Maybe We Should Have Planned for This?

by Telaryn

Summary

Clint has been spending a lot of his down-time at a local dive bar - enough to be considered one of the regulars. The problem, as he finds out when he's called into Director Fury's office, is that another one of the regulars - Mr. Quinn - is on a SHIELD watch list.

Panicked, Clint blurts out the first explanation he can think of...he and Quinn are dating.

Now he's faced with one of the toughest assignments of his career - getting Quinn to agree to the lie.

Notes

This is possibly the story I would have written if I'd started writing these two walking disasters with the intention of bringing them together. Thanks SO much to seraphina_snape for giving me the prompt and agreeing to join me in my madness.

This is not part of The Hero and the Bad Boy series, but it will have two more chapters to follow.
After that? Who knows?
Quinn was going to *kill* him. Quite literally, Clint realized, if even half the stuff Fury showed him was true.

“Little public, don’t you think?”

If they’d been at Haversham’s, the low lights and stereotypically smoky air would have made it easier for Clint to hide the fact that Quinn had startled him, but under the circumstances he decided to let him have the win. He nodded at the chair opposite him, grateful when Quinn took the offered seat without further question. “Thanks for coming.”

Dark eyes studied him for a long moment over the rim of designer sunglasses, before Quinn slipped the shades off and into an inside pocket of his suit jacket. “Almost didn’t,” he admitted, “but your invitation was intriguing. It had…style.”

“So,” he continued, settling back in the wrought iron chair and gesturing at Clint, “why the public sit-down?”

Clint shrugged. “Harder to hide a body in broad daylight?” He kept his tone light, but his choice of words immediately caught Quinn’s attention. *God, you really are on the list, aren’t you?* Clint thought, cataloguing at least fifty different micro-expressions as Quinn shifted mental gears, adjusting himself to what he now suspected was actually going on.

“Harder, but not impossible,” he said smoothly, his dark eyes meeting Clint’s. “People’s capacity to ignore what’s right in front of them is usually off the charts.”

*And there you have it.* “We need to talk,” he said, dropping all pretense and sliding his credentials across the table. Quinn picked up the battered leather wallet, opened it, and raised an eyebrow.

“I’d say we do,” he countered. Closing it again, he slid it back halfway. “But not on an empty stomach or a dry throat.” He signaled for a server, who hurried over immediately. “Nachos, sweetheart, and two of whatever’s the most expensive on tap.” He glanced at Clint, who was unnerved to see a sudden glint of mischief in the other man’s eyes. “One check, and give it to the good looking guy with the government expense account.”

“Wade kept insisting you were a fed,” he told Clint once they were alone again. “Gotta say, I didn’t see it. You don’t read legit at all.” He smiled slightly. “And this is going to play hell with the odds for next week’s dart competition.”

“Only if you out me,” Clint said, all of the nervous energy he’d been battling since leaving base suddenly flooding back. “And I’m kind of hoping you won’t. Our nights at the bar have become…ah…important to me.” He rubbed the back of his neck self-consciously. “My work with SHIELD means that I pretty much spend all my time with two people – my partner and my handler. It’s been nice being able to get out and hang with people who don’t ask questions, and who I haven’t just spent three straight weeks with in the ass end of nowhere.”

Another shift – confirming Clint’s suspicions that Quinn assumed this was some sort of official meeting. *Which it is…kinda…shit.* He’d known Quinn was unflappable, but this was starting to border on the ridiculous. Clint couldn’t bring to mind any more than two or three people who would voluntarily put themselves in this situation and not be showing at least a hint of nerves by this point. “I’m not saying any of this right.”
Quinn chuckled. “Let’s say, I’m beginning to understand why you’re not a big talker.”

SHIELD, huh? It salved Quinn’s ego somewhat that if Barton was a fed, he was at least a solid gray hat. And absolutely no idea how adorable you are. He’d had to have blind not to notice weeks ago that Clint Barton was a good looking man. Half the regulars at Haversham’s – male, female and those somewhere in between the two extremes – had commented on it, even if Wade had been the only one bold enough to try something so far.

He wasn’t surprised either to find that Clint presented well in public. Most of them did – it was practically a job requirement.

This inability to get his thoughts out in anything resembling a coherent order though – as far as Quinn was concerned, it crossed all kinds of lines and gave Barton an impossibly unfair advantage. Whatever his real reasons for asking Quinn to meet him here…

“I told him we were dating.”

Blink. “What?”

Quinn hadn’t even realized how far he’d zoned out until full awareness of his surroundings returned in a rush. “I panicked,” Clint said, his tanned skin showing a decidedly reddish hue now. “I didn’t want to get you in trouble, so I told my boss we were dating.”

Their server chose that moment to appear with their order, and Quinn made himself a mental note to insist on a generous tip for her to reward her flawless sense of timing. The few minutes of solid distraction allowed him to regain something of his mental equilibrium so he could get ready to have the conversation Clint had apparently asked him here to have.

No, didn’t expect this at all. God, Eliot was never going to let him hear the end of this.

“Okay,” he told Clint, once they were alone again. “I’m going to need you to rewind a bit, because I think my brain shorted out somewhere around you telling your boss that we were dating?”

He didn’t blame Barton a bit for finishing nearly half his beer in one swallow. “Haversham’s is the first time since joining SHIELD that I’ve developed a regular social outlet that wasn’t connected to whatever base I was assigned to,” he said, somewhat breathlessly. “I knew I was going to have to answer questions about it.”

“It occurs to me,” Quinn said, mind racing now over all the possibilities of what he might have inadvertently stepped in, “that I should probably ask you exactly what you do for SHIELD? I don’t need specifics,” he amended, waving aside Clint’s sudden look of concern, “but you’re not an analyst are you?”

That surprised a smile out of the other man. “No. No, I’m not.”

Darts…pool… Barton was the undisputed champion of both within Haversham’s circle of regulars. Memory of all the times he’d watched Clint hustle newbies for drinks suddenly flashed through Quinn’s mind, and this time he forced himself to ignore the physical beauty that had been on display and focus instead on the marksmanship.

“Never mind,” he said finally, not liking the conclusions he was drawing. “Go back to what you were saying. You were questioned about your time at the bar?”

He wasn’t imagining it – Quinn’s pulse had finally and definitely sped up. Clint could hear it in the
slight quickening of his breathing and the way his gaze had begun shifting between blinks. *Cataloguing escape routes.* It was pretty much exactly what he would have been doing in Quinn’s position. “You probably wouldn’t be surprised to find out SHIELD has you on a watch list?” he asked. *No way out but through.*

Quinn clearly didn’t like hearing that, but he shook his head. “Not really.”

“Well, whatever put you there, me associating with you creates red flags with my security clearance.”

He’d mis-stepped – Quinn clearly thought he was full of shit. “And somehow dating me doesn’t?”

Clint spread his hands, struggling to organize his thoughts and wishing that he’d paid more attention when Coulson had forced him to memorize this part of the SHIELD handbook. “It’s a different type of red flag. Keeps the focus on me instead of you.”

“They’re less likely to assume I’m targeting you,” Quinn finished. “Got it.” He fell silent then, his expression turning thoughtful as he took the opportunity to finish the nachos left on his plate. Clint followed suit, trying to give Quinn the opportunity to decide how he wanted to react.

After an uncomfortably long stretch of quiet, Quinn frowned. A heartbeat later, he reached for Clint’s credentials again – skimming them out of reach before Barton could react. Clint forced himself to stay focused on his food, even though the movement had definitely unnerved him. Quinn flipped open the wallet and looked at the contents again. After another long moment, his dark eyes flicked to Clint. “Hawkeye. You’re the sniper, the one that turned the Black Widow?”

Clint nodded. “Nat’s my partner.”

Quinn set the wallet back down, but made no move to return it – instead taking out his phone and firing off a quick text. Clint felt an unexpected jolt of pleasure low in his body when Quinn finally met his gaze again – his expression lit this time with new and fresh understanding. “So, saying I agree to this – what are you looking for?”

It was only in that moment Clint realized he hadn’t been expecting Quinn to say yes. “Nothing elaborate,” he managed. “We still spend time at Haversham’s – we just mix it up every so often with dinner or a movie or drinks.” He grinned self-consciously. “What do you normally do on dates?”

Now it was Quinn’s turn to look uncomfortable – and Clint tried very hard not to fixate on how unexpectedly attractive it made him. “I, um…I don’t really date,” he confessed finally.

Clint snorted. “Wow. We might just be perfect for each other.”

Quinn’s phone chose that moment to ping. He picked it up, read the text and rolled his eyes. “Oh, for fuck’s sake.” Before Clint could ask, he slid the phone across the table. “Looks like you might be right about us being perfect for each other,” he said, as Clint picked it up and read the text he’d received from an “Eliot”.

*Will you just kiss him already? Natasha needs pictures to send back to their boss, and I promised P & H I’d be back by three.*

*--------------------*

“Now that’s more like it,” Natasha grinned. Shortly after Eliot had texted Quinn, the boys had shifted their seats closer to each other. She couldn’t tell exactly who had made the first move, but after a handful of false starts, she had a nicely framed shot of Quinn cradling Clint’s face in his hands while he gave her partner a more intense kiss than she suspected Clint had managed for himself in far too
“You have to keep me in the loop,” Eliot told her as she took a handful of pictures and texted them to Coulson. Their handler would be responsible for passing them to Fury through regular channels. “I can’t believe I’m going to miss the bulk of this.”

Natasha was mildly surprised to see that, far from doing the bare minimum necessary to fulfill Eliot’s request, Clint and Quinn seemed to be settling into an actual public makeout session. “Well that’s interesting,” she observed, stowing her phone. “Has Jonah said anything to you about being attracted to Clint?”

“You know he hates when people use his given name,” Eliot told her. “And no – he gave me no warning about any of this.”

She’d run into Eliot Spencer a handful of times over the years. He was arguably the top of his profession on either side of the line, so even though she’d heard he’d gone legit, Natasha hadn’t been surprised to learn that he and Quinn were friends. “This is definitely going to get interesting then,” she said, raising her eyebrows as Clint reached up to card his fingers through Quinn’s hair. “And yes, I know he hates being called Jonah.”

“Ебена мать” she sighed, realizing that the boys were showing no signs of stopping.

Cupping his hands around his mouth, Eliot yelled, “Get a room!” across the length of the outdoor dining space. Natasha laughed as a heartbeat later Clint and Quinn flipped them off in perfect sync.

*Interesting indeed.* “I’ll loop you in if you promise to do the same,” she told Eliot, glancing over at her companion.

He nodded. “Deal.”
Maybe It's Time to Make a New Plan?

Chapter Summary

It isn't the first time Clint's been overdue getting back from a mission - but it's the first time Quinn's really had the time to think about how he feels about that.

“You’re brooding.”

Before Quinn could react, Wade had swept his beer from his hand, taken the seat across from him, and drained the bottle. “Wow – you must be bad off if you’re drinking that shit,” he exclaimed, making a comically disgusted face as he set the bottle down with a thump. “I mean what the hell, man?”

Quinn silently ran through all the reasons why getting into any kind of fight with Wade wasn’t an option – starting with him getting banned from Haversham’s and ending with the fact that the mercenary could be disturbingly creative when provoked – then held up two fingers for the server that had been taking care of him. ‘Josh’ had been trying to flirt with him most of the night, in addition to seeing to his food and drink. Even though he looked a little on the young side for Quinn’s taste, a few months ago he would have at least given the matter serious consideration.

Of course, a few months ago he wasn’t pretending to date a SHIELD specialist. A SHIELD specialist who was currently eight days and ten hours overdue from his last mission.

Not that Quinn was keeping track, or anything.

“No sign of your pretty bird?” Wade asked, as Josh delivered their drinks. He held onto Quinn’s bottle a fraction of a second longer than he needed to – enough to draw Quinn’s gaze. There was definite heat in his dark eyes now, where before Quinn would have sworn there was only a casual interest.

“Hey!” Wade snapped, as Quinn favored the younger man with an appreciative smile. “Junior! He’s spoken for, so go peddle your ass somewhere else!” Quinn wasn’t sure Josh had been at Haversham’s long enough to know about Wade, but the speed at which he retreated in the face of the mercenary’s anger spoke well of his natural intelligence. Or his survival instinct, Quinn was forced to acknowledge. When Wade got that bite in his tone…

“How do you know I wasn’t luring him in for you?” he asked, taking a pull off the bottle.

Wade’s brow furrowed, as if he’d never considered the possibility, then he shook his head. “Forgot. I’m only doing women this month.”

From anyone else, the statement would have been unforgivably offensive. From Wade – well, it was still offensive, but mostly because offensive was Wade’s stock in trade. “My sympathies,” Quinn told him. “And no, I haven’t heard anything. You?”

“Not even from the voices in my head man…sorry.”

Quinn wasn’t surprised – he’d mostly asked to make conversation. Wade was a good and loyal friend to all the regulars at Haversham’s, but his expanded view of reality meant that any information
he came up with was rarely in spitting distance of reliable. “I’m not brooding,” he said, taking another swig of his beer. “I don’t brood.” And certainly not about somebody I’m only pretending to date.

“You’re not cleared.” But the tone of Coulson’s voice was almost perfunctory, and Clint knew he wouldn’t have a fight on his hands. Not about this.

“Make me stay and I’m just going to make whatever poor therapist gets stuck with me cry.” He finished lacing up his boots and got to his feet. The movement was too quick though, setting the room slowly spinning around him. Swaying on his feet, Clint half sat, half fell back onto the bed.

Coulson crossed his arms over his chest. “You’re going to need to get the new unit looked at before I agree to you leaving.” It was supposed to be a simple hit – Natasha draw the mark out into the open, Clint take the shot. Like far too many of their jobs lately, it had ended up being anything but. There had been firefight, explosions, and in the madness Clint had lost one of his hearing aids.

“You don’t really think it’s the hearing aid,” Clint grumbled, burying his face in his hands. The vertigo had been bothering him ever since they’d been extracted. “You know I’m not sticking around for a concussion. By now I can treat them better than anyone here.”

“And any doctor worth the title knows better than to treat himself.”

When Clint could trust himself not to look up and see six of his handler, he glared at Coulson. “You’re not keeping me here for a knock on the head.”

“Humor me,” his handler said. “They’ll be sending your MRI up any minute – just let me satisfy myself that you’re not bleeding into your brain or something like that, and I’ll drive you to the damn bar myself.” Startled, Clint looked up into Coulson’s eyes and prayed he didn’t look as ridiculous as he suddenly felt. “That’s an awful lot of concern for somebody you’re only casually dating.” He paused, a small, knowing smile softening his expression. “Supposedly.”

“Coulson…” he began, but his handler rolled his eyes.

“Don’t even. I signed off on it because I agree with Agent Romanoff that the social outlet has been good for you. I don’t know if you have real feelings for this Jonah Quinn or not, and I don’t think you do either.”

He’s okay. Beat up, probable concussion, but alive. Nat says they’re not letting him have a phone and it’ll probably be another couple of days before he can contact you. The text from Eliot had eased a tightness in Quinn’s chest that he hadn’t realized he was carrying until it was gone.

“I get off at midnight.”

Quinn glanced up. Josh was on duty again, setting down a Coke to go with his order of nachos. “Noted,” he said, favoring the young man with a lazy, appreciative smile. He gestured with one finger, and Josh immediately straightened up. Quinn spent a decent amount of time looking him over, making no secret of how attractive he found the other man.

“Damn,” he sighed finally, shaking his head. “If I had a lick of sense I’d drag you out back right now and put you on your knees. Mouth that pretty was made to fit around my cock.” At the edge of his vision he saw the door to Haversham’s open and held up a hand to stop Josh from speaking. “But, you heard Mr. Wilson tell you I was spoken for.” His heart leapt as he saw Clint come through the door at last.
“So,” Quinn went on, shifting his attention back to Josh, “I suggest you take that admittedly
gorgeous ass of yours to the kitchen and tell Joe to put together an order of whatever Hawkeye likes
best. On my tab.” Getting to his feet, he pointedly stepped around the younger man and went to meet
Clint.

“You’re late,” he said, trying not to read anything into the brightening of Clint’s expression as he
catched sight of Quinn. Before the marksman could say anything, Quinn pulled him in close and
kissed him. Clint tensed momentarily, and Quinn felt him inhale sharply in surprise, but then he
relaxed into Quinn’s embrace – hands gripping Quinn’s shoulders as he kissed him back.

“God, you taste so good,” Clint breathed as their lips parted. “Smell good too.” Chuckling softly, he
ducked his said. “Oh my God that sounded weird.” When he glanced up again, Quinn could see a
flush of red in his cheeks – visible even in the dim light of the bar. “That was weird, wasn’t it? Did I
mention I have a head injury?”

Quinn snorted, stepping back and pulling Clint in against his side. “And that excuses every other
time I’ve talked with you how?” Guiding Clint back to his table, Quinn tried not to read anything
into the intensity of Clint’s reaction to seeing him…to kissing him.

And of course there’s nothing to read into you haunting this place like a lovelorn spirit hoping he’ll
walk through the door. Quinn also tried not to make too much of Clint’s casual mention of a head
injury – it explained why he’d been overdue, if his bosses had been worried about him. “You
know,” he said, trying to keep his tone casual as they took their seats, “I don’t know if I can keep this
up.” When Clint glanced up at him, clearly startled, Quinn went on, “I’m clearly not cut out to stroll
the widow’s watch, waiting for your return.”

“I’d do it for you,” Clint told him, pouting. “Hell, I have done it – remember that job you took last
month?”

“I got back a day early,” Quinn retorted, settling into his chair as Josh returned with Clint’s food.
“Not even close to the same.” He tried to suppress an even bigger smile as he watched Josh use the
same moves on Clint he’d used to get Quinn’s attention, and Clint respond in almost the same way
Quinn had to the attention. “I think he’d be up for a threesome if you’re interested,” he murmured,
onece Josh had moved on.

Clint was beginning to understand that Quinn enjoyed keeping him off balance – quips and off-color
comments perfectly timed to surprise him into a genuine response. The challenge was figuring out
how to give as good as he got. “I’m barely cleared to be eating solid food,” he retorted, popping one
of Joe’s fries into his mouth and nearly embarrassing himself all over again with how good it tasted.
“You’re gonna have to give me a couple of days before we try any kinky stuff.”

“Oh God,” Clint thought, eyes widening as he realized there was suddenly no hint of teasing in
Quinn’s dark eyes. Swallowing hard, he fell to eating in order to try and distract himself from all the
implications of that. “How did you know what to order?” he asked, once his stomach had stopped
growling – trying to move talk onto safer ground. “This is all perfect. Thank you!”

He started to pick up the beer, looked at it ruefully, then set it back down in favor of the water Josh
had also thought to bring. Didn’t consider the concussion, Quinn thought, mentally kicking himself.
Outwardly he shrugged, spreading his hands. “On that score, I have to admit I just told Joe to put
together whatever your favorites were. I’ve learned a lot about you in the past few months, Clint
Barton, but your eating preferences haven’t been a priority.” He glanced at the plates, cataloguing the
contents. “Now that I know, we’re good for the future.”
Clint blew out a quiet breath, sensing all of a sudden that behind the banter there was a lot that the other man wasn’t saying. “Quinn, are we okay?”

There was a brief moment when he was certain Quinn was going to say ‘no’, but then he gestured at Clint’s plate. “Eat before it gets cold. I’ll be fine – the past few days are starting to catch up with me.” Something of Clint’s doubt must have lingered in his expression, because Quinn suddenly relaxed into the same easygoing persona he presented to most of the bar. “Eat. I’ll get Josh to bring you a soda – I don’t know why it didn’t occur to me you wouldn’t be able to drink beer with a head injury.”

He met Clint’s eyes at last. “Seriously,” he said. “Eat. I’m just thinking too much – occupational hazard.”

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Idiot. Quinn picked at the remains of his food, and managed to hold up his end of the conversation while Clint ate, even getting the archer to laugh out loud at the story of how Eliot had brought his partners/sweethearts to the bar for a visit and the girl Parker had put three of the regulars on their ass before the rest of Haversham’s caught on and left her alone.

It was harder than it should have been, though – harder than it had been even six weeks ago. *I bet you’re a crappy patient too,* he thought, as Clint proposed the thoroughly terrifying idea of introducing Parker to Natasha. “I see one, maybe two columns still standing,” he said, considering their surroundings. “Maybe a section of roof.”

Clint snorted. “From what you’ve told me about Parker, you’re being generous.” He’d finished off nearly all of his food, and looked more like himself than he had coming through the door. Josh had cleared the table and refilled their drinks, all without comment, glance or innuendo now, Quinn noticed.

For the moment they were alone – or as alone as they ever would be in a place like Haversham’s – and Quinn couldn’t think of anyplace else he’d rather be…unless…

*God, just ask him!* Worst case scenario Clint would see it as crossing a line, and this…thing…whatever it was, would begin winding its way to the conclusion they’d both agreed to going in. “You know,” he managed to say finally, “you’re not supposed to stay by yourself if you have a concussion. You going back to base tonight?”

Clint smiled, but the expected barb about Quinn trying to teach him about concussion treatment protocol somehow never managed to come out of his mouth. “My apartment. I promised Nat I’d check in every couple hours. We’ve done it this way before. I’ll be fine – as concussions go, this is barely a blip.”

Quinn trailed the tip of one finger across a particularly deep gouge in the table surface and managed to completely avoid making eye contact with Clint. “You *could* spend the night at my place. That way you’d have somebody around to keep you awake. Just in case.”

Feeling completely ridiculous, Quinn finally looked up – and his heart skipped a full beat as he realized Clint didn’t think his offer was out of line at all. “How about you spend the night at my place instead?” Clint said. “I’m not up to arguing with Nat about changing plans at this hour, but I really would like the company.”

Feeling like he was about to step off a cliff, Quinn signaled Josh for the check.
There Must Have Been an Easier Way to Do This

Chapter Summary

When their jobs finally bring them up against each other, Clint and Quinn are forced to admit that they might have something worth fighting for after all.

“Package is on the move. ETA five minutes.”

Clint grinned, twirling an arrow between two fingers. “At least he won’t have time to regret you standing him up.” Natasha had been working their mark most of the evening, getting in and staying close enough to clone his cell phone. She’d finally left him with a promise of a midnight rendezvous at his hotel suite, and Clint was half convinced the man would be walking funny when he finally came into view.

“Looks like he’s picked up a few more bodyguards in the front hall,” Natasha told him.

“Sweet,” Clint muttered, taking up his bow and setting the arrow to the string. “More chickens to run around looking ridiculous. You heading back to the safe house?”

“Nah – I’ll wait for you,” she said, and Clint smiled. It was a nice night for a walk, and leaving a scene was always easier as a couple than it was on his own. “Something about you just screams trouble,” Natasha had told him once when he’d been delayed and questioned after a job.

Movement at the entrance to the Opera House caught his attention. Exhaling softly, Clint picked his target out of the cluster of half a dozen tuxedos. “Man seems nervous about something,” he said, readying himself to take the shot. “That many bodyguards is bordering on the excessive.” Drawing in another steadying breath, he drew back the string and took aim at the base of the man’s exposed throat. Another heartbeat and it would be all over.

What the fuck? He didn’t have time to wonder what trick of sound or light had drawn the attention of the bodyguard standing at the target’s right – shifting his aim slightly, Clint let his first arrow fly as the man was raising his own weapon to take aim on Clint’s position. It struck him in the shoulder, driving him backwards several steps before he finally tumbled to the pavement. Clint’s second arrow was nocked before the man hit the ground; the shot striking his original target in the left eye, burying deep enough that Clint had no doubt it reached the brain.

“Nat, where are you?” he asked, moving as quickly as he could to reassemble his kit. On the street, pandemonium had already broken out – Clint could hear screams, alarms, and the screech of tires as people reacted to what had happened.

“One block to the east,” his partner said. “Did I hear two shots?”

Clint grunted non-committally, snapping the case closed and heading for the stairs. “Dumb fucking luck,” he admitted. “One of the bodyguards made me. Don’t ask me how – I did everything exactly the way we laid it out.”

“Is Manjikyan dead?”

“Absolutely,” Clint confirmed. Of that, at least, he had no doubt.
“I don’t use barbed arrows. SHIELD’s made me some trick stuff over the years, but the barbed shit’s the kind of thing people who can’t hit their target use.”

_Thank God for small favors_, Quinn thought, closing his eyes and struggling to breathe through the pain lighting up his shoulder. If some overly eager Good Samaritan tried to take the arrow out too early, he at least wouldn’t be facing the possibility of being crippled for the rest of his life. He tried to reach across with his good hand, to check how much blood he was losing, but nothing seemed to be working right.

Somebody was at his side now, yelling questions at him in Serbian. Quinn opened his eyes and tried to focus on the medic, but the pain was escalating so quickly that it was hard enough for him to focus in English, let alone translate from a language he only knew moderately well. “English,” he managed.

The man looked decidedly disappointed at the news that Quinn wouldn’t be able to tell him what was going on, then gestured for him to relax. For his part, Quinn didn’t hesitate – this was definitely one of those times where passing out was one of the better options available to him.

_I wonder how other couples deal with this?_ Quinn couldn’t even be sure Clint had recognized him. He definitely didn’t know what had drawn his attention upward at almost the right moment to be able to save Manjikyan and screw Clint’s assignment. _He’s fast_. He’d spent an afternoon with Clint some weeks earlier at a public shooting range, but nothing about Barton’s behavior had indicated he was capable of the speed that had put down two people in less time than it had taken Quinn to get lined up for his first shot.

“I grew up in the circus,” Clint had told him. “Their star trick shooter thought I had promise, and it beat mucking out stalls in the hope they would remember to feed me and my brother. Duquesne was probably the best marksman I’ve ever seen, and he was…creative…when it came to motivating small boys.”

That night Quinn had found himself studying the network of scars that laced Clint’s body with a new eye. He’d known going into their arrangement that Barton had more than his fair share, but out of respect for the archer’s privacy and the fact that their relationship was still for all intents and purposes little more than “friends with benefits”, Quinn hadn’t spent all that much time on them. Besides – once he’d finally taken Clint into his bed, he’d discovered that the SHIELD specialist was an unusually talented lover – typically leaving Quinn with little to no energy for anything else.

There was a story there though, once he took the time to read it, and it turned out to be longer and darker than Quinn had expected. And when the sun rose on them the next morning, he’d been torn between asking Clint to tell him everything, and telling him that it was probably best for both of them if they called the whole thing off.

_You weren’t supposed to care, asshole_, was Quinn’s last thought, as oblivion finally rolled over him.

_“Will you stop?”_

The edge in Natasha’s voice brought Clint up short. He’d been so distracted by…something…that he hadn’t realized how vigorously he’d been pacing the length of their cramped safehouse. “Sorry,” he muttered, forcing himself into the nearest chair. “I just…”

He was grateful for the lack of pity in his partner’s gaze. “We’ve got three hours to extraction. Talk to me.”
If it had been anyone else, Clint would have taken refuge in the fact that his thoughts were ricocheting all over the place. Natasha though… He exhaled softly, doing his best to center himself. “It’s that bodyguard,” he admitted finally. He spread his hands, shrugging helplessly. “I know shit happens. I know I can’t account for every sound, every shift of light, but…”

Her expression was absolutely neutral, offering him nothing. “Focus on the moment he moved. I know you were running on pure instinct when you took the shot, but on some level you saw him.”

She was right. He’d gotten so fast over the years that the fraction of a second it took him to sight his target didn’t register in his conscious mind anymore. But the memory was there. It had to be. Nodding, Clint closed his eyes and tried to mentally reconstruct the moment when one tuxedo in a sea of black and white had done something unexpected.

“There’s something about a properly crafted sidearm.” The range had one of those testing grounds police academies sometimes used – a cityscape where the appearance of a target could signal a threat or an innocent bystander. Quinn had moved through the obstacle course with impossible grace and skill; Clint hadn’t been able to take his eyes off him. “I’ve used the larger guns, of course.” Pivot… swing…freeze as the target was revealed to be an image of an elderly woman leaning on a cane.

Motion from overhead…Quinn had hunched his shoulders in a particular way, swinging to train his weapon on a rooftop sniper…

Clint groaned as the truth welled up inside him with a certainty he couldn’t ignore. “It was Quinn, wasn’t it?” Natasha’s voice intruded on his memory. “You shot your pretend boyfriend.”

Opening his eyes, Clint nodded. “Looks like it.” He didn’t bother admitting that at least on his end things hadn’t been ‘pretend’ for a while. “I guess this was pretty much inevitable, huh?”

He didn’t know how he felt about the smile that was hovering around Natasha’s lips. “Sadly yes,” she agreed. “On paper you guys are perfect for each other, except for working opposite sides of the street.” She paused, her gaze narrowing suspiciously. “You know, we thought you were just in this to keep Fury off your back. He really that good in bed?”

As a rule, Clint didn’t blush – and he definitely didn’t embarrass easily. Natasha though – in the years they’d worked together his partner had managed to intimately acquaint him with both sensations. “Instead of me answering that,” he said, feeling his face grow warm, “do you have any ideas where they would have taken him for treatment?”

Quinn came awake searching for a bucket. Some things never change. Much as he would have gladly paid for it to be otherwise, his reaction to general anesthesia was apparently solidly in that category.

Strong hands caught him as he came up off the bed, steadying his shuddering body and getting a bucket in front of him just in time. “Bastard,” he sobbed, realizing who it had to be, as his stomach continued trying to turn itself inside out. “Your…fault.”

“You’re not going to make me feel worse than I already do.”

Convinced that the nausea was finally beginning to wane, Quinn closed his eyes – leaning without shame or embarrassment into Clint’s hold. “I hate anesthesia so much,” he sighed. He felt Clint move into position behind him, easing him more fully into an embrace.

“Now that you’re awake, they can probably give you something for it.”
He knew Clint was right, but Quinn couldn’t muster the energy for anything more than a small noise of assent. He hadn’t been prepared for how right it felt to wake up to somebody, to be able to lean on somebody – even if it was only for a little while. Calloused fingers combed gently through the tangle of his curls. “Should I call somebody?”

Quinn shook his head. “Not yet,” he murmured, letting Clint support him a little while longer. “You owe me.”

A kiss was pressed against his hair. “Anything you say.”

He had no way of knowing how long they stayed like that, but sooner than he was ready to face the outside world, the door to his room opened and several white-coated men and women entered. What followed was several long, torturous minutes of being interviewed, poked, prodded and examined – all of which required him being shifted from Clint’s embrace back onto the bed, and the archer being shouldered aside.

“No…” he managed to protest, as one of the intruders tried to usher Clint out of the room. “He… stays.” Their eyes met across the crowd of people, and Quinn was relieved to see the determination in every line of Clint's face. Now that he knew what Quinn wanted from him, he would do everything in his power to make it happen.

Knowledge that he wouldn't be alone allowed Quinn to relax and submit to as thorough an examination as he'd ever endured. By the time it was over, Clint had managed to work his way back to Quinn's bedside and their fingers were tightly interlaced as Quinn's lead surgeon updated them on his condition. The wound had been clean, as such things were measured, and the speed with which Quinn had received medical attention meant that his recovery should be relatively simple. Physical therapy, nursing care, follow-up visits... It was nothing he hadn't gone through before. Except... "I'll start the physical therapy here," he told the surgeon, squeezing Clint's hand, "but I want to be back in the States as soon as possible."

He recognized the look of doubt on the doctor's face even before the man said, "You would have a more reliable support system in a proper hospital."

Before he could tell the man what he could do with his idea of a "proper" support system, Clint said without a glimmer of hesitation or doubt, "He'll have everything he needs."
Can You Feel the Love Tonight?

Chapter Summary

Would have been entirely PWP, focused on Clint and Quinn navigating that delicate transition from fake dating to "hey, we might really be having feelings for each other"...

...and then Deadpool decided he was done being a minor character.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is dedicated to k3nj1ph1. A weirdly perfect ending to this little re-boot of my weirdly perfect OTP.

Wade had barely gotten his blanket spread out when the light came on in the window across the alley from his perch. “Dammit!’ he swore, fumbling the battered radio up onto the parapet and checking the position of the tape he’d jammed into the player. He’d thought about bribing a couple of the regulars at Haversham’s to delay Clint and Quinn’s departure for at least a few minutes, but in the end he’d decided to trust in his own ability to circumvent local traffic laws to get him where he needed to go.

Two figures moved into view – at this distance little more than silhouettes against the lamplight, until Wade caught up a pair of high-powered binoculars. “There we are!”

Quinn had backed his lover up against a sofa; Clint was hovering on the edge of being spilled onto the cushions, balancing himself entirely by way of his hands on Quinn’s forearms. The two men were kissing passionately, eyes closed, lost entirely in the feel of each other. Wade grinned happily, warmth flooding through his body, making his extremities tingle. It was easily as hot as he’d imagined in his fantasies, and if he was any judge of things Clint and Quinn were only getting started.

“Oh yeah – that’s nice,” he purred as Quinn wrestled Clint’s close-fitting t-shirt off, throwing the fabric aside and jerking the archer to his feet again. Fingers flexed possessively against the skin of Clint’s back, pulling him into a tight embrace. Wade was briefly distracted by the sight of more scars than he would have assumed Barton carried on his body. Thought being a sniper kept you out of the worst of things…are those whip marks? Shivering as the image of a naked Clint tied up and being flogged flashed into his mind, Wade was brought abruptly back to the present as the two men shifted more into profile, and he saw Clint’s nimble fingers working open Quinn’s slacks.

I bet you don’t even have a gag reflex, do you? Wade thought, as the possibility of seeing Clint on his knees with Quinn’s cock half down his throat brought his entire body on point.

Before he could see if the estimations he’d made about either man’s length or girth were accurate, Clint shuddered, his eyes closing, his hands coming up to scrubble desperately at Quinn’s forearms. Wade couldn’t see what Quinn was doing at first, but then the two men shifted again, and he saw Quinn had bitten the archer hard in the meat of his shoulder. You like it rough… Wade mused,
imagining that he could hear Quinn growling.

Making himself a mental note to drop a couple of microphones in the apartment the next time he had the opportunity, Wade went to his knees on the blanket as Quinn released Clint – spinning him so that his back was to Quinn’s front, then pulling him back into a tight embrace. The movement put Clint even more fully on display, and through the binoculars Wade could see that he was already half-gone from the effect Quinn was having on him.

“Oh yeah,” Wade groaned, feeling the ache in his body begin to grow and spread. Supporting Clint with an arm around his chest, Quinn undid Barton’s jeans one handed, pushing and tugging at the fabric until Wade was certain he’d finally caught a glimpse of Clint’s cock. “Now that is the quality content Mama signed up for!”

Clint fought the urge to rock his hips forward as Quinn cupped the bulge of his erection in one hand. “You know, say the word and I’ll pull the blinds,” Quinn murmured, nuzzling at Clint’s throat, his breath warm against the archer’s skin.

Clint whimpered as Quinn nipped sharply at his flesh. “He’s been camped out there nearly a week,” he finally managed to get out. “Seems a shame not to…not to give him something for his persistence.” Quinn’s efforts to free his cock were causing things to tighten pleasurably in his body; giving in at last, Clint let his head fall back against his lover’s shoulder.

“Kinky,” Quinn chuckled. “I like it.” Clint’s jeans and underwear slipped halfway down his thighs, and he shivered as Quinn took him properly in hand. “You sure you don’t want to just invite him in?”

Clint was struggling to find the words to explain why that was the last thing he wanted, when the opening strains of a familiar song drifted into his apartment from Wade’s perch. I can see what's happening (What?), and they don't have a clue (Who?). They'll fall in love and here's the bottom line - our trio's down to two. (Oh.)

“For fuck’s sake,” Quinn growled, apparently recognizing the love theme from The Lion King as quickly as Clint had.

And that would be exactly why I don’t invite him in… Clint thought, nearly falling as Quinn let him go suddenly – moving around him towards the sliding glass door. Gropping for balance against the back of the couch, Clint saw the glare that Quinn leveled at their stalker reflected in the glass, as well as the sharp ‘cut it out’ gesture. Shifting his focus past the other man, Clint saw frantic movement in the shadows. A moment later the music stopped.

“I don’t care how crazy he’s supposed to be,” Quinn said, turning back towards Clint. “I’m going to kick his ass.”

Still flushed and breathing heavily, Clint shook his head. “Forget about him.” The mood in the room had definitely shifted, but where before there was room for nothing beyond the hormones that typically drove both men, now Clint was finding it hard to keep his more emotional feelings at bay. “It doesn’t matter.” He stretched his arm towards Quinn, fingers spread in obvious invitation.

Sensing the change as well, Quinn took his hand at once, moving in close enough for Clint to bury his face in the other man’s chest. A warm hand cupped the back of his head, holding him steady, and Clint suddenly couldn’t remember the last time he’d felt so safe. “You sure you don’t want me to
close the shades?” Quinn asked, pressing a soft kiss to Clint’s hair.

Exhaling softly, Clint slowly shook his head. “I promise you, we shut him out and he’s going to be in the bedroom.” He brought his hands in close, returning to the issue of Quinn still having far too many clothes on. He looked up, catching Quinn’s eyes as he managed to get his hand inside the dress slacks and feel how hard the other man still was for him. “In the bedroom,” he repeated. “With scorecards.”

A shiver rippled across Quinn’s shoulders as Clint continued to tease at his erection, and Clint thought he heard something like a whimper escape the other man’s throat. “You keep doing that,” he managed, his tone light, but his voice breathless, “and we’ll play this any way you say.”

I should have gone with something more tasteful, Wade thought, digging into his backpack for a taco. He’d thought Elton John would be a safe bet, but the scene probably would have been framed better with the Sleeping Beauty Waltz.

Clint and Quinn seemed to have recovered though, and now Clint was taking the lead. Taco in one hand, binoculars in the other, Wade watched as Clint freed Quinn’s cock, then rolled gracefully to his knees. “Oh yeah,” Wade crowed around a mouthful of meat and vegetables. “Show me how you can deep throat that bad boy!” The angle was wrong for him to see exactly how well-endowed Quinn was, but he hummed happily as he realized it was taking genuine effort for Clint to get his mouth around the full length of Quinn’s shaft.

A shudder ran through Quinn as Clint found his rhythm, his head moving back and forth in long, slow strokes. Microphones, Wade thought as he watched Quinn’s hands gently stroking Clint’s hair. His eyes were closed and he was saying something, but he was too far away and the angle was all wrong for Wade to have a chance at lip-reading. Unless ‘tats are the shit’ are some kind of weird term of endearment where he comes from?

He was definitely planting microphones before trying this again.

In the apartment, things were suddenly moving again. Quinn had abruptly pulled himself free of Clint’s hold and dragged the archer to his feet; stumbling a little, Clint allowed himself to be led into the next room. Trusting they would do right by him, Wade grinned happily as the light came on. It was Clint’s bedroom, and apparently Quinn had decided it was time to get serious.

Serious, in Quinn’s view of the world, started with stripping Clint entirely out of his clothes – something Wade definitely approved of, even though he was once again distracted by how many scars the archer seemed to have. When he was entirely nude, Quinn kissed him again – hard and passionate once more – tumbling both of them onto the bed.

Wade finished his taco and went up on his knees again, leaning against the parapet. Quinn had thoughtfully arranged the two of them so that Clint was stretched out full length and Wade could clearly see Quinn’s hand stroking his cock. Boy’s hung, Wade realized, his eyes widening. Clint didn’t wear tailored slacks often – definitely not as often as Quinn did – and that tended to make the math more challenging.

The two men were talking again, and the look on Quinn’s face in the lamplight caught Wade’s attention. There was hunger there, and lust. Wicked good humor too – whatever he was doing beyond the hand job was driving Clint to distraction and he enjoyed that.

There was something more, though. Something Wade had known existed but hadn’t expected he would ever be allowed to witness. The look of a man in love.

*********************************************************
He’d nearly brought Clint off twice – the archer was gradually going to pieces under his ministrations, writhing and pleading with Quinn to put him out of his misery. “You have no idea how damn beautiful you look, do you?” Quinn asked softly, clamping down at the base of Clint’s cock just before the orgasm hovering at the edges of his awareness could take him.

Quinn had assumed Clint was too far gone to pay attention to what he’d said, but as he resumed stroking his lover, he realized that Barton’s storm-grey eyes were suddenly fixed on him with an intensity he couldn’t remember seeing in the other man before. “Quinn…”

Leaning in, Quinn kissed Clint before he could say anything else – long and slow and deep, pouring everything he was feeling in that moment into the gesture. Heat flared low inside his body; he pressed his aching hard-on into Clint’s hip, groaning softly with relief as his own arousal was banked somewhat. “Don’t say it,” he said, once he finally let Clint up for air. Forcing himself to meet the other man’s eyes he continued, “Whatever you were about to say, it can wait. Tonight, all I want to do is fuck you until you fall apart with nothing but my name in your mouth. I want to hold you while you sleep and when we wake up I want to start all over again.” He flexed his hips again, shuddering as a rush of endorphins flooded his system.

Clint reached up with his free hand, hooking the back of Quinn’s neck and dragging him down for another kiss. Closing his eyes, Quinn gave himself entirely over to the feel of the man lying beneath him.

It wasn’t a game anymore. If he was being honest with himself, Quinn knew it hadn’t been a game for him since he’d woken up in a foreign hospital recovering from an arrow wound Clint had given him. Barton had been there, feeling guilty, but willing – as Quinn had been – to see the underlying hilarity of the encounter. Beyond that, he’d stayed – barely leaving the hospital during the entirety of Quinn’s recovery.

It counted for a lot.

“You know,” Clint said as their lips parted, his tone mischievous, “if you’re going to do all that, we might want to get the rest of those clothes off.”

Quinn grinned at him. “Wade’s never going to recover from this, you know.”

He suspected Clint’s expression was suddenly matching his own. “Anything worth doing…”

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