

Who's Y/N?

Steve sat by Bucky's bedside, his mind and heart a complete mess as he thought about Y/N. She'd not left the hospital in over a week, her heart completely shattered by not being able to do something to save Bucky. He knew the darkness in her was threatening to take over, once upon a time it would've frightened him. Now he was beginning to accept it was a part of her, a part he could learn to love too.

"Steve?" Bucky croaked out.

Steve's head snapped up. "Hey Buck. How you feeling?"

Bucky looked down, realising what he was wearing and where he was. "What happened?"

"You saved her life." Steve tried to reassure him. "She's just gone to freshen up."

"Who are you on about?" Bucky asked him, completely unaware of who Steve was talking about.

"Y/N, she's not left your side for the last week."

Bucky knew that name, but it couldn't be who he thought it was. Only him and her knew that name. "Who the hell is Y/N?"

"Buck? What's the last thing you remember?"

Bucky strained to think, his mind blurry as he reached through his memories. Images of Winter on a security system flashing through his mind. "I was looking for winter." He began to panic the machines beginning to beep as his heart rate increased. He had to find Winter before the others did and killed her.

"Buck, calm down no one is going to hurt her okay. I promise." Steve wouldn't let them then and he certainly wouldn't now. "Get some rest okay? I promise she'll be safe."

"She's not evil Steve."

"I know pal, I know."

Steve let once Bucky had gone back to sleep. He had no idea how Y/N was going to react to the news. He'd be there for her in whatever way she needed. She may have been Bucky's girl but she was his too and he'd do anything for her, no matter the cost.

Getting a call from Steve to say Bucky was awake had me feeling on edge, there was something in his voice that told me that wasn't the whole story. I offered to meet him in the coffee shop down the street, as much as I wanted to go straight to the hospital something was telling me I needed to hear him out first.

The small shop was mostly empty as I walked in, the small bell above the door signalling my arrival. Steve pulled me into a hug before we both sat down. I appreciated the space he was giving me, we had yet to talk about our fight. That would come after dealing with Bucky, nothing was more important than that.

"So how bad is it?" I asked, wrapping my hands around the coffee cup in front of me to stop my hands from shaking.

"We'll get through this together sweetheart."

"Just tell me!" I snapped.

Steve knew I was just frustrated at the situation and not him, his calming attitude helping to keep me calm.

He sighed before looking back at me. "He still thinks you're Winter."

My entire heart shattered, months of us together lost because of one mistake. I felt the weight of my guilt pressing down on me. Bucky was in that hospital because of me and now he didn't even know why. I'd lost the man I loved once again, except this time I couldn't even be mad about it.

Steve placed his hand over mine. "We'll get through this."

"Together right?" I smiled sadly at him as a tear fell down my cheek.

He nodded, waiting for me to say something.

I couldn't do it, I couldn't stay somewhere where the man I loved couldn't remember what we had. It was too hard and I had no one to blame but myself.

"I just need a minute." I claimed scurrying out of my seat towards the bathroom.

I checked to make sure Steve wasn't watching before I slipped out of the back entrance. I had to disappear, not just for my own sanity. It was for everyone else's safety too. Bucky was my anchor, the one that kept me from doing anything I shouldn't. Without him there was no telling what I would do. In time Steve would understand that.

I flagged down a cab needing to get as far away as possible. At least if Bucky couldn't remember me he had a chance at a normal happy life. I had to find a silver lining from somewhere, it was all that could get me through this.

Thankfully it didn't take long for a yellow cab to pull up beside me.

Finally some good luck.

Just as I opened the door Steve slammed it shut. "Y/N. Stop." He knew I was running, that I'd taken the blame completely on myself.

"Just leave me alone Steve."

Steve sighed, running his hand through his hair. "You think this is easy for me either? But if you run, how does that help Bucky?" He had a harsh tone to his voice, one I hadn't heard in a while.

"He's finally free of me Steve!" I let the tears fall as I broke apart.

"Don't you get it? I'm happy for him!"

"You don't get to make this about you!"

I laughed, a sinister laugh that was born out of grief. "He's in there because of me!"

"No!" Steve shouted back, his own frustration and anger evident.

"He's in there because he loves you!"

"Loved not loves." I tried to calm myself down, if there was one thing Steve and I were good at it was the fighting. I didn't want to fight with him now, I'd lost too much. I placed my hand against his cheek, hid stubble scratching at my palm. "I can't stay around and hope he'll one day remember me. Not even you can ask that of me."

Steve placed his hand over mine, needing to feel me close to him.

"I want you both to be happy." I desperately wanted him to understand. "That's not going to happen with me."

"Do I even get a say?" Steve took my hand from his face to hold it in his own.

It broke my heart to leave, to lose not just one person I loved but two. It was something I would most likely never recover from, but they'd find a way through the other side, of that I had no doubt.

"Goodbye Steve."

Before I could get into the cab he pulled me back to him, the tears in his eyes almost changed my mind. I cared for him as more than a friend, but he deserved more than I could give him. He pressed his lips against mine, our tears making his lips salty as I returned his kiss. By the time he pulled back I was beginning to regret my decision to leave.

"Why are you so stubborn?" He breathed out as he rested his forehead against mine.

"Look after him and make him happy." I told him, knowing there was feelings on Bucky's part for Steve no matter how much he would deny it.

I pulled away, climbing into the waiting cab. The look on Steve's face would be seared into my mind for the rest of my life. The heartbreak as I left him. The grief at what I'd lost was enough to know I'd never be the woman he wanted me to be. I had to leave, to protect them both.

I wanted to be what they needed but I couldn't. In time they'd understand that. I just had to be strong enough to give them a chance.

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