

You Make Me Feel Free

I woke to an empty bed, the cold sheet beside me told me that Bucky had been up for a while. It wasn't uncommon for him to get up during the night, but something felt off. Throwing my robe around me I padded across the bedroom and downstairs into the living room.

Bucky sat on the sofa, a drink in his hand looking down at the floor.

"Buck?" I walked in slowly, not wanting to startle him when he was clearly not in the room with me. "What's going on?" I knelt in front of him, taking in the concerned look on his face.

"Steve's still here. I can't get him to talk to me." He gestured towards the sliding door that led out to our small garden. The wind whipped around the white sheer curtain that gave us privacy from the outside.

I gave Bucky a small nod and a kiss. "I'll try and talk to him." Bucky nodded but didn't say anything as I headed outside.

The cold air nipped around me as I saw Steve sat up against the wall.

"Steve?" I asked cautiously as I approached him. He lifted his head, slightly looking in my direction before staring back at the ground. I knelt down beside him, resting one hand on his bended knee. "Steve, what's wrong?"

"I can't do it anymore." His voice slurred as it came out as barely more than a whisper.

"Do what?" I was starting to become more and more worried by the second. While it was fun to tease him, I didn't want to see him upset or hurt.

He leant his head back against the wall behind him, his bloodshot eyes finally meeting mine. Even in the moonlight I could see the puffy eyes, the tear stains on his cheeks from where he had been crying.

"Be the perfect soldier." I could hear in his voice how much the admission had broken him. Something I never thought I'd see.

I looked down at his feet, noting the empty bottle that sat there. From the smell I knew straight away what it was. "Is that you or the Asgardian still talking?"

He ignored my question completely. "Everyone expects me to be the good guy, to play by the rules all the time." He paused, rolling his head to the side to look back at me again. The look in his eyes nearly broke me, but I couldn't let him see that. Not right now. "Everyone except you."

I smiled at him, trying to mask the hurt in my own voice at what he was telling me. "I'm nothing special Steve, I just help you think outside the box." He couldn't care for me, no one could. With the exception of Bucky.

A tear rolled down his cheek as he kept looking at me. I wiped it away, trying to gauge what he needed me to do to help him.

"I hear you earlier. With Bucky." He admitted, not a single hint of embarrassment on his face.

"He did suggest leaving," I tried to joke, wanting nothing more than to at least see a hint of a smile.

He closed his eyes, obviously not wanting to look at me as the words left his lips. "I wanted it to be me, but he accepts you in a way I never could." I wasn't sure if what I was hearing was heartbreak or jealousy, either way my ice cold heart broke for him.

"It's not me you want Steve." It's never me "It's how I make you feel."

"It's the same thing." The tears start rolling down his cheeks once again as he starts swaying from side to side.

I tried to keep my voice light, trying to get him to understand why it wasn't me that he truly wanted. "It's not the same thing, you just want someone who brings out that side of you."

"You're the only one that does." Tears and guilt wrack through his body as his head slumps forward. "You're the only one that makes me feel free."

I knew that feeling. The one where a certain person makes you see yourself in another way. Something you never thought was possible. There was one vital piece of information that he was missing though. "You need to accept that side of you before anyone else can." Bucky had brought out the good in me, perhaps Steve had too; yet I couldn't keep relying on him for that feeling, I'd had to learn to accept it for myself before anyone else could. I hoped Steve would be able to do the same.

Having a dark side isn't bad, it's how you choose to deal with it that matters.

"I hate that you met him first." I could hear the guilt in his voice as the alcohol took over, offering me random thoughts rather than a coherent conversation.

"Come on," I pull him to his feet, thankful for the first time in my life that I have super soldier serum running through my veins. "You need to sleep this off, we can talk tomorrow." I pulled his arm around my shoulder as I walked us inside.

"I don't want to go home," he slurred as I finally got through the door. I had hoped from some help from Bucky, but he was nowhere to be seen either.

Great

"You're not going home. You can stay here." Our house was only one bedroom so it was either the couch or the bed. I looked at the couch realising how uncomfortable the giant muscled man would be.

The bed it is.

I finally managed to get him into the bed, pulling his shoes off as he passed out. I stopped at the bedroom door, looking over at him. I wasn't sure what had triggered the meltdown he'd had tonight but I owed it to him to try and make things easier for him. Somehow.

I found Bucky sitting in the study, a picture of him and Steve in the war in his hands. I walked over to him, sitting on the arm of the sofa, putting my arms around his shoulders. "Hey."

"How is he?" He asked, not looking up from the photo in his hands.

"Sleeping it off." I placed a kiss on his left shoulder, enjoying the gentle hum of the machinery beneath my lips.

Bucky sighed, finally looking at me as he placed the frame back in its rightful spot on his desk. "He's in love with you, he always has been."

I shook my head. "He fell in love with Willow, she wasn't me." I couldn't entertain the idea of Bucky loving me, let alone someone else. Especially not Steve. Not after everything I'd done to him.

"Do you love him?"

Bucky's question caught me off guard, was that what he was worried about? I climbed onto the arm of the chair, kneeling in front of him. I rested my hands on his thighs, making sure he was looking at me. "I care for him a lot, but I love you Buck." He shook his head, almost as if he struggled to believe what I was telling him. "He needs you, he thinks he's betrayed you by how he feels."

Bucky pulled me up onto his lap, sweeping my legs over his. "I don't blame him. You're easy to love."

I chuckled, while I will accept a lot that comes out of his mouth. We both knew this wasn't one of those times. "We both know that's bullshit." I nudged his shoulder playfully, finally getting a smile out of him.

"True, but you're worth it."

I kissed him sweetly, not wanting to take it too far but enjoying the feel of his lips against mine.

I left him in the study, needing nothing more than to crawl into my bed. The soft snoring coming from Steve made me smile. At least he was sleeping it off now, although I wouldn't want to be him in the morning. I climbed into the bed, making sure to leave room on the other side for Bucky who had promised he wouldn't be long.

I must've dozed off at some point because I half wake up during the night with two sets of arms around me. I was laying on Bucky's chest, my legs wrapped around his. Steve had his arm around my waist snuggling into my back.

I had to admit, it wasn't the worse way to fall asleep. In fact I could get used to this if I had the option.

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