

The Case of David Richard Keener

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/25083598) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/25083598>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Fandoms:	Marvel Cinematic Universe , The Avengers (Marvel Movies) , Spider-Man (Tom Holland Movies)
Relationships:	Harley Keener/Peter Parker , Harley Keener & Tony Stark , Peter Parker & Harley Keener , Peter Parker & Shuri , Harley Keener & Harley Keener's Sister , Harley Keener & Harley Keener's Mother
Characters:	Harley Keener , Tony Stark , Peter Parker , Carol Danvers , Harley Keener's Sister , Harley Keener's Mother , Harley Keener's Father , James "Rhodey" Rhodes , Hope Van Dyne , Scott Lang , T'Challa (Marvel) , Shuri (Marvel) , Monica Rambeau , Kamala Khan , Vision (Marvel) , Pepper Potts
Additional Tags:	minor Peter/Harley , Harley Keener Needs a Hug , Abbie Keener is a boss , Tony Stark Is An Overprotective Dad , ironfam , x-men are mentioned
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2020-07-05 Words: 3,623 Chapters: 1/1

The Case of David Richard Keener

by [BlueAsylum](#)

Summary

“And today we have perhaps one of the strangest missing person cases in history-”

“Now I’ve covered a lot of cases in the past few years, but this one has got to be one of the most bizarre-”

Harley Keener is finally moving into the Avenger's compound for good, ready to train as the future Iron Man while preparing to attend MIT in the fall (along with finally meeting Shuri and Peter in person). However, while waiting for Harley and his family's arrival for the summer, the New Avengers (and company) get some shocking news over the television.

Thus enters the bizarre case of David Richard Keener.

Notes

Hey guys!

This story is actually inspired by true events. The case this is based off of is that of Richard Hoagland, so if you're interested, it's a pretty crazy story :).

Anyways, don't think I'll be making a second chapter as of right now, but I might change my mind!

Enjoy!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

A/N: So to make this story make sense, here's some events post-FFH that I've decided are canon:

- 1) Peter Parker won the court trial after evidence proving that Mysterio lied came out in the form of video evidence of him creating the elementals and using his illusion tech along with several of his employees that came forward after feeling bad for targeting a kid. With the help of Pepper, Rhodey, Carol, and basically every high-profile person ever, he won his case.
- 2) Dr. Strange found a way to bring Tony back, and he is alive. I don't know how he did it, I don't care how he did it, point is: he's back.
- 3) All of Team Cap still has bad relations with the current Avengers (working under the Accords) so they're not really in this fic. They've sort-of formed their own rogue group (excluding Vision and T'Challa, who work as Avengers under the accords)

"And today we have perhaps one of the strangest missing person cases in history-"

"Now I've covered a lot of cases in the past few years, but this one has got to be one of the most bizarre-"

"This is crazy. This is crazy! How did they not know?!? How did no one catch this guy?!?-"

"My biggest question is how the hell the family is handling this right now. I mean, what is going through their heads?-"

"I mean, at first, it just seems like your typical 'dad leaving his kids' story, but then you read on and oh boy, does it get interesting from there-"

...

The Avengers compound was packed. Carol was back from an intergalactic mission, and T'Challa and Shuri were visiting from Wakanda. The Avengers had certainly grown over the years. Carol herself had a few crime-fighting partners being Monica Rambeau and Kamala Khan (who was around Peter and Shuri's age). Although not currently present, after the Accords took place, Tony was contacted by Professor Xavier, who discussed gaining legal assistance in sheltering and training unregistered mutants. Tony agreed, and an act was passed that gave mutants the freedom to take sanctuary in an "undisclosed location", where they would be trained on how to control their abilities. From there, they would either go on to join the X-men, who mostly worked on policing and rehabilitating rogue mutants and those who used their abilities for harm, register with the UN and join the Avengers, or gain employment through the school. Miles Morales, although not an official Avenger yet, was currently training at the compound to become one with Peter as a mentor, and was excitedly talking to Monica and Kamala about their adventures. Hope Van Dyne, although not on any official Avenger's team, was a consultant on Avenger's tech and also offered her services, as well as her husband Scott's, in case of emergencies. However, Hope and Scott's main job was

working for Hope's parents, developing different treatments for a wide variety of conditions by using quantum technology. Both were present at the moment, sharing stories with Vision, T'Challa, and Pepper about their current progress while thanking Pepper and T'Challa for their generous donations to Hope and her family's (plus Scott's) work. Dr. Strange was currently at the sanctum, but promised he would make an appearance later that day.

Peter and Shuri were bundles of nervous energy, discussing their excitement for tonight and all the plans they had for when their new friend arrived. Tony, admittedly, was a bundle of nervous energy himself. He could tell Carol and Rhodey had caught on to his nerves and were trying to distract him with conversation. Of course, who could blame him. Tonight was an important night for him, for everyone really, hence the packed presence in the common room of the Avengers Compound. Tonight, Harley Keener would move into the compound. For good.

The kid had been a part of their lives for a while now long-distance. He facetimed Shuri, Peter, MJ, and Ned frequently (Peter perhaps a little more frequently than the rest of them, but Tony wouldn't tell), as well as Tony, Pepper, and Rhodey, who all tried to stay in touch with the kid after the whole mandarin incident. When Tony found out that school wasn't challenging enough for Harley, he offered to let Harley come stay with him, but Harley declined, saying that he didn't want to leave his sister behind. So instead, Tony set him up with online school, and a couple months ago Harley managed to graduate and get accepted into MIT (Tony wrote him a glowing recommendation of course) at the age of only 17. Harley also had his very own Iron Man suit that he would start training in to become an avenger. When Harley facetimed Tony to show off his prototype suit that he'd made out of junkyard scraps at only 14, Tony immediately sent him all the resources he could to help him make it better. A million marks later, and some secret donations from Wakanda, Harley had a suit impressive enough to rival Tony's own. Harley had even sent Rhodey one of his old marks and the suit was impressive to all the Avengers that were there to see Rhodey test it out. So, in celebration, Harley and his family were coming to stay in the compound for the summer in a sort-of all-expenses-paid summer vacation. To say Peter and Shuri were excited to meet him in person was an understatement.

Happy was probably already there picking the kid up, which meant in just over an hour Harley would be here. Tony was excited. And terribly nervous. He really wanted this to go well. He knew it had been hard for Harley and his family when Harley disappeared and his mom and sister didn't. When Harley came back just a year ago, his sister was three years older than him and in college with a full ride studying to go to Law School. It took some adjusting, but with his sister in college it meant Harley didn't need to worry about leaving her behind and could pursue college himself as well as transition into becoming an Avenger.

"Happy should be there by now, right? Maybe I should call him, make sure he made it. Or maybe Harley's running late, I should call them both-" Tony ranted.

"Happy's probably fine. You called him less than an hour ago and he promised he'd call you when they were on their way. Relax, why don't we watch some TV?" Rhodey suggested, grabbing the remote. He turned on the TV to see it was set to the news, he kept flipping through the channels, but it seemed like every channel had the same breaking news story. "Man, what the hell is so important that every news channel is covering it right now?"

“Turn it up. Maybe it’s something important,” Carol noted, straightening up as Rhodey turned up the volume, garnering the attention of the surrounding people.

“Today we have one of the most bizarre disappearance cases in history. Now, Richard, when I got the news about this story, I couldn’t believe it.” A woman spoke to her fellow new anchor.

“Me neither,” Richard responded, “and it seems a lot of people are terribly intrigued by the news of this man being located after almost 13 years of being missing.”

“Yes, after being declared dead just three years prior.”

“I still can’t believe they declared him dead. I mean the guy went off to buy a lottery ticket and never returned.”

“Yes, but you have to consider that when they looked at the lottery winners, his name wasn’t on the list so there was no way, in their minds, that he could’ve won. And since he didn’t win or take any of his belongings with him, and the police couldn’t find him anywhere, of course they were going to assume something had happened to him.”

“Of course, the reason that they didn’t find his name on the lottery ticket or find any receipts of him running off to a beach in Mexico somewhere or something like that haha, was because he had actually assumed the identity of a dead guy!”

“That’s right! Under the name of Terry Poleski, David Richard Keener not only claimed the lottery ticket, but also lived a completely new life in Florida, where he even remarried to another woman and had a son.” Everyone in the room froze at the woman’s statement, the name “Keener” bringing the room to a silence. Please don’t be who I think this is, please don’t be him, Tony pleaded in his head, suddenly much more worried about the fact that neither Happy nor Harley had called him yet.

“And now some of our viewers are probably wondering: how did he do it? And on top of that, how’d they finally catch him?”

“Well, turns out while on a family vacation, David Keener rented out a home from Terry Poleski’s father and found Poleski’s death certificate. Using that death certificate, Mr. Keener was then able to apply for a birth certificate, where he was then able to get a licence, claim his lottery ticket, and start his new life. His current wife, Margaret Poleski, had no idea who David actually was, and only found out after he was arrested.”

“As for how Mr. Keener got caught, after the snap, a lot of families found themselves separated and unable to contact each other. Some families looked up names on the internet, or tried to get a hold of people they knew over the phone, but some families decided to go on ancestry.com in hopes of locating their relatives or confirming that they were even still alive after five years. One such family was the Poleski family, and boy did they get the surprise of a lifetime when they saw that their dead son had, according to ancestry.com, gotten married 12 years ago. After just a small amount of digging, the family contacted the local authorities and David Keener was arrested on charges of identity theft.”

“Now, let’s talk about David’s family. This story only just dropped, but David’s former wife and her two children have been dealing with the tragic loss of their father for 16 years.”

“Yes, his former wife, Mary Keener, always believed that her husband hadn’t left them willingly. She stayed firm in her belief that something had happened to them, and even eventually accepted the fact that her husband was dead.” There it was. As the pictures of the family appeared on the screen, Tony couldn’t deny it any more. This story was about Mary, Harley, and Abigail Keener. He could sense the dread and shock around him. Everyone’s eyes were now glued to the screen. Tony spared a glance and Peter and Shuri. Shuri’s eyes were hard, but he could see the emotions swirling beneath her eyes, and by the way her fists were clenched, anger was most definitely one of them. Peter, on the other hand, looked like someone had just kicked a dozen puppies in front of him. Tears were starting to form in his eyes and his lower lip began to tremble as he watched. Harley had never liked to talk about his dad much to Peter and Shuri. Sure, he’d totally guilt-trip Tony with it every chance he got, but anytime Peter, Shuri, or any of Peter’s friends brought up his dad, he would either deflect or make up some lie about him. Yeah, he’s cool. He’s a total clutz when it comes to sports, so I blame any lack of athleticism I have on my unfortunate inheritance of his genes.

“Here’s a clip from an old interview with Ms. Keener on the subject of her husband.”

“Did you ever think that your husband had left? Just, ran away?” a man behind the camera questioned.

“No, absolutely not. I mean, they would’ve found him by now if he had, and he would never leave me and the kids. He didn’t even take any of his things. It was cold outside. He didn’t even have a jacket.”

“What about the rumours that your husband was involved in a drug trafficking ring?”

“I think that whatever happened to him, it would’ve had to be bad to make him disappear. I know David would never willingly get involved in something bad, but I think it’s gotta be possible. I mean, drug dealers could’ve forced him into it. He could be in danger for all I know.”

“And what about those letters you received just two years after his disappearance. The ones addressed to your kids?”

“Those weren’t from him. I know my husband, he wouldn’t have just left them like that.”

“So you think that it was just some sort of sick joke or prank?”

“Oh, absolutely. It didn’t even look like his handwriting!”

“Is that why you chose to burn the letters?”

“Yes. I didn’t want Harley or Abbie to see them. I didn’t want to make them think that their dad had chosen to leave them behind or something silly like that. It’s bad enough that my son thinks he ran off on his own, I mean, those letters would have only made things worse.”

“Ooo, what do you think about burning the letters?”

“Well, Richard, I think that if I was that mother and my husband had left me alone with two kids to raise and then just written the kids letters two years later, I would’ve probably burned those letters out of hate.”

“Oh come on, now. I mean Ms. Keener had no idea her husband had left.”

“He wrote her kids a letter! She even mentioned that the letter had an apology in it along with a goodbye message! How could she not know?”

“That’s a pretty good point. A lot of hard evidence there for your husband leaving you,” Tony hated the way they talked about Ms. Keener. Tony knew how much Mary loved her husband, and writing her off as some ignorant lovesick fool made his blood boil. He could see Carol out of the corner of his eye clench her fists at the comment.

“Of course, I’m more concerned about the kids.”

“Oh, absolutely. Harley Keener was only five years old when his father left, and Abigail was only three! I mean, how do you tell a five year old and a three year old that their father up and left? What’s even worse is that after thinking their father is dead for years, you find out he’s alive and has been living a life without them? I mean, he had a kid!”

“I can’t imagine what’s going through their minds right now. I mean, their dad basically decided they weren’t good enough and went and made his own better family.” God, Tony hoped Harley and Abbie weren’t watching right now. He didn’t want those thoughts being shoved into their heads.

“Yeah, well, looks like he made a mistake there, considering that both kids are attending Ivy League schools with a full ride no less! Abigail Keener is going into her third year at Brown and Harley’s set to start attending MIT this upcoming fall, at only 17 years old!”

“It truly is an inspiring story to see these kids succeed in life despite losing their father early on and facing heavy financial issues. I mean, when David left the family went completely broke.”

“Poor Ms. Keener was out looking for her husband when she should’ve been looking for a better income!” Tony was seriously about to make some very angry calls to this news station.

“Now, Richard, Ms. Keener may not have had a high income, but she certainly worked her tail off to make ends meet. She reportedly worked between 12 and 18 hours a day at a small diner in town to help pay the bills for years, before finally starting to work less around 6 years after David’s disappearance.”

“Speaking of income, on top of the charges of identity theft, David could potentially be sued for failing to pay child support for his two kids.”

“Goodness, 16 years of negligence, that’s gotta be quite the bill for him.”

“Of course, that’s only if Ms. Keener actually files the lawsuit.”

“Well, we actually have Bart Miller at the Keener residence right now, and it looks like he’s just caught the family outside their home, so let’s see what they have to say.” The camera cut to a live feed of Mary, Abbie, and Harley being bombarded by reporters. Mary looked like she had been crying, and Harley and Abbie were clinging to each other, various levels of shock and hurt flying across their faces. Harley’s expression broke Tony’s heart. He knew Harley had struggled more than Abbie with his father leaving, especially since Harley was older than her at the time and had more memories with him. He also took on the role of Abbie’s father as she grew up, taking care of her and sacrificing a lot of his childhood so Abbie could have hers. Tony looked around to see various levels of anger, sympathy, and sadness spread across the room. Poor Peter looked devastated staring at Harley’s expression. He could tell the kid really cared about Harley a lot, even if they’d never met in real life.

“Ms. Keener, Ms. Keener! What are your thoughts on the recent news about your husband?” a reporter shouted over the ruckus.

“I don’t- I don’t want to talk about it right now,” Mary choked out.

“Ms. Keener! Are you planning on suing your husband for not paying child support?” Mary looked taken aback by the reporter’s question. Tony winced in sympathy for the woman.

“I don’t know.”

“Do the kids know about what happened?”

“The kids are right here,” Abby stated, glaring at the reporter who questioned them stubbornly, “and yes, we know about what’s going on, now will you get the hell off our property?!?” Her voice rose to a near shouting level as she gripped her little brother even tighter. Harley was practically shaking at the attention, clearly still processing what had happened. His usual charm and sarcasm lost in the wake of his father’s reappearance.

“Do either of you plan to get in touch with your father?” The Keener siblings seemed taken aback by the question, both of them shocked into silence. Even Mary didn’t quite know what to say. Harley glanced at his mom and sister before speaking, his voice small and wavering.

“Can you guys please just leave us alone?” In response to Harley’s request, the reporters only bombarded them with more questions.

“What about his other son? He’s technically your half-brother.”

“What about you Ms. Keener? Do you plan to get in touch with your ex-husband?”

“How do you feel, knowing that David left you?”

The Keener’s needed an intervention- a rescue- immediately. Tony grabbed his phone frantically and dialed Happy’s number.

“Hey Tony-”

“Happy, where are you right now?”

“I’m at the airport waiting for Ms. Keener to get here.”

“Happy, I need you to get in a car and get to the Keener house as fast as you can.”

“Why would I need to-”

“Happy I need you to listen to me. You need to go pick the Keeners up right now. I don’t have time to explain. Just go!” With that, Tony hung up and watched as the scene in front of them quickly devolved into chaos as Ms. Keener started shouting near hysterically at the reporters. Harley was shaking even harder as tears formed in his eyes at the intruding questions. Abbie was calmly citing their rights and threatening legal action to the reporters, but Tony could hear her volume rise with every word as she began to shout as well. Harley looked like he was about to have a full-blown panic attack on live television, if he wasn’t already. It continued on for a full minute before it cut back to the reporters, who began to relay back the details of the charges against David Keener as well as diving into the personal lives of the Keener family. The way they spoke so nonchalantly about everything, even cracking jokes, made Tony want to vomit. How could they just violate their privacy like that without even the slightest amount of sympathy? Sure, Tony was used to having the prying eyes of the media around him, but Harley and his family had never had attention like that before. Hell, they weren’t even that used to strangers in the small town they were from, and any media attention surrounding David’s disappearance was always focused on Mary. He wondered if the media treated Mary like this when David first disappeared. Eventually, Tony got a notification from Happy saying he’d gotten the Keener’s and they were on their way to the airport. ETA 2 hours.

Tony looked around the room at all the saddened and shocked faces around him. Peter was choking on sobs while his phone blew up with texts next to him, probably from his schoolmates that knew Harley. MJ was both trying to manage her anger and outrage while also trying to comfort Peter. Miles and Kamala looked like they had no idea how to process what they’d just witnessed. Carol’s face was a mixture of sadness and anger. Pepper was crying with Hope and Vision calming her down. Rhodey looked torn with emotion, and Tony was pretty sure he didn’t look much better. Somewhere behind him he could hear the sound of a portal opening up as Dr. Strange arrived, completely clueless to the turmoil he was walking in on.

This day was going to turn out very different than he had planned.

End Notes

That's it! Hope you guys enjoyed it! Let me know if you want me to write more.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!