

Lies and Deceit

I le Zemo, happy in the knowledge he was on the Avengers radar, at least for now. If I managed anything else other than taking Steve down it was going to be that Zemo stayed out of that cell for good. I wasn't in the mood to deal with Steve just yet, in fact I wanted nothing to do with him at all but I knew it wouldn't last.

As if sensing the shift in my mood my phone began to ring, Bucky's name lighting up the screen along with a picture of us cuddling in bed not two days ago. I smiled as I looked at it.

"Bucky, hey." My mood instantly improved as I answered the phone.

"Hey doll. How's it going?"

I sighed. "I found Zemo. He's not got the book."

"You knew he didn't have it before you le...doll."

While that may have been true, it hadn't stopped me hoping. Hoping that everything that was happening was a lie, that Steve hadn't lied to and manipulated me for a year. That I hadn't fallen for the most elaborate scheme of lies going. Yet here I was walking through the streets of Madripoor, a different target on my hit list.

"I just had to be sure." I mutter as I come back to the airfield where the jet is waiting for me.

"Tell me where you are. I'll come to you and we'll figure it out."

While I appreciated him wanting to come and find me, to be that support system that we both knew I needed, I couldn't let him. Not yet at least. If Steve even got a whiff of what was going on then all this would be for nothing. He'd run before we got the chance to confront him.

"It's too risky. We need him to think he's won."

The silence that greeted me told me all I needed to know. Even miles apart I knew what Bucky was doing in that very moment.

"I can hear your eyes rolling Buck. Just trust me okay?"

"It's not you I don't trust. It's him."

"You trusted him enough to leave me with him for the last year." I snapped.

It was a low blow and I regretted it the moment I'd said it, but it was true. Having Bucky back made my entire body feel like I was living again, but it didn't erase the hurt. It didn't stop me being angry that he'd let me with Steve living a lie while he went and got the help he needed. How I wished he had come to me and told me everything, let me go with him, to support him and be at his side like I always should've been.

"That's not fair." Bucky grumbled back.

I sighed as I placed a wad of cash into the hands of the boy who had been keeping prying eyes away from the jet. "Look you asked me not to kill him so we do it my way." I walked up the ramp, placing my phone on speaker as I flicked the switches to bring the engines to life.

"Not alone Doll. Just tell me where you are."

The ramp behind me closed as I began to rise up into the air. The phone switched from speaker to filtering through the speakers around me. "I'm going back to him Buck, I have to."

"No you don't. Stay there."

I could hear the hurt in his voice, as if he didn't believe that I didn't want this. It was just the only way I could get back at Steve for what he'd done. I couldn't bear to hear the pleading tone to his voice.

"Goodbye Buck." The call disconnected before he could say anything. "I love you." I said to absolutely no one as I prepared for the short flight back.

When you think about getting revenge on someone that you used to love, you don't think about the hurt you're causing. Not to those around you that love you, and especially not to yourself. My life had been nothing but people finding different ways to control me, in my eyes this had been no different. Steve had crossed a line and as much as it pained me to be going home to him and not Bucky, I was out of options. One thing I did know for certain was that I wanted this done and I wanted it done quickly.

Before I could relax too much I made a quick phone call, one I never thought I would. A phone call to ask for help.

I arrived back at the house Steve and I had made ours just as the sun was beginning to rise. I knew he had things to do today, what exactly they were I wasn't sure, but it meant I could make my own plans without worrying about him finding out or overhearing anything. I threw the duvet bag into the cupboard under the stairs, making a note to double check all my weapons were there when I had a chance.

It didn't take long for Steve's footsteps to ring out around me. He came down looking fresh as a daisy in a suit. I wanted to throw something...anything at his smiling face as he joined me in the kitchen.

"You're back." He smiled.

Every single cell in my body was screaming at me to fight. To punch, kick, scratch, scream. Anything apart from what I was currently doing which was smiling right back at him.

"Coffee?" I offered sweetly, turning away from him to let the mask slip slightly. "So...what have you got on today?" I asked as I turned the coffee machine on.

"Just a few meetings to secure you some new suppliers for the bar."

The bar was one of the happy things I had let about our time away. I purchased it under my name only, something I'm more than happy about now. It was a simple takeover but Steve's presence had helped business grow. He took it upon himself to deal with the suppliers and accounts, leaving me to put all my time into running it how I want to. Now things were changing I'd have to do everything myself, not that it mattered too much. I knew Bucky would help when the time comes.

"Busy day then." I plaster the smile back on my face as I turn around to face him. "Here." I hold out his coffee towards him.

"Thanks. How did things go with Zemo?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "You were right about him lying to me. Screamed until he was blue in the face that he didn't have it. I'll think of some way to find it though."

"I'm sorry sweetheart, I know he meant a lot to you."

His false sympathies turned my stomach. I carried on smiling sweetly, draining my coffee as quickly as I could.

"It is what it is. I need to get the bar ready for opening. Dinner later?" I offer, not wanting to act out of the normal.

He smiled. "Sounds good. I love you."

I plucked my leather jacket off the back of one of the dining chairs, psyching myself up to say them three words back at the man I most definitely didn't love.

"I love you too."

I kissed him on the cheek before I headed out, making sure to grab my keys and cell before leaving.

Once the door closed behind me, I finally let out a small breath. Rage was simmering under the surface as I made my way towards work. I could at least get lost in the mundane task of wiping down tables and getting everything ready for later. Hopefully that would stop me from wanting to curl my hands around Steve's throat and squeezing until the light finally leaves his eyes.

I mean it probably wouldn't, but I could at least hope.

Just as the evening started began showing up for their shift I felt someone watching me. Turning round to scan the now rather busy room I found who they belonged to.

"Well if it isn't my favourite little runaway." Tony teased as he came to sit in front of me.

"Thanks for coming." I grabbed a bottle of tequila off the top shelf. Grabbing two glasses I poured us both a shot. "I don't know who I can trust right now." I admitted to him.

Tony lifted his glass up to mine, clinking them together before throwing them back. "What do you need Little Red?"

The nickname that once drove me insane, now had a strange sense of calming about it.

"Honestly? A friend."

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