

MARVELS SERIAL-CHAPTER FOUR

MERCURY

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BASED ON MARVEL COMICS' GOLDEN-AGE HEROES

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OTTO

But Zeus gave power to Captain
Marvel. And we all know what
Zeus was like.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

I don't know. How about making
Captain America the reincarnation
of Galahad? He was pure of heart
and Lancelot's son. You can have
Cap inherit the shield from his
father instead.

OTTO

That sounds good. Let me make
a note of that on the script.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Here you go.

She hands him the script.

OTTO

Thank you.

He writes a note on the top page. Then he sets the papers aside.
He hands her another set of clipped pages.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Now here's Mercury's origin.

She reads a few pages. Then she looks at Otto and grimaces.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

This is supposed to be his secret
origin?

EXT. A BUILDING'S LAWN - NIGHT

SUPER: EMIL FRANK'S LABORATORY, ENGLAND, SUMMER 1942

HERR SWASTIKA is a blond brownshirt who is calmly walking in
slow motion. He has a glowing swastika tattoo on his forehead.
Several bullets pass by his head, his arms, his feet, and even
close to his groin. He smiles in evil glee.

TWO ELDERLY HOME GUARD SOLDIERS

They fire their guns at the off-camera Nazi. They are terrified. When they run out of bullets, the slow motion ends.

SOLDIER ONE

No! It's not possible!

SOLDIER TWO

We both couldn't have missed him!

SOLDIER ONE

Bash his brains in!

Soldier One runs while he raises his gun over his head. He exits the scene. Soldier Two gasps and clutches his chest. He suddenly has a heart attack and falls to his knees.

HERR SWASTIKA AND SOLDIER ONE

Soldier One yells as he tries to pistol-whip the villain. Then Soldier One trips on a rock, falls on his back, and breaks his skull with a loud crack. The Nazi casually walks over his murder victim. Then he sighs and walks past the dead Soldier Two.

HERR SWASTIKA

This is getting monotonous.

INT. A LABORATORY - NIGHT

The lights are out. DOCTOR EMIL FRANK and his teen son ROBERT hide behind a lab table. Emil has a pistol. They anxiously hear slow footsteps in the corridor. Emil wipes the sweat from his brow. Robert is almost in the fetal position.

HERR SWASTIKA (V.O.)

How fortunate that I found you,
Doctor Frank.

The Franks silently react. Emil motions for Robert to remain quiet. Robert covers his mouth.

HERR SWASTIKA (V.O. CONT'D)

I did not even have to try.

THE DOORKNOB

It rattles a bit as the villain tries to get in from the other side.

HERR SWASTIKA (V.O.)
Because fortune is on my side.

The doorknob falls off. It rolls in between the astonished Franks.

THE DOOR

Herr Swastika opens it. He holds the other doorknob and its inner pieces.

HERR SWASTIKA
And that's because the swastika
is the symbol for good fortune.

He drops the objects and slowly enters the laboratory.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
Your experiments for the Allied
Forces really got the Fuehrer's
attention. You and your son
should have stayed in America.
(now very sarcastic)
But your late wife was such a
patriotic lady. How could you
refuse her final wish? Her
beloved England really needed
your help. I do hope that it
was worth watching her die in
the Blitz.

Emil stands up and aims the pistol at Herr Swastika.

EMIL
Damn you, Nazi!

Emil pulls the trigger, but the gun explodes. He is hit by the shrapnel. It also hits Robert. Both of them collapse on their sides. Robert hits his head on the floor with a soft thud. Blood pours out of their wounds.

HERR SWASTIKA
Thank you for supplying your
own murder weapon.

The villain walks to the other side of the table. He sees the unconscious Robert.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
What's this?

He bends down for a closer look at Robert's face.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
You must be Robert. I thought
you were at home tonight. You
don't look so good.

The villain holds Emil's wrist and checks his pulse.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
But you're doing better than
your old man here.

He plops Emil's wrist hard on the floor. Then he stands up.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
This is your lucky day, Bobby
boy. Uncle Adolph only wanted
your father dead.

He heads for the doorway.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)
Besides, there are three other
Americans who are demanding my
attention right now. See you
later . . . cripple.

The villain calmly exits the laboratory. A few moments later,
Robert quickly opens his eyes.

SUB-MARINER, CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND HUMAN TORCH

Sub-Mariner carries the other heroes and flies them through the
night air. The sky is full of clouds.

SUB-MARINER

Damn it all! Why can't we find
the lab?

HUMAN TORCH

Maybe the Home Guard steered
us in the wrong direction!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Or maybe Herr Swastika wasn't
kidding when he told them
about his good-luck powers!

HUMAN TORCH

So he jinxed us? And that's
why we're lost?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

God help us!

Suddenly a very strong wind blows them off-course in the other
direction. Sub-Mariner tries to fly against the gale force.

SUB-MARINER

Damnation! Where did this wind
come from?

HUMAN TORCH

It's too powerful to be natural!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

It's blowing even harder!

SUB-MARINER

What's going on here?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I think Herr Swastika wants to
meet us! Don't fly against the
wind! Just go with it!

SUB-MARINER

What if you're wrong?

Captain America looks at him and shrugs.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Then he gets away! And the
Marvels look like idiots!

HUMAN TORCH

If he's looking for a fight,
then I'll need some firepower!
Let me go, Namor!

Sub-Mariner lets the Human Torch fall out of the scene.

THE HUMAN TORCH

He bursts into flame and flies to the side.

HIS POV

The English village is lit up by the Torch's flames. After a few streets and locales are highlighted, Herr Swastika looks up from the lawn. He smiles viciously as he makes the Nazi salute.

HERR SWASTIKA

Hello, Marvels! Heil Hitler! I
see the time for stealth is over!

He turns the Nazi salute into a waving gesture.

HERR SWASTIKA (CONT'D)

Which means the winds are no
longer necessary!

THE MARVELS IN FLIGHT

The fiery Human Torch keeps his distance from Sub-Mariner and Captain America. The wind quickly stops blowing. They regain control over their flight patterns.

CAPTAIN AMERICA (V.O.)

Is he really lucky? Or is he
some kind of wizard? How is
he doing that?

HERR SWASTIKA (V.O.)

The Fuehrer wants to see you!
See you dissected!

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

HERR SWASTIKA

He will pay me . . . what you
Americans call . . . top dollar
to bring you back to Germany
alive! And somewhat well!

HUMAN TORCH (V.O.)

Like hell, Swastika!

A fiery cage surrounds Herr Swastika.

THE FIERY HUMAN TORCH

He hovers in midair and emits flames to the off-camera Herr
Swastika.

HUMAN TORCH

We stopped your agents! And now
I'm stopping you!

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA IN THE FIERY CAGE

HERR SWASTIKA

They were expendable decoys!
They kept you busy while I
located Dr. Frank! Now allow
me to end this charade!

He snaps his fingers.

THE FIERY HUMAN TORCH

The hero stops projecting flames and covers his mouth. He tries
to keep himself from vomiting.

HUMAN TORCH (V.O.)

Oh, God! I'm going to be sick!

He struggles to contain his vomit. This adversely affects his
flight.

HUMAN TORCH (V.O. CONT'D)

Oh, no!

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

The fiery cage disappears. He smiles viciously.

HERR SWASTIKA

What do you know? The firebug
caught a 24-hour bug!

RESUME THE FIERY HUMAN TORCH

He vomits smoke. This causes him to lose complete control of his flight. He also explodes and shoots fireballs everywhere.

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

Some fireballs land next to him. They set the grass on fire. The flames form a circle around him. The villain is confused.

HERR SWASTIKA

What's going on here?

THE FLYING SUB-MARINER AND CAPTAIN AMERICA

Sub-Mariner twists and turns to avoid the fireballs. Captain America uses his shield to deflect them away.

SUB-MARINER

I'm getting dehydrated!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Torch! Get away from us!

The fiery Human Torch quickly flies in and out of the scene. He leaves behind a flaming trail in the air. Sub-Mariner starts to perspire from head to toe.

SUB-MARINER

I'm too close to the fire! I
can't fly!

They quickly descend. Captain America holds his shield over their heads like a parachute.

CAPTAIN AMERICA (V.O.)

Maybe my shield can slow us down!

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

He smirks as he sees the fiery Human Torch fall onto the lawn in the background. The hero moans.

HERR SWASTIKA

Poor fellow! The fever got the better of you! Now who feels like hell?

The Human Torch passes out.

SUB-MARINER AND CAPTAIN AMERICA

The flames below blind them. They shield their eyes while Sub-Mariner sweats profusely.

SUB-MARINER

(very weakly)

Too . . . hot.

Sub-Mariner almost passes out. The heroes now fall.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Namor! Wake up!

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

He turns away from the fiery Human Torch. He looks to the other side and sees the other heroes fall within the ring of fire.

HERR SWASTIKA

Ah! So that's why my good luck created this fire! Flames turn the Sub-Mariner into a weakling!

SUB-MARINER AND CAPTAIN AMERICA

Sub-Mariner is barely conscious. Captain America groans in pain.

CAPTAIN AMERICA (V.O.)

I think I sprained my ankle!

He starts to throw his shield at the off-camera villain. But the hero suddenly sneezes, and it throws off his aim.

RESUME HERR SWASTIKA

The shield flies over his head and out of the scene. He laughs.

HERR SWASTIKA

It's allergy season, Captain
America! At least it is for
you!

RESUME CAPTAIN AMERICA

He struggles to get up while he sneezes. He looks at the Sub-
Mariner. This gives him an idea while he wipes his nose. Then he
faces the off-camera villain.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Swastika!
(sneezes)
I challenge you!
(sneezes)
Man to man battle!
(sneezes)
No shield! No powers!
(sneezes)
Will you stop that?

MIDDLE SHOT - HERR SWASTIKA AND CAPTAIN AMERICA

The villain points at the hero, who then stops sneezing.

HERR SWASTIKA

I'm not sure I can turn off my
power completely! But I accept
your challenge! A Nazi always
proves his superiority!

Captain America limps closer to Herr Swastika while they speak.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Even an American Nazi?

HERR SWASTIKA

So you know that I wasn't born
in the Fatherland! Did my English
give me away?

CAPTAIN AMERICA
 You're not the first Bundist
 to migrate to Germany! But this
 will be a first for you!

Captain America's costume disappears, leaving only the naked Steve standing in front of Herr Swastika. The villain gapes at him.

CLOSE SHOT - HERR SWASTIKA'S FOREHEAD

His glowing swastika tattoo disappears.

RESUME STEVE AND HERR SWASTIKA

Steve punches Herr Swastika with all of his might. The villain falls backward. Steve's costume reappears on his body while his shield materializes in his hands. He brings the shield down on the off-camera villain several times.

THE RING OF FIRE

The flames die down to a large degree, but they do not go out completely.

THE HUMAN TORCH

He wakes up with a long groan. Then he lets out a small yell when he sees the ring of fire. He points at it, and the flames fly to his body.

CAPTAIN AMERICA (V.O.)
 Don't worry about Herr Swastika,
 Jim.

HUMAN TORCH
 Thank God! What did you do?
 Knock him out?

Captain America limps to the still-burning Human Torch.

CAPTAIN AMERICA
 I did more than that. I killed
 him.

HUMAN TORCH

What?!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

He was too dangerous to let
live.

The flames go completely out.

HUMAN TORCH

Did his good-luck power give
out?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Once I made my costume disappear.

HUMAN TORCH

He saw you naked?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

It ruined his concentration. I
got the idea from Namor's skimpy
swimsuit.

SUB-MARINER (V.O.)

Speaking of Namor . . .

THE WEAK AND SUPINE SUB-MARINER

SUB-MARINER

He really can use some water now.

INT. A HALLWAY - NIGHT

Captain America holds Sub-Mariner's head while the Human Torch lifts up the tank from a water cooler. He spills some water, but he manages to pour half of it into Sub-Mariner's mouth or on his body. Sub-Mariner instantly perks up.

SUB-MARINER

That's much, much better!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Better give him the whole tank,
Jim. Just in case.

Human Torch pours the remaining water on Sub-Mariner.

ROBERT (V.O.)

(weakly)

Help!

The heroes look to the side.

THEIR POV

The bleeding Robert lies within the doorway. He points to the laboratory.

ROBERT

Dad . . . needs help!

THE HEROES

Human Torch approaches Robert while Sub-Mariner flies over him. Captain America limps to Human Torch, who kneels before Robert.

HUMAN TORCH

This must be Robert!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Son! What's your blood type?

ROBERT

AB . . . negative.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Oh, no! That's the rarest one!
The hospital won't have that!

HUMAN TORCH

I'm a universal donor! Once we
get him to a doctor, he'll be
okay!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

But we don't know how your blood
will affect his body!

HUMAN TORCH

We've got to take that chance!

Robert passes out. Human Torch catches his head. Sub-Mariner lands next to them. He somberly shakes his head.

SUB-MARINER

Give me the boy! We can still save him!

Sub-Mariner lifts Robert in his arms.

SUB-MARINER (CONT'D)

Captain, wrap your arms around my neck!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Are you sure you can carry us both?

SUB-MARINER

Yes! Now do it!

Captain America obeys. Sub-Mariner levitates him and Robert parallel to the ground. Sub-Mariner looks at Human Torch.

SUB-MARINER (CONT'D)

You light the way! We're not taking any chances this time!

HUMAN TORCH

Yes, sir!

Human Torch runs down the hallway where the exit door is. Sub-Mariner flies the others behind him.

EXT. THE BUILDING - NIGHT

Human Torch runs out the door. He holds it open, and Sub-Mariner flies the others out. Human Torch runs from them. Then he stops.

HUMAN TORCH

Flame on!

He bursts into flame. Then he flies out of the scene, but his off-camera flames light up the area. Sub-Mariner then flies Robert and Captain America in the same direction that Human Torch went.

EXT. THE ARMY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

CAPTAIN AMERICA (V.O.)

So how do you feel?

HUMAN TORCH (V.O.)

I'm hungry. The doctor said
that would happen.

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Human Torch and Robert lie on parallel beds. The hero has his shirt off and his arm bandaged. Robert wears a hospital gown under his sheets. His arm is also bandaged. Captain America sits on a chair and holds a crutch. Sub-Mariner stands to the side with his arms crossed.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I hope it worked. He may lead us
to more of his father's research
notes.

Robert wakes up with a loud gasp. Human Torch quickly sits up.

ROBERT

Dad!

Sub-Mariner quickly approaches Robert. He stares at the hero.

SUB-MARINER

Robert Frank. Listen to me. I'm
the Sub-Mariner. This is Captain
America, and this is the Human
Torch.

ROBERT

You're the Marvels! The Home
Guard said you were coming to
protect us!

(a beat, realizes)

But Dad's gun exploded! Where
is he? How is he doing?

They all look away from him. Robert notices the heroes' sad expressions. Then he bursts into tears.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

No! He can't be dead! You're lying! He can't be dead!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Robert, I'm sorry.

ROBERT

NO! NO!

He repeats "NO!" multiple times in a high-pitch, rapid voice. His hands move at super-speed while they pound the mattress.

SUB-MARINER

Robert!

The hero tries to grab Robert, but he uses super-speed to get out of his bed. He runs to the other side of the room. He glares at Sub-Mariner.

ROBERT

Getawayfromme!

HUMAN TORCH

Did you see that?

ROBERT

Whydidn'tyousaveDad?

SUB-MARINER

What?

ROBERT

Answerme!Whydidn'tyousavehim?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I'll get the doctor!

Robert quickly turns to Captain America before he can stand up.

ROBERT

Whatdidyousay?

Captain America stands up. Robert speeds to his side just as he leans on his crutch.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Talktome!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Robert, you need to lie down!

ROBERT

Whyareyoumumbling?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

He doesn't . . .

The heroes now speak and move in slow motion. Robert moves at normal speed.

CAPTAIN AMERICA (CONT'D)

Un . . . der . . . stand . . .
us!

ROBERT

Why are you talking so slow?

SUB-MARINER

Rob . . .

Robert turns around to see the Sub-Mariner creeping toward him.

SUB-MARINER (CONT'D)

Bert!

ROBERT

What the?

SUB-MARINER

Lie . . . down . . . now!

Sub-Mariner reaches for Robert, but he easily walks behind the hero.

ROBERT

They're moving in slow motion!
But how? Why?

The heroes pan their heads to Robert. He realizes the truth.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
They're not moving slower! I'm
moving faster!

Robert walks to Human Torch. He looks at the hero's bandage.
Then he looks at his own bandage.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I had a blood transfusion! The
Human Torch did this to me!
(with a wry smile)
Now I'm the fastest man alive!

The heroes now move at normal speed. Robert darts about the room
at super-speed. The heroes try to keep up with his movements.

CAPTAIN AMERICA
Namor! Grab him!

Sub-Mariner reaches for Robert, who zooms away from him. Robert
smirks.

HUMAN TORCH
Wait! Look!

The heroes now move and talk in slow motion. Robert moves at
normal speed.

HUMAN TORCH (CONT'D)
He's . . . smi . . . ling!

ROBERT
Smiling? Dad's dead, and I'm
smiling!

Robert breaks down in tears. Everyone now moves at normal speed.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Oh, God! What am I doing?

Sub-Mariner flies to Robert and lands behind him. The hero grabs
the boy's wrists.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Hey! Let go!

Robert tries to wriggle out of the hero's grip with super-speed, but Sub-Mariner holds fast. Captain America approaches them. Robert stops struggling.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You're hurting me! Let go!

SUB-MARINER

I'll let go when you calm down!

ROBERT

I can't calm down! My father's dead!

SUB-MARINER

Robert, I know what it's like to be an orphan!

ROBERT

You do?

SUB-MARINER

I saw the Nazis kill my mother!
They blew her up with a torpedo!

ROBERT

Oh, my God!

SUB-MARINER

I tried to avenge her death!
I attacked Germany back in
1939! But somehow they knew
I was coming--even though I
never told anyone of my plans!
They attacked me with firebombs,
and I barely escaped with my
life!

(a beat, much calmer)

So I had the U.S. Army teach me
military training. They also
teamed me up with the Human
Torch and Captain America.
Now we're protecting the
Allied Forces as the Marvels.

CAPTAIN AMERICA
And you can join us. With your
speed, you can avenge your
father's death. All you need
is the right training. We can
teach you. Let us help you.

Robert does not respond for several seconds. Then he smiles.

ROBERT
AllrightI'min!

CAPTAIN AMERICA
What was that?

ROBERT
I said, all right, I'm in!

SUB-MARINER
You won't regret it.

Sub-Mariner releases his wrists. Robert grimaces as he rubs them
with super-speed.

ROBERT
Damn,you'restrong!

INT. THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - DAY

WINSTON CHURCHILL stands behind his desk. Robert stands in front
of him. A suitcase is on the desk.

CHURCHILL
Today's the day, Robert.

ROBERT
(eagerly)
That's my costume?

CHURCHILL
Yes, it is, son. Today you are
a Marvel.

Churchill takes out the costume. He hands the pieces to Robert.
Robert beams with pure delight.

CHURCHILL (CONT'D)
 Now I'll turn my back. You go
 ahead and--

Robert quickly changes into MERCURY before Churchill can finish his sentence. Robert's clothes are on the seat.

CHURCHILL (CONT'D)
 (surprised)
 Change.

Mercury looks at his costume. Churchill scowls at him at first. But then he smiles when he sees the hero's look of pride.

MERCURY
 What's the M stand for?

CHURCHILL
 It stands for Mercury. He was the swiftest of the Olympian gods. That's your new codename.

MERCURY
 Mercury, huh? I like it. So when do I team up with the Marvels again?

CHURCHILL
 Not until they come back from Germany. In the meantime, I am asking you to become the personal bodyguard of both the king and myself.

MERCURY
 (eagerly)
 Personalbodyguard?Yougotit!

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL AND OTTO

She glares at him. He is very uncomfortable.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
 He was bitten by a mongoose?
 Otto. Really.

VILLAIN TWO (V.O.)
Binder's been writing too many
comic books.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
So was this a vampire mongoose?

OTTO
Okay, so it's not my best work.
You have any suggestions?

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Why don't you tell your readers
that he found a meteorite, and
it gave him super-speed? Maybe
that will inspire some of them
to become astronomers.

OTTO
I'll do that. And now here is
your secret origin.

He hands her another set of papers. She reads some of the pages.

ALL-AMERICA GIRL
I got struck by lightning?

OTTO
Mr. Lieber thought if we used
the magic lightning angle, we
might get a lot more readers of
Captain Marvel.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Perfectly understandable.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL (V.O.)
And very ironic.

To be continued in ALL-AMERICAN GIRL.