIDDEN BASE

Erica, James and Phoebe make their way back outside, their mood even darker than before.

JAMES

Who could have taken it? Who even knew it was down there?

PHOEBE

You think the League found it?  
(she shudders)  
Just think of how much damage they could do with an armory full of weapons.

JAMES

You mean, yet another armory full of weapons.

PHOEBE

Well, yeah. But these aren't theirs.

(MORE)



PHOEBE (CONT'D)

They could use them to blame the resistance, or really, set up anyone they want. It's a ready made excuse to hurt people.

ERICA

As if they had ever needed an excuse.

JAMES

Is that a ship?

He points up at the sky, as the Running Shot descends into the atmosphere, heading towards the Shooting Star.

ERICA

Come on!

She runs towards the new ships landing site.

EXT. SHOOTING STAR

Xander walks over to stand next to David and Zack.

XANDER

Bout damn time.

ZACK

You know they kept us waiting on purpose.

David steps forward as the ship lands.

DAVID

Enough, let us just get through this meeting with our dignity intact.

XANDER

Not likely.

Erica, James and Phoebe find a nice spot to watch them as Luke and Vic exit the ship.

DAVID

Luke, Vic, how nice to see you again.

Zack and Xander exchange annoyed looks.

VIC

I'm sure. Let's just get this over with.

DAVID  
As you wish.

He motions for Xander and Zack to follow Luke aboard the ship.

VIC  
You remember our terms?

DAVID  
30 percent finders fee on what we earn from selling the weapons. I have the account information in the computer.

VIC  
I'm taking a big risk here, trusting you and all.

He glances up at the sky, as if expecting something, before looking back at the ship.

DAVID  
You have my word of honor that I will honor our agreement.

VIC  
You better.

With that he rushes back into the ship just as Luke and the others are walking down the ramp. He exchanges some quick words with Luke before running inside. Luke just nods.

As Xander and Zack take the weapons onboard their ship he walks over to David.

LUKE  
I trust your guys can finish loading the weapons onto the ship?

DAVID  
But of course. It has been a pleasure.

LUKE  
Right, I'm sure. Well, I'm off!

He all but runs back to the Running Shot, which is already powering up.

David turns and follows Xander and Zack into the cargo hold.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - CARGO HOLD

Xander and Zack are unloading the weapons.

XANDER

You find it a little odd that they not only decided to let us in on the weapon sells, but also just gave us the loader?

ZACK

I'm telling you, this whole thing just smells fishy.

David walks into the room.

DAVID

I have to agree with Mr. Quinn. They were far too eager to get off world. There has to be more to this than them just feeling guilty.

ZACK

That's what I've been saying!

Xander stops unloading as he picks up a tiny device and twists it around in his hands.

XANDER

Uh, guys, what's this?

He holds it up for them to see.

ERICA (O.S.)

It's a League tracking device.

Xander, Zack and David all spin around to find an armed Erica, James and Phoebe standing in the doorway to the cargo hold with weapons drawn.

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

EXT. SALVATION

As the Running Shot exits the atmosphere on one side of the planet, League Terminators enter the other side. Avengers and carrier ships exit their hangers and start flying over the surface area, heading in the general direction of the Shooting Star.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - CARGOHOLD

Erica, James and Phoebe are still holding a shocked David, Xander and Zack at gun point.

DAVID

Who are you and how did you get onboard my ship?

ERICA

In case it escaped your notice, I'm the one with the blaster, so I'll ask the fucking questions!

She shakes with rage as she speaks. James and Phoebe exchange worried glances, as do Xander and James.

DAVID

I noticed, yet seeing as we are onboard my ship, I will continue to demand the answers that I seek. I say again, who the fuck are you, and why are you on my ship?

Erica's finger tightens on the trigger, but James steps forward, placing his hand on her arm.

JAMES

We came for the weapons. They belong to my friend here. Hand them over and we'll be on our way.

ZACK

As if! We hand them over and you'll kill us, prolly steal the ship in the process.

PHOEBE

We won't. We promise.

XANDER

No offense beautiful, but I'm not inclined to believe people holding blasters on me. Makes me a bit nervous.

James is thrown off by Xander calling Phoebe beautiful and the fact that she blushed at it.

ERICA

I couldn't care less if you trust us or not! Those belong to me, and I'm not leaving without. . .

Her words are drowned out as the proximity alarm goes off.

PHOEBE

What's that?

XANDER

The proximity alarm!

ZACK

It means we have incoming! And fast!

ERICA

The League! They followed that tracker!

Her gun lowered as she looks back towards the exit of the ship, judging if they have time to make it back to their own.

DAVID

We need to get in the air, now!

PHOEBE

What about us?

XANDER

I guess you're coming along. Strap up, it's going to be a bumpy ride.

Zack, who is already halfway towards the door, all thought of getting shot gone from his mind, throws back his retort.

ZACK

Fuck off!

XANDER

(holds up the tracking device)

So, this is what they are after?

ERICA

Yeah, we need to dump it before we take off.

DAVID

I have not agreed to let you stay onboard!

Erica points her gun at him once more.

ERICA

I don't recall asking for your blessing.

Xander puts his hand on her gun, lowering it.

XANDER

None of that now. We can fight this out later, you know when the League isn't on the way to arrest us for all these clearly not legal guns. Deal?

JAMES

We don't have much choice.

PHOEBE

Come on Erica, we'll never make it back to the ship.

Erica lowers the ship.

ERICA

Fine.

Xander turns back towards David.

XANDER

Boss man?

DAVID

Fine, for now. Just. . .just get rid of that!

Xander nods as he starts running past the others towards the cargo door.

XANDER

On it!

## EXT. SALVATION

Just as an Avenger starts to close in on the Shooting Star, it takes off, blasting past the fighter. It changes course to give pursuit. Other Avengers alter their flight paths to chase after our heroes.

One Avenger fires a missile, but not at the Shooting Star, instead at the Phoenix, which explodes in a fireball.

## INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

Zack is at the controls, while David, Erica, James, Phoebe and Xander all stand around, their eyes glued to the enemies closing in on them.

James and Phoebe hold each as they witness the Phoenix exploding. It's yet another home taken from them.

ERICA

There goes our ride.

XANDER

Guess we're stuck with you.

DAVID

For now.

The ship rocks as it gets hit. Zack struggles to get it back under control.

ZACK

Can we have a little less talking?

## EXT. SPACE

The Shooting Star rockets out into space, which is filled with League capital ships, known as Battlecruisers, as well as Avengers and Terminators as far as the eye can see. They came with a whole army to back them up.

## INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

The crew is speechless.

JAMES

What now?

ERICA

We can't let them capture us!

ZACK

No shit! Thanks for that, I was just getting ready to hail them and turn ourselves in. Sure glad you stopped me.

XANDER

Gotta love the sarcasm, but you do have a plan right?

Zack nods, but his face betrays him. He's as scared as the rest of them.

EXT. SPACE

The Shooting Star does it's best to stay ahead of the League ships chasing after them, but the Avengers give chase, firing at them as they go.

Suddenly the Avengers turn and fly back towards the planet, leaving the Shooting Star to escape.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

ZACK

Uh?

ERICA

Why are they retreating?

XANDER

(smiles)

They're chasing after the tracker, of course.

JAMES

The one you tossed out of the ship before we took off?

XANDER

The one and the same.

DAVID

But you tossed that out before we even took off, why just chase after it now?

ERICA

Surely they must know we discovered it and ditched it. That's why they tried so hard to shoot us down.



ZACK

Damn near succeeded if I'm being honest.

PHOEBE

So what changed?

Xander holds up a device.

XANDER

I put it on the loader we brought out to load the weapons, you know, before Vic and them gave us theirs. Figured I'd wait till we were some distance and then flip this little switch and send it speeding down the street.

ERICA

So they think we were the distraction.

XANDER

Bingo!

DAVID

That was risky.

XANDER

But it worked. Now lets get the hell out of here before they figured it out.

ZACK

Way ahead of you.

Off in the corner of the room where James and Phoebe are standing together, she leans in and whispers to him.

PHOEBE

(whispers)

I don't get it, they had more than enough manpower to go after us and the loader.

JAMES

(whispers)

I know, there has to be something else going on. I just wonder if Erica picked up on it too.

The look on her face tells them she had.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - DAVID'S OFFICE

He sits across from Erica, her blaster still in her hand.

DAVID

That weapon make you feel powerful?

ERICA

Depends, make you feel powerless?

DAVID

Not in the least. You would hardly be the first person to attempt to steal my ship, nor would I suspect you to be the last.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - KITCHEN

Xander is making himself some food while James sits at the table, his blaster trained on him the whole time.

XANDER

You sure I can't make you anything?

JAMES

I'm sure. Can you just sit down?  
You're making me nervous!

Xander takes his sandwich and moves to sit across from James.

XANDER

I make you nervous? Last I checked you were the one with the blaster.

James looks at the weapon, clearly uneasy to have it in his hands.

JAMES

Yeah, well . . .

XANDER

Not used to having a weapon in your hand are you?

James shakes off his insecurity.

JAMES

I know what I'm doing!

XANDER

Never suggested otherwise, just an observation. You're not a warrior, neither is your . . .girlfriend?

The look on James' face gives away the answer, Xander flashes him a smile.

XANDER (CONT'D)  
That's a yes.

JAMES  
I didn't say that.

XANDER  
Didn't have to. But that other lady, she's a soldier. Now if I remember, and a lot's happen since then, so maybe I'm off, but I seem to remember you saying that the weapons belonged to her. So, resistance fighter?

JAMES  
Stop!

Xander takes a bite of his sandwich.

XANDER  
That's a yes.

James is clearly nervous about how much Xander has figured out.

XANDER (CONT'D)  
Don't worry, her secret is safe with me. I never much cared for the League my damn self.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

Zack is at the controls while Phoebe sits in the co-pilot chair, the blaster in her lap.

ZACK  
So you going to interrogate me, or just sit there with that there blaster?

Phoebe shifts uncomfortably in her chair.

PHOEBE  
I don't really have anything to ask, just make sure you keep heading towards Serenity.

ZACK  
Serenity? Never heard of her. You  
sure these the coordinates?

Phoebe leans over to double check what was written down,  
before nodding.

ZACK (CONT'D)  
Not much of a talker huh?

PHOEBE  
I talk.

ZACK  
Just not to me?

PHOEBE  
Just keep us heading towards  
Serenity.

ZACK  
You new at this huh?

PHOEBE  
I'm not!

ZACK  
Sure you are. I bet you've never  
even fired one of those before.

Phoebe looks down at the blaster with a dark look on her  
face.

PHOEBE  
I wouldn't make that bet if I were  
you.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - DAVID'S OFFICE

David and Erica have their eyes locked on each other.

DAVID  
So, after we turn these weapons  
over to your friends.

ERICA  
I put the money in your hands. It's  
all I have left, but it's yours.  
Just as long as you get the kids  
somewhere safe after.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - KITCHEN

Xander and James are sitting at the table, beer bottles all around them. The blaster laid forgotten not far from James. James takes a sip.

XANDER

That's some story man.

JAMES

I wish that's all it was. A story, rather than my life. Than Phoebe's life.

XANDER

You really love her huh?

JAMES

Wha? I mean. . .Love is. . .

XANDER

A big word. You're young. You'll get there.

James lets out a nervous laugh before taking another sip.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

With the ship on autopilot, Zack is turned to face Phoebe.

ZACK

I'm so sorry. I've had my fill of run-ins with the League myself, but nothing half so bad as what you've been through.

PHOEBE

It just never stops. It's almost like everyday is worse than the last. And it's never going to get any better.

Zack puts his hand on Phoebe's.

ZACK

It will. Trust me!

She gives him a weak smile.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. SHUTTLE

Erica sits at the control of the tiny shuttle as Xander sits next her, laid back in the most relaxing position he could find.

ERICA

Your captain didn't need to send you. I could have made this delivery myself.

XANDER

No worries, I just wanted some fresh air. I mean, come on, being stuck up in the ship all the time, it's confining to say the least.

ERICA

So you expect me to believe you aren't here to keep an eye on me?

XANDER

An eye on you? Me? Parish the thought! I just want some air.

ERICA

Right, right, some air. I'm sure.

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE SERENITY

The Shooting Star hovers, dead in space near the moon, as League ships, of all kinds, flying around the planet.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

Zack sits at the controls, David standing behind him.

DAVID

You sure they can not see us?

Zack looks over his controls.

ZACK

As far as I can tell, we're in the clear.

DAVID

How about Xander and that woman?

ZACK

They're planet side, beyond that,  
your guess is as good as mine.

Zack turns around in his chair to face David.

ZACK (CONT'D)

Now, how about we talk our new  
guests?

DAVID

There is nothing to talk about. We  
finish this job and send them on  
their way. Just as we agreed upon.

ZACK

Or. . .and I'm just throwing this  
out there, but how about we let  
them stay?

DAVID

Excuse me?

ZACK

I mean come on, you want work,  
these people know people. I mean  
shit, they sold off the weapons in  
a matter of moments.

DAVID

They bought them. Surely you can  
not be suggesting that makes them  
worthy of being on our team?

ZACK

They got the drop on us. From what  
Phoebe tells me, they've been  
through some shit. You want to run  
jobs, real jobs? Maybe we take on  
new blood.

DAVID

They held us at blaster point. What  
makes you think we can trust them?

ZACK

They didn't shoot us. Hell, they  
could have taken the weapons and  
the ship by force, they took  
neither. Paid us and everything.  
Seems to me, they proved we can  
trust them. Proved we should.

David stands there, eyes locked onto Zack, not saying a word.

EXT. SERENITY - WOODS - NIGHT

The Shuttle comes in for a landing in the middle of a tiny clearing in the midst of the woods. The shuttle door opens and Xander and Erica walk out.

XANDER

You sure this is the right place?

ERICA

You sure you don't want to stay on the shuttle?

Xander just smiles and holds up his hands in mock surrender. Erica walks past Xander and looks around. She then lets out a whistle.

Suddenly, a group of heavily armed men come out of the woods with their weapons raised.

XANDER

What the?

ERICA

Relax.

After a few moments, Wesley and Hussain walk out, unarmed, Wesley with a smile and Hussain with a scowl.

WESLEY

You kept your word.

ERICA

Always do.

HUSSAIN

That's yet to be seen. Where are the weapons?

ERICA

Good to see you too, Hussain.

HUSSAIN

Erica.

(nods to Xander)

Whose he? New boyfriend?

ERICA

He should be so lucky.

XANDER

He has a name, Xander, in case anyone was wondering.



No one was.

WESLEY

May we?

He motions for the ship, Erica nods. He points at two of the nearest men who rush past Xander onto the shuttle.

ERICA

So how goes the war effort?

HUSSAIN

Not great to be honest. These weapons are just what we need.

ERICA

Is that a complement?

HUSSAIN

(he flashes her a smile.)  
Don't push it.

He then turns and leads the men with the weapons back into the woods.

ERICA

(turns to Wesley)  
Was that a complement?

WESLEY

Closest I've ever heard him give.

Xander just stands there looking out of place as Erica and Wesley walk after Hussain, the other men following after them.

XANDER

Should I just stay here?

No one answers him.

XANDER (CONT'D)

What am I, invisible?

INT. SHOOTING STAR - KITCHEN

Phoebe sits next to a James who has seen better days.

PHOEBE

How much did you drink?

JAMES

I don't know. He just. . .that guy,  
the one you like. . .  
(he quickly glances at  
Phoebe)  
He just kept bringing me drinks.

PHOEBE

The one I like? Are you jealous?

JAMES

Jealous? Me? Come on, you know me  
better than that!

PHOEBE

And you know me better than to  
think I like some guy just because  
he complimented me. James, you're  
the only one for me.

He smiles, before moving in for a kiss, but then he stops and  
rushes over to the trash in the corner where he starts to  
throw up.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

This is going to be a long day.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

David throws his hands up.

DAVID

I do not wish to speak on this any  
longer. We will not allow bandits  
onto my ship!

ZACK

Bandits?

DAVID

Bandit, a thief, a robber, an  
outlaw.

ZACK

Ohhh, so just like us.

DAVID

Amusing, Zack. Truly.

ZACK

I'm just saying, we sold them weapons we stole off dead people, after more or less failing a job that we were hired to do by an honest to god mobster. Not like we're saints here.

DAVID

Is there no work for you to be doing?

ZACK

Till Xander gets back, not as such, so why don't you stop avoiding the.

. .

He is cut off by the ships alarms going off.

ZACK (CONT'D)

What the?

He spins around and checks the controls. He pulls up the screen and we find two Avengers flying right at them.

DAVID

They see us!

ZACK

No shit!

He powers up the ship.

DAVID

You assured me that we were well hidden!

ZACK

I thought we were!

DAVID

You thought wrong! Now get us out of here!

EXT. SPACE

The Shooting Star fires up it's engines and takes off, the Avengers give chase.

ZACK

What do you think I'm doing!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Wesley leads his men through the woods, Erica at his side. The two of them in deep conversation. Hussain hanging out a few steps behind them, talking to one of the soldiers. Not far behind him, four men walk guarding the weapons, as they move them through the woods. Behind that are the last 4 soldiers, with a bored Xander bringing up the rear.

XANDER

(under his breath)

I should have stayed on the ship.  
Zack's probably having the time of  
his life, eating all my chips while  
I'm marching endlessly through the  
fucking woods!

He kicks a nearby rock, sending it flying off and hitting a tree. Two of the soldier's spin in the direction of the sound, their weapons at the ready.

Once they find nothing there, they return to their walk and Xander tries to act like nothing happened. After a few more steps, he hears something behind him. He turns around to find five League soldiers, blasters aimed right at him.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Uh, guys?

He holds up his hands. The resistance fighters turn around, blasters at the ready, only it's too late. Out from behind almost every tree, League soldiers pour out. A pair of Avengers come in over head. They are surrounded.

HUSSAIN

We've been set up!

ERICA

Not by us!

They glare at each other.

LEAGUE SOLDIER

Toss down your weapons.

HUSSAIN

What's the move?

Wesley looks around before tossing his down.

WESLEY

We live to figure it out.

His men follow his lead.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - KITCHEN

The room is rocked, knocking James and Phoebe to the ground.

PHOEBE  
What's going on?

James slowly starts to get back to his feet.

JAMES  
That felt like something hit us.

PHOEBE  
They found us?

James nods as the ship is rocked again.

EXT. SPACE

A legion of Avengers give chase to the Shooting Star as it races to stay one step ahead.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

David grips the back of Zack's chair so hard that his hands have turned white at the knuckles.

Zack scans the screen ahead, darting his eyes back to the instruments on the console, to keep himself apprised of the oncoming ships.

DAVID  
Get us out of here!

ZACK  
Great idea! Wish I thought of that!

DAVID  
How many are there?

ZACK  
You want me to count, or you want me to fly?

David takes a deep breath to steady himself.

DAVID  
Fly.

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

EXT. SPACE

The Shooting Star jumps, leaving the Avengers behind.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - COCKPIT

David falls into the second chair, his breath catching up to him, just as the door opens and James and Phoebe run in.

JAMES  
What's going on?

ZACK  
I just saved all our asses, you guys missed a hell of a show.

PHOEBE  
We jumped?

ZACK  
We had no choice.

JAMES  
But Erica? We can't just. . .

DAVID  
We did what we had to. In case it escaped your attention, we left one of ours behind as well.

PHOEBE  
We have to go back.

ZACK  
(nervous laugh)  
You gotta be kidding me. We escaped by the skin of our teeth and you want us to go running back?

JAMES  
You're going to just leave your friend?

PHOEBE  
Surely not.

ZACK  
Never said he was my friend.

DAVID

Nor did we say we were going to leave him.

ZACK

What? You can't be serious!

DAVID

We will not leave a man behind, nor will we break our word of honor.

ZACK

Word of honor. Word of honor that's going to get us killed!

JAMES

Not if we have help.

EXT. LEAGUE CAMP

The camp was rapidly thrown together, consisting mostly of tents. There are League soldiers of all ranks moving about.

A group of four such soldiers slowly make their way towards a tent near the back.

INT. TENT

Inside, Hussain, Wesley, Erica and Xander are tied up. None, looking too happy.

HUSSAIN

What's the plan?

WESLEY

I'm still working on it.

Xander struggles against the rope tying him.

XANDER

You know, if I knew you were planning on getting captured, I would have just stayed on the ship.

Erica pulls out a small knife from her boot.

ERICA

No one told you to come along.

She starts to cut her own rope.

HUSSAIN  
Someone's coming.

The tent flap opens up and two soldiers came in. The shorter one, stands by the entrance.

MARK  
Hurry up.

The taller man, clearly in charge takes off his hood. It's Tommy.

TOMMY  
You're Erica Valdez?

She finishes cutting her ropes and holds the knife in her hand and braces herself.

ERICA  
Whose asking?

TOMMY  
We're friends with James and Phoebe. He sent us a message that you were here, asking to keep an eye out.

Alyssa leans in the tent.

ALYSSA  
We have company, hurry the hell up.

Tommy nods.

TOMMY  
We need to get you out of here.

Erica pulls her hands free.

ERICA  
Fine by me.

XANDER  
Seriously, you cut yourself free and didn't even tell anyone?

Before anyone can even move, Hussain also pulls his hands, free, as did Wesley.

HUSSAIN  
You didn't free yourself yet?

Erica cuts Xander free.



XANDER

Well excuse me for not planning on getting caught.

TOMMY

Out the back, hurry.

He looks back and nods at Mark, who slides out of the tent. Taking off with Alyssa before the company arrives. Tommy follows Erica and the others out the back of the tent.

EXT. BEHIND THE TENT

Tommy leads them down, past other tents.

TOMMY

Let's get you guys out of here.

WESLEY

What about the rest of our men?

TOMMY

They aren't here, they were taken with the weapons up to the command ship. They were keeping the four of you down here to try and lure out more of your men in a rescue attempt.

XANDER

What the fuck did we walk into?

Erica just shakes her head.

HUSSAIN

We can't just leave without them.

TOMMY

You're going to have to.

EXT. CLEARING

Tommy, Hussain, Wesley, Xander and Erica stand in front of their shuttle.

TOMMY

You only have twenty minutes once you exit the atmosphere to get out of the system, that was all we could get you. After that, all eyes will be on you.

(he hands them a paper)

(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)

James sent ahead these coordinates  
to meet up with them.

Xander nods, taking the paper.

XANDER

Thanks man, don't know what I would  
have done without you.

ERICA

I wasn't going to leave you.

XANDER

I hope not.

He heads inside the ship. Erica moves past the entrance and  
stands in front of Tommy.

ERICA

I never thought I'd thank someone  
in that uniform.

TOMMY

And I never thought I'd be helping  
a resistance fighter. Things  
change.

ERICA

I guess they do. Thank you.

She holds out her hand and Tommy takes it.

With that he turns and takes his leave. Hussain hangs back  
while Wesley walks forward to say his goodbyes.

WESLEY

Thank you for coming.

ERICA

How can you thank me? I came to  
bring you weapons, and instead I  
cost you the lives of your men.

WESLEY

You didn't. The League did, and for  
that they will pay. Of that, you  
have my word. We're going to stay  
here and keep fighting. You just  
make sure you do the same.

She nods before turning and reentering the shuttle.

INT. SHOOTING STAR - DAVID'S OFFICE

Xander sits across from David.

DAVID

They got all the weapons?

XANDER

Every last one. Seems the tracking device we found wasn't the only one.

DAVID

I sent you to make sure nothing happened that would mess up the job. We need that money.

XANDER

Then it's a good thing for us that Erica still paid.

DAVID

Did she now? And why would she do that?

XANDER

Because we lived up to our end. She wasn't going to blame us for the League. She hates them. Like hates, hates them.

DAVID

Exactly the reason we need to be rid of them.

XANDER

She's resourceful, smart, determined and has more motivation than most to make sure she is never caught. She could help us.

DAVID

And the others? What do they bring to the table?

XANDER

Connections. We only escaped because of their friends.

DAVID

We do not need more people aboard this ship.

XANDER

That's exactly what we need. We  
need a crew, this is our crew.

DAVID

You really think they could help  
us, not only complete jobs, but  
find new ones?

ERICA (O.S.)

Already found you one.

They look up to find Erica standing in the doorway.

ERICA (CONT'D)

That is, if we're welcome.

David looks down, taking a moment to think it over. At long  
last he looks up.

DAVID

Welcome to the Shooting Star.

**THE END**