

Gwen Spider

By: The Hexen

The city of New York, some say it is rather picturesque with its masses of gray cement and concrete blending with the blues and whites of the nature that still clings to it. The Concrete Jungle, as some would put it, with its roaring engines and flocks of people going their merry way to do whatever it is they do. No jungle exists without its predators, however, and crime is a constant blight upon everyone's lives. Thankfully, for every petty criminal there was a hero, and New York had one of the best, our friendly neighborhood Spider Woman.

Every bleak and mundane day in the Concrete Jungle was made merrier by the sight of the webslinger swinging from building to building. It gave hope and joy to the people, and something else for the criminals to look out for.

But destiny has a way of throwing a wrench into every engine and was meant to be a simple patrol through New York's skyscrapers had suddenly become a nightmare for Gwen Stacy, or as she was known when donning the white and blue costume, Spider Woman. She was mid-swing between to rather large buildings when, out of nowhere, her spider sense started buzzing in her head, sending all sorts of danger warnings for impending doom, but no matter where Gwen looked, or where she ran to, the annoying buzzing would not stop.

The noise of the cars and passers by was muffled by the annoying buzz, and Gwen felt completely powerless against her own body, that the most she felt she could do was hide. And hide she did, near the ventilation ducts of a rather tall building she had managed to crawl herself in. From there, she held her head with both hands, praying for the buzzing to stop.

"This never happened before..." she wondered to herself. "Having spider powers is fun and all but not when they are working against you!" But right then, just as Gwen started to get used to the nuisance caused by her own spider sense, the buzzing stopped!

No warning, no buzzing, only the city noises all around. Gwen started to wonder if her spider sense, that was supposed to warn her about impending danger, was actually working on itself, but nothing else happened. Just as sudden as it started it had stopped, leaving Gwen a pile of questions and fear that her body was starting to play tricks on her, and she wasn't a fan.

A few hops and skips around the rooftop had proven that Gwen still had her spider powers intact, and outside of her stomach rumbling nothing else felt really out of place. Even getting to the edge of the building, leaping and swinging from a thin string of web proved to be just as easy as before, almost as if nothing had really happened.

In a moment's notice, Gwen caught the noise of a commotion at an alleyway nearby. From above, she saw two masked gun-toting goons mugging an elderly-looking man, Spider Woman could not fail now!

Gwen swooped in, she had to take care of those guns before she could afford getting cocky, but for some reason her reflexes felt different. Without even noticing, Gwen was already assaulting the goon that pinned the old man against the wall, pulling the gun from his hand with such force that she swore she heard something on the man's wrist.

"Oh shit!" The other masked goon yelled as he jumped back in shock from Spider Woman's sheer extreme speed. He didn't get even a second to lift his gun before it was hit by a swift string of web and yanked from his hand.

Both goons looked at each other, obviously unaware of what was even going on before Spider Woman's form unblurred before them. With both guns broken in half by a mere mere flick of the wrist from the spandex-clad girl, the goons just dashed away without putting up a fight!

"Wow, I don't recall being so badass!" Gwen thought to herself as she helped the old man back on his feet.

"Thank you Spider Woman." The man regarded as he dusted off his sweater. "Not many fine folk around these days. At least we can look forward to you keeping us safe."

The feeling of having helped someone was always warming, and even after a while fighting crime Gwen still hadn't gotten used to it. But without wanting to attract any more attention, she just nodded, flicking her white hood, and leaped off, back to her patrol.

The rest of the day went by like a breeze. For some reason, Gwen felt amazing, like her powers had never even gone haywire. In fact she felt much stronger and faster, to the point of beating bad guys up without them even noticing what was going on until after the beating had been done!

"Daddy you won't believe how amazing it felt!" Gwen sang joyfully from her spot at the dinner table, a very well served plate in front of her as the girl retold the tales of her daily patrol to her father George Stacy.

Being at home now, Gwen had shed her costume and now looked just like any ordinary teenage girl. Her blonde hair tied on a ponytail and her home clothes loose fitting and comfy as she scarfed down forkfuls of food.

"I don't know Gwen, shouldn't you be worried by that buzzing thing?" Mister Stacy still wore his button up blouse and formal attire from work. The man had no time to undress from his demanding job but he would not miss the opportunity to talk to his dear daughter, even less now that he knew about her secret identity.

"Oh don't worry dad, I'm sure it's just a hiccup or something. I'll be fine!" Gwen barely managed to speak in between chewing, and George had to admit he did not remember his daughter eating that much before.

"I don't know Gwen, maybe we should check with Doctor Van Dyne tomorrow, just to be sure." George said as he combed his already very well kept blonde hair, wiping some sweat from his brow.

"Alright daddy, if you think I should. But I'm telling you, doesn't feel like something is wrong." Gwen said it, but she knew it wasn't true. That *hiccup* she had earlier certainly left her worried,

like riding a very noisy bike that just happens to be working, but could snap its chain at any second.

Right after eating, usually Gwen would take some time for herself and try to catch up on news with her friends or study for the ever impending tests, but for some reason she felt really drowsy. Trying hard to keep herself awake, Gwen browser through her cellphone tabs, but her eyes would just not want to stay open!

“Ugh, guess today was harder on me than I expected.” Gwen yawned, stretching her arms and placing her phone to the side. After quickly brushing her teeth and dressing up on a very nice camisole, Gwen simply flopped on her bed, not even bothering with her bedsheets.

In a moment's notice Gwen was asleep, but a sudden noise woke her up. A loud bang at her window, as if something large had just tried to go through, making Gwen jump in surprise. After almost a minute had passed, Gwen thought the noise was gone but as she was about to fall asleep again, it was back louder than before.

Looking at her window, Gwen saw nothing, but once again as she tried to flop back on her bed, the loud bang was back. But this time Gwen was alert, and she turned to her window in time to see what the source of the noise was, and her heart froze.

There, like a large shadow on the windowsill, was the figure of a gigantic black spider. The six red eyes glistened under the faint light from outside, as the figure bashed against the glass, and Gwen's heart sank even more as she noticed the evident cracks at the surface, it was just a matter of time before the creature would break through.

Gwen twisted and turned in bed, the sight of the massive spider in her dreams overwhelming her, as her body just didn't seem able to keep still. A feature Gwen had failed to note earlier, two pairs of lumps that had grown at her sides, had been sore all day but the blonde had just ignored them as simple stomach ache, but as the girl slept so uneasily, the lumps seemed to grow taut beneath her thin clothes.

The window was shattered, and the looming shadow of the spider started to split the walls of Gwen's dreamscape, pushing itself in, the visage was frightening. As it happened, the small lumps on Gwen's sides started to bulge, grow, and lengthen.

Gwen was frozen in fear as the black hairy figure embraced her with its eight skittering limbs, tightening its grasp on her to the point where she could barely breathe. On Gwen's sides, her lumps, now grown to the point of sticking out against her thin dress, started to lengthen. What was once shapeless tissue started to grow muscle, sinew, and structure as five smaller knobs sprouted from each, lengthening and stretching until five fully functional fingers bloomed from what were now four new hands, tied to equally as functioning arms.

The spider's embrace was so tight to the point where Gwen felt so much pain she thought her body wouldn't hold itself together and snap under the pressure. But as it was about to break she opened her eyes.

Gwen screamed. The fact that she was dreaming wasn't an issue anymore, but now she was faced with the fact that not only her sides hurt but she had six arms! Took a second for her to

notice that all the arms and hands waving around here were not part of a dream, but her torn up camisole was enough proof that yes, they were all very real.

“Oh no...” Gwen stumbled off bed, her new arms still lanky as they tried to get their bearings. “Oh no!” Gwen repeated to herself once she noticed that, despite the awkwardness of having four new limbs, she was able to move them much like her older ones! “Oh no!” she mumbled a third time when she remembered the yell she let off, and that this would certainly bring her dad running to check on her.

“I have to do something...” Gwen thought to herself, but thinking was hard when you have four extra arms that twitch and move around on their own. Gwen ran to her closet, quickly grabbing her Spider Woman outfit, but when she tried to wear it, she found out that having six arms was a little bit of a hassle.

Pulling up her tight leotard pants was hard when your bottom right arm keeps trying to tug it to another direction, and your middle left arm keeps getting close to tripping you up by holding your leg, but Gwen found out that with some concentration she could move her new arms pretty well. She did have to cut some holes at the sides of her costume so her new arms could get some room, and the thought of working with them to jump and swing around town was already starting to worry the poor girl, but Gwen had to act.

Gwen’s only course of action, talking to doctor Janet van Dyne, she was a retired super heroine and well versed in most modern sciences. If anyone could help Gwen with her predicament, that would be Ms van Dyne for sure, Gwen just hoped the good doctor wouldn’t mind a sudden late night visit by Spider Woman.

Finally, with her costume on and her arms mostly under control, Gwen grabbed her cellphone and left her dad a message. She wouldn’t want him worrying in the middle of the night, and she definitely didn’t want him chasing her, not with the police, his colleagues, still working on the Spider Woman crime case.

Gwen sighed, looking at her dark bedroom, realizing only now that she could see very well without much light, opened up her window and jumped out, scurrying into the night. The night air was soothing, but soothing just wasn’t enough to ease Gwen’s mind, as she swung through the air and fired her webs like normal, her mind was still very troubled by the fact that her body was changing and she had no control over it.

Another thing Gwen had no control over was the New York Police Department, and even though her dad abandoned the Spider Woman case someone else had to pick it up. Having vigilantes around was one thing, but the accusation of murder was another, and someone would end up feeling righteous enough to bring the masked spider girl to justice. The bad part of all that, the one detective who ended up getting Spider Woman’s case was none other than Frank Castle.

Known for being a ruthless loose cannon, Castle was usually called when situations were a bit too extreme for the police to handle. And right now, Frank had his eyes set on unmasking this vigilante who thinks she could rise above the law. Sitting on his van, parked at one of many alleyways that crossed New York, Frank stared at a lit monitor, the only light on inside the car.

His black hair messed up from a day's job and his rough-featured face with a five o'clock shadow and eternal scowl, Frank watched as the image of a man came clear on the other side of the monitor.

The man was tall, black hair and beard, and wore an open jacket with fluffed neck that made him look like a lion, or a jungle predator, and displayed his menacing muscles, adorned by gruesome scars. His eyes peered at the monitor like those of an animal after a fresh kill, but despite that, the man seemed much more easy going than Frank Castle himself.

"Dasvidaniya Detective Castle." the man growled, letting a bit of his Russian slip the tongue.

"How goes the hunt, Kraven?" Frank retorted, his semblance barely displaying emotion.

"I found the spider's nest, she got careless today..." Kraven smiled.

"What are we waiting for then?" Frank replied almost betraying a hint of impatience on his voice.

"She is not home, but I have a feeling that you will be able to... make the ends meet... as they say here in New York." as Kraven spoke, he panned the camera over to where the supposed hideout of Spider Woman was supposed to be, and Frank Castle almost allowed a smile to cross his frown.

The small suburban residence at Queens wasn't strange to him. As soon as his gaze fell upon the small plaque with the words "Stacy's Residence" at the corner of the door, his brain already calculated a plan to draw the spider out.

George Stacy had woken up suddenly. He wasn't very sure but he swore he'd heard his daughter scream from the other room. Jumping out of bed and racing to see if he had been dreaming, George froze when he saw Gwen's room was empty.

By the look of things, Gwen had left in a hurry. Her bed sheets hadn't been removed but the mess of clothes and the open closet hinted at her rushing to grab something, and the open window clearly meant that Gwen had likely picked up her costume and ran off.

At first, George didn't know what to do, until he passed by his cell phone hoping that Gwen would have left something for him, and indeed she had. George's heart raced as he opened the seemingly hastily written message.

"Daddy I went to Doctor van Dyne's place. Will be back soon don't worry!"

Was that message meant to make him less worried than he already was? Because now George knew something was really wrong, and he could not sit idle and let her daughter fight whatever it was without him there to support her. And George would have certainly left the house in the middle of the night to go find his baby girl, when someone rang the bell.

"Who could it be at this late?" George muttered to himself, checking the clock on his cell phone to make sure. Indeed, someone was at his door half past midnight, and something about that smelled fishy.

Checking through the door's peephole, George's blood boiled when he saw who stood there. Opening the door slowly, revealing the looming figure of Frank Castle, George was certain that something was indeed off.

"Castle, may I help you?" George acted courteously despite the late night intrusion, and the fact that he was talking to the man tasked with bringing his daughter to jail.

"Was just passing by and wondered, it's such a nice neighborhood isn't it? Do you happen to have many problems with bugs?" George knew Frank was not a man for joking around, something had to be going on for him to be talking like that.

"What do you mean Castle?" George answered bluntly.

"Look, I really have no easy way to put it, but you are coming with me."

In Downtown New York, Gwen waited anxious at the corner of Doctor van Dyne's makeshift lab. It wasn't very common for someone to have convert their apartment into a lab but Janet had a pass because of her days as a super heroine. The lady was on her mid forties, and her hair tied in a bun and long skirted dress ensemble made her look way older than she really was, but Gwen knew the good Doctor was a genius and very acknowledged on Gwen's particular condition.

"Yeah your genes are going haywire Spidey, good thing I've read Curt Connors's papers on trans-human splicing." Janet stated as she fiddled with a microscope, examining the hastily provided sample from Gwen's blood.

"Think you can do something?" Gwen asked, while fidgeting with all her new fingers. Ever since she arrived at the apartment, Gwen had been feeling way too energetic, and the wait was just not helping it. Gwen felt that if she had to stay still for another hour she would explode.

"I can help you, but it'll take some time. Maybe in the morning I should have something that works." Gwen watched as Janet fiddled with beakers and added different dosages of chemicals to various plaques sorted on a table.

The promise of even more waiting annoyed Gwen, but thankfully her mask didn't betray any hints of those emotions to Janet. But even then, Doctor van Dyne couldn't stop but notice how agitated Spider Woman was.

"Look Spidey, you should try to relax." Janet said as she poured some liquid on a small glass and handed it to Gwen. "Here, drink this. That is a very light relaxant that should ease you up."

Gwen trusted the doctor and drank the contents of the cup, but was promptly distracted when her cellphone vibrated. Pulling it revealed a message from her dad, which by itself was already worrisome, but despite the relaxation provided by the drug she took, Gwen's heart raced when she read the contents of the message.

'Itsy bitsy spider, we've got someone you might know.' And attached to the message was a photo of her dad, George Stacy, tied to a chair, gagged and blindfolded but still very recognizable, and the pinpoint localizer of where they wanted Gwen to meet them. Whoever it was that had her dad kidnapped, they knew Spider Woman's secret identity and this was clearly a trap.

Instead of idling by and thinking of a best course of action, Gwen quickly hopped off her seat and left Janet van Dyne's improvised lab, making sure to let the good doctor know she'd be back later, but some pressing matters required her attention. Hopping off the balcony, Gwen spun her webs and swung through the buildings as hastily as she could, a multitude of questions bothering her mind in regards to who the hell had found out about her, and who would be ruthless enough to kidnap a cop in order to flush her out. And as she did, she couldn't help but notice a bothersome itch starting to build around her two uppermost arms, covered by the sleeves of her skin-tight costume.

The area marked as destination was a small depot near the docks, a fact that made Gwen grumble in her thoughts. "They always have to use those depots for traps... if only it was a nice looking one at least." she thought as she approached the place, without the height of the buildings to cover her any longer.

The place was fairly large despite being one of the smaller depots around, likely the kidnappers had gotten it just for a night in order to pull that plan off, but Gwen wasn't on the mood of falling into traps tonight. Approaching quietly, she spotted a van parked beside the building. The vehicle had a taller ceiling and obvious spots reinforced with bulletproof plating, this obviously belonged to whoever it was that wanted a piece of her.

Thinking quickly of a good plan, Gwen opted to move in from one of the large windows on the sides instead of going through the obviously open door up front. Skittering as quietly as her four new arms would allow, Gwen slid in from the slightly open window and slowly made her way through the catwalks, making sure to look around for anything suspicious.

The place was a mess, clearly whoever owned it had many issues including several stored boxes that had a very foul smell to them, cobwebs all over the place and Gwen was certain she spotted several rats pass by in the distance. Seeing herself unseen by anyone else, Gwen tried to keep her low profile but moved slightly faster, trying to spot her dad at some damp corner.

But suddenly, one of Gwen's arms got caught up on a very thin rope that had been hidden in the dark, and her hand was lashed by a very carefully placed lasso that tied the rope around, pulling the Spider Woman to the ground. Gwen thrashed around, trying to slip her arm off this trap as she heard loud footsteps come from behind her.

"Dasvidaniya Spider Woman." a gruff growling male voice boomed from behind her, pushing Gwen to attempt an escape with even more haste. "Beautiful night for a hunt isn't it? Don't worry, Mister Stacy is well, you on the other hand not so much."

Gwen managed to get her hand free as soon as her spider sense buzzed, warning her of the incoming knife the man held on his hand. Gwen jumped and twirled around in time to see the knife come down on the metallic flooring of the catwalk, getting stuck by the sheer strength of the strike.

The giant Russian man, Kraven, quickly pulled a dart from his belt and threw it at Gwen, who dodged it while still in midair, but allowed Kraven the time he needed to pull his knife free. Now face to face with her large assailant, Spider Woman could counter-attack with her own moves.

Gwen quickly fired several web shots at Kraven, who managed to deflect some with his knife, but rendering it useless and sticky. Right after the shots, Gwen dashed forward, and was about to tackle Kraven down when a sudden buzz made her veer off to the side right as a bullet zoomed past her.

From underneath them, a tall man carefully aimed a gun up to cover his partner, his voice faintly whispering “one batch, two batch, penny and dime.”

Realizing she was outnumbered, Gwen had to think fast. One of them was armed with primitive weaponry but the other had guns, the one with guns had to go first. Gwen dashed to the side, and off the catwalk, plunging into the abandoned crates and cans below, and dodging another gunshot. Her choice of hiding spot wouldn't work, however, as the crates provided little cover and were very noisy, so Gwen kept moving, and dodging another of Kraven's traps by a millimeter, as a net sprung up and hoisted the crates up.

Her blood was pumping, and all Gwen could hear was the sound of her heart pounding, sending shockwaves through all her body. She didn't care why she could see despite the depot being pitch black when she entered, running from gunshots was the priority. The strategy of moving to the shadows on the sides of the depot seemed to be working, Detective Castle wasn't as accurate as before and seemed to be firing mostly preemptively, which Gwen could deal with, but Kraven had vanished completely from her sight and this was worrying.

And her worries proved to be right, as Kraven jumped from the ceiling right on top of her just as she had dodged another bullet, and pinned her down to the ground. Gwen's body tensed, that was it, she was finally caught and would have to face a dose of Frank Castle's well known police brutality, but she wouldn't go down so easily. Mustering all the strength she still had, Gwen curled up and pushed against Kraven's much larger body, her six arms pumping as much strength as they could in order to lift the girl's back, and in a sudden realization Gwen saw Kraven's body fly through the air and slam against the opposite wall of the depot.

Adrenaline was pumping and the world around Gwen was a blur. Knowing she was still a target, she jumped back on the catwalk and was surprised when the metal groaned, and her landing left clear indentations on the sturdy structure. Her heart felt like it was about to burst out, and when Gwen looked at her hands, she saw the seams of her costume straining to keep her upper arms contained, and her four lower arms were clearly much larger, bulging with muscles Gwen never thought she had!

Only now Gwen started to notice that the infernal itch she felt was being caused by the tiny follicles of hair all over her arms, and was shocked to see them spread, and thicken, and grow, as her upper arms tore through the costume, and her lower arms clutched her chest, as a nightmarish pressure started to mount. Doubling over in shock and pain, Gwen saw her legs, now much bigger and bearing the same hair as her arms, shred the tight pants of her costume and her feet start to leave clear signs of strain on her shoes.

Thoughts rushed through Gwen's head, this couldn't be happening, but it was. She ignored the world around her as the changes became even more intense, mutation after mutation,

making Gwen's unstable body grow even more, and her costume screech under the pressure as her body pushed against it.

Her bones snapped and her muscles squelched in an unison of horrifying noises as sharp claws grew from the tips of each of her much larger fingers, like the sharp chelicerae from predatory spiders. The same happened to her feet, as her toes bulged and grew in mass, tearing through the boots with their sharp claws. Gwen couldn't see reason anymore, all that remained in her mind was the thought that she was in danger, and she needed to flee, to defend herself, to find safety. Large tusks grew from the sides of her mouth, menacing appendages a spider needed in order to survive, and tore through her already stretched mask, making it very uncomfortable against Gwen's changing skin, and her head pounded as her eyes seemed to stretch, and more sets of eyes sprouted from her forehead against the fabric. And as her small body, her chest and hips pulling the costume as far as it would stretch, the mask fell off to reveal six fearsome eyes, and a blonde mess of hair that fell to the sides, framing Gwen's head like a mane.

Finally, Gwen's costume snapped and ripped to shreds, leaving only tatters clinging to her much bigger and stronger body. Gwen saw her feet snap as her already engorged toes grew even more, the flesh merging until only two very large toes tore through the remains of the girl's shoes. The thoughts escaped her, and Gwen felt herself flex and stretch, her new muscles popping and new bones snapping as the Woman Spider felt for the first time.

Down below, Frank Castle had gone to Kraven's aid, trying to see if the hunter had been badly injured, when he saw from the ceiling six red eyes viciously looking down at him. Rolling to the side, Castle readied his gun to shoot, but his hands were promptly encased on very sticky jets of spider web, and the terrifying visage of Spider Woman, or rather Woman Spider, descended upon him, her vicious claws ready to rend at Detective Castle's flesh.

Castle, despite still being much bigger than the Woman Spider, couldn't stop her vicious advance, and the sharp claws dug into his kevlar vest as the creature effortlessly lifted him up and tossed him to the side. Kraven, seeing this menacing spider creature attack his partner, tried to tackle her to the floor, but, to Kraven's surprise, the Woman Spider did not budge, welcoming the tackle with a powerful embrace and tossing Kraven to the side with his own momentum.

Screams echoed through the docks, reaching the armored van parked right beside the depot, and waking up George Stacy, who had been unconscious and tied up inside the vehicle through all this action. As he moved around to try and get his bearings, something heavy hit the van from the outside, making the vehicle shake violently and loosening the rope tying his wrists.

Giving his bonds a stronger tug, George found them loosening up more, giving him enough room to struggle, until he finally managed to slip his arms off the ties and could undo the rope tying him to the vehicle's chair. Another impact made the van shake, sending George back to his seat, but not for long as the policeman hurried to the door, and after a swift kick, dashed outside through the broken doorway.

As he walked for the first time in a while through the night sky, George took a bit to adapt to the dim lights from the lamp posts on the pier, but as he looked around, George saw an ominous shadow rise from the depot warehouse right beside the van. It's six arms were the most distinct feature, but before George got to take a better look, the visage vanished, jumping off into the night, however, his attention was quickly drawn back to the van, where two human figures crawled back to their feet.

Staying back and analyzing the scene, George noticed that both figures were men. The taller and burlier one seemed to be very badly injured, likely had a broken bone or several, and was struggling to find footing, while the other George recognized as his captor and police partner Detective Castle, not as ragged-looking as the other man but still evidently bruised and struggling to walk.

"Shit... that thing got us real good..." Frank grunted. "Can't wait to pay it back."

"Da..." The other man answered on a heavy Russian. "What in hell was that thing anyway?"

"Crap..." Frank paused for a minute, thinking to himself while inhaling and trying to relax, leaning against the van before letting more words out. "Thing is... think that thing was Spider Woman..."

George couldn't believe what he was hearing. He knew this wasn't true, his little baby girl a monster? Beating up two of the roughest sleuths around New York? By reflex, George reached into his pocket to pick up his cellphone, he had to call Gwen, he had to make sure she was ok, but he found nothing, his phone had been taken.

"God dammit Castle what have you done!?" George spouted, completely breaking his cover and rushing the recovering duo, fuming with rage.

"Oh good, he broke out." Frank sighed, choking a whimper from the pain.

"What the hell do you think you are doing Castle? Kidnapping me, forcing my daughter to come out here, don't you know she was sick?" George pointed a finger furiously at Castle, who seemed to dismiss his angry colleague with disdain.

"Sick huh? That might explain the six arms" Castle taunted, expecting George to break his cool cop demeanor. But before any further conflict could ensue, a sharp high pitched noise cut the air, and a figure suddenly hovered down seemingly out of nowhere.

"Where is she?" The woman's voice echoed from a high tech facemask as the sudden appearance made herself cleared. Janet van Dyne, or as she was known on her prime days of crime fighting, Wasp had flown in with her flashy orange and black form-fitting and technologically advanced body armor.

The sudden appearance of the heroine had clearly shaken Frank Castle and George Stacy from their little fight, and both policemen had their attentions focused on Janet now. Catching his breath, George quickly addressed Wasp "Doctor van Dyne, what are you doing here, and wearing your old costume?"

"Spider Woman is in grave danger." Janet made sure to sound as serious and somber as she could. "She came to me for help and I've been pulling some strings with Doctor Connors but the

blunt truth is, her body is mutating, the spider's DNA is taking over and if we don't move quickly she could be lost forever."

"The hell is that all about?" Frank grunted from his corner near the van.

"Look, Spider Woman's DNA was unstable and the sudden surge of adrenaline might have caused her mutations to accelerate. I managed to isolate the issue and cook up a cure but she will need it fast, no time for petty grudges."

Frank Castle sighed, it was against his motto to let a scumbag vigilante to roll free on the streets, even less when she was a convicted murderer, but even the cold Detective Punisher could relate to what George Stacy was going through. The man was clearly in shock, the fact that his daughter could turn into a monster and lose control had not even been in his head until now, and yeah Frank would push the boundaries of the law a lot but he did not intend on killing Spider Woman, just roughing her up.

"Ah shit... wasn't planning on doing superhero work this week." Frank stretched his arms, swallowing the pain from his bruises. "Look, I'll help if you agree to bring her into custody."

"I have to help her..." George sobbed, the words almost not making it out as he tried to walk off into the depot, he needed to find something that he didn't know, he needed to understand what was going on and try to find a way to help, and Wasp had to hold him before he wandered into the warehouse alone.

George react to Janet's grip, he was too shaken up to do it. In all his years as a cop never did George Stacy imagine something like this could happen to his baby girl, so Wasp had to take over the talking.

"Detective Castle, Mr Stacy is clearly not in any condition to answer you right now so please..."

"I'll help" The gruff voice of Kraven came from behind Frank, interrupting Janet's speech. "I know how it is to be a concerned father. I'm a hunter by trade so please, let me track the spider, it's the least I can do."

"Right." Wasp nodded. "I'll need a moment to adapt the cure for transport, meanwhile you two see what you can dig up on Spider Woman's whereabouts, hopefully Mr Stacy will calm down and be able to help later."

It seemed like an impressive feat for Frank Castle and Craven to be standing and talking given their injuries, but in about an hour the two had gone from broken to good as new, almost not even looking like they had fought a giant mutant spider! Janet had to admit that for two men without superpowers those two were tough, and they really meant it when they said they'd start the search at once.

Castle and Kraven would be in the streets doing detective work, listening to police frequency, tracking the very evident claw marks the Woman Spider left or simply laying low and investigating possible spots where a giant woman spider could hide. Meanwhile, Janet prepared the cure for external use, with George standing by as a support and keeping track of Kraven and Frank's locations.

It wasn't until the first rays of sunlight started peeking through the buildings that Kraven caught a glimpse of something he found suspicious. It was common at some New York neighborhoods to have abandoned buildings that would get ran down by time or raided by homeless folk trying to make a living, but this one had an unusual amount of cobwebs binding the barred windows.

"Castle, do you have any news on this place?" Kraven spoke at a phone he carried on his jacket.

"Police has received a few notices of disappearances and one issue of assault by a strange creature around the block you are in." Frank's gruff voice answered.

"I think I found the spider's den." Kraven said as he examined the possible entrances to the abandoned building.

The building was large, must have been a hotel at some point, but the alleyways around it and the windows were covered by large amounts of sticky webbing. Going in through the barred front door was out of the question, but the options of the side door and the sewers were still open, but given the state of abandon the building was Kraven judged that the likely best way of approach would be entering through the side.

"They found her." George muttered, looking up from his cellphone "is the cure ready Janet?"

"It is, I can fly there in a-" the said proudly but was suddenly interrupted by George.

"I want to go, I must be there for her..." George said, getting up from his seat.

"You shouldn't go." Janet continued. "You are trained for action but this isn't a situation for police."

"I'm her father Janet, I have to be there, I have to help her!"

"Fine." Janet sighed, knowing full well that the time was short to be bickering like that. "But you should know George, seeing your daughter like this might be shocking, you have to be ready for anything."

"Don't worry, I won't let my girl down."

In less than a minute, the four were gathered near the building, planning their breach. Kraven had scouted the area and found out that the Woman Spider used broken windows to get in and out of the building, and despite the webbing marking the place, the doors were not jammed.

Kraven and Castle would go in first, engage with the Woman Spider while George and Wasp would go in afterward and administer the cure. From what Kraven had gathered of the interior of the building, the actual den was located on the basement, the place was likely coated in webbing and the Woman Spider would likely be sleeping there, but the building itself was very old and loud noises and brittle furnishing could very well work against them.

Very careful not to make any noise, Kraven pushed the door aside and led the way, with Frank right behind. After they had progressed a bit into what looked like an old kitchen, Castle signed for Wasp and George to get in.

“You two stay here and wait for the sign, we are going down.” Frank pointed to the doorway leading down to the basement, framed by a very sticky layer of webbing that progressed downward into the staircase.

Kraven started walking down the steps, with Frank hanging back a few feet, and the darkness started to become a real problem, but nothing the night vision goggles provided by Frank couldn't take care of. The descent was tense, with Kraven warning Frank of any webbing left there as alarm by the Woman Spider but on the final step before the ground, Kraven tripped on a web.

A loud screech that resembled a human voice echoed through the dark room and Kraven tumbled forward as the six-armed figure of the Woman Spider swung above, holding a string of web with her long feet as she tried to grab the incomers. Frank had to dodge next, being closer to the wall he had to move back up a few steps as the Woman Spider clung to the wall.

The issue now was that Frank was holed on a narrow corridor, with a set of stairs as his only way out and a fairly large spider mutant as his other alternative. Kraven tried to pull the Woman Spider off the wall but the six arms coupled with the two feet proved a much sturdier opponent than he expected. Frank then opted for his third alternative, a 12 gauge shotgun loaded with salt pellets.

A well placed buckshot and the Woman Spider had to go with Kraven's grapple in order to avoid a full frontal spray on her face. From behind her, Kraven had a good chance for a choke hold seen that none of the six arms could reach him, until he felt his legs being stabbed by the Woman Spider's long toe claws. Thankfully Kraven's legwear was reinforced with padding or else he'd be facing some serious bleeding, but that was enough of an opening for Frank to stun her with a full frontal shot.

“You two, come down!” Frank yelled, prompting George and Wasp to rush down the stairs as quickly as they could, making sure to shoot the Woman Spider with more salt pellets.

The effort wasn't nearly enough to knock the creature out, the pellets weren't even enough to bruise her prominent muscles, but the impact was distracting her from struggling against Kraven, so it helped. In a moment's notice, Wasp and George were downstairs, bringing with them a powerful flashlight that revealed most of the Woman Spider's den.

Web had been placed everywhere, like an elaborate coating of silk over every surface, maybe a way of the creature of finding comfort. At one corner, a couple of human-sized cocoons indicated that the Woman Spider had gone hunting, and the four den trespassers could only hope whoever it was inside the oval web-coated shapes would be ok.

And in the middle, with her six shimmering red eyes avoiding the light as best as they could, was the Woman Spider. Janet was right, seeing his daughter like this was unsettling for George, but somewhere underneath this big six-eyed creature was his daughter, and he would stop at nothing to see her face again.

“She isn't dead right?” George's voice was shaky, he wanted to get closer but he wasn't able to, his legs wouldn't obey him.

“Nah just out cold” Frank replied bluntly. “Now let’s get this over with.”

With Frank’s prodding, George was able to take a step, and then another, until he had finally gotten close to the Woman Spider. Her form was massive, at least twice the size of Gwen, and three times as muscular. With spots around the forearms covered in prickly fur and skin that looked more like an armor. Her face was partially human except for the longer forehead and the extra eyes, red and glowing, almost lively.

George got a hold of the vaccine applicator he had been given by Wasp, a syringe in the shape of a gun that displayed the contents of the cure, a very neutral colored serum, at its side. With a shaky hand, George got the syringe closer to the Woman Spider’s neck, but right when he was about to inject her head jolted back to life and two of her hands grabbed George’s arm, while another two took a hold of him by the waist.

The Woman Spider yelled a loud screech, struggling to break free of Kraven’s hold while pressing George tightly with her vicious hold. The scene was upsetting for Frank, who couldn’t take aim with George in the way, while Kraven tried as best as he could to keep a tight grip of the Woman Spider’s body even with her thrashing around, but the hunter knew he wouldn’t be able to hold for long.

The situation seemed hopeless, and George felt like his arm was about to snap under the pressure, but he did what he could. With tear-filled eyes he yelled “Gwen! It’s me! It’s your daddy! Please listen!”

The words didn’t seem to faze the Woman Spider.

“You are sick! Let me give you your medicine!” George felt hopeless talking to this creature, despite the fact that she looked so upsettingly like his girl. “Let me help you!”

Somehow, in some way, George felt that his words had reached something of Gwen that was still there, and the Woman Spider’s grip loosened. With his arm still tenderly held by the two left hands, George firmed his grip and thrust the syringe, digging deep into Gwen’s neck and injecting the serum.

Another screech echoed as the Woman Spider contorted, letting go of George and being dropped to the floor by Kraven. Her body quivered and convulsed violently, and for a minute George thought he might have screwed up the application or something, but Wasp reassured him it was going to be ok.

The thick layer of gray hide that had formed on Gwen’s skin started fading away as the bulging muscles shrank down. The convulsions started to settle as Gwen’s forehead shrank back to its normal size, the two extra pairs of eyes closing down until they looked more like small cuts, and the deranged mane that covered Gwen’s head settling back like normal hair.

Gwen’s body snapped, and Wasp had to stop George from going to hold Gwen, as her bones shifted, the sharp claws on her fingers shrinking down and her fingers deflating. Her two long toes went through the same change as the two long claws retracted and the engorged shapes shrank down, slowly revealing each of Gwen’s dainty toes. Even the extra four arms

underneath Gwen's regular ones, started dwindling and shrinking down, until they were back to lumps that melted away over Gwen's midriff.

Frank Castle shrugged as he watched the reversion, and threw his coat over Gwen's naked body as they returned to their normal curves. The light screeches that came from the Woman Spider before slowly reverted back into moans as Gwen's voice was restored, and the sharp tusks that had grown on the sides of her mouth slowly shrank back.

"D-dad?" Was the first word that came out of Gwen's parted lips as the changes came to a halt.

"Gwen!" George cried, finally being released by Wasp and rushing to hug his dear daughter. "I was so scared."

"Me too dad..." Gwen took a few breaths, seemingly getting used to her old self again. "It was so scary... like a bad dream."

"It's all over now Gwen..."

"Well, guess I'm off then." Frank blunted. "Come Kraven, we are gonna need a time before getting back to that Spider Woman case."

Janet knew Detective Castle wouldn't let go of the case so easily, but at least for now she was sure he'd give the Stacys a break. Besides, seeing a father embracing his daughter so warmly like that was clearly not the place to stir commotion.

As they walked out of the building, Gwen and George had been in a solemn silence, until George decided it felt like a good time to start some conversation with his dear daughter.

"Hey Gwen, I found this at the warehouse after last night..." He pulled a flimsy piece of fabric that Gwen recognized immediately as her Spider Woman mask.

"Dad..." Gwen reached out and took the piece of fabric, still with the holes left by the Woman Spider's tusks. "I hope you don't mind, but I still feel that the city needs Spider Woman..."

Later that night, Gwen had a show scheduled with the band she played in, the Mary Janes. And the band's namesake, and lead singer, Mary Jane was very annoyed at yet another late show up by Gwen.

"Glad you showed up at least." Mary Jane blurted with her hands on her jean-clad hips, ruffling her red hair back with a head bob. "After the last time, when you didn't show up, an, I was thinking about cancelling tonight."

"Well, glad I could make it." Gwen giggled, trying to break the mood left by Mary Jane's scolding. Noting the bandage over Mary Jane's Hand, however, prompted her to ask. "Hey MJ, what is wrong with your hand?"

"Oh nothing, I was bit by some animal last night, was too dark to see but didn't do much. Be back in a bit, going to the bathroom to freshen up." Mary Jane said as she walked off to the club's bathroom.

"Call if you need help." Gwen said sheepishly, making Mary Jane laughed as she walked off.

What the redhead didn't say, however, was that the arm that had been bit was itching like mad. When she got into the bathroom, Mary Jane even felt feverish, but she was willing to shake it off for the band, that is until she reached the mirror, splashing some water over her face.

Even with the loud music blasting from the club's speakers, everyone heard Mary Jane's loud, ear splitting scream. She was breathless, motionless, there in the mirror's reflection, Mary Jane saw two pairs of glowing red eyes peeking from above her shocked regular ones.