

## She's not expendable

Knowing Y/N was recovering had Steve relaxing slightly, there was just one problem left for him to address. Stepping into Fury's office, he couldn't help the anger he felt. "What the hell were you thinking?" He snaps at him.

With a sigh Nick turned in his chair, he knew a confrontation was coming. The Avengers had taken a shine to Y/N. "What do you want Rogers?"

Steve stopped in front of the desk, glaring down at Nick. "You put her life at risk." From what Nat had told him, Nick knew that there was a possibility that someone would go after Y/N. That didn't sit well with him.

"Not intentionally." Nick bit back. He knew there was a chance she'd end up in danger after getting the intel, but he didn't think someone would try and kill her for it.

"That makes it okay?"

Nick was beginning to get fed up of his attitude towards him. "Have you forgotten what she's done in the past?" Even now he didn't see Y/N as one of the team, he doubted that he ever would.

"No one has, that doesn't make her expendable. Sending Natasha to steal that drive from under her, it put her life at risk. If you had just kept out of it, she wouldn't be recovering from a gunshot wound that nearly killed her." His voice had gotten rapidly louder as he shouted at Nick, his anger getting the better of him. Y/N was part of the team in his eyes and he knew the others felt the same. The only one not getting that message seemed to be Nick. "Not only that, you've put the entire team at risk."

"In what way?"

Steve had thought about it on the way there, Nick had broken any chance Y/N had at trusting them. Meaning if it came to it, she wouldn't trust them to save her life and vice versa. He knew that Y/N would protect Bucky and Loki fiercely, but the rest? She'd put the mission before them. That meant they couldn't rely on each other, when they're on a mission the most important thing is trust.

"Now she won't trust a single one of us." Steve tried to get Nick to understand.

Nick stood up, meeting his gaze. "She didn't trust us to begin with."

"And you think this has helped? We were getting somewhere, getting her to see things our way."

Nick sighed, "I didn't know where the intel was. She did. When Natasha confirmed that Y/N had found it, I knew I'd have to send her in order to get it back." He stood up straight. "I never knew someone would attempt to take her life."

Steve backed off letting out a small laugh. "When she goes looking for answers as to why someone came after her. When she realises that it was you who put her in danger. Don't expect us to have your back." Y/N had become an important part of Steve's life and he knew he would protect her to the bitter end. Even if it meant leaving SHIELD behind.

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The last person that I expected to come and see me was Nat. She gently knocked on the door to Bucky's room; he had refused to let me out of his sight. Bucky opened the door, giving her a glare that would've intimidated most people but not Nat.

I shifted on the bed, the pain not as intense now, it was more of a dull ache by this point. "It's fine Buck, let her in."

He reluctantly moved out of her way but not before warning her.

"Don't upset her." Nat gave him a nod.

She sat on the edge of the bed, seemingly struggling to find the right words. Bucky was hovering around us, driving me insane. "Oh for the love of god Bucky. Do me a favour?"

He sat down on the bed next to me, taking my hand in his. I pulled him in for a quick kiss, nipping his lip hard as I pulled away. "Fuck off."

I could hear Nat biting back her laughter as Bucky glared at me.

"You'll pay for that later." His voice was so low it was almost vibrating through me.

"Promises, promises." I winked at him, laughing as he rolled his eyes leaving the room.

Nat sat leaning on her thighs, her eyes trained on the ground. "For what it's worth. I'm sorry."

An apology from Natasha Romano ?

I nearly wanted to look out the window, wondering if hell had indeed frozen over. Instead I sat further up on the bed, not wanting to look weak in front of her. "SHIELD were never supposed to know about that mission."

"Why not?" She looked over her shoulder at me.

"Is the bullet hole not enough of a giveaway?" She gave me a confused look. For a spy she really wasn't the quickest to catch on, I rolled my eyes at her. "That was a secure server Nat. The only people who could have known about it were SHIELD. Which means whoever was transferring and selling that intel..." I trailed off, waiting for her to catch on. It didn't take her long as she sat up and turned to face me a bit more.

"You think it's another SHIELD agent."

Ding dong! We have a winner!

I shook my head at how slowly she was catching up to where I was.

"Yup. So when you told Fury about the mission and where I had gone after, they knew where to find me. The second he logged that report it would've been picked up."

Nat shook her head before looking at me. "If you had just told me everything before."

I couldn't believe she was expecting me to trust her when she'd just gone behind my back. I'd asked her not to tell a soul about that mission. Now she wanted me to blindly trust her, I scoffed, shaking my head. "I couldn't trust you. I trust you even less now."

Something in her seemed to shift, her eyes softening as she placed her hand on top of mine. It was supposed to be comforting and yet it had the opposite effect. I pulled my hand away, I just wasn't comfortable with physical contact. The only ones immune to that were Bucky, Steve and Loki. With them I felt safe, I didn't mind them touching me. Everyone else was a different story.

"I've got your back Y/N," she smiled at me. "I always will." I wanted to give her some snarky comment back, but stopped seeing the sincerity in her eyes. "I wish I could believe you." I gave her a small smile, it was the best I could do in that moment. She nodded her head slightly, not sure what else to say. I sighed, knowing it was time I started being upfront about some things. "I wanted to know if you'd chose SHIELD over your friends."

Her smile told me that she'd already figured that much out. "This team is my family, they gave me a chance when no one else would. I will chose them every time." The way she mentioned a second chance resonated with me in a way that I hadn't expected it to. It was exactly what they were trying to do for me. Granted it was more because Bucky and Steve had fought for me to stay, but I was being given a second chance either way.

"If you truly mean that, don't get in my way when I tear SHIELD apart." It wasn't a threat, just a promise. SHIELD was as corrupt as Hydra, they just didn't know it. It had to go, just like I'd always said it did. It was just for different reasons now.

"I won't be in your way." She stood and walked to the door, stopping briefly to look back at me. "I'll be by your side."

I gave her a small smile. "We'll see."

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