

Madripoor

Walking into the club, Zemo trailed behind me. I knew he hated being in this place as much as I did. I walked round the bar to the small side door. A large security guard towered over me, in what I assume was an attempt to overpower me. I couldn't help but roll my eyes at him. "Selby is expecting us." He nodded, motioning to the table just inside the door. I placed my weapons down. Plastic chopsticks sat in my hair, the ends sharpened to a point. No one ever questions hair accessories, it makes it almost too easy. Walking through the metal detector I go through with no problems.

The dimly lit corridor makes me feel claustrophobic. It's dark and barely enough room for two people to walk side by side. The body guard opens the door and gestures us inside. Selby sits on a tattered couch, her short white hair styled into a point at the front. Her eyes narrow as she watches Zemo take a seat. I stand behind him, leaning on a pillar, I've learnt not to sit when you're surrounded by enemies. It makes it too easy for them to get the upper hand.

"Winter. What can I do for you?" Her voice is squeaky and I hate it. It's like nails on a chalkboard, instantly making the hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

"The serum. It's here in Madripoor. I want it."

To everyone else it would look like I'm a hero to sell it. However I knew only too well what a curse that stuff is, I want it gone. I know Karli took some from the power broker, but there's more being made. It had to stop.

"What do I get in return." Selby's gaze flickered between me and Zemo.

"Me." I stood straight, she had to believe I was her payment. At least until I slit her throat myself.

Her eyes lit up as she, no doubt began to imagine all the ways she could torture and kill me. "That is quite the offer." She pretended to think for a moment before smiling crookedly at me. Another thing that I hated about her. Her arrogance. "Dr Wilfred Nagel. He's who you need to find."

"Where is he?"

"Oh I don't think so. Now I take what's mine." She stood up from her spot on the couch and walked towards me. I kept still, for now. I needed her directly in front of me before I could kill her. She was half way across the room when I shot came in through the window. Killing her instantly.

Quickly pulling the chopsticks from my hair, I took down the bodyguards in the room before they even managed to pull their guns out. My weapons sat proudly embedded in their necks as bloody poured from their wounds. This was the sick part of me, how much I enjoyed it. I enjoyed watching the light leave their eyes. Zemo placed his hand on my arm. "We need to go. Now."

"You go. I know where to find you."

"Winter..."

"I know who fired that shot and Selby's men are going to be all over him. They'll kill him. That can't happen. That's my job."

He nodded in understanding and left, heading towards my safe house in Hightown. I didn't use it often but it would hopefully provide the protection we needed right now. I on the other hand grabbed the gun from the dead guard and punched the glass out of the window. I could hear shots being fired in the street over.

Climbing up the fire escape, I took a running jump onto the roof of the neighbouring building. Finding the perfect spot to fire from without being seen. Bucky and the one who usually has the wings came running around the corner. Pulling the trigger I took down their assailants with ease. They stopped to look around, unaware of who had just saved their nosey, pathetic little lives.

Stepping out into the alleyway, I raised my gun in their direction. Making sure that no one else was about. Being out in the open was too dangerous right now. "Do you ever get tired of fucking things up James?"

"Winter. Please."

"I knew by the bug in my pocket you'd turn up sooner or later, but even I didn't see you fucking up things so spectacularly."

I needed Selby's information, without it finding Nagel was going to take longer than I wanted. I just had to hope that Loki was doing better back in the states. I needed a win.

Bucky's eyes never leave mine, almost pleading with me to stop as he stares at me. Just standing here looking at him, I can feel myself softening. "I suggest you leave Madripoor now. Before I change my mind and kill you now."

"You're not going to kill me Winter." He takes a step towards me. His over confidence putting the wall back firmly in place.

"I've got a list of names James. Yours is in red underlined. Don't forget that." ↵

That hurts him, I can see it in his change of attitude. The way he hardens towards me. "Then pull the trigger!" He half growls and half shouts at me. My hands begin to shake, I can't do it but I can't let him know that. Lowering the gun I place a fake smile on my face. "All in good time. Now go!" I shout the last part at him.

"No! Not without you!" ↵

Our shouting was drawing a crowd, a crowd led to rumours and rumours led to problems. With a sigh I throw my hands up in defeat. "Fine. Follow me." I spin on my heel, not watching to see if they're following. Considering I can feel James' eyes all over me I conclude that they are.

Climbing into my car, I wait for them to get in before speeding off. Hightown was the last place I wanted to be, but the only place that would offer the protection we needed right now. A dead assassin and two avengers tended to draw attention.

Zemo met us at the door. His face concerned as he looked at me. "Since when do we trust them?" He followed me as I walked through the hallway. "We don't but it's not safe out there and they were being annoyingly stubborn."

"Don't pretend you're not happy we're here!" Bucky shouted to me as he followed us.

Sticking up my middle finger over my shoulder earns me a chuckle from his friend. "I still want to put a bullet in your skull." Even I couldn't sell that lie anymore. How many chances had I had at this point? Every time I hesitate.

"Sure you do." He mutters knowing I'm the only one that will hear him.

I get both James and his friend, Sam a change of clothes before getting changed myself. Walking into the kitchen I look over at him sitting on the couch. "Why are you here James?"

"To stop you doing something you'll regret." His eyes met mine and I had to look away, the urge to kiss him was too much.

"Too late. I'm looking at my regret." I knew my words would hurt him, that was the point. I needed to push him away. He was ruining every single plan I'd made.

"Winter." Zemo came to stand next to me, leaning against the counter so his back was facing Bucky. I knew my walls were crumbling by how easy it was to refer to him as Bucky now and not James. "An extra pair of hands might not hurt."

Was he actually kidding right now? If I needed an extra pair of hands I would've called Loki. "Another word out of you and I'll throw you back in that cell!" My voice was void of any emotion, even he knew that was a bad sign.

Holding his hands up in surrender he let me go past him. "You never should have let him out in the first place." Bucky's eyes refused to meet mine as I walked towards him. "Just because I didn't kill you, doesn't make us friends." I knew he was trying to coax the reason out of me. I just wasn't willing to give it. Sure I was doing something good here, getting rid of the serum. That didn't mean he'd agree with what I was planning next. I had to keep reminding myself that he wasn't on my side. Not anymore.

"So why bring us here?" Sam appeared from the bathroom half dressed. His well defined muscles popped against his dark skin. Bucky saw me watching him and rolled his eyes, it only made me look at Sam more. "The simple answer is I can't be out in the open for long, and you two would've just followed me anyway."

This seemed to pique Bucky's interest. "Why couldn't you stay out in the open?"

Sitting down beside him, I didn't miss the way he placed his hand beside me. His pinky finger brushing against my leg. It was oddly calming. "There was no love lost with Selby and I."

Pulling on his t-shirt, Sam came and sat with us. His eyes caught on to what Bucky was doing but he said nothing. Looking directly at me instead. "Who was she?"

"Black market arms dealer. I pissed her off a while back by blowing up her weapons."

He seemed shocked. Shocked that I wasn't pure evil.

"To escape her minions I had to fake my death and flee."

"If she thought you were dead. How did you get a meeting with her?" He was genuinely confused, if not slightly impressed.

Laughing I leaned forward, smiling as I placed my hand on his leg. "Honey, I rose up from the dead. I do it all the time." Standing up I walked back into the kitchen to refill my drink. ↵

"Look Sam..."

"Winter stop." Bucky barked before looking over at me.

"What? You asked." I couldn't understand his sudden need for me to be quiet.

Him and Sam shared a look before he looked at me. "Sam is recording it all. Just stop talking."

Wow. Honesty from James Barnes. Perhaps the world is changing.

Sam looked slightly sheepish as he looked towards me. "I'll delete the whole lot and promise not to record anymore. If you promise not to kill anyone." He held his hand out for me to shake. I was impressed, an avenger willing to go against the rules? This was new. I gave him a smirk. "I promise to only kill the bad guys." Before he could change the terms I shook his hand and watched as he pulled his phone out of his pocket. Deleting the files in front of me, an attempt to gain my trust. The problem was I don't trust anyone anymore, but he didn't need to know that. With a nod I excused myself using the excuse I needed to sleep. It was a lie, I just needed to get away from Sam and Bucky. Their whole 'doing the right thing' vibe was getting to me and I couldn't afford to let that happen.

I know I'm not a villain, but I'm not a good guy either. They'd learn that, one way or another.