



xxxvi. Undercover Kiss

Auralie, Steve, and Nat strode through the halls, more alert this time. The Shield agents had arrived to bring them back to Pierce, and they had to be on their guard. Especially with their slap together disguises.

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"I see two over there," Steve said, nodding to two agents making their way through the crowds.

"Two on that side," Natasha pointed out.

"And two in front," Auralie grumbled.

"A standard tag team," Steve sighed, "I'll take the ones in the front, you two take the ones on the sides, and then we make a run for it."

"Ali, look really interested in the merchandise on that kiosk, Steve, put your arm around me, laugh at something I said," Natasha ordered.

Steve put his arm around her and laughed. The agents went right past them. Auralie inspected sunglasses and bought a pair to add to her disguise. They went right past her too. Then she ran to catch up with Steve and Natasha.

"We have to take the escalator down," Natasha sighed.

"How do escalators even work?" Steve asked, "I swear, I've been out of the ice for a while and I still don't get it."

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"Not the time Steve," Auralie commented, getting on the elevator first. She slipped on the black sunglasses and put a confident smirk on her face. Act as though you belong, and they will think you do belong. It was a good principle, one that Nat and Maria drilled into her head.

That was when she spotted the runner-up for jackass of the year (a er Pierce of course) Rumlow. She sighed, of course, he couldn't have ended up in the hospital. He got onto the up escalator. She resisted the urge to turn invisible. That would just make a scene with all the people in the vicinity, and would not help with the undercover operations.

Fortunately, his gaze slid over her, and she was safe. But he was going to catch Steve and Nat. Auralie heard their whispered conversation about what to do.

"Kiss me," Natasha demanded.

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Auralie rolled her eyes. Her earlier crack about them making out was not supposed to be taken literally.

"What?" Steve asked. The last time he had kissed someone it had been Peggy Carter. He wasn't quite ready to get over her yet.

"Public displays of a ection make people uncomfortable," Natasha encouraged him.

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Steve nodded, "yes, they do."

Natasha sighed and took matters into her own hands. She took Steve's face in her own and pressed her lips to his. Auralie was watching all of this and had to hide her laughter. Steve looked so shocked. And it had worked. Rumlow had looked away. She didn't know why, a er all, it was just kissing, there was no fonduing going on. Auralie groaned. She had been spending way too much time with Steve.

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Nat pulled away, smirking, "you still uncomfortable?"

"That's not the word I would use," Steve remarked.

Auralie, Steve and Nat got through the mall alright. But they wouldn't make it far on foot, and Steve, ever the drama queen, had destroyed his motorcycle.

So they had to hotwire a car.

They went to the parking garage, and Auralie considered it a good sign when they made it there without incident. Steve found a car he liked and began to mess around with the wires.

Meanwhile, Auralie, deciding to keep tensions down with a little well-meaning teasing, signed to Natasha, "you know, when I mentioned you and Steve making out, I didn't expect you to take it literally."

Nat rolled her eyes and signed back, "shut up Ali, it was meant to be a distraction."

"There were several other things you could have done as a distraction," Auralie responded, her fingers moving fast.

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Natasha snorted and moved her own hands, "really? It didn't mean anything. Though I will say, he's better at it than I expected."

"You are so weird," this Auralie said out loud.

Steve gave them both a quizzical look. Natasha sighed, and said, "just ignore us. We're having a conversation, don't let it distract you."

Steve, who knew about Clint's hearing issues and how so many shield agents knew sign language because of it, just nodded. Steve had actually learned a little sign language, which was why they didn't go back to their conversation because he was still looking at them.

Steve had the car all hotwired. He opened the passenger door for Natasha, who laughed at what a gentleman he was. She thanked him and climbed in.

Auralie got in the back of the car, and Steve got in the driver's seat. As he pulled the car out of the garage and got on the road, heading for New Jersey, Auralie laughed a bit.

"What?" Steve asked, wondering what the young woman could possibly be laughing about at a time like that.

"It just feels sort of like you two are my parents, and we're on a road trip," Auralie giggled.

Steve rolled his eyes, "yeah, except with Rumlow and Pierce's goons on our tail and a flash drive and an assassin to deal with it."

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"Good times," Natasha smirked.

Auralie settled back into the seat, sighing. The adventure was far from over, but hopefully, she and her friends could pull o a crazy scheme like this. Fortunately, completely insane, out of control issues were the Avenger's specialty.

A/N: A shorter chapter, and one that I just wrote for me because I like Romanogers. More in-depth and action-packed chapters will come next, don't worry.

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