Take It Back

by alandoflimbo

Summary

About five years ago, a one night stand with Y/N tore Bucky’s life apart. It was also the night before his wedding. Now he’s married to her sister and she needs a place to stay.
Prologue

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

CAST

Sebastian Stan as Bucky Barnes
Chris Evans as Steve Rogers

Shay Mitchell as Ashlyn

Scarlett Johansson as Natasha Romanoff

"You"

as Reader

"We were inevitable from the start, weren't we?"
New York, New York

Present time

_Bucky Barnes_ was humming Bohemian Rhapsody while he reached his arm out to grab a carton of milk from the fridge.

His hand, that wore his golden ring like a five thousand pound of disruptive vindication, barely wrapped fully around the handle when a familiar voice made him yelp, causing him to bang his head on the top shelving of the refrigerator.

He thought his wife had gone to the office early that morning, like she usually did, to catch up on some paperwork that was due at the end of the month.

He knew she wouldn't pass up the opportunity at an opening for another promotion.

Naturally, he figured he had been alone, so it’s no surprise that he had jumped about one foot into the air and his heart was now beating away at one hundred beats per second.

A soft chuckle echoed through the large open kitchen.

A deep groan leaves his lips as he rubs the now sore spot on the back of his head.

The flesh there was hot to the touch.

Shamefully, he spins around to see Ashlyn leaning on the breakfast counter, a small smile playing on her pretty lips.

His eyes furrow together.

“I thought you were gone,” he mumbles.

She eyes him up and down with a smirk on her face.

“Yea, about that, change of plans.”

Bucky stretches his arm out as he uses his other to roll the sleeve of his extra tight white dress shirt up to his elbows which still held a lingering tan from summer time.
Walking up to the counter, he does the same exact thing with his other arm, switching the milk from hand to hand as he does so.

Ashlyn’s smile drops slightly, and Bucky raises a brow noticing her changed worried demeanor.

Slowly, he sets the cold milk down next to his white bowl and then crosses his arms - leaning forward onto the cold counter.

Not allowing his eyes to drift away from hers, he moves in until their faces are inches apart and he watches her intently.

She was looking everywhere - the ceiling, to the left, to the right, to the table - everywhere, except for him.

“What’s going on?” He asks concerned.

Ashlyn bites her bottom lip.

He looks down at her finger that was making an invisible drawing on the marble counter.

Her gel nails were a rosy pink, a matching ring on her own left hand.

“You know my sister, Y/N?” After she says your name, she finally looks up at Bucky.

The millisecond the name even rolls off her tongue, it’s like a butcher knife was jammed into his lower chest and very slowly dragging its way up his throat.

There could be many reasons why Ashlyn was bringing you up, but the one he feared the most he quickly opted out because she hadn’t killed him yet. Just the thought, the fucking reminder of that day, of you, made everything different again. Things hadn’t been different in five years and they weren’t supposed to be now.

Especially now.

To say he was distraught by his wife’s question was an understatement. He was absolutely moments away from cardiac arrest or at least some kind of mental breakdown.

He hated you.

He took secret therapy sessions for the first few months of his marriage because of you.

Ashlyn knew you two didn’t get along, except she never knew why. It was weird because the first year and a half she had dated Bucky, you and him had gotten along extremely well.

You were even best friends. But then one day, he was avoiding her name in every conversation; settling for ‘her’, she’, or ‘your sister’. When she came upon the subject, he would change the topic. He even wanted to have thanksgiving with just his family instead of with yours.

Ashlyn has considered asking you what happened that made Bucky completely detest you, but for some reason she was afraid.

She just didn’t know why.

She eventually decided to not pry on it any longer and made sure they weren’t in the same room together.
But this would change everything.

You had called her two days ago crying her eyes out and begging to stay with her for a bit until everything was “okay again”. Ashlyn figured it had to be serious if you were even willing to stay in the same home as the man who couldn’t stand you.

So, of course, she said yes. Plus, you were her little sister.

“Yeah…” His tone was hesitant and uncertain.

It was obvious he did not want to know what he was about to.

“Well,” she hoped she wasn’t making a big mistake.

She brought her slightly shaking crossed hands to her mouth and took a deep breath. There was something in her husband's eyes as he waited for her to speak, she just couldn't tell what it was, “some things went wrong back at home and she kind of doesn’t have a place to live right now.

“No.” He doesn’t even stumble on his words as his head snaps away from Ashlyn. It comes out in a snarl.

She knew this wouldn’t be easy, but now the kind of hard part was over.

“Babe, come on. It’ll only be for a bit.”

His mind was running on horse speed now, he just started spewing out excuses and bullshit for anything against this stupid idea.

Memories flash in his mind - awful tear-jerking memories.

Memories of your voice, your skin, and the way your hips moved against his.

Just like that, words spew out, “I don’t trust her, Ashlyn.”

His eyes are blurry as he scans their huge living room. His eyes pan over to the floor-to-ceiling twenty-five-foot tall windows that were starting to reveal the foggy weather on New York City’s horizon.

That’s why she wanted to come here.

His voice raises to an angry tone.

"All of a sudden, coincidentally after we just moved into our new penthouse she just “wants” to move in here too?” He puts air quotes around his head for emphasis. “It’s so obvious what her intentions are, baby. I don’t know how you fall for that.”

Ashlyn was the angry one now.

She was hurt that he would ever think so lowly of her own biological sister, “I highly doubt that’s why.”

Bucky rolls his eyes dramatically and drops his arms to his sides, “You’re my wife, she’s my sister in law that I refuse to remember exists. Did you forget this?”

She was the angry one now as she stood up, “Look. I’ll never understand why you hate each other the way you do. But you need to get the hell over it, Bucky. She’s my baby sister and she has
nowhere to live right now.”

Bucky breathes in and out harshly through his nose as he contemplates her words for a moment.

Nervously, he runs a hand through his hair. An overwhelming amount of emotions had hit him the moment she even said her name. When she had followed that with the idea of her moving in, he began to panic.

Now, with every passing second, the feelings were just building and he could not control it.

He looks over at the living room, the piano, the stairs, the elevator, and the foyer. She was going to be here.

She was supposed to stay in the past.

There was no way there weren’t other motives behind her idea. She always had ulterior motives. This made him absolutely furious.

Ashlyn notices how he was now turning a weird shade of red and she began to grow even more worried.

She walks around the counter and takes Buck’s face in her hands. She pulls his eyes away from the home decor and then finally he looks down at her.

Just like that, he lets a heavy breath escape from his lips and he leans his forehead against hers.

She calms down too and she lowers her voice to just above a whisper.

“Bucky, it’ll be okay. It won't even be for long, just until she finds a place to resettle.”

She runs a tentative thumb across the top of his cheekbones.

He itches his forehead - a nervous tick he has - and his tongue clicks in annoyance, “Does she at least have a job right now?”

He figured that if you had somewhere to be, that’d mean less chance of seeing her for most of the day and also that she’d make enough to find her own place soon.

“She’s going to start looking at soon as she gets here.”

Bucky growls lowly as he looks at his milk and bowl, appetite suddenly gone.

A burning fire burns in his gut. “She better not think I’m going to give her one.” He needed to know how much time he had to collect his thoughts, to control his emotions. He was afraid he didn’t have just enough, “When does she get here? I’m assuming you told her yes before you even asked me.”

Ashlyn didn’t even take offense to his tone because he was right.

“She’ll be here tonight.”

Bucky takes in her words for a couple of seconds and then nods. A small smile forms on Ashlyn’s face. She steps forward and kisses Bucky on his forehead before saying she was going to step out to run some errands and that she would catch up on work tonight.
When she’s halfway towards the elevator, he’s already leaning his arms over the sink. He closes his eyes and tries to control his breathing.

He hadn’t seen you since the night before his wedding day: five years ago.

All those emotions he had been harboring down for years suddenly came up his throat in a form of bile.

He swallowed down thickly.

“Also, I haven’t told her about the baby yet. So try not to mention that for a couple of days.”

The elevator dings and then she was gone.

Fin Du Prologue

**SOUNDTRACK**

i. 

*Poetry* by Wrabel

ii. 

*Crash Into Me* by Dave Matthews Band

iii. 

*Chances* by Five For Fighting

iV. 

*Apologize* by One Republic

V. 

*Lost In The Moment* by NF

Vi. 

*Here's To The Night* by Eve 6

Vii. 

*Drops Of Jupiter* by Train

Viii.
Superman by **Five For Fighting**

IX.

*On The Other Side* by **Augustana**

X.

*If You Could Only See* by **Tonic**

Xi.

*Starlight* by **Jai Wolf**

Xii.

*Alone Made Of Ice* by **Maldito**

Xiii.

*Still Falling For You* by **Ellie Goulding**

Xiv.

*Breathe* by **Lauv**

Xv.

*Kiss Me* by **Ed Sheeran**

Xvi.

*Come Away With Me* by **Norah Jones**

Xvii.

*What Goes Around Comes Around* by **Justin Timberlake**

Xviii.

*Chariot* by **Jacob Lee [THEME]**

Xix.

*Never Let Me Go* by **Florence + The Machine**

Xx.

*Wait* by **M83**

XXi.

*The River Has Run Wild* by **Mads Langer**
Gravity by Sara Bareilles

Breakeven by The Script

The Black and White by The Band Camino

In My Veins by Andrew Belle

Don't Keep Driving by The Paper Kites

Work Song by Hozier

Dancing On My Own by Calum Scott

Any Other Name by Thomas Newman

Chapter End Notes

*If you choose, watch for hyperlink dashes that are clickable within each chapter. They will direct you to the song. Optional.*
Chapter Summary

Y/N arrives and Bucky is not doing so good.

Chapter Notes

*Language and very sad feels in this one*

Chapter One

It was that summer

I learned your number

Your laughing dials down as the innocent moment between two friends pass inside the crowded restaurant.

You couldn’t believe that in less than twenty-four hours, your best friend and your sister were going to be married, and yet you couldn’t shake the feeling that you both never knew happiness like you did right at that moment.

You were going to miss this - laughing together. Obviously, there were other aspects of your relationship that you were most definitely going to miss more than that, but for years you both always just shoved that under the table.

You’re not laughing anymore, and instead, you’re just looking at each other, realizing you’ve both run out of time.
You’re the first to realize that your hand is still on his arm. Bucky looks at your hand and you follow his gaze.

Realizing what you’re doing, you take your hand off his body like it’s on fire.

Bucky subconsciously frowns at this, suddenly missing your touch.

You clear your throat, “Sorry, I -”

“You wanna get out of here?”

He was digging through the closet, throwing boxes from here to there. He wasn’t looking forward to seeing you. That much was obvious as he swung a beige pier 1 throw pillow across the bedroom, nearly hitting the lamp off the nightstand.

The bottom of it shook and the shade swung back and forth, making the yellow glow bounce off the walls of the room from side to side.

He looked at the crooked pillow in annoyance. With a huff, he got up off the floor and made his way to the side of the bed to fix it. As thankful as he was that he didn’t bang the lamp off the table, on the other hand, he was also mad it did not fall.

You deserved a broken lamp, if anything, you deserved no light at all in this room. Darkness would be the best thing for you; complete and utter darkness.

But no, instead you got a bedroom that was probably the size of your old living room (he remembers your old place very vividly), an entire view of the city, fifty-five stories high into the sky, and some of the finest Egyptian cotton sheets.

You were being treated like a queen.

He stared down at the bed, considering if he should ‘accidentally’ step on the white duvet with his extra dirty boot.

He has to squeeze his right hand into a fist to stop himself.

These sheets were too damn expensive, Buck.

Ashlyn had thought it’d be a good idea that Bucky got the guest bedroom ready while she went to go pick you up at JFK.

Since they had only recently moved in, not everything was ready yet, including the guest room. There were pieces of furniture that still had to be properly moved into place, the curtains had to be installed, and then they had to make the bed.

It didn’t seem like a whole lot in theory, but the amount of work that had to be used would eventually be dangerous for Ashlyn and the baby.

So he didn’t mind staying behind to fix the room and take care of it himself, it just bothered him who the room was for. He felt like he was doing some kind of good deed for an undeserving soul.

With a flick of his finger, he carelessly straightened out the corner of the torturous pillow one last time before leaving the bedroom, flicking off the lights behind him.

His phone dings in his pocket the moment he shuts the door close behind him. With an exhausted and overdramatic sigh, he pulls it out and unlocks the screen.
We’re on our way up! Be nice.

He feels like he needs to puke. He runs a hand down his face and places his cell on a random corner wall table that sat in the long hallway. He pinches the bridge of his nose.

His mind started to drift into many possibilities and scenarios of what was going to happen the moment you walked back into his life. How would you react to seeing him? Were you going to confess to her sister about the truth about that night? Did you still look the same? Were you still carefree?

He fists and unfists his hands, taking in a deep breath.

It’s been five years and he still wasn’t able to wrap his head around it. He wasn’t going to start now.

Everything had been going so well before this news about you showing back up.

ding.

He turns the corner of the wall and he can’t breathe.

What he sees first is your silhouette on the opposite side of the elevator wall as it opens, then it’s his wife stepping out, and then it’s your feet stepping into the foyer right after.

Time seems to stop when he hears your laughter, and he remembers.

That night plays in his mind and it replays over and over like a haunting memory. That god awful memory, the one that he thought he would end up cherishing forever.

His heart starts beating so fast the second his eyes lay on you. You turn fully, and you stop immediately. You weren’t expecting him to be right there and yet there he was in all his glory.

He looked gorgeous in his black plain t-shirt that hugged his toned body.

He takes you in as well because it’s you and he can’t believe it. You still look exactly the same - hair cascading over your shoulders, eyes with a look in them that could kill.

He opens and closes his mouth and he can’t breathe and he wants to cry.

He’s pulling you behind him in a rush as you both pushed your way through the crowd towards the exit.

Your smile covered your face as you almost stumbled behind him at how hard he was pulling you. You couldn’t help but laughing, grabbing on tighter.

His heart suddenly stopped and it swelled so much he felt faint. You were still just as beautiful as when he last saw you.

He hated that.

You eyed him up and down, feeling your own heart slow down drastically.

Your hand slid up the side of his pretty face, and then into his hair and you pulled - hard.

“Please.” You begged.

The memory shakes him to the core and the anger is back. He’s now staring at you with pure
hatred, and in that instant, you regret the choice you made of coming here.

Problem is, you had no other choice. Plus, you would have to face him eventually right?

You know he hates you, God, even you hate you. You don’t blame him, but you were hoping that that could all be put behind you. It had been that way, anyway.

So you figured at that point that you would be the grown one and try to take the first step into progress.

You take a deep breath, “Hey, you.”

Your voice. He hadn’t heard it in years. It was the voice that he tried to get out of his head the first few months of his marriage, the voice he heard late at night when he couldn’t sleep. He hated you for leaving such a mark on him.

The tension was unbearable as he stood there saying nothing in response, and you were beginning to feel a bit awkward. You were hoping for at least some kind of effort on his part.

Ashlyn’s gaze drifts back and forth between you and Bucky and you raise your own brow, waiting.

Ashlyn looks at Bucky one more time, “Bucky, do you want to help Y/N take her bags into her room?”

Bucky looks at Ashlyn. Damn. His wife was there the entire time and he blacked out like a total idiot, he definitely needed to be more careful. Especially around Ashlyn.

He looks at your suitcase and then nods, “Yeah, baby, no worries.”

He says half sincerely, reaching to your side to grab the handle of your suitcase and with his other hand, he takes your duffle bag. You whisper a soft thank you, and you notice he’s now avoiding all eye contact with you.

“Bucky will show you to your room.”

You thank your big sister once more before following Bucky.

You take advantage of the walk to look around at your sister’s new apartment. You knew that one year into their marriage that Barnes’ Enterprises had nearly tripled their worth in the market, but this was not what you were expecting.

Even when Ashlyn had said that their elevator opened right to their floor, you had to stop yourself from choking on air.

You took in the large living room with the floor to ceiling windows (what the hell, was that the Empire State building right there?) and the black grand piano that was a little to its right. You try to catch a glimpse of the living room and kitchen but you turn on a long hallway instead, followed by another right turn.

This place was beyond the comfort you needed. If anything you would’ve never expected something like this from Bucky, towards the end of your friendship he was significantly wealthy for sure, but he was always so humble. He’d rather cut off his own arm than give away his black Honda Accord that he’s had since college. You remember all the issues that damn thing always had, but for the life of him he would not give that up.
When Ashlyn had pulled up in an Audi R8 to pick you up at the terminal, you had complimented her on the car to which she said it was actually Bucky’s.

“What happened to the honda?”

Ashlyn waved nonchalantly in the air with her hand, “He took that to the yard years ago. Long gone now.”

Your heart hurt for a second, taking in the sexiness of this new very expensive car, “Oh.”

Bucky stopped in front of one of the rooms. He set the suitcase down and opened the door. When it was open he picked it back up and walked inside leading you in.

You’re pretty sure your gaping as you take in your room, and you can't help the small smile that took over your face. It was all just ridiculous.

The rooms were huge, and you had glass windows on two entire walls (with curtains newly installed in case you need privacy) - the view was insane. The dark wood flooring contrasted beautifully with the white sheets of your bed and the small furniture was delicate but modern.

It was gorgeous.

Bucky notices this, and he also noticed the way you were ogling earlier when you were looking around the living room.

It takes all his muster to not roll his eyes and just kick you out. He rudely drops your duffle on the floor next to his feet.

The act makes you jump up in surprise.

And then its silent, dead silent, as his back is still turned to you.

You stare at him, terrified. Its been five years.

He looks out at the city in front of him, trying to control his breathing and his temper. The tension was so thick in the room that he thought about just running out. But he couldn’t, he needed to get things straight first.

It had been almost too long since either of you said anything so you decide to break the silence.

You don’t expect your voice to sound so broken.

“Bucky…”

He has to close his eyes after you said his name.

“Promise me you won't tell her.” His voice breaks at the end of his plea.

The image of his beautiful wife on his wedding day and how happy she was playing in his head. He thinks about him and Ashlyn and their baby and he doesn’t want any of that to be destroyed. It couldn’t. He couldn’t bear to break Ashlyn’s heart like that no matter how messed up what he did was.

You just couldn’t.

You swallow hard because it doesn’t take that much explaining to know you both know what he is
talking about. It pains you that after all these years, while he knew you better than anyone else, that he still doesn’t know you at all.

You would never be that heartless, you would not take your sister’s happiness away like that.

You look down at the floor, “I won’t.”

He takes in your words and it takes a few seconds for him to believe you. When he does, he nods slowly - more to himself- and then turns around to leave.

He couldn’t be near you, it was unbearable.

You want to call after him, to stop him and tell him everything right then and there, but when he’s almost out the door, he’s the one to stop and start talking, “She might buy that you’re here because of personal issues, but I know the real reason you’re here. I’m not an idiot.”

You frown at this, snapping your head and body around. Your brows furrow together in confusion.

“What are you talking about?” It comes out in a whisper.

He’s still turned away from you and you can tell he’s breathing a little harder judging by the muscles on his back.

You’re confused beyond belief and you have absolutely no idea what it is he is talking about. The real reason as to why you’re really here?

“I’m here because I have nowhere else to go.” It pains you to say those words, but they are true. Your throat starts to clump up and it’s sore and it burns. It’s because you felt like crying.

He noticed the pain in your voice, but he didn’t care. He didn’t want you, and most importantly, he didn’t want you here.

“Just stay the fuck away from me and my wife.” He says before walking out.

For the hundredth time that night, you couldn’t breathe. You stood there as you felt the unbearable heat in your cheeks and the burning in your throat. You stood there staring blankly at the door where the love of your life just walked out of, trying as hard as you possibly could to not start crying your eyes out.

________________________________________________________________________

Your tiny hands tremble as you fold up the little note.

Diligently to not awaken him, you slide it right under his pillow.

[Music]

Lost for you I’m so lost for you

You come crash into me

And I come into you
Chances

Chapter Summary

Maybe he still loves her.

Chapter Notes

Oh my gosh thank you so much for the kind reviews. I am so glad you guys are enjoying this story just as much as I'm enjoying writing it. It's honestly such a blast. Thank you!

Chances are when said and done

Who'll be the lucky ones who make it all the way?

Though you say I could be your answer

Nothing lasts forever no matter how it feels today

 ───────────────

7 Years Earlier

The only thing you ever loved more than life itself was food. It had appeared to be the answer to pretty much everything, including the answer to all your questions in life.

You were sad? Food. You were stressed? Food. You were happy? Food. You were bored? Food. Food was the essence of everything that revolved around you, and you can’t remember a time in your life when you never appreciated it.

Which is why it’s no surprise to anyone - including yourself - when you’re leaving the chipotle line with two chicken burritos inside your paper to-go bag. You knew very well that both those burritos were for you; one was for when you got home and binged watched Gossip Girl while the other was for around midnight when you couldn’t fall asleep.

The answer to not being able to fall asleep? Food.

You’re in a daze as you walk through Chipotle, grip tight, eyes going towards that extra attractive man sitting towards the left. A random little boy runs past you, his arm hitting the side of your coat and you pray silently to yourself that he didn’t get guac on it. His mom, with a head of blonde curls, runs behind him telling him to slow the hell down.

What you don’t see is the guy on the right sitting by the window. He sits on the stool with a friend and he’s chowing down a bowl when his eyes flicker up to you just when you’re a couple of feet
away from the exit. Recognizing you immediately, he quickly dabs his bottom lip with a brown napkin and tells his friend he’d be right back.

You’re about to reach for the door when a soft hand catches your inner right elbow.

Instinctually, you flinch, mentally preparing to brace whoever this rapist was.

But then you see the guy’s reaction and he looks apologetic as he pulls his arm away, realizing he most likely frightened you judging by your lightning speed reaction.

His eyes furrow and his lip perks up at the side, “Hey, sorry ‘bout that,” he whispers, motioning to your elbow with his head. He tilts his head just a bit as he stares at you a little bit longer.

You wonder why this gorgeous piece of man would want to talk to you of all people. He definitely did mistake you for someone else. That or he’s a serial killer.

His hair was short and he had bluest eyes you had ever seen. He had a boyish cute smile and he wore an attire that could only be closest described to a frat boy. You couldn’t deny it though, that light blue dress shirt served him justice. You couldn’t help but stop yourself from biting your lip. Was it just you or did he remind you an awful lot of Carter Baizen? God, you couldn’t wait to get home and finish catching up on season 3.

His voice interrupts your enamored thoughts, “Are you Ashlyn’s sister?”

You sigh in defeat. Of course the too good to be real extra hot stranger was looking for your sister.

You give him one more look over his person and in an instant, everything clicks in your head - the blue eyes, the rich cute boy look, the hair that looked soft enough to pull- and you roll your eyes. You hold the paper bag in the crook of your left arm, leaning onto your left leg.

You let out a sigh, but you couldn’t help the small smile that fills your face.

Nodding, you respond, “You must be Bucky.”

His smile reaches his eyes. It’s genuine, soft. “So she’s talked about me, huh?” His tone is teasing, prideful.

Your eyes practically roll into the back of your head. Instead, your eyebrows just raise up dramatically, “Oh, yeah, she’s talked about alright. You’re literally all she’s talked about the last few weeks.”

He smirks and his arms cross over his chest.

Interestingly enough, other questions swirl around in your head, “How did you know I was her sister? I’ve never met you prior to this.” Your eyes narrow curiously.

“Oh, I saw your Instagram. Guys snoop too, ya know.” He rubs the back of his neck nervously, “and I also remembered Ashlyn saying she had a little sis so I just put two and two together when I saw your name.”

You couldn’t help the chuckle that escaped your lips. Oh, the countless of guys who’s feed you’ve snooped through. You even remembered going as far back as four years and accidentally liking their “family vacation in Aruba” photo. So you knew exactly what he was talking about.

“Right.” He nods once more, shifting from feet to feet. You clear your throat as you gasp the bag
“Dinner for the family?” He gestures to the large bag you’re holding.

You smirk, “Nah. It’s all for me.”

His brows raise up, impressed, “What? A little thing like you?”

You take a slight offense to his comment. Him not buying that you could chow down two burritos kind of insulting you. You could even do three if you tried, “I like chipotle.” You try to come off sounding condescending but instead it comes off playful.

He smiles, “Alright.”

Ashlyn has been talking about this boy for the last four weeks nonstop and something that she said just two days ago enters your mind. You clear your throat, “So are you guys actually that serious or is my sister being overdramatic saying you guys are actually going away together next weekend to the Hamptons?”

“No yea,” He motions over to his friend that is sitting by the window. His friend waves slightly over his own burrito, “My friend Steve’s got a house down there and so does my father. A bunch of us are going. It’s actually quite more traditional than it is romantic, but we’ll see how that goes, too.” He ends with a suggestive smile.

You look between him and Steve - who was also downright gorgeous - and then return him an equally soft smile, “Well, have fun. She’s really looking forward to it.”

You were happy for your sister, she was a great girl. And to be fairly honest, Bucky seemed like an equally sweet guy. So what he was rich, that didn’t automatically qualify him as a douche.

The following words that leave his mouth only confirm that:

“You can come too if you’d like. There’s a couple of other girls that’ll be there.”

Happiness fills you instantly. You had never been to the Hamptons before. You haven't done anything fun in years, period.

You try not to show your excitement as you chuckle, “Oh. Are you sure you all want a twenty-one-year-old hanging around with you guys?”

*Please says yes.*

He laughs gently, “Hell yeah. You’re not a kid, plus it’s not like we’re that old. I’m only twenty-six.”

“I know,” you smile, “She told me.”

He looks away and towards Steve’s direction, making a soft strand of her fall onto his forehead. You take that second to appreciate his profile. You look away quickly.

“Look, I gotta get going, but when you get home to tell her I invited you too. Honestly, I think it’ll be pretty cool.”

You look at Steve again and then back at Bucky. He was smiling at you.

“Okay.” You smile back softly.
As soon as you sit in your car, you try to lie to yourself by saying that you’re not freaking out over the trip. All of your entire college career you barely got to party much, mainly because you were too focused on school and your love life to even have a social life.

You grab the wheel as you toss your head back, a big smile on your face.

Maybe this was the beginning of something new, a brand new start from your old messed up one. This could be God’s way of giving you a second chance.

Surely, you could be overdramatizing everything, it was just an invite to a weekend getaway. But still, you were finally leaving your hometown.

At that moment, when you buckled your chipotle bag into the passenger seat and gave your paper bag a little tap, you were thankful your big sister had met Bucky.

You were so ecstatic that you didn’t even eat your burrito right away as soon as you walked straight in through the front door.

You started yelling your sister’s name as you close the door behind you. You walked passed the living room and then tossed the Chipotle bag onto your kitchen counter.

Turning around, you sigh.

The entire hallway was lined with cardboard boxes and garbage bags - your sister was moving out soon. You nearly trip over them as you made your way to her room. Impatiently, you knocked repeatedly on her bedroom door.

“Ashlyn!”

You didn’t wait for a response, your hand quickly went for the doorknob and you threw it open.

Your big sister looked up at you from folding her clothes. With a deadpan look, she says, “Come in.”

You swing the door close behind you with a smirk, “I ran into your bae at chipotle.” You sing and you hop onto your knees on her bed.

She peaks a brow at you.

“You did not.” You nod enthusiastically, “What’s he doing upstate? He lives in the city.” You could sense the uncertain jealousy in her tone.

You shrug, “He was with a friend.”

“A friend?”

You roll your eyes, “A guy friend.”

A look of relief washes over her face and now she’s smiling. She picks up a pair of jeans out of the clean clothes bin and starts to fold, “So? What did you think? Was I exaggerating?”

You smirk and roll your eye, knowing she was referencing to the moment of when she first told you how freaking gorgeous Bucky is, “He was alright I guess.”
She gives you a look and scoffs playfully, “You guess?”

“Fine, he lived up to your words.”

“So that’s why you barged in here all happy like this? I don’t know how I should feel about my little sister freaking out this much over meeting my new boyfriend.”

Please, like you would ever. You pick up a clean pantie from the pile and throw it at Ashlyn’s face.

“No, you dumb shit,” she raises a brow as she picks up the underwear you threw and puts it back in the basket.

“Okay, then what’s up? You’re so damn antsy.”

You look at her for a beat and then take a deep breath, “You know that trip he invited you to?” She nods. All of a sudden you were super nervous. You start picking at the bedsheets below you, “Before you answer just remember, I’ve been through a lot this year. Ya know, with Eddie Brock and everything” Ashlyn’s face falls at that. Eddie had destroyed your life, literally. “and when I was in school I never really had a chance to do much because mom forced me to work my ass off instead of having fun like a normal young adult-“

Ashlyn’s eyes narrow and she interrupts you. “Just say it, Y/N.”

You look her dead in the eye, “He said I could go with. There’s going to be a lot of more people there, too. I asked if I was too young and he said no.”

Ashlyn stares at you for a second and the nods, smiling softly. She returns to folding a Star Wars T-shirt. “I know Brock was a tough time for you and I agree that you do need a break, get out and have some fun.”

Joy fills you instantly, “Is that a yes?”

“Yes, it’s a yes.”

You get up and wrap your arms tightly around her waist, almost making her tip over. She chuckles lightly, “Dude. Seriously?”

“Oh, you won’t regret this.” You squeeze her tighter.

Present Day

You’re caught in your thoughts as you watch your sister make you a cup of chamomile tea. She was always the sweetest soul. You think back to Bucky’s words in your temporary room, how he told you to stay the fuck away from her.

He had never used that kind of tone with you in his life. Just the replay of that moment has your eyes filling with tears again.

You watch as Ashlyn picks up her little Tiffany blue kettle and starts filling your mug with water. The steam flows up dramatically into the air and she hums.
“This is going to make you feel better in no time,” she motions her head to the paper bag next to your arm with a smile, “and the Chipotle I got you.”

You smile back, but it doesn’t reach your eyes. You place your feet close together on the feet rest of the barstool and lean the side of your face into your hand. Truth is, you hadn’t eaten Chipotle in five years. The memories make you sad, and you nod quickly as you swallow down the dryness in your throat.

Ashlyn notices the look on your face and she leans in closer to you, her arms leaning on the counter in front of you.

“Just give him some time, Y/N.”

You look up once more and try to smile again. Ashlyn wants to know so bad what happened between you two, you can see it in her eyes. And it fucking kills you.

She takes a deep breath and places the mug in front of you. She continues, “You know if you both just tell me what it is that made you dislike each other this much I could help you.”

You couldn’t. You click your tongue and say the same thing you’ve been telling her for five years, “I told you. We had a huge fight over something dumb. I don’t hate him but it’s hard to go back.”

You pick up the bug carefully with both hands and blow into the liquid. You knew it was still scorching, but you loved the way it warmed up your cold hands.

She watches your face intently and an idea hits her. She smiles slightly and pulls the mug out of your hands. You look at her even more confused when she takes your right hand in yours, pulling you around the counter.

“What are you doing?” You ask confused.

She smiles wide, “Dancing with my sister,” she looks slightly above your shoulder and says a little louder, “Alexa, play Fast Car by Tracy Chapman.”

The Alexa repeats back the command and the very familiar tune starts to play throughout the house.

At that moment you don’t know if you want to cry or laugh. Ashlyn smiles wide as she grabs your shoulders, caressing one of them lovingly.

“You remember we would always listen to this with dad? Especially on our trips up to Vermont?”

You feel tears once more and you wrap your arms around her.

“Of course.”

You feel her arm wrap around your shoulders and she rubs you back softly, “You’re my little sister. As much as I love you, I also love my husband. It’s very hard…”

Her voice breaks and you have to bare yourself as you take in a deep breath. She was crying softly into your arms as you swayed back and forth, “It’s very hard not seeing you get along.”

With her in your arms like that and the memories clouding your mind of how much she always took care of you, you promised that you would try. Try for her. Fuck Bucky. You would try to make it work, at least for her.
You cleared your throat and said in a stronger voice, “I promise.”

You both smiled and by the time the song was into its second chorus, you were both swaying a little harder and laughing out loud - just like old times.

Bucky stood by the doorway as he watched you laugh. Your sister spun you around, making the hem of your PJ top swirl around almost in slow motion because that’s how he felt that scene was unfolding. There you both were but all he could watch was you. You and that damn Chipotle bag on the counter.

He swallows down thickly, his eyes watering.

________

  I’m holdin’ on a rope
  Got me ten feet off the ground
  I’m hearing what you say
  But I just can’t make a sound
Lost In The Moment

Chapter Summary

We learn how the reader got hurt. and Y/N and Bucky's relationship is toxic as ever. Lots of cursing. Mentions of sex, cheating.

Chapter Notes

Firstly, I want to apologize for how long this chapter took. It was difficult with the holidays and then after New Years I got sick for about two weeks. So yeah. To make it up I wrote you all a 6k word chapter. I basically crammed two into one for you. I hope you enjoy it!

This may be the last sunset I'll see
So I'll take it in, I'll take it in
This may be the last air that I'll breathe
I'll breathe it in, I'll breathe it in

“Oh shit. Sorry.”

The apology catches you off guard. You were moping in a corner of the dark kitchen, and you thought you had been alone. Not only because of the dead silence and eeriness of the entire downstairs area but because it was two in the morning.

You jump up and turn around in your spot and you see Bucky standing there in the doorway.

His hair is disarray and he’s shirtless while his sweats lay low on his hips. One of the two jaw strings was tucked messily inside, the other hanging freely. His cheeks gave off a soft pink hue, the clear evidence of what he had been doing with your sister, all over his body.

His first instinct is to recoil in embarrassment, after all, he and Ashlyn had thought everyone was asleep and they weren’t necessarily quiet. Did you hear them? Is that why you were awake?

The embarrassment quickly dissipates when he notices your blood shut eyes and your messy hair. His arm drops off from the wall from where he had been looking for the light switch.

You quickly snap your face away from his direction and rub underneath your eyes and cheeks.

“Everything ok?”

You nod curtly as you turn your entire body away from him, tucking your hair behind your ear. God forbid if your sister’s own boyfriend saw you crying.

Life just had to kick you in the ass multiple times.

“You don’t look okay.”
It’s not like you could tell him exactly what was up with you. To start, you barely knew him, and second, no one is even supposed to know that you cry- it made you feel pathetic and absolutely small.

You were crying because it was two in the morning and anything that ever tormented your life to make you the emo soul that you are hit you worse after midnight. It’s rare for you to even lay in bed at such an hour and not shed a tear or two. Truth is, your life was always a struggle and you felt like you never got a break.

No relationship you’ve ever been in was a success. There was always something that got in the way - either he was a cheater, he didn’t love you back, he was too old for you, or there was someone he loved more.

That was exactly what happened with you and Eddie. Sure it was three years ago, but it left you completely shattered.

Up until you had met Eddie, your love life had already been a disgrace and you had lost almost all faith to even continue searching for Mr. Right. But when you met Eddie, you thought all that had changed. You had thought he was different, that he loved you and always would. You had let down those walls for him and finally allowed another man into your life once more. You worked hard in school and on your relationship with him - letting everyone else out- for your sake in making it work with him and setting up a potential foundation for a future life together.

But of course, that was all too good to be true. One day he told you that what he felt for you wasn’t love.

Hot and heavy tears ran down your face as you stood in the middle of his living room, a Walgreens gift bag in your hand. It was valentines day and you had gotten him a rare copy of one of his favorite childhood books. But he didn’t know that yet, as it laid in the plastic bag wrapped up in blue tissue paper.

You had sat crisscrossed in bed the night before wrapping it perfectly tight as you smiled to yourself, you were so happy at that moment in time.

Though, you had never felt betrayal and worthless as you did as this day right now.

His voice was heavy and sultry - God you hated it now - as he explained himself, refusing to take the gift. “Look, Y/N. I think you misread my intentions.” He reached out to take the bag from you, setting it on a nearby table. You stood there emotionless and empty, letting him take it from you.

Of course, that was all too good to be true. One day he told you that what he felt for you wasn’t love.

You swallow the knot in your throat. A chuckle escapes you, almost sinisterly. Eddie frowns.

“I appreciate the gesture, I do. But,” he looked at you in pity. Or maybe it was remorse. After all, he did know about your past and your other failed relationships. Just the phrase that he used to describe your gift for him - gesture- made you fall into a pit of blackness. He knew about you and all your insecurities and he had the audacity to just throw that all away, “but you’re not my girlfriend.”

You swallow the knot in your throat. A chuckle escapes you, almost sinisterly. Eddie frowns.

“You should’ve known. After all, that’s what I’m good at right? Misreading intentions.”

You look up at him finally and he looks away immediately like a coward, almost caving into
himself as he tried to look at anywhere but you. He knew you were right.

You grow angrier at this.

“Right? So you know what. Take the stupid shit that’s in the bag and take everything else that I’ve given you. My body, my secrets, and my fucking dignity.”

“Y/N, you’re perfect, just not my type as a girlfriend—“

You wanted to end your life then. Three years of your life he had wasted. You lost friends to spend time with him, you sacrificed time, your virginity. You didn’t even want to question it anymore, you just wanted to get out of there as soon as possible and never want to look at him or any other boy ever again.

Suddenly, you were numb to pain. You walked past him and towards his front door. You felt him grab your arm.

“Please.”

“Let go of me, Eddie. Just keep the book and let me go.”

And he did. You had practically run into your car and slammed your door shut in aggravation. You couldn’t believe that it had happened again. You threw your forehead against the steering wheel and began to wail, the pain cutting you from within your heart.

At the moment int your life you vowed to yourself that you would let no one in ever again. You couldn’t commit anymore. True love just wasn’t for you, like Eddie said, you weren’t girlfriend material. You were fucking material and that’s all you were good for. You were worthless.

During the day, the reminder that you were worthless didn’t really kill you so much. At times, you even forgot about it. But it was at night when you would get hit with the overwhelming emotions, that reminder that you were alone. And you felt so alone.

You and your sister had taken the Amtrak train to The Hamptons and the whole ride there she was talking about Bucky and his friends and how sweet they were. You could see in her eyes how excited she was for you to finally be out and that she was trying to remind you how loved you really are. She knew how you felt about yourself, especially Eddie, and she had grown extremely worried about you.

It didn’t help that you didn’t have a mother figure and she knew that, but she was feeling excited already. Ashlyn knew that even though you had self-esteem issues now, that you have started to at least put minimal effort - not none - to move on to better things. So the fact that you were going away to meet potential new friends was amazing in her book and great progress.

When the train had been about ten minutes from the station, you were leaning your forehead against the glass. The soft trickles of sun rain scattered its surface and a bit of the ray of light managed to peak through one of the clouds in the blue sky and make you warm inside. You grew anxiously as your leg bounced up and down in your seat.

You looked at the beautiful scenery of the million-dollar homes out in the horizon. This was definitely going to be different than what you were used to.

You heard Ashlyn tell Bucky that they would be arriving soon and you grew nervous.

This was it. This was the new beginning and you wished that everyone would be nice. After all,
you were sensitive behind your new grown tough shell and demeanor.

When you and Ashlyn had gotten off the train, you both walked towards where Bucky said he would be standing to wait. You pulled your grey suitcase behind you as you looked around the station and the people. You lost count of the number of boys you saw wearing polos and sailor shoes.

“I feel like I’m in white people central.”

Ashlyn snapped her head over to you and gave you a stern look, “Be nice.”

You rolled your eyes and smiled a bit, “I just hope they don’t all play golf or something.”

“Oh! There he is!”

You followed Ashlyn suit towards the exit. Through the glass, you could see Bucky standing by the door on the outside, looking around, his hands in his pants pocket.

“Bucky!” Ashlyn screamed not even having made it yet outside. You cringed inwardly, looking around and seeing people glaring.

Bucky clearly didn’t find that obnoxious, though, as he snapped his head around and smiled really wide.

His eyes crinkled at the sides and for some reason, you were kinda glad he wasn’t dressed like a classic frat boy. He wore a regular grey t-shirt and nice jeans with worn-out boots.

Ashlyn ran into Bucky’s arms as he wrapped himself around her spinning her around slightly, “I’m so glad you made it.” He nuzzled his face into the side of her hair by her neck and kissed her there lovingly. You tried not to gag, it was all so lovey-dovey.

No way any man could actually feel so happy, so quickly and so confidently, about another girl, right?

But then you felt sad again because you remembered it was your sister. Things only don’t work out for you. Oh, how you missed being in someone's arms like that.

You smiled sadly as you looked down at your suitcase, allowing your sister and her boyfriend to enjoy their moment.

“Bucky, you know Y/N.”

Bucky looked up from your sister’s face, where he had been lovingly staring, and then at you. He smiled and it reached his eyes. With his one arm that wasn’t around Ashlyn, he stretched out to shake your hand.

“Of course. Chipotle girl.”

You were stunned by the gentleman gesture of his hand. You took his hand and shook it and smiled.

“That’s me.”

Bucky let go of your hand and squeezed Ashlyn tighter against his side.

“Alright, why don’t you guys get in and I’ll put your stuff in the trunk. It should be a 25-minute
drive to the house. Everyone is already waiting.”

You looked over to the left to see a black S-class Mercedes, and then back at Ashlyn with eyebrows raised.

She had the same look on her face and just shrugged with a smile. You shook your head to yourself also smiling at how insane this all was. She got into the passenger side and you carefully sat in the back. You were so scared to even leave a scratch on it. This car was worth more than your tuition and car combined.

“Dude, this is nuts.”

You let out a nervous breath through your nostrils as you crossed your hands in your lap. You eyed your skinny blue jeans from old navy and your dingy flats that you always wear. You felt uncomfortable all of a sudden.

You felt the trunk close down and then Bucky got into the driver's seat.

You looked up at him and saw him smile over at Ashlyn and take her hand in his.

“Y’all ready?”

You couldn’t say no, but no you weren’t.

“Hell, yea.” Your sister exclaimed with a laugh, “Do you know how long I’ve been wanting to take a vacation?” Bucky laughed.

The rest of the ride they talked and you allowed them to as you sulked in the back, looking at the scenery. It wasn’t long before Bucky picked up on your silence and kept eyeing you through his rearview mirror.

“She always this quiet?” You heard him ask your sister in a whisper, barely over the music.

He didn’t think you heard so he was caught off guard when your eyes suddenly snapped to his. He looked away quickly.

God, you hated when people talked about you in the third person.

“She’s fine, it’s just been a while since she’s been out and about.”

“Yeah, I’m fine.” You answer curtly, hoping to give off a confident attitude, but instead, it comes off nasty and you are sure of this when Ashlyn give you a slightly dirty look in the side mirror.

The rest of the ride Bucky and Ashlyn talk about things that make them laugh and they share flirtatious looks and hand squeezes. You roll your eyes without meaning to.

It’s not that you were grossed out per se, but you just didn’t get it. How do some girls find this kind of love so easily and yet for you it’s so damn difficult to even get an “I like you” back? Also, this whole rich boy attitude Bucky was giving out did not seem genuine to you in the slightest.

Does a rich new york city boy just happen to find an upstate-middle-class-girl to be girlfriend material?

You watched way too much Gossip Girl to buy any of this. Something was up, it had to be.

You’re now in some rich people town because you see a golf club to your right and mansions
both sides. You see houses with lawns - big ass lawns- and you also see range rovers being driven by happy soccer moms who love cutting people off.

Suddenly, the car makes a left and you’re driving down what you thought was a street but was actually the driveway to a house.

It was huge.

It was white, about three stories high, and there were white columns circling it’s front and more cars parked around a fountain that laid right in the front.

The car pulls around right at that spot at the entrance and Bucky turns off the car.

“Allright, you guys ready to meet everyone?”

no.

Everyone gets out and you stand there, absolutely distraught, as you look up at the house in front of you. You hear distinct music thumping and the splashing of water.

Bucky pops open the truck and Ashlyn goes to his side, “I can get it,” Ashlyn insists.

“Baby, don’t worry about it. I’ll carry them both in, you guys just have to worry about having a good time.”

Ashlyn kisses him on the cheek.

“Buck!” You and your sister snap your eyes to where the voice came from and you see a gorgeous man with piercing eyes. You recognized him immediately from your Chipotle encounter.

“Hey, man.” Bucky greets, shutting the trunk closed. Both suitcases were already on his side.

The gorgeous man, that you remember as Steve, walks down the long steps to greet you and Ashlyn.

“Hey, I’m Steve. Nice to meet you guys.”

“Hi, I’m Ashlyn.”

“Why of course, I damn well know who you are, you’re all Buck talks about. Pleased to finally meet you.”

You notice Steve and Ashlyn’s first meeting to be nothing more or less than a genuinely friendly greeting. Maybe these people weren’t what you assumed.

Steve turns to you, “I recognize you from the other day, but I didn’t get your name I’m sorry,” he smiles shyly, a small red tint of his cheeks,

You smile back, surprised at his character, “Y/N.”

“Pleased to meet you, Y/N.” He smiles again.

You hear Bucky clear his throat, “Steve, you wanna take Y/N inside and show her around?”

“Yeah, sure.” You feel a hand on your back and Ashlyn shoots you a confident and friendly smile.
When you’re both inside, Steve takes you into the foyer. The air-conditioned air feels fantastic on your skin. The home was breathtaking and Steve smiles at your reaction. You look away embarrassed, “Sorry, I’m not used to this.”

“I understand,” he walks into the living room and points to the left, “that’s the TV right there if you ever feel antisocial,” he points to the right, “that’s the kitchen when you get the munchies in the middle of the night.”

You look out the glass window and you see a large pool and then you see people.

You feel your face contort.

“Hey,” suddenly Steve’s voice is softer. He pulls you from your trance and his face looks concerned. He’s not sure what to say so he thinks for a second before speaking again. He reads you well, “Bucky told me you were younger than us,” you raise a brow, “but you don’t have to feel weird. We’re all friends here.”

You know that. You nod slightly and fidget with your hands, “Thanks.”

“Maybe you’ll feel better if I just introduce you to everyone first.”

And he does. You meet Natasha (but everyone calls her Nat). You’re immediately intimated by her because she’s gorgeous, so gorgeous you’d probably go lesbian for a night for her, but she ends up being the kindest soul. She offers you to come to her whenever you need anything or when you need to know where anything is.

Next, you meet Sam. He’s just as sweet, if not, sweeter than Steve. Except he’s a bit sarcastic and comes off very strong when he offers to rub sunscreen on you later. But after Steve shoves him on the shoulder with a laugh and Sam smiles wide too, you see that that’s just how he is and he means no harm in it. It even makes you smile too and you tell him “ok” to which Steve looks shocked and Sam just laughs.

“See? I knew she’d like that.”

Next, you meet recently engaged Peter and Gamora and they are downright adorable. Sure, they’re much older, but for some reason, you find comfort after you meet them.

It surprises you how none of the people here are coming off to you as spoiled or dumb.

“That’s Parker,” Steve points out a younger kid towards the back by the grill, “and that’s Thor giving him a hot dog.”

Steve smiles over your shoulder and you feel a hand on it, “Hey! Did you meet everyone?”

You spin around to see your sister. Now you were feeling more comfortable and more like yourself than you did when you first arrived.

“Yeah! They seem cool.” you smile, “Sam seems like an idiot but everyone else is not that bad.”

You hear a laugh and it’s Bucky coming up behind Ashlyn. He wraps his arm around her waist, “Yeah Sam is an idiot. I’m glad you agree.”

Bucky looks over at the water.

“Y’all going in or what?”
You end up having a surprisingly great time for your first afternoon with your new friends. Who you didn’t expect to get the most along with was Nat, but you did.

After the pool party, everyone decided to burn some wood in the fire pit.

Sam and Steve are burning marshmallows, Nat is cross-legged as she skims through her phone, and Ashlyn sits in Bucky’s lap.

You feel a nudge on your left arm and you see that it’s Steve giving you the stick with the marshmallow.

You shake your head, “Nah, it’s okay I’m not hungry anymore. I had way too many cheeseburgers.”

Steve’s face falls, “Okay. I had made it for you.”

He looks sad and you regret telling him no. You snatch the stick out of his hand once he’s turned away, “Fine!” You exclaim, stuffing the marshmallow in your mouth.

Everyone laughs, and Nat stares at you impressed, a faint smile on the side of her lips.

“Speaking of Cheeseburgers, I swear I saw you swallow down at least like five of those,” Bucky accuses with a teasing tone.

“I told you, she eats like crazy.” Ashlyn chuckled in his lap.

“Yeah, but like where does it go? A little girl like you.”

“Stop teasing her.” Steve insists.

That’s the second time Bucky's referenced you like that since you’ve met and you have to ask. You take a moment, swallowing all of the marshmallows.

“Why do you keep calling me that?”

Bucky raises a brow, surprised by how upfront your question is.

“Because you’re, you know, really small.”

You weren’t like your sister, curvy in just the right spots, you weren’t tall. You were five two and looked like an eighteen-year-old. You wait till the remnants of the marshmallow are gone and you excuse yourself for a drink from the kitchen.

You’re grabbing a coke from the fridge minding your own business, seriously considering telling everyone you’re gonna shower and get to bed when you hear the door to the backyard close again. You look over to the right side of the island and see Nat.

She smiles softly.

“Hey.”

“Hey, Nat.” She’s sitting on the stool, smiling at you knowingly.

“No offense but you’re kinda creeping me out.”

She chuckles, “Sorry, it’s just I think Steve really likes you.”
You practically choke on your drink, coughing sporadically as you set your can down.

“What?”

Steve was hot, dreamy, almost superhero-like, and probably one of the sweetest souls you’ve ever met. No way he could be interested in you, and even if he was there was no way you could go there, it’s not why you came on this trip.

“I can just tell. Plus, Steve isn’t the kind to go after girls who are superficial, I think there’s something about you that he really likes.”

You consider her words and at first, you’re overwhelmingly flattered, especially if she was right. But yet again this couldn’t happen.

You cross your arms over the counter and sigh, “Even if you're right, it’s not why I came. I’m trying to be happy again, not to meet some guy.”

Nat nods, “Yeah, I totally get that, no pressure. I just wanted to let you know because you seem like a great girl and he clearly sees that.”

You smile, “Thanks, Nat.”

And you would think that conversation would make you feel better about yourself but it does the exact opposite. When everyone goes to bed that night, you’re still up trying to fall asleep. You start thinking about how happy Ashlyn is, you see how gorgeous Nat is and you think about your past relationships and Eddie and that stupid damn book you bought him.

Suddenly, your pillow is covered in tears and you sob into your pillowcase.

You didn’t want to date anytime soon and you were afraid of falling in love. Because what if he only loved you so much and not enough? Not just thinking about Steve, but anyone.

You sit up once your sobbing stops, but tears still leak out. You leave your bedroom, careful to not make too much noise to wake anyone, tiptoeing, and walk downstairs to the kitchen.

You needed a beer.

Just the thought that only alcohol could make you feel better makes you cry again and you wipe your tears on the end of your sleeve.

And that’s how Bucky found you.

“You don’t look okay.”

You hear his bare feet walking across the floor towards you and he turns the light on.

“No, keep them off.”

He doesn’t say anything but obeys you, turning them back off.

“You’re crying.”

You roll your eyes.
“Yeah. Never seen a girl cry before? I’m sure you haven’t, everyone in your life seems oh so happy with their Mercedes and their Rolex watches.”

Bucky’s quiet and you peak up at him. Hurt flashes across his face for a second.

It’s not that you were a bitch, but it was two in the morning and you were overbearingly emotional right now. You would snap at a tomato if you wanted to.

Bucky pulls his sweats a little tighter at the strings, feeling exposed and embarrassed.

“I’m sorry if I in any way made you feel uncomfortable. If it’s the little thing comment, I swear I’ll stop.”

A look of confusion comes across your face. That’s what he thought you were crying about?

“I just can’t help it, you eat so much shit and you’re so,” he looks over you once with a really intense concentrated face (almost like he was solving a math equation), “small.”

You roll your eyes, “Where’s the beer?”

Bucky is quiet for a second, confused, and then says, “In the fridge, bottom shelf.”

You take one for yourself and then hesitate for a moment before grabbing another. You close the fridge door and stretch out your hand handing him the drink.

He looks at you and then taking it, “Thanks.”

He takes this as a permission to sit on the stool across from you. You’re opening shelves and cabinets attached to the island and it takes him a moment to realize what you’re looking for.

“Far-left drawer.”

You open it as told and you find the bottle opener. Without a care in the world, you snap open your bottle and then you hand over the opener for him to do the same.

You both stand there for a good five minutes in comfortable silence before you run your hand through your hair, sadness numbed by the alcohol.

“I wasn’t crying over your comment.”

Bucky realizes that you’re about to open up to him and he starts playing with the condensation on the beer glass, “Okay. I’ll bite. Why were you crying?”

“A bunch of shit, really. But it mostly has to do with my Ex, to sum up.”

“Oh.” Bucky’s eyebrows furrow, “I’m sorry. Ex’s can be tough when things end badly.”

The alcohol enters your system once more after another swing and you snap, “Actually no,” Bucky jumps up a bit surprised by your outburst, “if we’re being honest, he wasn’t even my ex. He wasn’t even my boyfriend.” You drag a stool onto your side and sit down across from him, “I was his fuck buddy for three years, but during that entire time I thought we were dating but he doesn’t let me know until three years later that he could care less about me.”

Bucky looks shocked, a mixture of your situation, and also that you just cursed in front of him. He was honestly at lost for words. But he understood partially why you were a wreck right now.
“I’m sorry.”

You roll your eyes again.

“Yep, that’s what everyone says. You know sometimes, that’s not enough.” You take another swing.

Bucky does the same, “Look, I don’t want to come off cold, but sometimes that’s the only thing that can be said.”

You don’t like that answer, at all. He knows you don’t by the reaction on your face, kind of like you want to break the beer bottle against the counter and stab him with the shard.

“I’m just saying, from a guy’s point of view, sometimes I’m sorry it’s all we can say. You can’t choose who you love. If a guy fucks you with no feelings attached, I do agree that he should make that settled from the get-go and not let it go on, but if he’s not showing any romantic interest in you and decided he doesn’t want to be with you, it’s not his choice.”

You ponder that for a second. And surprisingly, it makes sense. He’s right.

“I guess the problem is that no one wants me romantically.”

“I think you’re afraid.” You look away from him and at your hands, “There will always be someone who loves you for you and not for sex, you just need to not be afraid to find that still. Trust me. It will happen to you.”

Maybe Bucky was right, you think. Maybe you need to let someone in, and by that let them get to know you not your lady parts.

“I’m not just saying this because you’re my girlfriend’s little sister, but trust me. Some day, someone will love you for you.”

You finish the last bit of your beer. You lay your glass down and then tip your head to the side at him. He looks back at you, questionably.

“And did that happen for you?”

- 

**Present Day**

You had a great day with your sister, she was honestly one of the best people in your life right now.

But all you could think about was how you promised her that you would make things work as much as possible between you and Bucky for her sake. When she had started crying in your arms that had done it for you.

You had to leave the past behind, no matter how much it hurt. No matter how different you wished things happened, you had to stop. He had to stop. He used to be one of the strongest and smartest men in your life and he was treating you awfully.

You had to speak to him - you did.

When he had gotten home that afternoon, he had avoided you like the plague and you did the same until you gathered your thoughts on how to go about the situation. He had quickly gone to his home office to catch up on work while Ashlyn cooked dinner and you helped out. When Bucky
refused to join you two, you realized this would be harder than you thought.

Hours later you found yourself cooped up in your guest room, job searching on your laptop. Honestly, you weren’t even exactly sure what it was you were searching for.

You heard Bucky and Ashlyn arguing in the background and you tried to drown it out as much as possible, plugging an earbud in.

A few minutes later after they stopped, there was a knock on your door.

Your head snaps up and you wonder who it is, a weird feeling of fear in your gut. You push your laptop away from you and get up to open the door.

You’re surprised to see Bucky on the other side, a nasty look on his face. He looked angry and you swallow down nervously.

He steps up to you and you take a step back, surprised.

You realize he did that so he can close the door behind them and so Ashlyn wouldn’t hear.

“I told you to stay away from her.” He’s whispering fiercely. The little dance show in the kitchen had left him distraught. “the last thing I need from you is for you to ruin my relationship with my wife by your mere presence.”

You recoil back in hurt, eyes suddenly darting to the floor.

He hates this, hates that you can’t even look at him.

“Look at me, Y/N.”

The words leave you breathless as a strong memory shakes you. It’s the same ones he said to you that night but under a completely different circumstance.

You feel yourself start to shake. Slowly, and with uncertainty, you look up at him.

You’ve never seen him like this- so angry. His eyes are hard and furious, his posture broad and confident.

“The moment you walked into this building, everything has been falling apart, and she can’t know why. Every second of every day you spend more time with her, she is closer to knowing.”

A thought enters your mind. You knew Bucky, you knew that he always liked to appear powerful and domineering, but deep inside he was a big Labrador. You knew just how to make things look like you two were at least talking to make your sister happier. You had to one-up him.

With a confidence that you had lost the moment you saw him, you regained it in a millisecond, and you stood up taller on your feet.

You took a step towards him.

You saw his own confidence falter for just a second and yours grew.

“She’s my sister, she comes first in my life before you. So I’m going to do as she asked. I think that we can at least pretend to be civil in front of her for her sakes don’t you think? I’m assuming she thinks you’re right here in my room right now to try and patch things up? Is that what you told her? “no worries baby I’ll try to talk to her”?”
He looks away from you, his nostrils flaring up, “Little does she know that you’re trying to push me away, doing the exact opposite of what you’re telling her. You’re trying to hide something that you know will destroy her life. You don’t even care that you’re lying straight to her damn face.”

“Fuck you.” He looks back up at you, his blue eyes digging themselves into your own. He meant those two words and it hurt you to the core. It hurt so much.

Your eyes start tearing up again but you don’t stop, “You know I hold so much more power in her life than yours. You know that I could destroy you with one sentence, there’s no consequence for me except my sister’s love. You would lose everything, so you’re afraid. Instead of owning up and being responsible and tell her the truth you run away. You’re a pussy, Barnes.” You take another step up to him. But he doesn’t budge - not him with his stupid overconfidence and reputation.

“You’re an awful husband.”

That does it for him. He’s pushing you up against the glass window, a pointer finger jammed into your chest. He’s breathing hard and so are you. Except that his isn’t out of anger anymore, he looks like he’s trying not to cry.

“I love,” he voice breaks embarrassingly so. He takes a deep breath as he examines your face, trying to control his emotions, “I love my wife. Fuck you,” His voice falters into a whimper, “I love her. I love her.”

You feel your lips shaking and you don’t know why those words hurt. They shouldn’t, but they do.

You look down at his finger because you can’t stand to see the wetness in his eyes.

“She’s my baby, you get that?” You swallow hard, a burning sensation growing in your throat, “huh?!” He jams the finger a bit harder into you and a sob escapes you, but not from physical pain, “She is my wife, and I don’t want one stupid meaningless night to get in the way of that. Clearly, it was a mistake.”

You open your eyes that you hadn’t even realized you had closed and a few tears fall onto your cheeks.

How many times will he tell you to fuck off? You never thought he’d ever say such a thing to you, ever.

“You’re nothing like the man I used to know.” You say through clenched teeth.

“Well, guess what. You kind of ruined that the moment you said those three goddamn words.”

You freeze. You know exactly the words he’s talking about and when you had said them. But the fact that he’s using that moment and those words to treat you the way he now makes you scared and feel so small.

You had meant it when you said them and you were in a vulnerable state of intense pleasure. The stupid pussy won’t even admit it that he had said them back, too.

You take a deep breath and snarl, “Get off of me.” He does and suddenly you can breathe again. You’re breathing hard against the glass and he watches you, his own face still quite mad, but that moment of sadness is quickly gone.

You look away and look towards the other side of the wall, thinking intensely. This was toxic. This was a mess.
You look back at him and you see that his confidence has dissipated and if it’s any emotion he’s holding onto now it’s exhaustion. He sits down on your bed, completely numb, staring at the corner of your floor.

“For my sister, I will act around you like everything is okay again. And I’ll keep quiet about it. But just know it won’t make you a better man.”

“You think I don’t know that?” He snaps. He takes a deep breath and runs a hand over his face.

He decided then and there that he would follow up with your plan. They would have to at least act like they’re okay in front of Ashlyn, even though secretly they were toxic.

“Okay. For Ashlyn.”

It was always for her.

*I know that you got a lot on your plate
You keep telling me I should get out of your way
But I can't see how you gon' lie to my face
Don't tell me you fine 'cause I know that you not so don't even try*
Chapter Summary

Ready for the ride? We start at the beginning. We learn more about Bucky. and, huh? Nat? Bucky asks Ashlyn a very important question.

Chapter Notes

This was a tricky chapter. In fact, I re-wrote it twice and changed my mind with how I wanted to do it and totally erased the whole thing and started from scratch. The transition was difficult and I wanted to make it as direct to the point as possible.

And here's to the nights
We felt alive
Here's to the tears
You knew you'd cry

Montauk, NY 7 years earlier

The trip lasted for about two more days, and it ended up being a complete blast. The day after the pool party, you had all woken up bright and early. You remember waking up and cringing as the bright sun peeked from behind the curtains in your guest bedroom. You winced and cursed. You had a slight headache from last night.

You hated being a damn lightweight. Just one sip and you already knew the next morning a dumb migraine would follow you around.

Thankfully, after a cup of coffee and an Advil, it began to go away. Everyone gathered around the kitchen island as they all decided what they’d do for the day for fun. Once it was settled, you made your way out into town.
The town was pretty, it had its handmade stone laid streets and it was clean. Vintage light posts lined the streets, and even though it was day time they remained on, illuminating and, creating a calm and romantic glow. Couples walked down the sidewalk hand and hand. Some of them had kids who they would push in their expensive strollers.

Some were tourists, some were here for the summer, and some were leaving their beach homes for a walk into town for some fresh air and good breakfast.

You walked alongside Nat and Sam while Steve, Bucky, and Ashlyn kept stopping to look at some antiques through the windows. Your group insisted to walk into the stores instead of just looking from the outside.

You strolled into the touristy gift shops and felt inclined to buy a white sweatshirt that said Montauk on it.

Next, you went to breakfast at a little five-star corner restaurant that barely fit all six of you around a corner table. It was fantastic. At one point, the syrup had practically sprayed out of your nose after Nat said something offensive about Sam.

Sam snarled in annoyance and Bucky and Ashlyn threw their head back in chuckles. Meanwhile, Nat and Steve made you laugh even more.

You were honestly having the time of your life. You didn’t expect to feel so comfortable so quickly and you couldn’t be more thankful to have actually made such good friends.

Eventually, the sun had begun to set - the sky was turning into a dark blue with specks of purple and pink.

You were all walking down Main St to go to a gorgeous restaurant Ashlyn had found on yelp when you felt a slight nudge on your arm. If you had been daydreaming, you almost wouldn’t have felt it.

You looked over to your left to see Steve smirking down at you. His blue eyes (did they have green in them? Jesus H. christ.) sparkled and his pure white smile made you feel funny inside. His sincerity was overbearing.

The way he looked at you reminded you of what Nat had told you yesterday in the kitchen and you felt a deep blush make its way up to your neck. You snapped your head and cleared your throat, trying not to smile.

It was nice to experience something for once that wasn’t depression or fear. In that instance, you felt total happiness. It was a nice change from your everyday routine. And while you constantly felt Steve’s eyes on you, he obviously hadn’t looked away even though you did.

You felt that tug that made you want to have a conversation, but you maintained your distance because that’s not what you wanted- not yet.

Sure, the circumstances around you made you want that, but your heart could be deceiving. You had to use your brain, and right now what your brain told you was that you had to take things one step at a time. Right now, the only first step you were truly worried about was making friends. So you simply smiled and allowed your hair to fall onto the left side of your face, trying to hide your blushing profile as much as possible.

Steve understood immediately and looked away slightly embarrassed. Friendship was nice. It had a
nice ring to it.

Before you and Ashlyn had left that Sunday night, you made sure to take everyone’s number - even Steves’. He was surprised at first but knew that this was because you thought of him as a friend. So, of course, he didn’t overthink it and gladly gave it to you with a bright platonic smile.

You would all keep in touch. You were definitely looking forward to finding out more about these new people because something told you in your gut that there was more to them then what they looked to be; you were looking forward to it.

Your conversation with Bucky that Friday night showed you just that.

“So what did you think?”

Ashlyn had asked you breathlessly after you both struggled for about two minutes to get your luggage onto the luggage rack above the seats.

You smiled and leaned your head against the cold glass. “They’re all really sweet, Ash. Bucky seems great for you.” You can see her little smile in your peripheral, “I can tell why you both like each other so much.”

And you were telling the truth, even though he came off like a total rich boy, he seemed to have qualities that resembled that of Ashlyn.

“You know,” She started softly. That got your attention and you looked over to see her staring at you, her eyes glossed over, “I still remember the first time we met. I was actually in the city running some errands and I was wearing this dumb hat, my lame attempt at trying to be fashionable on a weekend out, and it was really windy.” You watched her eyebrows knit together as that day played over in her mind. You hadn’t heard this story and you were quickly interested, “I kid you not, my hat flew across the street onto fifth and suddenly it was gone. I was so confused because how does one just lose a hat like that, right?” She chuckles, almost in disbelief, “I walked all the way down a block until I was on 42nd and there was a guy there. He looked good. Like really good.”

Her smile grew wide and you smiled back. The story was delicate and something out of a very tale.

“And then he invited me out for some coffee and we went. He’s the sweetest man I’ve ever met. Y/N.”

The way she says it, almost too seriously, makes you gulp. This wasn’t just your sister bragging about some cute guy anymore, this was about a man she really truly cared about.

She clears her throat and looked down. At that moment she reminded you slightly of your mom. Oh, how you missed your momma.

“I know I’ve only known him for a couple of weeks, but is it crazy to say I see myself spending the rest of my life with him?”

All this considered, normally you would’ve said yes, but for some reason, this felt legit. Just the weekend you all spent together proved that. You took her hand in yours and caressed the back of it comfortably.

“Not at all, Ash. I guess that’s just how it is for some people. Like look at Kelly, she and her boy went out for what? Five months? And then they already got engaged. It’s just like that for some people.”
You both sat there in silence for a bit, just thinking. You optimistically were thinking about how your life was changing for the best while Ashlyn’s thoughts were on her future with Bucky.

He loved her and you could tell. If Bucky knew about what happened with your family and still went to the extent that he did this weekend for Ashlyn and you, you were certain that he cared deeply.

“Dude. I can see the way he looks at you.”

Barnes Enterprises, New York, NY

That following Monday in the city was dark, rainy, and cold. Businessmen ran into their offices with their suits covered in wet droplets and the women held on tightly to their umbrellas as the wind picked up. On the fifth, Barnes enterprises stood proudly in the middle of the city, the companies name big and prestigious for everyone to see.

At the reception desk sat a young girl with short black hair who typed away on her computer with her freshly done gel nails. From her right, a redhead walked by, speed walking as she looked through the papers on her clipboard. Her grey suit hugged her in just the right spots. The men who worked there knew her well, but still couldn’t help but look every time.

The black-haired girl looked up from her desk just for a second to greet her, “Morning, miss Romanoff.”

“Charlie.” Nat greeted back as she flipped another one of the sheets over.

Nat had just pressed the down button on her elevator when someone came to stand beside her. She looked over and smirked.

She felt him lean over her shoulder and look at her clipboard.

“He’s meeting with Stark?”

Nat looked up at Bucky, “Well, you know your father. He never quits.”

Bucky shook his head with a slight smile. The elevator beeps as the door opens and they both step in.

Nat looks him up and down as he presses the number 78. He narrows his eyes at her, “What?”
“You work for one of the richest men in the city and yet you still show up in a plaid shirt and jeans.”

Bucky rolls his eyes as the doors close.

“I didn’t have time to change.”

“It’s 8 in the morning, where the hell were you coming from?” Bucky says nothing and Nat knows he’s lying. She rolls her eyes and drops the conversation, after all, they’ve had it at least a hundred times already.

The elevator continues to zoom on up when Nat speaks again, “It was a nice weekend. I had a good time.”

A big smile came over his face as he bites his bottom lip, “It really was.” He sticks his hands into his front pockets and Nat smirks knowingly.

“You’re serious about her, huh?” Bucky blushes, kicking the elevator floor with his boot. “Don’t act like I don’t know. The only other girl you’ve ever taken to one of our Hampton “pool parties” was me back in college. But we had been dating for five months, you and Ashlyn have hardly been together that long and you took her. And we all know why.”

Bucky looks over at Nat, a look on his face that he knew he couldn’t hide. Nat just continued to smile.

“Nat.”

Nat hugged her clipboard tight to her chest. “You love her. I’m happy for you.”

Bucky caves in and lets out a loud sigh as he runs a hand through his hair, “She’s amazing. Ever since I first laid my eyes on her I just had a feeling that she would change my life forever.”

“I’m happy for you. You deserve it after what you went through.”

“Thanks, Nat.”

Nat takes in a deep breath and lets out a long “So…”

Bucky raises a brow at her.

“How about Steve and her sister, huh? Come on they are so cute together.”

Bucky chuckles deep in his chest, “Yeah I guess. He did say he thinks she’s really cute. But I don’t know, she seems too feisty for him. Kinda like a piranha.”

“The hell?” Nat laughs out loud.

“I’m serious. Like I’m kinda scared of her. She’s a lot different than Ashlyn. Ashlyn’s vanilla, rainbows, and a box of puppies.”

“And Y/N?”

Bucky thinks for a moment, “I mean, I guess she could be a box of puppies, but definitely not golden retrievers. Maybe Chihuahuas.”

“I don’t know, she seems like she just really needs a friend right now. I like her a lot, actually.”
Bucky fakes gasps and puts a hand up to his chest dramatically as he threw his head back, “Oh, my god. Are you a lesbian?”

“Shut up, Barnes.”

They both step out together and say their goodbyes. Nat heads off to her side of the floor as Bucky continues on straight. Another girl - named Vanessa- with a really short skirt and double D boobs in a slightly unbuttoned white dress shirt greats him. Bucky says hello back, trying not to cringe at her whore-ness. He still couldn’t understand why his father would allow such an inappropriate dress code.

Actually, scratch that, he knew why.

Bucky arrives at the end of the hallway in front of two large doors and he knocks nonchalantly. With his other hand, he skims through his phone, looking for Steve’s name. He just found it when he hears a strong “come in”.

Bucky opens the door and steps into the large office. The curtains were all open giving them a 180-degree view of the entire city. Even in its ugly days it was still spectacular.

The man sat at the mahogany desk all the way towards the right, leaning back in his leather two thousand dollar chair, twirling a pen in his right hand.

The older man glared at him as he saw him only interested in the phone in his hand.

“Hey, dad.” Bucky mutters, walkings towards his desk.

His father continues to stare at him disapprovingly. He was an older man, in his 50s but still put together. An early grey fox at his finest. No wonder the women here were all eye candy for him.

“Have a seat, son.”

Bucky blindly looks for the chair in front of the desk and sits down on it. He’s typing out the iMessage and he hears his father clear his throat.

“Sorry, I just gotta tell Steve something.” His father sighs in aggravation as he throws his crossed hands onto the desk in front of him. There’s silence and then the sound of the swoosh of the message being sent. Bucky tucks his phone into his pocket and looks up at his father.

He doesn’t look too happy.

“What’s up, dad?”

His father examines him and then takes a deep breath, “I need you to be taking this business a little more seriously.” Bucky bites the inside of his cheek, “I know you’re more like your mother - god she was so damn relaxed all the damn time - but eventually, I’m going to need you to be more like me.”

“Wow, Dad. I almost felt mom just turn over in her grave just now.”

“Is this a joke to you, James?” His father snarls. Bucky avoids contact, realizing he went too far with that comment. It was just that this whole business thing always drove him mad. It wasn’t who he was meant to be. He just wasn’t his father. But he was still his father.

Mr. Barnes realizes that Bucky regrets his words as he sulks down in his seat. He drops his head
back down and sighs.

“Look, I know it was even harder for you after you came back from Afghanistan and your injury-”

At this, Bucky rolls his eyes and shifts in his seat, “Seriously, dad?”

-“but it looked good in the press.”

Bucky turns slightly red at this and his voice raises, “I didn’t do it for the press. I wanted to save lives.”

“I understand, why it’s why you need to start changing. You’re not twenty-one anymore. People are looking now.”

“What are you saying? That I need to turn into the next Christian Grey?”

“You’re dressed like a child, Bucky. You’re always on your damn phone and you refuse to come to any work meetings.”

Bucky rolls his eyes again.

“My illness is taking a toll on me, more than we thought,”

Bucky freezes at this as his face drops even further. He peaks up at his father, his eyes dark, “What? I thought you were getting better. You went into remission. Look, if this is another sick way of you trying to get me to be this CEO person you so want me to be-“

“It came back. Just found out this morning.”

Bucky is frozen at the words. He couldn’t believe it, all this time he thought his father was indestructible. After months of chemo and hospitals visits and finally beating it, it was back.

Sitting right there in front of his father’s sunken eyes he could tell just how desperate he really was.

“And one day soon I will no longer be here.”

“Dad-“

Bucky’s voice was soft, sad.

“I’m going to need someone to take on the Barnes name.”

For the first time in his life, Bucky actually considers it. He sits there in silence as he takes everything in. He’s heard of stories of how when people usually get diagnosed again after remission, the chances of survival become really slim. He looks around the office, around the city.

As much as he didn’t like the idea of it, he did love his father.

“What do you need me to do? I told you, I’m not a republican.”

Mr. Barnes chuckles. It was a mixture of humor and relief. “That’s fine. I will not pressure you on that. Not yet. But first, you need to stop being so damn sensitive, next get rid of that damn car-“

Bucky frowns, triggered.

“What’s wrong with my car?”
“It’s old, James. It’s all rusted, it makes weird sounds. David said he went to go move it the other day so we could use the parking spot and the damn thing trembles whenever he breaks. Don’t you realize how that makes us look? You can buy any car you heart desires, we have the money for it-“

“Seriously, dad? You’re gonna go at me because of a damn car?”

“It’s about your image. People are looking for things like that, especially with the paps. Speaking of, I saw you with a lady. What’d you take with you in the Hamptons?”

“I took your car. Mine was in the shop, the exhaust pipe went out again.” Bucky says nonchalantly, gesturing with his hand as if it were nothing. He hears his father sigh again.

“Look. I just want you to -“

“To not be me. I get it."

“Tonight you’re going to have another chance to prove yourself. There’s a Sothebys auction event at the plaza. I need you to be a Barnes. If you want to make your father proud, you’re going to need your prove yourself.”

Bucky pinches the bridge of his nose and thinks about it.

Once he’s thought it over, he drops his hand onto his leg, “Alright. Can I bring a date?”

The Plaza, New York, NY

It was gorgeous. You’ve only ever walked by The Plaza when you bought waffles off the waffle truck in central park, but you never thought you’d find yourself in it one day and with an exclusive invitation.

Sure, you were a plus-plus one but still.

You felt like you stood out like a sore thumb in your average J Crew long dress. Granted, though, it was the most expensive one you owned.

You had blown out your hair and it cascaded all-around your flawlessly done face and your shoulders. You felt out of your shell but you were promised that your new friends would be here and they would be just as obnoxiously pretty so you wouldn’t feel out of place.

When Bucky invited Ashlyn, he told her to tell you that you could accompany Nat. He didn’t tell Ashlyn but Bucky didn’t want to add the pressure after what you told him in the kitchen and invite Steve as your date, even though he knew how much interest he had in you.
You’ve barely made it twenty steps into the lobby and cameras are snapping away at you and Ashlyn like mad. You felt dizzy and blind, not being completely used to so many lights going off.

“Hey!”

A familiar voice and you and Ashlyn spin around to see Bucky and Nat.

His hair was combed to perfection and he looked like a walking magazine model. He wore an all-black Hugo Boss tux with matching black dress shoes.

Ashlyn practically yelped as he took her into his arms, “Hey gorgeous.”

When they pulled away, she cupped the side of his cheek and shook her head in disbelief, “God, you look so good.”

He bit his lip before giving her a peck and whispered, “Yeah, but have you seen you?”

“Oy.” You groaned in disgust. It was all so cheesy.

“I know it’s really gross. But kinda sweet.” Nat mumbled. She looked hot with her red hair curled, Marilyn Monroe style, with a tight red mermaid dress that probably cost as much as your annual salary. She hooks her arm with yours and hugs you tight to her side, “Come on, let's find the others.”

You walk off and leave the love birds to be.

Bucky hooked his arm in with Ashlyn’s and they begin walk arm in arm. He tried his best to not grimace at the blinding lights. He smiles professionally from left to right at the yelling of his name.

He looks over at Ashlyn and sees her almost cringing. He frowns, “I know this can be a bit intimidating.”

“A bit? Everyone here makes at least 90 dollars an hour, meanwhile, I make close to nothing waiting tables at a diner.”

“And that’s why I love you. You’re not fake, you don’t care about that stuff, you care about things that truly matter.” He walks with Ashlyn until they’re both in the ballroom.

The room looks breathtaking, the lights were dimmed and huge centerpieces lay in the middle. Some people sat while others swayed to the soft music that was played by the jazz band on the dance floor.

Ashlyn and you had googled online how much the tickets for these events cost if you weren’t personally invited and you both found out that the cheapest ones were about three thousand per guest, and that was the table by the kitchen.

“That’s us up there.” Bucky’s motions up by the center of the room with his hands that were still intertwined with hers. Ashlyn immediately spots Steve, Sam, Nat, you, and two other people Ashlyn didn’t know already sitting down and smiling.

“Look who it is. It’s Mr. and Mrs. Smith.” Sam jokes as Ashlyn and Bucky take their seats. Bucky pulls out Ashlyn’s seat for her to sit and then he sets between her and Steve.

“Yeah, well, at least I have a Mrs. Smith.” Bucky retaliates and then scoots himself closer to the table. Everyone oohs and Bucky smiles.
The rest of the night goes well, Bucky attempts his best to come off as professional as possible, occasionally standing to talk to some well-known people and making business conversations with them. That’s why he was here after all. He’s in the middle of talking to some apparently really important man named Wallace when he meets his father’s eyes.

For some reason that made Bucky sad. Mostly because it hit him why he was doing this. He was doing this for him. He smiles at his dad and continues to talk to Mr. Wallace.

After a couple of interviews and some talking, Bucky decides he needs to take a seat before dessert, or at least enjoy his date for the night.

On his way to the table he spots Steve making conversation with Y/N and he sees how you’re trying to shy away. He frowns. He sees you get up from the table, excusing yourself to use to the restroom.

Bucky’s glad when Ashlyn follows her. When he sits down next to Steve he starts, “Steve. You gotta be careful with her.”

Steve takes a sip of his wine, “Bucky. I’m not gonna make a move, not yet.”

Bucky nods, also pouring himself some wine, “I told you, she’s not in a good place right now.”

“She seems fine to me.”

“Yeah, well she’s not.” Bucky snaps.

Steve narrows his eyes at him and so does Nat, suddenly intrigued, “What’s going on?”

Bucky sighs when he sees everyone looking at him. He takes a deep breath.

“Look, the other day at the house I walked into the kitchen and she was crying. She told me why and let’s just say that if you’re interested in her, be smart about it. She’s got emotional baggage.”

“Who’s got emotional baggage?”

You felt rage, you saw white.

Bucky freezes at the sound of your voice.

Nat gaps up at you and tries to come up with a lie, “Just this guy.”

You look down at Bucky and then at Steve, feeling embarrassed and ashamed. You just couldn’t believe Bucky would out you out like that. Nat could lie all she wanted to protect you, but you knew he was talking about you.

“But you said ‘she’.”

Nat stayed silent while Bucky and Steve both looked down at the table.

Suddenly, Sam spoke up, “I love this song.” He walked around over to you and gave you his hand, “Y/N, would you care for a dance?”

You weren’t going to be upset. If anything, you and Bucky would deal with it later. So you pulled yourself together and all your embarrassment and gave Sam a big smile, sliding your hands into his, “I’d love to.”
They both walk off and everyone looks at each other in awkward silence.

“What the hell was that?” Ashlyn asked, placing her hand on Bucky’s shoulder.

Bucky sighs and gets up, holding Ashlyn’s hands tightly in his.

“I’ll explain later. But right now,” he looks a strand of her hair behind her ear and then caresses her cheekbone, “I want to dance with you.”

Ashlyn smiles sweetly at him.

Once they’re on the dance floor, Bucky holds one of her hands while the other holds onto her waist, pulling her tight up against him.

Bucky feels bad but he decides he’ll deal with that later. He pulls Ashlyn closer to him and they both sway to *Beyond The Sea*, his head leaning against the side of her face.

At that moment, they are both so content.

“But let’s be honest, it would be nice to live in this kind of lifestyle.”

He leans down with a smile and speaks softly into her ear, making goosebumps come up on her arms, “You’re perfect. You’re perfect.” He kisses under her lobe and she moans.

He continues to whisper sweet nothings to her and she giggles.

*We’ll meet beyond the shore*

“You’re better than all this.”

They sway.

*Happy we’ll be beyond the sea*

“That’s the same as saying I’m too good for you.” He feels her hand on his neck and she pulls the little hairs there and he shivers, “I’m not too good for you. I’m perfect for you, and you’re perfect for me.” He sighs contently into her hair.

*I know beyond a doubt*

She pulls back and stares up at him. She holding both sides of his face as she looks at his eyes, his eyelashes, his little nose. She smiles.

“I love you, Bucky.”

That was the first time she had said that to him. His heart beats wildly in his chest and he grabs her by her waist even tighter - almost leaving a bruise- and he leans down and kisses her deeply.

And then it’s just them in that entire room and he’s content.

He lifts his arm away from the hand that was holding hers and runs it through her gorgeous hair.

When he pulls away he stares at her for a long pause. The back of his hand caresses the side of her faced tenderly, “I have an idea. You want to stay with me as much as I want to stay with you, then work for me.”
She stops swaying and brings her hand up to his that is still on her face. She’s in total disbelief as she gapes up at him.

“What?”

He smiles. “Okay that sounds bad, work with me. You can help me run the company. I know it’s not the best idea to mix relationship with work but my parents did it, we can do it, too. I can show you how to do everything, you can start at the bottom, maybe an assistant job at first, and it’ll be good pay, you’ll have your own office—”

Ashlyn is shaking her head in disbelief, a tight knot in her throat, “Bucky. Bucky stop.” He stops stunned. Was she turning him down?

She smiles widely, “Are you serious right now?”

Bucky smiles, and pecks her on the lips, “You’re already moving out of your home. I’ll help you get an apartment here.”

“In Manhattan?”

“Yes.”

“Bucky, this is all just, so…I’m stunned. It’s not too fast?”

“I love you, Ashlyn. And I think there’s no more perfect time than now.”

So long, sailing, no more sailing

“So will you move to Manhattan for me?”

No more, farewell
Now that she's back in the atmosphere

With drops of Jupiter in her hair

Sure, she had been packing for the last few weeks, and you had even helped her skim apartments on Zillow, but you couldn’t believe your sister was really moving out. When you had met everyone over the weekend, you felt pretty confident that they were everything they hadn’t seemed to be after first. They were humble, selfless, and friendly. You still somewhat trusted that, but for some reason, after you had overheard Bucky literally telling everyone what you had confessed to him in that kitchen, your hope for a new trusted friendship quickly diminished.

You thought you had confided in someone you could trust. Granted, you’ve only known him for a short period of time, but it felt right.

But after that incident and seeing everyone lie straight to your face, you felt slightly betrayed and annoyed. You weren’t planning on making a move on Steve anytime soon, but any hope of that ever happening now was long gone. He knew now that you were damaged goods. How could you trust that everyone else isn’t like Bucky?

And now Bucky had your big sister in a trance, too?

You watched with a disappointed smug on your face as your big sister zipped up her last duffle bag. It was the last of her luggage to go, everything had already been taken to the truck with the help of Bucky and Steve. She picked up her bag by the strap and threw it over her shoulder.

She didn’t even have to lift one finger up until that point since the guys had done everything for her. As you watched an exasperated breath leave her lips over lifting that one bag, you tried not to glare.

Completely oblivious to your disappointed look of shame, she clapped both her hands together and took one last look around her now empty bedroom.

“Alright. Everything else is already out in the truck, so I guess this is it.”
Her gaze returned to you and she smiled slightly. Her hair had been blown to perfection just an hour before and not one speck of her lipstick was out of place, not even a strand of hair.

It wasn’t that you were angry that she literally put no effort into this move, but you didn’t have a good feeling about any of this. Okay, to be honest, you were slightly jealous. She was being treated like a queen, but on the other hand, there had been no effort on her part and now she was about to live life like a millionaire?

No, you weren’t jealous. No.

You crossed your arms together and looked down slightly angry.

“So what happened to the other place you were going to move into?”

It was a little condo apartment just outside of town. It was a one-bedroom with a small kitchen and a small balcony. *It’s nice* you had said as she gave you a short tour of the place. It was simple and just enough space for her to finally begin her own life.

She wasn’t too worried leaving you behind with your home, your parents had already paid it off before they passed away so all there really was were utilities. Your job as a hospital receptionist paid decent enough. At least one of your paychecks would have to go towards the home.

It hurt that she now eyed *this* home with that same distaste as if the home you both grew up in was now beneath her.

Ashlyn scoffed, “That place was ugly and small anyway. Bucky just recompensed me for the downpayment I had paid.”

What?

You raised a brow, “He just gave you the money?”

Ashlyn smirked, “Yeah. Can you believe it?” She shrugged as if it was nothing.

You just looked at her in disbelief, hoping she used that money for something good.

“So you’re using that towards the new place, right?”

Ashlyn rolled her eyes, “As if. Dude, that money wouldn’t even cover one-fifth of the downpayment for the new place. Bucky’s paying for everything.” She bit her bottom lip to try and stop her growing smile.

You frowned at your sister’s overjoyed demeanor. You didn’t like this one bit.

She walked passed you and then paused in the middle of the hallway, “I’m gonna be living in Man-freakin-hattan. This is a dream come true.”

You tried not to roll your eyes - you tried.

“Sure yea, its been your dream for what, two days? Come on, Ashlyn.”

At that exact moment, Bucky came around the corner wiping his jeans probably of the dust from the boxes that had been laying in the hallways for weeks and was now in the moving truck.

He’d had loaded the last box and had come back inside just in time to hear the end of yours and Ashlyn’s conversation.
He wrapped his arms around Ashlyn’s waist and gave you a spectacle look. He didn’t want this to be jeopardized. His look was curious and slightly annoyed.

“Everything okay?” He gave Ashlyn a squeeze as he asked the daring and accusing question.

The tension grew immediately when his eyes met yours. You hadn’t spoken to Bucky since that night at the Plaza. You’re not too sure why you were so on edge about the whole thing. It’s not like you knew him enough yet to have felt a major loss in wanting to never talk to him ever again after he outed you out.

Maybe it had to do with the fact that you had thought he was different for some reason. But the Plaza event mixed with him telling everyone about something extremely sensitive, and then literally offering your sister to buy her an apartment in New York City with a fancy job showed you that you were wrong.

He was a materialistic rich boy who thought he could win your sister over with money and he didn’t care about feelings. Why would everyone else be any different?

You had ignored all of Nat’s texts since that weekend because you decided to cut loose. You should’ve known not to trust too quickly.

And now here they were taking your sister with them. So, of course, after he asked if everything is okay, you could only glare at him.

You saw him rub your sister’s back as he looked between you two, noticing the grown tension. She had caught on to your snarky comments by now and was not having it.

Ashlyn looked over at you, giving you a couple of seconds to at least attempt to smile. When being happy for her never happened, she rolled her eyes and started walking towards the front door, still holding onto the strap of her bag.

“We’re fine. I was just leaving.”

You didn’t want your sister to be mad at you for having common sense. Annoyed that she was now fed up with you, you spun around to go close her bedroom door. It pained you to see it empty and knowing she was going somewhere ravishing.

She was leaving simplicity for something unnecessary and it pained you. It wasn’t worth it and you hoped she would realize that soon.

“I’ll meet you in the car.” Bucky told Ashlyn. She looked over at him confused for a second and then saw him motioning with his head towards you where your back was still facing him as you closed the door. Ashlyn caught on and smiled.
The purpose was obvious; maybe he could attempt to fix this.

You didn’t know he had been waiting for you until you heard him clear his throat.

You spun around genuinely surprised, thinking they were both gone by now.

He looked at you with a thoughtful look and stuck his hands in his front pockets. His eyes drifted to the floor for a second as he ran his tongue along his bottom lip. He looked a bit timid and unsure. He wore a red plaid shirt and he had a beard coming in. As much as he kind of annoyed you, you couldn’t help the thought that he looked like a total snack. Too bad he’s an ass.

You realized how inappropriate that thought was and you quickly looked away.

His voice was husky and low as he spoke, “Look, I know you’re not too happy with me right now, but I wanted to apologize.”

“For what?” You played dumb, crossing your arms.

He didn’t know if you were kidding or not as he examined your poker face which showed no sign of humor.

“For what I said to Steve.” He said slowly and carefully.

“And Sam and Nat.” You added.

So you did know what he was talking about.

“I know, I’m sorry, it was tactless. I was just trying to help you out.”

Maybe it's him standing there, but the memory of that night hits you full force and so does the moment he outed you out. You start to feel embarrassed again and slightly betrayed.

“How was that helping me out? By letting everyone know I was emotionally damaged and emotionally unavailable for a relationship is helping me out?”

“Yes,” he says it as if the answer is obvious, ”you seemed to not have been looking for anything right now, and then after what you told me I connected the dots as to why.”

You roll your eyes and pinch the bridge of your nose. He was right but you didn’t want to admit it. You were still angry at him. You continue to run the same hand down your face and you rub your eye, sighing.

“Oh, god. Bucky, you don’t know shit about me. I told you one thing that’s only a snippet of my life, and you automatically think you know everything?” You lift your hand away and stare at it in front of you. You pick at your cuticles in shame, “I don’t need you to protect me, I barely even know you. I can take care of myself.”

There’s a brief pause and then a shuffle of his shoe against the floor. He didn’t know why it bothered him so much that you were unaccepting of him. He knew it was wrong to tell everyone about you crying, but he was just trying to help you. If things ended up going well with Ashlyn and he proposed to her one day, you were going to be family and he wanted to be close with you.

He had to make it right. He knew what you thought of him, he knew it the moment you met him. The clothes, the cars, the watches. It angered him.

“You’re right, I don’t know you. But you don’t know me either. You think I’m some rich boy
whom’s buying your sister don’t you?”

You’re impressed that he caught on so quickly and was willing to admit it. You raise a brow.

“Well, it sure looks that way. Oh, and thanks to you, by the way, Steve will no longer even attempt to ask me out ever again even when I am ready.”

It took all his willpower to not scoff.

“Alright this is nuts, we’re literally mixing up two things at once right now. Firstly, you’re still young, what are you 20?”

You roll your eyes once more. What is with him always referencing to you as a child?

“And Steve will come around, trust me when I say that what I said to them- it left no damage. Because of me, now he just knows to take it slow and neither of you will be getting hurt in the process. You’re welcome to that.”

You click your tongue and roll your eyes.

“You know, one day your eyes are gonna get stuck like that.”

“You’re so cocky. Even when it comes to something being your fault you still manage to find yourself as the damn hero.”

He ignores you blatantly, “Second, I offered your sister these things because I love her.”

This silences you.

He takes in a deep breath and looks around your home. He didn’t have the same look that Ashlyn did when she did that. He looked sad, almost sympathetic. He looked down at your Chuck Taylors and moved closer to you.

When he looked up at you, standing only about three feet away, you were only curious as to what he had to say to fix all this.

“I like your shoes.”

You frown at him, confused as hell.

“What?”

“I’m not the kind of guy you think I am, Y/N. This,” he unlatches the Rolex off his wrist.

“Careful you’ll sprain your finger trying to do too much effort in taking that off.” You watch intently as holds it between his fingers.

His plaid sleeves ran around his wrists and, honestly, if you hadn’t known who he was, he did look like just an average boy right now.

He glares up at you, nostrils fuming.

“This,” he repeats, “is my fathers.” He pauses to allow you to take that information in. You’re not sure what he was expecting your reaction to being because all that does is make you aware that he likes borrowing his father’s things.
When you say nothing except stare at his hands he continues, “I don’t even own a fucking Rolex. He makes me wear them.”

Oh.

You subconsciously frown.

He goes on, noticing how his statements had an effect on you now, “The shoes I’m currently wearing are vans,”

He watches as you look down at his grey sneakers. The fabric on them slightly worn out from overuse.

“and these jeans I got at H&M. And guess what, they were forty percent off.”

You got it now. A little at least. But you didn’t want to admit it. You tried not to snicker at the image of him going to an h&m and running to the clearance section. You tried to hide your growing smile and instead sucked in your bottom lip into your mouth.

“Okay, so you like to save, who doesn’t?”

You looked up at him with a smirk and he was silent. He saw your smile and he smiled too in disbelief, scoffing.

“My God, I don’t even know why I try with you.”

You shake your head, finally admitting to yourself that maybe he wasn’t so bad. You try to remember why this conversation had even gotten to this point.

You smile slides off your face and you clear your throat.

“You were trying to convince me that you weren’t buying my sister’s love.”

He nods, sliding the watch back onto his wrist. “Right.”

“Look, Y/N,” and you do. His face was serious now and he was on a mission- convince you that he meant well, “I know your sister, she doesn’t care about that kind of stuff; money and shit. So when I offered it to her, I knew she would take it because it would make her life easier. Not because I want her to live my father’s life that he wants for me.”

There it was again, him talking about how his father wants him to be a certain way. You frown and made a mental note to ask him about that one day.

“Ashlyn doesn’t care about material things, so it’s not going to go to her head. She’s smarter than that. It’s not even about that, I want her to have security and stability and I want to always see her, be around her. Is that so wrong? It’s simple, Y/N.”

You consider his words and nod. Maybe you were quick to judge. He wanted her safe. He wasn’t buying her. He simply had the compact and disposition to do what he was doing and he was offering it to her.

He meant well.

“I would love more than anything for us to be friends, Y/N. That’s all I ask. The last thing I want is bad blood between us because of some dumb misconceptions. And I don’t want you taking out your annoyance with me on her.”
He meant well. And he was nice. The term friend had a nice ring to it now and maybe you were willing to give him a second chance.

“Okay.”

He smiles. It’s silent for a bit. He looks around your extremely average home once more, that same sympathetic look on his face.

“You’re gonna be okay here, little girl?”

The nickname that once made you furious with him now made you smirk. He was teasing you.

“I’m grown, old man.”

He raises his arm up in defense, a smirk lingering on his lips.

“I told you, being a friend here”

“Fine. Yes, Bucky ill be fine.” You were serious now and he nods back knowing you were, “I’ve been taking care of myself since I was fifteen. Don’t worry about little ole’ me.”

He smiles sadly. “Okay. So we’re good?”

“We’re fine.”

But now you had more questions.

You were walking him towards the front door, watching as he rubbed the back of his neck.

“Hey,” he turned around at the sound of your voice slightly surprised, “do you know if h&m is still having that sale?”

He smiled wide.

It took a few days for your sister to get everything organized and put together at her new place. As soon as everything was done and put together, the first thing she did was invite you over.

It was a bit tense when she had asked you over the phone. You both hadn’t necessarily said goodbye on good terms. But you were willing to push that aside after your talk with your friend Bucky. Ugh, you still couldn’t believe you were friends with a Barnes.

You took the train into the city and then a taxi to Prince St. You stared in disbelief out the window of the taxicab as you pulled up to the front of her apartment. You were so shocked you almost overpaid the cab driver.

Of course, Bucky had gotten her in an apartment in fucking Soho.

Just walking into the building, the smell of Chanel perfume was overpowering your sense (you’re surprised you didn’t sneeze) and you swear that on the ride up to her floor there were three girls in the damn elevator wearing the same classic Gucci belt. Is this what your sister’s life now was?

You prayed it wasn’t and that Bucky’s decision for her would actually do her well.

When it opened up to her floor, you looked for number 7 and then knocked- hesitant at first.
Just the hallway was gorgeous, it consisted of marble floors and pristine white walls with off white classic moldings. The door was so white you rubbed your finger over where you knocked to make sure you didn’t leave a…knock mark? You weren’t even sure.

It didn’t even take ten seconds before the door swung open to reveal Ashlyn in a classic white t-shirt and jeans - no Gucci belt! You practically sighed in relief.

“Y/N! Oh, my god come in.”

She pulled you in by your arm and you practically tumbled in.

The apartment was ridiculous. It was all white with class white moldings boarding the walls and corners and there was a small chandelier in the foyer but it looked marvelous as its lights bounced off the marble floors. It was identical to the hallway but bigger and brighter.

You gaped in disbelief. It was so beautiful.

“First I wanted to apologize about how sorry I am for just walking out the other day. I don’t know what it was.” You were such in a daze you almost didn’t even know what it was she was talking about. You looked between her and the house, gaping like a fish.

“It’s okay. It was my fault.” You mumbled.

You walked some more into the home and saw a lofty area that had very light wood flooring and columns randomly in the middle of the room.

It was huge, “Oh my god, Ashlyn.”

“I know, isn’t it sick? You have to see the size of my closet, and don’t even get me started on my own Infiniti pool up on the roof-“

You practically did a double-take.

“A what?” You knew what an infinity pool was, but you were not believing this. “I knew Bucky was rich but this is insane, Ashlyn.”

You saw her face fall similar to how it did back at your house when you had your fight and you reached out immediately to fix it. You gave her a soft smile as you held her arm, “No, I love it.” Her eyes lit up again, “I just can’t believe this is your life now. Bucky spoke to me about how great this would be for you.

She smiled back, slightly surprised, “I’m glad he spoke to you.”

“Yeah we’re actually kinda friends now, can you believe it?”

She stared at you for a beat, “I can, you’re both amazing in your own way.”

She practically skipped across the floor all the way to the other side where a massive all-white kitchen was. You had to laugh at the irony. Ashlyn didn’t even cook, “Look at this, Y/N! I don’t even have to work a day in my life anymore. He bought this whole thing, I own rent, nothing. Just basic utilities, sometimes.”

You frowned immediately, “You’re going to stop working? What about the job he gave you?” You said disapprovingly.

She shook her head after a long pause, “No, I’m still gonna work for him. Do you know how many
times I’ve envisioned us having hot office sex—“

You cringed and raised up your arm as if to physically stop her, “Oh god, please stop. Ew.”

She smirked, “Plus…” she ran her hand down her white marble island. She was so dramatic in doing so that her upper body was practically over the entire island, “He says I get to travel for work if I decide to go, and I heard there’s a Paris work trip coming up soon. Paris!”

You rolled your eyes but smiled slightly, “Okay. But it’s still a job. Don’t let all this stuff get to you.”

She rolled her eyes, “I’ll be fine, Y/N.”

You looked at her for a second and convinced yourself to believe her. You took a deep breath and smiled as you put your bag down on the floor next to you, “Alright now let me see that closet.”

Ashlyn started her job that Monday, and just as expected, she was invited to partake in the Paris trip as Mr. Barnes’ assistant. And by Mr. Barnes, that was Bucky’s father, not Bucky.

When Bucky had introduced them, Mr. Barnes’ was immediately impressed with Ashlyn. He thought she’d fit in perfectly and quickly replaced his current one for her.

“She’s perfect.” His father has said confidently after giving Bucky a hug and as he watched her sway out of the office.

Bucky smiled at his father’s compliment, “Yes! I’m so glad you like her.” His dad smirked.

“Of course. But, since you’re still being trained under my watch, I don’t want you having an assistant yet. You still have other important things to tend to - did you finish that file I left on your desk?”

Bucky sighed, putting his hands into his suit pants pockets.

He was dressing more professional now. If he were to be the next CEO when his father passed, he has to dress to impress. He had to act as he wanted it.

“Don’t do that, that’s an Yves Saint Laurent suit. You’ll stretch the seams.” He gestured down to his hands. Bucky ripped them out as if they were on fire, “About that file.”

“No, I’m halfway. Not finished.”

“They should’ve been finished days ago. Work on them. Ashlyn’s hired, and she’s coming with me. As my assistant. Our deal with Pym Technologies is supposed to close next week and we need
a bigger offer. I need to discuss some serious topics with them first and Hank will be at the Annual Dinner in Paris. I need her with me to help me,” he started twirling his finger around in the air as he made his way over to his desk, “help me make sure that Pym is my only focus. She’ll deal with my other issues for me.”

Bucky nodded understandably but also a bit hesitant.

“Oh, that’s fine, dad. I understand. Just please take care of her. She’s not really used to this kind of lifestyle.”

“I’ll take care of her, James.” He sat down behind his mahogany desk and eyed Bucky up and down, “Now go tell the lady congrats and get the hell out of my office. You have work to do.”

Bucky had been working on the file nonstop since Monday evening and he still had pages left to get completed for Stark. The day prior to her leaving Bucky had pulled her aside and asked her if she was sure she wanted to go. After all, he knew Ashlyn wasn’t used to this kind of lifestyle and he didn’t want to make her do something she wasn’t comfortable with.

He barely even had time to see Ashlyn before she left that Wednesday morning. She had been so excited and he was happy for her.

He was actually taken about when she quickly defended herself, saying how she would actually love to go and is looking forward to learning more about the job and the world. She didn’t fail to mention how his father had even gotten her a five thousand dollar dress for the dinner.

“You don’t have to wear it if you don’t want to, baby. I can speak to him.”

“Are you kidding, Bucky? It’s gorgeous. God, I can’t wait to put it on.”

He was sitting at his desk Wednesday night in his office and he was almost finished with the damn paperwork. His eyes drifted towards the clock on his laptop that read 11:01 PM and he tried not to groan as he rubbed at his tired eyes. He had closed them for about two seconds to let them rest for a bit when his phone started vibrating. He jumped up at the loud rattling noise it made on his desk.

He picked it up and looked at the name and frowned.

“Y/N?”

You were relieved to hear another voice at the end of the line. You looked around you, it was dark and cold. The only light came from upcoming cars on the freeway as it passed you.

“Hey. I was wondering if you were with Ashlyn. Nat won’t pick up and I’ve been trying to get a hold of Ashlyn for the last half hour. It’s important.”

You held yourself tighter, eyes drifting towards the woods on your left. You heard a twig snap and your heart started racing.

Bucky could sense the worrisome in your voice and he immediately stood up in his chair.

“No, no she’s on a flight to Paris right now. Why what’s up?”

“Paris?”

“Yeah, something about a new company deal. I was going to be briefed on it when they came
back. Is everything ok?"

You hesitated and Bucky heard cars zoom past you on the other end. You looked down in front of you as smoke escaped your open hood, your car was parked on the side of the highway.

“I mean, I was really helping she would help me.”

Bucky bookmarked his page on his screen and shut his laptop closed. “What’s up, kiddo? Come on, tell me.” He slid some papers into a folder and closed it, dropping it onto his laptop.

“Fine. My car broke down. I’m legit stranded.” You heard the twig again and backed slowly towards the car.

You could hear Bucky freak on the other end and the sound of shuffling of papers.

“Shit. Where are you?”

“I’m like 25 miles from home. I don’t want to call triple A because I don’t have coverage.” You said pathetically.

Bucky started standing up from his seat and gathering his belongings, his wallet and a phone charger, “No, it’s okay I’ll be there. Just send me your exact address on the map app thingy and I’ll be there as soon as possible. Don’t leave your car, y/n it’s dark. Stay inside, ok?”

When Buck had gotten down to the garage he looked at his black Honda and then looked outside. It was late, there weren’t any paps at this time so he didn’t think he would have anything to worry about. He reached for his car keys in his pocket instead of the Lambo one that his father had left for him.

He slid his keys into the ignition and made his way upstate.

It took him an hour and five minutes to get to where you were. You were confused as first as you saw a black car pull up behind you, not one you were expecting. At first, you weren’t even sure if it was him, but then you saw him get out and run to your side of the mirror.

You rolled the window down and stared up at him. He was still wearing his suit, had he been working this late?

“Are you fucking nuts?” You narrow your eyes at his sudden exclamation, “What are you doing out this late? Your sister is gonna kill you when she finds out.”

Your face fell as you reached out to your bag that was in the passenger seat and your phone.
“I’m sorry, can we just go home, please?”

He tried not to snap at you but he saw the exhaustion all over your face and decided to leave it for another time. He tapped your car with a finger, “Fine let's go. You can leave the car here, I’ll have someone come pick it up for you tomorrow.”

It took you a good few seconds to make sure you had everything. When you were sure you were leaving nothing behind, you walked over to the passenger seat of the car. When you got in, Bucky was texting away at his phone in his lap, his left arm on the door holding the side of his head. He peaked up at you from his phone as you got in, still holding that similarly disappointed frown.

“You know someone could’ve raped you out here.”

“My god, you are tactless. It’s not like I chose for this to happen.”

He dropped his phone back into his cupholder and sighed, “Seriously. What were you doing out here?”

“For your information, it wasn’t that late. It was only 10:30 when I was making my way home and then got stuck. You’re the one that took an hour and a half to get here.”

“Well, what did you expect me to do, fly?”

You roll your eyes. You saw him reach out for the radio and look for a decent station. He settled on something slow and mellow. It took you a few seconds to realize it was Drops of Jupiter.

You smiled briefly. The silence after your short argument was replaced by the irony of it all. You frowned as the music had a little static to it. You looked around the vehicle and then at Bucky as he drove down the highway with his left hand on the wheel his right on the seat next to him.

He looked so normal.

You watched as he switched lanes carefully and then subconsciously started humming along to the song.

You didn’t realize you were watching him until he looked over at you.

He was surprised by how your eyes became accusing and your voice suspicious. He tried not to laugh at the look you had. You narrowed your eyes at him.

“What happened to your car?”

He looked at you confused and then around his car as if looking for some big default or accident. His voice became tainted with worry, “Why? I just cleaned it yesterday. Did you see something?”

You were so lost. You narrowed your eyes even more and your voice was still slow and low as you laid your head against the seat staring at him. It was obvious you were really sleepy.

“I meant your other car.” You mumbled.

The realization hits him and his mouth opens slightly.

“Oh.”

He takes a deep breath and looks back out at the road, his jawline was tight and sharp.
“That wasn’t my car,” he continues to look out in the road and licks his lips, “This is my car.”

He didn’t even have to elaborate for you to figure it out that the other car was his fathers.

You were so taken about by his simplicity that warmth filled your heart. Your friend was simple. He was your friend.

You wanted to ask more questions, even slightly make fun of him at the way the car occasionally jolted, but you were so tired.

You felt your eyelids drop closed.

You were woken up by something heavy dropping into your lap. Your head snapped up and you looked around suspiciously. The first thing to catch your attention was a bright yellow light of a tall M, and then the trees in front of you. The car wasn’t moving and you realized you were parked.

“Why’ we parked?” You mumbled, still trying to straighten yourself up. Then you notice Bucky chomping on a Big Mac followed by an obnoxiously long fry. You frowned.

You were at a McDonald’s parking lot.

You were dead tired and wanted to go home and he thought this was the best time to pull over for some damn food?

You were about to snap at him when he gestured to the bag in your lap, “Your stomach was grumbling like crazy after you fell asleep. I didn’t want you going to bed hungry.”

oh.

You open the paper bag and the heavy whiff of Mc Donald French fries hits you in the face. Fucking hell, if that didn’t smell delicious.

You couldn’t believe the gesture. You decide to not pry at him and instead dig in. You both sat there eating your burger and fries in enjoyable silence.

“Yo, I love when you think all the fries are gone but then there’s like three at the bottom of the bag that fell out.”

His comment makes you laugh out loud at how relatable and true that was. He smiles, he never heard you laugh before.

You weren’t even tired anymore by the time you finished your cheeseburger.

Bucky still had that same old station on and now it was playing Superman by five for fighting.

You smiled softly.

“Thanks for this. I really was starving.”

Bucky chuckled, “No problem, buddy.”

I’m more than a bird,

I’m more than a plane,

More than some pretty face beside a train
You sigh as you take in the relaxation of how serene and asleep the world could be this late at night.

You feel dryness in your throat and peer down at the empty cup holders, “Although you are a bit of a dumbass. You buy all this food and yet no drink?”

“Seriously? I bought you food and you’re complaining.” He laughs.

“Come on, Bucky. This is like dollar menu shit. You couldn’t get a drink?”

“Are you serious right now?”

You looked at him like he was retarded, “UH, yeah.”

He shook his head in disbelief, a small smile grazing his mouth.

“Go inside and get yourself a drink then.”

You gaped at him. You looked around the back and saw no cars at the window.

“Just go through the drive-thru again, there’s literally no one here.”

“Dude, I have a water bottle in the back, just drink that.”

“Not if it’s filled with your damn backwash.”

“Who gives a shit, Y/N, it’s water.”

With that said he jumps out of the car and opens his trunk. He grabs a recently opened water bottle and tosses it into your lap, “There drink it.”

You stare down at the bottle.

“Why can’t you just go through the drive-thru?”

He stared at you from outside the car, “Drink the damn water, Y/N.”

You glared at him and unscrewed the water bottle, maintaining full eye contact.

He grimaced at your death glare as you down the water, “Jeez, you really are a damn piranha.”

He throws himself back into the driver seat and buckles his seat belt.

He looks over at you for confirmation before driving away.

“Alright, you good?” His question was teasing but he was also serious at the same time.

He was surprised you drank all the water. You threw the bottle into the back seat and leaned back against your seat as he stared at you.

“I’m great.”

You expected a reaction from him after you threw the water bottle, maybe a stop throwing shit in my car or something similar, but all he did was smile and nod.

“Good.”
On the way home, you both sat in uncomfortable silence listening to the radio. At one point you asked to use his car charger and he replied:

“I’m using it.”

“What percent are you at?”

“Seriously? it’s my charger.”

Eventually, you won that one and he let you use it for a bit. He dropped you off and you waved back to him from your front door after you got it open and he waved back. You watched as his little black Honda drove off into the night. A soft breeze from the end of summer night came through, blowing your strands off your shoulder. The world seemed to have changed at that moment.

*I don’t know where the ocean meets the sky,*
*I don’t know why the world keeps spinning by*

You smiled because you were full, content, and happy.

*meow.* You look down as you’re greeted by your little friend you just adopted the other day.

“Hey, Pebbles.” You smile.

A buzz in your pocket startles you after you close the door. You stare down at your phone and see it’s a text from Nat

*Hey. Sorry I didn’t get to you. I had a date. Just now have some downtime if you know what I mean ;) I hope everything is okay? I saw you called several times. I didn’t want to call you now because I didn’t want to wake you if you’re asleep.*

You smiled as you started typing out your own message, dropping your car keys onto the kitchen island and flickering on the lights.

*Hey, Nat. Everyone is okay now. It’s all cool. Yea I’m still up. I ended up getting in touch with Bucky and he helped me out. A date huh? I didn’t know you were seeing anyone.*

You barely put your phone down when it already rang back with another response.

*Kinda lol. Wanna hang out tomorrow and I can tell you all about it?*

You stopped for a second and smiled. For the first time in a long time, you felt happy. You finally had friends again, and boys were the last thing on your mind. You felt happy, you felt like you mattered, you felt somewhat important.

You try not to get emotional as you type out a message to Nat.

*Yes. I’d love that.* :)

You put your phone to charge, brushed your teeth, and then tucked yourself into bed.

You were happy.
Present-day

You hadn’t meant to walk into their closet, you were actually looking for spare towels but you had somehow opened the wrong door and you were completely enveloped by lights, shoes, purses, fashion design clothing, and hundreds of accessories.

Your eyes shined at how ridiculous the amount things they owned was. It was beyond ridiculous, actually. Who needed this many things?

You knew your sister was doing better when it came to material things but this was crazy. You saw two Chanel flap bags and three Yves Saint Laurent bags on her shelf, side by side.

As you walked around, captivated, you looked in the middle where there stood the drawers filled with accessories. Curiosity got the best of you and you slowly opened it to reveal several watches - male watches to be exact.

But there was one that caught your attention especially. It was the silver-black Rolex.

Diligently, almost trembling, you took the watch in your hand. You softly stroked the silver bindings and began to remember.

It was the first time you as saw all of him and he had been wearing nothing except that damn Rolex.

It was also the first time you had seen all his scars. You had traced them with your fingers and later that night - with your tongue. You remember thinking he was the best damn thing to ever enter your life, and the most gorgeous.

But that watch - it was one of the things you first hated about him when you first met him - but then it became the thing you loved to see on him the most. Especially when it was the only thing he wore.

The bed jerked furiously up and down. You felt the metal on his wrist hitting your -

“What the hell are you doing?”

You yelp, looking towards the door. Your heart that had been hammering away in your chest was now in your throat. You were startled by his entrance and you prayed to God that he wasn’t reading your mind just moments before.

He stood there eyeing you suspiciously as you held the watch.

“I-“ you couldn’t get the words out as you stared at him, the memories still vivid in your head.

This looked bad, even you had to admit it. It looked really bad.

“Sorry, I was just looking for towels.”

He looked at you with a glare that could kill, not buying a word you just said.

“In there? Do you think I’m fucking stupid?”

You put the watch back down and closed the drawer, “I swear I was just looking and I opened the wrong door-“
“You don’t live here. I could easily call the fucking cops on you.”

You were taken aback by his threat. You literally stepped back in disbelief, “Are you kidding?” You breathed.

He shrugged, “Yea, why not. You’re fucking going through my shit that’s worth more than anything you own put together and you happened to do it when I and my wife are not home. Imagine how that’ll look to them.”

You felt small. His words kept hurting more each time. You had to look away from him, you had to look away from those eyes that hated you so much. You were so furious at that moment. But you were tired. You just wanted some damn towels so you could shower and get to bed.

You didn’t even look at him as you walked past him out of the closet.

His eyes brows narrowed as he watched you walk away, “That’s it? You think I’m just gonna let this go?” He spat out.

You stop. You were turned away from him, heaving. Your eyes were hot as were your cheeks. Your hands bunched together at their sides as you closed your eyes tightly together.

“All I want are towels.” You grit through your teeth.

Eventually, after a long silent pause, he walks past you, hitting your shoulder as he does so.

He’s at the other door that leads to the hallway when he looks back at you and sees that you haven’t moved from your spot.

His face was emotionless, “Do you want me to show you or not?”

You let out a short sigh and followed his steps. It took a few seconds before you realized he was leading you back to the guest bathroom where you previously were.

You watched as he crouched in front of the sink pantry and opened it. He pulled out a pile of three white towels and put them on top of the sink.

“That should be enough for you to keep from snooping through our shit for a while.”

“Where is she?”

He was almost out the door when you asked the question.

“She’s putting away the groceries, why?”

“I’m just pissed as hell that she’s not here to see the way you’re treating me.”

“Fuck off, that has nothing to do with it. You’re going through my shit. Private property.”

“Really, James? So there’s no other reason why you’re lashing out at me like this?”

He scoffed as he watched you next to the towels, gesturing to the distance between you and him. That’s what you always did with him and it angered him. The distance, the accusations and yet still so far away. He couldn’t stop the words before it left his lips.

“Look at you, you’re a little coward. And yet you wonder why no man can ever love you.”
The second he says that, as much as he hated you right now, he regrets it. Your face falls drastically and you feel a pit in your stomach grow cold.

You are left silent. And the silence is deafening, almost as if he won and you have nothing left to say. And you don’t. What could you possibly say to that? It was true. It was why you were never loved. Nothing he was saying was wrong, and that’s what hurt.

You cant look at him, because you know that if you did you would fall apart right there. You don’t see his face, how broken it looks, and how much he looks like he wants to apologize. Instead, he just stands there, dead.

You needed to shower, you needed to be away from him. You wanted to sit in the tub and cry.

You walked over to the door and slowly closed it in his face.

He stood there in front of the door, unable to move.

With your hand still on the door, you close your eyes and soft sobs rack through your body in waves. It hurt your chest so bad that you had to lean onto your arm for support as you brought yourself to your knees. You were trying so hard not to cry out loud, not to scream, that it physically hurt you. It hurt so much that you had to bring your other hand that wasn’t on the door to your chest as if it would somehow make it stop hurting.

You looked up and gasped and it came out in the form of a whimper. You hope he didn’t hear you. You had worked so hard on your pride your entire life. There was no way a man could do this to you.

Your nails dig into the door as you try to stop. You’re trying so hard to stop crying, but it hurt so bad you couldn’t stop it.

Please stop. You wanted to scream.

When he hears that sound, Bucky’s hand involuntarily goes to the doorknob.

And are you lonely looking for yourself out there?
If you could only see...

Chapter Summary

Bucky reflects on what he's starting to feel. Is his conscious starting to finally bother him? Also, more pre hot mess Bucky/Reader while Ashlyn is still in Paris with Mr. Barnes.

Chapter Notes

Not too sure how I feel about this one. didn't want to get into this just yet but I figured it would work. I'm going to have to focus on 7 years earlier bucky/reader after this though so we can see how this all even happened in the first place. Ya'll with me?? :D let me know!

If you could only see the way she loves me

Then maybe you would understand

It was the first time in his life where he truly understood what earth-shattering silence was. It was ironically deafening and loud; too loud. He stood there motionless as the howling of the blood pumping in his head, his heartbeat inside his chest, and your soft cries on the other side of that door became unbearable. His world seemed to have stopped the second he had said those words to you and, it was like for the first time in five years, it was only you and him in the world.

The moment those words left his lips, he had regretted them. Truth is, he regretted them before he even said them. He knew with conviction that they would hurt you and they did- they absolutely did.

After much subconscious effort, he had finally done it. He had hurt you to the point where there was no going back. Whatever was left of whatever the hell was even still there was now gone. And even though you did hurt him to a point to where he never thought he would ever recover, and even though you are a heartless bitch to him, he knew he shouldn’t have said that. He had crossed the line.

He knew well what you went through when you were a young girl, it was wrong of him to shove such a negative aspect of your life in your face. Even though he did hate you so much, he had to make an exception for that.

Especially when it wasn’t even true, to begin with.

His hand is still frozen around the doorknob as he blinks hot and heavy tears away. A tremor shot down his spine as he practically felt the warmth of your presence behind the door. His throat hurt as he swallowed down the thick and heavy lump.
He couldn’t help it- you had made him so angry as you held his watch. When he made the connection he saw fire red and he was furious. The sight of you made something inside of him snap. Maybe it was the memories that overwhelmed him or maybe it was the reminder that you ever only wanted him for one thing.

But those memories - it overcame everything in his being. He had lost all self-control.

How could you?

His eyes furrow together as he remembers the reason for everything - for all this, and for his anger. He was so busy thinking about how much he hurt you by saying those words (and about the memory of the most amazing time of his life) when he had totally forgotten what you did, who you are.

He clears his throat slowly, backing away from the door, and dropping his hand from the knob.

He couldn’t fall for it. Not again.

Dr. Banner had told him he had his weakness, and his weakness was you.

This was what you wanted: you wanted pity so it could look like you didn’t mean it. You wanted to look like you did nothing wrong.

With tears now gone and his sadness for you now inexistent, he leaves you behind and walks back down the hallway towards the main living area. He shakes his head to himself almost disappointedly as he rubbed the back of his head, his heavy feet shuffling.

He couldn’t believe he almost caved.

He had to stay strong just like he has the last five years. He had to think about his future, not his past.

He and Ashlyn had some tough times the few months leading up to their engagement and also the first few of the marriage, but he knew that most of that had to do with you. You were a constant distraction from what was really important. The moment you were out of the picture, it was just him and Ashlyn and he was finally able to focus on just her.

Things eventually started getting better. Ashlyn was happy, she was ecstatic about life, she was enjoying the shoes she walked on, and she couldn’t be more thankful. It was a contrast to what she was the months prior.

She ended up being the perfect Mrs. Barnes that his parents would have wanted, and that made him happy for them.

It broke his heart that they wouldn’t be here to see Bucky welcome his baby into the world.

And that’s the thought that’s going through his head as he watches Ashlyn from the hallway wall. She wore a little yellow dress and her hair was in a French braid. He was surprised her little belly wasn’t showing yet.
She was setting the table preparing for dinner. The gold sequin napkins that had a grey ring around them glowed against the perfectly white porcelain plates as she set them on top. There were three tall scentless candles in the middle of the table and the table runner was grey, matching the rings.

Ashlyn was always for the show, he had learned.

Bucky waited impatiently for Ashlyn to look up at him, and when she finally did, he smiled softly.

She returned his smile, setting the last rolled napkin down. She couldn’t help but notice the subtle hint of flush against his face. She frowned slightly.

“Everything ok?”

“Hm?” He hadn’t trusted his voice yet. Also, he had to come up with a lie.

She perked a brow, “You look flushed.”

Bucky uncrosses his arms as he walks over to Ashlyn, eyeing down at the table as he does so and then back at her- smile still on his face.

“No, yeah, I’m fine. I just wasn’t feeling too good for a second.” He rubs his belly for the added effect.

Ashlyn frowns again, “Oh, no. I hope you’re not too sick for dinner.”

Bucky hums in delight as he walks around Ashlyn, grabbing her by her waist.

“No, I’m just fine.” Ashlyn leans back against him and sighs softly, a little smile playing on her lips at the loving act. Bucky kisses her neck - right under her ear- and then leans his chin on her shoulder, looking down.

“But you did set this up real quick. You’re really hungry, huh?” He squeezes her side gently with his right hand.

“I think it’s the baby.”

For some reason those words make a shiver go down Bucky’s spine and he freezes. His face becomes serious at the overwhelming and unexpected emotions that he begins to feel. Ashlyn turns around to face him. He’s looking down, but now at her stomach. His hands remain tight on her waist as she steps closer to him.

This was real.

And it terrified him. The realization makes a short breath escape his mouth. It nearly knocked him
over. This was real. He was going to be a father and there he was in his wife’s arms.

He doesn’t know why it makes him feel sick.

He felt Ashlyn’s hands go to either side of his face. She observes his intense features, especially when one of his hands goes to her tummy. She softly caresses his left cheek, “Are you sure you’re okay?”

A short laugh, almost a cry, leaves his mouth. He licks his bottom lip right after and sniffs slightly. He moves in closer to her and tightens his grip on her.

When his eyes finally make their way to meet her own, she’s already staring into his, questioning.

He didn’t like it- they were practically taunting.

He lets out that same cold and short laugh and then slightly shakes his head.

It just comes out-

“I’m fucking terrified.”

Ashlyn smiles and they’re both staring at each other with small tears pooling in their eyes. She assumes it’s because of the baby and the new changes that are going to happen over the next few months. She understood because she was afraid, too. But something else also bothered her.

But she couldn’t say.

“Me too, but we can do this.” She whispers. If she could say it strongly enough, maybe she could convince them both.

But he’s not too sure, he thinks.

He’s never felt so worthless, so dirty. How could he bring a child into this world knowing what he did, what kind of man he was? His conscious never killed him much before, it was always more about the questions of why why why and how does he move on. He didn’t even think about how this would affect his little baby. And by this, he meant the night that happened five years ago and the events leading up to that. Because why Y/N had hurt him, he was guilty of even letting his heart feel what it did leading up to it. It meant more to him.

Maybe Y/N was right, maybe he was an awful husband.

He doesn’t even have time to think before he feels Ashlyn’s lips on his, demanding and leading. He can’t help it, as much as he feels like throwing up right now, he doesn’t know if this will be the last time he’ll be able to do this for a long time. So he kisses her back so hard she almost tumbles back against the table. He cups the side of her face with his left hand as he deepens their kiss, tilting his head to the side for better access to get his tongue in. He’s demanding and strong - and he hasn’t kissed her like this in a long time.

It was different.

Ashlyn starts to pull away when she senses Bucky getting a little more intense, a sense of fear building inside of her, and she places a hand on his chest to stop him. They stare at each other breathing hard and in shock. He would say she looked concerned or confused but she felt something else. Something that she herself can’t quite put her finger on.
She clears her throat and adjusts her two hundred dollar dress and urns back around to fix the napkin on the plate that was obviously already neatly prepared. It was obvious to both of them that she was trying to break the tension.

Bucky is just standing there in the same spot, watching her hands move the utensils in a blur. That howling was still in his ears.

“Baby,” he says breathlessly, putting his hand over her right one to stop her. And she does immediately. His touch is comforting, pleading. He didn’t want to lose her. God how he didn’t want this to blow up.

“I’m okay, I’m just starving.” She looks up at the tv and mumbles to herself as she makes her way over. Bucky steps back curtly as she does so, “I’m gonna put on some light jazz, and then Y/N will be out soon, and we can all eat and have a nice dinner.”

The silence lasts a bit as she picks up the remote for the apple tv, finds the Spotify app, and finally puts on some Count Basie.

Bucky leans on the chair in front of him, deep in thought. What was happening to him? His stomach was in weird knots.

He’s felt this feeling before, and it was almost identical to the one he felt on his wedding day. But this one was stronger; helpless.

He pinches the bridge of his nose as he makes his way to the kitchen to see what Ashlyn had made. He had to distract himself from his accusing conscious.

He remembers when they first got married Ashlyn could barely fry a damn egg. Five years later and she at least attempted to be decent at cooking and she successfully succeeded. He was proud of her.

He’s about to lift the pan lid when he hears Ashlyn’s voice.

“I just got the weirdest call from Steve while you were in the bathroom.”

He stops suddenly. Steve. He hadn’t heard that name in years. They were best friends for years and then one day he was just gone. He never knew why and it hurt him. It took him years just to focus on only Ashlyn and work.

Lately, his past was following him everywhere, so this definitely perks his interest. He lifts an eyebrow and turns around to look at Ashlyn.

“Steve?”

Ashlyn places the remote down on the coffee table and spins around to look at Bucky. Her expression is unreadable which only makes Bucky more curious.

“Did you know him and Y/N were seeing each other?”

7 Years Earlier

You drink the last of your orange juice until there’s nothing but ice and the annoying sound of nothing being sucked into the straw. You suck and suck on it just long enough for Nat to look up at you over her milkshake with a raised brow. She had just finished telling you about her hot night
with a bartender named Nick Miller or something and you had to drink all of your juice to quench your now intense thirst.

You didn’t even realize you were doing it and being annoying as hell until she gave you that look. You caught yourself and pulled back in a chuckle, covering your mouth with the sleeve of your shirt in embarrassment.

“I’m sorry, I don’t like to waste.”

Nat smiles, “That’s okay.” She takes another sip of her vanilla shake and then pushes her glass aside. She crosses her arms on the table in front of her and leans in with a smirk, “So, I told you about my boy, now you tell me what's got you all happy and sucking your straw that hard.”

You frown with a small smile on your lips, “What are you talking about?” You honestly didn’t know what it was she was referring to. Sure you were in a good mood, but were you that in a good mood? To where she actually caught and called you out on it? You were confused at the accusation as you push a strand of hair behind your ear.

She leans in closer with a tilt of her head, “Oh come on, you’ve been smiling nonstop since we met up. And let's not mention that you called me out of the blue after ignoring my messages for several days.”

You duck your head down in shame. She was right and you were hoping she wouldn’t have called you out on it. But you’ve come to learn that Nat is Nat, and Nat is honest.

“Nat…” you were prepared to explain yourself for ghosting.

“Look, it’s okay, Y/N. I know why you were upset. It’s not that hard to connect the dots.” She reaches over and steals one of your fries. You glare at her. You both literally just had a two-minute talk all about how you both hate sharing your food and there she goes stealing your fry. She chews and swallows quickly, “But clearly you got over that. Something happened.”

“Nothing happened, Nat, I just have a new outlook on things now.”

She bites her lip, “Is it because of Stee…” she emphasizes the “e” playfully, in a singing tone, and you roll your eyes.

“No, I haven’t even spoken to him since Montauk.”

“Oh.” She deflates, looking disappointed.

You drink the last bit of your orange juice-now ice air- and take a beat before responding. You had to think back to what moment it was that changed things, “I spoke to Bucky the other day,” Nat’s eyebrows come together curiously. She wasn’t expecting that at all. You start running your finger up and down your cold glass, trying to gather condensation on the tip of your now hot finger, “and then he really came to my rescue and it just showed me you guys aren’t so bad. What’s with that look? Nat.”

She looks down at your finger and then at you, “Nothing, I just didn’t know you guys were friends.”

Something about the way she said that really put you off the wrong way and you didn’t like it. But you move past it.

“Ha, friends. Still weird saying it out loud.”
Nat raises a hand up deafeningly, “For some reason, your fries taste better than mine, so this is a disclaimer. I’m about to steal another.” You smile and roll your eyes. You push your plate closer to her, giving her an open invitation. She takes a fry and waves it in the air before shoving it in her mouth. She eyes you carefully and then swallows her fry.

“So how exactly did he rescue you?” She asks, wiping her hand on a napkin.

“My car got stuck the other day so I called him to come to help me. That’s actually why I had called you a bunch of times, too. But you never returned my call.” She stares at you a little bit longer again and then sighs. You didn’t like this, it annoyed you, “Why?”

“Nah, it’s nothing.” She pulls out her phone and quickly changes the subject with a smile which you are thankful for, “It’s almost six. We should get going before the movie starts without us.”

You girl day with Nat had been a success and it wouldn’t be long before you had a feeling that you could call her your best friend. You hadn’t had a best friend since you were sixteen. Her name was Amber and one day she just caught you off - said that you were holding her back in life.

Anyway. You try not to think about the bad things in your past and focus on the future. You had invited her to a night at her place to catch a movie. So here you were getting the place ready.

After Ashlyn had moved out you realized how little things you actually owned. If it weren’t for most of the furniture that she let you borrow, it would be like a newly moved in home. Your bare feet even echoed against the wood floor as you walked from the living room and into the kitchen.

You had gone grocery shopping so your fridge and pantry was readily stocked for at least several nights of Netflix binging and intense midnight munching. You actually enjoyed cooking as well, so you made a pact with yourself that you would try the first few weeks of living alone to try and cook yourself dinner instead of on spending on taking out so the impact of paying for the home wouldn’t hit you so hard.

You kind of enjoyed living alone - you could walk around naked from a fresh shower and you could dance around your living room with headphones in with no one to bother or judge you. Except for maybe Pebbles, your newly adopted kitty.

Aside from the silence when the TV wasn’t on, it was quite nice. You could literally do anything you wanted. This is what George Washington was talking about when he spoke about the land of the free…it was George Washington right?

You decided to make her and yourself some dinner, snacks after. You stirred the pot of noodles that were boiling in the salted water your pot and wipe the back of your steamed hand on your folder apron that hung around your waist. You look over on the counter and smile at the awaiting ingredients that would prepare a delicious penne vodka. You dip your pinky into the sauce for a taste and hum to yourself in delight.

It was damn perfect.

You lower the heat on the stove to medium-high and then you head back to the TV to pick a movie off Netflix.

You and Nat were friends now, but for some reason, you couldn’t really pinpoint what kind of movie she would be into. You were fighting against choosing either Mr. and Mrs. Smith or Clueless. You were that lost.
You’re about to make a choice when a knock startles you off the couch. She was early.

You look over your house once more, not necessarily prepared to welcome your first guest ever. Was is clean enough? Was your decor ugly? Did it seem like you were trying too hard? Oh shit, was she allergic to cats?

You reach over and try to fix the potpourri on the table until it at least looked somewhat aesthetically pleasing. Once it was fine, *eh I guess*, you rushed over to the door.

You heard a second knock.

“Coming!”

You unlock your door and you have a huge smile on yourself as you’re about to greet Nat. Except that it’s *not* Nat.

It’s not a stunning redhead with a quirked brow. Instead, it’s a boy with blue eyes and he’s looking down at your apron in utter amusement.

“What, are we eating tonight?”

His half-smile is bright and joyful, a playful tone lingers in his voice. He’s stretching out his right hand to hold open the door a little more. He wore a green and white plaid shirt and his brown hair was unruly.

shit.

Your once big smile is now a teasing glare.

“You again?”

He winces, “Ouch. Not even a “how are you?”?” He places a dramatic left hand over his heart as if you’ve literally hurt him.

“You’re the one at *my* house.”

He rolls his eyes and moves in closer to you, clearly begging for you to let him in, “Fine. I wanted to get your advice on something. I so happened to be in the area.”

You ponder for a second and decide it’s okay. But you didn’t want him here when Nat got here. You look around before instinctually grabbing him by his sleeve and pulling him inside.

“Fine, but make it quick.”

He tumbles in with a smile and then looks around your place. He notes the newly bought rug under the coffee table and the sound and smell of boiling noodles.

You take in his concentrated look as you untie the apron from around your waist.

“So you have a question? This couldn’t have been done over a text message?”

You glare at the back of his head as he goes into your kitchen without even asking, peering over the ingredients on the counter.

“Yea,” he mumbles, picking at your stuff, “but I wasn’t too far, plus I’m kinda lonely and bored. Thought I’d see a friend.” He sticks his finger into the sauce and you practically run over to him in
annoyance, “Ashlyn’s still in Paris. Hey!” He exclaims as you push him aside and set the bowl back towards the subway tiles on the wall.

“Stop touching my food.”

He sticks his finger in his mouth and sucks on it with a big smile, it was obis he was teasing you. God, you hated him.

You sigh as you open your pantry above your head and grab a packet of popcorn, slamming it on the counter.

“Pasta and popcorn? You’re weird.”

You roll your eyes, “It’s for after the movie, after dinner.”

He nods at your words and then looks over at the island. He notices the two plates of food and two glasses for sodas. His eyes narrow in shame.

“Shame, shame. “I thought you weren’t ready for dating.”

His comment makes you double take from the popcorn to his face and then the island. You hated talking about your dating life, anything that had to do with it brought a feeling of nausea to your stomach. Thankfully this wasn’t it.

“You could’ve at least let Steve know.”

His tone is disappointed. It was obvious everyone rooted for you and Steve, even your neighbor next door did. Knowing that you were possibly pushing that idea aside really affected Bucky. It was obvious he was not too happy about it. Especially since you were now all friends, it almost seemed like some kind of betrayal- even if it was uncommitted.

You sigh tiredly as you walk past him, shoving him slightly aside to take a look at your pasta. It looked almost ready so you reach into the bottom cabinet bending down to grab the colander placing it in the sink.

“It’s not. I invited Nat over.”

“Oh, okay.” You sense the relief in his voice.

“So Ashlyn’s really not back yet, huh?”

“Nah. Must be a good sign though. For the company at least.” He says pulling one of the stools from under the island to sit on it.

You turn off the pot and grab two mittens to prepare to drain the water.

He watches you and your meticulous movements as you pour the pasta into the colander in the sink, the hot and heavy steam rising into the air.

“Where’d you learn to cook?”

You laugh at the memories that answer his question.

“My momma,” you shake the colander until all the water is out and then your re-pour it into the pot. You grab your vodka sauce and a mixing spoon and pour it inside the pot, “She used to be a chef at this really nice restaurant down by Lexington. I always enjoyed watching her so she figured
I had the same genes as her, so she took her time to teach me her…\textit{ways.}” You wave your spoon crazily in the air as you say the word ‘\textit{ways}.’

“I didn’t know she was a chef.”

You furrow your brows as you scrape the last of the sauce in the bowl, “Ashlyn never told you?”

“She told me a lot about your family,” you tummy turns in sadness. So that meant he knew about what happened to them. You take in a deep breath and blink away tears. It’s been only three years and it still hurts like it was yesterday. He notices the way your shoulder sulk and how you try to toss your hair to cover your face using your shoulders.

He looks down as he whispers, “I’m sorry by the way.”

But how could you be selfish? You knew what happened to his mother, too. Everyone around the country knew it was in all the papers, all the websites, it was on CNN nationwide. It was ten years ago but you remember. You use that as a common ground.

You place the bowl down and then mix the declines pasta in the pot on low heat.

You look up at him as you’re mixing and you both share a look. You see the sadness lingering behind his eyes.

“I’m sorry, too.” He knows what you’re talking about and he smiles for a fraction of a second. You look away and continue to mix the food.

You don’t tell him, but that night he had picked you up you had just gotten back from visiting their grave. It was their wedding anniversary and you dropped off some lilies.

“Thanks by the way, for the car.”

He smiles softly.

“No problem.”

It’s silent as you turn off the stove. You walk over to the fridge and grab basil from the shelf. He watches as you grab a knife and start cutting it into minced pieces on the cutting board very quickly with skill.

You look up at the clock on the stove and then back at your knife cutting the green vegetable. She would be here any minute.

“So what advice did you want?”

“Okay, yeah,” he pulls out his phone from his front pocket and starts skimming through Safari, “It’s almost our fourth month anniversary and I wanted to take her to a concert, ya know, like floor seats or VIP access.”

“Of course.” You chuckle. You grab the basil in your cupped hands and drizzle it over the pasta as a garnish.

“So which do you think she’ll like better - Coldplay or John Mayer?”

“Hm. For an anniversary?” You turn around with your arms crossed and ponder his choices for a second. Your sister was cliche. She wasn’t grey, she was either black or white. The answer was simple.
“Coldplay.”

He perks a brow at you, “Really?”

“Yeah. I think she only knows like one John Mayer song. She knows a butt load of Coldplay, thought. Ever since her Twilight phase back in high school.”

“Twilight phase?” He says in amusement. He’s smiling wide, his nose crinkled in an adorable way that showed he was cringing.

“Yeah, ya know, when all those girls used to make those depressing fan vids to Fix You and shit.” You wave your hand in the air as if it’s nothing, “She’ll love it.”

He laughs and jumps off the stool, “Okay, cool. Yeah. Coldplay.” You eye him suspiciously. Something was off and you know immediately what it is. You try not to giggle.

You notice as he looks over to one side and then gives you a small smile, “Thanks.”

You’re looking up at him and you give him a small knowing smile. You bite your bottom lip.

He narrows his eyes at you, “What?”

“You wanted it to be John Mayer, didn’t you?”

He gapes at you for a second and then chuckles. He looks away, slightly embarrassed.

You smile wide. You’re about to tell him how much you also think John Mayer would be more fitting for an anniversary when a knock echoed through the house.

Your eyes go wide. “Shit. That’s Nat.”

You quickly cover the pot behind you and then run towards the front door.

When you open it Nat is standing there with a bottle of wine and a bright smile.

“Hey, I’m so happy you’re here.” You greet her with a tight hug, “Come in.”

“Hey! It smells so good in here. I bought myself a Moscato. Thought we could use it while we talk about-“ he voice drifts off as she looks up to see Bucky standing in the kitchen. She furrows her brows as he gives her a slight wave and then she looks back at you, “Uhm? Hey, Bucky.”

You wave your hand nonchalantly, “He was just leaving.”

She still has a weird look on her face as she looks between the both of you. Bucky walks back into the living room, getting ready to leave.

He looks between you and Nat and smiles. He was happy that you were finally making new friends. He couldn’t wait to tell Steve. “You girls have fun. But not too much fun.” He adds a suggestive wink in there that makes you roll your eyes, but a smile still remains on your face.

You shove him out the door with one hand as he’s smiling, “Goodbye, Barnes!” He practically trips out of the house.

“Bye, ugly.” He mutters under his breath in a playful tone.

You turn around after you close the door and Nat is still giving you that same look.
But you’re completely oblivious as you breathe out with a roll of your eye, “Sorry, I thought he’d never leave. He just showed up.”

You both decide on watching Clueless which, honestly, surprises you. You both laugh at the movie and also chill back in happiness as you munch down dinner.

When the movie is over, you’re both sitting on the floor in front of the couch, a wine glass in hand, and scattered baby photos of you everywhere. You’re telling Nat stories about you and Ashlyn and your parents, and it’s making her happy. You were letting people in and she enjoyed how much she was learning about you. You were a great girl.

Nat’s holding one of you and Ashlyn when you were both little. It was a picture you took at Disneyland when your parents were still alive.

“And they had just gotten us these stuffed Mickey Mouse toys. But I ended up puking all over mine so I was trying to steal Ashlyn’s.”

Nat chuckles, “Ew, that’s gross.”

You smile softly at the memory, “Yeah my parents were so mad.”

She looks at you for a second and then sits down the picture. Finally, she asks something she’s been dying to. She says your name softly before readjusting herself on the floor and taking a sip of her wine.

“Yeah?”

“I-“ she takes in a deep breath and then sits a little further up on her legs, “Bucky is a sweet guy. He naturally this way of getting close to people, it’s just how he is. He’s a lot like his mom.”

You furrow your brows in confusion and at her sudden rant, “Ok?”

She pushes a strand of hair away from her face and continues, “I just - I do get worried with him sometimes because he tends to over care. He’s very sympathetic.”

You take a sip of your wine, a light fuzzy feeling now starting to take over.

“I just don’t want you to…” she sighs as she looks up at you, uncertain as to how to say what she wants to say without it coming out wrong, “I don’t want you to think that he’s being a certain way when he’s not. When he loves a girl he is a committed to them. Being nice is just his nature, and sometimes it can come off flirty, I just want you to protect your heart. I can’t even begin to tell you how many girls involuntarily have fallen for him not even realizing it.”

You tilt your head at her. You honestly wanted to laugh because you couldn’t really believe she had thought that of you, but at the same time you want to be respectable, “I am so confused right now. Nat, I do not like Bucky. He’s my friend. Sure, he’s being nice and all but he’s also an ass.”

“Okay. Okay good. I know this is a weird thing for me to say, but I know him well, trust me.”

“When he loves someone he is dedicated, and I mean it, he will give it his all. And honestly, I think Ashlyn’s the one.”

“How do you know so much about him?” You catch yourself and you feel like you’ve asked something too personal. But when she smiles you take that as an invite so you continue, “I just, you seem very protective of him. Are you guys close?”
“We used to date in college.” Your perk a brow. You did not expect that “He was a sweetheart. He had gone through a lot and we were there for each other. But he wasn’t the one.”

Your face falls slightly, “I’m sorry.”

She smiles wide, “We agreed we’d be better off as friends.” She takes another sip of her wine, “And trust me, I totally get him being an ass thing. He’s a dick.”

You smirk tipping your wine glass to take a sip, “But like a nice dick.”

“A soft dick.”

You practically spit out your wine as you both laugh out loud.

Present Day

You, Ashlyn, and Bucky all sat around the dinner table in utter silence. The only sound was one of the scrapings of the utensils against the plate as you cut your chicken and when Ashlyn or Bucky would place their fork down to take a sip of their water.

Bucky was fuming. His anger had nearly doubled since the moment he saw you in his closet. He had only peered up at you twice after you entered the kitchen, but he couldn’t handle it.

Every time he saw you he couldn’t stop envisioning Steve touching you, kissing you, doing all kinds of things to you, and it angered him. Steve was his best friend.

You let him?

His own best friend? You were worst than he thought, and to make it worst he was jealous beyond comprehension. He wanted to find Steve and punch him in the face for fucking you.

But did you guys even do that? How serious were you? How did he never tell him? Has it been going on for five years?

He tried to hold a blank look on his face to not look obvious. It made him even more annoyed that you looked empty, though.

And truth is, you were.

You had been all cried out from your episode in the shower. You were emotionless and over everything. You were over the situation, you were over being sad and trying to make it right. You were numb. Mechanically, staring straight into your plate with a death glare, you cut another piece of your chicken and chewed on it.

Maybe you should just leave and find a hotel. Maybe you should give up entirely. It’s not like anyone loves you or ever loved you. You were unwanted, you were a waste.

Ashlyn took an awkward sip of her water as she looked at you. She wasn’t necessarily upset, she just had a lot of questions. If anything, she was happy that you and Steve had finally given it a try. Why hadn’t you told her you were dating Steve, let alone, living with him? Why did you leave?

Steve had sounded distraught and curious over the phone as if he was waiting for some kind of news. That made Ashlyn curious because she immediately knew you and Steve were hiding something. Did you not trust her?
The tension around the dining room was growing by the second.

The first voice to break it is a vibrating sound from the living room. It was Ashlyn’s phone that she forgot on the couch.

Everyone looked over towards it and Ashlyn pushed back her chair. She was thankful because she couldn’t handle the silence anymore.

“Sorry, that’s my phone.” She said a little too ecstatically. You and Bucky met eyes for a brief second, and after that, it was hard to look away.

“Hello? No yeah. Oh, how is she doing? She’s not?” Ashlyn looks over at you over the couch but you’re still looking at Bucky as he looked at you back. You don’t realize she’s talking about you.

Was that him? Bucky kept thinking.

“I’ll let her know. I actually haven’t seen her on her phone. Is everything okay with her?” She whispers the last part.

He’s dead to you you say in your head, your face cold as stone.

Ashlyn frowns at Steve’s response, “Okay. Yeah, yeah no worries, Steve.”

You feel your stomach drop instantly and Bucky’s nostrils flare up in anger. Your stomach is in tight knots and your heart is beating so fast you felt like you were going to pass out. Your head immediately snaps over to Ashlyn who’s looking at your with an unreadable face. You swallow nervously. Your palms were sweating and you wanted to run out of there.

This couldn’t happen, not now.

Ashlyn says bye to Steve and then walks back to the table. She pulls out her chair slowly, agonizingly slow and she sits down just as slow, her left arm on the table. She bites her lip as she takes her napkin off the table and then diligently places it over her lap. She smooths it down and then pulls herself back close to her plate.

She clears her throat and then looks at Bucky and then at you.

You were terrified and Bucky looked pissed. You were waiting for it - for the blow-up.

But it never came.

Instead, Ashlyn clears her throat and picks up her fork. You watch her like a hawk, like waiting for an atomic bomb to go off.

“Okay, so who thinks I put too much salt in this?”

You feel your left hand tighten next to you as only one thought crossed your mind:

Steve Rogers, what did you say.

Sayin' you love but you don't

you give your love but you won't
you're stretching out your arms

to something that's just not there
Chapter Summary

We find out more about Nat/Bucky. We find out about Bucky's past. And we have some Steve in here. What's really going on with Ashlyn? And Y/N and Bucky...you have to be careful. Warnings are language, mentions of sex (briefly), and very disturbing details of gore/violence. Wrote it that way for a reason. poor bucky.

Chapter Notes

So this chapter is a flashback to everything how it started seven years ago. I felt like judging by the comments everyone was a bit confused and thought this took place in the present. So I edited the intro to say seven years ago. Sorry for the confusion! This chapter is Ten Thousand words long. And I am not sorry. This is the chapter that is going to change things. I needed to get it perfect...I needed to get the characters out there so I could have the perfect base to finally let this bad boy unravel. And it could not be any less than 10k. It's why this took a little longer than the other chapters. It's three times as long, and very very very important. I hope you guys aren't too mad at me for the wait! D:

\[ \text{Soldier keep on marchin' on} \]
\[ \text{Head down til the work is done} \]
\[ \text{Waiting on that morning sun} \]
\[ \text{Soldier keep on marchin' on} \]

The smell of the trash scattered around the atrociously lit cavern mixed in thoroughly with that of searing human flesh. Several men hid among the corners of the room as they threw their head back in amusement. Their attire consisted of a middle eastern military uniform and a unique cover on their face. It was almost a balaclava of some sort, except that there were only holes for their eyes and not their lips. Their gaze lacked soul and empathy and it was bitter to the core.

In the middle of the room laid a dingy metal stretcher, its wheels were rusted from years of combined usage and uncleanness. Attached to its sides were two adaptable arm rests that had accommodating worn out straps for the arms and legs.

His screams were deafening as it surpassed the screeching of the grinding of his bones and the deafening motor of the chainsaw.

The smell was pungent and strong in his nostrils, making him visibly gag. The pain he felt was blinding to the point where if he closed his eyes tight enough, he hardly felt anything at all. With a feeling of consternation, he would open them back up quickly, realizing that the reason for that was that he was beginning to pass out from the pain.
The only reason he hardly felt it as torturous anymore was because of the adrenaline- it had begun to mask the unendurable pain.

With a whimper and a soft cry for help, his legs became noodle-like and his gut burned with presentiment. The howling of the men’s voices commanding orders around him in a language he couldn’t understand (and the distant shots being fired from would could only be an AK-47) echoed in his brain along with the chainsaw. He knew they were sounds he would not forget for years to come.

As if the adrenaline dissipated, he feels that sudden pain that no man or woman should ever feel in their life.

They were cutting off his arm as he laid wide awake. They didn’t even bother killing him first or make him pass out in a way. No, they wanted him to feel, hear, and smell everything. It couldn’t get anymore morbid than that.

Below the stretcher on the ground was a white rag drenched in red.

It was beginning to turn a rough shade of black the more the blood dripped from his arm onto it.

His gaze travels down to his poor limb, god how he didn’t want to look, but of course, he had to.

When he saw what they were doing to him, he felt like his stomach was on fire and his eyes were drenched in acid. His bone was visible to his eye and his flesh had been shredded up like cat meat. There were parts of his tendons that still hung on. They were part of his body that he wasn’t ever meant to see. That pungent smell returns again along with the pain and the sound of the electric saw. This time it was applied almost directly to his humerus.

A sob mixed with a strong gag, that gets stuck in his throat, racks through his body. He cries out loud for help as his legs start to thrash and hot tears run down his pretty face.

"Please, let me go! God, Please!" He begs.

7 Years Earlier

As she takes the elevator up to the sixteenth floor of The Pierre, she thinks about their past history and what she’s learned from it. It was a summary of what had taught her love and appreciation.

For something so strong, it was a surprise that they still managed to be amazingly close friends and have it be just that.

The reason for it was because their relationship had been based off cheerful hormones. They both went to school for business. They were young, and he had just recently left the army. It was evident to her that he was looking for comfort in another soul. After what he had been through, the recovering process was complicated and heartbreaking. He always described his arrival to her as a hollow shell - his life was newly deserted and he was greeted to reality with a blinding scream of agony.

She was gorgeous and he was a broken boy and would have anyone fooled with the look of a gleaming James Dean. Their relationship was inevitable, and it was amazing and young.
Reflecting on everything, it doesn’t surprise her that she’s over protective. She doesn’t quite understand that feeling of murkiness that she gets when she sees him linger in your apartment, or when she finds out that he is the reason for your exceptional happiness. It’s all a daze and a distant foreshadow.

It’s obvious to her that after meeting you, she could sense that you and Bucky had quite a lot in common. Just like she and he did when she first met him. And similarly to like she and Bucky did, he confided in you for opinions. After Bucky had unraveled that information about your baggage at The Plaza Hotel, she knew the kind of girl that you were.

You were vulnerable; innocent.

It wasn’t that she thought you had any intentions with a taken man, or that anything specifically would happen between you and Bucky - per se- but more so that you wore your heart on your sleeve.

She was worried that eventually this would come off the wrong way and it could turn into something no one wanted to deal with. She wanted to protect you as well and she had tried to make that as clear as possible the other day.

Even though she knew Bucky would never be the kind to over step that line, she remained worrisome about the feeling she was feeling.

She rubs the back of her neck as she adjusts the gun on her left holster that hid under her short black, but a casual, dress. She was supposed to be at a rendezvous for Mr. Barnes in a half hour. It would be used only under certain repercussions, he had reminded her with a suggested look.

Nat liked Ashlyn a lot. She was gorgeous, sweet, and kind. She was undoubtedly happy for Bucky when he introduced her to her. She had greeted Nat with a slightly weak handshake and a big bright smile that seemed to have promised trust and security. And when Ashlyn would look at Bucky, she very well looked in love.

Sure, Nat thought it was too soon for Bucky to offer her a job, but that’s what Barnes’ did. It’s the same exact moves that Mr. Barnes used on Bucky’s mom when they first started. They were wealthy, it wasn’t out of the ordinary.

It wouldn’t surprise Nat if this was Bucky’s The One. Ashlyn was safe; she was normal with no ties to any complications.

She was a breath of fresh air.

When it came to the Barnes men, things were always straight forward. Bucky was a little different because he wasn’t materialistic, but he was filthy rich and things did come easier to him than for many ordinary males. Unfortunately, sometimes he would forget that. He could be tactless; he could be inadvertently oblivious.

And that’s what worried Nat. He was a natural flirt- a sweetheart, so to say. He was kind. She lost count how many times she and Bucky would be walking hand and hand together to their next class and he would stop to help a girl who dropped her books in the hallway. It would be so awkward for him the next day when they would come up to him and ask him out and he would say no, that he already had a girlfriend. He was dating Nat and yet he would still do these very kind gestures for the ladies.

And they all took in the wrong way.
It’s no surprise that Nat was very torn about warning you and also torn between if Ashlyn really was good.

Just over and hour ago she had been in the work meeting for the Hank Pym agreement. She had stared at Bucky’s newly assigned empty seat in total confusion and with a slight bit of concern. She even started biting the tip of her thumb the more she looked at it.

She knew he wanted to be there, so why wasn’t he?

She noted Ashlyn’s stride from the door to the front of the table. Ashlyn and Mr. Barnes stood together delivering the outstanding news and people looked at her in total interest.

Something was wrong.

The other elite members of Barnes Enterprises call out his absence like its a retort and Mr. Barnes’ face contours into a mixture of anger and embarrassment. With a taint of disgust in his voice, he gives Nat an order: go find him.

She’s surprised he doesn’t ask Ashlyn, his most likely future fiancé. Because let’s be honest, it was obvious to her that that’s the direction it would go in.

She looked exquisite standing there in front of the oval desk holding that little clipboard. It was no doubt in anyone’s mind that she would look impeccable standing next to Bucky as the wife of the next CEO of Barnes Enterprises; she practically glowed like a star.

Right before Nat left, Ashlyn had explained to her of his whereabouts and thanked her politely for her help. Nat was not happy.

“Yeah. I’ll go let him know.”

Her voice had been sturdy and unemotional.

The elevator dings and she marches onto his floor with a heavy stance. She walks the empty path of elegance and bright fixtures made of porcelain and marble. The lighting was radiant and it oozed of splendor and passion. The door was a Kole-styled door with white square moldings, each square was wrapped in a delicate gold lining that resembled the culture of the Taj.

There was a window at the end of the long hall that revealed central park in all its glory. From there, she clicks her gun into safety and scans the halls for his apartment.

Once she locates it, she knocks urgently. She was so confused- confused and angry. Forget Ashlyn’s lame excuse and answer, she didn’t understand how Bucky could be so irresponsible at a time like this.

There’s a silence after her knocking and she tries once more.

“James, open this damn door,” she says loudly but not too loud for the wealthy neighbors to call security on her. Not after last time.

She lifts her fist one more time with a grunt and was about to knock again when it swung open, revealing an apparent exhausted Bucky.

His hair was a mess and the right side of his face had a fresh red mark on it- most likely from passing out on that hideous throw pillow that she had been telling him to get rid of for the last five years.
He glares at her as he rubs his left eye with the knuckle on his pointer finger. His expression was nothing short of un-amusement.

“Damn, a guy cant even piss in peace anymore these days. What do you want, Nat?” He asks.

He spins back around, leaving the door wide open for her to walk through.

She shuffles in, quickly closing the door behind her. The fresh smell of lemons and vanilla engulf her senses, it was obvious that his housekeeper had just left. His apartment was immaculate.

He had a white chesterfield style couch with an off white cabriole to the left. To the right was a traditional fireplace with crown moldings and a subtle, but splendid, chandelier hung in the middle. In the dead center was a large window with a view of central park.

Amongst the cleanliness laid a freshly dirtied bowl on the glass coffee table, crumbles of crackers scattered about its perimeter.

As she makes her way over to his all-white kitchen, she stares at his back disapprovingly. He grabs his remote and turns off the TV and she drops the folders and binders that she had been holding on top of the counter, finally relieving of the unwanted weight she was forced to bring over.

She looks up to see Bucky still rubbing at his eyes. She takes in his attire - a pair of two-day-old grey sweat (obvious from the wrinkles and grease marks) and a white t-shirt.

“Why didn’t you show up to work?” She asks, bluntly.

His long sigh answers her question.

She’s pissed.

“We’re practically killed everyone in that damn room. Your seat was empty, Bucky. Empty. Don’t you think you’re a little too old to have a babysitter?”

Bucky groans as he finishes rubbing his eyes with his palm and walks over to Nat. He raises a brow at her, her words clearly not affecting him one bit. She never scared him and he never scared her. That’s what their relationship always consisted of. It was the mere reason they broke up- they realized that the only thing they really ever enjoyed about it was the sex.

Other than that, they were practically just friends with benefits. Sure, there was love there at first, but after spending time together and talking about their future goals, they realized they got along better than that. They were best friends, and the sex was making it more complicated than it needed to be. They came to terms that they were a college fling and nothing more and they were okay with that.

It was simple and not awkward, so they moved on.

She rolls her eyes and pulls out some beige folders that are within the binders and slides it across the island to him. He eyes them suspiciously but finally takes the time to answer her question before taking them in his hands.

“I know. I was up all week late trying to finish those damn files. And I gotta tell ya, they had nothing to do with anything important. It was all HR shit. He’s doing this on purpose as an excuse for getting up my ass.” He says.

Nat gave him a glare, eyeing him up and down. She crosses her hands on the table in front of her
and moves up closer to him. Her voice is lower now, calmer. She decides that with him she needs to make him realize it on his own.

“Bucky. It is noon on a Wednesday and you didn’t even come into work. You don’t think you deserve that in the slightest? Not even a bit?”

He stares at her for a bit. He knew she was right.

“Fine. But he could be a littler more lenient.” He says.

Nat sighs as Bucky eyes down at the paper work that was now in his hands. It takes him a second to realize what he was reading and he feels slightly betrayed. His eyes furrow together and he rests the arm holding the paper work onto the cold island.

“So the deal worked out, huh?”

She’s still so lost and confused. She eyes him curiously taking note that his reaction was not a good one, and then around his four million dollar home. She smartly makes the connection that he appeared to be the only one there all day, aside from the maid.

“You haven’t spoken to Ashlyn at all since she’s gotten here?”

He shrugs nonchalantly, “She wasn’t allowed to brief me on it, but she told me the meeting for it wouldn’t even be until tomorrow. I called out sick today.”

She takes in his response and she’s infuriated, “You can’t call out sick Bucky.” Nat puts a finger down on the paper he’s reading, the edge of it poking him in the lower belly, “If you want to be part of this and be professional about it, you have to stop slacking off. Second, Ashlyn just started this week. Why would you even listen to her?”

“I have no reason not to. Plus, she’s been with my father all week. She would know better than I do.” He responds quickly.

She doesn’t understand how to Bucky that doesn’t sound off. She doesn’t get how he doesn’t see that it’s not supposed to be this way.

“You just missed the most important meeting of your life.” She says.

She scoffs quietly.

“I know. I’ll talk to her.”

There’s a soft ding and it echoes through the kitchen. Bucky looks up at her as he tries to push down the feeling of slight anger down his throat. He loved Ashlyn, he truly did, but her doing this to him was uncalled for. Granted, he should’ve known better than to listen to her - Nat was definitely right about that- but he trusted her enough. Also, he was exhausted.

Nat reaches into her green jacket pocket for her phone. She peaks a brow as she reads her message.

“What is it?” Bucky asks.

“Steve just told me your dad’s seconds away from trying to find someone else to take over the company.”

Bucky rubs his face, “Fuck. I gotta talk to him.”
“Please do, Bucky. It physically scares me how much better Ashlyn is at this than you are. She didn’t even go to school for this shit.”

“I’ll fix this.” He says in a critical tone.

He gathers the folders in his arms.

“Also, stay away from Y/N.” He raises a brow at her sudden request, “We all know she’s not in a good state right now, and I don’t want her misreading your intentions. We both know how you can be sometimes.”

Bucky laughs out loud at this, “That explains a lot.”

Nat narrows her eyes in a questioning manner, “What?”

“How you act so weird around me when I’m with her. Trust me, Nat. She knows we’re friends. Plus I’m not how I used to be. If anything she hates me a bit.”

“I highly doubt that. She told me you were friends.” Nat says.

“I mean, yeah we are, but it’s weird. Who knows, she’s still in her early twenties. You remember what that’s like, right?”

“Enlighten me.”

Bucky shrugs, “You’re still finding out who you are, what you like, learning the difference between fantasy and reality; you’re mad at everything in the world.”

“I guess.” Nat answers.

He reaches a hand out to Nat’s shoulder and squeezes her there comfortingly with a slight smile, “Don’t worry about me, Nat. Now go back to work, I gotta figure this shit out.”

She thinks for a second before finally believing him. He was right, she had to relax and have nothing to worry about.

When Bucky closes the door behind her, his smile slides slightly off his face. You didn’t have any expectations in anything that he had done for you, that much was obvious. And he would never make a move on you.

He loved Ashlyn and you were simply his friend. That would be fucked up.

But then he thinks about his actions lately, and how they might come off as leading. He remembers how he went to rescue you at the side of the road. But did he have a choice? No.

And then he went to your house to ask you a question. Could he have just texted you? …yes.

Nat was right, he needed to pull off a bit. Especially since he meant nothing of it.

Now, he just felt like a crappy boyfriend and slightly inappropriate.

But he was also a bit pissed.

He looked down at the folder in his arms.

Merger Meeting - Copies
He lets out a tired sigh and shakes his head to himself. This was supposed to be his day. Why did he listen to her?

The answer was simple. He loved her and he believed in her.

Some of his friends questioned his motives that day out on the L.I why he brought her so soon to the beach house.

*Four months is too fast,* they had said.

*Are you sure?* They had asked.

“Yes,” his finger skimmed around the opening of his frigid Budweiser can, remembering back to the moment he first laid eyes on Ashlyn. She had been cold and her nose was a little red dot that he wanted to kiss.

“There’s just something about her. At first, I asked her out because she was gorgeous, and the way we met was like totally out of a movie, but then I got to actually meet her, and I learned how amazing she is and how humble.”

“She’s not like the other girls I’ve gone out with. She doesn’t care about how rich I am, she didn’t even know who I was. She was only nineteen when her parents passed away and she raised her little sister all on her own. She’s independent and she has such strong morals. I love her. And I know my mom would’ve loved her, too.”

With that declaration, it didn’t surprise Sam or Steve that he then offered her a job and an apartment. To any normal person that would’ve been excess, but on the upper east side and SoHo, that was just another Tuesday.

For some reason though, as he’s staring down at the folder, there’s a momentary feeling of regret in the pit of his stomach.

But he swallows it down quickly. He couldn’t let other people’s voices get into his head. There must’ve been a good reason for all of this.

“It was a bad car accident. It was a head-on collision—“

“I’m so sorry.” His voice was soft, caring.

She looks down at her cappuccino and then out the window at the snow slowly falling from the sky.

She jumps slightly when she feels his hand on hers. It all felt so surreal.

“My mom died right after I came back from Afghanistan. They had chased her down after they found out I had made it out alive, and they wanted revenge on our family. It took the officials months to find her.”

He still remembers the day they found her. Her body had already started to decompose - better yet, the pieces of her body. It was stuffed in a suit case and thrown into a river bed, tied down by heavy bricks to keep the current from pushing it up towards the surface so it wouldn’t be found any time soon.

He was held captive for three months by terrorists, with hardly any food or water, tortured. His left arm was nearly cut off to the bone by a chainsaw, and this is what he came back home to.
The public never released the details of his captivity, only merely mentioning that he was lost in the desert for a few months. His father didn’t want the extra information out into the open. *It was too dangerous*, he would say. *They don’t need to know all that.*

*You are a hero, son. Your mother and I are so proud.*

They were certainly thankful for the press they got for it.

So nobody really knew. No one except his friends, and eventually Ashlyn.

She was understanding. He loved that about her, too.

They always called him a hero, but that’s the last thing he felt like when he remembers how he cried like a child on that stretcher, begging for his life to be spared.

He was anything but.

“Come in.”

The sound is sweet, it’s delicate, it’s slightly hesitant.

As soon as he walks in he’s enveloped by the smell of vanilla. It reminded him of home and it left him content.

He sees her sitting at her desk and she’s got the biggest smile he’s ever seen on her face.

He feels like he’s slightly floating. How did he even make it across the room? When had he closed the door? It was all a daze.

She made him so happy. There was just something about her that made him feel like he had his whole life together. Seeing her, being around her, it made him warm.

And God, how much he missed her. He didn’t realize it until he actually saw her.

She gets up from her chair and the first thing he notices is her too-tight skirt and her too-tight blazer. He feels jealousy boil inside of him for a split second and he wonders who saw her in that meeting today wearing that. Did that sleazy accountant Loki see her? He never did trust that guy.

She strides around to the front of her desk and then Bucky’s already walking to stand in front of her, like a predator and prey.

Who was he kidding?

He looks down at her and he moans out loud. She was gorgeous and he wanted to eat her up right then and there.

He tried to remember if he locked the door behind him as he bites his lip and Ashlyn cups his face in her hands.

“I see you finally got your new office.” He smiles bright, his eyes crinkling at the sides.

“Mmmhmm,” she says, “I guess I did a good job.”
Bucky moans and slowly leans down, giving Ashlyn a soft but lingering kiss.

“I missed you.” He says once he’s pulled away from her.

Ashlyn smiles softly, “I missed you, too. Paris was amazing.”

“I’m glad you had a good time.”

She leans in once more and kisses him deeper this time. Her right arm goes around his neck as she pulls him closer and she takes advantage of the position their in to hoist herself onto her desk.

But it’s while he’s kissing her that he remembers why he’s here and what he had missed, because of her.

He pulls back suddenly and Ashlyn frowns at the unusual move. He looks down at the paper work on her desk - they’re copies of the agreement, similar to the ones he had back at home. His heart races a bit for some reason that he can’t identify and he moves slightly to the side of her to grab one of them.

He reads it for a second, his expression going hard.

“You told me the meeting was tomorrow. I should’ve been there, Ashlyn.” He says.

He looks back up at her, disapprovingly.

He feels her soft touch on his arm; it’s comforting.

“I am so sorry, Bucky. That’s what he had told me. There must’ve been a last-minute change or something.”

He ponders her words for a second and nods. She was trustworthy.

“It’s fine. I already spoke to Dad and he understood. He’s willing to give me one last chance. I just can’t be missing shit like this. This is really important to me now, you have to understand.”

His tone is serious and strict. This was different than how he always used to speak to her. He was usually sweet and delicate. This was demanding, this was business talk.

Ashlyn tilts her head and gives him soft puppy eyes, “I know, baby.”

Bucky sighs. He smiles at her and grabs her lightly by her side, bringing her closer to him.

“Good. Anyway. I got us a little something for our fourth month anniversary.”

Ashlyn’s face lights up immediately.

“No way.”

Bucky flashes her a grin as he reaches into his back pocket. He hopes she’s just as excited as he is when he finally gives it to her. Ashlyn had no idea what to expect.

She’s a little lost when he hands her two pieces of paper that say:

“Coldplay?” She asks, confused.

He smiles blissfully and his body is jittery, almost childlike, as he looked between the tickets and
her face awaiting her reaction, “Yeah, I figured it’s something safe. It’s not something little because we’ve been together for only a few months, but it’s not our six months yet. What do you think?”

He becomes hesitant to wanting an answer the longer she stares at the tickets. His stomach drops.

Bucky’s face and heart fall simultaneously. His legs tingle a bit and he bites his bottom lip, feeling his throat go dry. Slowly, he pulls it out of her grasp and takes the ticket back in his hand.

You. You were the one that told him this would be a good choice.

Ashlyn looks between the ticket and Bucky’s face and she becomes worried. Quickly, she perks up, snatching the ticket out of his hand, “I love it, thank you. I can’t wait to go with you.”

She kisses his cheek quickly and then tucks the ticket into her purse that was on her desk.

He’s surprised.

“Really?” He asks seriously, not really believing it.

“Yes, really. I remember them from my twilight fan girl days. Like, I remember some of their songs it’s all mixing together right now.”

Bucky smiles at her response.

“Y/N told me about that.”

“My sister?” She asks.

“Yeah, I asked her which show I should take you to and she said this one and why. Told me about the whole Twilight thing.” He gestures wildly with his right hand and a small smile.

Ashlyn smiles, “I’m glad you two are getting along.”

Quickly, his facial expression changes again and he starts looking back and forth between Ashlyn and the window outside. The whole Uber drive to the office, he had been thinking about how he would go about this. It would be one of his very first steps into trying to cut back from you and be smarter. Ashlyn should be there for you.

“Speaking of which,” He clears his throat knowing you would hate him for mentioning this to Ashlyn. But he had to, no matter how much he really had loved to had finally gained your trust. You seemed like a very cool girl to him and you were both getting along so well. He rubs the back of his neck nervously, “While you were in Paris she had been driving down I-95 when her car broke down on the side of the highway-” Ashlyn frowns.

“What?” She asks quickly.

“She called me for help so I had to get her car towed and all that. Point is, it was like midnight when I got to her. She really should not be out that late. What if I hadn’t answered?”

Ashlyn pushes herself away from her desk and Bucky and quickly goes around her desk, grabbing her phone, “Damn, I’ll talk to her, Bucky. I’ll give her a piece of my mind.”

“Oh, okay. That’d be good. She’s young and I get worried about her sometimes.”

Ashlyn is extremely preoccupied to pay attention to what Bucky just said as she types away from a
wordy text message to you on her phone. She was telling you how irresponsible you were and how you could’ve died. Ashlyn runs a hand through her hair as she tosses it back, taking a deep breath.

Bucky’s eyes drift from her to her bag where she now crumpled Coldplay ticket was.

He knew that bag. His eyes furrow as he feels doubt.

“Did you get a new bag?”

“Huh?” She looks up and follows his gaze that is on her bag on the desk. She smiles shyly, “Oh yea, your dad got it for me. He said it’d win Hank over something. It worked.”

“Oh. No yea, it’s nice.”

To say you were pissed was probably the biggest understatement of your year. You were blinded by anger as you read your sister’s text. Your cheeks felt like they were on fire and your hands were slightly shaking as you held your phone.

She was yelling at you like you were a child.

Why the hell would Bucky tell her all that? Was it all even necessary?

After Nat had left her to follow up meeting with the other agents, she had called you and asked if you wanted to grab some early dinner and maybe have a couple of margaritas. You guys were having a great time, that was until the accusing text came up on your phone.

How could you be so irresponsible?

Followed up but an additional rant on what you had done a few days ago while she was away.

After your rage started to dissipate a bit and you decided to take a deep breath before writing out a reply, Nat had reminded you that that’s just how Bucky is. He likes to watch out for people and maybe he didn’t think she’d react that way. She tried desperately to calm your nerves, but it wasn’t helping a whole lot.

You knew the real reason you were so distraught.

You told her this and she gave you a look that was a mixture between confused and curious.

Truth is, the reason you were so upset wasn’t even because Bucky had snitched on you or because your sister was yelling at you like you were a child.

Up until the death of your parents, you and your sister got along okay. Well, as much as a fourteen and an eighteen-year-old possibly could. You would occasionally argue back and forth over who’s turn it was to watch tv and who ate the last of the cereal- things like that. For a sister, Ashlyn was great at certain things, like giving advice for boys, helping you do your makeup and hair for the middle school dance - where, by the way, you weren’t asked to dance once -and keeping you safe. When your parents would go away for the weekend, Ashlyn wasn’t the kind to throw a party. Instead, she’d make sure you both had a nice warm dinner ready. Usually, it would be a take out from your favorite Thai place or Japanese.

Your favorite memories with her, though, would be when you and your parents would go on random long car rides upstate blasting oldies with the windows down. All four windows would be down at the same time while your dad went fifty and the wind would circulate through out the
entire car. The breeze was refreshing from the 90 degree summer days.

“You girls will remember this one day.” He had said.

Your relationship was happy. Those days were happy days.

After the accident, something seemed to have changed in Ashlyn. Her mind almost seemed to have slowed down and she became slightly distant. She would go out more, she would spend more hours at work, she wishes she would be there to help you when your boy troubles appeared, but sometimes it just wasn’t possible. She wasn’t as helpful as she used to be. By the time you were eighteen, you were the one cooking dinner almost every night. There were no more take-outs, no more talk about mom and dad and you both drifted apart drastically.

You both fought more and your entire life, in general, seemed to have gone down the shit hole.

When you turned twenty, things got a little better. Maybe it was the fact that you were both in your twenties so you both had more in common than you realized. There were more movie nights, shorter days at work, and more girl talks at night.

But it was still tense. Ashlyn would never be the same Ashlyn that she was after her parents died and that was something you had to come to terms with.

So this, her yelling at you, it wasn’t anything out of the ordinary. You’ve both done this plenty of times. That’s not why you were upset.

You decided to just ask Ashlyn if you could stop by to talk about it. She immediately agreed to the idea.

Which is how you, Nat, Ashlyn, Bucky, and Steve all ended up crowded around her apartment. Bucky and Steve sat in the living room talking about the new deal while Ashlyn was popping open a bottle of wine for everyone to celebrate the new deal with Pym.

Steve’s gaze kept going back to you involuntarily every time he’d move his head. Truth is, he thought you were beautiful.

Contrary to what you might have believed when he found out about what you had been through, it actually made him admire you even more. From the moment he saw you in that Chipotle, he knew you were different. And when he had brought you for the tour in the house and he saw how shy you were, he was captivated by your slight insecurity. You were gorgeous and confident and you didn’t even know it. You could easily take a man’s breath away, just like you did his.

He quietly waited for the moment to finally ask you out. When you were ready, of course.

“Just wait a bit longer,” Bucky had told Steve. Steve looked down, his cheeks going red. Bucky pushed him playfully on his arm, “and stop being so obvious, you idiot.”

Steve looked up at him with a serious look, cheeks still red. Bucky thought it was adorable how much Steve liked you and he loved teasing him about it. Honestly, he couldn’t wait until it happened. He had a good feeling about it.

Bucky looked down and pulled some lint off his legs, “Actually, it’s kinda too late for that now. The whole world knows you want her.” He says.

Steve slightly chuckles. He looks up at you and he finds it adorable how you keep swaying back and forth, your chin resting in your hand as you looked up at your big sister. His face turned
serious.

“It’s just,” He looked up at you as you stood there with Ashlyn and Nat, “There’s something about her.”

Bucky’s eyes went to Ashlyn at his words and he smiled slightly. He got what Steve was saying. There could always be little signs he and there telling him that he should second guess moving so quickly with Ashlyn, but just one look at her took that all away.

He loved her. He cherished her.

You didn’t know what was happening right behind you. Instead, you were waiting for your sister to blow at you the same way she had over the phone.

Nat looked between you and Ashlyn with a tense expression, not really sure how this conversation would go.

“So,” Nat says before she takes a sip of her red wine, “good day, huh?”

Ashlyn looked up from pouring her glass of wine to Nat and then to you. She looked back down and cleared her throat.

You perked a brow at her silence.

“Wow, you had so much to say before and now nothing?” You roll your eyes, “Not surprising.”

Ashlyn let out a long breath as she placed her glass down and then crossed her arms over her chest, evidently upset with you. She gave you a scowl, much like a mother would.

“You shouldn’t be out like that. Especially when I’m not even in town. We both know your car is a piece of crap, Y/N. It’s not the first time it happened.”

This made you absolutely fume. It was obvious she was going to go straight for the kill.

“Well, I’m sorry but I wasn’t expecting Bucky to freakin snitch on me, Ashlyn.” You mumble avoiding looking at her and instead at your own glass.

“Great, you used the word *snitch* so you know that what you did was wrong.”

You shook your head to yourself because you were so annoyed and in disbelief. Everything about your sister made you always stressed out. If it wasn’t the choices she made it was the things she said or how she never would think.

You licked your lips and let out a snarl. You blinked a few times and then looked up at Nat who looked slightly uncomfortable being in that situation between you two. Then, you looked at Ashlyn who was expecting an answer from you. She had one eyebrow perked and a hip jutted out as if saying *explain.*

You chuckle coldly.

“Do you even want to know what it was that I was doing that night?” You say in a low and menacing tone.

Ashlyn scoffs. “Yeah. What exactly were you doing? Looking for another guy to shack up with?” You felt your cheeks heat up and your chest burn. Your nostrils fumed as your lips pursed into a thin line. You couldn’t believe she would stoop so low, “Please don’t tell me you were trying to get
an anguished look came on her face as she rubbed it, “For the love of God.”

Her tone was louder this time and it had caught everyone’s attention. Bucky and Steve immediately turned to you both, concerned.

You felt tears build in the back of your throat at her accusation.

“Really?” You asked in disbelief. You didn’t trust your voice, you were either going to lose it and cry or lose it and scream. Right now, you didn’t want to cause a scene.

She gave you a long and cold glare.

“Honestly, I wouldn’t put it past you. Look at Brock. And now Eddie. That’s just who you are. I wouldn’t put it past you to be so reckless and irresponsible.”

“Wow, after all these years I finally thought we had a common ground. I thought that what we had was actually healthy again.”

She gave you a confused look as if you both haven’t been living the same life for the last almost ten years.

“What are you talking about?” She asks cluelessly.

Your eyebrows furrow together in confusion.

“Are you kidding, Ashlyn? You never cared about me when I was in high school. And now all of a sudden you want to treat me like a child?” You arms motioned to the room around you. This was it, you were losing your cool. “Are you trying to impress your new friends? This whole caring act really isn’t fooling me so don’t try to fool them.”

Ashlyn gave you a could glare and then she looked at everyone else as well. She couldn’t believe what she was hearing.

Of course, she knew how close you two used to be and how things changed after your parent’s death. But you had to understand how hard that was for her, you just had to. She felt her own throat burn. She remembers those days when you would both do each other’s makeup in the bathroom and your mom would scream from the kitchen that dinner was ready.

Of course, she remembered, and she cared. She went to your bed side that nights after your middle school’s dance after no boy had asked you to dance and she had told you how special you were that night.

After mom and dad, things changed. She knew that, and it always bothered her.

She looks back at you.

“I can’t believe you really thought I didn’t care about you.”

“You changed ever since Mom and dad died.” You snap back.

The room burned intense silence. One of the boys cleared their throats but you weren’t sure who.

There were tears pooling in your eyes nows as you say through your clenched teeth, “That’s why I’m angry, Ashlyn. It’s not because of how you are treating me right now, or because Bucky snitched on me, he’s my friend. I know he was looking out for me. I’m freakin’ mad because I can’t believe you forgot.”
Silence.

“What are you talking about Y/N?”

Vivid images of your parents pop into your head and you feel a tear, and then two, drop onto your cheeks. You rub them away quickly.

“It was mom and dad’s anniversary,"

Ashlyn’s expression and tone totally changes in that instant as it clicks. Her mouth opens slightly and her shoulders relax. But you weren’t, you were heartbroken over the fact that she didn’t get it.

You take a deep breath and look her dead in the eye, “I was visiting their grave that night. I was leaving mom her Lillies and dad his Yankee cap. The stupid hat kept flying away and I had to find a way to keep it down. It took me a half-hour.”

With that, you stormed out of the room.

After about twenty minutes of calming down in your sister’s obnoxiously pretty bathroom, you decided to walk out. You knew it would feel awkward at first which is why you decided that the best destination from there would be her terrace.

You turn off the bathroom light behind you and you walk down the long hallway towards the voices which have gotten significantly louder. It was clear that the sad and awkward moment between siblings had passed and everyone had changed the subject. You were partially thankful for that.

The first one to see you emerge from the hallway was Steve.

He did a double-take when he saw you standing there and the sides of his lips perked up.

“Hey you,” he gestured to the table, “We’re all attempting to make some home made pasta if you wanna join?”

The invitation was sweet and humble. That’s everything that Steve was. You smile at him and clear your throat as you step further into the kitchen.

Bucky looks between you and Ashlyn and he still sees the lingering tension there and he feels bad. He didn’t want this to happen. He just wanted Ashlyn to show that she did care for you.

“Yea, Y/N, it’ll be fun,” Nat adds.

You give a slight smile, still avoiding eye contact with your sister. You eye the terrace through the glass doors in the living room.

“In a bit. I’m just gonna grab some fresh air, okay?”

“Yeah.” “Sure.” “Mhm.”

Bucky watches as you struggle to open the glass door at first. Stupid thing wouldn’t even budge! You realize you didn’t unlock it on the hatch you cover your face with your hair embarrassingly.

Bucky looks back at Ashlyn just in time for her to make a comment, “I feel awful.”
Nat comforting rubs her back, “It’ll be okay. You guys just need to talk things out.”

Bucky agrees with this, but he gets another idea. He knows he promised to keep distance, but he knows he needs to do this. He doesn’t know why but he gets a feeling.

He really needed to stop getting those.

He quickly reaches over the bowl of dough and grabs one of the chips that everyone had been snacking on. Except he grabbed one off of Ashlyn’s plate.

Ashlyn raises a brow at him over her lashes and gives him a smirk.

“Really?”

Bucky smirks as he tosses the chip into his mouth and then gives her a wink.

“Bucky’s a fucking idiot.” Nat retorts, “Surprised you didn’t learn that yet.”

Steve tosses his head back in laughter.

Bucky finishes his chip and then gives Nat a playful smile.

“Kiss my ass, Romanoff.”

Everyone laughs for a bit and then Bucky turns back one more time towards the glass doors and sees you sitting there on one of the benches, playing with the sleeve of your long shirt.

He wipes his hands on his jeans and then gets up from his stool.

“Babe, I’m gonna go outside for a bit,” Ashly looks up questionably and then she also looks out at you. Bucky doesn’t miss Nat’s weird look and he’s prepared for this which is when he adds, “I’m just gonna try and make her feel better. You can thank me later.” He gives Ashlyn a suggestive wink that makes her blush.

You’re slightly startled by the soft knock you hear on your side of the glass door that leads out to the terrace. It was a gorgeous terrace, the floors were dark wood and the outdoor furniture were brown with green cushions and there was a decent size jacuzzi on the side.

You look up and you’re slightly surprised to see Bucky standing there.

He bites his bottom lip nervously and then looks over to the other chair on the opposite side.

You catch on and without him having to say anything you wave your left hand to the chair, gesturing for him to take a seat.

He smiles and closes the door behind him.

He sits down and you look over at him. He had a blue plaid shirt that were rolled at the elbows and his jawline was sharp and determined as he stared out into the city. You watched as a gentle late August wind came and softly blew one of his hairs onto his forehead- a small imperfection.

You smiled to yourself.

You and your sister fought a lot and you knew this one would blow over eventually, but you had to admit that your sister did deserve Bucky. He was everything that she wasn’t. He was calm, he was
gentle, and he always had both his feet on the ground. He was careless and he loved McDonalds and John Mayer. You wondered what else he liked.

You’re lost in your thoughts when Bucky snaps his head to look at you, but this time his face is serious and a bit sad.

“Y/N,” he starts softly. He moves his seat closer to you and rests both his arms on his legs as he leans closer to you, “I’m sorry, I didn’t know…”

He doesn’t have to finish for you both to know what he’s talking about.

The edge of your sweater drags across your cheek as you rub the tears that are dried there. You rest your chin on your hand as you rested your elbow on your knee and you looked away from him and out towards the city.

You were hurt. Her words hurt you.

You take a deep breath and say, “Of course. You didn’t know. How could you know?”

Except that he should’ve. He shouldn’t have been so rude with you when he picked you up, he should’ve asked you what you were doing calmly like a real friend would. He went about it all the wrong way and he knew this, it’s why it bothered him so much.

You click your tongue as you turn to face him. His face is looking at you intently, deep in thought, “I just can’t believe she brought Brock and Eddie up, ya know? She knows how upset I get about that stuff. She can be so cold sometimes.” Your voice is a tremble and you run your hand through your hair, tossing it back a bit.

For the first time in a long time, you felt comfortable talking to another person in this manner. Sure, you had Nat now, but that was different. That was girl talks and talking about kinky things and laughter. This was real shit stuff. Sure, Bucky had outed you out that day at The Plaza but you realized that he was looking out for you. And since then, Steve hasn’t backed off from you. He’s just been more calm and less on top of you, and you admired that.

Which is why you felt so comfortable with Bucky now. But as you looked at him and how innocent he was you didn’t get how someone could fall for someone else when they were both completely different.

“You know, she didn’t even care to remember. They would’ve been married thirty five years.”

The look he gives you isn’t sad, it’s sympathetic, and it’s a slight smile.

“I miss them so much, Bucky. I don’t understand how she doesn’t. Like, I get that she’s your girl and all, but there’s so much you still don’t know, I think.”

And perhaps you’re right, but Bucky knows that those details will come out with time. Right now, out here, his main focus was you and Ashlyn.

His voice is still almost as low as a whisper as he looks closely at you, “I’m sure she does care just as much, Y/N. You can’t say she doesn’t just because it didn’t enter her mind in that moment. Your safeness was the first thing on her mind when I told her about you. Everything else got clouded up.”

You ponder that for a second. You narrow your eyes at him.
“Why did you tell her?”

“Because she should be there to protect you. You need someone there to protect you.” He says it as if it’s obvious, “Unfortunately, with siblings, things will always be a rollercoaster ride, but the one thing that should never change is your love for each other.”

“I understand.”

And you do. You had to talk to Ashlyn and figure stuff out, things had to be better again. Your thoughts quickly lift from that to another topic, “Thank you for that, by the way. For bringing my car back to my house all fixed. I just think it’s hilarious that she called my car a piece of crap, it’s like she’s never seen yours.”

He places a hand dramatically on his chest, playing offended, “What? Hey!”

You chuckle and it’s a sweet sound.

His face falls for a second in shame and you observe it. You roll your eyes when you sense why he reacted that way. You couldn’t believe it.

“She’s never seen your car?” You burst out laughing.

He avoid eye contact for a bit and pokes at his own sleeve.

“Ashlyn ain’t gonna care. I know her.” He mumbles.

“Yeah, okay.” You say sarcastically. You both knew the answer to that.

The sadness was now gone as you both smiled slightly.

“I still can’t believe you did this for her.”

He looked up as you gestured around the city, the terrace, and her million dollar loft.

“Yeah, well, love makes you do crazy things sometimes.”

The response is so sweet that for a second you miss that feeling.

“But this for me is nothin’, ya know? Not that I’m sayin’ I got her less than what I could’ve but I know what some people might think knowin’ I did this for her. But they just need to understand where it comes from. My dad did the same for my mother.”

You notice his New York accent slip in for a split second and you note of that for later when you tease him. The comment about his mother makes you smile, though. Is this what he thought about your sister? You look at the massive life he’s given her and you think about the statement he just made.

He really did love Ashlyn.

Maybe you just had to learn to love the same things about her that he did.

“You’re an ass for that by the way.” You reach out and push him playfully, “Friends aren’t supposed to snitch on their own friends. Have you never had a friend?”
Bucky laughs out loud and then excitedly does a mini dance.

“Yes! We’re friends!”

You gave him a smile as your eyes crinkled at the sides, “Duh, you idiot.”

You and Bucky sat for a bit longer next to each other just looking out into the city and taking in the sounds of Lower Manhattan.

You couldn’t deny it, this was nice. Maybe one day even you could move out here. Obviously, your apartment wouldn’t be as massive and it wouldn’t be in this part of town, but Manhattan didn’t sound so bad anymore.

You were deep in your thoughts when his gaze traveled to you. You always did that, he noted - daydreamed a lot.

“You know, I miss my mom, too.” It just comes out.

His comment catches you off guard and you snap your attention to him.

“Sometimes I feel like she’s still here. It pains me so much when I remember how she was treated in her last moments.”

You can literally feel the emotion in his voice and it physically pains you.

“It wasn’t your fault, Bucky. As far as everyone knows, you are a hero. I’m sure she thought so, too.”

Bucky freezes as he perks a brow at your comment.

“You know about me?” He’s uncertain the way he asks, almost like he didn’t want a response.

You look at him like he’s dumb. Of course, you knew what everyone else in this country knew. Even your parents and your sister knew who he and his family was. What kind of question even was that?

You start nodding and then Ashlyn appears at the door to the deck with Nat standing next to her.

“How we doing out here?” Ashlyn asks, hopeful. She stares a you suggestively a little longer.

You give her a slight smile, “We’re okay.”

Nat looks between you and Bucky and then at the phone in her hand, her smile is huge and excited. Bucky’s face is still contorted into a thoughtful expression.

Judging by Ashlyn’s smile she also knows what Nat is looking at and what she is about to announce.

“So,” Nat starts, “who wants to go to Sydney next week?”
Starlight raining over me
Like drifting through a memory
Wake up in your crystal sky
We're floating just to feel alive
Still Falling For You

Chapter Summary

Bucky starts having weird doubts. Y/N learns what happened to Bucky's arm. Her opinions about him changes drastically. fluffy feels. -sister crushing on her sister's bf trigger warning-

Chapter Notes

So this chapter is a shorter one, kind of a transition into the reader's opinion about Bucky. The next chapter is going to be a BIG one and I already have most of it done, so that one will come fairly quickly. Maybe tomorrow or another day this week.

Keep me alive, make me cold
Carve me up, and I will shine

“He was helping a group of Israeli children escape the orphanage that was being bombed.”

“The kids had made it safely onto the refuge truck, but they took him before he could get on.”

“His arm was merely hanging off by the nerves.”

“Miraculously, they were all intact.”

Sydney, Australia

Steve was finishing rubbing tanning lotion down your back when your gaze drifts over to Bucky and Ashlyn. Ashlyn was folding her towel and grabbing her sunglasses off the concrete ground of the pooling deck when you see Bucky unbuttoning his white dress shirt, revealing smooth skin.

You do a double-take as you take the lotion bottle from Steve. You realize this is the first time you’ve seen him without a shirt. He hadn’t gone swimming in Montauk, so naturally, as a woman, you were a bit caught off guard by the manscape.

He was somewhat tan, his nipples significantly darker than the rest of his body, and it was obvious he worked out. He had subtle abs and toned arms that you never noticed before because they were always hidden under Henleys and plaid shirts.
But that wasn’t why you couldn’t look away. It was the rugged scars that started on his arm, just below his left shoulder.

They were deep, careless, spastic, and looked painful. You noticed him look down at it himself for a brief second as if wondering if he should put his shirt back on or not. He was self-conscious.

He quickly decided against it and sat down on the chair and grabbed his own sunscreen out of his backpack that sat on the floor between his feet.

You note another scar just below his armpit, it was deep and ran across towards the front of his chest but faded out just to the left of his nipple. As he sat back up, he involuntarily made eye contact with you, noticing your gaze on his scars. You were staring and he caught you. His eyes were emotionless as he still for a moment.

You felt the heat rise in your cheeks and you quickly looked away, ashamed.

You could feel his gaze still on you as you pretended to turn around to thank Steve for his help.

The moment passes and Bucky ends up laying on the chair for a bit, taking in a quick tan and some vitamin D while the other girls were on the poolside sipping their cocktails and giggling. You could hear the laughter through the air and the splashing of water.

You laid next to Steve who was also taking in some of the sun’s rays. You didn’t want to admit it out loud, but the truth was that you didn’t want to admit that you were waiting for Bucky to leave so you could ask Steve the question that had been swirling in your head.

It takes about 45 minutes for that to finally happen. Ashlyn jumps out of the water and grabs onto his hand trying to drag Bucky in. She manages to pull him from his nap on the chair and to the pool.

You wait until he’s out of ears length and with that you snap your head up from where it was resting on your crossed arms to look over at Steve. Before you can even get a word in he’s already talking. His eyes are closed tight, a small damp white towel draped lightly over them, and his mouth is in a straight line.

“He got it in the war.” He mumbles into the air. It was obvious that he was over relaxed and swaying in and out of a doze.

You gape at him, “What? How’d you-“

His eye remains closed and his feet are crossed at the ankles, his arms behind his head. He looked gorgeous as he laid tanning in the hot Aussie sun, taking all the glorious sunlight that God had to offer him.

“You were staring so hard, it was practically inappropriate.” He says casually.

What? There’s no way. You were trying so hard not to make it obvious. You feel your face turn a crimson shade once more.

“What? No, I wasn’t.” Your tone doesn’t even convince yourself. Crap.

He smirks when your voice falters for a second, losing all confidence.

He pokes an eye at you, “Kidding. But everyone always wonders when they see it, I just figured that’s where you were going.”
You feel less embarrassed for a second, realizing by Steve’s words that you weren’t the only one who has stared and asked. In that second, you kind of felt bad for Bucky. Really, you hadn’t meant to stare, but they just looked so painful. Who did that him? Did they always ask Steve since he was his best friend? Or did they usually ask Bucky?

You felt inappropriate asking Bucky himself. It just felt so personal like a violation of privacy.

“So…what happened?” You asked hesitantly. Did you want to know?

“I’m sure he can tell you the details himself. But basically, it’s from when he was in Afghanistan.”

You head bows down in slightly shame, of course, it is. You should’ve known, how could you forget? You don’t know why you didn’t put two and two together. You knew he had been deployed years ago and you knew about how he had been lost in the desert and it took months to find him. But you distinctly remember them saying that he was fine and nothing bad happened to him- if anything, he was a huge hero for surviving without a scratch.

So you were very confused by it all.

You don’t ask Steve any further questions and instead decided to ask Nat the next time you saw her.

Bucky sat at the edge of the pool with his back turned to you, his legs swaying in the cool chlorine water. After arguing with Ashlyn about not wanting to go in, she eventually gave up with a pout and let him be. He just wasn’t in the mood to go swimming right now, he had a lot going on in his head.

It wasn’t that he thought Ashlyn didn’t love your parents, of course, she did, but Y/N did have a point. There were a couple of things that you had said during your fight that kept him on edge. Did Ashlyn really not remember it was their anniversary? Did she really abandon you emotionally during your entire high school Career? What didn’t he know?

That bag he saw in Ashlyn’s office, his mother used to own one similar. He was just a little boy when he went with her to go get her own in London. It was a five thousand dollar bag at the time. Why did Ashlyn have one? He knew Ashlyn wasn’t the kind of girl to care about stuff like that. Even if it was his father that bought one for her, that would be extremely out of line, it wasn’t even near her pay rate.

He knew he was overthinking it, but he kept thinking about that damn bag.

But there was an even bigger thing that stood out to him that he just couldn’t shake. He kept thinking it as he watched Ashlyn, Nat, and Wanda sip on their rum buckets and laughing out loud in the deeper end. Ashlyn threw her head back, a big smile on her face, her boobs bouncing as she chuckled.

Bucky smiled.

She was damn gorgeous and there wasn’t a moment where he didn’t want to suck on them- his smile falters - except for right then and there.

You had known who he was, you made that confession when you said you knew what happened to his mother. And yes somehow Ashlyn didn’t know?

As if Ashlyn knew Bucky was thinking about her, she turned her head to face Bucky and she gave him a big smile. Bucky gave her a slight one back and a small wave. He didn’t know how he
would go about this. If he should ask her directly. But maybe he shouldn’t even dwell on it, to begin with, Ashlyn wouldn’t lie, she was perfect- an angel.

Instead, he could ask you.

He involuntarily rubs his left arm, his eyebrows shuffling together.

You had been staring at his scars. His ugly defying scars. He should be used it by now, its been years, but he wasn’t.

You left the pool with Steve arm in arm (in a platonic way of course), laughing your asses off as you took funny selfies. You both had come to term with the current state of your relationship and you were both contents with whatever it was. He was a great friend, he always read you like a book, and he always knew the right things to say.

After the pool, you all went out to the yacht that would leave the Sidney bay at sunset.

The gust of the ocean felt amazing against your freshly burnt skin, the taste of curly fries still fresh on your tongue.

The girls were taking extra posed pictures to post on their Instagram while you sat with Steve, laid back with your feet up taking in the sway of the boat.

This love is like fire and ice
This love is like rain and blue skies
This love is like sun on the rise

You had looked up and seen Bucky holding Ashlyn from behind as they both stared into the Australian sunset. He wasn’t shirtless anymore as he now wore a white t-shirt.

Steve sat next to you and elbowed you playfully. You looked down and saw him offering you a burger slider which you gladly took with a big smile.

But you couldn’t help but let your gaze drift up once more towards the happy couple, you smile sliding off your face. There was more to the picture than what everyone could see, you knew it the moment you saw his arm.

You felt pity and still not knowing what had happened to him bothered you.

You shook your head, trying to distract yourself with something else. You looked over at Steve with a smile, “You guys do this every year?”

“Actually, at least three times a year. For the end of summer, New years, and then right after July fourth.”

You rolled your eyes with a chuckle, “Jeez, you'll are extra.”

Steve laughed as you both looked around the boat as it sped up even faster against the tide. The Sydney sun felt amazing on your skin. The laughter of your new friends, mixed with the smell of Chanel perfume with sea salt, barbecue, and maybe a shot of whiskey, left you with a feeling of content and enjoyment.

It was amazing.
This life was amazing.

“Admit it, you love it.”

You bit your lip at how true his statement was. You couldn’t believe you were enjoying this.

It was almost the like sound of the music went up in that moment and you got instant goosebumps upon your arm.

You saw your sister reach her hand out for you to stand up. You looked up at her with bright eyes and then you looked over at Bucky who was smiling and gesturing with his head for you to take her hand.

“I can’t dance, Ashlyn! I need at least some alcohol first.” Everyone chuckled and you saw Nat hand you a glass of something pink. You perked a brow at her.

“Take it, Y/N!”

Screw it.

You don’t know what it was, all you knew was that it was delicious and the rest of the night was the most fun you had in years.

You didn’t want it to end, but unfortunately, it had to at some time.

It was 11 pm and everyone else had already gone to bed except for you and Nat. Both of your hairs were pulled to the side from your late showers after scrubbing the chlorine and ocean water out of it.

You still couldn’t believe you jumped off the side of the boat. You had never done that before.

Nat was giving you a smirk.

“You glowed in the Australian sun today, Y/N. You both get along well.”

You smiled at Nat’s words as you stared at her across the island.

You couldn’t complain you were getting used to this life - it was fun. It was crazy how much you were beginning to love your new friends, and you couldn’t wait to be back New Years.

Your face falls as you remember what had happened earlier at the pool when you had seen Bucky take off his shirt. You look down and clear your throat.

“Nat I need to ask you something.”

She gives you a questioning look.

“What's up?”

You weren’t sure how to ask it, but then you realized that there just wasn’t an easy way to ask it. You had to just ask it.

“At the pool today I noticed Bucky’s arm, and I know it’s probably something really personal and private but they look,” You looked up to see her eyes lost in a trance as if you touched a really touchy subject. Shit.
“Like something really bad happened to him.”

Nat looked around the permitters and then cleared her own throat.

“He doesn’t really like to talk about it. Trust me if it’s something he wants to tell you, he will himself when he is ready.”

You understood that you did, but you couldn’t help but overthink it all. Which is why you can’t even stop the next phrase from leaving your mouth before it does.

“What happened in Afghanistan? He didn’t just get lost did he?”

Nat gave you a hard look, it was almost angry and furious.

“Like I said, Y/N,” her tone was stern, “he has to be the one to tell you.”

You didn’t mean to poke a nerve. You tried to justify yourself as much as possible.

“I just feel bad. Obviously, he was very hurt.”

Nat got up from her stool, “Look I’m gonna get to bed. As I said, he will tell you. That’s not my place.”

You nodded shortly, “Okay. Thanks, Nat.”

You didn’t mean to make Nat upset. You sit there with your own thoughts for a few minutes taking in the conditions of which your life sat in this very moment.

You still couldn’t believe any of it.

You smiled to yourself. In that instant, your phone dinged on the counter. You unlocked it to see a text from Steve.

*Goodnight buddy*

You bit your bottom lip as your smiled widened.

You see something in your peripheral vision and you almost jump up in surprise before you notice it’s Bucky turning the corner from the hallway into the living area. He doesn’t look so amused as he walks right past you and to the cupboard next to the fridge.

“Oh, hey. I didn’t know you were up.” You say nervously over the sound of cardboard and plastic shuffling. It was obvious he was trying to be obnoxious with his movements, nobody is that loud when messing through cardboard. Your eyes don’t leave the corner in which he was just standing moments ago. You were screwed, did he hear you?

You look to your left to see him digging his arm into the box of Frosted Flakes. He glared at you.

He shrugs, his face still giving you a not amused look, “Been here for a while actually. Couldn’t sleep. But didn’t wanna interrupt, ya know, your little girl chat.”

He wasn’t sure why he was so upset. It wasn’t just that he hated when people talked about him behind his back, but he especially didn’t like it when it was out of pity. But especially you. He had no idea why you wanted to act as you cared. Or maybe it was because he didn’t know how to react to someone caring that wasn’t his long-time friends or family. Even Ashlyn, when she had seen them, she didn’t try too much. And he liked that.
It didn’t bring back good memories if anything it was disrespectful.

He shoved another fist of dry cereal into his mouth as the realization hits your face. He had heard your conversation with Nat, it was so obvious.

You looked down, embarrassed.

“Bucky—“

He shrugged once more. It was clear he was trying to not look like it bothered him, but it was obvious it did.

He munched on his cereal loudly, still glaring at you.

“It’s okay to be curious. It’s just why?” He spats once more, “It’s just, it’s not really your business, ya know?” One more shrug.

You were momentarily caught off guard by his cold demeanor.

You cleared your throat and looked away from him, trying to hide your hurt expression

“I didn’t mean to offend you, Bucky.” Really, you hadn’t. “I thought we were friends.”

You get up from your seat and it’s obvious that he thought you were about to walk out of that kitchen and not mention it ever again. That was his intention, but that’s not what you do.

You walk up to him until you’re standing right in front of him. He looks down at you, curious and taken aback by your brave action.

You narrowed your brows up at him, nothing but hard determination on your face. You didn’t like when people put words in your mouth and you weren't going to now.

You saw right through his tough stance. You saw him visibly gulp at your stance, you didn’t even blink.

“They looked painful.” Your voice is serious and filled with emotion.

Your words and the way you said them, and the look you gave him while you said it, made him gulp once more.

“Yeah,” he voice comes out in a broken whisper, “Yeah they were.”

You look at his covered arm, “I understand that you don’t want to tell me yet, I do,” then you look back at his face, “But I hope that one day that opinion changes.”

You wait there, searching his eyes for any answer, but they’re blank. Just when you thought he was a friend you could easily read, you were proven wrong. You let out a long sigh and turn around to walk away from him.

You don’t expect the hand that catches your arm before you walk away.

You looked down surprised by his move. You were so sure he wasn’t going to say much else.

“Why are you so curious about me, Y/N?” His voice is broken and you noticed the tint of surprise and empathy in them. You wonder this, did no one ever show interest in his well being before?
The answer was simple.

“You’re my friend, Bucky. I shouldn’t be any different than all your other friends. I came to freakin Australian with you guys, and I’m the only one that knows nothing.”

“It’s not that I don’t trust you. I don’t like talking about it.”

His heart fell as he watched disappointment make your shoulders slump.

“Y/N,” His voice is a sad whisper and it makes you swallow hard, “You don’t want to know, Y/N.”

Your breathing picked up and your teeth clenched.

“I do.”

And so he does. He tells you everything. He tells you about how he was captured and what they did to him while he was taken. Apparently, his only scars weren’t just on his shoulder, but in other parts of his body too. He gives you excruciating details that make you shiver.

“It was a miracle they were able to salvage it.” He blinks away the heat in his eyes as he plays with the cereal box in his hands, “When they found me it was hanging off by the nerves and some muscle. Took years of physical therapy to go back to somewhat some normality.”

“If you want to read more they’re all in a file locked in the tower, blocked by two guards. My parents didn’t want the public to know. Something about ruining the Barnes image.” He answers your question when he notices you frown. Your heart falls slightly at this statement. He sets the frosted flakes box between his legs, you were both now sitting across from each other on the kitchen floor, “Almost as if I was pathetic or something.

“Fuck,” He throws his head back against the cabinet in disbelief, “I was their own child, ya know?”

You look sadly at him as he runs at hand through his hair. It was obvious why he didn’t like talking about this.

“But you’re not pathetic.” You say simply.

He scoffs.

“I might not be pathetic, but I’m also certainly not a hero.”

“Bucky, you survived months of pure human torture and look at where you are now.” You gestured around you.

Bucky looks at you for a second in amazement. After all that and you still thought he wasn’t pathetic? He looks at your hands fidgeting in your lap and for once in his life he decides to maybe accept that he could be a hero of some sort. He looks down at his own hands now and nods.

An overwhelming amount of terrible and sad emotions fill his heart. You notice as he takes a deep breath, soft tears on his water line.

“Bucky?”

You don’t expect it to come out so softly, but it does.

His eyes snap to you and the look in them surprises you. It’s filled with heartbreak and sorrow.
“You wanna know what I was doing before I was caught?” There are tears in his voice when he asks you angrily. But you knew he wasn’t angry with you, he was angry at the situation, he was angry at whatever it was he was about to tell you.

“I was helping a group of Israeli children onto a school bus to escape the orphanage that was being bombed.”

He shakes his head as he looks up at the ceiling, those events playing in the eyes of his mind.

His answer leaves you numb and with another feeling, you can’t quite pinpoint. This man in front of you, he was nothing you thought he was. He had a heart of gold. You’re speechless. Your heart hammers away inside of you as the many emotions flicker over his face.

He laughs painfully, “And you know what? Even though I laid there dying, bleeding out from all parts of my body, feeling the pain that no man should ever feel, I was happy.” Wait, what? “I was happy because I was able to save everyone one of those little kids. I’m glad it was me and not them.”

You feel the tips of your fingers tingle and your palms sweating. You wanted to snatch them off your lap and give him a hug. How could someone be so selfless, so unselfish?

This boy that sat in front of you - the one you thought was conceited, spoiled, and privileged- he was anything but.

And just like that
All I feel is you
All I feel is you
You are all for me
Breathe

Chapter Summary

finally. feelings. strong language.

$I found New York laying in your arms$
$We'll melt into the bedroom floor$
$Never knew I'd stay for so long$

One year later.

New York City, *New York*

“I just think it’s interesting that you knew who I was, yet you said that the first moment you saw me you had no idea who I was,” He looked back at you with a contagious smug smile, “and dare is say, you thought I was cute.”

You roll your eyes. He was such an annoying tease sometimes and it made you blush how much his accusation was true.

“Shut up, Barnes! It was a momentary lapse,” You threw your hand up defensively, that cocky smirk still on his face, “anyone could’ve thought that about you if you were mentally slow like I was at the time. I was starving. Also, they never showed a lot of you on TV,” you point a finger in his face, “at least not as much as your parents.”

He sighs happily.

“Well, fine. I’ll let it slide.”

You chuckle, finally taking in the serenity of the comfortable silence in the parked car in the dark. You couldn’t help that high that you felt in your tummy when he bit his lip and shook his head at your silliness.

Your smile grew involuntarily, “You’re an idiot,” You looked outside your window and to Ashlyn’s apartment building. It was taunting and it stuck in your face like a big middle finger, “remind me again why we’re here and why you made me wear a dress?”
He looks outside his own car window.

“I’m surprising your sister with the best birthday party she’s ever been to. She thinks we’re just going out to eat, but no.”

Your head snapped to face him in disbelief. He always did things like this, he always seemed to pull great ideas out of his ass and transform them into gestures that were too pure and great.

“No way, what did you do?”

The side of his lip perked up.

“I just pulled some few strings- invited some highly important people.”

The kind of boyfriend he was never fazed to amaze you. For a moment you feel jealous. You wondered what it felt like to be treated the way he treated Ashlyn. The sad part was that Ashlyn took it for granted, it was like she didn’t appreciate what she had right in front of her.

You blink quickly and swallow the dry lump that had formed.

“You do so much for her.”

You hear him sigh and a sound which could only be him readjusting himself in his seat.

“We’ve talked about this. She deserves it.”

If you listened any closely, you could almost hear that doubt in his voice. But he would never admit to it and you knew that.

You shake the anger and the sour emotions and instead give the back of his head a sad smile.

“She does love you, but she loves the money, too, Bucky. You gotta admit it has crossed your mind at least once or twice, or a bazillion times the last year.”

“It has, okay? Of course, I’ve noticed how she’s taken a liking to certain things and also to the company, but she’s not a bad person, Y/N. I know you both have your differences but you need to just accept the fact that while she likes material things, she also does love you and me very much. And you and I love her, too.”

He was right. You decide to change the subject. Up to ten minutes ago, the atmosphere in the car was happy and now it was gloomy and kind of emo.

“Except for that time, we dumped that homemade bucket of slime on her head.”

Bucky throws his head back against the seat in laughter. His laugh comes from his chest, hearty and strong.

“Yeah, she was not happy about that.”

You chuckle softly.

“It was fun though.”

“Dude, all our pranks are fun though. The best one has to be that time we tried the saran wrap on Steve’s toilet seat and we heard him screaming like a little pansy.”
“You laugh just as loud as he did seconds ago, “It got in his fucking hair. Do you still have the picture of his face on your phone?””

He turns and gives you a blank expression, “Uh, duh.”

You couldn’t believe you and Buck have been best friends for over a year now. You remember when you first became friends if someone told you he would become your best friend, even more so than Nat, you would’ve laughed in their face. But here you both were getting along amazingly well.

“Send it to me.”

He perked a brow at you.

“Why? What are you planning, you little minx?”

“Oh, nothing.”

He mumbles something under his breath about how you’re always up to something and you feel so happy at that moment.

Something else you were feeling was pee- you really had to pee. You bounced your leg up and down quickly as you looked out towards the building.

“God, what is taking her so long? You don’t take this long.” Bucky exclaims.

“She’s probably making sure each piece of hair is in prestige position.”

“Yeah, but so is yours and you take half the time.”

There’s a moment of silence after he says that and you think it’s because he realized what he said and it makes your cheeks heat up instantly. He’s never said something like that about you ever, he always teased you, not complimenting you.

“What?” You ask him breathlessly.

He clears his throat, “Actually, yea no,” he reaches over and ruffles your hair, “it’s ugly as hell. You know what it almost looks worst than that time when you got run over by that kid Kyle on his bike on 53rd, remember?”

Of course, you remember. The kid had also spilled hot chocolate all over your blouse and hair, and Bucky had made fun of you all day calling you ‘chocolahtay’.

Someone walks out of the building and you realize it’s Ashlyn. She looks happy as she picks up the side of her long dress so it wouldn’t drag across the floor.

“Shut up, there she comes!” You see your sister’s smile go from happy to weird. You know why and so does Bucky, “I still can’t believe you brought your Honda.”

“I had to bring my baby to this.”

“God, you’re sad.”

“You know you love her.”

You did. You and Bucky shared some fun memories in the car with Steve. On Ashlyn’s business
trips with her father, when the three of you would hang, you would always go away together in it. You puked in it once, you practically got stabbed to death in it by Bucky’s straw that got stuck in the cigarette burner (long story), and then there’s the faint but heavy memories of you, Bucky, and Steve singing 80s hits while driving to a Wawa in Jersey.

“Yeah, but I’m not so sure Ashlyn will. We know how she is.”

On her walk to the car, Ashlyn looks around her surroundings to see who’s watching her walk into the Honda. Her uneasiness sticks out like a sore thumb.

“Hey, Baby.” She greets Bucky as he gets into the passenger seat. “Uhh, where’s your car?”

You look between them trying to hold in your laughter. Bucky was stuttering while Ashlyn looked mortified.

“I, Uh, I-this,” he clears his throat, “this is my car.”

This was hilarious. You loved watching him squirm.

“Yeah, right!” She notices Bucky’s face and how he’s not smiling and her face falls, “oh, oh.” She looks around it realizing it wasn’t a joke, “it’s nice. I like it.” She gives him a smile.

You narrow your eyes at her. No way that response was innocent and honest. You knew her, she hated this damn car.

Ashlyn looks out the window and Bucky turns to look at you and sticks his tongue out victoriously.

You give him a grimace.

---

You three arrive at The Rainbow Room. It was prestigious and glorious beyond recognition, you had only heard of this ballroom in movies and it definitely owed up to its reputation. You looked around in complete awe as you walked in, your eyes going immediately to the beautiful dance floor in the center and the light fixture hanging above. Surrounding the circular room were rectangle windows that expanded from the floor to the ceiling, exposing a glorious view of Manhattan at dusk.

You felt the music pumping in your veins as everyone clapped widely at Ashlyn and Bucky’s entrance- you trailing right behind. The howling and loud clapping made Ashlyn’s face break out
into a huge smile while Bucky grabbed her hips from behind and kissed her neck, whispering happy birthday in her ear.

You swallowed thickly as you did a double-take, watching this unfold.

It was insane to you how out of his way Bucky would go for someone he loved. He was always so selfless and giving. You watched as he gave your sister a squeeze and you looked away.

Blinking quickly, you try to find one of your friends in the massive crowd of entrepreneurs, colleagues, and CEOs.

You’re glad when a familiar voice greets you from your left, his posture is nothing short of mature and self-confidence. He holds a smirk on his face as he gestures his elbow for you to take.

“Walk with me?”

His question makes you smile and you hook your arms together.

You look up at him as he walks you up the steps onto the floors where the tables were. You look over, admiring his face. His profile was gorgeous. There literally was no flaw about him. He notices you staring and he looks back at you, a twinkle in his blue/green eyes.

“So how’ve you been Steve? How was Haiti at the humanitarian relief?”

Because of course, Steve Rogers had spent the last four months in Haiti helping the need. Everyone claimed it was a publicity stunt for Barnes’ company but anyone that knew Steve personally would know that even though if he was ordered to go, he was mostly going for the will of his own heart.

“It was amazing.”

There’s so much compassion in his voice when he answers.

“I’m glad. I feel like I haven’t seen you in forever.”

You remember what happened the last time you saw him; you both do.

He clears his throat as his cheeks turn a shade of pink, “Yeah, how have things been?”

“They’ve been great. Ashlyn’s been away a lot with Mr. Barnes trying to wrap things up,” your eyes drift back towards the couple who are greeting the guests, “if you know what I mean.”

Steve’s smiles slide off his face and he bites his lip nervously.

“Does he know how long he has?”

It breaks your heart when you remember how much of a toll this entire thing is on Bucky. You sigh and push your hair that was beginning to tickle your face behind your ear.

“I’m sure he’s aware. He’s been working nonstop for the last few weeks trying to get everything ready.”

You remember helping him for months trying to organize how to get every paperwork ready, trying to learn all the ropes and essentials he would need to be the next CEO. Ashlyn was always away on her business meetings and had little to offer, you, on the other hand, stayed in the city and watched as he sat countless nights with bloodshot eyes staring at his laptop at 3 am on the top floor on the tower.
Part of you felt pity while the other felt pride for your friend. Ashlyn wasn’t treating him right and you had called him out on it many times, but when the fight always came to love it was different. Something in him just wouldn’t give in. It’s not that you didn’t want your sister to be happy, you did, but something was off. Bucky deserved the best, he deserved love and respect back, especially for the amount of work he was putting in to prepare for his father’s death.

You take a deep breath when you see Steve narrow his eyes at you.

“He’s like a changed man. Remember when he would come in with T-shirts and jeans? Poor guy snapped at an intern the other day because she was wearing flats instead of heels.”

Steve scoffed with a small smile, not believing Bucky would do such a thing.

“Jesus.”

You remember that poor girl crying later in the bathroom and then Bucky feeling awful about it after you told him, but you both knew it was the stress.

You look back up at the couple, and this time Bucky looks up and smiles at you briefly when your eyes meet. You smile back.

“Yea I think he’s going through some severe andropause.”

Steve laughs, “Bucky’s twenty-seven not forty-nine.”

You shrug and cross your arms, immediately your eyes scan the room, looking for the open bar.

Steve continues to stare at you.

“How’s it going between you two?”

You’re caught off guard by his question and you feel a sensation in your face that you pray to God isn’t evident to the outside. By Steve’s expression, you can’t even tell what he’s feeling or what he’s trying to say.

Between you and Bucky? What kind of question even is that? All you know is that it makes you nervous.

“What do you mean?”

“Like I know things were crazy at first, and then those trips we always took together you both seemed to get along amazingly well. But then you always argued. Just wanted to make sure you haven’t killed each other yet.”

Oh, that’s what he meant. You feel relief and memories take you back to that day, making you gape and hit Steve playfully in the arm.

“Well duh! He tried to stab me, Steve!”

Steve chuckles.

“It was barely an attempt at anything. The car would’ve caught fire if he didn’t get the damn straw out!”

Your chuckles dial down, “Yeah whatever,” Your eyes narrow as you begin to overthink and more memories from the last few months overwhelm you. Your voice is low now, “No yeah, things are
great. We’re getting along pretty well. He’s my best friend, ya know?”

Steve nods. He gives you an intense look that makes you swallow nervously, and then he’s taking a step towards you until there are only mere inches between you. He takes one of your crossed arms in his hands and holds it.

“What about me?”

That night replays in your head. The night that should’ve meant more to you.

“Steve…”

You don’t know if it’s the gesture or how softly he’s holding your hand (or maybe it’s even something else you can’t pinpoint at that time), but you feel small tears building up in the back of your throat. The look he’s giving you is nothing but grace and you felt like a bitch for it.

“I’ve been waiting for you for almost a year and a half now, Y/N. You know I have.”

Shit. You’ve dreaded this conversation for months, but you knew you had to be smart about it. You couldn’t throw this out, you had to be cautious about it.

“I know, Stevie, I know. But his is the first time in a long time where I’m finally learning myself again, who I am. I’m just now getting ready to maybe be ready to be in a relationship again. I can’t rush this, but I’m getting there.”

He squints his eyes understandingly and gives your hadn’t a tight squeeze, but his mouth is in a tight line.

“I understand.”

God, you hated this. It was like stepping on a puppies paw.

“It’s not that I don’t want-“

“No, “ he stops you with a soft shake of his head, “yea I get it,” his tone is strong and you’re certain by it that he does understand, “And I don’t regret it. That day out on the terrace.”

You blush furiously at the memory and by the way, he’s looking directly into your eyes. You had both had a bit too much to drink at the New Years ever party in Australia three months ago and he had leaned over while you were a mid chuckle and kissed you. It had been building for a bit, in a cute high school love kind of way.

It felt sweet and good; soft.

“It was right.”

He says strongly, pulling you closer to his chest.

You look up at him, “but not the right time.”

Steve looks down at his feet and shuffles them while pulling his hands out of yours and sticking them in his pockets.

“And that’s what I’m waiting for, y/n.”

You smile sweetly at him and he smiles back. You step up to him, wrapping your arms around his
neck for a tight hug which he returns just as tightly. You both stay like that for a few moments until you feel a low rumble against your hair.

“You know, when Bucky was a little boy he almost got stabbed too.”

Your eyes furrow in confusion, many many scenarios coming into your mind. Bucky was stabbed, or almost stabbed?

“What?” you say as you pull away from him.

Steve has a smug smile on his, “Yeah, by a little blue stuffed teddy bear named boo bear.”

He bursts out laughing after he says it.

“No way, Bucky had a little stuffed bear when he was a baby?”

“Oh, the boo bear story.” You hear Nat’s voice behind you. She’s sucking on a black straw that was most likely sucking up some overhyped alcoholic drink, an amused look in her gorgeous eyes.

Steve gives Nat an outraged look.

“Baby? He was like nine years old!”

Nat obviously knew this story, but even so, she still manages to choke on her drink.

You try to contain your laughter. You couldn’t believe this.

“Okay, so why did this stuffed bear almost stab him?”

“It was one of those bears where the arms are stiff because they have these wooden arms, right? But keep in mind he’s had this damn bear since he was two so it was beginning to rip at the seams. It was dirty and ugly, but he still loved that damn thing. He held it every night when he went to bed.”

You envision Bucky holding a little stuffed bear while he slept and it warmed your heart. You smile faintly.

“One night he had a really bad dream and I guess he squeezed it a bit too tight. The damn wood poked out from the arm and “stabbed” him.” Steve continues, “Well, more like poked and he didn’t even notice until he woke up that morning.”

“He was traumatized, and not because of the stabbing, but because of the wood coming out of boo bear’s arm. His mom made him throw it out that afternoon and he was never the same ever again.” Steve ends the story dramatically.

By the end of it, you didn’t know if you wanted to laugh and make fun of Bucky or find it adorable. The only thing you kept wondering after that is if Sam knew about this and if so, he must give Bucky hell for it.

The rest of the party ended up being a huge blast. This was no longer your first of these kinds of parties, it was probably your fifteenth now, and you have become surprisingly accustomed to them. You’ve learned that hanging out by the open bar was your best place to be, it avoided conversations with people you could care less about and you could get as drunk as you wanted to. But that last part was a joke, you didn’t drink every time. But the people here probably thought you did. Especially damn Carol from accounting.
She picks up her cosmo from the bar, giving you a side glance.

“Back at it again are we, miss y/l/n?”

You could only respond to her snarky and sarcastic comment with a fake smile and a wave of your own drink in your hand.

“As always.”

She gave you another glance of un-amusement and when she was walking away, you gave her back a dirty look.

What was it with these middle-aged women not being able to mind their own business? You take another sip of your fruity drink and you see Bucky and Ashlyn in the corner of the venue. Your eyes narrow curiously as Ashlyn rolls her eyes and Bucky gestures wildly. They were arguing, that much was clear.

Bucky runs his hands down his face as he feels the anger boiling in his chest.

“Babe, this is the third one in a month. I feel like I hardly see you anymore.”

Ashlyn gives him an apologetic face, her hair falling across the side of her face.

“I know, Bucky, but these are strict times right now. You know what I mean,” she gives Mr. Barnes a side-eye glance from the corner of her eye and Bucky looks at him as well, “We have to get everything done.”

He narrows his eyes at her, still not understanding why it was so difficult for them to spend more time together, unrelated work times. He was slowly beginning to understand less and less what was happening to them. He was stressed.

“I just don’t get why I can’t come with you, Ashlyn.” She gives him a confused look, “Seriously, it’s all I ask. I’m your boyfriend and I can’t even go with my girlfriend on a damn business trip.”

She feels the guilt, she does, but he couldn’t accompany her. It’s not like it was her right to decide anyway.

“Bucky, you just can’t.”

He looked at her in disbelief. He couldn’t believe the situation he was in. He had been the one to offer her a position as an assistant and somehow she had managed to peak herself through and he couldn’t even accompany her? He was furious. He just wasn’t sure if it was at her that was mad or at himself.

Of course that the last few months Bucky had started to realize what you had been trying to tell him for months, and on a certain note he did agree, but at the end of the day Ashlyn was still his girlfriend and he had to put at least some kind of effort into trying to look past the negative and just appreciate her for who she is. She was making that really difficult lately.

He gives her a hard glare with his ice-blue eyes.

“Yeah, I get it.”

She was taken aback by his expression.

“It’s classified information.” She stutters out.
Bucky rolls his eyes this time.

“Ashlyn, it’s not like I’m going to be reading over your shoulder or going with you guys to the meeting. Even though I have every right to. I just want to spend the nights with you,” he moves up closer to her and looks at her eyes, her nose, and her lips- just trying to admire her for a second.

“Ashlyn we haven’t had sex in a month.”

He could literally feel the distance between them, not just emotionally but physically.

She gulps at his words, her face feeling hot and her chest heavy, “Yeah well, maybe that’s a good thing, Bucky.”

Bucky literally recoils in pain as he takes a step back, his posture going frigid. Her eyes lacked emotion.

“What?”

“I just mean, this business has to be ready. We can’t be distracted.”

It was just getting more ridiculous by the second, her logic made no sense to him.

“You do realize I’m the next CEO right? That at this point there isn’t anything that I don’t know anymore. That the only fucking ass reason I’m not going with dad is that they don’t need my signature, yet.” He emphasizes the last word.

Ashlyn gulps, shocked. He had never spoken to her in this tone before, let alone used a curse word with her. She feels the tears in her eyes and the instant regret on Bucky’s face.

“You’ll thank me one day,” she says hoarsely, “Anyways. Thanks for the birthday, Bucky.”

She walks away with tears in her eyes, making sure to hit his arm on the way out.

The rest of the night is a heavy blur on Bucky’s mind. He worries about how things with Ashlyn will follow out after the party. It doesn’t help when he runs into Ashlyn at the hallway to the bathrooms and she tells him that Bucky could go ahead home and she would just call an Uber and meet him at his place. Maybe meet him at his place, she emphasized before walking past his fallen expression.

He had run a hand down his face and the first thing on his mind was to find you and just get the hell out of there. He didn’t even care about the paparazzi at this point, he just wanted his best friend and his home. He needed to think maybe have another drink.

He knows you well by now and it doesn’t take him longer than a bathroom break to find you standing at the bar.

He knows you’re bored out of your mind and completely out of your comfort zone, but that’s what always amazed him about you. You would go out of your shell to please your sister and your friends.

He takes the glass out of your hand as your taking in the last sip of your drink and you gave him a pouty look that is nothing short of adorable.

“Let’s get the hell out of here.”
A huge weight is lifted off your shoulders and you let out a long sigh as you pick up your bag off the counter.

“Finally.”

It doesn’t take much for you to notice Bucky’s attitude as he struts out of the room, accidentally hitting some people on the way out and his mouth in a tight line. You have trouble keeping up with his pace in your painfully high heels. It isn’t until you’re both walking towards the elevators when you notice a very distinct detail.

“Wait, where’s Ashlyn?”

Bucky presses the elevator down button.

“We got into an argument.”

This didn’t surprise you. Six months ago, maybe, but not anymore. They were at each other’s throats whenever she would be back in town.

You both make it down to the lobby in comfortable silence, your heels now in your hands and your feet barefoot against the marble.

Once you’re both at his car around the side street you peek over his hood.

“What happened?”

Bucky visibly sides and gets in the car. You get inside with him and immediately kick on the heat towards your feet. Used to this now, Bucky says nothing. He pulls out his cell phone and types away some quick text before letting out a heavy breath and tossing it in his cup holder.

“It just, don’t you think I should be going with her to these business trips?”

“Yea I guess.”

“I should be. I’m her boyfriend. What if she-“

“What if she what, Bucky?”

It’s silent.

“Nothing. Forget it.”

It annoyed you to the core how back and forth he was. It physically pained you and made you want to slap him as you watched him sulk in his driver’s seat. He brought this on himself, and it’s not like he ever didn’t anything to change it. And God, how you would change it for him in a heartbeat. You quickly look away as you feel a tightness in your chest.

You look down at your nervous hands as you play with them.

“You’re the one that gave her this job- this life. I warned you from the beginning and you admitted yourself that you knew what you were getting yourself into. And you said that it didn’t matter because she-“

“Loved me.”

“Loved you.”
You look up at him and your eyes meet in an intense gaze.

“I think you need to relax, Bucky. You’re being hard on yourself.”

You reach out and caress his hand that is on the gear shift. Bucky looks down at your hand on his and he realizes you’ve never held his hand before.

“It’ll be okay.”

For some reason, when he pulls out of his parking spot, he leaves more anxious than than when he left the party.

He ends up taking you to his apartment and Nat sends you both a text in the group chat. Bucky’s the one that reads it out loud as the elevator opens up to his floor.

“Nat just texted me that she’ll be here soon.”

Bucky unlocks his front door and when you step in you go straight to his window, your hand on the glass like a little girl. He smiles at you as he places the keys down on the foyer table. While you looked out, he went to the kitchen and poured you both a glass of Champagne.

You always got so excited at views, it was like you enjoyed the fear of being so high up from the ground and admiring the city lights that bounced off your gorgeous skin. You were so innocent and sweet and you would fit so well living here. If only you didn’t have to keep driving an hour every time just to see him.

“I never get sick of this view.” You loved how the cars looked like little ants down below.


“Shut up, dumbass. It’s grown on me.”

You looked adorable holding your heels in your hand and your dirty brown feet against his five hundred thousand wood flooring and there’s a tightness in his chest.

He doesn’t catch himself before it slips out.

“Yeah, well you’ve grown on her too.”

You turn around and you see him giving you a glass of champagne, a look in his eyes that you
can’t recognize.

That look doesn’t falter as he continues to give you that look.

“It looks good on you.”

You realize he’s talking about the city skyline right behind you. His eyes drift over your dress and then your dirty feet. He takes a sip of his champagne, swallowing thickly.

“Why don’t you move out here?”

For a second you pray silently that maybe he’s going to offer you something. Not a gift like your sister, but maybe some kind of deal. Your heart was in New York now. Being here, being here with him…with your friends, it made you want to be here all the time.

“Like I could afford it.”

You say nervously, hopeful.

But his eyes are blank now, the moment gone.

“Suit yourself.” You face falls at his answer. You don’t know why but you expected a different answer. Don’t lie to yourself, you knew exactly the answered you wanted.

But of course, he wouldn’t do that. But that’s okay, you guess. You take the glass of champagne from him and cross one your arms across your waist mumbling a thank you.

“I saw you talking to Steve at the party. How’s that going by the way?”

“Steve’s great. But I’m not ready yet.”

He nods understanding.

You realize you never told your best friend what had happened months ago, and you feel guilty for it now. He had looked over at you and Steve at the party and you didn’t even know.

You clear your throat.

“He kissed me.”

Emotions flicker across his face. Surprise, amusement, shock, and something else. He perks a brow at you.

“What?” He says lowly.

“Yeah,” You don’t know why you feel it’s important to tell him and why it feels this serious. It terrifies the shit out of you. The tension between you both is thick as he continues to stare at you, “Not tonight, on New Years actually.”

You take a sip of your drink nervously, looking away from his gaze.

“Wow. How did that, uh, how’d you feel, ya know, after?”

You genuinely think about it for a second, and it that second you realize that Steve isn’t what you wanted anymore. You think about the kiss and you’re honest about it as you respond.
“It felt nice. It felt good. It felt,” Your eyes flicker up to his and the tension grew immensely. The way he looked as he waited for your answer made it obvious that he really wanted to know. And while you’re both looking at each other you think about the last year and a half and how your friendship grew and how much you both changed. You think about the sweet memories you both shared together and how one-day things ended up taking a turn that made it scary and wrong.

Neither of you remembers when it was, but it wasn’t too long ago. It was as if one day you couldn’t share drinks anymore, you couldn’t share snacks, you couldn’t text each other, you couldn’t go on road trips anymore. One day, it all changed and it all stopped.

Steve was the exact opposite. Bucky watches you intently as he waits for you. You look down at his own lips and then back at his eyes.

“It felt safe. Easy.”

“Is that what you want?” His voice is a low rumble.

“I want it to be right.”

You see him swallow and then he turns away from you sharply, drinking down the rest of the champagne.

You’re about to ask him if there’s something you both should talk about when there’s a knock at the door. You stare at the back of his head in a heavy daze as he places the glass on the foyer table and lets Nat in.

Your heart hammered away inside your chest as you watched him. You don’t know what was happening, and you wanted to know badly because you no longer knew how to even act around him. Neither of you did.

“Hey, guys. I’m sorry if it’s going to spoil the after-party but my friend asked me to watch her baby for a couple of hours. The last-minute trip to Monte Carlo.”

He gives Nat a tight hug and then he’s carrying something in his arms as he turns around.

“Yeah, no problem, I missed this little boy.” Bucky says in an adorable baby voice as he squeezes the little baby’s nose, “Oh my god, you are so cute.”

The baby grabs Bucky’s pointer finger with his tiny hand and your heart melts instantly.

Your heart flutters and you recognize the emotion that follows that flutter - fear.

That’s what you feel because once it hits you what it was that was happening, you realized you were eternally and completely fucked.

All I know you taught me
You're my all and more
Chapter Summary

Steve confronts Bucky about his feelings for you. You come to terms with your own feelings. Drama ensues.

Chapter Notes

very mild sexual content in the intro. implied sex and then oral sex. language.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Paris, France

She doesn’t know what happened to her, maybe it was around the time her parents died or maybe it was the distance between her and her old life which she detested that pushed her over the edge.
She didn’t want to be where she was; she didn’t want to be in this situation, but she had gotten herself here.

When she met Bucky she didn’t expect to fall for him as fast as she did.

She did lie to him when she made it seem like she had no idea who he was. She had lied because she didn’t want him to think that the only reason she was into him was because of the money - he had to give her a chance. And that’s exactly what he did.

But she had fooled herself into thinking she wasn’t only in it for the money. Truth is, at first she wasn’t, but after she was offered the job and after her first paycheck, she realized that this was the real-life she wanted and she would do in all her willpower to keep it. Even if it meant hurting Bucky by going the extra mile.

It had reached a point where she had let the money, and the good things she was getting, blur her vision of what she really had wanted.

But one thing was for sure, she would do anything possible to keep what she was gaining but she could not lose Bucky. It just pained her when she thought that maybe her heart wasn’t in it as much.

She felt cold and calculating for it. She had gotten over him after he had ended up being the opposite of what she thought he was but ultimately she was stuck. She couldn’t leave now, because everything else that came with him, she wanted.

She thought Bucky was still great in bed, a great guy, and he’d make a great family man because he was extremely loyal. But that fire she once felt when she dated him the first few months was now gone.

Because of the amount of respect she still had for the Barnes’ family, she would continue to make these sacrifices - continue to hurt him and have a secret life - so he could become even more successful. And for that, he would always thank her, and she would be at his side during his successes.

She sits on the edge of the bed, the Eiffel Tower visible through the window behind her as she pulls up the black stockings up her legs. She always felt a little disgusted with herself after nights like these which were now a regular, but it paid the bills and it signed contracts that would earn them millions.

Her hair was a mess and her chest was still bare and hot from her activities of the past few hours. She pulls her hair to the side as she bends down to get her Vera Wang bra off the floor.

She feels a hand on her back.

“Leaving so soon?”

The man asks in a taunting tone.

Ashlyn masks her annoyed grimace with a smile and turns sharply around to face Mr. Stark.

She crawls up the bed as his hands go to her waist and she kisses him with tongue and teeth.

“I hope not, especially if you’re still expecting me to sign over forty-five percent of the agreements, miss y/l/n.”
Ashlyn bites her lips and she gives him a sexy smolder as her finger drags down his bare chest. Tony moans under her touch.

“Of course not, I’m just going to send a quick text out to my sister.” She lies.

“Mmmm. Don’t keep me waiting too long, or it’ll be forty. And Mr. Barnes won’t be too happy with that now, will he?”

Ashlyn gives him a side smile, but inside she was fuming. She thought the ten orgasms she’d given him were enough.

She pulls herself off Tony’s chest and quickly grabs her phone that had slid off the bed and onto the floor.

She types out a quick message to Mr. Barnes:

**Might be a little bit longer. S is being greedy and we need that 45. Text you when he’s done with me.**

It isn’t until a few minutes later when she’s got Tony’s dick in her mouth and he’s grunting while his hands are in her hair that her phone vibrates with a reply.

**My good girl.**

---

New York City, *New York*

You’re leaving Bucky’s apartment when you run into broad shoulders and a strong chest. You look up at the figure and instantly giggle when his arms hold you steady in place.

He looks between you and Bucky questionably.

“Slow down there, Y/N.”

“Sorry, Steve. I gotta go before I miss the last train out. See ya!” You wave him bye as he looks at you running down the hall over his shoulder.

With a shake of his head, Steve walks into Bucky’s apartment and closes the door behind him. He sees Bucky sitting on the couch typing away on his laptop.

Bucky peers up at him and gives him a half-smile. His eyes look tired, heavy and dark bags underneath them.

It was obvious he had been in that same position for a long time. It would only be down to months or weeks now until Bucky had the whole control of a multi-million dollar company.

Steve walks around the couch and puts his hands on Bucky’s shoulders, giving it a squeeze.

“Hey, man,” Bucky says.

“Hey to you too. How’s it coming along?”

“Just briefing on the happenings. Getting kind of nervous, ya know?” Bucky says, gesturing wildly with one hand as the other continued to move over the course of what looked like a pie chart.
Steve couldn’t get your face out of his head. Ever since your talk at the birthday party, you hadn’t even spoken a word to him. When he had texted you and you had been more than comfortable with your responses. In a way, he almost felt friend-zoned and it hurt his feelings.

He had grown with expectations of your feelings for so long now and for you to act like nothing was there anymore made him feel like it was all a waste. He felt led on by you.

He didn’t know what was going on in your head.

He’s not going to deny how close you and Bucky have gotten either. Sure, he knew you two were best friends, but for some reason, your closeness made him insanely jealous. He would hate how on your road trips you and Bucky would belch out the chorus of a song together, completely zoning Steve out, not even noticing how quiet he’d got.

He hated those moments where he felt like he was being a damn third wheel.

It was messed up for you both to be acting this way together- it was wrong.

Steve knew very well that you definitely shouldn’t act the way you do with Bucky and you shouldn’t constantly be at his apartment like this.

But he would never tell you because he didn’t want to come off as controlling. It’s not like he had any right to anyway, you weren’t his. But he would tell Bucky because he was his best friend.

Steve stares back at the door in which you just left, a longing look in his eyes. You had looked beautiful tonight like you had been laughing.

The jealousy burns in his chest.

“So,” he gave Bucky a tighter squeeze, “You and Y/N coming up with more evil pranks?”

Bucky lets out a chuckle.

“She was helping me with some ideas for when I take charge. She’s more practical than she looks.”

Steve snarls under his breath. It’s not like he even had the opportunity to know, Bucky took all her time up for him to have the chance to.

“Shouldn’t Ashlyn be helping you with that? The one that actually works for you?”

Bucky’s silent for a moment as his typing comes to a halt. Like nothing even happened, he quickly returns to typing away.

“She’s on another one of those business trips, doing whatever the hell it is I can’t know about.”

Steve frowns. He didn’t know about this.

“Wait, what?”

“I don’t know, we’re just going through a rough patch is all.”

“Have you spoken to her about it?”

“Trust me, I have. I just gotta let this blow over.”
Steve nods understandingly. He goes around the couch and sits in the love seat on Bucky’s left.

Steve stares at Bucky’s intensity as he works on his computer and it bothers him. Maybe it was the jealousy, but part of him also knew it was the reasoning behind what was clearly happening in front of everyone’s eyes.

It was wrong.

“Bucky, we need to talk.”

“Sure, what’s up?” Bucky says, not even looking up from his laptop.

“Please, could you just put that aside for one second? I don’t want to be an ass.”

Bucky looks up at Steve with a perked brow. Steve Rogers never cursed. This was new and was certainly serious. Bucky nods slowly and sets his computer aside but not closing.

“Sorry, man. Go ahead.”

Steve takes a deep breath and moves up closer to the edge of his seat.

“It’s about me and Y/N.”

Something flickers in Bucky’s eyes and it makes Steve frown. It wasn’t an emotion he wanted from Bucky, it was the one he least wanted to see- jealousy.

It’s obvious this topic made him upset, but he masks it up quickly.

“Yeah, she told me,” He says in a monotone. Steve continues staring at him in interest and reluctantly because no way could this actually be happening, “glad you finally had the balls to do it. Took you long enough.”

The words are playful but his tone and face aren’t. Steve couldn’t believe that his gut was right; Bucky liked y/n.

This makes him furious.

“Bucky.” Steves tone is serious and it makes Bucky’s emotion change to nervous for a split second, but he recovers fast, “She shouldn’t be here all the time.”

Bucky narrows his eyes at him, an uncomfortable laugh comes out. He feels his palm sweating as he rubs it up and now his leg nervously.

“What are you talking about?”

“You know exactly what I’m talking about. You and Y/N.” Bucky gulps, “You know I can read you like a book. I’ve known you since I was twelve.”

Bucky looks down at his lap, “Do you seriously think something good is going to come out of this, Bucky?”

“We’re not doing anything, Steve. She’s my friend.” He retaliates quickly.

“Face the facts, Bucky. You guys got close, too close. You need to take a step back. It’s inappropriate.”
Suddenly, Bucky’s angry.

“Is this because of you and her? Steve I’m not going to pull her from you, that’s not my say, you two can do whatever the hell you want.”

“Really? And you wouldn’t care?”

Bucky licks his lips and then moves up closer to Steve, not losing eye contact. His mouth is in a straight line.

“No, I have a girlfriend.”

“Yes. Yes, you do, and it’s her sister. Do you realize how bad this is?” Bucky runs a hand through his hair, “Look, I get you’re both going through a rough time right now, you and Ashlyn, but don’t do this.”

“Steve, listen to me.” Bucky figured he might as well be honest now. No point in lying anymore.

“Yes, I did notice that some things started to brew between me and y/n, but I’ve cut back from it. Plus it’s not mutual. So what, I have a small crush on her? She’s tiny and adorable. It’s completely innocent, nothing serious. We are not going to cross that line. I would never do that.”

Steve stares at Bucky’s face for a second, looking for any sign of doubt or reluctance but he doesn’t see any.

Steve feels relieved and he lets out a sigh, “Okay.”

Bucky takes in a deep breath and looks away and laughs nervously, “Alright, now that that talk is over.”

Bucky gets off the couch and walks over to his window. He stares out the scenery and many emotions take over his heart in that instance.

He didn’t mean to, he really didn’t, but he had grown to admire you to a point where if he wasn’t careful he knew he could fall in love with you.

The way you carried yourself, you were so selfless and innocent but also had so much free will and spirit.

Up until four months ago, he wasn’t too sure, but after he saw you standing in his living room the way you had, your heels - that he knew you worked two weeks for to buy - in your tiny little hand, and your small dirty feet on the ground, the nail polish on the toes scratching off.

You had looked beautiful. And he hated the thought that had entered his mind, he wanted to fuck himself over for thinking it, but he had thought it.

If only I had met you first.

“You need to cut her out,” Steve says from the chair.

“What?”

I know Bucky thinks. Bucky heard him loud and clear, and he knew he was right, but he didn’t want to.

“Not forever, just put a wall there. And I mean this as a friend and from Ashlyn’s perspective, not
someone who is interested in Y/N. Bucky this is really bad if you let it go on.”

Steve was right, this couldn’t go on. If it did, Bucky would do something he would soon regret.

“Okay.”

Steve’s surprised but how quickly he agreed to the idea.

“Okay?”

“Yeah, you’re right. I’ll cut her out. Or at least push her away.”

He had to because he cared about her.

---

_Barnes’ Enterprises, New York_

“Nat, I need to speak to you, NOW.”

Nat looks up from her desk, worry all over her face.

“Is everything okay?”

You shake your head quickly back and forth.

“No, Nat. It’s not.”

You run-up to the chair that’s in front of her desk and sits in it quickly.

The emotions are running high in your blood when you look up at her. She sees the fear in your eyes and it scares her.

“You were right.” You whisper. You feel the tears in your voice as you look away from her and towards the wall. You take in a deep breath, feeling the hot tears brewing inside of your skull, “You were right, Nat.”

It doesn’t take much for Nat to know what you are talking about. She knew about yours and Bucky’s growing friendship and judging by the time and day and the fact that you were in the city made it clear that you were just with him.

Nat groans, banging her wrist repeatedly against her forehead.

“I knew it. I knew it, I knew it,” you give her a pleading look, “I warned you.”

“That was almost two years ago, Nat.”

“But still, it still applies.”

You sulk in your seat, running your hands down your face as you tried to calm yourself down.

Nat was right, she had warned you. She told you to be careful with Bucky because he had tendencies of becoming close with girls he wasn’t interested in.

She warned you that he was super sweet and had a bad habit of giving girls the wrong impression.
You had been so careful the last almost two years that you did not see this coming. You were starting to fall for your best friend and nothing could happen, he wasn’t even interested in you, to begin with anyway. He just came off that way; as flirty and over caring.

Nat had been right. Bucky had been crawling into your heart this entire time and you had no idea. The worst part was now you had to find a way out. If even Ashlyn found out you would be screwed and Bucky certainly could not find out.

You didn’t want to ruin your friendship.

You would have to take certain measures, but cutting him out would never be one of them. You don’t know what you would ever do without him.

“What the hell do I do?” You ask desperately.

You and Nat sit in silence for a few minutes that consisted of you trying to control your breathing and Nat saying I knew this would happen and I told you to be careful over and over.

Nat takes a deep breath and leans over her desk, her hands crossed on it as she stares you, “Look, this is what you’ll do.”

“You need to find someone. At least just go on one date so you can distract yourself. Go out there. Think about it, Bucky is the only male you’ve hung out with closely the last few months. You need another man to do that with. Maybe you’re just confused.”

You think about her words for a second and realized she probably had a point. You had been spending so much time with Bucky that maybe it wasn’t him that you were having feelings for, maybe it was the fact that he was the only male you’ve been around. You haven’t dated in nearly two years, it could be a dry spell.

You nod quickly as you stand up and Nat watches you curiously.

“Oh. Yep, you’re right. I need to find a cute guy and just ask him out.”

You don’t wait another second before you’re leaving Nat’s office. You were on a mission to find a cute guy. Even if it weren’t a relationship, you needed to go on a date, you needed to spend time with someone that wasn’t Bucky.

As if on cue, as you’re closing Nat’s door and turning around to leave down the hallway, you bump into someone- hard.

You stare down at the guy in shock as he’s crouching down to pick up his papers that you made him drop.

“Oh, my gosh.” You crouch down in front of him to help him, “I am so very sorry.”

“It’s not a problem at all,” he says sincerely, a British accent on his tongue that makes you turn to jelly.

You look up at him as you hand him his papers and he’s giving you a small but shy smile.
He was beautiful and you felt your breath catch in your throat as you mumbled a low hi.

“Hey,” he says back, his smile growing wider, “Uhm, I’m Loki.” He introduces himself with his hand stretched out.

You thank the heavens for this glorious opportunity and you shake his hand.

“I’m Y/N.”

“Pleased to meet you, Y/N.”

---

*Upstate New York*

*(you wanna be loved)*

*this feels like falling in love)*

Your encounter with Loki had left you excited and looking forward to this Friday.

After you helped him walk his paperwork down the hall to his office, and after you both got to know each other a little bit more, he asked you if you wanted to grab some dinner with him Friday night.

Without a second thought, you said yes and swapped phone numbers. Not only was this a social experiment to move on from your inappropriate crush, but Loki was genuinely sweet and hot. You were *definitely* excited.

You even sent a text out to Nat letting her know that the plan is moving successfully.

She was more than proud of that, she was relieved.

Your train drops you off into town a quarter to nine and you drive home anxiously.

You’ve just slid your PJ bottoms on when you hear a vibrating sound coming from your nightstand. You look over to see your phone lit up with the lets BUCKY at the top.

You frown as you slide it open to answer. Bucky never calls.

“Hey, butt face. I caught the train if that’s what you are so worried about. I did not miss it like last time.” You say laughing.
The silence on the other end, except for his breathing, makes you instantly worried. Something was wrong. Your smile slides off your face.

You sit down on the edge of your bed, “Hey, is everything okay?”

“Look, Y/N,” he sighs on the other end and you frown. His tone wasn’t the usual happy and playful one that he used, “We gotta, we can’t…”

More silence and it’s overbearing to you. You were becoming more worried by the second and you couldn’t take it.

You even for a second maybe thought he was calling to let you know that he felt the same, and maybe you two could figure this whole thing out together.

Your heart swells at the thought.

“Bucky, just say it.”

“We can’t spend time together anymore. I have to push you away, Y/N.”

Your heart falls into your stomach and your body goes numb.

“What are you talking about?” You whisper so quietly you’re surprised he hears you on the other end.

This couldn’t be happening.

“Ashlyn is supposed to be my best friend. Not you.”

The words cut you to the core and you feel hot and heavy tears behind your eyelids.

What were you thinking, thinking that he liked you?

You take a deep breath and sniff harshly, trying to not lose it over the phone. Bucky had never seen you cry and he wasn’t about to now, especially when he was telling you he didn’t want to be your best friend anymore.

“So I can’t talk to you anymore?” You snarl.

A beat of silence.

“No, we can talk, we just have to cut back a lot. Please understand.

You see red and you feel it all over your body. You felt broken.

“Fine. We won’t be best friends anymore, whatever.”

With that you hung up, tears finally trickling out of your eyes.

---

*falling in love*

*we're falling in love*

---

Chapter End Notes
I just want to say thank you all so much to who always leave me such lovely reviews (you know who you are) You have no idea how much it makes me feel like we're friends and that I can entertain you this much with this story. I love you guys so much, you have no idea. And I always remember each of your names. I hope you all have a blessed day and that I was able to satisfy your needs with this chapter hahahaha let me know if there's anything I should do different or what I can improve in. ALSO. If you notice, for each chapter I include different songs that I imagine playing within the scenes. I had been keeping track of a playlist I had made on youtube, if you want me to continue it and keep a place just with the songs for you guys please let me know! :D
Come Away With Me

Chapter Summary

Shit is getting real. I am so sorry. Warnings: SMUT.

Chapter Notes

I am absolutely grateful for the amount of gratitude that I received in the last chapter. I got 64 reviews, in one chapter. I was blown away and overwhelmed by how loving you all are. Thank you so much. And I am so happy you love this story. Thank you so much. Also, the song in this chapter is called Come Away With me by Norah Jones. It's beautiful and I guarantee you, I will break your fucking heart if you listen to it and keep it in mind while reading "THE SCENE". I apologize in advance for any grammatical errors -> (more notes in ending note)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Come away with me in the night

After that horrendous phone call, you had spent that whole night crying. Any possibility of why Bucky would do such a thing crossed through your mind as you laid wide awake into the early hours.

After many reasons came and went through your mind, you decided not to pry on it; as it was only making you feel worst. The feeling that grew within your chest as you replayed his words was becoming more unbearable.

Eventually, once you were into your fifth episode of How I Met Your Mother and your second bag on Lays potato chips, you came to terms that you weren’t as special to Bucky as he was to you. That was the bottom line.

Everyone had been telling you for a while and you should have listened, you should have been careful from the beginning. But even if you were, to be honest with yourself, it’s not like you even expected to develop feelings for Bucky. It was innocent from the start, and there was never any alternative intentions behind anything you ever did.
It snuck up on you.

You even considered that maybe you were somehow coming off strong to him without realizing it and it scared him off.

It’s been three weeks since that day and it was blatantly obvious that Bucky decided to distance himself from you. That’s not including his very blunt text inviting you to his birthday dinner.

Thankfully, that’s exactly how long it took for you to finally become comfortable with having someone else to lean your head on. It took time, but slowly you were able to think about him less and less.

It was more when you closed your eyes at night, that you would replay Bucky’s words in your head over again. Yes, it would still break your heart.

Your first date with Loki had gone smoothly. You had met him at Harold Square and he had worn a nice suit and tie while you wore a little black dress that fell just below your knees, accompanied by a pair of short heels.

You both went to some little restaurant in the village

It was perfect.

He was a complete gentleman and made you smile and laugh. If it wasn’t enough that he was extremely kind and respectful, he also wouldn’t hesitate to hold your hand across the table and tell you you were beautiful.

You would smile painfully, trying not to think about how on the walk over you both walked by a little cafe that Bucky had once introduced you to. You hadn’t been to that cafe since he cut you off.

Loki was the embodiment of a perfect man. Sure, he was no Steve Rogers in the chivalry sense, but he was a man, the exact thing that you needed at that moment. There was some underlying mischievousness to him that you couldn’t deny, but that only made him oh the more desirable to you. You were definitely happy about that.
You should be interested in him - by his level of perfectness - but for some reason, you couldn’t allow your heart to open up to him. What you hated the most was that you knew why you couldn’t, no matter how hard you tried.

He would laugh in front of you, and you would fake one back. It hurt for you to admit that the only person you could think was Bucky while you sat across from him.

Why couldn’t you get him out of your mind?

You couldn’t help but glance down at your phone every so often, waiting for that random silly text he would always send, but you knew you wouldn’t get one ever again.

You chewed on your delicious steak and steamed vegetables, faking a smile as you did so.

If it were you and Bucky, he would take you to a McDonalds or Applebees or even - there’s a pang in your chest as the words resonate in your head and you stop yourself before you could go any further.

“You okay?” Loki had asked you midway through dinner.

“Huh?” You asked a bit lost, your eyes glossed over.

He gave you a funny look between amused and curiosity.

“I just asked if you wanted to try their pinot noir. I’ve heard its quite delightful.”

You smile softly.

“You, sure.”

That night he dropped you off at the train station and you headed back home. He had offered to
drive you home so you wouldn’t have to take the train, but you had a monthly paid pass anyway, so you might as well put it to use.

There honestly wasn’t much of a reason anymore for you to spend much of your time in the city. You feel your throat hurt when you realize that the only reason you ever did was because of him.

He was the reason you loved New York. He was New York.

Angry at yourself as you walk into your room, you pull your cell out of your bag and text a message to Loki, telling him that you enjoyed your date and that you’d love to go out with him again that Sunday.

And that’s how it went, you guys ended up going on five consecutive dates and were now at the phase of holding hands. It was simple and timid, but growing nonetheless.

Today, you’ve both been officially dating for three weeks.

It was Monday morning and Bucky was exhausted. After Ashlyn had gotten back three weeks ago, they had another argument and if it weren’t for his father standing right next to her and telling him that they did it, they had doubled all profits, Bucky would’ve called it off then and there.

But Ashlyn had smiled at him with tears in her eyes and walked up to him, wrapping her arms around his neck. He stood still as he reluctantly hugged her back.

He knew that it wouldn’t take long before she would go again and his heart couldn’t take it. There was something she wasn’t telling him, he knew, but he didn’t know what it was.

He felt like she didn’t even love him as much anymore. He considered the possibility that maybe you were right, that Ashlyn was a changed person, but part of him holding on to the past; the past where they were madly in love and there was nothing but happiness.

Which is why he told Ashlyn and his father that he was glad everything went smoothly.
He gave her a slight smile and then looked over at his quickly deteriorating father.

“Just leave a copy of the paperwork on my desk, thanks.” And with that, he walked out.

He would sit for hours at his desk trying to make the necessary phone calls to get everything ready for his father’s death, but it was so hard to concentrate.

After each phone call, he would rub his forehead stressfully as he thought about you. He thought about how amazing you were, about how simple you were, the way you looked standing in his apartment, how he had grown to like you in a way that he shouldn’t have.

Then, he would think about that phone call, and how sad you had sounded on the other end.

He knew he had hurt you by breaking up your friendship, but he made the right choice. Ashlyn was his priority, not you. That’s the way it was supposed to be.

But as he stared out of his large window that overlooked the city, he wondered if it was worth it anymore.

Ashlyn had left on another trip this weekend, the last one, she had said.

And he missed you.

As he looked down at your name in his phone, he no longer knew what was the right choice and it made him feel awful. He felt awful because the choice he wanted to make wasn’t the one he should.

With a sigh and a curse, he throws his cell phone onto his desk and walks out of his office.

He’s making his way down the hall, taking a quick scan to make sure everyone was doing what they were supposed to when he decides to step into the break room for some crap tasing coffee.

He hadn’t had time to stop by his favorite cafe this morning and he was getting so cranky that he
was even pissing himself off. Truth is, he couldn’t go to that cafe anymore. It reminded him of you.

He walks in and the smell of the coffee grinder makes him smile in contentment. He moans in delight as he walks over to the small counter to grab his own mug. He chooses the one that has some funny saying on it.

Crap coffee is better than no coffee.

He’s halfway through pouring his cream in when he feels two arms hug him from the back.

Startled, he jumps up. But when he fully turns around and sees who it is, he gives her a half-smile.

“You’re back.”

“I am,” Ashlyn says smiling up at him brightly.

Bucky ignores the mug on the counter and turns around to give Ashlyn his full attention.

“How was Paris?” He asks rubbing her arm. He tries to find some kind of deception in her eyes, some kind of answer.

Instead, they are lined with small tears and sincerity.

“It was good. I missed you.”

Bucky raises a brow, not expecting that response. They had been so cold with each other lately that that had been the first term of endearment used between them in a while.

“I doubt it.”

It slips out before he can control it.
Ashlyn's face falls as she tucks a strand of hair behind her ear, “Look, Bucky. I wanted to apologize.”

His eyes furrowed in confusion.

*Now she wants to do this?*

“Yeah?”

“Yeah, look, I never should have denied taking you with me to these trips. This is your company and nothing should be hidden from you. I know how it might make you think, and it’s clearly been tearing us apart.”

She’s looking up at him with pleading eyes and he can tell that her apology is sincere.

He sighs, giving in.

“It terrified me, knowing you were out there. And it’s not that I didn’t trust you, I just-“

She smiles softly as she brings her hand to hold the side of his face.

“I know. But I won’t go anymore. If I do, I won’t go without you. This is about us now.”

It was like a huge weight was lifted off his chest and he lets out a whimper he didn’t know he was holding. He leans in and gives her a tight hug.

“You have no idea how much that relieves me. I felt like we were drifting apart. Like we don’t spend enough time together anymore.”

By Ashlyn pushing him away, Bucky had felt like he was becoming close to y/n. He was looking for comfort in someone else because Ashlyn was never there anymore.
“I completely agree. Which is why I’m not gonna do that anymore.”

And she didn’t have to. She won Hank over and forty-five percent of all the Stark’s proceeds.

Her job there was complete, “I want to stay here, with you.”

Bucky smiles wide. It was like he was given another chance at becoming close with his girlfriend again and maybe his intense feelings for y/n would go away.

Maybe they weren’t even real, to begin with, he thinks.

He takes her hand tightly in his.

“Alright. Do you want to come over tonight? I can make us a nice dinner.”

She smiles softly, squeezing his hand.

“I’d love that.”

Bucky’s mood improved immensely after Ashlyn’s return. It was like everything was going back to the way it was supposed to, and he was relieved to find out that his suspicions were incorrect, and that she would no longer be away. This was their time to shine now.

This was the way things were supposed to be. There’s a hop in his walk as he’s walking back from his accountant’s office.

He smiles wide when he sees his co-worker coming from the opposite direction, looking just as happy as him.

“Hey, Loki. Why are you looking so jumpy?”
Loki looks up from the paper in his hand and smirks.

“Me? Look at you. I haven’t seen you smile like that in weeks.”

Bucky shrugs.

“The lady is back.”

Loki nods understandably. He knew Ashlyn was back because you had told him.

Bucky nudges him with his arm, “So, tell me, what’s got you cheesin’?”

Loki chuckles as he looks down, his cheeks tinted a pink shade.

“It’s a girl isn’t it?”

Loki’s smile grows wide.

“I’m going on another date tonight. I’m hoping this time I can actually make a move.”

Bucky smirks.

“About time you put out again.”

Loki rolls his eyes.

“It hasn’t been *that* long.”

Bucky chuckles. Loki’s chuckle dials down.
“Well, make sure you use all the moves.” Bucky gives him a wink.

Today’s date with Loki was different. For one, you were finally starting to feel like you really were his girlfriend and no thought of Bucky had even crossed your mind. You were finally moving on and it felt amazing.

It was obvious that Loki also sensed a change because you were one hundred percent invested in him with all your attention. He knew that previously there had been something clouding your mind, but whatever it was seemed to now be disappearing and he was on cloud nine.

You threw your head back as you laughed out loud at another one of his stories.

“Thor’s an idiot, trust me when I say no kid has ever freaked out so hard at seeing a damn snake, darling.”

Your laughter dwindled to a chuckle as you admired the man in front of you. His British accent was sultry and sexy, and he a sense of humor that left you in tears.

You bit your lip as you watched him take a sip of his scotch on the rocks, a smile still lingering on his lips.

You bit your bottom lip as you watched him. He peaked a brow at you over his glass.

“What is it?”

You just shook your head, a smile still on your face, “Nothing, I just,” you tuck a strand of your hair behind your ear as you lean on your elbow. You lean closer into him as he watches you curiously, “you’re adorable.”

Loki frowns, almost insulted, “Adorable? I’m no child.”

You gave him a playful frown of confusion as you take the glass out of his hand. He watches you in interest.
“You’re not?”

He tilts his head and his frown starts to becoming an amused smirk.

“I’d be very afraid if I found out that all this time you thought you were dating a child, y/n. Might have to report you to the authorities.”

You give him that same look he had just give you moments before - curiosity.

“Okay, this just got weird fast.”

Loki’s the one that laughs out loud this time. He takes the glass out of your hand this time and points a daunting finger in your face, “Next time you take my drink, I’ll punish you for it.”

His voice is husky and something changes in the air the moment he says those words. Your smile slides off your face and his pupils darken to almost a black color.

That night, Bucky prepared him and Ashlyn a romantic dinner.

They shared everything from the last few weeks (well, almost everything), and they shared a silent apology as they did their best to reconstruct their love.

Over her trip, Ashlyn had missed Bucky’s birthday, but she hadn’t forgotten to get him something while she was away.

“I just hope you really love it.”

Bucky sits across from Ashlyn in his living room. He had set up a cute table. There was a white table cloth laid over it, with two plates and a candle in the middle. The rest of the lights in the apartment was off, but the living room window remained open.

There was a sound of fire crackling and rustling of a paper bag that Ashlyn was stretching out to
him over the table that read BOSS on it.

He gave her an amused look as he took it out of her hand.

“Is this what I think it is?”

She gave him an excited smile and she bounced her right leg up and down.

“It might be.”

Bucky sets the bag down in his lap as he looks through the white tissue paper. A big smile pops upon his face when he finds the black folded piece of clothing at the bottom.

He pulls it out, excitedly.

“You got the bomber?”

He looks at the ridiculously expensive jacket in his hand, the jacket he had been obsessing over for the last five months.

“Babe, *fuck* it’s gorgeous.”

He lets out a loud chuckle as he sniffs it.

“It even smells like how I imagined it would.”

“You’re crazy. Try it on, I want to see how it looks on you.”

Bucky stands up and quickly slides each arm into the black jacket. He stands up proudly as he tucks on the sides, looking down at himself.
“So?”

He looks up at Ashlyn for confirmation and she’s staring up at him smiling.

“You’re so hot.”

Bucky chuckles as his cheeks turn a slight red.

He smiles down at his new gift, “Thank you, I love it.”

_Come away with me on a bus_  
_Come away where they can’t tempt us_

He hears Ashlyn get up from her chair and make her way towards him. He looks up at her when she places her hand on his chest.

It pained her everything that she had done, the guilt starting to eat away at her.

She knew she shouldn’t have done it, but she had done it for them. Maybe she could love him again, now that the work was over.

He gives her a longing look as the soft piano music played in the back. He swallows down nervously as she looks up at him. They haven’t been this close in proximity in a while.

_With their lies_

“Ash…”

“Happy twenty-eighth birthday, Bucky.” She whispers.

She leans up and kisses him softly. She pulls away so quickly that Bucky doesn’t have time to respond to it.
“You actually reminded me, I got a package sent to my door. Apparently, it was supposed to be sent to you but you had to sign for it, they included a backup address and it was mine. I didn’t open it.”

Bucky’s eyebrow furrow in confusion at the weird change in subject, “A package?”

“Yeah. It was the one I brought in with me.”

“Oh, I thought that was just a second gift for me.” He adds playfully.

“Wow, someone’s humble.”

“Hey! It’s for my birthday. I’m allowed to not be for one day.”

*I want to walk with you*

*On a cloudy day*

Ashlyn laughs as she picks up the medium-sized box and hands it to him. When Bucky takes it from her, he’s surprised to find that it’s not as heavy as it looked. It weighed so light that he figured there was pillow inside of it.

Bucky walks over to the couch and easily rips open the box.

When he opens the top he sees a little baby blue colored card on the top that reads:

*Happy Birthday, Bucky.*

*y/n*

His eyes furrow together. You must’ve mailed this out before he distanced himself from you.

*In fields where the yellow grass grows knee-high*

*So won’t you try to come*
This makes a heavy pang in your chest burn. He feels something else inside as he reads the words over and over again. Honestly, he had thought you had forgotten it was his birthday because you never even sent him a happy birthday text and you didn’t go to this birthday dinner.

But he didn’t blame you. He was an ass.

It hurts him that this means so much to him because four simple little words should not mean this much (especially from you), but it does.

He reluctantly pulls the card off the gift that laid beneath. When he sees what it is, he freezes and her heart skips a beat.

It was like the wind was knocked out of him.

Overwhelming emotions take a hold of his heart as he stares at the little eyes and the little hands of the plush toy. He feels a tight knot in his throat that won’t give out no matter how hard he tries swallowing. His world stands still, and all he can think about at that moment is you.

**Because it couldn’t be possible.**

*Come away with me and we'll kiss*  
*On a mountaintop*

His chest is heavy and he feels his eyes burning as the piano in the background matches the emotions coursing through him. Ashlyn could be trying to talk to him, but he wouldn’t even know because he could care less.

Right then, he only wanted one thing and one thing only. It was something that was obvious from the beginning but he couldn’t bring himself to admit.

*Come away with me*  
*And I'll never stop loving you*

The burning in his chest is continuous as his breathing picks up.

He feels admiration, he feels love.

He wants to scream and he wants to cry because it’s all so overwhelming for him.
And he can’t fucking breathe.

“Bucky, what is it?”

Reality hits him in that instant and he blinks up at his girlfriend, dazed.

She looks concerned and worried.

Bucky tries to blink away as much of what he’s feeling as possible before he closes the box and sets it down beside the couch.

“Nothing, it’s just something I ordered on amazon. Thanks for bringing it over.”

Ashlyn narrows her eyes at him, not buying it one bit. As far as she knew, Bucky wasn’t even expecting a package to begin with. She continues to eye it suspiciously.

Bucky stands up exasperated as he runs a hand through his hair. He looks around the room and pulls on his strands, his face looking flushed.

He swallows thickly and Ashlyn begins to grow even more worried.

“Bucky, what the hell is going on?”

As Bucky pulls on his hair and his mind runs at one hundred miles per hour, his eyes meet his car keys and jacket on the island and in that second he knows what he has to do.

He’s not thinking anymore, he’s just doing it.

He looks over at his girlfriend, “I forgot something at the office. I’ll be back, okay?”
He doesn’t give Ashlyn time to respond before he’s out the door.

And I want to wake up with the rain
   Falling on a tin roof
   While I’m safe there in your arms

You don’t know when he started kissing you or when you even left the restaurant and did you both really drive a little over an hour when you could’ve simply gone to his apartment?

But here you were sitting in Loki’s lap as he sat in the driver’s seat. Your hands racked through his unruly hair as your lips brushed against his in harsh kisses.

His grip on your waist was strong as he pulled you against him. His fingertips were likely to leave bruises that would appear later. One of your hands ran the side of his face, down to his jawline, the side of his neck, and down his chest. Your lips left his as they left a trail down his chin and to the side his throat.

Loki threw his head back against the seat as he let out a long groan. He felt himself growing harder as you ground yourself against him. He could feel your center perfectly against his crotch because your dress had risen up your thighs and it now laid rolled up onto your hips.

You heard him tucking on his belt buckle and his zipper. Looking down, you watched his hand as you continued to move your hips- eager.

His breathing was ragged before you took his hands off his jeans and into yours. You kiss him harshly once more, making you both moan loud. The sound of your lips smacking together echoed in the car.

This was animalistic and physical. You had been trying so hard for so long to be careful that you forgot how much you love this- how much you love sex.

You kissed him for a few more minutes as your tongues danced together, your ass accidentally hitting the horn on the steering wheel at one point.

It made you chuckle and he sucked on your tongue.
Eventually, you were practically hyperventilating and you both needed to pull away to breathe.

Loki looked up at you in awe, his lips red and swollen, his hair poking in every direction and a very evident boner in his jeans.

“Wow.”

You chuckled as you bit your bottom lip.

“As much as I’d love to do this in the car, I have some hella creepy neighbors.”

Loki looked out the window at the houses around them. The lights were still on in them letting them know people were still awake and maybe it wasn’t a good idea to do this out here.

“Damn. I’ve always wanted to do it in a car.”

“While that sounds great, let's just go inside.”

Loki agrees and turns off the car. He goes around the car once you step out and he pushes you up against the side of it, kissing you deeply.

“You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to do that.”

You wish you could say the same.

You mask the sudden pain you feel by running your thumb against his bottom lip and looking up into his eyes which held heavy admiration for you.

Slowly, you lean in and run your lips against his.

You don’t know how he does it, but somehow he’s walked you backwards towards your front
porch without his lips leaving yours.

He’s got you up against the brick wall of your porch. You feel his dick through his jeans against your pelvis as he grinds up against you and you moan deliciously, bringing your right leg up around his waist. Loki uses that opportunity to raise your dress up once more around your hips.

You wanted him to fuck you. It’s been years since you’ve had a good fuck and at that moment it’s all you wanted.

You feel the wetness gather in your core as he pulls your other leg around him.

It seems to turn you on more when you realize you’re on your front porch and anyone could see you at this point.

You hear him push his clothing aside and pull himself out through the opening in his boxers. He bites on your neck and you scream out as he sucks on it afterward.

It drives you crazy, and it makes you groan, “Fuck.”

You feel him push your underwear to the side and he’s rubbing his tip against your folds.

You look down at his ministrations and gasp at the sensations that wreck your body.

“Shit.” You whimper as it grazes your clit.

“Mmmmm.” He moans in response, his other hand going around to grip your ass. He angles you upward so he can slide himself into you.

You reach a hand down to spread your pretty lips to allow him better access.

Once he’s completely in you, you throw your head back against the cold bricks, because it’s been so long.
You let him fuck you hard on your front porch, you let him breathe against your neck as he says nothing, you allow yourself to just feel.

You needed to be wrecked and he does so as his hips gain rhythm against yours. His thighs slap against you and the sound is arousing, making you closer to the edge.

He lays his forehead against your collarbone as he looks down at where you both meet, ramming into you at a quick speed.

Your mouth shapes a perfect “O” as you feel your end approaching and you can tell he’s close too because his breathing is ragged and sharp.

A whine escapes his throat, “Y/N.” He whimpers.

Your hand finds its way to your clit and you rub yourself quickly as you find your release, cumming around his dick.

You feel him swell and empty himself inside of you as he lets out a long grunt, thrusting one last time.

Your head feels heavy and you feel dizzy as your vision is pure white. The only thing you can hear in your ears is your blood pumping and a twig breaking.

*Wait for what?*

It was synced, the way you and Loki both look up towards the same direction, your eyes both still clouded over from a post-orgasm bliss.

“Shit.” You hear Loki mumble, quickly setting your down and tucking himself away in embarrassment.

What you see leaves you frozen in place and your heart falls so hard deep into your chest you can
feel it.

Bucky stood there motionless in your front lawn, his hair a mess and his cheeks wet from hot tears.

You’re shocked and you feel disgusted, but you’re also confused. It almost felt like a hallucination.

You saw his Addams apple bobble as he swallowed down hard and his eyes finally left yours and instead to your messy dress and to the hand that had just been giving yourself pleasure to another man.

He doesn’t know how to feel, but whatever it is, he knows he doesn’t deserve to feel it.

Obviously, he had someone back at home and so did you, apparently.

You’re still confused by his presence.

You try your best to swallow down your own tears as you fix your dress.

“Bucky,” his eyes go to Loki who simply gives him a small wave, “What are you doing here?”

He was there because he thought you felt the same and he wanted to kiss you. That’s why he was there, he thinks to himself. **He looks down at Loki’s jeans.** But clearly, he was wrong.

Bucky’s gaze drifts down towards the grass below him and he clears his throat.

“Sorry, um.” His voice cracks slightly.

But he doesn’t continue. Instead, stilling avoiding eye contact, he gives them a short gesture with his hand as if saying bye and walks away back towards his parked Honda.
You hear the blood gushing once more in your ears as you watch him walk away from you.

To come away with me in the night
Come away with me

Chapter End Notes

Can you guys guess the gift that the reader gave Bucky?

I just wanted to say that I'm sorry for the delay. This took a lot longer than I intended, but I've been going through a tough time these last few weeks and I just did not want to write. I suffer from bad depression and sometimes it's just...really tough. I honestly think that writing this triggers it as well, I kind of use it as a way to express my emotions that I deal with. I've been through a situation similar. so yeah. sorry for the rant lol. I wish this chapter could be better written but I'm just now coming out of my rut and I needed to get something out. I hope you guys liked it. Also. no gifs in this chapter. it was too heartbreaking.
What Comes Around, Goes Around/Karma’s a Bitch.

Chapter Summary

Bucky and Ashlyn have an intense moment and it drives him into making a radical decision.

Chapter Notes

Took advantage that I was feeling well still and popped this one out fast for you guys. :) I hope you enjoy this one. this intro scene I ADORED writing.

Hey girl, is he everything you wanted in a man?

New York, New York

His bedroom was a dark grey, reminiscent of the color of masculinity and raw energy. Each wall was circled by a white pearl molding that lined the ceiling and the floors. On one side of the wall was a dark wood bookcase that was stacked in a disorderly fashion. A mixture of hardback and softback copies lined the shelf. They were many genres, from tales of old veterans to fun recipes and Stephen King novels; entire collections.

On the shelf beneath that, there were three picture frames tilted from the left side that displayed favorite memories. One of them was of him with a great friend of his who had unfortunately lost his life in the war. They both stood together side by side, Bucky’s arm draped tightly around the boy’s shoulder, a huge smile on both their faces. They wore their army uniform and combat boots, and there were worn tires marks in the orange dirt under their feet.
The next picture was of him with his parents. His father’s hair had just begun to gray and his mother wore her dyed blonde hair just above her shoulders. It was at an event in Washington DC, and his parents had dragged him along for press sake. He didn’t budge, for he loved his parents with all his heart. It was taken six months before his mother had been diagnosed with Leukemia.

The third picture was of Bucky and his mother, months before she was killed. His mother had complained the whole time about how she didn’t look pretty enough to be in a picture and was constantly refusing to be in it. But after much begging, Bucky insisted of wrapping a light red bandana around her bald head, tying it in the back with much care. He had told her she looked beautiful and always would. Eventually, she gave in and agreed to the picture, Bucky kissing her left cheek as the click went off.

The last two bottom shelvings were decorated with random knick-knacks - three storage boxes that portrayed as novels laid on top of each other, two bookends in the shape of a J and the other a B, and at last a little succulent plant to the far right corner. On the top of the bookshelf laid a blue Yankee baseball hat.

The walls were bare except for two framed black and white paintings that hung on the same wall as the bookshelf, side by side. It was an abstract picture, scattered black and white lines. It brought the dark grey of the wall and the crown moldings together beautifully.

On the other side of the room were two large black doors that slid open to reveal a walk-in closet, but they were closed. On the third wall was a large arched window that looked out into downtown Manhattan, the freedom tower standing tall and proud overlooking the harbor.

Across from the window was a king-sized worth bed. The bedding consisted of a dark grey bed sheet that matched the pillowcases and the walls, a heavy white comforter thrown over it and then over that a dark grey throw over the end of the bed. The headboard was only slightly taller than the pillow, a black color that matched the wooden support of the bed.

The smell enveloped her like a hug as Ashlyn sat on the windowsill up against the cold glass. His bedroom smelled like him: delicious and clean like vanilla and expensive cologne, a drop of orange somewhere in between.

She looks around in a daze, memories of what had happened in these walls engulfing her emotions. She swallows thickly as her brows knit together in shame.

A blur compromised her vision as she started to understand what it was that she had been doing the last few months.
The sexual encounters that had played part in obtaining part of a company’s willpower in order to grow financially, to lying to the man she once loved but had been lying to from the beginning.

It pains her from within to realize that she didn’t realize she didn’t want her relationship with him compromised until he was no longer within her reach. She cursed herself for becoming the woman she had, she hated that she knew he deserved better. She wanted to tell him the truth and come clean, probably have a clean start, and she knew it was selfish of her to want it all.

To her own bewilderment, it hit her in that instance that she needed to stay here and she needed to make him stay. She felt the jealousy consume her body as she saw her boyfriend run off to somewhere that wasn’t where he said he was going. He didn’t have to tell her for her to know he was lying.

She had been the one to grow distant by being away for so long, and by doing that he had looked for comfort in another, whoever the hell it might even be.

She wanted it to be right again, she wanted to belong here again. She had messed up and they both knew it. She couldn’t help who she was or the person she had become, but she would better herself to love him again, to win his heart over one more time.

If you were to ask her if she had eyed that box with hatred and bad intentions, she would lie and say no. Though she wanted to burn it with the heat of a thousand suns, she had refused to even step near it, as if it would burn her from the inside out.

She had sat on his couch emotionless for about a half-hour, hands trembling as she sent him text after text about his whereabouts. Her thumb shook uncontrollably as she eyed the seven bubbles that reminded unanswered. Swallowing thickly, trying to get the image of him with another woman out of her head, as if on autopilot, her body had taken her into his bedroom.

She had eyed his belongings with a feeling of betrayal and hurt. He was supposed to love her.

She doesn’t know how or when it happened, but his lamp had found its way shattered on the ground, and her throat had become raw from unstoppable tears.

She had to put an end to this. Even if it meant she had to beg. It scared her that she didn’t even really know anything yet- that this wall all based off guessing. It was from a gut feeling and she
was seething. The thought of him with another woman made her see red.

*He was hers.*

Another hour goes past and it was now a quarter to eleven. He still hadn’t called or texted her back.

Her body began to shake abnormally as she crouched down to the floor, picking at the wooden crevices.

*He had left her behind.*

She replays the look on his face when he had walked over to his car keys (she hated that damn car, he was worth so much better than that. *Stupid fucker.*) He looked broken and distant as if what he was feeling wasn’t something that was in the room; it was irrelevant to her.

Bucky had to forgive her, he had to love her again.

She had to apologize for not being there because no one else could win but her.

She looks up from the floor, her breathing ragged as she sees the screen of her iPhone across the room. When had she thrown it?

The screen remained black and dark, a sign of no notifications.

Another soft cry racks through her as she hears the sound of the jingle of keys and then the sound of footsteps creaking towards her direction.

*You know I gave you the world  
You had me in the palm of your hand*

Her head snaps up as a heavy breath escapes her heavy lungs when she sees a shadow in her doorway.
He had come back.

Her breath catches and it hitches audibly when she sees his face. Her face contours into a painful expression as her fingertips grip her thighs.

You left.

His own appearance leaves her distraught and curious. It was obvious he had been crying judging by his bloodshot eyes and heavy licked lips. His hair was in a disarray, most likely pulled from a heavy meltdown.

She wonders why he was in that situation. Had he given up and come back to her? Did he do something he regrets? Was he sorry? Did he forgive her?

Bucky’s eyes were blank as he stared at Ashlyn. His chin was high and his breathing was sharp, still trying to catch his own breath. He looked numb as he looked at his girlfriend, taking in her desperate position.

You left me.

What happened to us?

Please.

I’m so sorry.

Bucky knows just by looking at her and by the lamp next to his bed that she knew he had run after another woman.

So why your love went away
I just can’t seem to understand

But she didn’t know who. The reminder of you sent a heavy jolt through his heart.

A whimper leaves Ashlyn’s throat as they both share an uncomfortable silence of pain, torture, and
unspoken broken words.

They had both messed up, and it was her fault.

**She wanted to love him again, she did.** Her eyes would say.

Bucky remains frozen in his spot as Ashlyn moves from the window and closer to where he’s standing. She crawls across the floor until she’s in front of him and she stares up at him, pleading.

Bucky swallows as he feels the immense guilt. He sees the pain in her eyes like she knew that he was moving on from her.

He wanted to cry because he loved you and you had been with another man. He had sacrificed his relationship to run after you. He had left her behind to go after you, he was going to kiss you and maybe finally clear the air.

It was wrong. He had made a huge unfaithful mistake. He couldn’t believe he was about to cheat.

His eyes close tightly together as the image of you wrapped around Loki plays in his mind. The way your hands were in his hair, your legs around his waist. Please god no. he had said as he was walking up to your house, not wanting to believe what he was so clearly seeing with his eyes.

*Why would you do that?*

There’s a sound of heavy breathing and sniffing, coming from both of you, in the bedroom.

You didn’t feel the same. He would never judge you for what you did with Loki, you had every right to. Part of him was even happy that you were finally opening up to love again.

You were moving on, and maybe you had to, too. But it still doesn’t make sense to him. What was the point of you hating Ashlyn so much? What was the point of everything else you both did that was obviously trespassing the just friend's zone?
He had never been so confused in his life.

Bucky looks down once more and Ashlyn’s eyes are red, desperate.

A sob escapes Bucky’s throat and he shakes his head.

He was so fucked.

His eyes close tight again as he feels Ashlyn’s arms wrap tight around his calves. He feels the warm moisture of her tears against his legs and the racking of her body as she trembles softly.

“I’m so sorry. I’m so sorry I did this to us.”

Bucky takes in a deep breath and looks up towards the heavens, the wetness coatings his cheeks once more. He couldn’t breathe.

He couldn’t get the image of your legs wrapped around Loki out of his head, he couldn’t get the sound of you cumming out of his head.

He had fallen in love hard with someone he shouldn’t have. He had to fix this.

“Please forgive me.” Ashlyn sobs against his knees.

A whimper leaves Bucky’s lips as he looks back down. Ashlyn was begging.

“Don’t hurt me again,” Bucky says just above a whisper. His tone was menacing and demanding, lined with despair.

His hand goes to the back of her unruly head and he rubs her there gently.

Ashlyn sobs against his knees.
“I won’t I promise.”

“I’m not going anywhere.”

Ladies in sundresses and men in loose-fitted t-shirts filled the outside patio area of the little cafe on Bleeker. Most of the girls wore designer shades as they sipped on their De Venoge Cuvee Louis accompanied with an Instagram worth poached egg on a piece of avocado toast, while their date sat cross-legged admiring them in all their beauty, more than willing to pay for two more glasses of Louis Roederer just to have an opportunity to sport them a little longer.

It doesn’t surprise you in the slightest that this is the place Ashlyn takes you to lunch. She seems happier than usual as she asks the waitress for seating outside, her tone perkier and more light. Her Louis Vuitton slung over her right shoulder as you both weaved through the heavy crowd of brunch hour. You followed her suit as she guided you towards the sunlight that peaked in through the doors that led to the outside table area.

Ashlyn doesn’t thank the hostess as she sits the menu down between you two, but you do before she has the chance to walk completely away. You look up at Ashlyn and she’s already looking at the lunch menu.

You shuffle uneasily in your white chair as you look out towards the street. You feel that slight bile again that has been coming up your throat for the last few hours, and you’re thankful when the waitress comes over and pours you both a complimentary glass of water. You down it fast while she’s pouring Ashlyn some.

Memories of last night make you uneasy. Everything had been going well with you and Loki. You finally allowed yourself to be intimate with another man again and it felt amazing and it definitely helped you get your mind off your other issues. That was until the said issue was standing in your front lawn, watching you fuck your boyfriend.

As if the situation you were in couldn’t get any more messed up or confusing than it already was. Why had Bucky been there? And even if he was there to apologize, which you are kind of hoping was the case, there’s no way you both could go back to normal. You thought that telling him how you felt about him would be the worst thing ever, but that was no longer the case.

You considered texting Bucky, maybe even calling him to find out why he had been there, but part
of you was deathly afraid. The ball was in his court, and you didn’t want to seem desperate.

You explained to Loki before he left that you had no idea why Bucky was there, but you did tell him about how you had both been best friends but he had for some unknown reason cut you out. He ultimately agreed with you that he had most likely been there to try and patch things up again, and then you and him most likely traumatized Bucky for life.

You laughed for a second at that answer, but then it quickly dwindled as another realization hit you.

You were in love with Bucky, and he had caught you giving yourself to another man. It felt dirty and wrong, more so than embarrassing.

*Why was he there?*

“What are you getting?” Ashlyn asks, setting down the cardboard menu between the two glasses, “I think I’m gonna go with the Petits Pains au Chocolat.”

You gave her a funny look. It was obvious that spending a lot of time out in Paris changed Ashlyn. You look down at your menu and quickly say the first thing that sounds appetizing to you.

“I’ll just get the scrambled eggs and toast I guess.”

Ashlyn gives you a perk of her eyebrow, “Y/N, honey, why don’t you put your bag on the table instead of the chair?”

You narrow your eyes at her in confusion, “Why?”

Ashlyn flicks her freshly blown-out hair over her shoulder and sighs, “You don’t want some grimly man stealing it do you? Y/N, a lady always sits her bag down on the table next to her.”

Your eyes flicker to her LV that was on the table to her left. You honestly thought she had put it there just to show off that she had one.
You hold your tongue from saying this, and instead with a heavy grimace and fake smile, snatch your black crossbody bag and place it down next to your napkin.

“There.”

Ashlyn smiles sweetly at you and takes a sip of her water.

The waitress comes over and you both order your food.

“How’s it going to with Loki?”

You choke on your overpriced, but a surprisingly delicious scrambled egg.

“How did you know about me and Loki?” Your face turns red as your mind wanders far. Did Bucky tell her?

“He’s been telling the whole office, Y/N. He’s clearly head over heels over you,” Ashlyn delicately pulls a piece of her pastry, “Although I will add, Steve is completely heartbroken over it.”

You groan internally as Steve’s pretty sad face enters your mind’s eye.

“I can’t believe he’s telling people already.”

“What’s the big deal? He’s a great catch. I’ll admit, he can be a bit mischievous at times, just sit down with Thor for an hour and he’ll tell you, but he’s hot and he has an accent.”

You roll your eyes with a shake of your head as you take another bite of yummy eggs.

“He’s a cool guy, but I don’t know if I like him that much yet. I just need time, Ash.”
“Time for what? If you’re happy to go for it.”

“That’s the thing, Ash, I’m not.”

Ashlyn frowns and you bite your tongue, realizing you’ve said too much.

“I mean, I am, but I don’t know. It’s too soon for this talk. We’ve only been going out for three weeks.”

Ashlyn nods approvingly. You look at her, hesitating for a second. You don’t want to ask, but you feel like you should reciprocate the interest. You take a few more bites of your eggs, stabbing at them nervously with your fork.

You didn’t want to know, but you had to ask.

“How about you? How are things with Bucky?”

“They’re great. Things are definitely better between us. Almost better than when we first started dating.”

The response breaks your heart. Obviously, what Bucky had said about making Ashlyn his best friend was working. It’s not that you didn’t want was best for them, but it didn’t seem right to you. You were still insanely skeptical about Ashlyn’s intentions and Bucky deserved better. Clearly, that didn’t matter though, because they were both doing well.

You fake a small smile, “I’m glad.”

There’s a small moment of silence before you feel Ashlyn’s hands over yours.

You look up, surprised.

“Y/N, look,” she says softly, “I know I haven’t been the best sister the last few years and I’m
Sorry. I’m also really sorry that I’ve changed. I never expected any of this,” She motions with her hands around you both as if gesturing to the city and to the life she was now living, “and I didn’t expect to like it as much as I do. I also apologized to Bucky last night, told him I was sorry for distancing. He has forgiven me and I hope that you will too.”

Her words shock you. This was the first time in a long time that your sister has demonstrated her love towards you. She literally just apologized for everything that made you skeptical about her.

“Wow, Uhm,” she looks at you expectedly, awaiting a response, “I forgive you.”

The smile that breaks over her face is too bright, almost fake, and you doubt it for a second if she’s being sincere.

There seemed to have been other intentions behind this apology. But you were exhausted at this point and you accept it.

You don’t miss the way Ashlyn doesn’t tip the waitress.

You’re both walking out, the hostess shoots you a bright smile and you tell her to have a great day. The buzzing sensation against your hand startles you because no one had texted or called you all day except for Loki that morning.

You expect to see Loki’s name on your phone, but you’re shocked when you see the one name you weren’t expecting.

Bucky.

Hey, I was hoping you could stop by my office today. We need to talk.

You can’t breathe for a second and your handshakes as you re-read the words until they are stuck in your head. He hadn’t spoken to you in so long. You’re terrified, you’re scared of what you’re feeling because of one damn text and you’re scared of seeing him and hearing what he has to say. You look up as you’re walking behind Ashlyn and you take in a deep breath.
Ok. I’m in the city today. When do you want me to stop by?

You hardly have time to lock the phone when another text arrives.

Now is fine.

You suck in a deep breath and let it out dramatically past your lips.

Today was Ashlyn’s day off so she went straight home after brunch. You told her you had to catch up on some errands at home, not wanting to tell her the truth.

The ride up the elevator to the top floor was not fun. Avoiding both Steve and Loki seemed more like a burden than anything. When had your life become a wave of lies and hidden secrets? Never had you thought you were on your way to meet a future CEO that you were currently head over heels for, but trying to hide from two gorgeous other guys in the meantime. It seemed almost outrageous to you.

Every time the elevator would stop on a random floor and someone would get on, you would hide your face with your hair as much as possible, only peaking your eye up to see the floor numbers.

A breath you didn’t know you were holding comes out when you finally arrive on the top floor. You quickly walk over to Bucky’s door which happened to be the last one on the far left down the long hallway.

You shakily raise your hand up to knock, almost hesitantly. There’s no response after the first knock and you start looking around nervously, looking for any indication of Steve or Loki. Sighing, you move from leg to leg and raise your hand up to knock one more time.

“Come in!” You hear, finally.

You close your eyes tightly together and take a deep breath before turning the doorknob.

When you’re inside you see Bucky sitting in his chair behind his desk. He’s wearing a light grey
suit with a white dress shirt underneath and a blue tie. His eyes are already on you. He ignores the heavy pang in his chest and how he feels just by one look. The way he stares at you is sympathetic and longing.

You have to look away before you combust into flames, and you do so as you turn around to close the door behind you. One of your hands remains on the doorknob and the other is one the door itself so it could close softly.

“Hey.” He says softly, lovingly, almost.

You turn around slowly. When you do he’s furrowing his eyes at you like you’re afraid of him or something similar. It hurts him.

You look up until your eyes meet and the memory from last night returns.

“Hi.” You respond weakly.

He ticks his jaw and he looks at the chair in front of him and then back to you. “Could you sit please?”

His instruction makes you freeze at first. You look at the leather chair and then back at him. You nod slowly, making your way to his seat.

“You knew I was in town.” You say once you’re seated.

Bucky smiles softly for a fraction of a second before it’s gone.

“Ashlyn told me she was taking you to brunch.”

He’s moving his left leg up and down nervously, his gaze intently on you- taking you in.

“Then why ask?”
“I wasn’t going to assume that you would say yes.” He had a point. You look away from him and towards the scenery outside, “Look, Y/N, I wanted to apologize.”

Your stomach turns as your eyes look at him involuntarily. Had you heard him right?

He looks at you with sentiment in his eyes, his gaze goes towards his hand that is playing nervously with his ballpoint pen.

“For which part?”

His hand stops at the question you ask and he looks up at. His gaze is so intense at that moment that you feel the air grow thick between you two.

“For cutting me off or for ruining my moment with my boyfriend?”

Bucky gapes at you in shock.

“What?” He breathes.

“Did I stutter?”

Bucky stares at you and then scoffs in disbelief, shaking his head from side to side.

“I didn’t cut you off.”

You cross your arms over your chest as you lay back against your chair, now angry more than afraid.

“Then what do you call it, Barnes?”
He drops the pen hard against the table.

“I was pushing you away, creating distance, that’s all. You need to realize, y/n, that I and Ashlyn have been going through a hard time. You know things between us have been distant, and I’m not saying you were to blame-“

“Don’t you fucking blame me for your problems with your girlfriend-“

“I’m not! I’m just saying that I was devoting my time to the wrong place.”

You nod quickly, staring so hard at the spot above his shoulder that you hope it will make the tears brewing behind your eyes go away.

“So you brought me here to remind me of that? That we can’t be friends anymore?”

“I brought you here because I wanted to tell you that I shouldn’t have done that.”

You weren’t expecting that.

“What?”

“You can’t help-“ he feels the emotions brewing in his chest as he continues to stare at you. I thought you loved me, too. He wants to say. “You can’t help who you become friends with,” but I still I want to keep you in my life, “And you snuck up on me, you’re my best friend. I did the worst thing by pushing you away.”

“I still want you there when I want someone to complain to about my day, I still want someone to be there when I need advice when I want to get hammered when I want to have a good time or binge watch Hey Arnold with.”

A chuckle escapes through your nose and you bite your bottom lip to keep from smiling.

“I’m so sorry I hurt you.”
You continue to bite your lip as you stare at each other. His eyes are begging and there’s a smile on the corner of his mouth.

You don’t bother asking him about last night, because you put two and two together and realize that he was there because he wanted to apologize - you had been right.

He’s thankful you don’t ask.

“And I’m sorry you had to see that last night.”

A look you don’t recognize is on Bucky’s face as. He looks away, his cheeks a deep red, his eyes almost black.

“Yeah,” he says so lowly you almost have trouble hearing it, “let’s not talk about that ever again.”

Part of him hates that he had to see that, the other part always dies a little inside when he replays it, another part of him grows with desire, and then there’s that smaller side of him that is happy that you’ve moved on.

Now that you’ve moved on, he figures he should too.

He doesn’t tell you this, and he doesn’t tell you yet that he had been looking at engagement rings online before you came in. For some reason, he couldn’t say it to your face.

You and Bucky had a great talk and you leave a lot happier than when you woke up that morning. It was almost as if everything was going back to normal again. You’re closing the large mahogany door behind you when someone sneaks up behind you.

“Y/N?”

You’re frozen in place at the voice. You quickly turn around, trying to mask happiness all over your expression. The last thing you wanted to look was suspicious.
Your sister is looking at you with a really confused look on her face.

“What are you doing here?” She asks slowly, looking between you and the door to Bucky’s office.

You try to rack your brain for any excuse possible.

“I-uh,” Ashlyn looks at you waiting, her expression growing apprehensive, “Loki asked me to hand Bucky something before I went home.”

Ashlyn’s expression lightens and you thank the heavens for finding such a quick and believable lie.

“Oh, okay.”

Now you’re the confused one.

“I thought today was your day off.”

Ashlyn stares at you for a second before looking over her shoulder and back at you, “It is, but I had to come in to also drop something off.”

You squint your eyes at her, a weird feeling in your gut that told you something was off.

“I’m gonna go in and say hi to Buck.”

You step aside to give her some room, “Oh, yeah sure.”

She gives you a sincere smile before going in, “I’ll see ya later, girlie.”

You give her a smile back. Once the door closes in your face it quickly falls off.

As if on a mission, you quickly walk over to the room that your sister just came out of.
You quickly identify this as Mr. Barnes’ office and it scares you that you could get in trouble for trespassing. You look around to make sure the hallway is clear, once it is you reach down to open door.

Locked.

You curse to yourself as you huff. You try to find any possible way to gain access inside, but you see nothing. Giving up, you sigh and spin on your feet to turn around.

You hear the shuffle of paper and you feel something against the toe of your shoe. You look down to see the corner of a manila envelope sticking out from underneath the door. Curiously, you lean down on one knee to pick it up.

You feel guilty at first, this could be something extremely confidential. If you take this, they would notice it was gone.

You feel awful for not trusting your sister but what if she was hiding something like your gut was telling you?

You make up your mind as you quickly, with shaking hands, open the clasp of the envelope. You stick your finger into the edge of the envelope and pull it back so you can look in. There are several documents inside, and you’re skimming through it when something in between catches your eye. It was Mr. Barnes’ will.

All you see are Ashlyn’s name, a big amount of money in a line right after it, a lot more significant than Bucky’s and -

You’re about to keep reading it when you hear muffling behind Bucky’s door. Quickly, you close the envelope and slide it back under the door.

You run out of the building so fast that your vision is dark and blurry. Your head feels faint and scenarios of your sister from the last year come into your head.

Her trips, her material things, her life, her cockiness, and her stuck up attitude. What the hell was she hiding. It was obvious to you that her apology had been a huge lie. You only wondered how much of that was also sincere to Bucky.
Your mind is racing back and forth while you sit on the train looking out the window. You hate that you can no longer trust your sister, but at the same time, she seemed sincere about wanting to be your friend again. It was the materialistic side of her that was poisonous and why you wanted her as fast as possible from Bucky.

You had to tell him, you had to remind him that she was using him. He had to believe her this time.

You feel a rush as you’re about to pick up your phone to send him a text - you haven’t texted him in so long and it sends fire through your heart- you curse yourself as you try to push it down as much as possible. Your feelings couldn’t matter right now, only stopping this did.

It surprises you when your phone goes off as soon as you’re about to unlock it.

It was Bucky.

You quickly unlock it with a smile, ignoring the soaring in your heart.

*I didn’t want to tell you earlier, because it’s a surprise but I need your help with something.*

You smile.

You don’t have time to respond before the next text follows.

It’s a picture.

Your heart drops the second it comes in. You can feel it pumping against your ribcage and you feel like you want to *die*.

You’ve never felt the way you did at that exact moment. You feel your hands clamming up and you want to cry.

*This is the one. I’m going to ask Ashlyn to marry me.*
It was a ring. The picture was a beautiful diamond ring.

Bucky sat back in his office, staring at his phone, at the message he had just sent you. He felt wrong, all of this felt wrong. But it felt like it should be right.

He wonders why you hadn’t replied yet, he knew you had your phone in your hand at all times. Were you safe?

He drops his phone on his desk as he takes in a deep breath and runs a hand through his hair.

It was official. He was finally going to propose to Ashlyn.

After all, you didn’t feel the same, and even if you did for a second in time, you had moved on now. You were with Loki. He thinks.

Bucky’s rubbing his forehead nervously as he stares at his phone waiting for a response.

He didn’t know that on the other end you were blinking away hot tears that were blurring your vision and that you felt angry and disappointed.

You type out the fakest lie you’ve ever told anyone:

*It’s beautiful, bucky.*

With that, you turned off your phone for the rest of the night.

*Now it’s breaking my heart to watch you run around
’Cause I know that you’re living a lie
But that’s okay baby ’cause in time you will find*
Your chariot

Chapter Summary

Bucky finally confronts the reader about her feelings towards his and Ashlyn's relationship. *Very strong language.*

Chapter Notes

Fuck. *wipes sweat off brow* This was a hard one to write. But so damn important.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

_How do you do that with your eyes,_
_You know it gets me every time,_
_I swear I wish I could read your mind,_
_Cause I ask the same question every night_

Upstate, New York

Steve texts you that afternoon asking if you were okay because you weren’t at the engagement. You don’t reply.

You never understood love. As a child, you always imagined it’d be something that brought happiness to you. You envisioned yourself twenty years into the future as five years old you would rip toilet paper from your parent’s bathroom and stick it into the sides of your red headband. Then, you’d dig into your mother’s closet and look for the fanciest pair of heels that she owned. They were about four times the size of your little feet, but you didn’t care as you spun around in front of your mirror, caressing the toilet paper that fell over your shoulder as if it were a veil.

You were five and you couldn’t wait until you met your prince charming, you couldn’t wait to fall in love for the first time like the princesses in the movies. It seemed real to you - true love. It wasn’t a myth or a fairytale, even staring at your own parents you could tell it was a real thing.
Of course, your life never turned out that way. Boy after boy, then men after men, your heart was continuously broken. That image of you walking down the aisle in a big white dress eventually diminished and with each time it seemed easier to let it go. You had no longer thought about five years old you in the toilet paper veil. Instead, you grew more with the expectation that if something was good, maybe you could date the guy forever, not even get married.

Who cares if all your old high school and college friends were married except for you.

This true reality was what you lived with now. You no longer believed in true love, just infatuation, and lust.

Or so you thought you no longer did. Your gut and your heart told you otherwise while Pebbles laid next to you as you watched Dirty Dancing for the third time that week, the second time that day.

You caressed Pebbles as she purred intently. She loved you and you loved her - this kind of love didn’t hurt.

You found yourself believing in love once more as you stared at Swayze dragging the back of his hand down Baby’s inner arm.

There had reached a point after your experience with Eddie where you couldn’t listen to love songs anymore and movies like these made you cringe. You had become a hater, more out of lack of faith of love than hating love.

Love scared you, it’s why you let it go. It always left you hurt, it was always one-sided.

You feel a tightness in your throat as you wonder how Bucky’s hands would feel on you if you both danced that same way.

Pebble lets out another purr.

You allowed yourself to sulk now in pain, learning from past experience that keeping it in doesn’t help anything. But you refused to think of him ever since he showed you the ring.

It wasn’t doing well for your health. You couldn’t eat, you couldn’t sleep, you couldn’t concentrate at work, and you couldn’t control your tears.

You were an awful girlfriend for not even texting Loki, admitting to yourself that he wasn’t the one you wanted and you refused to lead him on like it’s been done to you. You hoped that he would understand without you having to have said anything.

Lazily you pulled out your phone, and before you realized it, you found yourself lurking on Instagram. You scroll quickly through the feed, subconsciously looking for one exact name for the five hundredth time that week.

Suddenly, your thumb stops and you feel a frigidness in your upper belly.

You didn’t see his name but you saw hers. The picture that you saw made a heavy knot in your throat grow and you couldn’t move. Your thumb trembled slightly against your screen, nearly giving the picture a like.

You felt your heart grow heavy and your nerves that were previously numb begin to burn, reaching from your fingertips to your face.
You were nauseous as you felt the need to scream and cry at the same time.

Why bother lying to yourself anymore?

He was the love of your life.

Your love was going to marry your sister and grow a family with her. Your heart shattered at the thought of them having children, having a life together.

Your eyes close tightly together at the image of Ashlyn baring his kids.

You tried to control your breathing as you felt it escape erratically through your nose.

Everything about the situation made you stressed and aggravated; completely and utterly heartbroken.

It was quite obvious to you that he didn’t deserve this, Ashlyn didn’t deserve him. It annoyed you that he couldn’t see how much better he deserved.

It made no sense to you that he didn’t feel the same way. Not that you were selfish or anything, because are you fucking kidding me you say to yourself as you reopen your eyes and continue to stare at the picture in your hand.

Your vision begins to blur.

Of course, when you had given him the same teddy bear he had as a little kid, it was the same gesture you had done with Eddie. Of course, it was, because you couldn’t help it. It’s the kind of girl that you were. It surprised you that he never even said anything about it, you were expecting at least something.

But no, he never even said thank you.

You loved Bucky. You loved him. You were in love with someone you couldn’t have.

You were in love with someone that didn’t love you back.

Again.

You turned yourself slightly into your pillow on the couch and buried your face into the soft fabric.

You dug your nails into it as you sobbed.

Not again. Not again.

You couldn’t bring yourself to go to their engagement, and part of you felt awful because he was your best friend. But you couldn’t bear it. Your heart would not be able to take it. How could you fake your complete unhappiness in front of all of those people?

God, what you would do for just one kiss...

The thought makes a whimper leave your lips as you hold onto the pillow tighter.

You don’t know when, but eventually, you fell into a short slumber. It was the first nap you’ve gotten in in seven days.
There’s always something that pushes someone into making a drastic decision in their life. It could be something positive or something negative.

Up until a few weeks ago, the thought of proposing to Ashlyn still seemed far into the future for Bucky. If anything, his hope for that kind of future had begun to dwindle down up until a few weeks ago. But then he realized that the reason he held back was because of you, because of a certain hope that he had for the future.

But after it became embarrassingly clear to him that that’s not what you wanted, and that he had imagined it all, he had no more reason to hesitate in asking Ashlyn’s hand in marriage.

Everyone would be happy in their own way: Him and Ash would be the perfect couple his parents had always wanted, you could move on with Loki, and he could stop being foolish and a horrible man.

That’s what he expected.

He had chosen the location at the 1 Hotel Brooklyn in Brooklyn across the river. It was one of his and his friends’ favorite sports in the summer. It had a nice deck wooden that overlooked downtown Manhattan. He was more nervous than he’d ever been in his entire life ever since he woke up that morning, clinging onto the velvet box as he stares at his reflection in the mirror.

He swallowed nervously as he took in his own pale face. He was really about to do this tonight.

He wore a nice tailored dark blue suit and he allowed a little bit of his stubble to grow in. His hair was perfectly combed, and his fancy watch glowed on his wrist against his sun-kissed skin.

The little box would remain tucked in his inner coat pocket until that night.

Arriving there, he was greeted with many smiles and suggestive eyebrow raises as if they were all asking if he was ready without actually saying it.

No, I’m not.

He had invited a good amount of his good friends. Including you, Sam, Steve, and Nat. Those were the most important to him, especially on one of the most important days of his life.

It had been an amazing night and it ended up going a lot more smoothly than he thought it would. He surprised Ashlyn at the end on the deck, his friends watching as they all gathered around. He had gotten down on one knee with a bright smile on his face. He had felt a twinge of doubt in his heart when a gust of wind passed over Ashlyn’s body, her hair flowing in the crïps air.

His heart fell slightly. It wasn’t the hair he wanted to touch.

He had asked Ashlyn to marry him because it was the right thing to do.

This was the right thing, he kept telling himself.

He repeated it to himself as Ashlyn cried into his arms saying yes yes yes, he repeated it when he slid the drop-dead gorgeous diamond onto her finger, he repeated it (this is the right thing) when his friends were congratulating him.

He repeated it to himself when he looked around for you, but then slowly realizing you never even
came.

He had looked down at his cellphone while Ashlyn freaked out over the ring, showing it to her
dfriends on the other side of the roof.

He skimmed over his Instagram feed, a betraying task that he shouldn’t do with his fiancé (his
future wife) sitting right there.

Ashlyn had posted the proposal picture two hours ago, he knew she wouldn’t hesitate a moment to
spread on social media.

He finds it quickly and it already had over thirty thousand likes and two hundred comments.

Bucky looked around his vicinity before dimming his screen dark enough as to where others
couldn’t see what he was looking at. He clicked on the likes tab, the search bar, and then searched
your name.

No results.

You hadn’t liked it nor left a comment.

You didn’t even have the decency to show up.

You were his best friend and you didn’t show any gratitude on one of the most important days of
his life.

He was pissed.

Bucky was in a warped daze as he continued to look out into the river, phone tight in his hand. He
feels the wind against his face and he closes his eyes as he tries to push down the unwanted
emotions.

He should be happier at this moment. Right now he should be holding hands with Ashlyn back at
the dinner table. But instead, he was on the other side of the roof, coming to terms to with what he
had just done.

Part of him felt guilty because he knew Ashlyn would look over her shoulder at his back. After
their moment a few nights ago, she knew that someone new had entered their life, but they had both
made a mutual decision to move on from it. But now she had doubts as she watched him deep in
thought next to the rive and not next to her.

Her friend calls her attention and she quickly looks away, clearing her throat, trying to push away
the horrible feeling she was feeling.

Bucky was still in a trance as he thought of you. Why didn’t you come? What had he done wrong?
Bucky feels a hand come down on his shoulder and he spins around, slightly startled.

Sam. Bucky smiles.

“Hey, buddy.” Sam gave him a small smile.

“Hey, Sam.” Bucky sticks his hand in his pants pocket.

“Congrats.”
“Thanks,” Bucky reaches his right arm and pats Sam’s arm comfortingly, “and thanks for coming, man.”

“Of course. I wouldn’t miss one of the most important days of your life.”

“Jeez,” Bucky runs a hand through his hair and sighs, “Yeah, can you believe it?”

“Not really, but it has to happen eventually right? You’re getting married.”

Bucky gives Sam a side smile and nods. Sam follows Bucky’s gaze as he looks over at Ashlyn, no look of happiness or contentment over his face.

Sam bites his bottom lip.

“Look, I spoke to Steve.”

Bucky snaps his head over to Sam and perks a brow at him.

“Oh yeah?”

Sam eyes him for a second before looking Bucky up and down, his voice lowering.

“He told me about you and Y/N.”

The mention of your name leaves Bucky startled and shook for a second. A slight chuckle, which sounds more like a puff of fair, escapes his lungs as he looks quickly between Sam and Ashlyn nervously.

“Wh-why on earth would he do that?” His stutter is hard to miss and he catches his mistake. He clears his throat and stands taller on his feet and looking Sam directly in his eyes, “There’s nothing to talk about. Is he off telling people now that something happened? I don’t-“

“No, Bucky, relax,” Sam chuckles as he raises a hand to calm Bucky down, “Nothing like that. He’s your best friend, you and I both know that the last thing he would do is spread rumors. Especially about something as messed up as this.”

Bucky looks down at his feet ashamed.

“We’re both your friend and we want nothing but the best for you two. He came to me because he wasn’t sure how to handle the situation. And honestly I’ve even been skeptical about you two myself.”

Bucky gapes as he scoffs, his face suddenly feeling hot and his heart beating away rapidly. This was dangerous. Did Ashlyn notice too?

“Jesus, is it really that obvious?”

“Look, I don’t think you’re a bad person. Honestly, I feel like the way Steve was handling it made it seem like you were, and he probably made you feel that way, but you’re not.”

Bucky decides that he’s going to stop bullshitting everything and accepts his friends’ help. He steps up closer to Sam.

“Are you kidding? I feel like shit, Sam.” He whispers as he looks back at Ashlyn and then back to him, “It’s not right. An idiotic crush on my fiancé’s little sister?”
“Of course it’s not, but it’s also not something you should be stressing so much about.” Bucky narrows his eyes at this, “This is why people say a guy and a girl can never be just friends, I mean they can but of course there will always be some kind of tension there- it’s completely natural.”

“Yes, but-“

“It’s a damn crush. Stop beating yourself over it. But I will say, I think differently than he does.”

“How so? Please, any advice that you have right now would be great, because I can’t take this. This guilt.”

“I don’t think you should’ve cut her off nor pushed her away the way you did. You and I both know that Steve did that because he’s crazy about her and wants her to have nothing to do with you romantically. He freaked. He’s being protective and jealous.”

Bucky clears throat, trying his hardest to not get the mental image of you and Steve together.

“So what do you think I should do? I’m engaged, I love my fiancé, but she’s my best friend. Look at her, she didn’t even care to come here tonight, and I don’t know why.”

“And it’s killing you that she’s not here. You care more about her not being here than you do about being engaged.”

Bucky rubs the back of his neck as he stares down at his feet. He closes his eyes tightly together.

“Does that make me a bad person, Sam?”

“It makes you a loyal friend, and someone with a crush that needs to be wiped away and dealt with as soon as possible.”

“What are you saying?”

“You need to talk to Y/N. You guys need to talk about this. Tell her how you feel. That’s the first step into moving past this.”

Bucky feels a hollow hole in his stomach at the advice Sam’s give. Him telling you how he feels? How would that in anyway help the situation? It didn’t make sense to him at first, but then the more he thought about it the more it made sense. Him telling you how he feels would help him move past it. There was some kind of tension between you two that was probably coming off the wrong way from him and maybe it was giving away mixed signals. Maybe your were confused, or maybe there was something else on your mind as well.

Sam was right, you both needed to talk about this. He needed to find out why you weren’t here.

“Okay. Please don’t let this get to Ashlyn, I don’t wanter her involved and I don’t want to hurt her. This is between the three of us: you, me, and Steve.”

Bucky decided to hang out with Ashlyn and his friends for a couple of more hours. They have their share of cocktails and laughter and then they all make their separate ways home.

Surprisingly (and thankfully) Ashlyn tells Bucky that she needs to go home for the night, no matter how much she wanted to celebrate their engagement on their lonesomes at his place, she wasn’t feeling well.
“I’m so happy this is happening.” Ashlyn had whispered against his lips as she leaned against her door to her apartment.

Bucky smiles back convincingly, “You sure you’re not feeling too well?” He gives Ashlyn a suggestive squeeze on her hip, “I wanted to celebrate with you.”

He figured he might as well sound like he has no where to go so she’s not suggestive.

“As much as I want to,” she giggles against his lips, “I feel really nauseous right now and I don’t want to ruin the moment by puking on you while I’m on you.”

“Jesus Christ, Ash.” Bucky cringes as a short laugh escapes his lips, “Fine. Tomorrow night then.”

Bucky wastes no time once he’s free of her grasp.

Your senses come back by order. First, it’s your hearing: a knock. Then, it’s touch: Pebbles purring against your chest. Next, it’s your eye sight as you slowly open your lids. You raise up slightly dazed, it had been the deepest nap you had in days and you were completely gone.

You thank the heavens that your sleep had been dreamless. You want to kill the bastard that is at your front door right now pounding away with no respect. You raise up even higher until you’re fully sat, waking pebbles in the meantime. She hops off the couch with a small thump and wags over to her food and water bowl.

You pull your blanket off your legs as the persistent knocking continues.

“Jeez, wait!” You call out annoyed.

When you open your front door your face to face with the last face you wanted to see.

Your sister’s…fiancé.

You gulp hard. You couldn’t cry, not now.

Bucky looks pissed as he stood on your welcome mat. Clearly, you weren’t sick nor dead.

You clear your throat as you push down your feelings for him and nonchalantly greet your best friend.

“Hey, Bucky.”

“Hey, Bucky?” He questions in a scoff.

You narrow your eyes at him confusion. Had you said something wrong?

“Is everything okay?” Your tone is sincere, obviously, you didn’t know why he was upset.

He had come to you with a mission in mind, to tell you something very important, but the second he saw you he couldn’t get out of his head that you didn’t go tonight.

“You know, you’re the only person who hasn’t wished me a congratulations. Not even online, nothing.”
You raise a brow, slightly taken aback by his brazen attitude. He was waiting for you? You don’t understand his attitude.

“I texted you the night of, I told you it was a beautiful ring. The week after I just got caught up with stuff. I already had plans tonight that I couldn’t cancel.” You lie.

Bucky gives you a hard look.

“I wanted you there.”

“I couldn’t make it, I had to work late.” Another lie, not realizing you just contradicted your previous lie.

“You said you forgave me but it doesn’t seem like you do. I told you I was sorry, Y/N.”

You look at him in complete awe, almost breathlessly. Did he really care that much that you didn’t go?


“Then what is it? Are you not happy for us?”

You take in a deep breath, nostrils slightly flaring, and you swallow hard.

“I’m sorry, Bucky I’ve been busy.” You repeat again.

Bucky looked at you in disbelief.

“Busy to say congrats? It’s a damn text, Y/N. You could’ve at least had the curtesy to say congrats.”

You were confused, you were taken aback, and you were stunned by how passionate he was being.

You were so damn confused.

How dare he act like he cares that much.

“Why do you care so much Bucky? So what, I forgot to say congrats, whats the big deal? Congrats. There you go,” you say emotionless, not even looking him in the eye, “Again, I told you the day you got the ring that it was beautiful. Is that not enough?”

“And that’s all you said. She’s your sister and you’re my best friend. Why wouldn’t I care what you say?”

You narrow your eyes at him, not understanding his attitude.

“You seem to want validations from others more than yourself. Are you unsure of yourself, Barnes?”

“What the hell is that suppose to mean? Validation?”

“I mean, what do you want from me, Bucky? I’m giving you everything I can right now.”
The moment the phrase comes off your tongue you can no longer even look at him. It was the most truthful you had been with him the last few months, and it was the closest you’ve ever gotten to even saying anything close to your feelings from him. The thought that the was right there in front of you and you could just simply tell him you love him made you want to cry, it made you angry beyond recognition. You had no right to do anything with him and it broke your heart. You yearned for him, your body craved his love and you couldn’t do anything about it.

This really was you giving everything you could, and he had no idea.

“That’s very hard to believe.”

You step into your living room with your back towards him. You run a hand through your heavy hair, taking in a deep breath.

You couldn’t lose your cool, not now. But how dare he.

“Honestly, you want to know why?” Your voice starts slowly but growing dangerously high with each word, “You want to know why I didn’t wish you a congratulations? You want to know why i’m not happy for you?”

Bucky looked at your back in disbelief and scoffs.

“I knew it. Of course, you’re not happy for me.”

You ignore him completely as you say it one more time, “You want to know why?”

“Enlighten me, please.” His voice is stronger now too.

Tired from the amount of exhaustion you felt the last few weeks from what he put you through makes you snap. You were done.

You turn to face him fully, your hand that was in your hand hitting your thigh as you bring it down.

“Because I thought you could do better!”

Bucky’s looking at you lost.

“What?”

“I’ve been telling you for almost two years, that she isn’t who you think she is. You make this whole thing up about her in your head and you don’t even know it. You make up this version of her for you to love and that’s not who she even is anymore. She’s a damn liar, Bucky,” Bucky fumes as he takes in your words, “If you only knew what I’ve seen her do, what I saw. Something is up with her, and truth is, I was reluctant to tell you because I didn’t want to be that damn person. I didn’t want to be the girl that talks shit about another guy’s girl without proof.”

“She’s your damn sister, y/n.”

“She’s a damn liar, she’s hiding something and she superficial, how do you not see it?” You gesture wildly with your hand, “It drives me nuts how you can’t see that I’m not okay with this?” You try to control your breathing and the sudden brimming of tears in your eyes as you look at him. He was gorgeous. He was made to be loved.

“She doesn’t deserve you, Bucky.” You whisper hoarsely.
“Then who does, Y/N? Who deserves me? Is it damn Carol from accounting, is it Nat? Who deserves me if it’s not the woman that I am with?”

“I don’t know, Bucky! Maybe someone who doesn’t only cares about money or their image. She only cares about the stuff you’re giving her, and I don’t mean the love you give her.” You voice falters at the word ‘love’ and it pains you how you sound so weak, so pathetic.

Bucky breathes in deeply, his eyes a dark hue, a look on his face that you cannot pin point. He looked angry, that much was evident.

“She loves me.” He says pathetically, so pathetically you can’t help but roll your eyes.

This makes Bucky fume and he steps into your apartment, slamming the door close behind him.

“But she loves her apartment more. She loves her bags more, she loves the money more, the clothes, the lifestyle, the job. You really want to marry someone like that? That just cares about what they look like one hundred percent of the time?”

The anger Bucky feels in his heart is uncontrollable. It comes out before he can even stop it.

“Well, maybe that just means you should start caring about appearance, too. Maybe the problem is you and not her.”

The words hurt, they burn you from within.

“What?”

All you hear is his breathing and you see a twinkle of regret and sadness in his eyes as he adverts them from you.

“I didn’t mean that. “

You felt so sad, you couldn’t believe he really thought that of you.

“This entire time I thought you were different. That you didn’t care about that kind of thing. I thought you were good. That you were a good man.” Bucky looks away shamefully licking and then biting his lips, “Look at you, Barnes. You’re shying away from me. You’re nothing what I thought you were, and it’s breaking my heart.”

Bucky sniffs as he closes his eyes tightly together. If you’ve never sounded so broken in your entire life he’d be damned, and it was all his fault.

“I don’t care about those things. Fuck, I’m just upset that you didn’t give me your congratulations. Your opinion means the most to me.” He didn’t even want to tell you how he felt at this point anymore.

“I might’ve broken your heart by saying something I didn’t mean to,” he looks up at your now, his blue eyes dark, “But you broke mine by not being there on the most special day of my life. I came here to have a serious conversation with you and now all you’ve done is make me feel bad for wanting to be in love with my fiancé. You have no idea how much I want this to work- me and her.”

You shake your head.
“I do. I’ve always known. More than you know. You want your fucking congratulations? Well, you’re in bad luck because I’m not giving it to you. You want me to be your friend, someone who is honest with you? Leave the girl.”

“Excuse me?”

“Honey, I’ll tell it to your face like no one else ever would and you know it. You goddamn fucking know it, Barnes,” Bucky swallows hard. At this point, you are so over it, so over your emotions that you don’t care anymore, “If I told you, you wouldn’t even believe me.”

Bucky shook his head at you once more, but this time his eyes were pleading.

“For the love of God, just tell me.”

“I don’t trust her,” you move up closer to him. Bucky swallows hard as he watches you, “and I don’t trust what she’s doing with your company. I think she has bad intentions, selfish ones, Bucky. Ones that are for her own benefit.”

“Really like what?”

“Well, for one I saw your father’s will and it had her name written all over it including a shit load of money with it.”

“What? What the hell are you doing going through my father’s will?”

“I wasn’t going through shit, Ashlyn slid it under his door and I happened to accidentally step on it.”

“Oh, right, and it just so happened to be out in the open like that. I don’t know if you understand this, Y/N, but Ashlyn is my father’s assistant, of course, she’s allowed to slide things under his door. And who the hell cares if she’s on his will? She’s my future wife, eventually what she owns will be mine anyway.”

“You are so goddamn gullible, Bucky.”

“I just don’t understand what you’re implying!”

You moved up closer to Bucky until you were a feet away from his body. He looked furious.

“You mean to tell me you’ve never once thought about what it was she was doing out on those trips or what it is that your dad and her do on these trips?”

Bucky was angry as he also stepped closer to you, his voice loud, “You think that I’ve never thought about that? Of course, I have. And we’ve talked about it, I don’t know who you think you are, Y/N, but you have no right to be interfering in these kind of topics between me and Ashlyn.”

You roll your eyes, spinning away from him. You feel a tight grip on your elbow- it’s bruising.

“She’s not cheating on me.” His voice is venom, it’s strong, “She would never.”

He looks at the back of your head and he feels weak. He had come here twice to your house, once with the intension of kissing you and the other to tell you that he has feelings for you, but both times it went horribly wrong.

“I came here to have a conversation with you. I wanted you to at least tell me you are happy for
me. But instead, all I get is hate - over and over again. I understand your views about her, I do, but I
don’t know what to tell you. You think everyone is going to fall for your reasonings and your
accusations because you’re innocent and you have never done any wrong in your life, but you can’t
forget that you’re dealing with me.”

You’re speechless as you process his words. He thought this was all a game to you.

“How do I know for sure that it’s not you that are all those things? Because let me tell you
something, y/n, I know the woman I fell in love with, I know the girl I met and she is none of those
things you accuse her of, so stop trying to force it down my throat.”

He was saying it more to convince himself at this point.

“You think I’m fooling you into making her think she’s the bad one? You think I’m lying about
her being manipulative?”

“Y/N, you have done nothing but talk shit about her.”

“Fine!”

It comes out in a roar as your snap back around and scream it in his face. Bucky recoils slightly at
your outburst. Your face is red, your eyes flushed.

“Fine, Barnes, you want me to stop talking shit about her and stop trying to protect you, I will!”
You tilt your head up higher, a finger in his chest, “But just know that if she hurts you, it’s your
own fault. I will give you that, because you’re my best friend. But I’m not giving you my blessings
onto something that I know is not right. That is something you cannot force out of me.”

He should’ve been pissed at you- he should’ve been- as he stared down at you with your little
finger poking into his chest. You were refusing to give him the congratulations he wanted, and he
should’ve been mad at you for it.

But he couldn’t help the feeling he felt in his heart as he looked down at you, both of your eyes
hooded over in unspoken emotions.

He wanted to be mad at you so bad in that instance, but all he felt was love.

He loved you so much.

Bucky’s eyes drift from your eyes and to your little nose…he stops before he can look any further
and he looks back up at your eyes.

“Okay.” He says softly and simply.

You squint your eyes at him. Was that it?

Bucky looks down at you and moves away, clearing his throat.

The tension in the room calmed down between you two as it began to grow silent, the big blow out
finally fading out.

“So what did you want to talk about, Barnes?”

Bucky bites his bottom lip as he contemplates if he should go through with it or not, but he decides
against it. Now was not the right time. Maybe never would be the right time.
Right now, he just needed to clear his head, he had to process everything that was put out in the open from you. They were strong emotions that he never realized you felt.

He didn’t want to believe the things you said. It made things harder.

“Nothing, it’s kind of silly now. I’ll probably just text you.”

“Okay…”

Bucky quickly wipes his eyes with the back of his hand and walks around you to the front door.

“I’ll see ya later.” He mumbles.

He quickly opens the door and leaves, closing the door behind him.

You stare at your door motionless.

You prayed to God that your sister wouldn’t hurt him, that she already didn’t hurt him.

You wanted to tell him how you feel, you did, but it was wrong…

Right?

Was it wrong?

Of course, it was.

But he was right there, just outside that door. Just one touch wouldn’t be so bad…

You walk over to your front door and touch your doorknob.

But he [she] wouldn’t touch you back. He [she] doesn’t feel the same way you do.

Little did you know that on the other side of your door Bucky was thinking the same exact things you were, his own hand wrapped around your doorknob.

––––––––

*Baby you know that I won’t mind,
If we get no rest, til’ the sunrise.
I plan to love you all my life,
Until you meet your chariot.*
Chapter End Notes

Take It Back soundtrack now is on Spotify! I'm having troubles with the account right now, but I should have it up by tomorrow. If anything in the next chapter I will post a direct link to it. : ) again, I apologize for any typos. I promise one day eventually I will go back and fix everything, but I'm at a point right now where I'm just like you guys. I'm as eager to post as as you guys are to read it that I always miss some typos lol
Never Let Me Go

Chapter Summary

Reader and Bucky have revelations about their feelings. Reader and Ashlyn go wedding dress shopping. And guess who's back. *strong language* *mention of phone sex*

Chapter Notes

I’m on Tumblr Incase you guys are on there too :) my Tumblr is: allandoflimbo (two ‘l’s)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Looking up from underneath

fractured moonlight on the sea

Reflections still look the same to me

He stares at the bright florescent lights above him, the pale fingers of his left hand brushing up against the vomit colored curtains. The smell of an excess amount of rub on alcohol and disinfectant makes him feel sick to his stomach. It was obvious that they were trying to remove the stench of death as much as possible.

The roaring of the air conditioner under the window and the beeping of the heart monitor played
over and over in his head like an evil mantra, reminding him of when he had been in the same position years ago when his own mother was dying of cancer. If you had asked him how he felt, he would be honest and say he felt fragile and that his life was in disarray and pieces. Life didn’t just give his mother cancer, it murdered his mother, chopped her into pieces with no disregard for human life. Life gave his father cancer as well, and once more, here was life taking someone else away from him.

He squeezes that hand that is holding his right one tightly. He remembers his childhood. He was definitely privileged growing up, that much was evident. A family of politicians and useful businessmen and inherited wealth- he never had much to complain about. Though aside from riches and privileges, he lived normally just like any other kid did. He had friends, he had a family, he had a first kiss, a first girlfriend, a first time. He had all those things that everyone always wished to experience until they did. But the ones that always spoke to him the most were the ones that were currently flowing through his mind as he took in another whiff of death.

The cold of the room turned into the heat of summer skies and the smell of rub on alcohol turned into caramel popcorn and hot dogs.

The sound of the crowd would captivate his tiny little ears and he would be in awe as he took in the scenery around him. Four-year-old Bucky never imagined that such a big amount of people could hold so much passion for one name, Yankees and that so much emotion could be conveyed in a stadium. His little blue eyes would drift over the popcorn and the bacon on a stick and then the huge field below. The crowd would sing New York, New York and by his fourth game that same year, he already knew all the words himself.

It would take him seconds to realize his dad was holding him tightly against his chest, singing the song in his ear and caressing his little arms.

“Isn’t that cool, buddy? One day you’ll catch one of those little balls yourself.”

Bucky would smile up at his dad as he held onto his finger.

His dad would look down at him and give him a kiss on his forehead, Bucky’s little blue eyes sparkling and opening as wide as they would go.

“Yeah, papa.”
His little innocent voice drowns out into a loud echo in his head. Opening his eyes, he blinks away from the bright lights and returns his gaze down to the hospital bed. The heart monitor had slowed down drastically.

The older man was pale and his eyes were sunken, head clear of any hair. He had stopped eating days ago, his body no longer being able to digest food properly, so his skin had become similar to an elastic, clinging onto his bones for any kind of nutrient it could find.

Bucky swallows thickly at the scene before him.

*papa.*

His father was quickly deteriorating and it was taking a bigger impact on him that he thought it would.

He had experienced death with his mother, but this was different this time.

He wasn’t sure if it’s because the realization that he would now be parentless for the rest of his life (neither of his parents ever got the chance to see him get married or have a child) hit him, or if it was the sheer fact that the second his father escaped through his fingers, a piece of paper would be slid toward’s Bucky’s way giving him all rights to a multi-million dollar company, impacting thousands of lives.

All the power of Manhattan would be in his hands.

He thinks it’s probably a little bit of everything and that’s why he was trembling in fear. He didn’t want his father to die.

He remembers sitting by his mother’s side when she had been in the hospital and it had left him weak.

Sitting next to his father and watching the man struggle for breath, Bucky felt the same.

He was beyond scared.
He even began to doubt himself if he was good enough. Was he going to survive all this? Was he going to be able to handle everything that was going on in his life right now?

The reminder of you makes his eyes drift up towards Ashlyn. The things you had said to him still resonated in his head.

Ashlyn stood directly across from Bucky on the other side of the bed. She was holding Mr. Barnes’ right hand and her big diamond rock seemed to stand out in the room in all its bright glory.

*Vindication.*

Bucky watches intently as she caressed his father’s hand, her eyes brimming with tears.

“It’ll be okay darling.” Mr. Barnes had whimpered out, thumb running over the back of her hand. His eyes would scan back over to Bucky who had a blank look in his eyes, “You two will make a marvelous duo, I can bet you that.” Mr. Barnes made direct eye contact with Bucky, “I am so proud of you, my son.”

Bucky pursed his lips tightly together.

“I love you, dad.” Bucky had breathed out. Ashlyn reached out with her other hand to grab onto Bucky’s.

He reaches for it hesitantly. They stay that way for a few minutes.

When they walk out hand in hand, the nurse tells Bucky and Ashlyn that he needs to get some rest and that they will start him on morphine soon.

The words - rest, morphine, soon- it leaves him with a taste of bile on the top of his tongue. Bucky runs a hand down his face, exasperated.

Ashlyn pulls Bucky aside until they’re huddled in the corner of the waiting room.
“I don’t know if I can do this, Ash.” He breathes, avoiding eye contact with her.

Ashlyn pulls one of his hands off his face and holds it to her own. She kisses his palm tenderly, eyes shutting close.

He was her priority now.

“It’s okay, you’re just feeling a lot of emotions right now,” Bucky shakes his head quickly back and forth and Ashlyn moves in closer to him, giving him a tight hug, “Everything will be fine.”

Bucky nods against her shoulder.

“Yeah.”

“You are good enough. We are good enough.”

“I know, at least I think I know. It’s just hard, Ash. He’s my dad.”

Ashlyn scratches the back of his neck tenderly and sighs.

“You’ll get through this. I know you will.”

Something you had said to Bucky the other day still resonates with him and he decides to test it when he pulls back from Ashlyn and takes her face in his hands. He tenderly rubs his thumb over the top of her lip.

“Did the nurse say anything to you about how much time he has left?”

*She would know. She has grown closer to his own father than he has in years.*
“I think three days, the most.”

Bucky’s eyes shut and he lets out a long breath.

“Shit.”

“As long as you stay by his side, Bucky.”

“I know but I still have a lot to get done before then, we both do.” He looks around the room and then back at Ashlyn, “You have to go get your dress today with Y/N and I have to finish reviewing the last few files left if I want to be ready for Monday. What if I’m not here when he goes? I need to be here, Ash.”

“Then you will. Look, we’ll both go do what we need to do, but he is priority at the end of the day, remember that.”

Bucky nods.

“Alright, so are you going to go today to pick up the dress?”

“Yeah, but it’ll only be a few hours, at most. And then I have to go to city hall to go pick up some other civil paperwork, that should buy us both some time. We’ll both be done and we’ll come back together.”

Bucky narrows his eyes at her added task but he doesn’t question it.

“Okay. Okay, yeah sounds good.”

As before I went under...

“To the left, you have the ball gowns, to the right A-line, and around the corner, you have your mermaid styles - columns and fit and flare. They are all separated by fabric and color. White, off white, beige, creme, etcetera,” The busty blonde lady looks down at Ashlyn, you, and Nat, “Was there something specific you had in mind? Mr. Barnes did say he left us with a budget of sixty thousand for the dress so we could even consider looking at the exclusive ball gowns for this season.”

You and Nat share a raised brow. You weren’t sure if you were caught off guard by how many
words the lady was able to spew out in less than five seconds or that Bucky had given them a sixty grand budget for a dress.

*Jesus fucking hell, Barnes.* And it had to be a *Michael Cinco* piece.

Ashlyn looked unaffected as she looked through the lens of her Dolce sunglasses and then pushing it up over her forehead, a look that lacked no-confidence over her face.

She angled her chin upwards, tightening her grasp on her bag.

“I’d like to see the Columns styles, please.”

“Of course. This way, miss y/l/n.”

You and Nat both followed down the beautiful hallway.

Truth was, the second you walked into the store, you felt your heart clench inside of your chest. You weren’t sure if it was because you were jealous that, once again, someone you knew was getting married and not you, or if it was the one thing you didn’t want to admit.

When you all walked into the well air-conditioned room, your eyes had immediately darted to the overwhelming amount of wedding dresses that circled around you. It was flaunting, it was like a damn punch to your gut.

This was no longer a theoretical situation or something that was hypothetical. This right here, your sister marrying Bucky, was real. And of course, she had asked you to be her maid of honor.

After your outrageous argument with Bucky, things seemed to have strangely clicked into place. Maybe it was because you finally got off your chest your feelings about your sister’s intentions, but whatever it was while yes, Bucky was still going through with the wedding, things weren’t as tense between you two anymore.

You weren’t angry with him as much as you just loved him. You had realized that your love for him overcame any negative feelings you had towards your sister. Yes, you were more than angry
and upset that he was settling, but if it made him happy, then so be it. You loved him and his happiness mattered the most to you.

Which is why you were damn afraid of him getting hurt.

You wanted him, but it was one-sided. She had met him first.

Your eyes flicker to the ball gowns as you walk past them. You never understood how a girl could get married in anything but a ball gown - it was the classic princess dress. They were beautiful and so damn pretty.

You feel a lump in your throat as a few of them catch your eyes…you never understood why a girl would spend such an amount of money on a dress just for a boy. You never understood the obscurity of a wedding, of a day dedicated to two people because you loved them, you never understood it until you met Bucky Barnes.

So damn pretty. You repeat over and over again.

You’re walking past hundred of dresses when suddenly a distinctive dress catches your eye.

It’s a small blonde girl, her curls cascade down her back, and she’s standing on-top the circled platform as her friends sit around her, praising her dress and how beautiful she looked. You had also frozen in your spot, captivated by the glorious gown.

Finally, you understood the big hype over a wedding dress and it made you want to cry.

Why couldn’t it be you?

The dress had a curved back, diamonds circling around the cut. Down the back were diamond designs, the folding in the dress was lined with them. It started at the was it and it cascaded towards the floor, stretching a couple of feet across the floor. It was a princess dress that screamed money and lust.

It was the sexiest yet most elegant representation of love for two souls that you had ever seen.
You didn’t realize you had tears brewing in your eyes until the bride to be looked up, her eyes meeting yours. You smile shyly at her and she smiles back at you, a smile so bright you become envious of it.

You wonder if you will one day be that happy.

“Y/N?”

Your head snaps around and you see Nat a couple of feet ahead of you. She looks at you waiting and confused.

“You okay?”

You clear your throat and nod, “Yeah. I’m fine.”

The column dresses are beautiful. Not what you would’ve gone for your wedding day, but beautiful nonetheless. Your sister tries on dress after dress, spinning around the platform.

“Guys, I really love this one.”

“It’s okay, I feel like you could do better.”

“It’s kinda skanky.”

Next.

“I don’t like the way this one makes my ass look.”

You perk a brow.

“It looks fine.”

“Don’t you have any maybe like off white dresses or something a little more extra?” Nat suggests.
“What do you mean?” Ashlyn asks, hands on her hips. It was obvious everyone was exhausted after Ashlyn already trying out thirty dresses and yet none of them caught their attention.

You were already skimming on your phone for the closest Popeyes while Nat’s hair was a partial disaster from running her hands through it so much.

“I don’t know, none of these really screams wedding to me.”

“What are you talking about, these are wedding dresses, guys.”

“I think what Nat means is none of these have really said ‘this is it. This is the dress that’s going to change my life’ ya know? Like this isn’t supposed to make you feel like you’re buying a prom dress, Ash. You have to find something that,“ You think about the feeling you had when you saw The dress, “You have to find something that sums up why you are doing what you are doing. A dress that will make you cry because it’s the dress that you were made to wear since you were a little girl.”

Ashlyn’s eyes soften as she takes in your words, the sides of her mouth perking into a small smile. She nods and calls the lady from before over.

A few minutes later, the lady comes over to Ashlyn’s dressing room and knocks on her doors, three dresses in her left hand.

Nervously, you try to peak at the dresses in her hands.

You knew deep inside that the moment your sister found the dress that not only would she cry, but so would you.

And shit, did she find the damn dress.

It had Ashlyn written all over it. Ashlyn and Bucky: Money and power.

It was a column style dress made entirely of lace. It glued onto Ashlyn’s body as if it was made for her, emphasizing all her gorgeous curves. It was her and it symbolized perfectly everything she
You knew it was the dress moment she walked out in it because the tears in the back of your throat burned you. It burned your throat and it burned your heart.

It hadn’t become more official until now. Your heart broke as you realized you’ve lost your fucking chance. It was the worst thing you could feel on your sister’s special day, but it was exactly what you felt.

You wanted him to be yours, you should have met him first.

But it didn’t happen, and because of that, your sister was marrying Bucky.

When she turned around to look in the mirror and her eyes filled with tears, your heart broke.

So what your sister is a materialistic bitch and can be selfish at times, she was one hundred percent in this wedding with all her heart and here you were wishing you could take it all away from her.

You were a bad person, an awful person.

Regret and guilt eat away at your stomach.

“This is it. This is the dress.”

And it's peace in the deep
Catherdral was you cannot breathe

Bucky’s body feels sluggish and slow as he walks over to the large window in his office.

He looks out into the city, heavy hands in his pants pocket as the harsh rain pallets hit sideways against the glass window. The towers shine bright against the dark grey sky and his chest feels heavy, guilt eating at his heart as he feels the need to grab his car keys and drive back to the hospital next to his father’s side.
His mouth turns to drown into a small snarl as your words from the other day replay in his head. Specifically, the ones about Ashlyn and his father.

He didn’t believe you about the will thing. At least, he couldn’t.

Obviously, if he thought it was true, he wouldn’t accept it. It’s why he didn’t overreact at the moment. It had crossed his mind late at night when he would lay in his empty bed. He would text Ashlyn as she lay in some hotel in Paris, trying to at least attempt some phone sex with her - anything- but she would never reply. Of course, it had entered his mind.

It wasn’t that he didn’t trust you, he knew you had nothing but good intentions, but it just felt too crazy to believe. You must’ve read the paper wrong, or there was some kind of misconception. But for his fiancé to have crawled into his father’s heart deep enough for her name to be on his will before Bucky’s?

It just wasn’t possible.

And if it were true, how did she win such a position? Nothing made sense to Bucky as he swallows a heavy lump in his throat, another jolt of thunder rumbling through the walls. A shot of lightning shoots through the sky as Bucky spins on this heel and faces the darkroom.

He hadn’t even bothered turning on the lights when he came in. It was after hours and everyone had mostly gone home anyway. He had barely gotten anything on the last file finished, his mind had traveled to you and your damn accusing words. To you and your beautiful mouth…

He had slid the papers off his desk in anger, getting up from his chair, breathing heavy and sharp.

He was unsure of what his next step in life would be, he felt like he was constantly digging himself a bigger hole. And now with his father’s death, it was about to get even bigger. The thought of it all made him shake in fear.

He was not ready.

It didn’t help that every other thought that entered his mind was always of you.
It was always you.

no need to pray no need to speak

now I am under all

Without a second thought, and with a huff, he walks over to his desk and opens the bottom drawer. Kneeling down on one knee, he opens it. The drawer squeaks loudly against the coils as if daunting his mind even more- accusing him even more of being mentally unfaithful.

Inside the drawer lies the little plush blue toy, the one that made his heart sore and wants to leave everything behind for you.

When he opened the drawer he got the same feeling that he had when he opened that birthday box- you were his sweetheart.

His throat closes up sharply again as he reaches down on his other knee to grab the little teddy bear.

You knew what that little teddy meant to him, how it was his life when he was a little boy. Your gesture showed and further proved that you had given him that gift with intent. It wasn’t just an ordinary gift, you could’ve have gotten him anything, but instead, you got him an exact replica of boo bear. Everything that summed up the real him, the best times in his life. You had overlooked all the bad, all the obvious details, and instead went for the sentiment. For Value.

He knew what it meant and you damn well knew it too.

He doesn’t understand you and him, and he wonders if he someday he will. He wonders if he will ever tell you how he feels about it, about you, if it was even worth it. He wonders if it would change anything, if maybe...

He clears his throat as he takes in a deep breath, closing the drawer back up.

Your argument the other day had left him feeling a way he hadn’t before that. When he had gone to
your house to kiss you, it had been different. He wanted to kiss you because you had literally melted his heart.

When he had stared at your front door after your argument, he wanted to rip it back open and kiss you because he couldn’t take it anymore. It was no longer a need, but a hunger.

He hated that you didn’t give him your blessing, he hated that you were pointing out all of his insecurities and all his doubts, but he damn loved you for it too.

He couldn’t stop thinking about how your lips would feel against his, your little fingers wrapped around his because oh you were so damn tiny and he noticed it from the moment he met you. From the moment he saw you he knew he could lift you up so easily and do all kinds of things to you that would make him the worst man on the planet.

He hated how you had him wrapped around your little finger, but he loved it all the same.

It made him so furious.

He knew you didn’t feel the same, you were leading him on and not even realizing it.

He knew that *that* was the only thing holding him back.

The reality of it makes him want to scream and throw the laptop off his desk so it could join the paper on the floor.

If you loved him, he now knew that he would leave it all just for you.

He’s about to start thinking about the past year and a half that had led you both up to this point when he gets a phone call.

His phone vibrates in his pocket and he pulls it out. When he recognizes the phone number on the screen, he feels his gut grow hot.
“Hello?” His voice is hesitant.

“Is this James?”

“Yes. Yes, it is. Can I help you?”

He doesn’t know why he asks, he knows what it’s about. But he does so anyway.

“James, this is doctor John from New York-Presbyterian.”

He doesn’t say anything.

“I’m calling to inform you that unfortunately, your father began to deteriorate faster than we thought. He took a turn for the worst about two hours ago but we were hoping to keep him stable until we called you in. Mr, Barnes, he passed away about five minutes ago.”

Bucky’s left frozen as he stares at the wall across from him, slowly moving from his kneeled position to sit up against the wall, knees bent against his chest.

Bucky tells the nice doctor that he understands and thanks him and the rest of the conversation is a heavy blur. His hand that hold his phone drops to his side.

He’s stunned.

He couldn’t believe that in just one fraction of a second everything could be just gone, and yet at the same time have it all in the palm of his hands.

As if a coincidence, the object in his hands vibrates once more. This time it’s a different phone number.

He feels the tears building in his throat, the coincidence too overbearing for his heart to handle. Of course, the one person he needed the most at the moment decides to call him.
When he picks up, your velvety voice sends a shock through his heart.

“Hey,” you start softly, “it’s me. I just - I wanted to apologize Bucky.”

His vision is still blurring and his mind is blank. Silence.

“I shouldn’t have said a lot of those rude things to you, I mean, even though I did mean them, I shouldn’t have. It’s your wedding,”

You meant every word this time.

*And it’s breaking over me*

*A thousand miles down to the sea bed*

Bucky’s eyes close tight together at the sound of your voice. He throws his head back against the wall. Grip on his phone tight. “and she’s going, she’s going to be your wife Bucky.”

Bucky’s eyes open slightly. His gaze is glossy, salty tears brimming them. Your voice was so sweet and he hurt so bad.

“So I shouldn’t have been that nasty with you. So, I’m sorry, Bucky. You’re my best friend and I don’t wanna make you upset. Especially for your wedding.”

He still hasn’t said anything and your eyes narrow as you look at the times for train departures on the screen at Grand Central.

“Bucky, are you there?”

You hear his breathing hitch.
Bucky licks his bottom lip as he looks up towards the ceiling. A soft sob escapes his throat.

He no longer knew.

“Bucky, what’s going on?”

Every bad possible scenario enters your mind. Was he cutting you off again? Did you go too far this time? Was everything okay with Ashlyn? As much as you disliked her at this point in time, she was still your sister.

“Bucky, please...”

Your plead makes a low whine escape his throat. Your hand comes up to your mouth nervously.

What was going on?

This time would be different than last time. If he wanted to leave you again he would have to do it in person. Confidently, you walk back towards the exit of the station and to the direction of his office.

“I’m going there now."

Your Uber drive to his office is an emotional blur. Your little hands shake slightly against your phone in your lap.

So many scenarios entered your mind and you even considered maybe messaging Ashlyn, but you thought better against that for now.

The Uber drops you off and the parking garage is chilly. You hear the thunder rumble as you run towards the elevator. You take it up to the lobby and there you great Lucy the receptionist who has grown fond of you the last few months after you were there so often. She was used to you now and she knew you and Barnes were good friends so she always let you on up.
You take the main elevator to the top floor where you knew Bucky would be.

This was it. It was either make or break moment in your lives.

Your feet seemed to be moving on its own as they run you to his door at the end of the hallway. You were thankful that the floor was empty, everyone went home for the night.

This allows you the moment to knock loudly on his door without a care.

It takes a couple of good seconds for him to open the door and the moment you see his face, any trace of anger or suspicion is gone.

You’ve never seen Bucky cry before, and the sight of it tore you in half. Your face falls, and naturally, your body pulls into his. Your right-hand goes to his face.

This is the first time you’ve ever touched him where it wasn’t his hand. Except there is no trace of romantic in it or anything out of line, this is out of love and empathy.

His face is hot against your palm and you’re stunned by how perfect his skin feels under your hand. You feel your heart hammering away inside of you, your little fingers curing against his face. One of your little fingers land just below his eye and you see a tear roll off the tip of his eyelash, his gaze still down at the floor below him.

He sniffs slightly and you brush the teardrop away from his flushed cheek.

Speechless, you shake your head to yourself in disbelief and pull his body into yours into a tight hug.

You feel him shake slightly beneath you.

“He’s gone.”

The realization hits you and your eyes close tightly together. His body feels warm against yours as
you let him hold you tight. Blindly, you wrap your arm around to close the door behind you both, allowing you two some privacy. Even though you two were alone on the entire floor, this needed its own privacy.

This wasn’t meant to be shared with the outside world.

“Do they know?”

He knew you were asking about everyone else in the world.

“Not yet, I think. It was a few minutes ago.” He sniffs hard, “Shit. It was a few minutes ago and I fucking missed it!”

You pull away and put your hand against his chest, feeling his heavy heartbeat against your hand. His face was red and flushed.

“Hey. Look at me,” Your hand goes once more to his cheek, pulling his face to look at you, “It’s gonna be okay. Breathe. I’m so sorry, but you need to breathe.”

“I fucking missed it, Y/N.” He sobs silently.

You had never seen him cry and the sight of it makes you want to cry too. You whimpered slightly as you wipe away more of his tears.

“Please breathe.” You whisper, your mouth wet from fresh tears that had fallen onto them.

Bucky nods quickly.

“Let’s sit down, okay?”

You take his hand in yours and drag him over to the side of the wall. You both sit down against it.
He instinctually wraps his left arm around your waist and you nuzzle down against him.

You pull him up against you as your left arm goes around him, pulling him tighter to you.

You both stay light that for a few minutes while you allow him to cry.

“I’m so scared. I don’t know if I can do this.”

He says suddenly. He chest rumbles when he talks and it vibrates against your ribs.

Your drag your left arm so that it lays on his chest and you rub him there softly in small circles. He loves the way your little hand feels against him and it sends warmth throughout his body.

“You’ll be fine. Do you know why you’ll be fine? Because you’re the smartest man I know. You are wise. You are strong, and you will get through this.”

His eyes open slightly as he looks down at you.

“I’m all alone, y/n.”

“You have Ashlyn, Bucky. And you have me. And Steve, Sam, Nat,” you look up at him. The way he looked to you right now looked sinful. His lips were red from being overly bitten and crying, and his gorgeous features never looked more perfect to you. Fuck. You never wanted him more in your life, You never wanted to care for someone more, to love anyone more. Your left-hand leaves his chest to his face.

When you touch his face for the third time that night, his eyes finally snap to yours.

Something happened at that moment that had never happened before. Unspoken words were shared between you two, words that you never had the courage to say before. Now, this wasn’t platonic, nothing about this moment right now was safe or innocent.

Your heart beats away madly in your chest as you trace his features once more. (would you ever be
Bucky’s lips open slightly as you trace them with your hand. Your hand stops there as your eyes flicker up to meet his.

You thought he would look scared or confused, but he looked the exact opposite. He looked at you like he wanted this just as much as you and the reality of it leaves you fucking breathless.

“All your friends who care about you so much.” You finish off almost so quietly he can’t almost hear it.

A strong and exasperated breath escapes Bucky’s breath as this moment leaves his breathless and even more emotional. He wanted you.

You had no idea how bad he wanted you right then and there. He didn’t even care anymore that you didn’t feel the same. Just one damn kiss…

He looks down to your own lips.

“Look at me.” He looks up at your eyes.

You take your hands off his soft lips as you set yourself up a little higher, his arms not even slacking off your body, still keeping you up against him. He watches your every move cautiously.

Once you’re sit up, you have to look away from his face because you have never been in such close proximity with it before and it leaves you burning.

Bucky watches as you look away from him and a whine escapes his lips, his lips puckering. A small growl escapes his throat and it makes your head snap at him in surprise. The sound was something you had never heard from another man before. You didn’t know what that sound was.

When you look back at him, he has the side of your face in his hand and he’s giving you a pleading look.
“Bucky,” Your voice comes out shaking.

The hammering in your chest becomes unbearable and so does the heat of his hand against your cheek when there’s a knock.

Bucky’s hand quickly drops off your face as his eyes drift up to his office door.

You swallow down hard, your left hand going to your cheek where his hand just was.

What just happened?

You quickly look over to where Bucky is walking and suddenly he stops. You look up at him, eyes questioning.

He looks over his shoulder at you, “Come on.” He gestures to you with his hand for you to join him at his side.

Still confused, and your heart still hammering away, you get up off the floor and stand next to him.

Both of you have questions swirling around inside your heads. Bucky is screaming at himself for his moment of weakness. How could he have almost done that? Did you feel the same? You were leaning in…

Meanwhile, you were also confused because he didn’t have feelings for you. So what was that moment you both just shared? Do ‘friends’ do that kind of thing?

So many questions linger in the air as Bucky reaches his arm out to open the door.

When he does, both of you are met with another set of blue eyes, this time there’s a speckle of green in them.
“Steve,” Bucky says curiously.

He looks between you and Bucky. You hadn’t seen Steve since the party, and it was obvious he was not too happy with you after finding out about you and Loki.

Bucky knew that it didn’t look good, Steve catching you here with him.

He swallows down the immense anger and jealousy he feels as he hands Bucky a piece of paper with a clip at the top.

Bucky looks up at him confused.

“It’s time,” Steve says simply.

*And the arms of the ocean are carrying me*

*And all this devotion was rushing out of me*

*And the crashes are heaven, for a sinner like me*

Chapter End Notes

If you guys like this story you should check out my stories Ashens! That was the baby that inspired this baby to come out. That one will be my main focus again once I’m done with this guy. If you guys like Divergent/50 shades that kind of stuff, you’ll really enjoy it. I promise. Please give it a try! :)
wait.

Chapter Summary

Steve confronts the reader about their situation. Bucky is finally the CEO and he finds out about Ashlyn and his father's decision that he left behind on his will. Bucky and Reader interact once more. ** Strong language. **

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Set your dreams where nobody hides  
Give your tears to the tide

Steve doesn’t even give you a second glance as he walks across the room over to Bucky’s desk. He tries not to make it obvious that he’s uncomfortable, but you notice the way he strides in too confidently, throwing you an indirect shade with a side glance.

You and Bucky, still trying to mentally recover from the moment you two just shared, watched as he leaned over the table, supporting himself on one arm. With the other, he reaches across the desk to grab a pen that lay’s next to Bucky’s laptop.

Bucky throws you an additional glance. He still doesn’t understand what had just happened. He knew he had almost kissed you, but you hadn’t pulled away. If anything, you had leaned in yourself.

You touched him.
His heart was still in a fragile state, he tells himself. He looks down at the paper the Steve handed to him, his eyes scanning over the words.

You try to peak an eye at it over his shoulder, curious as soon as his entire demeanor changed. Minutes ago he had been sad, broken, and he had looked the closest to what you had always hoped for - love as he looked at you.

But now, he was aggravated.

“They couldn’t even wait until his body was cold?” Bucky spats as he waves the paper in his right hand, looking up to meet Steve’s eyes.

It doesn’t take much for you to realize what he’s holding.

Steve looked pissed and tired as he peaks an eye at Bucky. Steve straightens his back out as he beats one finger repeatedly down on the table.

“They can’t wait. This has to be done now,” Steve’s eyes drift over to you, he looks you up and down with a raised brow. His gaze is intense and you blush furiously. Not from his stare itself, but from embarrassment. His look was accusing and his words only further confirm that, “unless this isn’t a good time.”

Bucky seethes as he walks over to Steve, his bright teeth in a tight line.

Steve’s eyes are still on you and you felt a tremor go through your body. You felt awful and most importantly guilty, knowing exactly why he was pissed. You didn’t blame him, he had every right.

You look away from his eyes swallowing hard. You wanted to be swallowed down into a dark hole.

“It's just you? Where’s everyone else that has to be present to watch me sign this damn thing?” Bucky asks Steve once he’s in front of him.

Steve finally looks away from you and down at the paper in his best friend’s hand.

“This is just page one, the one that will hand everything over to you. As soon as this is signed, it’ll all be yours. No formalities. The other important stuff will be later, when it’s time to sign all that, we will have a board meeting. This is nothing compared to all of that.” Steve taps the pen against Bucky’s chest as Bucky glares at him. They knew the real reason there was tension in the room and it had nothing to do with his father’s death, “So, yeah, Buck. It’s just me.”

Bucky takes a deep breath as he snatches the pen out of Steve’s hand.

The silence in the room is overbearing, your heart was still beating in your ears and the only sounds were that of the distant thunder in the skies above you and the scuffling of the mahogany desk as Bucky wrote down his signature.

“I’m sorry, Buck.” Steve finally says once he’s finished. Bucky looks away as he clears his throat, not wanting to make eye contact.

“We all saw it coming. Nothing we weren’t ready for.” Steve nods as he pulls the paper off Bucky’s desk after realizing Bucky wasn’t even going to attempt to hand it over himself.

“I need to splash some water on my face or something,” Bucky mumbles under his breath as he pushes himself off his desk. He doesn’t even give you a second look as he walks past you towards
the bathroom.

He needed air.

You could still feel the ends of your hair standing up and the heat of your blood on your face as he brushed up against you.

Once it’s just you and Steve in the room, the tension is thick. Steve had noticed the way your breath caught when Bucky walked past you. His heart sunk and his blood boiled simultaneously. This wasn’t how things were supposed to go.

Steve’s looking at you disapprovingly and you look away in utter shame. You had been so transparent in front of him, so disloyal as a friend.

He watches you intently, begging with his eyes for you to talk to him, as you walk over to where your purse was against the wall. But you don’t.

You swing it over your shoulder and then turn around to leave.

You needed air. You needed to think.

“Y/n, wait.”

You freeze in your spot. His tone is pleading, his hand on your upper arm is strong.

You closed your eyes tight together.

When you turn around to face him, the only words that come out are: “I’m sorry.”

Because you were. You didn’t mean for any of this to happen.

Steve narrows his eyes at you, mouth gaping.

“What’s going on, y/n? I don’t understand.”

You look everywhere except for him, the indiscretion eats away at you.

“What do you want me to say?” You say shamefully, settling for looking at the grown.

He looks at you for a beat and then chuckles in disbelief, but there’s a very evident sound of heartbreak underneath it. He looks away from you and to the wall, “What do I want you to say?”

He looks back down at the ground and shakes his head, “I’m not begging for anything, y/n. I never pressured you into anything,” he looks back up at your beautiful face, “It just doesn’t make sense to me,” Steve scoffs as he pulls his arm off you, “You told me you didn’t want to be with me because you weren’t ready for a relationship, but then I find out that a few days after you told me that, that you were with Loki? I don’t understand.”

You’re silent because you yourself don’t have a direct answer. You were a mess.

He notes you have no response so he continues, “Is it something I said? Is it me? Because if it is, please just tell me, because what you’re doing is unfair.”

You swallow hard, the lump in your throat growing dry. Finally, you look up at him, your eyes red, brimming with tears.
Steve takes in a deep breath, his eyes suddenly soften to more than when he first came in.

“If it’s someone else that has your heart—“ he whispers, his heart slowly falling into his stomach at the thought of you and Loki, or worst, you and his best friend. His best friend who knew that he, Steve, had always wanted you.

“Steve,” you interrupt him, not letting him go there, “I meant what I said when I had told you that I wasn’t ready. This thing with me and Loki, it was just me testing out the waters. Getting out there again. It had been so long since I had been with someone. I don’t want to jump into a relationship with you just because it feels like something fun we could do. I didn’t lie to you.”

He stares at you and considers your answer for a second. He should believe you, and for a second he buys it, but he sees the lingering look of doubt on your face and he wonders if even you believe your own answer.

He clears his throat and looks around the room before returning his gaze to you. This time you meet his eyes.

“Why were you here?” He asks strongly.

You furrow your brows together.

“What?”

What was he implying?

“Why were you here with Bucky?”

You feel your heart in your throat, the thrumming of it is in your ears and your shame comes out in the form of anger and annoyance, “Because he’s our best friend, because I was worried when I called him earlier. I showed up and he was crying. I don’t know what else you’re thinking, Steve.”

Steve scoffs under his breath. Fucking bullshit.

You catch his negative attitude in an instant and you’re lost and so very confused.

“What’s going on, Steve?”

Steve bites his lip, shaking his head back and forth as if in denial.

“Steve,” Steve doesn’t say anything. You move up closer to him, taking his hand in yours. He’s surprised by your gesture and he looks back up at you.

For a second he even forgets what he was mad about. You’re absolutely beautiful and he was so close to having you as his. He swallows hard, recognizing that he hasn’t been this close to you since New Years.

“Steve.”

He swallows hard.

He looks into your eyes and he continues softly, “You told me to wait for you, and that’s exactly what I’m going to do. If you’re going to back on your word do it now,” his eyes go to your lips, “If there’s something else that should make me not wait for you, please tell me so I can walk out of here right now. The last thing I want is for you to hurt me on false hope.”
You feel your throat close up sharply at his strong pleading words. You gulp.

“You’re asking a lot of me.” You practically whimper out, your hands both shaking.

“I’m really really not. You told me that the only reason you didn’t want us to happen was because of time. Aside from time, I see no other reason as to why you wouldn’t want to be with me, why we can’t happen. I’m not holding anything against you, y/n. Just don’t lead me on. I don’t want to give one hundred percent of my heart to you just to later find out that you weren’t really in it. If you’re going to hurt me, I’d have you rather do it now than later on.”

His words are begging - they’re desperate. You see it in his eyes how much he’s begging you not to hurt him and it makes you hurt.

You don’t know what else to do except wrap your hands around his neck, hugging him tightly to you.

You feel his large hand pressing up against your back.

“The last thing I want to do is hurt you.” You tell him.

He believes you, but as his eyes follow the gaze out into the hallway where Bucky just went, he’s not so sure.

But he accepts your answer.

Ashlyn had met Bucky at the hospital about an hour after the phone call. After Bucky had time to freshen up in the bathroom, washing away any feelings that he could, he called Ashlyn up to tell her of the news. She was distraught and extremely saddened, letting him know that she’d be on her way to the hospital soon.

After staring at his reflection long enough in the mirror and convincing himself into thinking he was a good man, Bucky walked back to his office to let you and Steve know he was headed to the hospital. He didn’t allow his gaze to lock on you for too long. It was dangerous.

You both knew very well what had just happened and it had to be buried down as much as possible.

Ashlyn had run into Bucky’s arm as he hugged her tight. They spoke to the doctors about what would happen next and then they spoke among themselves regarding the funeral and memorial services.

It was that night while they’re in Mr. Barnes’ office that Ashlyn asks a strange question about his father’s will. This makes Bucky’s head snap up immediately. He had just gotten off the phone with the funeral director and she was already asking about the will.

The will you were telling him about.

“Probably tonight. Fury’s coming over to sit down with us over what goes on from here,” Bucky looks around his father’s (now HIS) office. There were boxes all over the place filled with Mr. Barnes’ personal belongings. Bucky didn’t have the heart in him yet to move it out and move his own stuff in its place. He looks up at Ashlyn curiously, who is sitting leg crossed in front of him, her tight skirt halfway up her thighs.
Bucky swallows hard.

“Why?”

“No reason, I had discussed some things with him and I just want to talk to you about it as well, before you freak out.”

Bucky clears his throat. “What kind of changes?”

“I’m not even sure yet, he didn’t fully disclose me on it.”

Ashlyn’s hand seductively went to the top button of her blouse. She played with it as she bit on her pen with the other hand.

Bucky looked away quickly and down at the paper on his desk. The last thing to be signed was the agreements with Hank and Tony Stark documents that the company had recently adjoined.

Bucky signs his line below next to CEO.

This was only the document that approved that he’d now be the one taking charge on their meetings.

Bucky continues to file through the paper, proud that he had finally done everything that he needed to. Bucky clears his throat as he notices Ashlyn’s skirt still riding up deliberately.

“I’m having Steve and Sam help me load up my stuff from my apartment to the moving truck this afternoon, but my lease isn’t up until the month after the wedding. I’m thinking of staying there until the week of the wedding and then closing it out when we’re at my father’s place. I’ll have some stuff moved in, but not everything.”

“Why don’t you just cut the lease?” Bucky sighed as he closed his laptop, “It’s money, sweetheart. I’m not my father. Just because it’s pocket change to me doesn’t mean it is to someone else.”

The silence in the room is overbearing.

Bucky sighs.

“Anyway, the penthouse is ours. Did you want to already move in? I can have them stop by your place to have them pick up your stuff.”

Ashlyn doesn’t tell Bucky that she knows damn well where the penthouse is and that she’s slept in it countless of times. The guilt eats her alive as she watches her fiancé’s eyes on her.

She needed to make this work, she had to leave the past behind. That was her and his father’s idea to make this company thrive.

“You are the angel we had been waiting for, love. He needs you to make this work. He won’t know how and he will never need to know.”

“Am I a bad girl, Mr. Barnes?”

“Very bad, honey, very bad. But that’s why you’re so good, and why you will be perfect for him.”

“I don’t like cheating.”

“Don’t think of it as cheating, Ashlyn. This is a business. The only reason Bucky wouldn’t
understand is that he’s not a businessman. He works too much with his heart. It has his perks, but unfortunately, it could make you guys lose it all. I will teach you the ways."

“And if he finds out?”

“He won’t. Before you know it, you’ll love it and it won’t even bother you anymore.”

Ashlyn sits on the edge of Bucky’s desk as she leans over him. Her top button had become undone and Bucky’s eyes drifted down to her plunging cleavage.

Ashlyn knew what she was doing and she knew how hot he was for her right now. They hadn’t had sex in a while.

While, sure, his heart was somewhere else right now, but he was still a man. Maybe what he needed was to relieve some of the tension he was feeling because of you…

His tongue darts out to lick the top of lips.

“Yeah, baby,” she crossed her right leg over her left one, giving his eyes access to her tan legs, “That’s fine.” She whispers.

He doesn’t even remember what they were talking about anymore.

“Baby its been so long.” She whispers, following her fingers down to the second button of her shirt.

As much as his dick wanted to, as much as that carnal part of him wanted to fuck her on his desk, fuck the aggravation from not having you, fuck it out of his system - he bit his lip and looked away.

“As much as I’d love to christen my dead father’s office, we have a lot of stuff we have to get done.” Ashlyn huffs.

“You’re really not considering this whole abstinence thing until marriage are you?”

It’s morbid, it’s something no one really wants to do, but it’s necessary.

Bucky sits around a large wooden table along with three other people and Ashlyn. After he had done his homework, he was familiar with them before they even had to introduce themselves.

The young woman had medium length hair and piercing eyes. A warm smile. She wore a tight grey tailored suit and short heels. Wanda Maximoff, the Chief financial officer.

Next to her sat a man in his early sixties. He wore a dark blue suit and his hair was a dark black
shade. His name was Nick Fury, the current COO.

Next to him was the operations manager, a younger gentleman with a knack for sarcasm and uncomfortable jokes but knowledgable nonetheless. Operations Manager, Mr. Scott Lang.

They all talked for a bit until it was time to sign the supposed “documentation”.

Scott slides a paper over to Bucky. Bucky already has his pen in hand, ready to sign his life away.

“This is the bank information, which will allow all revenues and incomes to be automatically deposited into your accounts. This is all of your father’s assets which have been passed down to you.” Scott adds.

Nick hands Bucky a folder. “This is the contact information for all of your departments, these are all the names of important people which you will contact daily,”

“Confidential are on page A3 to A8.” He adds.

“I’m sure Steve Rogers already gave you the ownership form correct?” Fury asks.

“Yes. Yes, he did.” Bucky nods.

“Perfect. Since your wife will be co-owner as well,” Scott says while smiling up at Ashlyn, “we do have an additional official form that will be needed to be signed with the vice president and other officials present. For that, we will have to wait until after the wedding, per the request of Mr. George Barnes.”

“That’s fine.” Bucky agrees, maintaining eye contact with Lang and giving Ashlyn’s hand a squeeze.

“Now, onto the will.” Fury announces, pulling out a skinnier folder.

“Everything is yours obviously,” Fury starts, “He’s left you codes to all his private locks, his private information, and all the material things he’s passed down. We’re talking assets worth millions. To which, inside this folder, you will see additional information in regards to those and others that you can later ask Mr. Lang about, since not every item could be listed here.”

There’s a long silent pause in the room before Fury looks between Bucky and Ashlyn. He crosses his hands on the table in front of him and clears his throat, “Mr. Barnes, your father had added one information regarding behalf of Miss Ashlyn.”

Ashlyn bites her bottom lip nervously.

“It’s a prenup that’s already been signed by Miss. y/l/n,” Ashlyn avoids looking at Bucky as soon as his head snaps to look at her, “and has to be obeyed by Mr. George Barnes’ request in his will. It says that in any given situation if you two were to separate, the majority of the profits of Barnes’ industry will be given to Ashlyn. Under no circumstance will only you be given full responsibility, unless in the result of a death.”

For a fraction of a second, Bucky’s world stops. His mouth is stuck open, and his hand that was holding Ashlyn’s slacks. A short laugh of disbelief leaves his lips. Wanda looks down at the table below her and Scott looks between all of them at the sudden tension, his eyebrow perking up.

Bucky looks at Ashlyn for confirmation and then at Fury and then at the paper.
“I-i’m sorry, what?” He shakes his head, “That’s not-"

“But what's to worry about, Bucky?”

Ashlyn interrupts him.

When he looks at her, this time his face is furious. He couldn’t believe that Ashlyn would do something like that.

He’s pissed that she had the audacity to look up at him smiling, an over-optimistic tone in her voice. But he was anything but fucking optimistic. He felt nauseous. “We’re not going to be divorced. I would never divorce you. And you would never leave me. So there’s nothing to worry about.”

He shakes his head, still not believing in her betrayal. He was shocked and speechless.

And his own father was behind this?

“But why? I mean, why do you want the majority of the profits? I just don’t comprehend why you two would come up with this decision.”

“Bucky. He’s the one who decided this.” Her tone is perky and he doesn’t buy it for a second. He feels disgusted as he lets go of her hand.

“You told me that there are things you discussed with him. What did you two hide, Ash?”

Ashlyn swallows nervously. She looks between everyone at the table, suddenly feeling awkward, and she tucks a strand of her hair behind her ear.

“Nothing, Bucky. We just figured it’d be the best choice for you. I don’t understand why you are getting so angry over this,” she adds nervous chuckle, “it’s only if we were to divorce. It’s only under the worst-case scenario.”

“It just doesn’t make sense to me. You don’t know how to run a company, Ashlyn.”

“I trust you, Bucky. Which is why I agreed to this.” She says sharply.

Bucky was fuming.

“We need your signatures on the prenup and will.” Fury cuts in.

Bucky looks up sharply at Nick.

“I’m sorry, but it’s a will. You have no say in this, James. Mr. Barnes’ orders.”

Bucky swallows hard as he feels Ashlyn’s lingering touch on his hand. He feels dirty in his own skin for a second and his hand trembles as he puts the tip of the pen against the piece of paper. He takes in a deep breath and hesitates before signing.

Bucky is in a trance for the rest of the meeting, his emotions running wild and his mind not knowing what to think anymore.

Wanda shuffles through some more folders and then slides -finally - the last one over to Bucky.
“You will have a board meeting on Monday and there you will meet your entire team. Tuesday, you have a photoshoot at eight followed up with an interview with CNN at eleven thirty and a written interview with the New York Times at two. You will have a fitting with Louis Vuitton on Wednesday for an outfit for the gala which will be in September. And starting Thursday until the end of July you will have a team working for you on pre-determined decisions made by your father before he passed so you and your fiancé can focus on your wedding. Think of it as a long vacation.”

Bucky clears his throat, “Understood. Thank you, Wanda.”

“Alright, I think that’s everything,” Then Wanda, Nick, and Scott all stood up together.

Fury stretches his arm out for Bucky to shake. Bucky takes it confidently and a little too harshly. It was quite obvious to everyone that he was still very upset.

“Congratulations, Mr. Barnes. You’re officially the new CEO and owner of Barnes’ enterprises on all accounts.”

Bucky turns around sharply to face Ashly once everyone is gone.

She’s shocked at the tight hold he has on her arm. It hurts.

He’s hurt.

“Ashlyn, why? Just please fucking tell me. You have no;” He takes in a deep breath and relaxes his hand, “you have no right. I care about you so much, you know I do, but I don’t -“

She feels the tears brewing in her eyes.

She doesn’t know why she’s crying, but she is. “You don’t what, Bucky?”

He rips his hand off of her and gestures wildly around them, his voice suddenly several octaves louder.

“This! I don’t know what kind of crap my father put in your head, but does none of this seems strange to you?”

She steps up closer to Bucky’s face and grits in his face, “Seems to me that you don’t trust me, that’s what it seems like to me.”

Your words - you- you put doubt in his hands.

I saw her name on his will…

Ashlyn continues as her eyes water up even more, “I promised you I would love you forever, it’s why we’re doing this isn’t it? Getting married?” Bucky cringes at the way she says it, almost like it was a chore or an obligation, “Why would I want to spend the rest of my life with you and want you to have all of this and then take it all away? Of course, I would never do that. You’re freaking out because you’re the one who’s scared. Please, for the love of God, the last thing I would want is to work so hard on this with you for some other women to take you away from me and steal your money from you. I’m doing this to protect you, protect us!”

Ashlyn took in a deep breath as she eyed Bucky up and down. Suddenly suspicious. “But it won’t happen because you love me right? Right, James?”
Bucky looked down at her with clenched teeth and now his own tears in his eyes. What on earth had they become?

His gut was burning hot.

“Right.” He lied.

_________

One month before the wedding.

The closer their wedding day arrived, the more Bucky wanted to turn time around and change it all. But he seemed to have been making mistake after mistake. His choices haven’t been the best.

He had avoided you for the last four months, fear that another moment like that one day would happen again- except this time he wouldn’t be able to turn away.

He was slowly becoming weaker because of you. You had made him a weak man, you had filled his mind with doubt.

His net worth was now just above eighty million dollars, but the only thing he wanted was you.

Days after signing that goddamn prenup and that will, he kept thinking of different ways to opt-out of this, to opt-out of it all, but it had been too late.

And worst of all, there was still a ninety percent chance his feelings were completely unrequited.

Bucky’s mind weighed like a hundred pounds, or at least his conscious did. Ashlyn’s words repeated repeatedly in his mind.

*the last thing I would want is to work so hard on this with you for some other women to take you away from me and steal your money from you*

Was that really her worst fear? And if it were you, you would never do something like that. You were an angel.

Had you been right all along? Was Ashlyn really the materialistic girl you had been warning him about? Was she really in this for the money? The thought itself makes him shake. It couldn’t be.

He kept lying to himself to make himself feel better. Ashlyn had been perfect when he first met her, she had been everything he thought she would continue to stay.

The reality of it hits him like a ton of bricks.
Ashlyn had changed. Everything he thought he saw in her had always been in you.

He doesn’t want to submit to the realization, he doesn’t want to cave because it was too late.

He had to make the best of his situation. He had to force himself to fall back in love with his future wife because he no longer had a choice.

He had to make it work.

You still have some stuff at your apartment right?

Bucky had texted Ashlyn after buying her a bouquet of flowers and chocolates on his way to her apartment from the office. Perks of being a CEO- you didn’t always have to actually be doing the hard work majority of the time, you had assistants and other representatives that took care of the job for you- and you still got paid.

Bucky takes the elevator up to Ashlyn’s floor regardless of her non-response.

He swallows down the anger he feels.

He knew she was just about fully moved into their new penthouse so he thought that he could be kind enough to help her with her last few things. They were getting married, after all, he had to at least attempt to be courteous, no matter how uneasy he felt about it.

He knocks and he wished to heavens that it hadn’t been you who opened the door.

You guys hadn’t spoken to each other in four months.

You’re startled at first by his presence and then by the items in his hands.

“She’s stepped out. I was just finishing packing the last of her stuff.” Bucky stands there motionless as he stares at you. You take a step towards him and stretch out your hand “This is very sweet. I’ll be sure to hand this to her for you.”

Your tone is different. Tired, like you’ve given in.

“Thank you.”

He doesn’t expect it to come out so softly.

You both stare at each other, the tension thick.

Bucky clears his throat.

“Do you know where she is?”

You nod curtly, spinning around to head inside. You leave the door open so he can step in behind you.

You hesitate for a moment, trying to think if this was really a good idea.

“I think she’s shopping. I’m not sure though, she asked me to come to help her pack tonight but I decided to come earlier so she didn’t have a lot to deal with, ya know?”

He continues to stare at you, breathlessly.
You looked adorable. You have a small bun in your hair, the strands of it were fallen messily over your head and around the frame of your face. You had a small summer dress and an apron tied around your waist.

It’s then that he notices the smell of freshly baked cookies.

You were beautiful.

pure. “Yeah.” He whispers in a daze.

You’re shocked by how soft his voice is. Your eyes flicking up immediately to meet his. “I hope she likes the flowers,” he continues, keeping eye contact with you, “they are her favorite. And I went all the way uptown for those chocolates. She loves those.”

You swallow hard. Your eyes search his and he searches yours. “You’re an amazing man, Barnes.”

“Y/N….” He whispers.

You both remember that moment, you both know what happened.

What was her intention?

What was his intention?

“You are. You do so much for the people you love, you make beautiful gestures, you really are a great guy. And I know you hate when I say this but, how I wish you saw you deserved more.”

He feels defeat at your words. He feels filthy, he feels disloyal, unfaithful, disgust. How could he have let this happen? How could you both been so careless? How could you have made him fallen for you so hard so quickly?

Ashlyn had been right.

But it won’t happen because you love me right?

He was weak.

“Maybe I don’t.”

His response makes you sad.

“Bucky, don’t say that. Don’t lower yourself down.”

But it won’t happen because you love me right?

He was a weak man. Ashlyn was right. She had done was she done because she was stronger than him.

“I’m just saying, maybe a lot of you think too highly of me. I really appreciate your kind words, but come on y/n, take a look around you, without my money and power, what am I? I’m a pathetic little New York boy who buys chocolates and flowers for a girl who doesn’t even answer her damn phone, who doesn’t even bother to fucking show up, who doesn’t even care that I-,” he doesn’t realize he’s borderline crying until he forces out the next phrase through hush tears, “I brought her flowers and chocolates.”
Your heart shatters. You wanted to do nothing more than run around that island and hug him; kiss him.

But of course, you don’t.

It’s wrong.

And he doesn’t feel the same. He’s just going through a rough patch and doesn’t know his worth, that’s why he almost kissed you. Nat has always been right from the beginning.

*He has a way of making girls fall in love with him without even realizing it. It’s just how he is. be careful. Don’t fall for it.*

But, hell, how you *did* fall for it.

You swallow down thickly. Your throat hurts- it burns.

“Bucky.”

“I know she’s not perfect, but neither am I. That’s why me and her work.”

He explains, trying to convince himself more than you and it’s obvious and it hurts both of you to the fucking core. “You’re looking at this the wrong way, Bucky. If you could only see yourself the way I see you.”

“And what’s that, y/n?”

“You are a strong person, you are committed, and you are going to make a great husband. Any girl would be lucky to have you, and not because of your money, but because of who you are.”

That’s all he needed to hear to know for sure that you still saw him as Ashlyn’s husband and then he left.

________________________

And your words replay in his head when he takes Ashlyn out to dinner

*You are a strong person,*

Ashlyn similes up at him over her dinner menu. He smiles back, reluctantly.

Ashlyn stretches her hand out across the table to hold Buckys’. The diamond on her ring had been his grandmothers, his mothers, and how hers. It was gorgeous and almost too big for her finger. But she damn loved it.

*you are committed,*
Ashlyn was right, as long as everything stayed great between them, they had nothing to lose.

_you are going to make a great husband_

Maybe he had been overreacting. Maybe his father knew was he was talking about when he made that decision for them. Maybe Bucky did have it in him to be a great husband and he just lost sight of it because he got distracted.

Ashlyn smiles at him once more over her glass of wine. A Sauvignon, her favorite.

And, god, how he does want to love her as much as he did the first moment he saw her. He wishes he did and he wished he could trust her. He wanted to push you to the back of his mind and move on. He wanted to be a damn good husband.

But you, fuck. Fuck.

_Any girl would be lucky to have you_

So why couldn’t it be you? Why couldn’t you just love him back?

_and not because of your money_

You were everything that Ashlyn wasn’t. You weren’t the kind to make a man run after you so you take advantage of him and take his money away. That’s the idea that Ashlyn had put in his head because she never would have thought that the women he would love would be you.

You would never hurt him-_ever_. You would never use him-_ever_.

You would never find your way into his heart for the money.

Sure, maybe you weren’t in love with him, but he knew that you cared about him more than anyone has in a long time. If not, more.

_because of who you are._

He takes a sip of his own wine, peaking up at Ashlyn over his own glass. For the first time in his life, he didn’t feel any remorse in the idea of cheating on her.

He would leave her in a heartbeat for you

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter.... ;););););) btw these characters are driving me nuts with their lack of communication skills.
Our Beautiful Dance.

Chapter Summary

Warnings: SEX. SMUT. HEAVY ANGST HEARTBREAKING SMUT. Strong language. Cheating. Lots of cheating. (please read end note for more info when done reading). Bucky and Reader finally find out how they feel about each other.

Chapter Notes

Hope you guys enjoy. This chapter is 14 thousand words long...and the smut scene itself is close to 9 thousand which is more than half the story. Next chapter after this will now be the beginning of Phase II. (post wedding day to present)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The river has run wild tonight

The birds have stopped singing and I've lost my sight

And you

You're not around

Greenwich Village New York, New York
It was a month before the wedding and you weren’t prepared for your unanticipated uproar of emotions.

You sit next to Nat on one of the wooden stools that lined up against the glass of the cozy café. It was semi-busy as a few people chattered around you both here and there, the sounds of the coffee grinder and some indie song, that you’ve heard a one too many times, around you.

It was a comforting setting and it was supposed to make you feel soothed.

But that was the last thing you felt as you both sipped on your drinks, staring out into the street.

You sat with your feet close together on the feet stand on the stool. You both had just gotten back from picking up your dresses for the wedding and your feet throbbed faintly in your shoes, the needed rest doing you well.

Your mind was far as you watched the people walking outside, avoiding Nat’s questioning gaze on the side of your face as she kept attempting to say something. You knew she had been trying to come up with the right words the last house, but clearly, none seemed right.

You didn’t want to admit to it, but your feelings from the last year had reached its last straw and you could no longer enclose your strong emotions.

It hadn’t been hard to look past your saddened face as Nat watched you pay for your dress, an indisputable grimace on your face as you gave the lady your debit card.

You didn’t even try to hide your scowl anymore.

You had given up on pretending; on hiding your true feelings.

“Do you want to talk about this, Y/N?”

She finally has the courage to ask after she takes a sip.

You take one as well, looking down at the table right after. You were waiting for her to have the balls to say something.

Truth is, you wanted to get it out.

Letting it build up inside of you was making it worse for your emotional health.

“It’s in a month. I don’t know if I can do it, Nat.”

It’s a sigh that leaves her mouth. She’s disappointed in you and you don’t blame her.

“You still like him?”

It should’ve been a simple question, but it was anything but. She was so naive to what was really going on.

“Nat, I don’t think it’s just like anymore,” You look up at her to see her already staring at you, concern in her eyes, “It stopped being like months ago.” You add in a pathetic whisper that almost sounds like a supplication.

She looks at you in confusion until she realizes what you mean and her face changes from
furrowed brows to a look that is serious, her eyes widening slightly.

She takes in a deep breath and moves in closer to you.

“What are you talking about, y/n?”

You don’t know why but you smile, it’s a sad smile.

“I’m in love with him.”

Nat’s face falls and it resembles the feeling that you are currently feeling inside of your chest. It held dead, pity, and then disbelief.

Your eyes flicker over to the bag on the table that held your dresses and you continue softly, your eyes still far and not necessarily focusing on anything specific.

“I’m in love with him and I’m going to be standing there,” you swallow thickly as your voice breaks, as the mental image of Ashlyn wearing a white dress and Bucky wearing a tux enters your mind, “watching him, give himself away to someone undeserving.” You say brutally as your eyes fill with angry tears.

“What happened to Steve?” A scoff leaves your lips as you roll your eyes, a tear trickling out one of them and falling onto your cheek.

“For fucks sakes, Nat, it was always a small crush between me and Steve. Nothing else ever happened between us. I don’t know why everyone keeps pressuring it on us like me and he is meant to be together or something, or like anything was even there in the first place.”

Nat takes your hand into hers and she shakes her head.

“We don’t say it out of pressuring you two, sweetie. This isn’t about us wanting you two to be together and only you two, it just seemed like it was right. I mean, since the moment you met him we all saw a spark so it made sense.” Nat watches as you stare at nothing, the pain in your eyes. She didn’t realize you were in so deep.

She tucks a strand of hair behind your ear with the hand that is not holding yours, “You and Steve seem right, but we aren’t going to pressure you into anything if you don’t feel the same. Just let me know and we’ll shut up about it.”

You nod understandably as you swallow again.

“But you and Bucky? Y/N, this isn’t-this isn’t good. I knew you had feelings but I didn’t realize you were in love with him.”

“Yeah, well.”

You let out another scoff as you look down at your hands in shame.

How could you?

Another wave of hopelessness hits you.

“I can’t do it, Nat. I can’t be there.”

“You have to support her. You’re her sister. I know it’s hard, but-“
She cuts you off sharply.

“And watch him give himself away to her?” You say through hot tears, “Watch him kiss her in front of me? Watch her marrying the man I want to -" you take in a deep breath, catching yourself before you finish your sentence.

You were crying now and Nat stared at you in shock, knowing exactly how you were going to finish it.

You run your hand angrily down your face as you wipe your tears away in revulsion with yourself. 

You were pathetic and sad, y/n.

“Jesus, Nat.”

“I know, just breathe okay?” Nat says soothingly as she pulls you in for a hug and then runs her hand down your hair and back.

You shake against her, “You should have told me, I would’ve helped you prepare, maybe step up as maid of honor, or anything. You should have told me, y/n.”

You nod because she was right.

You were too late to fix anything of this, “Because now you know it’s too late to back out. You can’t not go. If you don’t it’ll be obvious, people will start questioning it and also she’s your sister. You have to at least be there during the ceremony. At the reception, if you have to, stay the hell away from him and her. But you have to be there.”

You think about her words as she holds you, consoling you, and you realize she’s right.

Nat takes in a deep breath as she thinks about the situation her friend is in and she looks around in disbelief, pulling you tighter.

She knew about your feelings for Bucky but this was different.

“Love, y/n? Love?” She asks breathlessly.

After your revelation to Nat, and then finally coming to terms with owning up to yourself and your strong feelings part, before you knew it, it was the day before the wedding.

It had been a strange few weeks leading up to it. You had hardly even seen Ashlyn or Bucky in person, knowing very well that they were more than likely getting everything ready.

You don’t miss his interview on CNN that month, and you’re one of the first few people to read his article online by the NYT.

You watched him from afar even if you couldn’t be near him right now. You knew it was inappropriate, but you couldn’t stay away any longer.

You would text him what you thought about his appearances and the things he had said, complimenting him here and there, and you two would joke back and forth until the late afternoon-until he would stop responding, most likely taking care of things for his big day.

You swallowed down the bile in your throat.
You furrow your brows at the certain things he’s been texting you.

He would thank you.

*Thank you so much, y/n.*

*You’re always there for me, y/n.*

*What would I do without you, y/n?*

*Are you there?*

He was acting a bit strange towards you like something was off or something had happened, but he never mentioned anything out of the ordinary. You assume that he and Ashlyn are going through another bump in the road, not that you’re surprised or that he should be either.

Normally you would be shoving it in his face about how right you were, but seeing him so gloomy pained you more than it made you prideful.

Your love for him was stronger than the pride of being right.

You want to ask but you don’t bite, in fear that Ashlyn’s paranoid manner would lead to her discovering the evidence in his phone.

So you continue on with accessing as much information and proximity that was considered appropriate and acceptable with distance. He didn’t hesitate to notice how you always complimented him now as well, different than how you two used to be which was teasing and playful gestures.

There wasn’t any more of that. Now, your short conversations consisted of serious compliments and underlying gestures that meant more.

Like when the three of you went out for appetizers a few days ago and you had passed him the ketchup and his fingers had touched yours. Both your eyes lingered on each other longer than necessary before you cleared your throat, quickly looking away.

It didn’t go unnoticed by you that *he* didn’t look away.

His eyes were burning into you, branding you.

He wasn’t bothered by the touch, instead, he was intrigued, looking at you like he wanted more.

You felt his gaze remain on you and you were thankful that Ashlyn was too busy skimming through Instagram to notice anything.

“Alright, girlie. I’ll see you on Friday night?” Your sister has asked you after dinner as you the three of you stood outside the restaurant, satisfied and no longer starving.

Tomorrow was her bachelorette party.

It was a beautiful summer night, hot but with a steady and refreshing breeze.

You were still a bit taken aback by the feeling of Bucky’s fingers on yours. It remained in your skin, the spot tingling nonstop.

She had called you an Uber to take you to the train station while she stood arm in arm with Bucky,
getting ready to walk home in the warm summer night.

You gave her a small smile that was as happy as you could fake it.

“Yeah, I’ll see you then.”

Bucky didn’t buy your bogus happiness and your eyes meet once more after you respond.

He was still giving you that same look. There was no shame in his behavior and it made you uneasy.

This couldn’t be possible. He couldn’t do this to her. He couldn’t be selfish enough to finally want you because Ashlyn did something that he didn’t like.

Because that had to be the only reason for it.

It was wrong. You couldn’t do that to your big sister. Ashlyn might be heartless, but you were far from that no matter how much right and justice was behind it.

“Alright, I gotta get going.” you clear your throat of any suspicious intent, “it’s getting late and the trains get extra sketchy this time of night.”

“Of course, be safe. Text me when you get home safely.” Ashlyn says.


He looks into your eyes, “Goodnight, y/n.”

As you spun around to make your way to Grand Central, the only thing that was going through his mind as he watched you was how damn stupid he was for not realizing any sooner how much he loved you.

He couldn’t get out of his mind how he should be walking you home and not the deceiving woman in his arms.

He felt out of his skin as Ashlyn’s skin touched his. It felt wrong.

He knew when your eyes met over the table that he had been right all along.

Your eyes revealed that in just a fraction of a second, a glimpse of remorse and doubt.

Mystery.

He hated that he doubted himself when he saw you in Loki’s arms.

But now he was certain that it was impossible that you didn’t love him.

The tension that had brewed between you two as you touched was exactly that - love.

He loved you and he was certain you loved him too, but he had to know for sure before he made any drastic moves.

He was running out of time.

And he knew that when he was confirmed of it, that everything would finally be right in the world.

Because you would never hurt him. Ever.
You were an *angel*.

And now here he was on the night before his wedding day at some trashy bar up in midtown.

Buck hated midtown Manhattan. It was always overcrowded and overpriced and prestigiously overrated. He would take his local cafes and small parks over hundreds of people swapping sweat and carbon dioxide any day.

But of course, the sexiest and most provocative one would be in this exact location.

Everything about the place was oozing sex and provocativeness. The music had an obnoxious amount of added bass to it and the only lights were the red and blue ones that hung over the overcrowded dance floor and the bar in the far right corner.

Of course, Steve and Sam had pulled him out of his comfort zone to a bar/strip club that had Bucky blushing the moment he stepped inside.

He was genuinely surprised that Steve would pick such a place. It wasn’t in his nature.

The loud music pumped in his veins as they walked past tens of disloyal men, some of them too drunk to have any self-pride left.

It was dark. He was not comfortable at all as he watched the half-naked girls giving said men sultry lamp dances, some of them taking them into a back corner that was hidden by red velvet curtains.

“Come on, live it up, man!” Sam shouted over the music, handing Bucky a shot glass of vodka after they had made it to the bar.

Bucky looked down at it, skeptical.

He wasn’t this kind of man.

Bucky looks over at Steve who has his eyes narrowed at him, waiting for him to take the drink.

“Look, guys, I get the gesture, it’s my last night as a bachelor and all, but I don’t know,” He looks over to the hot girls, “you couldn’t find anything less…degrading?”

It slides off the tip of his tongue in disgust.

“You do realize you only get one bachelor party, right?” Steve says, clinking his glass against Bucky’s.

“Not if you get married more than once,” Bucky says with a shrug and half-smile.

“Shut up, ass. Just take the damn shot and loosen up. Stop being a damn grandma.”

Bucky hesitates for a second.

Bucky throws his head back as he takes the shot.

It burns his throat.

---

**SoHo** was alluring this time of day. The clean streets glowed orange as the setting sun reflected off of it. It created the perfect atmosphere of tranquility as it contrasted with the whites and blues of the brownstone styled buildings.
It was calming and quiet, everything you could as for a Friday in the city.

But you were anything but tranquil. Your stomach was killing you since you woke up that morning, dreading the events today and tomorrow that would unveil.

You were nauseous and in physical pain from the anxiety that was eating away at you.

The time had finally come for your sister and the love of your life to get married and you couldn’t take it.

You tried to drown in your third glass of champagne as you and Ashlyn’s other girlfriends watched her opening bag after bag of Victoria Secret items.

You couldn’t believe that it was really your third glass and it had had no effect on you.

God damn your sister for buying liquor that had almost no alcohol in it.

“Oh my god. This one, this is the one for tomorrow.” Ashlyn exclaimed as she held up a piece of black fabric.

At first, you couldn’t tell what it was, but when she held it up by the shoulder straps you could see the flimsy piece of lingerie that would most certainly cover nothing in all its glory.

It hardly had any fabric at all, just enough to barely cover her nipples and only a small string to cover her…

It made your heart fall into your stomach. It wouldn’t have had such an impact on you if she hadn’t had said it was for their wedding night, the wedding night, but now that she had that’s all you could picture in your head.

You kept seeing her wearing that as Bucky took her.

Like he was meant to.

You see red and you look quickly away. You couldn’t do this, you just couldn’t.

You try to ignore the ooohs and the repulsive girly laughter as you try to control your sudden onset of heavy emotions. As you do so, you catch Nat’s eyes briefly across the room.

Her smile that she held for Ashlyn was slowly falling off her face as she watched you. She read you like a book and you hated her for it.

I can’t.

As you watched Ashlyn open lingerie after lingerie and toy after toy, you got a weird feeling in your tummy. Something fires up inside of you, and as you’re watching Ashlyn hold up bottles of different flavored lubes, you make eye contact with Nat one more time.

This time, deliberately.

Maybe it was the jealousy that motivated you to want to do what you wanted to do, but you weren’t sure.

Steve comes up behind Bucky, tapping him on his shoulders as he sat at the bar.
“You know, you’re a really tame bachelor. You make Elmo look like a pornstar.”

Bucky gives Steve a slight smile as he plays with the rim of his beer bottle. He looks over to the left where Sam seems preoccupied with a gorgeous brown skinned beauty in his lap.

“At least Sam is having a good time.”

“You should be, too.” Steve pats Bucky once more, “I think even I’m gonna find myself a girl and go back there. Maybe that’ll force you into having a good time and stop being so damn depressing.”

Bucky clears his throat, not amused.

Steve’s eyes furrow at Bucky’s lack of humor.

“I’m kidding, man. Well, about the depressing part. I just wished you’d lighten up a bit. You know I care about you, right? We all do. We just wanted you to have a good laugh today. There are no other intentions behind this. At least smile.”

“Right. No, yeah, I’ll have a good time. Just give me a sec to finish this beer. Go have fun. On me.”

Steve adds in a friendly wink and a sounds good before walking off towards the direction of a really pretty tall blonde.

Bucky sighs deeply as he takes another swing.

You shouldn’t be clouding his mind, especially on the night before his wedding.

The truth is, his conversation with you should’ve happened days, if not weeks, ago.

It bothered him that he was going to get married never have told you how he felt and not hearing you say it back.

He couldn’t get out of his head that he literally had hours to claim you.

He couldn’t have some slut grinding her ass on him as he thought about you.

He wanted you next to him right now.

Like fate playing its cards once again, he gets a text

It’s from you.

He hears his heart in his ears and his face is on fire.

He looks around to make sure no one is behind him and he sees Sam and Steve go into one of the private rooms in the back.

Hey. What are you boys up to? This bachelorette thing is kinda lame. Hoping I can escape.

Bucky smiles before typing away a reply.

To be honest, it’s kinda lame here, too. Let’s escape together?

Bucky clears his throat as his thumb trembles. He doesn’t know why he’s trembling.
He types out the address of the bar and sends it to you.

Once your screen lights up you open it quickly. Nat notices how you’re finally intrigued in your phone and how you’re smiling, too happy.

And there was only one reason for your happiness.

You wait until Ashlyn finishes opening her gifts before you pull her aside to tell her you don’t feel good and need to head home early.

She gives you a tight hug with a kiss on your cheek and tells you to feel better.

Nat watches this unfold, an uneasiness in her eyes.

You’re walking down the steps of Ashlyn’s apartment building when a hand catches your arm.

“Don’t do this.”

You feel bad, so bad that you want to run into your friend’s arms and say I won’t.

You turn around and look at Nat and you know she knows what you’re doing.

Her eyes were desperate, begging you.

“Please, y/n, just come back inside. I don’t want you to hurt more than you already are. This is not a good idea.”

You clear your throat. You had to look away from her or you would cave. You couldn’t cave anymore.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about. I’m going home. You know I already wasn’t feeling well this morning.” You lie through your teeth.

The silence is heartbreaking, filled with lies and deceit.

“Really?” Her voice is pained.

It hurts her that you’re lying straight to her face just as much as it hurts you. You both know you’re lying.

But you don’t care enough, you needed to see him.

You look up at her, determination in your eyes and you hope that she can see it too.

“Yes.”

She looks at you for a bit before looking up at the street above your shoulder.

“Just be careful.”

“I will, Nat.”

Stressed, Nat runs her fingers through her hair.

How the hell did she get into this mess?
It doesn’t take you long to find Bucky at the bar and you try not to contain your laughter as you tease him for Sam and Steve bringing him to the skankiest place in the city.

His eyes light up quickly when he sees you, and minutes pass before you both know it. You tell him about how you were practically dying at Ashlyn’s party, no longer being able to handle seeing one more bra.

You change the topic as his cheeks turn a slight pink, telling him you wished the girls brought at least some real alcohol to the party.

Bucky smiles up at you and then asks the bartender for a drink.

Once he slides it over to you, you kind of just staring at it, dazed.

You say fuck it and down it down. You do the same for another one.

And then:

“You have to take it, come on!” He laughs as he bangs his left hand on the bar counter, a bright smile on his face.

“No, Bucky! I can’t take another one. I have to wake up sane tomorrow. We all do.”

His smiles slide off and becomes serious at your words.

The realization hits you both that he was going to be married. You think about your almost-kiss at his office the other day, you think about that beautiful wedding dress you saw…

You swallow hard as he moves into you. You think he’s going to do something when he narrows his eyes at you provocingly and then whispers, “Take the damn shot.”

The faintest of smirks line his face as you pick up the shot glass.

You were not okay.

You tip your head back as you swallow it down in one go.

Might as well numb it away.

You slam down the glass and you feel the burn of the liquor down your throat, not even cringing.

There’s a long pause of silence as he stares at you.

“How do you feel?”

You practically laugh out loud at his question.

“How do I feel? It’s a shot of tequila, not heroin.”

“Heroin’s probably pretty amazing, huh?”

He smirks.

You gape at him smiling.

“Let’s go do some.” He adds with a shrug.
Anything to get him out of here.

“Jesus hell, Bucky. How drunk are you?”

“For your information, I’ve had one shot which is two less than you have had and I’m bored out of my mind.”

“Well, I’m not drunk either. You know I ain’t no damn lightweight anymore.”

“You sure about that?” He says tauntingly.

You perk a brow at him.

“Yes. I am sure. Honestly, your bachelor party sucks ass, Barnes.”

Bucky laughs out loud at this.

Eventually, our laughing dials down as the innocent moment between two friends pass inside the crowded bar. You couldn’t believe that in less than twenty-four hours, your best friend and your sister were going to be married, and yet you couldn’t shake the feeling that you both never knew happiness like you did right at that moment.

You were going to miss this - laughing together.

Obviously, there were other aspects of your relationship that you were most definitely going to miss more than that, but for years you both always just shoved that under the table.

You’re not laughing anymore, and instead, you’re just looking at each other, realizing you’ve both run out of time.

You’re the first to realize that your hand is still on his arm. Bucky looks at your hand and you follow his gaze.

Realizing what you’re doing, you take your hand off his body like it’s on fire.

Bucky subconsciously frowns at this, suddenly missing your touch.

You clear your throat, “Sorry, I -”

“You wanna get out of here?”

You’re unsure if you hear him correctly at first. But his eyes are pleading.

Let’s get out here.

You nod. And he takes your hand hurriedly.

He didn’t want Steve or Sam catching him. He would make sure to send them a text later with some kind of lame excuse that he knew they wouldn’t believe.

He’s pulling you behind him in a rush as you both pushed your way through the crowd towards the exit.

Your smile covered your face as you almost stumbled behind him at how hard he was pulling you.

You couldn’t help but laugh, grabbing on tighter. Where were you even going?
You both step out of that damn place, the fresh air filling your lungs. You both laugh as you dramatically fall through the exit of the strip bar.

He waits until your smile had winded down and then takes your arm. You both walk down the street arm in arm, loving the way the heat of the August skin felt against your skins.

You’re both so caught up in your own thoughts, wondering what is what you two were doing on the night before his wedding, wondering what it was that had happened these few months to make this moment anything but innocent.

You’re both contemplating if you should tell the other about your feelings, but neither of you knew how to begin.

It’s terrifying and you feel him pull you closer to him as a look you can’t recognize is on his face.

What he feels is determined, determined to get the truth out tonight. He was tired of the games, the unspoken. Tonight, he was going to tell you everything while you also told him what he needed to here.

Because this was the last time he had a chance to.

He was going to tell you he loved you, and if you loved him too, he would be out of town tomorrow with you. He had a duffle bag packed just in case because something in his gut told him that he knew this was right.

He would leave Ashlyn for you tonight if he needed to.

You’ve both been walking for at least thirty minutes and you don’t even realize he’s walking you to his apartment.

What was once calming during your walk is now tense as you both stand side by side in his elevator.

What was going on?

There's trouble in the heartland

You're drifting your own way

You look over at him and his jaw is in a tight line.

He looked absolutely gorgeous tonight. A plain white t-shirt that hugged his arms just right.

The doors open with a ding and you walk in front of him, already knowing your way down the hall.

He’s got you in front of his door and you’re about to reach for his door handle when his hand stops you.
You freeze.

The silence is maddening and you feel a tightness in your chest and you’re afraid of what he’s going to say.

*Just tell him, y/n. You yell at yourself. Why are you even going into his apartment?*

You swallow hard.

*There is trouble*

*It's a wasteland*

*There's something you don't say*

“I need to ask you something.” He mumbles on the back of your neck, his hand still not letting go of yours.

“Okay.” You say, voice shaking.

He takes a deep breath.

“Is this,” He takes another deep breath, making his voice slightly stronger, “Is this over?”

*I don’t want it to be.*

“Is what over, Bucky?”

“This,” he says strongly. He lets go of your hand and he waits for you to turn around and look up at him. His eyes hold many emotions as he stares down at you, “Us, our friendship. Tomorrow I’m a married man and I just need to know if this is going to be the end of this?”

You scoff, trying your best to hide your fear. Deny, deny.

“You say it like what we’re doing is wrong.”

“Is what we’re doing right?” He snarls.

It catches you off guard.

“We’re friends, Bucky.”

*lie. lie. lie.*

He looks at you in disbelief. “God, y/n, why do we keep running from this?”

You look down, no longer being able to look him in the eye.
“I don’t know what you’re talking about, Bucky.”

He’s had enough with this, this back and forth, and he spins you fully around until your back hits hard against his door.

“Bucky-“ you voice trembles in fear and anticipation.

You didn’t expect this. You didn’t expect him to have known all this time, too. He knew how you felt and you’ve never felt so naked in your damn life.

You don’t show it, but you are beyond shocked.

“I’m so sick of pretending, y/n. Please, please tell me I’m not crazy.” He cried desperately, He moves in closer, teeth tight together as his eyes run over your face, “Shit, Please.”

You swallow hard as you look up at him once more.

“Tell me this isn’t all in my head. I know it’s not.” He begs, his hands on either side of your face, and you see the small tears in his eyes.

This couldn’t happen.

“I think,” You take in a deep breath, pulling his hands off of you, “I think I need a drink.”

You spin around to his door once again, closing your eyes tight together and trying to catch your breath.

“A drink? Yeah, okay,” he says so quickly it scares you like it wasn’t just a drink he was going to get you. You see his hand reach around you to slide his key in, “Let’s get you a drink.”

He looks you once over before nodding and letting inside before him.

He pours you a glass of scotch. Not many girls like whiskey but he knew you did.

He pours it in front of you and you try not to stare at his gorgeous arms, you try not to inhale his cologne too much.

You swing it down harshly as you sit at his kitchen island, your back towards him.

The atmosphere in the room was very different than it had been when you were both outside and when you were at the bar.

The air was thick and filled with tension, and the accusing topic swayed in the air, waiting to be addressed.

He doesn’t realize how afraid you are to admit to it, because you don’t know where you two would go from here after you did.

If there was one thing you were certain of, it’s that you didn’t want to lose him.

That’s why your hand shook around the glass and why it remained quiet between you.

He feels hot as he turns to stare at the wall of his living room, trying to catch his breath, trying to control the sudden onset of emotions.
You two were so close to admitting your feelings to each other and he couldn’t wait. But he was equally furious with you as well. If you were going to get out of this by continuing to make him second guess himself, he was going to lose it.

He feels hot. So hot. The way he had yelled at you out in the hallway was only a snippet of how frustrated he was.

The silence in the room was deafening piercing. You swear that neither of you had ever felt so much tension inside a room before this.

He doesn’t think before he’s reaching for the hem of his t-shirt and pulling it up over his head.

It stuns you when you spin around on his stool. You watch the way the muscles in his back flexes as he reaches his arms up, pulling the fabric up over his head, his jeans low on his hips.

You suck in a sharp breath, your face feeling hot. So hot.

“I’m going crazy. You drive me crazy.”

He spats.

You can’t control the scoff that leaves your mouth in response to his words.

“Wow, that’s sweet, Bucky.”

He fumes.

“You stress me so much, you fucking stress the shit out of me.”

You can’t control the hurt that you feel like his words. Your face falls along with your stomach and you set your glass down on his table. You needed to get out of here.

“You know what, I think I’m gonna go.”

You say with tears in your eyes.

He hears you as you pick up your bag off the chair, as your little feet hit the floor beneath you.

He’s so damn frustrated. He doesn’t give you time to walk to his front door.

“Why’d you give me that bear?”

You stop halfway into his foyer. His questions stun you.

There was no way...

You see his back moving up and down as he breathes in and out harshly.


You fake a small laugh as if it would lighten the atmosphere around you. When you realize it doesn’t, your fake smile quickly disappears.

You swallow down nervously.

“What do you mean?” Your voice trembles as you ask him. He doesn’t respond, and somehow you’re moving up closer to him.
Because there was no way...

You eye him up and down and you deny.

“It was just a gift.”

He scoffs at your response and you physically flinch.

He knew.

His tone is menacing when he speaks.

“I remember when you bought Eddie that book,” the air between you is hot and thick, “you bought it for him because you loved him.”

The second it rolls off his tongue it’s silent. If it were any quieter, you swear you could hear both of your heartbeats.

Your eyes look out his window for a second before drifting back to him, you were in a daze and you felt drugged. You felt nervousness grow your stomach.

“Bucky.”

“I need to know.” You hear the tears in his tone, the agony.

This couldn’t happen, not now. Not the night before your sister’s wedding.

Of course, you had to deny it all.

“That’s not why I got you that gift.” It pains you to lie.

You blink away hot tears as you say it.

He turns around sharply, and it’s evident on his face that this talk wasn’t over. His face is contorted into an angry snarl, cheeks red and eyes wet.

“What did you stay with me when my dad died?” His voice is loud and you find yourself trying to corner yourself. But there was no use. You were fully exposed now. “Why did you care about what happened to me at war? Why do you care?” He practically sobs as he throws his arm out into the air, “Why do you care and no one else? Why do you care and she doesn’t?”

Your heart broke at the expression on his face. Your heart broke because you both knew why.

“I- I don’t know.” You stammer out, despair in your eyes.

“Bullshit!” He yells, “Bullshit, you know! You made me question myself for months! Made me think I was crazy, but we both know.”

You try to step back, your heart not taking the anguish anymore. It hurt you to see him like this, to know it was your fault. It hurt you to know that you had both done this yourselves.

“Bucky, please.”

Bucky closes his eyes tightly together as he pulls on his hair, “I fucking can’t anymore. This denial, this back and forth. I can’t fucking take it.” He spins back towards the wall as he now pulls on his hair. A growl escapes his throat, “It’s all bullshit!”
You both are shocked when you realize he’s just punched the wall with the hand that wasn’t holding his shirt.

He stares at it, disoriented and you gape at him, stunned. Afraid.

Your eyes are wide and you feel tears in the back of your throat.

“James.” You whimper out.

You had never called him James before and it surprised you both when it rolls off your tongue like honey.

Another tear rolls down his cheek.

“The goddamn teddy bear, y/n. Why did you give him to me?”

Tears are running down your face now, too.

“You know why.”

[Something always brings me back to you
It never takes too long]

Bucky blinks away hot tears at your answer. He sucks in a deep breath. He’s frozen in place as he stares at the wall directly in front of him. The off-white plaster was screaming at him to turn around, to gather his composure and do the right thing.

[No matter what I say or do
I'll still feel you here 'til the moment I'm gone]

It was obvious what had transpired: you had both said too much and not enough and it had all boiled down to this exact moment in time.

He couldn’t move.

He had had fantasies about a moment similar to this, but in his fantasies, he was always the one to make the first move and do something. But here he was and he couldn’t even lift a finger to do a damn thing.

He was afraid that if he were to do anything, it’d be sinful, that maybe he would even hurt you. Did he have it in him to control himself?

But that was physically impossible right now, he thinks as he feels a slight twitch in his pinky finger.

His breathing is erratic as he hears the faint little steps against his floor come up behind him.

Slowly, they were making their way closer to him.

Your steps were diligent but confident, the sound summing up everything that had led up to this moment.

It’s so quiet that the only thing you two can hear is the sound of his breathing, your tiny feet walking, and the distant hum of the refrigerator. You see the muscles in his back tense when you get closer to him, the silence in the room becomes unbearably quiet. It was screaming at you both, it was the answer you both needed in your own way.
The silent scream was the phrase he had said moments ago that still lingered in the air like a damn siren.

*Because you loved him.*

He feels his heart in his throat and the air between you two is thick and dense.

He swallowed thickly as you came closer to him.

You couldn’t touch him or he would lose it.

Though, who was he kidding? He knew you were going to because your silent revelation to him is only further proving that he was right. He had been right all along.

You cared about him. He *wasn’t* crazy.

His bareback is faced towards you and you take your time to admire his skin.

You felt a carnal hunger inside of you, begging you to touch it. You’re breathing hard just like him as your legs drag you to him like a beautiful dance of push and pull.

You take in one more deep breath as your body comes close to his.

It’s powerful- the pull. The *love* that consumed your hindsight.

It wasn’t your mind controlling you anymore, it was your heart by its mere nature- it’s mere want; it was him- *he* was pulling you to him.

Your heart skips in your chest.

He was waiting for you.

He was what you wanted, and now he knew. You felt selfish as the heat you didn’t realize that you buried for him made its way up to your tummy in a form of knots and beautiful butterflies.

It drives your entire body crazy and it was now taking charge of it.

Your little fingers tremble in the air as you bring them parallel to his body. The moment your fingers tips touch his bareback you want to cry.

Bucky’s eyes close tight at your touch, a hot breath escaping his parted lips. It was almost like it left a brand on his skin, leaving your mark on him, a mark that would last forever.

(-oh and how it would-)

Your touch sent fire through him that made him want to forget everything that he had been loyal for, forget. Everything that he believed in, everything that had kept him from you.

He sucks his bottom lip into his mouth as he tried to pull your skin in tighter to his as if he had some kind of telekinesis power. Because if he’d be damned, it wasn’t enough. He wanted you.

The need builds inside of him with every passing second, your tiny touch doing nothing but confirming his carnal needs.

*Because you loved him.*
He hears haunting violins playing in the distant, a sound of finally. finally.

Nothing additional or any confirmation has to be said between the two of you for Bucky’s hand to slack and for him to drop his shirt onto the floor next to his feet.

The sound of the soft cotton hitting the wooden floor sounded loud to your ears.

It makes the heat in your cheeks rise, the fire in your pit burn even hotter.

Your eyes look at the fabric on the floor - a representation of the sin that was about to happen between these four walls.

You stretch out your fingers flat against his back, making him sigh. The moonlight peeks in through his large window as your hand drags slowly up his back. His breath hitches audibly at the feel of it.

His eyes close together again as his right-hand falls against his leg. He rubs his hand there on his jeans. trying to get rid of the nervous sweat that had gathered on the edge of his palm.

He can’t breathe.

And you were in a trance.

Instinctually, you take another daring step closer to him, the feeling of love engrossing you completely. A love that you’ve never felt for anyone else, not even Eddie, not even close.

This was different. This was all-consuming love. This was the kind of love you die for.

Your other hand comes up to lay beside your right one and your thumb flicks lightly against a small mole that is there. The imperfections on his perfect body made you soar, it made you want to cry out.

He felt your ragged breath against his back, and his eyes look down at the shirt he dropped.

Was he really going to do this? Were you both really going to do this?

He wasn’t yours to touch, but at that moment in time, you wanted him to be. You wanted to make him yours because he should be yours- he should belong to you.

You feel selfish, but you no longer care.

No more second-guessing yourself, you take one more step even closer to him, your small nose brushing slightly against his toned back.

The act makes him shiver and you hear it. It made the butterflies inside of you swell.

He feels a tightness in his chest.

He needs to swallow down the moan as he feels your hot breath against his skin, oh it was so hot, and you were so damn soft.

You stare directly at his skin and you want to kiss him there, but instead, you just take in a deep breath, inhaling his scent.

It was sweet and vanilla; delicious. Both your hands now lay side by side on his back as your forehead leaned on him. Your hands widen slightly, gripping onto whatever was there, but you
didn’t even know what.

Love.

The phrase replays again in your head: *The love I felt for him consumed me.*

Taking in a deep breath, you stretch your right hand slowly around to the right side of his waist. He’s soft, surprisingly warm, and you guess that’s it’s because he’s blushing and burning just as much as you were.

This was past territorial premises, this had crossed the line five minutes ago.

*I do not want to be afraid.*

The fact that he hasn’t stopped you is more evidence that he wants this as much as you.

And that’s all the convincing you need to reach your hand out even further until it’s laid on his upper abdomen.

He looks down at it, his eyes hooded over in lust.

Bucky’s breath catches in his throat and he feels a sudden sadness in the pit of his stomach.

He’s sad because this should’ve happened two years ago.

It should have been you, always you. Everything about this moment was right.

All he can think of as he looks down at your little digits against his broad chest is how damn perfect you are for him.

He doesn’t care at that moment that you’re his fiancée sister, or that he’s twenty-eight and you’re only twenty-two. He doesn’t care about how disloyal this was, he doesn’t care that he’s about to hurt Ashlyn in the worst way possible.

You’re his best friend, you’re y/n. You should have always been him, from the very start.

This all should’ve been wrong, but it felt so right.

Hesitant at first (it was like he was afraid to break your little body) he takes your right hand into his and then he takes a deep breath as he drags it down his toned stomach.

He drags it lower and lower until it’s on top of his belly button.

The gesture makes you tilt your head so that your lips are hovering just above his skin and you bend your fingers that are on his lower belly so that your fingernails are on the surface of his skin.

You dig them deep within his skin and his eyes close tight together once more. A hard gasp escapes his mouth.

He looks down at your hand as his mouth is slightly open, his eyes squinting in intense pleasure.

It surprises him, you surprise him.

You’ve only touched his stomach and he’s already losing control with you.

It scares him what else you could do to him and he’s scared to move your hand to the place he
wants you the most.

Because, fuck, if he wasn’t honest with himself.

Neck bending backward, he looks up at the heavens as he swallows hard. His eyes snap open and they’re painted over in pure carnality and disbelief that this was happening now.

This is all he wanted for the last year. **You.**

*The love I felt for her consumed me.*

*Why lie anymore? Why hide the truth any longer when you have everything you’ve ever wanted right at your fingertips?*

Because you loved him.

You nod against his back. He knows what you’re saying yes to and he grabs that right hand that is on his tummy into his own right one and he holds it tightly.

He holds your hand like he never wants to let you go.

You almost sigh contentedly at the feel of it.

You lay the left side of your face against his back, bringing your front flushed against his back. You never noticed just how much stronger he was then you than at that second.

Your fingers unbend and you lay them flat against his flesh. Your right hand is gripping tightly against his stomach, pulling him tighter to you.

While doing this, he moves up closer to the wall until he feels his breathing bounce off of it. It was hot and his heart was bursting out of his chest.

You were worshiping him and he couldn’t contain his emotions.

Your fingers bend once more against him, your nails digging into his skin.

He gasps as he stares down at your hand, his eyes half open and black.

He whimpers. It’s a cry, it’s a plea.

*Because you loved him.*

Suddenly, he pulls you sharply by that arm until you’re in front of him and your head hits back against the wall.

For a second it hurts, but it’s the last of your worries and concerns right now.

Everything heats up quickly and you feel your heart making its way up to your throat. You’re breathing so damn and he’s got you wrapped around his damn finger.

He’s looking down at you, lids heavy and his breathing extremely quick.

Another whimper leaves his throat as he pushes himself up against you.

Your chest is tight up against his as you stare up at him, your small fingers now against his tummy and waist.
You take that moment that he’s looking down at you to drag your fingers up his chest…his pecks, his throat, and to his cheeks.

You couldn’t breathe and your fingers go to his little hairs behind his ears and then back around to his soft lips. You touch them, admire them.

He watches you in awe.

You were an angel.

He brings his right hand up to your left one that is on his face and he holds it there against his lips. All of a sudden, the movements stop and you’re both staring at each other, breathing hard. He doesn’t care anymore at this point because he just wants you, in any way he can get you.

You both want to cry as you stare at each other. You pant.

You feel Bucky’s left hand raise and hold your chin up. He slides it through the right side of your hair and he’s pulling you towards him in a harsh manner.

The hammering in your chest increases as you feel the heat of his breath come closer to your face. The way he’s looking at you, it sends a shiver through your heart and you feel tears lingering in them. No men have ever looked at you the way he was at that very moment.

With so much admiration, so much want.

You still couldn’t believe that he wanted you. You couldn’t believe that he was okay with this.

He couldn’t take it any longer, with a strong pull he leans down sharply, pressing his lips against yours into a fierce kiss that leaves you powerless. The groan that escapes you is inhumane because the explosion behind your eyes is blinding.

His kiss was blazing.

His other hand grabs the other side of your face, running through your hair. You kiss him back just as hard and you tilt your head to the side, allowing him better access into your hot mouth.

The peak of his tongue dances across your own languidly and your right-hand grabs his right arm, pulling him closer to you.

You felt so tiny against him, so pure.

But nothing about this was pure.

He feels how small you are too as his right-hand drifts down from your head and to your neck. He grips you there, kissing you even more roughly like he couldn’t get enough of you.

You feel his hands drift down your clavicle as his tongue and lips kiss you frantically. It was like he couldn’t get enough of your gorgeous sweet mouth. He drank you like fine wine.

He moves his hands down to your shoulder, and then to the side of your boob next to your arms,
against the hot fabric there.

You were so damn hot through your shirt and he’s gasping into your mouth at the mere touch of it against your shirt.

His kisses slow down against your lips and you whine slightly as he starts to pull away. Your head falls back and it hits the wall behind you as he slowly kisses the side of your mouth, your cheek, and then down your neck. He lands on your pulse and he sucks there hard, his right hands grabbing your side harshly.

You let out a gruntled moan as you feel him suck on you, his hand leaves your side to grip the opposite side of your neck.

He pulls away slightly and just breathes against your hot flesh, the simple act making your way eyes clouded.

He pulls back until you both are staring at each other and his thumb plays with your bottom lip. He stares at it, captivated.

He looks back up until your eyes meet again and this time you’re the one to tilt his chin down with your little thumb. You lean in and sensually drag your lips against his.

The sounds they make against each other is erotic, glorious.

You start to pull away when he pulls you in once more, shoving his tongue inside of your mouth.

A loud groan escapes your throat as his tongue slides against yours.

You don’t know how it happened, but he had walked you back into his bedroom, and before you knew it he was laying you down onto his bed.

He sat you on his bed, making sure his lips never left yours, meanwhile his right arm stretched out onto the mattress next to you.

His left hand still held your face.

You pull away breathlessly, but you couldn’t stay away from him any longer, for you still didn’t take in enough of his taste.

You pull away just long enough to take in a deep breath before kissing him once more.

You raise your trembling hands to the sides of his neck and he stops kissing you.

He stares down at you, wondering what would be your next decision.

He continues to stare down at you, his hair a mess, and he leans down and kisses you again.

This time his kiss is soft.

His kisses are no longer rushed.

The initial thirst of your mouth against his has now been sedated and now he couldn’t get enough of your taste on his tongue.

You tasted so sweet and he could eat you up just like this.
He wants to enjoy this, he wants to keep kissing you for the rest of his life.

His lips kiss your bottom one languidly and you kiss his bottom lip with so much tender he sighs into your open mouth. He dives in once more with his tongue making you cry in utter happiness.

finally. finally.

His hand reaches down to the hem of your shirt and he hikes it up until it’s just below your breasts.

He pulls away from your mouth, but not too far. His eyes fall close in contentment and he leans in, kissing you softly on your forehead. The innocent acts make your heartbeat wildly in your chest.

Everything about this was precise and beautiful.

It was angelic.

You feel his hands slide your shirt up to your arms and over your head. He takes his time watching you.

There was no rush.

Once it’s off, he looks down at you.

He looked delicious standing between your legs, his hair disarray and his chest already covered in a small amount of sweat.

His jeans were hanging just slightly below his waist, making the elastic band of his boxes visible.

Both of your breathing echoed off the walls.

He looked sinful, delicious.

He gives you a look that reflects conviction and boldness.

Slowly, he puts his right hand on your chest, slowly pushing you back towards the mattress until you’re laid down beneath him.

He stretches his left arm above your head and he lays himself above you. His left knee rested on the outside of your right leg and his right knee nestled between your knees.

You wonder what he’s going to do next as he plays with the hair on the side of your neck, just looking at you. He twirls it, pulls on it, smooths it down, and he repeats it twice.

You stare up at him in astonishment as he puts his fingers on the side of your temple and drags it down your cheek and to the left side of your nose.

He touches you there softly, remembering all your features until they are glued into his memory forever. Even though he knew this wouldn’t be the last time, he wanted to drink it in as much as he could.

You looked adorable below him, your lips already bruised from heavy kisses, chest flushed from desire and sexual need. Your body rose up and down quickly as he continued his descent past your jaw, down your neck, to your clavicle, and then to your pink-hued chest.

You tilt your head, looking down at him.
Your breasts are still clothed, thin white material of a simple bra you owned with no padding.

You gasped as his finger trailed the elastic band of it and then down to your abdomen, right down the middle. His eyes gazed down past your tummy and to the waistband of your jeans.

You threw your head back as his eyes took you in.

He couldn’t believe anyone could be so beautiful, so damn perfect.

His fingers linger on the band of your pants for a moment. His touch is playful.

Once more, you look back down at him. You needed to see him.

His chin lays just below your belly button, and he’s staring up at you with those beautiful eyes that you’ve loved since the moment you saw them.

A whimper leaves your throat at the amount of love he’s transpiring by just a look, and you place both your hands on the side of his face and his soft hair, running your hands through them, just touching him- just loving him.

You watch as both his hands leave your pants and they slowly itch up the hot skin of your waist and to your sides where you white bra wraps around your body. You watch him in love, watching how he was worshipping your body, loving you, making up for all your wasted time.

He’s never touched or admired another soul like he was admiring yours.

He tilts his head down and places a gentle kiss just below your little belly button. The kiss was so soft it almost hovered. You ever wondered if it really happened.

He looks up at you, breathing quick, and both of his hands wrap around to the front of your body until each of your breasts is in his palms.

You feel his hot skin through your nipples and they harden immediately at his touch.

He watches as your head falls back against the white comforter of his bed, your left leg involuntarily going around his shoulders.

You looked beautiful. *Just like that.*

He moved up your body and dips his head down to capture you in a wet and intense kiss, making your pelvis grind up against his.

He squeezes both your breasts at the same time while you curve up to him in almost an inhuman way, pushing them so close together that the sound that comes out of your throat is a mix between pain and pleasure.

You pull at his hair with both your hands, bringing him impossibly closer to you. You forced your tongue so deep into his mouth, wanting to swallow him whole.

You couldn’t get enough of him. You just couldn’t.

His hands leave your breasts and he drags one of them down to your hips.

He kisses you and moves you until he’s got you laid down, head on hid pillows, headboard behind your head.
He takes a small moment to look down at you and he takes in the sight of your body laying beneath him. He can’t believe it’s taken you both this long to end up like this in this position.

He wants to memorize you, he wants to mark every part of your body. He wants to claim you.

His eyes are territorial as he slowly kneels between your open still jean-clad legs.

You watch as he lowers his legs to lay straight out with the bed until he’s laid on top of you. He leans on his right arm, most of his weight onto the right side of his body.

Your lips tremble as he grazes his left hand down your chin, neck, chest, between your breasts, and down your navel. His face was still only centimeters from yours.

You gasp as you watch him stop just above your jeans.

He picks up the side of the comforter until he’s got you both tucked underneath it. As if this was something that had to be just between you two, not even the rest of New York City was allowed to see through his window glass.

You were for his eyes only,

The small act itself makes you groan.

Suddenly, you feel his hands on the button of your jeans and you bite your lip as you’re staring up at him and into his eyes.

He bites his own lip as he stares into your eyes, his eyes consumed by complete and utter yearn.

You looked at him with tearful eyes. You close your eyes slowly at the sound of your zipper being pushed down agonizingly slow.

You give him another languid kiss with mostly tongue as he does so, making wet noises.

You both look down as he pushes down the side of your jeans. Once your red lace underwear is visible to both of you, your legs open wider.

You couldn’t fucking believe it. Neither of you could.

You lean in once more to kiss him, except this time you catch his cheek. But you don’t stop, you kiss his cheek over and over until he’s forced to look at you and you kiss the side of his mouth.

He continues to push your jeans down past your smooth thighs and you help him by pushing down the other side as well.

It isn’t until he’s got your jeans down to your knees that you both realize you still have your heels on.

He looks down at them and he considers for a second of just leaving them on - the image making him grow harder for you - but he decides to leave that for next time.

He wanted this to be perfect.

He didn’t want to just fuck you tonight, he wanted to make love to you and for some reason, that kind of fantasies didn’t seem right in the moment right now.

Which is why he pulls them off for you one by one and then tosses them across his floor.
The sounded they make against the Wood is sinful.

He continues to pull down your jeans, short nails accidentally scraping against the side of your thighs.

Once they’re fully off, he grabs the side of your face and pulls you in for another deep kiss.

You gasp as you feel his hand reach into your inner thigh, just inches from the spot you wanted him the most.

You moan, hoping this was it. But he surprises you.

Instead, he worships your body once more.

His kisses repeat against your lips until he’s got your tongue tied with his, next he’s giving your face it’s decided attention, followed by your neck, throat, and chest once more.

The heat in the room was unbearable. You couldn’t take it anymore.

He repeats the same kisses from earlier down your body as he shimmies down. Except for this time you’re not wearing pants.

Your head snaps up quickly as he kisses your navel.

The fact that his lips were just inches from your core makes you whimper and you’re legs widen slightly on their own.

Bucky’s eyes are hooded over in black as you feel his two hands grab the side of your thighs, opening you up to him.

You swallow down thickly.

This was happening.

He’s laid down between your legs. His body was now covered by the blanket, but it was still hovering slightly off the bed so you could still see his face.

With slow and timid kisses he kisses your inner legs, the side of your knees, and then up higher and higher.

You felt your core grow wetter for him. You knew you were throbbing, you felt the blood gushing down to that little bundle of nerves and you knew that when he finally touched it you would scream.

You’re expecting him to finally kiss you there when instead he kisses the little spot just before it on the side of your inner leg. He lets his lips linger there longer than he had on the other spots.

You throw your head back at how torturous he was being but yet how much you were enjoying it at the same time.

It isn’t until he lays the side of his head there and he closes his eyes tightly together that you realize what it was that he was doing to you.

It was something you never experienced before and you never thought you would.

It’s only confirmed when he takes your hand in his and squeezes it tight. You just don’t understand
why he would do it…he didn’t feel the same that you did. And even if he did, he had someone else in his life.

*He couldn’t…*

You look down at him and he slowly opens his eyes.

They look at you with so much love and innocence. Like you were his precious love.

He looked adorable with his unruly hair, lips swollen, laying his head just inches from such an intimate spot of yours like it was the most natural thing in the fucking world. Like you two were made to always do this.

You know what he was doing.

He was making love to you.

This wasn’t just about a carnal need, this wasn’t just about sex or finally tasting each other, this was two years of unspoken whispers, this was two years of misconceptions and secrets being unveiled. This was an expression of how angry you both were for not realizing it any sooner. This was expressing how much you were meant for him.

Your heart cries out as he suddenly raises back up to your face and he kisses you once more.

You cried into his mouth, confused at how much love he was showing you. How he wanted to do this to you when he was in love with somebody else, how he shouldn’t be doing this because it was wrong.

Nat’s words replay in your head. *He just has a certain way of making girls fall for him.*

*But what you would give for just one night.*

*What he would give to win your heart, to claim you as his.*

His heart soars at your requited feelings.

Your teeth clash together as he moaned into your mouth.

You were going to make the most of tonight because it would be the last.

Your hands grab his neck harshly as you spin him around until his head is the one against the pillows.

He looks up at you breathlessly. Your unruly hair fans around your face as you lean down to lick his neck and his jawline.

Next, you stick the tip of your tongue out, running it across his ear lobe.

His breath catches in his throat and his arm goes up to your head and he pulls on your hair, but not too hard.

You give him the same treatment he had just given you.

You kiss his chest. His nipple was slightly darker than the rest of his body, and it was hard as you flicked it with your tongue.
He groans at the beautiful sensations it gives him.

You lay your right side of your face on his chest and your admire his body before you. You drag your left hand all around his upper body until it’s memorized in your mind - you had to remember it forever because it was the last time- you feel his muscles, the little hairs of his own navel. You drag it to his hip where his jeans lay on his waist.

He looks down at you breathlessly.

Your little fingers, oh how he wanted to grab each little one and kiss them tenderly (he couldn’t wait until after tonight when he could have you forever) and to his other nipple.

You look up at him to see his reaction and his mouth opens slightly as you pull on his nipple with your teeth. After you tweak it once more you drag your hand up to his shoulder and to his cheek.

You caress him there softly, recording every detail of his face. He swallows hard as he watches you in admiration.

You drag it once more down his shoulder and this time your fingers go to his scars there.

His breath hitches as you touch each one, giving it its divided attention. They were ugly and harsh, and you see the flicker of embarrassment in his face.

You hated that he despised one of the things that made you fall in love with him in the first place.

You wanted to show him this.

So you do something that shocks him. You lean over his chest and kiss his scars on his shoulder. He watches you in shock, captivated by your gesture.

You open your lips until your tongue is flat against them and you give them a wet open kiss with mostly tongue.

He gasps as he watches you. He watches as a trickle of saliva leaves his arm, leading into your delicious mouth.

You do that to every scar, and on your little journey, you discover more scars you never knew he had. Including one that ran slightly down his side, one on the back of his arm, and eventually one that started above the band of his jeans and then disappears beneath the fabric.

Soon you’re between his legs and he knows what you’re about to do and he doesn’t know if he’s ready.

This means so much to him.

You watch his face as you lay down between his legs just as he did earlier, and you grip the buckle of is belt in your tiny hands.

His gorgeous hand snakes into your hair and he caresses it softly, pulling it to the side.

The gesture makes you want to cry; especially when his thumb touches your scalp so lovingly.

The sound of the buckle being undone is toxic in your ears.

The room is silent, except for it.
Once it’s open, you unbutton his jeans and pull down the zipper slowly just over his ever-growing bulge.

A deep moan leaves his throat as he helps you pull down the rest of his jeans past his legs.

Once he’s in nothing but his boxers, you admit him through his underwear. He’s so hard you see the outline of his cock perfectly through the dark fabric. You’re about to reach out with your hand when he pulls you back up by your little arms until you’re above him and he leans up and kisses you deeply.

He doesn’t want you to give him head tonight. Not tonight.

You’re both caught up in another deep kiss when you grind down on him, and a sudden feeling of pleasure racking through both your bodies. You both pull back realizing there’s only one sheet a fabric separating you both from something that would mean everything.

Bucky didn’t even have to think twice to know he wanted it.

You, on the other hand, was worried about your pleading heart. You didn’t want to be hurt again. But you God how you wanted to make love to him. Your heart was caught between putting him in a terrible position, to you getting hurt, and to going along with this because it was already halfway there.

Your lips leave his as you leave a tiny kiss on the tip of his nose.

He flips you around slowly until you’re beneath him and he pulls the covers closer to both your bodies.

He stretches one of his arms out on the headboard behind you and with the other, he takes your leg and curves it around his back.

He jolts up against you until his hardened length is against your core and he grinds there slowly.

You both moan simultaneously at the sensations.

He forces your leg tighter around him and he’s looking down at your open mouth and eyes half-open.

With an impatient hand, he places it just above your underwear.

He pulls down your red lace slowly. Once it’s off your little toes, he takes the time to admire your body. You feel the red hue of blush on your cheeks. This was Bucky Barnes, your best friend, and he was looking at your bare pussy. This was Bucky Barnes, the love of your life. The nervousness quickly diminishes and you widen your legs wider for him.

You were beautiful. Your tiny pussy was a little darker than the rest of your body but so silky and smooth. He holds back a moan as he takes in just how damn perfect you were made for his cock. His hands glide up the sides of your inner thigh and to the sides of your pussy. Your pussy was so pretty and glistening in the moonlight that peeked in through the window.

He slides his hands up your pelvis, your tummy, and then he’s laying over you once more. He gives you a soft kiss as he undoes your bra. Your hands go to the band of his boxers and your slowly pull them down his legs.

When you see him for the first you are captivated by his beauty.
He was gorgeous. His cock was thick and long as it curved up against his belly. Angry veins lined the sides of it, starting just underneath the head.

You give him another kiss as he pulls the comforter tighter around you both. His left hands returns to the headboard and with his right hand, he grabs his shaft.

With a moan, he drags his head up and down your silky folds.

You gasp at the sensations, your head sinker further into his pillows. He watches your face and kisses you once more on your forehead.

With his right thumb, he caresses the top of your head softly. He’s being so caring and gentle.

When he enters you for the first time it’s beautiful and tender. It feels so good that you didn’t know sex without foreplay was possible and so enjoyable. But it is and it’s powerful.

For the first sexual touch between you two to be so direct and simply put was beyond erotic.

You still haven’t touched his cock and he’s never touched your pussy, but he was currently inside of you, making love to you in the most sensual way, taking his time.

He’s seethed inside of you and your gripping onto his neck with your arms, your legs around his hips.

You give him one more kiss once he’s seethed inside of you. You feel full and you feel like you’re glowing. The way you squeezed his dick so well made him see stars once his tip hits your cervix.

You felt amazing around him, so tight and wet.

*So damn wet.*

He continues his soft thrusts, prolonging the pleasure as much as possible. You both enjoy the moment between these four walls.

The sweat on his forehead builds up as he stares down at you.

And it’s perfect. This was exactly what it was supposed to be: sex.

There aren’t any crazy positions, neither of you talk, and there are no dirty words. It’s the overall act that is powerful. The sheer reality of his cock sliding in and out of your pussy, beautiful and making the goosebumps on your arm come alive.

In and out, in and out.

You both make love like that for about ten minutes, just enjoying each other’s company and pleasure. Enjoying each others little sounds.

It makes you want to cry, it makes you want to scream because you didn’t want this to end.

Silent tears escape your eyes as he leaves more tender kisses on the top of your head.

He’s grinding on top of you.

Every part of him is touching every part of you; His face to your face, your chest to his chest, his cock to your pussy, his legs to your legs, there is no space between either of you and it’s all-consuming and a beautiful dance of love and it’s the best work of art you’ve ever performed with
another human being.

To him, This wasn’t just sex, you two were making love; this was the definition of love.

He feels you clench around him and the sounds around you both are delicious.

There’s nothing but breathing, squelching, his balls hitting against you in rhythmic beats, and the sound of his headboard hitting up against his wall with each thrust.

It’s like that for a bit and you moan when you feel him twitch inside of you.

It triggers your impending orgasm and your lovemaking finally enters its next phase.

The mood in room changes from peaceful to desperation, urgent.

Your panting turns into loud moans and then into deep groans, and next to whimpers.

The feel of him hitting you deep inside - oh god right there - has your toes twirling in the air.

You let out pleading whimpers and cries, your legs wrapping around his waist pulling him in tighter and deeper into you.

The blanket that was around his waist starts to slide down his ass and his thrusts grow erratic as he feels the immense pleasure of your tight cunt around his swollen pulsing dick.

Your cunt squeezes him just perfectly in the spots that make him cum. It’s specifically the one little spot under his head and he gasps as it hits you repeatedly and then faster and faster and faster.

His pelvis was hitting your clit just right and you stretch your arm up behind you to keep your head from hitting the headboard. His thrusts grow erratic and you are so damn close.

You pull away to look at him because you wanted to see his face as he came undone on top of you, and his teeth are clenched as he looks down at you below him. His hair has fallen onto his face and it’s stuck on him by the sweat. He groans through his teeth as he looks into your eyes, crying for you.

His hips hit the back of your thighs harder.

He stretches both his arms to lean on the headboard behind your head and he rams his hips into you even harder, making you scream.

He’s grunting harshly as he feels his end approaching and he curses himself inside his head when he sees you reach down to rub at your clit.

control, control, control.

He throws his head back only for a moment to gather his composure.

He wanted this to be pure and make love to you, and he was going to go through with it, he hates that he nearly lost control as he watches your other hand go behind you to grab onto the headboard.

You rock back and forth against the blanket beneath you, helping him fuck you.

With one hand holding to the headboard behind you and the other on his waist, you look down to where he’s ramming into you and you gasp out loud.
Your eyes coil together as you feel the burning in your core growing.

Bucky moans as your clench around his cock and he harshly grabs the left face of your face.

You look up at him, gapping, and he’s staring down at you with eyes furrowed and lips parted in intense pleasure.

He grunts as he keeps direct eye contact with you, his hips still hitting yours hard.

Your lips purse tight together and your head tilts up slightly as you feel your end approaching.

Just when you’re both about to cum he stops his movements.

He wraps his arm around your right arm -right under your armpit- and throws it over his shoulders. He reaches it down to your ass, pulling you closer to him and then his hand goes to your head. He runs his hand through your hair until it’s bunched in between his fingers and he holds you impossibly close to him.

This was beautiful, this was heartbreaking.

It’s when he rubs his thumb across your scalp like the angel he knew you were that your heart soars.

Like the love of his life that you knew you were.

He’s got you up against him and he’s panting into your shoulder, making gorgeous sounds of lovemaking.

You grasp the back of his head and pull on his hair and then softly caress it, your eyes rolling back into your head.

It escapes you before you even realize it.

Every memory hits you, every fight you two ever had, every great memory you’ve both shared- all of it.

“I love you.”

You whisper so softly into the air it’s almost drowned out by the loud creaking of the bed.

Bucky whimpers at the words, his heart explodes and he closes his eyes tightly together as he slams into your even harder.

He pulls on your hair, pulling your head into the crook of his neck.

When your orgasm hits you, you scream into the eyes of the heavens snapping open at how strong it is. The hand that was not on the headboard goes to his ass and you drive him quicker into you, almost desperately, your teeth clenching at the immense pleasure you keep feeling over and over.

He groans loudly, his left hand grabbing onto yours that is on the headboard. He squeezes it tight.

“I love you, I love you, I love you…” he whimpers as your tight cunt around his cock feels delicious and makes him cum harder than he ever has in his entire life.

And it drags on throughout his body, starting at the tip of his cock, to the base of his shaft, to his balls, to his ass, his legs, his torso; all of it feels the pleasure that racks through him as he cums
inside of you. He screams along with you and you feel him swell inside of you, his seed filling you up to the tilt, and it doesn’t stop.

“Fuck!” He screams loudly, hand slamming down on the headboard making it rattle awfully hard against the wall.

You don’t notice how much you’re both sweating until you’re breathing hard and you tilt your head to look at him as best you could.

The ends of his hair were soaked against his neck as he panted against you. His hold was still tight on you, not wanting to let you go.

He was shaking, absolutely shaking. You were shaking too. He slowly dropped you down, and your legs remained tight around his waist.

Slowly, he lifts his head from the cook of your neck to your shoulder and then his nose hits yours.

His hair is soaked at this point and he’s breathing hard, red lips against your own, tears in both of your eyes.

His eyes are half-closed as he still tries to catch his breath.

You feel like crying as you watch him, this beautiful boy who you had grown to love so much.

Your trembling left-hand leaves the headboard and you use it to caress the side of his face, your thumb running over his wet cheeks.

[But you're neither friend nor foe though I can't seem to let you go]

You don’t know it, but you’ve also got wet strands of hair on your forehead.

Bucky leans in closer to you, and he gives you a wet kiss. He whimpers when you pull away for a second to catch your breath.

You run the hand that is on his face through his hair, pulling him closer to you. You kiss him deeply as you lift your leg tighter and higher up on his waist, not caring how the blanket slips fully down this time, revealing both of your naked bodies to the world.

[The one thing that I still know is that you're keeping me down]

You allow the intense sleep that follows to ingulf both of you. He doesn’t even bother pulling himself fully out of you and you don’t care either.

He couldn’t wait until he woke up the next day and spend the rest of forever with you.

You’re awaken by your natural alarm clock that you usually ignore.

For some reason, your body naturally likes to wake you up at five-thirty every morning. You typically would ignore it and go back to bed until your real alarm clock awoke you, but this time
you followed it.

It takes you a second to realize that last night hadn’t been a dream.

At some point during the night, he had pulled out of you and you now felt an empty feeling between your legs.

He’s got you in his arms, your back to his chest, his right arm tight around you.

It breaks your heart that this couldn’t happen ever again.

Bucky couldn’t sacrifice his wife for this. And if Ashlyn found out it would break her.

You pull yourself from his arms. As you stand with one of the sheets around your body, you realize this is the first time you’ve ever been in his room. You look at his things and it breaks you. You didn’t want to leave this. You loved him and he loved you. You felt torn.

Looking over his stuff you see a Yankee hat and next to it is the little bear you gave him. You feel tears once more make their way up your throat.

Today was his wedding day and you had done something awful.

You now knew he loved you just as much as you loved him, but it was too late. You had both been too late.

You think this as you kneel on the bed next to him, caressing the side of his gorgeous face as he sleeps peacefully, You look up to the window noticing that the sky was turning a lighter shade of pink and that you had to be fast.

He would have to start getting ready soon and so would you. Your heart hurt badly as you traced his relaxed features with your tiny fingers. You tried to memorize them and you didn’t miss the trace of a small smile on the sides of his mouth.

You felt awful.

But it was the right thing to do.

You felt your bottom lip tremble as you sucked in a sob.

Angry at yourself, you stand up sharply, wiping your tears on the back of your hand.

You couldn’t say bye to him directly, it would hurt too much. Quietly, you get dressed and then you look for a piece of paper and a pen. You find a random piece of scrap paper in his home office and your rip a small piece of the corner off.

You scribble down your apology and your goodbye.

Your tiny hands tremble as you fold up the little note.

Diligently to not awaken him, you slide it right under his pillow.

When you’re at the door to his bedroom, you give him one last look behind your shoulder before leaving.

How do you do that with your eyes
Chapter End Notes

The reason I dedicated so much to this love scene was because the entire story revolves around it. That's why it was so long. I initially wanted their first love scene to be straight up fucking...I wanted it to be hard and nasty to the point that it ruined everything between them, but then I sat back and I thought to myself what it was that I wanted represent. Truth is, I wanted it to be something that summed up what they felt. I wanted it to be powerful and make a statement. I went from wanting to write an extremely dirty fuck fest to a love making scene where they literally don't even talk - it's just breathing and moans and body worshipping. And I am happy with my choice. I'm really glad of this one and I know this chapter ended on a bad note, but the story has just only begun. ;)

Songs used for this chapter was The River Has Run Wild by Mads Langer and then their love scene the oh so popular Gravity by Sara Bareilles. Chariot by Jacob Lee also makes a comeback. I'm still working on the Spotify page. I'm sorry, I've been super busy with work and personal stuff that I haven't had time. But I will get on it, I promise. When the Spotify is done, it will be posted on my Tumblr! allandoflimbo.

I also hope you guys understand my overuse of italics and bold in this chapter...very important.

Hope you guys enjoyed this one. ;)
The Morning After

Chapter Summary

The Morning After.

Chapter Notes

Language. Cheating. Sad. PLEASE read Author note at the end. very important... and i apologize for any typos. I literally rushed this one out. I haven't had time to write and was starting to feel bad for leaving you guys waiting. But here you go.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

[ After all, what if he only loved you so much and not enough? ]

It had been years ago, but it couldn’t be broken.

With slight hesitation and a convincing stature, you had looked at yourself dead in the eye.

Your hands wrapped around the edge of the dingy cold sink, gripping it tightly in order to control your anger. Your eyes were bloodshot and your knuckles white, matching the walls of the old bathroom. The drain was dark and hollow, its inner piece missing since around the time your were ten years old. Around the drain were splatters of orange and ugly brown, it spread outwards towards the inner ends of the sink, the rust making itself a part of the porcelain.

In your reflection, your tired eyes had drifted down to your lips then slowly down the middle of your chest where a gold chain hung loosely, a little round pearl hanging off the end of it. Your trembling right hand had gone to the pearl and making your neck as stiff as possible and with a
grunt you had pulled the small chain off your body. You felt the soft burning on the back on your neck where the necklace had dented into your skin, but you didn’t care.

It hadn’t hurt as much as your heart did.

Opening your hand, slowly your fingers unraveled from around the jewelry.

You felt sad and immense sorrow as you looked at it - the necklace laid broken in your hand, it’s frayed ends falling off the sides of your palm.

You made a cup with your hand and tilted it in the same angle as the sink. You watched in awe as it slid down the gaping hole of the drain, gone forever.

That was when you had made a promise to that you would never love someone ever again.

It had killed you when you discovered it. You didn’t expect your guard to have fallen, and you hadn’t expected it to be with him of all people.

Your chest grew heavy with dread months ago when the realization that you’d broken that promise had hit you. It had happened again.

You thought you had been convincing enough to not fall for another man, at least not in such an irresponsible way.

To your dismay, of course you hadn’t convinced yourself and you had allowed yourself to fall in love again and this time it was stronger than it had ever been in your entire life.

You were not prepared for any of this. None of this was even supposed to happen. It wasn’t like it was with Eddie or Brock where you had purposely looked for them and with the purpose of a non-platonic relationship.
Bucky had been different.

Bucky was your best friend. He was your sister’s fiancé.

It was a mistake.

You felt like an awful person for putting him in this situation. Coming between a man and a woman’s love? That was not you.

And that is why you left, why you had to leave.

You didn’t dare look back as you picked your bag off his marble counter and your little cardigan that had been draped over his bar stool moments before he had given you that glass of whiskey.

Your eyes lingered there for a second.

The glass was still there, sitting in the dark where the sun had not yet reached, and the ice had melted and now pooled at the bottom of the cup - warm and bland.

You hadn’t finished it your drink. He had been too busy kissing you, seducing you, making love to you.

Your stumble blindly for his door as your eyes remain on the tips of your shoes. You had to keep your head on straight. This had gotten farther than you ever wanted it to.

Your breath shakes slightly as you think about what you’re doing. You know it’s wrong, you know it.

Your mind keeps telling you to leave, but your heart is fighting with it and telling you to stay.

You ignore your heart because you know its hurt you many times in the past. You no longer trusted it. It’s why you’ve only made awful mistakes the last few years.
You decide to leave.

You close his door quietly behind you, careful to not awaken him. You didn’t want to deal with a big blow out, another Eddie-heartbreak.

You were a coward and you knew it.

A damn coward.

Keeping your eyes focused, you run down the too-bright hallway towards the elevator that would take you far away from the sin you had just committed.

You didn’t allow yourself to think about last night and how something that was so wrong could feel so damn right.

You erased your mind of all images and fantasies of you running back into his room and kissing him until he awoke. Touching his face until his bright blue eyes stared back at you.

The carpet flooring of the elevator felt too soft for your liking and you missed the feeling of his dark wooden floors beneath your bare feet and the tips of your toes against his soft cotton sheets.

You watched in regret as the elevator doors ding close in front of you, your eyes drifting one last time to his apartment door.

You feel your heart getting heavier with each floor that passes, as it took your farther away from him.

You were doing the right thing, weren’t you?

The doors ding too soon for you liking, and the cool air of the lobby makes you cringe internally. You missed the warmth of his bed, the heat of his strong arms.

You feel an additional tremble in your bottom lips as you continue your way past the front desk and security.
Your legs can’t stop shaking and you know that you need to sit, or at least get out of there.

You know you’re running and you know you look suspicious but you don’t care.

Desperately, you ignore the heavy pumping of blood in your ears.

_I love you. I love you._

You hear his voice in your head.

As if in agonizing pain, you run your hand through your hair, pulling on it hard as you ran faster.

You run through the revolving doors out of the hotel out into the warm air, and everything around you howls.

The sounds of the city already awake circled around you, but all you could hear were his words.

You look up at the beautiful still dark blue sky and you try to take in the gentle wind as it blew through the clouds and the over filled trees, but all you could feel were the lingering ghost touches of his soft fingers against your torso.

You try to smell him once more (as if trying to dig up a memory), but instead, you just smell the musty, but yet sweet, smell of Manhattan.

It was a mixture of air conditioner fluid and the occasional honey roasted peanut.

You had been calm and collected within his four walls, trying so hard to keep your composure and do what you thought was right, but the second you threw yourself against the side of his building, you sobbed uncontrollably into the small sweater within your grasp.

They racked through your body in harsh waves, starting at your knees as they buckled to the concrete. You felt the pain in your head as you pulled on it hard. Your finger tips of your other hand left your mouth and you dug them harshly into the brick wall behind. You gently lowered
you yourself to the ground as more angry sobs left you.

Concerned eyes looked at you as they passed you by, eyes judging and also questioning, but you could care less what they thought as you closed your eyes tightly together, soft whimpers leaving the break of your over kissed lips.

His face and the memories from last night replayed over and over in your head as you felt your heart falling and begging for some kind of release from the pain.

Your left leg bends in as your lay your elbow on your knee. Closing your eyes tight once more, a strong sob racked through your chest and you brought the sweater again to your face. The fabric against your face became soaked and slimy from your hot tears.

You opened your lids slightly to stare down at the beige fabric that was now turning a shade of brown from your tears.

You sucked in your bottom lip as it trembled. You were irrevocably in love with the man that laid in his bed just a couple of feet above you.

*Just go back.*

You scream at yourself.

*Baby, I want you more than anything. Please believe me.*

You say as you stare into oblivion.

You knew that you could go about this an entire different way. One that could potentially turn into something great.

All you had to do was turn back around into that door and run back into his arms.

It wasn’t too late yet and you had time, you knew this.
But you weren’t that kind of girl.

You couldn’t take him away from your sister and it’s not like he would even want to anyway. He loved you, but you doubted that he loved you as much as you loved him and you weren’t prepared for that kind of hurt again.

Not again.

You could at least tell him goodbye personally and not through a damn note.

But, again, it was too damn hard.

You knew he wouldn’t understand why you had to do this, and it would kill you just as much as it would kill him. You wouldn’t have the strength to pull away just like you didn’t last night.

What you did to your sister, behind her back, it killed you.

You threw your head back against the wall and stared up at the sky until your breathing calmed down and your tears finally stopped.

You cursed the weather for being so damn perfect. You cleared your throat.

It wasn’t what you wanted to do and you knew it was heartless, but it was the right choice. You would face this day and then you would do what you needed to do that was best for the both of you which was leave his life.

You would allow him to have the happy ending he deserved.

And if there was one thing you weren’t - it was a home wrecker.

You quickly realize that since you didn’t spend the night at home that you don’t have your dress on you and that you also needed a quick shower before heading to the church. You look down at your watch and you’re glad that you still have close to two hours.
The sun peaks in through the pristine glass, its orange and yellow rays radiating off the floor, peaking just lightly onto the white comforter of the king-sized bed.

Bucky laid belly down, his left hand tucked under the pillow, while the other laid on his side. His unruly dark brown hair was sprayed over his pillow, his eyes squinting from one of the orange rays that manages to hit the corner of his closed eyes.

He sees light but his body feels like it’s floating. Relaxation takes a hold of his body as he hums in contentment, spreading his right leg a little wider. The cool sheets feel amazing against his bare skin. His white comforter just briefly touches his cock and he’s instantly remembered of what happened last night.

You two had made love and he doesn’t think he’s ever been happier in his entire life.

A small smile plays on his lips as he throws his arm to the side, preparing to grab onto your waist and pull you closer to him.

He always figured you were a cuddling type of person and he wanted to do a lot of that.

It takes him a second to realize that as much as he was trying, he wasn’t feeling you behind him, he groped and touched but all he could feel was more blanket and cotton.

His eyes open slightly, cringing at the raising bright light in the sky.

He lifts his head up slightly with a groan and he looks down at himself. His blanket laid just below his waist line.

He looks over to see you weren’t laying there. He smiles to himself at the thought of you making breakfast for him in nothing but your cute little t-shirt. He wanted to walking up behind you and pull you close to him. He couldn’t wait to have you for himself.

This was no longer his wedding day, but yes the first day of forever with you.

He softly tosses the blanket to the side. After he slips on his boxers, he makes his way to the door of his bedroom.
With a smile he opens it wide, eyes scanning for you.

“Y/N?” His voice is sturdy.

He momentarily stalls when he sees all the lights off and a serene quietness envelope around him, resembling that of an empty home.

His eyes furrow.

He walks down the hall and into his master bathroom.

Maybe you were taking a shower. His lips perk at the sides as he pictures you in his head as you took a hot shower.

He opens the door to the bathroom slowly, being sure to not startle you.

“Sweetheart?” He says softly with a gentle and rhythmic knock.

After no response, he opens it all the way to see and looks inside.

It was empty, no sight of you anywhere.

He doesn’t know why but he gets a worried feeling in his stomach, like something was wrong but he wasn’t sure what.

Had something happened? Did you go somewhere? Why couldn’t you wait for him to awake?

His bare feet echo through the home as he runs a hand through his messy hair.

Bucky goes into his room and looks for his phone. He didn’t have much time to find you before everyone would start showing up to get ready for the wedding. He was hoping you’d both be gone
by now, getting everything packed into a cab and headed to the hotel he already had booked in anticipation of things going as smoothly as he thought it might.

He spots his phone on the floor next to his night stand and he’s about to walk over to it when something peeking from under his pillow catches his eye.

His eyes furrow when he notices it’s piece a of paper.

Leaning over, he snatches it quickly and unfolds it.

**I’m sorry I did this. Goodbye, Bucky.**

His stomach falls as he reads the scribbled writing.

He can’t breathe. His vision blurs as he tries to take in the words you left him.

*You left him. You left him.*

His breathing picks up as he crumples the note in his hand, and the hot air from his lungs comes out of his nose in angry huffs. He licks his lips, blinking wildly as he tries to contain his emotions. He feels his heart beat pick up while he stares at his various clothing scattered across the floor.

He swallows down the pain he feels in his throat, a sudden on set on unexpected tears trying to make its way out of his eyes.

Tears of betrayal.

He had never felt the way he was feeling right now. His hands tightened in fists and then opened up again.

He walks slowly to the window of his room, his hands shaking. He bites his bottom lip so hard he draws blood as he scans the city line, somehow looking for you. As if, somehow, he could see you
from where he was.

*You left him.*

You were his love, and you *left* him.

With a gruntled groan and an animalistic roar he throws the note against the glass. He struts over to his bookshelf, his posture tall and steady.

His eyes burn and he’s hyperventilating as he rips everything out off the shelves, throwing it carelessly across the floor.

Once his hand is around the teddy bear, he holds it tight until his knuckles are white and finally he allows himself to cry.

He growls as he throws it across the room. The plush toy bounces off the wall, its little eyes looking at him mockingly.

In a fury and blurry hot eyes, he rips the blankets off his bed. He wasn’t sure what he was trying to accomplish by doing that but he felt the sudden urge to get rid of everything that had you on it. Your sweat, your juices, your tears, all of you, it had touched the cotton and it pained his heart.

He sobs as he rips everything apart.

“No, no!”

Hot tears run down his face. He’s on his knees and he feels them turning red from the friction of the floor rubbing against them. He pulls on his hair as his back falls back against his wall.

Leaning over, he opens his closet door and pulls out a suitcase. Sniffing hard, he unpacks it all: extra credit cards, extra cash, a card key, and an extra set of clothes for you and him. He throws the suitcase across the room as well.
He runs his hands through hair and he sobs harder as he stares at the items scattered across his floor, looking at the mess he had made.

Why would you do this to him? Why would you hurt him this way?

He should’ve told you of his plans, he knew he should’ve, but he had to be sure first. After you told him you loved him he would tell you everything that morning.

Why would you do this? Why would you make it believe that you would run away with him?

After his breathing is calm, he looks for his cell phone again. He rummages through clothes and blankets.

He needed to call you, find you, talk to you. He was at lost to what to do for the rest of the day, the rest of his life.

He needed you.

He hears knock at his door and all his movements stop.

No.
Quickly, he tidies everything up as much as he could.

Reality washes over him like a cold shower and he’s shoving all the items into a suitcase and into his closet. He was trying his best to hide any evidence of what he had planned for the day,

Once the closet door is closed, he quickly tosses everything back onto the bed, including the comforters and blankets that still smelled of you.

He runs his hands up his face into his hair and looks around making sure he didn’t miss anything.

An additional knock scares him and he quickly realizes he should at least put a shirt on.
Leaving his room, he makes sure to close the door behind him. Even with everything cleaned up, he got a weird feeling leaving it open.

He walks through the living room and to his front door. Bucky takes a deep breath before opening it.

Sam and Steve stood there with soft smiles.

Steve has a tux in his hand and so did Sam.

“Hey.” Sam smiles brightly at him, a smug on his face.

No., his head kept saying. This wasn’t right.

Bucky runs his hand through his hair nervously trying to figure out what to do to get out of this.

But get out to go where? Where did you go? Get out to go to a random hotel room by himself? He would never cause himself such embarrassment.

“Today’s the big day, man. You ready?” Steve asks nervously, taking note of Bucky’s lack of enthusiasm and tired eyes. He knew his best friend well and he could immediately sense that something was not right.

Bucky spins around, stress overwhelming him.

“Isn’t it a little early?” He mumbles under his breath.

He wonders what would’ve happened if they had gotten here while you and he were leaving if you had decided to stay.

Everything was a mess.
“You get married in four hours. I think the girls are already getting their hair and makeup done, Buck. We have to make sure you are relaxed and focused. Figured we’d hang here for a bit to have breakfast and then head to the church in an hour, meet up with everyone else. My parents said they would be there around 7:30.”

Bucky nods, but he’s not listening.

“Are you okay?” Sam asks in a concerned tone as he lays his suit down on the counter.

“Yeah, just give me a second.” He mumbles before making his way into the bathroom.

Steve and Sam share a look.

They wait until the bathroom door is closed.

“Something definitely is not okay,” Sam says.

Steve’s face is stern, an itching feeling that he didn’t like too well crawling up his chest, “No. No, it’s not.”

Bucky stares at himself in his mirror.

Why would you do this to him?

He couldn’t get married. He didn’t Ashlyn the way he loved you. But he also thinks about the contracts he had signed.

It was one thing to break one of the contracts and then getting away with you, but breaking it and getting away with nothing was a completely different story.

What if he didn’t even find you today?
He knows he shouldn’t care about the damn contracts but he wanted it for you. He wanted to give you everything, he had a plan.

This wedding seemed more like a business mission than anything.

He would have to tell Ashlyn eventually. He couldn’t hide it from her.

Bucky closes the door behind him once he’s finally calm and collected.

“Feeling better?” Sam asks.

“Yeah.” He lies.

Steve doesn’t smile.

Ashlyn spun happily in front of the large mirror. The victorian edges of it crowned around her frame, the edges of her white dress twinkling in the sunlight that came in through the window of the church.

Her bright smile lit up her face as she thought about what today would be for her. It would be the beginning of her future, the beginning of everything else.

She was ecstatic.

Nat smiled behind her as she delicately placed her veil on the top of her head. All the other girls sat cross-legged in their pink satin robe as they watched.

“Awww!”

“You look so beautiful.”

Ashlyn smiled as she met each one of their eyes. When she met Natasha’s, Nat could see the slight disappointment in them. You weren’t there.
You were supposed to be the one putting the veil on her head, buttoning the velvet buttons on the back of her lace dress.

Ashlyn had asked Nat about you after she mentioned that she still had not received a text back from you and she was growing worried. You were supposed to be here a half-hour ago, makeup and hair already did.

Nat’s face had fallen dramatically as she remembered last night. She was scared, but she tried her best not to think about it too much, hoping that she was just over thinking it all.

She prayed that nothing happened. She was beyond relieved when Ashlyn had told her that Bucky texted her and letting her know that the boys would be at the church soon, too.

Nat was relieved, nonetheless.

The red head’s fingers were just placing the beautiful veil on top of Ashlyn’s shoulders when there was a sound of the door closing shut behind her. Everyone looked up, Ashlyn’s eyes meeting yours in the mirror.

Your breath caught in your throat as you saw her standing there. Her dress was beautiful and so was her veil. Her makeup and hair had been done beautiful, curls cascading down her back and eyes piercing through the air. She looked beautiful and soon there was a small trace of tears in her eyes.

You were here.

The memories of last night with the mixture of seeing her standing there hit you like a fucking train and you felt I huge pain in your chest.

Caught in a trance, you slowly make your way over to her.

It pain had become unbearable and you felt awful for what you did to her. But at the same time you wanted it to be you. You were jealous, you were in a rage of heartbreaking emotions.

Your void Nat’s nagging eyes on you the entire time.
“You look,” you say softly as you eye the rest of her dress down to her train, “wow.”

You know you were late, but you had driven as fast as life would allow you to. You had quickly brushed your teeth, showered, done your makeup and hair and grabbed your dress and ran out the door.

But you came.

You had made the right choice, you try to tell yourself. The guilt ate away at you, knowing that you had slept with your sister’s fiancé, but as you saw her in the mirror you knew it had to be the right choice. You couldn’t steel her happiness away like that.

And that’s when you vowed that you would never tell her about what happened, you would never tell anyone.

And you had to run away.

Your heart hurt badly.

Once again, you had loved too much and it was someone you couldn’t have. You knew Bucky would understand because, even though he did tell you he loved you, you knew it wasn’t in the same way he loved Ashlyn.

He wouldn’t dare leave her for you.

You’re tracing the skin of her upper arms when you feel a tight grip on your elbow.

You look over to see Nat glaring at you.

You clear your throat as you look down at your dress that is draped over your arm.

“Oh, I’m gonna put this on and I’ll be right out to help you.”

Ashlyn nods as you walk over to the little hallway that led to a more private area where you could
You’re just about to unbutton your jeans, hands shaking and throat burning, when a voice interrupts you.

“Where were you?”

You ignore her for a little longer than necessary before answering.

“I’m sorry I’m late, Nat. But I’m here, aren’t I? Isn’t that what matters?” It comes out harsher than you intended it to.

“You’re late.”

You’ve got your jeans pulled around your thighs when you spin your head up to look at her, your face red and overfilled with emotions.

“But I’m here.”

Nat stares at you for a beat longer before looking down at your dress and nodding.

“You are.”

In front of the big church, he feels its cold shadow towering over him, blocking him from the calming heat of the August sun.

The height of the structure intimidated him. It made him feel a burn in his stomach and he began to feel nausea. His blue eyes trickled over the details of the gorgeous church.

When he had chosen this place a year ago, he had been ecstatic and happy.

Looking at it now, he felt anything but.

A strong smell of lilies blew through the air as a small gust blew through, making the full-blown trees above him sway through the air. The rays of the sun peaked in through the leaves creating a beautiful halo down the sidewalk.
He’s faintly reminded of his mother.

He had been just eight years old and he had been at this exact location for a funeral. In the car, one of the buttons came off his suit jacket from playing with it so much and his mother had looked at him with sympathetic eyes as it laid in his tiny hand. Pulling a needle and string that she always carried with her in her bag, she knelt down in front of him outside of the car and began to stitch it back on.

The weather had been similar to today, and it sickened him.

He no longer had happy memories left to hold onto, nothing good but the memory of last night.

What you had done was wrong. But he needed to still find you.

He needed to know what was going on.

He needed to see you again.

“Dude. Come on.” Steve mutters as he stared down at him from the top of the steps.

With his suit in his hand and one more hard swallow, he walks up the taunting steps that would lead him to something he could no longer back away from.

He thought that once he had his suit on that everything would be okay. That maybe it would help him think straighter, make him more powerful and determined to do what he had to do.

He thought it would help.

But as he slid on his shoes, his eyes burned and his head became clouded with all thoughts of you and what you did. He felt tainted, betrayed, and empty.
He couldn’t take it.

With a tie of his left shoe he feels exhaustion overwhelm his entire being. His left arm drops between his legs while his right one goes to the side of his head. Hunching foreword in the chair, he shoves his face into his hands and cries.

Steve and Sam watch as their friend falls apart in front of them.

They don’t say anything as they watch him, shocked. Heavy cries broke throughout Bucky’s body as he sobbed into his hand.

He didn’t care anymore that his friends were watching, he couldn’t take the pressure from holding it in.

Sam swallows hard as he pulls Steve aside.

“What’s wrong with him, man?”

Steve sighs deeply.

“I don’t know. Should we say something?”

Eventually, Bucky pulls his face away from his hand. He had become red and his chest was moving up and down rapidly as he sniffed and tried to control his breathing. He widens his legs as he leans his elbows on each knee, bringing his hands together and in front of his face.

He had to find you, he was determined to find you before the wedding. He had to.

With more sniff, he sits up and clears his throat. His lips were soaked and his eyes red. He licks his lips, avoiding his friend’s gaze.

He stands up and pulls on his lapels, his head high.

“Let’s do this.” He mumbles as he pulls on the tie harder.

“Are you sure?” It’s the first time Steve’s been doubtful of the entire situation. Up until now, he had always rooted for Ashlyn and Bucky to court out their issues, but seeing the state of his friend, he knew something was up.

Something about it doesn’t sit well with him, and he’s deathly afraid of knowing what it was that
was bothering him so much.

“Yes I’m goddamn sure,” He says a little harsher than he intended it to. He runs his hand through his hair as he spins to look at them, “because what other choice do I have? Tell me, what else can I do right now?”

“Bucky, what is going on? Did something happened between you and Ashlyn?” Sam asks concerned.

Steve just stared at him, glaring.

“No, it’s just,” He sighs, “whatever it is it’s too late now.”

“What’s too late?” Sam asks.

Steve is afraid to know as he continues to stare at him.

“It’s too late to just leave her hanging. I did love her, I did, but it’s just things got in the way and I had a plan, and everything went totally the opposite direction and I didn’t think it’d get this far.”

Sam looks at him, completely confused.

“You’re the one that proposed to her.”

“You don’t think I know that, Sam?”

“Buck, please just tell us if you want out of this. You shouldn’t go through with this if you feel like something is stopping you, or making you doubt yourself.”

Bucky scoffs.

You *left him.*
“I’m fine. I’m fine.”

No, he wasn’t fine. He had to find you. He had to see you.

He looks for you in the hallway while he’s with the guys in the hallway. He looks for you when he looks over to the entrance of the church, waiting for you to walk through and tell him how sorry you were and you just freaked out and that you could both get the hell out of there.

He looked for you when he took a deep breath before walking through the double doors of the church where hundreds of people sat waiting. Where his family was, his friends, press - everyone.

He felt like he was going to pass out as he walks to the front of the alter, his eyes scanning everywhere for you as if he figured maybe you weren’t even in the wedding anymore.

But you are nowhere to be seen.

He realizes where he is and he’s frozen. He swallows hard various times as heavy bile tries to crawl up his throat.

“You’re okay, Buck.” Steve, his best man, tells him as he stands right next to him.

Bucky takes in a deep breath.

People gathered around smiling and whispering as they watched him standing in the front, people already taking pictures of him.

He hated it, he hated this.

He wanted to run out the door, he wanted to.

But something kept stopping him. Maybe he was a coward.

But where would he go after this? To a life without you?
He was marrying a woman and it was supposed to be a serious thing, it was supposed to make him realize how serious this decision was, but something about you seemed to blur his mind as if it was blurring the line between reality and making correct choices.

You. You messed his mind up.

Sure, he knew that he could have any other woman, it didn’t have to be Ashlyn. But he did love her at one point, and he was a good man. He tried to see the good in people no matter what.

He was a good man.

Now he was a cheater, and he was still going through with it.

It ate away at him like a flesh-eating disease.

He didn’t know what to do.

At least he thought he didn’t until he saw the one thing he didn’t expect to see so soon.

The one time he wasn’t looking for you, and when he had expected to see someone else.

It was you. He didn’t even notice that the music had already begun and that everyone had already stood up to look or that the other bridesmaids had already walked down.

He breath catches in his throat and he feels an almost whimper leave his mouth.

You were beautiful.

His heart cries at how everything about the situation looked. You were walking down the isle, towards him, but no you weren’t his bride. You were the women that he had slept with hours ago and left him broke and with so many questions.

He wanted to be mad at you the second he saw you but all he was was captivated.
He gets a weird foreshadow feeling as he watches you walk down the isle.

You were looking down at the floor as your peach-colored dressed dragged beneath you against the rose pedals that the little flower girl had thrown.

You couldn’t look at him because you knew you would fall apart.

*Look at me.* His eyes were saying. *Please look at me, baby.*

You felt a weird pull, and as much as you tried not to, you made eye contact briefly.

Your heart explodes when you see the way he’s looking at you.

So much admiration.

Your body reacts immediately, your skin burns and your core heats up as the memories from last night sway over you in hot and rippling.

You feel his hips against the back of your legs, you hear his heavy breathing in your ear, and his hand gripping the headboard roughly as it banged against the wall.

You hear his moans, and you hear the way he told you he loved you.

You rip your eyes away from his as you feel the tears coming up your throat.

You were an awful person.

You both were.

You wanted to run out of there, you wanted to run away and crawl into a hole and fall apart.
Bucky wanted to run out of there with you in his arms.

The music changes to the wedding march and Bucky’s eyes tear up.

When he sees her, his heart shatters.

He was no longer a good man.

Why the fuck was he doing this?
He wouldn’t deny it, but Ashlyn looked beautiful, too.

Her dress was tight and slim, modest, and her veil cascading down her arms and face. It was massive and taunting.

Everyone awes and flashes go off, especially the photographers for Vogue and W.

Bucky swallows hard the closer she gets to him.

Steve pats him on the shoulder.
You couldn’t look. You tried, but you had to keep blinking and looking away.

It hurt too much.
When Ashlyn finally arrives in front of Bucky, he takes her hand in his and he notices that her hands are trembling.

She smiles sweetly, tears in her eyes.

Bucky looks scared, terrified.

They say their vows, Bucky swallows hard the entire time trying to keep himself at bay and you
want to scream.

This was a mess, everything was a mess.

Before they exchanged their rings, the minister had asked if anyone had any objections.

It was dead silent, and it was a fearful moment filled with prayers and tension. But Bucky became apprehensive, his eyes drifting to look at you behind Ashlyn.

Please say something.

He wanted to you stand up for them, he wanted to you to stop this, he wanted you.

But when you said nothing, your face still cold as stone, his heart pummeled hard and he realized then and there that you didn’t want him as much as he wanted you.

His bottom lip trembles slightly, his eyes returning to Ashlyn’s.

Once the minister returns to talking, the atmosphere is calm again and they exchange their vows and rings.

Bucky tries his best to control himself as he slides the ring onto Ashlyn’s finger and hers onto his.

“I now pronounce you Mr. and Mrs. Barnes, you may kiss your bride, James.”

Both of your hearts broke together.

He leans into Ashlyn, breathing hard.

You can’t breathe and you look away.

You couldn’t look.
With a small peck to her lips, mixed with tears and a soft whimper, he kisses his wife softly.


That’s the words the guests used to describe Ashlyn and Bucky’s wedding when they first received their wedding invitation.

THE PLAZA
768 5TH AVE, NEW YORK, NY

Any girl in their right mind would be jealous of Ashlyn. Not only was she marrying the most eligible Bachelor in the city, but she was getting the wedding of every girl’s dream.

The best jazz band in the city was booked to play and the reception had been going smoothly well for everyone.

Everyone except for you.

You dried your tears as much as you could in the bathroom. After the ceremony, everything seemed to have gotten a hundred times worst and you couldn’t stand to be at the location for any longer. You had tried your best as maid of honors, doing your honorable duties, but eventually, you caved.

“It’s okay, y/n. I’m so sorry.” Nat said soothingly as she rubbed your shoulders from behind.

“It’ll be okay, I’ll be okay.” You kept repeating to yourself as you hyperventilated into your tissue.

“You’re strong,” Nat whispers. She felt pity for you because no way this situation was easy for you. She had had doubts earlier this morning, but when she saw how well behaved everything actually went on your part and after she had seen you watch the love of your life and your sister get married, she felt bad for you.

“How long do you think you can make it?”
“Not very long.”

You say pathetically, dabbing the soggy tissue under your eyes, careful to not remove too much of your makeup.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t stay here.”

He knew he was officially a married mad, but he still looks for you. After the ceremony, you had dipped and he couldn’t find you again.

He needed to speak to you, he needed to ask you all the questions that were swirling in his head.

He was officially a bad man, an awful significant other so he had no shame and admitting to himself the one reason he wanted to find you.

He had to tell you one more time that he loved you.

He chases for you at the reception but you are nowhere to be found.

You see his searching eyes from one of the seats in the corner of the banquet hall. But you don’t give into it. It was wrong.

You sat there quietly, and you thought you could watch them just for a little longer.

Just one more dance, you kept telling yourself.

You thought you could handle just ten more minutes of it but you couldn’t.

It’s when you’re getting up out of your seat, and pulling your dress up so you could walk faster when Bucky spots you over Ashlyn’s shoulder.

His eyes furrow when he realizes that you were walking to the door, you were leaving.
Steve is talking to Sam across the other side of the room when he sees you.

He excuses himself from Sam and makes a run after you.

You felt heavy and you needed to get away. You needed to escape the thumping music behind you.

Everything about that room behind you scared you and hurt you and you could no longer take any of it.

You feel more streams of tears run down your face as nagging thoughts kept following through your head.

What if I had just stayed that morning?

But he wouldn’t have left her for you.

You didn’t deserve it—love. You were worthless.

You were so sure that after just a few hours after the heat of your sex had diminished that he would have had it out of his system.

His I love you had been something that came out from being in the moment, it just had to be.

But at the same time, you couldn’t stop yourself from thinking about what if you were wrong.

You see the doorman through the glass and you’re about to make a run when something stops you, a voice.

“Y/N.”

You’re gasping as you close your eyes together, trying to gathering your composure before turning around. A sob gets stuck in your throat and your grip on your dress tightens.
He looks at you and what he sees scares him.

Everything is scaring him and he doesn’t know why.

“You’re crying.”

He says softly, simply.

You just stare at him, your face contorted in pain. You open your mouth to speak but no words come out. He waits for you to talk, but instead, you wipe your nose on the back of your hand and turn back around.

Everything was hurting you.

Bucky’s running into the lobby when suddenly he stops.

Because there is Steve standing and looking at the door where you just walked out of.

Steve doesn’t need to turn around to know who was behind him and he’s scared to know why his best friend ran after her too.

He remembers the same way Bucky cried earlier that day and he’s afraid to know any details.

Anger boils in his gut and so does heavy jealousy. He was irrational.

He spins around to face Bucky, a disappointed look in his eyes.

Bucky swallows hard as their eyes meet, the revelation of the entire scene scaring them both.
Bucky’s breathing hard from running and Steve looks away.

With a heavy stance, he walks past Bucky, purposefully hitting his shoulder on the way.

Bucky knew he had some explaining to do but he was also too preoccupied with thoughts of you to deal with his best friend right now.

His eyes dart back up towards the exit and he continues his run out. He accidentally hits the door man as he stumbles out, and mumbles a quick apology before look around for you.

He sees others outside, some even are his guests and they stare at him confused and in concern.

He doesn’t see you, and he runs his hand through his hair.

He looks one more time to his right, but this time he sees it.

He sees the bottom of your peach dress getting into a cab. He heart soars and he makes a run for you.

But it was too late. You had slammed the car door close and your cab pulled out, zooming down West 58th st.

You were gone.

Chapter End Notes

Alright so this will be a big one…and I know author’s notes are usually looked over or people don’t really pay it mind but I hope you do read this one.

First off, the kind of feedback, reaction, and reviews that I got for the last chapter…It blew me out of the water. I was not expecting it in any way shape or form. I knew you guys were enjoying this little story, but I cannot explain to you how shook and speechless I was. Just to give you a general idea, it took me two to three weeks just to start reading all of them and replying to all of you. Mainly because my head couldn’t
wrap around the generosity and just...you honestly have no idea how much I had to sit back and let it all settle in because it was not settling in.

When I first started this story it was just supposed to be a little thing to get me brewing and “stretching” for my other fic that (at the time) I was writing on the side that was supposed to be my main story. I wasn’t really expecting this one to get the reaction it did, and I don’t think it really hit me until around chapter 10 how much you guys actually enjoy this and I wasn’t really believing it. This was going to be a little thing just for fun, I don’t even have a beta for it, and I barely double read it, it wasn’t one of those pieces like the ones I’ve written in the past where I dedicate my all to it...but after I got the reaction I started to get, I started to look at this story at a different way and it scared the SHIT out of me. I went from writing it easily and quickly to rewriting chapters, being afraid to knowing what to write because I felt a lot of pressure to entertain. Staring at the blank screen of my MacBook for hours...scared out of my mind.

I know it’s silly lol and it’s just fan fiction but it really hit me around chapter 10 how well received this is and that’s when chapters started taking longer to come out.

The reason this update took so long was because of things currently going on in my life, not necessarily bad things but just a lot. I’m in film school, I’m also working a full time job in a stupid office (sometimes doing overtime to afford my dumbass bills) on the same days, there’s always weddings and family gatherings that I can’t avoid, my friends are always asking me to hang out and by the time I realize it, I only have a few paragraphs written and it’s two weeks later lol. Not to mention I haven’t taken a proper vacation in five years LOL.

So, its been a bit hard lately. I’m hoping starting in the fall things will be easier but I can’t make any promises. But I do promise that this story will not be abandoned, I just need you guys to have patience with me for a bit, especially because I want to make the story as best I can and not just bullshit it.

End of August to mid September is also a hard time for me because around 9/11, it always hits close to home for me and I get depressed, in a weird ominous way. So yeah that too.

Once again, I apologize that this took so long and I hope you don’t hate me too much for it. This chapter was awful because i still didn't have time to work on it but i kept you waiting for so long that i rushed it...and i can't do that. I don't like when i dont give things my all. this wasn't it.
New Beginnings

Chapter Summary

They're transitioning into an entirely different level of complicated. Bucky and Ashlyn are married. And it's bad.

Chapter Notes

I know this isn't a Tuesday - Thursday, but I finished this one early. : ) I'm working on a writing schedule that will make it easier for me and so far it's working great.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It had become routinary.

Like an immortal soul or a person without any malice and without non-malice intent, you’d carry on and on.

You’d wake up at five-thirty am, take a hot shower, go for a run, take another shower, get dressed for work, stop by your choice of restaurant that week, pick up cat food, feed Pebbles, clean the house, take another shower, put on your PJs, and binge-watch American Horror Story until it was too late to decide if it was actually too late to go to bed.

It took exactly one week into your emotional break down for you to realize that your life had to be
this way in order for you to succeed. It was the only way you could keep yourself distracted from the other thoughts of guilt that would lead to ultimate heartbreak.

You had left Ashlyn’s life in a way that you didn’t see yourself doing.

At first, you felt wrong for it.

She was your only sister and the only closest family member you had left. You especially thought it was wrong for leaving without any explanation. But eventually, after much-considered thought, you decided that even though it was wrong, it was the best choice. It was something you had to do.

You had to do it because it would be wrong of you to hang out with her or have some kind of association with her without her knowing the evil thing that you had done behind her back.

It didn’t sit well with you.

You also realized that if you stuck around, you would probably develop some kind of hate for her that would be beyond your control; hate made out of jealousy and envy.

You wouldn’t be able to see them together ever again, you would not bring yourself to.

You had texted her a few days after your decision, explaining to her that new opportunities had arisen in your life and that you might be seeing less of her because of it.

Though you still reassured her that you would continue to stick around if she needed anything and she reciprocated vice versa.

As much as you disliked her, as much as you didn’t like the choices she’s made, or person that she had become, at the end of the day she was always your big sister. That was a kind of bond you couldn’t break.

After she’d wished you good look and good wishes, you wondered if you should contact Bucky.
You wondered if he would tell her.

That was the first time the thought entered your mind and it scared the shit out of you. You prayed that he wouldn’t say a thing.

You thought about Steve as well. You knew he wasn’t dumb but you were thankful that he never mentioned anything both that night. But for some reason, you couldn’t get that damn look he had on his face. You couldn’t forget the way he looked at you at the wedding.

He had chased you, and he looked hurt by you.

Like he knew.

Sometimes you wonder if maybe if it had been Bucky that had run after you if you would have stayed.

But it wasn’t.

After that conclusion, you begged yourself to move on.

That was when the routines began- it kept you busy and distracted.

It had been five months and two days since you walked out of his life.

After much time, it was going a lot better than how you thought it would. You started by distracting yourself with your own life.

You even picked up extra hours at work and spent endless nights learning new recipes.

You wouldn’t admit it out loud, but you ended up watching way too much of the news. Maybe it was the adult in your trying to peak out, or maybe you were just that desperate to get away from your own issues.
You and pebbles sat on your couch as you both mocked Trump’s face on CNN, softly caressing Pebble’s little black head.

Your sat on your legs, your little throw blanket thrown over your lap and Pebbles next to your feet on the couch.

You shook your head in dismay as yet another scandal unfolded itself.

“What a dumbass, Peb.”

Meow.

You gasp.

“What do you mean you would have voted for him?”

Meow. Prrrr.

You huff.

“That’s what I thought, you little nugget.”

Everything during the day got easier as time went by, including life.

Slowly, you had cut yourself out of everyone’s lives.

You didn’t want to, but you felt like it was the best choice in such a predicament.

You didn’t answer Steve’s calls.
Bucky never even attempted to reach out to you except for one night about a week ago.

You had stared at your phone in a trance, completely puzzled at first, before tossing it on your couch.

You went back to sliding on your sneakers for your daily run.

No.

You ran your emotions away until the sweat mingled in with your tears.

You didn’t even realize it started pouring until you had to stop on the side of the road, breathing hard as you attempted to catch your breath.

You let your head fall down as your hands rested on the knees of your bent legs. You sobbed relentlessly as the thunder clashed in the skies above you.

The overwhelming guilt consumed you.

You had done good, you did everything you could to distract yourself and to not think about him.

But during the nights it was the hardest.

Simply put: you were lonely.

You missed your friends, Steve, and Nat. You wanted to make peace with Steve, you wanted to tell Nat how sorry you were for being a coward, and most importantly, you missed him.

You’d wake up the next day and repeat it all again.
It was the only thing that helped.

The beginning months of their marriage had been rocky.

It had gone in any way you would’ve expected for a man who had just cheated on his wife.

Their wedding night had been a disaster.

When they returned to their room that night, in a mix of tight hand-holding and severe lack of eye contact, Bucky had allowed Ashlyn to go into their suite before him.

While inside, he sat on the bed, back faced to her, and he had been silent as he unbuttoned his dress shirt.

Ashlyn had stared at him, even though he couldn’t see her.

The silence had been unbearable.

She felt pain-filled tears in her eyes at his cold demeanor.

He was treating her not how a husband should, especially on their wedding night.

He was treating her like something was very wrong.

She didn’t understand why.

Their ceremony had been everything she had ever dreamed of, but during the reception, he had barely stared into her eyes. He didn’t look at her during their dance, and only once or twice after that.

They made brief eye contact once when his eyes had been cold and soulless. In an instance, a part of her heart hurt badly within her chest.
What’s wrong? She had wanted to say.

She wasn’t too oblivious. She knew that months ago something had happened with him and someone else, especially after she had been gone for so long on her work trips. She knew that they had gone through a big bump in the road.

And the guilt of that had eaten her alive and she promised to put it behind her, so she continued to strive for them - to make this work. Ashlyn wasn’t sure exactly what Bucky had done, but like a silent mutual agreement, neither touched the subject any further.

For some time, she had even believed maybe she was wrong because they started doing so well again.

But their wedding day and their wedding night went anything but well.

She had gone into their bathroom and slowly taken off her jewelry and dress. Soft tears ran down her face as she took the hundreds of bobby pins out of her hair, laying them down on the sink with shaky fingers.

She had refused to look at herself in the mirror, knowing that she’d start crying right away.

She slid on a pair of matching pink silk PJ shorts and a tank top.

Neither said a word as she slid up next to him on the bed.

It didn’t surprise her that he didn’t even make love to her that night.

It took time, but eventually, he had gathered her in his arms, caressing the sides of her waist as she breathed against him.

Her lingerie was tucked away and left untouched in her suitcase.
They didn’t talk about it, and Ashlyn swallowed back heavy tears as he laid motionless without saying a word.

It took them hours to fall asleep that night.

Early that morning they took their flight out to Mykonos.

He held her hand the entire flight, occasionally giving her a small smile that never reached his pretty blue eyes.

A pair of eyes that ones use to shy but were now a pit of no emotions.

Ashlyn tried to hold back more tears as he laid his head against the window, staring down at the puffy clouds and not at her.

She regretted it- the nightly escapades -what she had done with men on her work trips, what she had sacrificed to give them.

Their future was now filled with materialist fortune because of her filthy mistakes, and she most importantly regretted what she had done with his father.

She wanted them to be okay.

She wanted him to love her the way he used to.

She sniffed slightly as her throat grew tight. She laid her head on his shoulder.

The heavyweight of her head made Bucky look down at his lap, closing his eyes tightly together.

He felt awful.
Sure, he didn’t want Ashlyn anymore, but something just didn’t sit well with him knowing what he did and Ashlyn knowing damn well that he was acting strange.

On their honeymoon, when they did talk they argued.

They had gone to a little restaurant in a bay area but barely spoke a word to each other.

The air was tense and his kisses only lingered like a tangent poison on her lips.

Every night he had woken up shaking and sweating. He always dreamed of you and your gorgeous smile.

He could hear you saying his name in his dreams, and he could feel the bones of your hips on his hands as he guided you to move above him.

Then, he would hear you tell him you loved him and he would start crying in his sleep.

They were never loud enough to wake Ashlyn up, but it was strong enough to make him stir and awaken.

They didn’t make love until the night before they flew out.

It had been spontaneous and Bucky had done it more out of anger and stress after he had seen something in a gift shop that reminded him of you.

He had whimpered against Ashlyn's mouth as he held her against the wall of their little bedroom. It was a small room, about thirty by forty feet because they had wanted the trip to be as authentic as possible.

His hands helped to wrap her legs around his waist and he grabbed her harshly, forcing his tongue down her throat.

He shoved her beneath him onto their bed as they ripped each other’s clothes off.
Next, he had taken her brutally against the mattress.

Afterward, Ashlyn had been stunned.

He had never fucked her that way before. It had been purely carnal, dirty.

She laid shaking that entire night.

He woke up again that dawn, having dreamed of you again.

He knew he needed help, he knew that the guilt was eating him alive and so was the sadness of losing you.

Four five months, their marriage has been silently suffering and grew complicated. The other wondered how long it would be before one of them said something to make or break it.

They moved into Bucky’s father’s penthouse shortly after.

It was beautiful. It wasn’t as big as Ashlyn would have expected, and Bucky also had sworn it used to be bigger when he used to live with his parents. It had an average size foyer that would lead into the living room. The wood flooring was light and contrasted beautifully with the white walls. To the right was a large window that occupied most of the wall, and to the far side was a decent sized kitchen with dark brown cabinetry. Down the hall was a guest bedroom and a powder room.

On the left side was a dining room and then to the corner glass stairs that led up to the upstairs area where there were three other bedrooms, one full bathroom and a master bathroom that connected to the master bedroom.

The mere thought that Bucky was now sleeping in the same bedroom that his now-dead parents used, made something creep up his spine - a cold and chilling feeling.

It didn’t help their marriage and it certain didn’t help with the other emotions he had felt.
They would eat dinner in silence and then they would have silent meaningless sex on their dinner table in a tangle of confusion and unspoken declarations.

It got to the point where Ashlyn had left for work every morning without even waiting for him anymore.

She would feel used and empty, the bruises on her hips nagging and mocking her for the rest of the day.

Ashlyn considered just asking Bucky what was going on.

She wanted to, but she was afraid.

It had been going on for five months.

It’s a Tuesday morning when Bucky was having breakfast by himself in the kitchen. He hears a knock on his door.

He looked up from his phone, where he had been reading today’s news.

He perks a brow, not expecting anyone to have been at his home at this time. He hadn’t even seen Steve since his wedding day, their little awkward encounter not yet having been addressed.

It was evident neither wanted to.

“Come in.” He said loudly through a mouth full of honey nut cheerios.

The big white door swung open.

Bucky was slightly scared at who the intruder was until he saw a big head of red pop out from behind the door.
A long sigh escapes his lips.

The beauty spins her head around and gives him a bright smile, closing the door behind her.

She perks a brow.

“You didn’t comb your hair today, I see.”

Bucky runs a quick hand through his hair as he swallows down the cereal.

“What gives? My house, I can do I want.” He mumbles swirling his spoon in his milk.

He peaks a teasing eye up at Nat and smirks.

“Yeah, I can see that.” She laughs.

“What’s up?”

“How are things with you and Ashlyn?”

Bucky stalls for a moment, swirling his milk one more time, before responding.

“What do you mean?”

“Nothing, I’ve just noticed that you’ve been a bit different the last few months,” Nat states simply.

Bucky sighs, looking out towards the kitchen window and out into the city.
He gives into himself and sighs.

“It’s been better, Nat. Marriage isn’t as easy as we’d hope I guess.” He mumbles the end as he takes the bowl off the island and turns around to put it in the sink.

Nat sighs, “Yeah, I can imagine. Why do you think I haven’t gotten married yet?”

Bucky chuckles, “You’re right. You’re smart.”

There’s a small smile on his face when he says it as he spins back around, but Nat senses the pleading tone in his voice and both of them are quiet.

Nat eyes him up and down before she reaches into her bag.

Bucky narrows his eyes at her.

“Just know that if there’s anything you need, you can just ask me. If you need a friend, advice, anything. If you guys need any help—”

“Thanks, but we’re fine.” He cuts off curtly but not in a rude manner.

Nat ignores him and pulls out a white card and slides it across the table.

“Please don’t take this as an insult or me trying to pry or anything like that, because it’s none of my business. But I think this might help you both.”

Bucky takes the card.

**Couple’s Therapist**

*Bruce Banner*
Bucky looks at it for a second.

He contemplates it, really contemplates it, and he finds the gesture comforting and surprisingly sweet.

He bends the edge of it as he reads the name of the doctor repeatedly—over and over again.

“Thanks.”

Bucky could care less any longer about salvaging his wedding with Ashlyn. He should’ve known it was all an evil scheme for her since the beginning, so he was doing this for his own selfish needs.

Bucky wants nothing more than to rip his hand out of hers as they sit next to each other on the dark brown leather chairs. He hopes the good doctor doesn’t see right through his phony act.

Dr. Banner was soft-spoken and wore small glasses on the peak of his nose. He gave off a sweet soul that automatically piqued Bucky’s interest. From his first firm handshake, he knew that Banner would be someone he could trust.

Bruce gave the beautiful couple a small smile before sitting down directly in front of him.

The room smelled of aloe and mint, calming Ashlyn for the first time in a long time.
“Mr. And Mrs. Barnes please sit.”

“Thanks.” Both Bucky and Ashlyn said.

Bruce takes off his glasses and eyes the couple curiously.

“So let’s start by introducing ourselves. You just got married five months ago?”

“Yes. Sir.”

He lays his glasses down on the table in front of him.

“That’s very recent. I’m surprised.”

Ashlyn gives Bucky a side glance as Bucky continues to hold steady eye contact with Banner.

“Yes, we’ve had some issues in the past.”

Bucky’s jaw ticks.

Bruce notes this.

“Well, we’re going to discuss possible issues that maybe could’ve arisen and insecurities between the both of you. This will be a long process, but I will do in my best ability to help you both. We’re going to put all our walls down for this, do you understand? No secrets from me.”

Bucky swallows while Ashlyn nods. She looks once more at him and Bucky is still facing forward, jaw tight and tense.

“You see? He can’t even look at me.”
Bucky rolls his eyes.

“Do you not love me anymore?”

Bucky doesn’t respond.

“Do you want a divorce? We’ve been married for five months. You didn’t even have sex with me on our wedding night.”

Banner raises a comical brow at this.

“I can’t leave you.”

Bucky says fiercely. The silence that follows it is tense and questioning.

“So we need to make this work,” Ashlyn says, quickly letting go of his hand.

Their first session with Banner was an hour and five minutes long. It was the most the couple had talked to each other since their wedding day, and it solved absolutely nothing.

Dr. Banner sighed as he watched them walk away, not really knowing what the hell he was going to do with them.

He was just thankful that they were done screaming so he could take his small coffee break and read a bit.

Of course, that was cut short when he heard a small knock coming from his door.

“Yes?”
Bucky walks in slowly, a mischievous look in his eyes as he slowly closing the door behind him.

Banner raises a surprised brow at him.

“James? Something wrong?”

Bucky licks his lips nervously.

“N-no sir, I just…”

Well, this was interesting, Banner had to admit. He sits down on his desk, still keeping one foot on the floor.

He notices how upset and nervous Bucky is and it’s the first sign of emotion he had shown aside from anger all day. It intrigues the doctor.

“You can tell me.”

“If I ask to see you privately, as my therapist, would what me and you talk about be confidential?”

Bruce is silent for a second as he connects the dots. He notes Bucky’s fidgeting hands and his pleading eyes.

Something was killing the poor kid.

“Is there something you don’t want Ashlyn to know?”

“Yes.” It comes out in a whimper. His tone, begging.
“James, if whatever this has to do with your marriage, you should tell your wife. You're here to fix your relationship with her, but yet you want my help to help keep something hidden from her.”

Bucky is silent as he looks away, defeated. This stuns the doctor.

“You’re not here for your marriage.” Bruce says it like it’s not questionable, “you’re here for you.”

Bucky’s stance and tone become pleading as he steps closer to Banner.

“It has more to do with my health though. Look, I know it doesn’t make sense but I need help, please. I’ll pay you twice or ever three times as much. As much as you want. Please, doctor Banner.”

Bruce didn’t like this, but for some reason, he figured that maybe if he helped Bucky with his private issue, it could eventually fix the problem he had with his wife.

Maybe.

He regrets it a bit after he says it, but he does.

“Alright, I'll help you.”

You had another episode last night and it was worse than usual.

You swore you could feel his soft hands on your hips as you moved on top of him.

You felt the whispers of his voice against your ears as he kept telling you he loved you, and it felt so real.

You were a ghost when you woke up, and your body robotic. The sun wasn’t up yet so you turned on your side lamp on your nightstand since it wasn’t too bright and wouldn’t hurt your eyes.
It took you a bit for you to come to your senses and for you to notice that you had gathered your personal belongings on your bed and that you were throwing things out.

Things that reminded you of Ashlyn. Pictures of when you were kids, T-shirts, gifts she had given you - everything.

Tears ran down your face as you skim your finger over one specific picture of you and your sister with your parents.

You sobbed and your sadness became anger as you continued to stare at her in the picture.

How dare she get the loving man, how dare he love her more than you…you were angry.

And you wanted to move on.

In a fury, you rip the pictures into tiny pieces until they’re scattered all over your bed.

Your breathing is shallow and heavy as you look at the mess you’ve made.

With a different kind of pain that you hadn’t felt in a long time, you bury your face in your hands and cry silently.

Everything around you was silent. The house was silent and so was the world outside.

You were alone.

Fifteen miles away sat Steve in his work office at Barnes Enterprises.

He had just put his two-week notice in and he couldn’t stop thinking about you.
He couldn’t stand to work for Bucky right now, not after the wedding night and not knowing anything about what was happening.

It distracted him too much and it made him upset.

He’d gotten a new job at a new company five blocks down. Steve had requested two weeks from his top guy so he didn’t even have to talk to Bucky directly to let him know he was leaving.

He was almost entirely packed except for some things that he still had to finish before he left.

It was early morning and he was finishing up one of his files when the image of you clouded his mind.

The image of you running out of his best friend’s wedding and crying haunted him.

He needed to find you.

That’s when he had stopped doing what he was doing and he pulled out his phone.

He found your name without thinking and clicked the little phone icon under your name.

Steve lets out a heavy breath as he brings his phone to his ear. With his other hand, he runs it through his hair and pulls slightly at the top.

-ring.

-ring.

Come on. Come on. He says in his head as he bounces his left leg up and down. What was he even going to say?
The ring cuts off and he sucks in a breath-

“...I’m sorry but the number you are trying to reach is no longer in service.”

His heart falls into the pit of his stomach.

In your room, you had somehow fallen asleep through all your crying, and your phone laid silent and untouched on your nightstand.

Chapter End Notes

So the Spotify playlist for Take It Back - Phase 1 is uploaded on Spotify and it's free to the public. I'll link it below and you can go check it out. Maybe give it a follow. :) 

Take It Back (Phase one) PLAYLIST --->

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7u09K7fDQuKjtqzalcagn1?si=NK-t2bCOQum5LTmSX-af3w

AGAIN. Thank you so much for your support! I love every single one of you so much. You are dear to my heart.
Is everything okay, Mr. Barnes?

Chapter Notes

Short but important chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Its been a few weeks since Bucky and Ashlyn started couple therapy and it had gone a little bit better than expected. Things started to brighten on Ashlyn's side as Bucky began to make certain changes in the way he now treated her.

With Doctor Banner helping him in opening his mind to new possibilities and helping him conclude on his own that your intentions had been anything but innocent, Bucky began to take a new look on his situation and ultimately decided to do what would be best for him and his wife.

Doctor Banner didn’t have to tell him this directly for Bucky to quickly assume this.

Going into therapy, Bucky had no belief that what you had done to him had been out of malice. He didn't think you had used him in any way, shape, or form.

Things had simply started to develop and you two had gotten into a relationship that crossed a line it wasn't supposed to. That was it.

But Bruce asked him if it made any sense for you to have suspected such bad qualities in Ashlyn even before she began to show anything negative. Bucky soon began to think that the reason he saw what he did in Ashlyn was that it had been planted in there by you.

Right?

Sure, he knew her intentions were bad with the will that she and his father had conjured up behind his back, but was she just there for his riches? He now found that hard to believe as he watched her attempt to cook them a nice dinner, cursing to herself as she burned the sautéed vegetables.

Was someone really that capable of doing something so awful?
Had it really been you this entire time that wanted his riches?

He knew very well that by the end of the night you guys had shared, he had been willing to give it all to you.

Bucky knew it was a big thing for him to assume about you, considered how much he loved you, but what if Bruce was right?

Bucky had to harbor down tears at the thought of you purposefully hurting him; of you warning him against Ashlyn, about the things she wanted when in fact it was you who wanted it all.

He wanted to deny it, he did.

But if it were true, he was hurt, because even after all you've both been through, he had fallen in love with you.

He no longer loved Ashlyn, but he loved you.

His life had become something he no longer wanted to deal with anymore.

After getting angry feelings off his chest to doctor Banner, some things had become less tense in his marriage. There was a mutual peace. There was no love, except only from Ashlyn, as it was desperate that she was trying hard to gain back Bucky’s love and trust.

Bucky's nightmares continued, and his thoughts still lingered back to you when he would be alone in his office or alone in his living room watching tv.

You were his everything. And now you were gone.
You didn't care about how much he suffered. You had lost, so you ran- as easy as that.

Bucky had spoken to Steve a couple of days ago and his face had fallen when Steve told him he was transferring to another company. Bucky had so many questions as Steve reluctantly broke the news to him, almost like he was afraid that Bucky would realize why.

It had become a silent agreement between them that neither would mention you ever again.

Bucky had simply wished him good luck and hadn't seen him since.

Before Steve's departure, Steve had taken upon himself to ask Ashlyn how things were between her and Bucky.

She had been direct with her answer and told him that things were bad at first but now was getting better.

"He didn't seem off to you on his wedding day?"

Ashlyn's nose crinkled in confusion, growing nervous.

"No, why?"

Steve bit his tongue and held back as he responded.

"Just wondering. He's seemed a little off, wasn't sure if he wasn't feeling well or something was going on between you two."

"I mean, we had our ups and downs leading up to it," She wants to shove down the feeling she gets in the pit of her stomach when Steve retells her Bucky's attitude during their wedding day, because of course, she remembers how cold he was and how they didn't even have sex that night. She breathes in heavily through her nose, "but we did seek help and we are good now."

Steve nods understanding and they continue their conversation regarding his job change for a few
more minutes before he spins to leave.

He's surprised when he feels Ashlyn's hand on his arm. Her grip is sturdy.

Steve raises a brow at her and when he sees the look on Ashlyn's face he feels pity.

Her eyes were brimmed softly with tears, if you looked too fast you wouldn't have even noticed it, and her bottom lip trembled slightly before she sucked it into her mouth.

Steve felt so awful for her because if only she knew what she didn't know. But it wasn't his place to say anything.

As much as he hated his best friend for having a deep crush on his wife's little sister, he was still his best friend. He wouldn't do him bad like that.

Ashlyn shifted from feet to feet, her eyes gazing away from Steve's pitiful look, "Look, what happened in the past, is in the past. If he ever liked," she took in a deep breath as more tears filled her eyes, "If he ever liked another woman while he was with me for that brief time I wasn't around, I have made a promise to him and myself to let it go. It's in the past," Ashlyn's eyes drift back to Steve's blue/green ones and small smile lingers on her lips, "He didn't cheat on me. He would never do that to me. He loves me."

Steve watches Ashlyn's face for a bit, to see if he sees a trace of any other emotion similar to doubt.

He sees none and he's convinced that Ashlyn believed her own words.

Steve's heart broke because clearly, Ashlyn didn't know Bucky as well as she thought she did. Maybe he didn't cheat on her physically, but emotionally he did.

"I'm glad you guys are trying to make things better." Steve smiled, though it didn't fully reach his eyes.

Ashlyn wanted to feel better after that talk, she did, but something kept continuously nagging her in the back of her head. As the door closed, she allowed her tough demeanor to dissipate and she
turned back to her desk.

With a trembling hand, she roughly rubs the tears that have now leaked out of her eyes off her face.

Wanda Maximoff watched her boss's life from afar with a questioning eye.

Working under Ashlyn, Bucky, and briefly Steve, she had taken note of their toxic dynamic. And it all seemed to have revolved around one certain girl that she had never even met yet.

Her name was Y/N.

She noticed how Steve had decided to leave right after Bucky and Ashlyn's wedding, and how Bucky's attitude had completely changed after you left. He barely smiled anymore, and word got around that he and his new wife slept in different beds.

The first time she heard your name was weeks ago when she had overheard Steve on his phone just as she was nearing his office.

"I told you, Sam. Y/N changed her number. I haven't been able to get ahold of her in weeks. I don't know where she is or why she left-" Wanda peaked an eye behind the wall just in time to see Steve running his hand through his hair as his back was turned to her, "I have to tell you something, but please don't say anything to Ashlyn or Bucky because I don't even know what is going on."

Sam must've said something on the other line because Steve didn't say anything for a few seconds and then let out another sigh.
"I know, I know, I'm not trying to start anything, but I think it has to do with why she left. At their wedding, I saw when Y/N had run out and I had chased her- yes, of course, I went after her, you know how I feel about her and she looked so upset- yes, Sam. Anyway, I had just caught up to her when I noticed she was crying. She looked at me and then turned back around and ran- no, I didn't run after her because I was shocked - and then I turn around to go back and guess who had also run after her. Yes, and on his wedding day, Sam. Something is going on, and I don't think it's as innocent as we made it out to be-

Wanda's eyes grew large at Steve's words.

"-and we saw Bucky crying that day, we knew something was wrong," Steve grips on his hair as his eyes close tightly together, "Jesus, what if- what if he did it?"

At that, Wanda had run off, knowing she had walked into a mess she now found herself part of.

The second time, it had been a mistake, a God awful mistake. Ashlyn had asked her to drop off some financial forms for her at her home. Ashlyn had told her that she wouldn't be home but that Bucky would and that he would just take it for her.

Wanda should've known something was off when she knocked three times and there was no answer. She looked at her phone and saw that it was the exact time she was told to be there.

She heard a loud bang followed by a grunt inside the home, and automatically her concern grew. She went from spectacle to worry in a heartbeat.

Something was wrong.

Was a defeated sigh, she knew she was about to do something that could potentially get her fired, but what if someone inside was very hurt?

She sighed as she got onto one knee, pulling a bobby pin out of her long hair. Her gorgeous hair fans around her face as she struggles at first to get the bobby pin inside the keyhole. After about twenty seconds she hears a soft click and she slowly turns the handle.

The first thing she notes is the dark home. The lights were off.
Next was the shuffle of legs, followed by a thump and a long whimper.

Wanda swallows her as she grips the forms tightly to her chest.

She eyes the pretty home, looking for any source of another human being.

"Hello?" She asks softly.

Bucky stiffens at the sound of a voice - a woman.

He hadn't been expecting anyone, and as far as he knew, the front door was locked.

His heart raced at the thought of someone seeing him this vulnerable, this broken.

He had been doing fine. He had been going along about his day when it replayed in his head - all of it.

And he lost it. With a harsh sob, he had fallen against his kitchen wall, using one arm to hoist him up, while the other ran from his thigh, up to his chest, and his hair.

He had pulled on it hard as he sobbed angrily. He fucking missed you so much, and he felt that he had so much to right to hate you right now, except that he didn't. He wanted you back in his life.

You fucked him, and you left him.

He had thrown items everywhere until finally he fell to his knees and cried desperately until he could no longer see.

He didn't know how long he stayed like that. Back to the wall, knees to his chest.
He wasn't even aware of reality anymore until he heard that gentle feminine with a voice held a small accent.

His eyes had shot up passed the island, and the girl who looked back at him looked heartbroken and stunned.

It was obvious to both of them that she had walked into something she wasn’t supposed to.

There sat her boss Bucky Barnes, against the wall, cheeks soaked from heavy tears, lips, and eyes blood red. His hair was disarray from pulling on it.

A fruit basket, apples, pears, a broken plate, and a spoon laid scattered on the floor not that far from him.

She swallowed harshly, expecting her boss to snap at her and tell her she was fired, but instead all he did was stare at her - exhausted.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for the support. I love you all immensely.
I got time while she got freedom.

Chapter Summary

Time jump. Shit is about to hit the fan very soon.

Chapter Notes

Fuck. Fucking. I'm looking at the 1k reviews right now and I'm just shook. The overwhelming support has just been amazing. I have no words to describe how much I love you all dearly.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Cause I got time while she got freedom

'Cause when a heart breaks no it don't break even

Three years later.

Williamsburg, Brooklyn NYC

The delicious smell of freshly brewed coffee, baked muffins, and pastries engulfed everyone’s senses as they ate contently at their little tables scattered inside the little bakery, Brooklyn’s Delights.

To everyone’s dismay, the weather had turned snowy and a lot of the people that had been walking outside had run inside the little shop for temporary cover and warmth. While doing so, many
settled for a warm snack as they took in the gorgeous display of goodies and the wonderful aroma. Each one paired with an equally warm drink as they warmed themselves up, collars pulled high, hats pulled low, and fingers tucked under long cotton sleeves.

The customers that were already inside the bakery stayed in their spot, looking out the window as the flurries turned into thicker drops of white flecks.

Darting an eye towards the entrance as it dinged once more, you ran behind the counter, shimmying your way between your friend Katie and Sammy. You never really grew as close to Sammy as you did to Katie over the years, but you two got along just fine.

The commotion around you grew louder as the snow got heavier. You thanked the heavens that your little apartment was only right down the street and that you wouldn’t have to walk too much in this white shit the tourists call a wonderland.

You wiped your hand on your already dirty green apron that laid folded around your waist, with your other hand grabbing a mug, placing it under the nozzle of the hot chocolate machine. You then pulled the lever, the loud whirring sound of the machine mixing in the with the many voices inside the little bakery.

It was obvious it was getting more hectic than you could all handle, the line now doubling in size and zig-zagging around some of the tables.

“I need one caramel mocha latte,” you threw over your shoulder to one of the girls. Next, you placed another mug on the station next to yours and poured some milk, “extra caramel.”

“One caramel mocha latte coming up!” Sammy yelled over the sound of Katie’s register closing and the hot chocolate machine, as she prepared her station and her ingredients.

“Extra caramel!” You shouted one more time.

Katie stood at the register yelling out different names and drinks and then charged the customers. It was obvious she was getting a bit overwhelmed at that she needed a hand.

Katie never really liked ringing people up, she was always best in the kitchen making the goodies that made Brooklyn’s Delight what it was.
“Y/N, I got an additional order of three hot cocoas, mediums.”

You sighed softly as you grabbed two cup caps from under the counter where you were working and put them on both of the drinks you had just finished preparing.

You signed the names appropriate on both cups before walking over to the small counter.

“I have a Sean and a Cindy?” You said loudly as your eyes scanned the crowd. You watched as people shimmied around and then two individuals passed in through the crowd to where you were standing. A tall blonde and a tall brunette took their drinks and thanked you before heading back over to the window to admire the storm.

You looked over at Katie and smiled sadly as she clenched and unclenched her hand while a customer prepared to give her another order.

“Katie, it’s okay I’ll take over the front. You can work station one.”

The thankful brown eyes she gave you were sincere.

“Thanks, Y/N.”

You let her pass you before you spun back around to take the order. A little boy stood in front of you, his hands gripping onto the counter.

A warmth filled your heart as you leaned down to rest your chin on your hand until you were eye level with him.

“And what can I get ya?”

“Hiya, I want a chocolate cookie, please.”
You frowned playfully.

“You sure that’s all you want?”

He nodded simply with a shy glance at you.

You smiled sweetly as you bent down to grab a wax tissue paper and then a cookie that was still warm. You knew that when he bit into it that the chocolate would still be melted and yummy. You put it in the little white paper bag and handed it to him.

You looked up at his mom that was standing right behind him, her hands on his tiny shoulders.

She smiled at you.

“That’s all for us. We’re just warming up a bit.” She motioned slightly with her head towards the street.

“Not a problem.” You told the nice lady the price of the cookie and she paid you.

The little boy dropped a dollar bill into the tip jar as he walked away, practically inhaling the cookie into his mouth. You thanked him enthusiastically and you smiled wide at him.

He smiled back - well as much as he could with a mouth full of a cookie crumbles.

You raised your head back up to ring up your next customer when you saw the last thing you were expecting.

Your breath seemed to have caught in your throat and a sense of fear entered your heart. You were caught off guard and not prepared in any way.

The eyes that looked back at you were questioning at first, a hint of surprise and a tickle of sadness in them.
You swallow nervously, involuntarily backing away a little from the register.

He wasn’t supposed to find you, granted none of them were.

You had escaped, you had run away.

You should have felt horrified and like you had failed, but with him standing in front of you right now the way he was, you didn’t realize how much you actually needed it.

You cursed yourself.

You should’ve known that Brooklyn wasn’t far enough if anything it was a lot closer to Manhattan than your old home. But you had grown a liking to the city and you wanted to be as close as you could afford and without having to live anywhere near them.

The part of Brooklyn that you liked was still pricey, but you had settled on a small studio with a small balcony and a bathroom that almost never had running hot water. Sometimes you would have to wait a day or two just to have enough for a long enough shower. On normal days you would have to settle for lukewarm.

It was just over fifteen hundred a month, which wasn’t bad for the area, but given the amount of space you had and the cost, after a little over a year, you were quickly regretting letting go of your own home.

But there was just something about New York that you loved, even if it was Williamsburg.

But you had taken all your extra measures you possibly could to cut that other piece of your life out - to forget him.

You had hoped that it would never find you ever again.

And yet here was a part of that old life, staring you dead in the eye.
“What would you like?” You said so simply, yet it held so much meaning. Your voice wavered and he took note of it as he raised a brow.

His mouth slowly went from a harsh line to a softer frown.

“A blueberry muffin and a small hot chocolate, please.”

That voice.

“For here or to go?”

You had forgotten that voice.

At that moment, when you’re opening the register to give him change, your face gets insanely hot. You feel like someone had just poured a bucket of hot water all over you.

It’s hot because you remember the last time he saw you and the last time you saw him. It was shameful. And you had run.

You both knew you had run away.

And yet here he was.

You turn around to give Katie the order and you give the name along with it, without having to ask him for it.

You grab another wax tissue and a small paper bag. Bending down to your knees, you grab the muffin.

Making as little eye contact as possible, you hand him his bag and then politely tell him to wait on the side until it’s finished. When you take your next customer’s order, your gaze continues to drift
over to him, only to find him already staring at you, confused.

You swallow harshly and you wonder if he was here alone or if any more of his friends came with him. Your eyes briefly go to the growing line of customers, trying to find any more family faces.

You wouldn’t be able to handle it if they did.

You take their money, give money back, and then you do the same for the next customer.

Eventually, you hear:

“One small hot chocolate for here!” Katie shouts as she spins around, followed by the name.

You clear your throat as you watch him grab the steaming porcelain white cup.

You get a feeling in your stomach as he’s spinning around and you don’t know what it means or why it happens, but you follow it. Maybe it’s the guilt, or maybe it’s because underneath it all you knew you were secretly waiting for this.

You quickly run over to Sammy, a small hand on the back of her shoulder.

“I need you to cover the register for me.”

“What?” She asks with helpless eyes.

“Just for a second. I’ll have Kev come back here to help make the drinks between clearing tables.” You say quickly as you untie the apron from around your waist.

You don’t wait for her answer as you drop the apron on one of the dirty dish gurneys in the corner by the kitchen. Quickly, you eye out the head of hair you are looking for and you run after him.

You make sure to grab the arm that isn’t holding the hot cocoa.
He turns around slightly startled until his eyes meet yours.

His brows furrow and his mouth opens slightly but no words escape them.

You take in a deep breath.

“Steve.”

You don’t give him time to respond before you’re pulling him to a more private corner, closer to where you dropped your apron.

Sammy eyes you curiously from her work station.

You narrow your eyes up at him.

“What are you doing here?”

He furrows his own eyes at you before tilting his head to the side. He looks down at the steaming mug and then back at you.

“I’m having something warm. What does it look like?”

You nod, realizing how dumb your question was. But you both knew this was more than what you meant. He notices the nervous shuffling of your legs and when you look once more behind him.

“Is it just you?”

Your voice is small and timid.

He looks at you curiously.
“Yes, it’s just me. Who else would be with me?” His voice is low, taunting.

You don’t answer as you bite the inside of your cheek.

Steve sets his cup on the small table that luckily happens to be empty, probably because it was the one closest to the kitchen and he sighs as he looks down at it.

Your heart falls as you watch his face go from serious to visibly upset.

You knew it was coming.

He licks his lips briefly before looking back down at you with those sad eyes, those eyes that knew you broke his heart.

“What happened, Y/N?”

You breathe in sharply through your nose as you cross your arms across your chest. You have to look away from his blue/green eyes for a second or you would have lost it.

It reminded you of home, of what you had left behind.

His question is agonizing, and the answer to it fogs your mind. The answer was horrid. He couldn’t know, no one could. It would die with you.

With you and…

You feel your face getting hot.

“One day you were there, and then the next,” his voice is soft as if he’s recollecting the story in his mind's eye. He sees the smallest of tears in the corner of your eye as your breathing becomes shallow, “You left.”
You take a deep breath before making direct eye contact with him.

“I had to,” you hope he doesn’t catch the fear in your eyes as you watch him bring his brows together in genuine concern, “I needed a change. It was too much for me.”

You add sharply.

“Too much for you? We were your friends. Your sister-“

“Look, Steve, I don’t want to talk about that right now.”

“I looked for you, Y/N. After you left; after you changed your number.”

“Steve, please-“

“It just confuses me because I thought we had something special. You told me you weren’t leading me on.”

Suddenly your bottom lip is trembling.

“Look, I know what I did was messed up, I just, can we meet up somewhere to talk? Somewhere preferably that isn’t my job. I live down the street.”

He looks at you for an extra beat before nodding slowly. He pulls his phone out of his back pocket.

“When do you get off tonight?”

“Nine PM. I’ll give you my number and address.”

It had started out timidly and incredibly innocent. Neither of you was really sure of what kind of friendship foundation you wanted to build on, especially without any of your other friends involved
When you hung out with Steve, it would usually be the three of you. You, Bucky, and Steve. With Bucky now out of the way, it felt different and very tense.

Neither of you really touched the subject the first few weeks, not wanting to bring up that part yet. Steve wanted the intention of finding out from you that night why you had left, but it was just something about the way you looked sitting against the window sill of your balcony, the moons’ light creating a gracious silhouette of your body that made him not want to know yet.

He wanted to take in these moments with you. For a short time, he wanted to just forget the bad and the ugly.

At the end of the day, he missed you.

You silently thanked him for this, thankful that he was able to see that even though you had run, it didn’t mean you weren’t somewhat grateful to had run into him today.

You both spent that night closed in, just talking about the last three years. You told him about how you decided to leave your old job because you felt like you wanted a different way of life, and how you sold your parent’s home and kept the money in a savings account, untouched.

You told him the story of how you found this super small studio, but yet how it taught you that simplicity also brought you happiness.

He had looked at your little pull out bed in the middle of the room, a small plant next to it. On the wall was a bike, a few books were piled on the floor next to the plant, and next to the heater coils was the tiny kitchen.

“It’s not the best, but,” Steve looked up at you, brows perked and waiting. You smiled slightly as you took his hand in yours, “Come on, let me show you.”

Steve let you drag him out of your front door. You took him to a dingy door down the hall and let it slam close behind you both. It was dark in the stairway and it smelled faintly of wet carpet. You both walked about five more flight of stairs until you opened the last door, it was metal and a little heavier than the first one.
The cold air hit the both of you and a gust blew the speckles of snow off the ground into your face.

Steve looked over at you and saw that you cared less as a bright smile came on your face. You walked forward, not caring that the snow was now up to almost your knees. You tugged on Steve’s hand until he followed your gaze to where you were looking.

There, across the river, was the city. You could see the Brooklyn Bridge, the trade center, and the Empire State Building beautifully from where they were.

Steve’s heart warmed at this. As he looked over at you, he could see that you really had tried to stay as happy as you possibly could with what you could. He was proud of you.

You both stood there for a little bit longer until the snow started to give you both the initial feeling of frostbites on your legs.

You were both walking back to your apartment when he said it.

“I don’t work for him anymore. I left around the same time you did.”

He doesn’t know why he tells you that and you don’t know what to make of it except that you’re kind of thankful that that means fewer chances of running into him.

Over time, you two became great friends again. Steve ends up spending more and more time at your place. He’d watch you as you water your little plants, as you’d wipe down your kitchen, and when he would spend some time out on your fire escape. He would look over at you and you would be petting Pebbles as you read yet another new book that year. It was obvious you were running out of places to put them and Steve made a joke about how he’d have to buy you a bookshelf.

His favorite days were when he’d help you do your laundry. You didn’t have one in your building, so you would go to the little laundromat about four blocks away. He’d help you take your clothes, he’d sit with you and tell you silly jokes as you waited for the clothes to wash, and then he’d help you fold them.

You had missed this. You were happy that you were finally able to talk to someone again.
Part of you regretted leaving them all behind so suddenly, but at the time, you knew that it was the correct thing to do.

You missed your friends dearly. You’re in the middle of folding one of your T-shirts when you feel that feeling that you had been harboring down for a while come up your throat.

You remember that time in the car when the plastic straw had been stuck in Bucky’s car. You remember his laughter, his hand on your wrist…

You didn’t realize you had started crying until Steve’s hand was on your forearm. You sniff hard and tell him you’re fine, giving him a weak smile.

He hated moments like this- when you were both reminded that the past still existed and that something had happened.

You both forget it, and he helps you take your clothes to your apartment.

You’re glad Steve never pried on why you left when you did. At least not yet.

This is why about two months into your newly built friendship with Steve again, you messaged your sister on a Sunday morning. You had remembered her number by heart ever since you were kids.

She had returned your message with a tearful phone call, where she claimed how much she loved and missed you and if you were doing alright.

Steve watched from afar on your little chair with a raised brow, curious as to how you would react to any mention of Bucky.

“We just started having holidays with his family now. Y/N, I would’ve invited you, but you just left.”

“I know, Ash. I’m sorry, things got hard. But I made a living for myself for a bit which was nice.”
“I missed you.”

You always had strong dislikes for her attitude and for what she did to…him. But you always focused on your sisterly relationship. Once again, you hated having bad blood.

“I miss you, too.” You say, your mouth in a tight line.

“As long as you’re okay.”

“Yeah, yeah I’m fine.”

“You should come to visit us. I know Buck’s been weird, but maybe you can get by this.”

“Look, Ash, I gotta go.” You say quickly at the mention of his name.

Steve looks at you curiously and you avoid his eyes as you push a strand of hair behind your ear.

You knew he was staring into your back as you distracted yourself with making some ramen. And he knew that you knew.

The last three years for Ashlyn and Bucky had been a rollercoaster of emotions and changes. Eventually, Bucky had no choice but to stay at Ashlyn’s side and take it all in the long run.

He fooling himself and being a damn idiot; it ended up going better than he had hoped.

Six months after they started speaking to doctor Banner, they had gone on a small road trip up to Vermont where they would spend a long weekend at an air BnB lake house.

The car ride there had been dead silent and tense, but for some reason, as the rain pellets began to hit the windshield and as Bucky sped of the winds-wipers, a feeling of longing hit him.
He began to remember the first few months that he and Ashlyn had dated, and he realized that no matter what she might’ve done to hurt him, that she had been doing nothing but trying to make it work ever since the wedding.

She really had, and he had been nothing but cold to her. Here she was attempting to make something out of nothing, and he was making it even more difficult.

He could divorce her, leave her behind with his money, he could say screw it and find someone new, but would it really kill him to just give it another try and see past the bad that she had done?

Banner had taught him that much the last few months if anything at all.

He had reached down for her hand, and she was momentarily stunned at first. He hadn’t touched her in so long.

He intertwined their hands together and then brought the back of her hand to his mouth, kissing her softly there.

It didn’t feel right to him, but he knew he had to make it feel right. He had to give it another chance.

He swallowed the knot in his throat as Ashlyn began to cry, her head leaning on the glass of the passenger seat window.

Bucky looked out into the dark highway as the rain continued, mixed in with her little sniffles. Her hand tightened in his.

“Ash.”

“That’s the first time you’ve touched me in five months,” she sniffs loudly now, “I am sorry, Bucky, for everything I’ve done to ever hurt you. But we need to move on from it. We need to do better, be better. We need to try.”

She pleads, tears running down her cheeks.
Bucky swallows hard as his left-hand wraps tightly around the steering wheel of his Audi.

Bucky wasn’t fully convinced that you had betrayed him, he still loved you very deeply, but he honestly didn’t see a reason anymore to try for something that was now so out of reach. When Wanda had found him in his kitchen, he had admitted to himself that even though you could’ve done all these bad things to him, that he still loved you. But he had to move on.

So, of course, he had to convince himself that you wanted nothing but bad for him and focus on that.

He had to lie to himself that maybe Ashlyn was telling the truth. Maybe they could try again.

“I can see that things between you and Ashlyn have gotten better.”

Bruce had said.

“It’s as best as things can get. You know I don’t trust her, but I no longer have a choice either.”

“You do have a choice, you don’t have to be with someone just because you feel like you need to be. I know I’m you’re marriage counselor, but do you in any way see any of this working out for the best? Forcing something out of trying to make things complicated?”

“We can try. You’ve opened my eyes to a lot of things I hadn’t seen before. Maybe Y/N was trying to steal my money, maybe she fooled me into loving her so she could take it all, maybe she did this because she has something against Ashlyn-“

“Bucky, you know very well that that’s not what I said. I told you to do what you felt was the best decision with all the facts that you have available to you, to come to your own conclusion about what you should do-”

“I loved her with all my heart and you know what she did to me-”

“I do, but-“

“She betrayed me, she did this on purpose. She’s evil. Not one text, not one phone call. She’s just gone.”
“-You and I both know you had an emotional affair, that might’ve or might’ve not blocked your judgment, but it was for you to conclude-“

“-And I’ve concluded that she tricked me. I was a fool for thinking she ever loved me. I’m a changed man now, Banner. Now I know that I can’t be as careless as I used to be.”

“I think it’s the guilt.”

“Excuse me?”

“I think the reason you are trying to find these excuses, to make something work that clearly won’t is because you know you messed up, and it’s hurting you. You’re hurting your marriage by keeping what you did a secret. Don’t you ever think that maybe it would help if you just told Ashlyn the truth-“

“There’s nothing to tell, Banner.”

“You had sex with her sister.”

Bucky sat there still as he breathed in harshly through his nose.

“You have to tell her.”

He helped Ashlyn cook at the lake house. She had been reaching up to grab something off the top shelf when he saw the little bit of skin peek out from just under her t-shirt. He had walked up behind her, hands on her waist, and kissed the side of her neck.

They stood like that for a bit as they took in what was happening.

Like a silent mutual agreement, they had decided to give it another chance.

So what if Ashlyn wanted his money too, she didn’t fuck him and leave. She wanted what he had but she also wanted him. She would never hurt him the way you had.

He had learned to become an ass, too.
By being too lenient, he had allowed himself to be fooled by you and he couldn’t allow that to happen again.

After their trip, he quickly got rid of his Honda. He would deny the feeling of heartbreak in his chest as he saw it being driven away, he would refuse to replay the memories in his head that that car held - the memories of you.

He wouldn’t admit that he missed you, that he still loved you.

He had picked up a new Audi R8 on his way home.

It was obnoxiously clean, fancy, and held no memory of you. It was empty, and it was exactly what he needed.

He had become the CEO asshole at work, too. One little slip and he was firing people left and right, even interns.

“Are you fucking kidding me? You don’t know how to do anything, do you?”

The young intern looked up at Bucky in shock, his little hand wrapped tightly around the coffee cup.

“I asked for a small coffee, three sugars, and cream. Is it really that fucking hard?”

“No, sir, I’m sorry they only had two left-“ The boy’s voice shook as he attempted to defend himself.

“I don’t give a shit. Get out of my office. And my building.”

Wanda stood in the corner as she watched it all go down, watching as the young boy left trembling in fear and embarrassment.

All over a stupid cup of coffee.

“Can you please make sure he finds his way out? I don’t want to see his face ever again.”
“Yes, sir.”

Wanda had her hand wrapped around the doorknob before she turned to look back at Bucky. He had an angry brow raised at her as he waited impatiently for her to do what he asked, and she took the courage she definitely didn’t know she had to speak up.

“Can I ask something, sir?”

“Make it quick.”

“What if I told you you weren’t the only one looking for her.”

The silence is unsettling and she watches as his entire act changes.

Bucky’s eyes narrow at her.

He feels something deep in his stomach at Wanda’s words.

“Are you trying to pry into my personal life, Maximoff?”

“No, sir-“

He can’t breathe. Don’t fall for it.

“Then get the hell out.”

She feels hot tears behind her eyelids.

“I’m just trying to help you.” She croaks before she turns around to leave.

You. Memories of you return to him in a flash. He feels that feeling again deep inside his chest.

His heart feels heavy again.
He feels it.

“Wanda, wait.”

Wanda is trying to blink away heavy tears.

“Yes, sir.” Her voice shakes.

Bucky sighs as he walks up to the door and closes it.

“Look, I know I’ve been a dick. You’re my friend. Especially after that day,” he takes a deep breath, “What do you know?” He whispers.

“I overheard Steve talking to Sam a while back,” Bucky’s face becomes concerned at this, “They know that you were acting weird on your wedding day because of her. It’s not a secret. I just don’t want this to blow up in your face later. Sooner or later it will all come out.”

It was after the incident at the laundromat and after your phone call with your sister that Steve’s mind started to clear a bit after seeing you for the first time in three years.

He’d made his way to your apartment around the time he knew your shift had ended, about a quarter to ten. He had texted you to let you know he was bringing some pizza over, that way you’d know to expect him.

He had run by the little Italian place around the corner you both learned not too long ago was pretty damn good. After living there for almost three years, you didn’t once step foot into there, not really paying it much attention. After the first time you went with Steve, it was your go-to weekly.

Steve carried the plane pie in his right hand as he made his way into your building, glad that you left it unlocked. He closed it tight behind him and made his up to your studio.

The wooden stairs up to your floor were always creaky and constantly falling apart. Steve climbed them in surprise and a little bit of fear, worrying if one of the steps would collapse beneath his feet.
He hoped the pizza would at least survive.

You had opened the door with a huge smile that lit up his heart and the both of you quickly dug into the pie as Gossip Girl played in the background. After arguing with Steve over what you both should watch, you eventually won and told him that he would love the show after he gave it chance.

Not even ten minutes in and he was already making fun of your choice of entertainment.

“Shut up! You haven’t even given it a chance yet.”

“It’s giving me weird vibes. Something about the people in this show, doesn’t it freak you out and they look exactly like our friends?”

You burst out laughing as a strip of the cheese dangled off the pizza and then off your chin as it slid down.

Steve smiled wide as he picked the dangling piece of cheese off your chin.

Your laughing dialed down as you both made eye contact.

Steve’s gaze became serious as his smile slowly fell away. He let his hand fall into his lap, wiping it on the side of his jeans.

You watched as he placed his paper plate down between his feet and then clearing his throat.

“Steve?”

He looked over at you, his face now slightly fallen as he took in your pretty features.

But he knew he couldn’t let that fog up his mind.

“Y/N, we need to talk.”
“‘bout what?”

He searched your eyes for any indication that you might’ve been bluffing, that you didn’t know what he was talking about, but he saw none.

“About what happened three years ago.”

At that moment, the atmosphere in the room completely changed. Your eyes became dark and he saw a look overcome your face that he hadn’t before, not since that one day many years ago.

He knew he had reached a nerve, but he had to know.

“Look,” he took your hand in his after you put your pizza down on the table, “I get that you wanted a change of pace, and I understand some of your motives, but I still don’t understand why you left.”

You looked down at your hands in his as you fidgeted with them.

“Y/N, I’m going to ask you, and I want you to be completely honest with me, please.”

“How can I trust you?” It came out pathetically quiet, strands of your hair falling around the sides of your face in shame.

“What do you mean? After all we’ve been through and after all, I’ve told you about how I feel, you still think I’m not worth trusting? I would never hurt you.”

“It’s not that. I mean, because of them. I know they’re your friends, and I also don’t want to hurt you.”

“No matter what is true and what isn’t, you can and you should trust me. Yes, it might hurt me deeply, but I’ll still help you get through it.”

You took a deep breath as you brushed a strand of hair behind your ear. Steve follows your move, doing the same to your hair behind your ear. Your breath catches in your throat as your eyes meet, his gaze intense.

“Did something happen between you and Bucky?”
The air between you both become thick, palpable.

You don’t respond as you continue to look down at your lap, afraid.

Steve’s throat grows dry at the sadness he feels, the mere thought of you and his best friend
together, but he needed to know.

“I know that you guys got close. I remember the way you guys interacted, and I know that he did
care about you. But that’s all I know.”

You nod, not saying yes, but agreeing to talk about this.

“Did you guys,” he takes a deep breath, “Did you kiss? Did you hook up?”

The last part comes out strained like he didn’t want to ask.

You contemplate telling him the truth but you don’t. You take a deep breath before looking up to
meet his eyes.

“We kissed before the wedding, but that’s all.”

He stares you for a second as he thinks about your answer.

“Before the wedding? Well, that sure does explain a lot. How did this happen? Do you have
feelings for him?”

“As you said, Steve, I guess we got too close. And, no, just a small crush.”

“But you literally left everything behind, because of a crush.”

“I didn’t want to destroy anything. I didn’t want to be that girl.”

“You know how I felt about you - how I still feel about you - and I told you to tell me the truth.”

“But you’re just such a sweet guy, Steve, I couldn’t do that to you.”

“So, you felt pity for me? That’s what it was?”
“No, I just wasn’t sure what was going on inside my heart, I needed to breathe. I didn’t want to leave you and then regret it.”

“You’re telling me the truth?”

You feel the pain in your heart, you want to tell Steve the full truth but you couldn’t. You couldn’t lose him, not when he was the only person you had right now.

So you lie.

“Yes.”

“Does Ashlyn know?”

You swallow hard, “What do you think?” Steve looks down, “Huh? Of course not, I would never do that to her.”

“And you don’t think Bucky will?”

You think about it for a second before taking a deep breath and removing your hands from his. You run them through your hair as you let out a long breath.

“I don’t know.”

Steve nods. He didn’t like that Bucky acted on his feelings by kissing you, but you told him it was a small crush. He understood that things like this could happen sometimes, so he decided to give you the benefit of the doubt. Though, he knew that if he saw Bucky anytime soon, that he’d punch him in the face.

What was he thinking?

Steve clears his throat once as he tries his best to now change the subject.
“I left the company around the same time you did. I didn’t like the atmosphere anymore. Something was wrong after you left.”

“Missed me that much, huh? I still can’t believe you left.”

Steve smirks.

“You know, Williamsburg works for you. It’s boujee but calm.”

You smile.

“I like it, but I might have to leave. I can’t afford it anymore.”

His brows furrow together in shame.

“I’m sorry.”

You shrug your shoulder nonchalantly.

“Eh. I guess not everyone is lucky sometimes.”

Steve thinks about like really thinks about. He knows it’s his feelings getting in the way, and because of that for only a split second he thinks it’s a bad idea, but then he sees your living condition, how you’re both watch tv with your right foot almost out the fire escape and your left foot almost out the front door.

Obviously an exaggeration, but he knew you deserved much better.

“How about you come live with me?”

You look at him for a small second with a weird smile on your face, because you thought it was a joke.
“What?” His face is serious and you shake your head in disbelief, “Steve, I couldn’t disrupt your life like that, plus what if-“

“I live on the east side, all the way across the island from the royal couple. You won’t see them. Hell, I haven’t seen either of them in three years. I’ll put a decent roof over your head, I’ll make you happier than you are right now, I’ll even maybe see if my boss can offer you something simple and we can ride the train together. It’ll be fun-“

Before you realize it, you’ve got your arms wrapped around his neck and he’s holding you tight against him.

“Thank you so much.”

“Anytime, Y/N. So is that a yes?”

“Yes, I would love to!” You hold him back tightly as you feel a long sigh escape your lungs like a huge weight had been lifted off your shoulder, “I just, I do like where I work. I’ve been there long enough where they’ve risen my salary a bit. I’d rather stay there. Plus I like the atmosphere.”

“Anything you want. We’ll make it work.”

---

*Her best days will be some of my worst*
*She finally met a man that's gonna put her first*
*While I'm wide awake she's no trouble sleeping*

Chapter End Notes

We’ll be in the Present Time in about 2 to 3 chapters.

I'm sorry for the delayed uploads lately. Its been tough. I don't wanna bore you guys with my personal life drama, but it's a mixture of bad and good. My boyfriend dumped me, but i'm also closer to finishing my first ever movie. So it's been a mixture of feelings. :) I hope you are all doing well. I wish there was ways i could talk to you guys more easier. Well, you could always message me. Again, my tumblr is Allandoflimbo if you wanna chat or need a friend!
The Black and White

Chapter Summary

Steve finally learns the truth and Ashlyn makes an announcement.

Chapter Notes

So I'm not too sure how this one turned out, so I need you guys to tell me for me.

The song used for this chapter is The Black and White by The Band Camino. It's incredibly beautiful, and I think it captures everything so beautifully in this chapter, especially the lyrics. I'll be adding it to the playlist but please give it a listen on youtube.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Call it what you need,
But don't blame yourself for me
Don't blame yourself for me

(Cause I spaced myself from you
Cause I got tired of hurting you
But now I'm hurting too)

Two years later.

“We’ve been doing so well for five years that I found it strange that nothing has broken us yet.”

“What do you mean?”
“I don’t know. Maybe I’m paranoid, maybe I’m just expecting something to blow up in our face. Like I feel like sometimes it’s hard for you to see how much I really do love you.”

Ashlyn’s heartfelt response made Bucky sigh.

“We’re in our new home, Ash. We’re literally on top of the world, and I’m on it with you. Of course, I see it.”

“Yeah?”

He smiled softly.

“Yes. We’ve worked on our issues and we’re doing so well.”

Silence. Two hands were on the back on his neck, dark eyes looking into his.

“Have you ever made love, Bucky?”

The question caught him off guard and Bucky’s heart was suddenly in his throat.

“Five years and I’ve to think I’ve never made love to you. It's always just been sex. I’ve always wanted to, though.”

“Ashlyn...”

“Baby, let me show you how much I love you.”

He wanted to rip her hands off his neck, but instead, he reached around and held them tighter against his skin.
And for the first time in a while, he thought of you. He finally admitted to himself that he still wanted you.

After much denial, he caved and thought of you as he fucked his wife.

Bucky couldn’t take it.

His heart kept shattering over and over again as he grabbed her small neck in his hands, the neck of someone that was supposed to be his wife.

He felt hot tears behind his eye lids as he sobbed into her neck, as he attempted to make love to her, knowing he was doing so miserably. Because it wasn't love, what he felt for Ashlyn was no longer love.

Just respect.

He grabbed her hair in his hands and whimpered as he tried to allow himself to feel.

He had put up a wall around his heart for so long, trying to be this horrible person he really wasn’t; all of it just to forget you.

He was supposed to love his wife by now, he had hoped to especially because of how well she had been treating him lately. She was truly trying to become better and she had.

They finally had a great life together, they had it all, but he still loved you.

And he hated you for it.

“Bucky, baby gonna cum.” Ashlyn had cried, tightening her legs around him.

He came into her with a shout.
He should’ve known everything had changed, that he had finally admitted to himself that he was not over you and that he needed to talk to Ashlyn about it. He knew this the moment he felt the disgust run up his spine at what he had just done- what he kept doing.

He wasn’t an unfaithful man.

He was prepared to finally look the barrel of the gun down the eye, but what he wasn’t prepared for was for Ashlyn to hand him a little gift back five weeks later with a bib inside along with a positive pregnancy test.

*Daddy’s little baby.*

The bib had read.

Bucky was shock. He had thought Ashlyn had been on birth control - he was not ready to be a father. And most importantly, he didn’t want to have a child with her.

He had held Ashlyn in his arms as she rejoiced.

Afterward, when she was in the kitchen drinking a glass of water, Bucky’s head had been in the toilet as he violently puked out his nerves.

He hated the situation he was in, and he hated you.

“Ash, did you buy more tomatoes like I asked?”

A muffled response came from behind the closed bedroom door down the hall as you rummaged through the refrigerator.

Looking one last time behind the bottles of random condiments - ketchup, mustard, soy sauce, and Worcestershire sauce- you cursed under your breath as you dropped a garlic glove from between your fingers.

Brodie’s little nose was sniffing at the clove at your feet before you realized it.
“Brodi, honey, stop it. This is for din-din.” You said playfully as you reached down to grab the garlic.

Brodi stuck his tongue out at you and you sighed contently.

You hadn’t even had the chance to get dressed yet, barely making it through the door before already preparing a nice dinner for you and Steve.

Giving up on finding those extra tomatoes, you turned your attention back to the cutting board in the counter.

The last two years living with Steve had been amazing. You couldn’t have asked for a better roommate.

It all started when he spoiled you by offering the largest bedroom in the apartment.

He was kind. He’d let you call dibs on the shower whenever you wanted and on Netflix. He was understanding. He would respect your boundaries on your lowest days - especially on those days- when you needed to be alone and just sulk in silence.

Steve lived in a nice three-bedroom apartment on the upper west side, right off West 88th St, and it was more than what you ever thought you deserved. But with much gratitude and kindness, you took his offer and accepted it.

His gesture never went unnoticed by you. It wasn’t every day you were offered such a comfortable living situation.

When you first moved in, you had asked him why he lived in a place with two spare rooms if he lived by himself to which he simply responded that he used to have roommates that lived with him fresh out of college but over time as they each began to make their own money and eventually got married, they got their own place.

Steve never moved out, he was able to afford it all himself anyway, so it worked out perfectly.
Barnes Enterprises has blessed him with a beautiful salary at the time.

Speaking of Barnes Enterprises, you hadn’t spoken to him in five years, but it wasn’t like you didn’t own a television or a smart phone. You knew that The Barnes were now living a happy and wealthy life somewhere across town in a prestigious penthouse somewhere on the East Side by the river.

You tried not to think about it, you tried not to think of him anymore.

It took you about five months to get used to living a somewhat upper-class life.

You still settled for doing the same things you always did, vowing to yourself to never change just because you were now more comfortable. You would take the train - the M track - every day across the said river to Brooklyn to work at the coffee shop, where you had been promoted to Manager (but truth be told you were looking for something closer now). You never thought you would be one of those New Yorkers that could wear headphones the entire commute to work on the train ride and on the walk to work. You were always worried you’d accidentally miss your stop or miss something important, like if the train derailed or if you wanted to pay extra attention to a bum that was doing crazy things on your train.

You were surprised that only a few months in, you were able to simply count the stops in your head, and let your feet drag you to where you needed to go on a will of their own. You weren’t like the tourists who waited for the walking man crossing to light up on the sign to cross the street while you blast your favorite song of that week.

You didn’t think you’d fit in so well, learn the city so well. And yet you did.

On your way home, you’d go to the little market and buy some groceries when you had the chance, and if not, you’d try to at least stop by at home first, In one arm you’d have the ingredients for the night’s dinner, and in the other holding a leash walking Steve’s Boston Terrier, Brodi.

You were more than thankful that Steve let you keep Pebbles, and even more so when Brodi and Pebbles got along fairly well.

The dynamic between the both of you had changed gradually and then suddenly.

You knew what you were getting yourself into.
The first few months living with Steve you would feel his lingering eyes on you during small nonintimate moments. Like when you were preparing breakfast, trying to flip one of the pancakes, or when you were reaching across the coffee table to grab the remote control.

Part of you felt bad for him, you knew very well how he felt about you.

It wasn’t until your sixth month living with Steve that you walked in on him tying on some nice dress shoes. You had leaned against his door frame with a small smile and crossed arms and asked where he was going dressed so nicely.

His cheeks turned a sight shade of red.

“I have a date.” He had said smugly.

It had caught you off guard at first. You could still feel his lingering gazes, his comments with underlying meaning.

Not that you were trying to play him or that you enjoyed the attention, but more so because you wanted to feel the same way back desperately. You wanted to move on, you wanted to love another man, especially a good one at that. You prayed that with time maybe it would happen.

Maybe life would give you another chance. You wanted a distraction from your late-night thoughts when you would still think of Him and how he used to make you laugh, how he used to kiss you, how you felt when you saw That dress, and how he had felt when he had made love to you in his bed that he now shared with his wife.

Steve and Sharon didn’t last long. Four months later at some ungodly hour of the night, Steve had walked in drunk into your shared apartment. It was hard to miss the way his keys had slammed onto the kitchen counter, the way he had looked into your eyes when he pleaded with you and cried asking why you just wouldn’t love him. Why you wouldn’t kiss him again, finally give it a try.

After his pleading moment, you had held him tightly to your chest as he finally told you that Sharon had dumped him.
Maybe this was your chance and maybe you should finally give it that try.

You had run your hands up the side of his face, allowing his ears to slide in between the edges of your finger tips. With slight hesitancy, you had angled his head down to yours and You kissed him.

You gave it a try- you and him.

You knew it might’ve not been the best idea, especially since he was your roommate, but part of you secretly hoped this was finally the escape you needed, the once you’ve been asking for.

You’ve been given The chance to move on, with someone else.

You wished you felt more in your shared second kiss, god how you had prayed for it. It was sweet and gentle, but it lacked that fire that you had felt when you kissed Bucky.

And that made your heart shatter.

But you pushed it down and kept trying to make it work. Six months had eventually passed and here you were.

Tonight was your turn to cook dinner and you had worked late at the coffee shop. You had called Steve on your way home asking if he could pick up some tomatoes since you were exhausted.

With another sigh, you quickly shut the refrigerator door.

“Did you find them?”

His happy and jittery voice came from behind you.

You turn around slightly after putting the freshly washed vegetables on the cutting board to see a tight towel hung low on his hips. Your cheeks turned a slight pink shade as he walked up behind you, taking your hips in his hands.
He moaned slightly as he placed a small kiss on the side of your neck.

He loved kissing you.

“So you did get them?” He chuckled slightly against your skin and the rumble made you smile.

“Of course,” he continued his trail of kisses up your neck and to the back of your ear, “Why don’t we do something else instead, though?”

It wasn’t the first time he’d asked.

When the words left his lips you felt something cold in the pit of your stomach and you tensed against him. Steve noticed this and slightly cleared his throat to prepare for the upcoming rejection that he had heard a one too many times.

He’s noticed how you’ve been together for months, and you haven’t slept with him yet, he noticed how you kept avoiding it. How you would lie and say you were too tired, just to get up and watch some tv or look on your phone. How when he would drag his hand just slightly up your thigh, how you would grab it and intertwine his fingers with yours.

He was even starting to wonder if you didn’t believe in sex before marriage.

With a deep breath, you removed his arm from around you, “I’m hungry, I should cook.”

“’We can order take out.” He murmured against your hot flesh.

You started feeling dizzy, sick to your stomach.

“Come on.” He returned his arm to your lower tummy, “We can order take out. We haven’t had Thai in a while.”

You felt the bile in your throat, the strong hammering of your heart against your rib cage.
“I don’t want Thai, Steve. I want to make home made dinner,” You remove his arm one more time, this time sharply. Your voice was borderline imploring now, “Why don’t you go get dressed and then pick something good for us to watch?”

Steve gave you a look that made you want to smack yourself across the face. You could see the look of shame in his sad puppy eyes.

Damn you.

You were glad that Brodi decided at that moment to hop on his back legs to get Steve’s attention. Steve let go of you and looked down at his little dog.

You watched in shame and guilt as Steve called Brodi to follow him to his room. He didn’t even look back at you.

One moment you had been cuddled in his lap as you watched TV. Then you felt his hands on you and you allowed it.

You needed to try. You needed to stop feeling like you didn’t deserve it.

Quickly, The air between both of you became thick and he stared up at you. You felt yourself gulp as you felt the soft skin of his palm against the side of your face.

You felt physically sick to your stomach. You felt like a whore.

You didn’t deserve his kindness, his love. What you were doing to him was killing you for the first time in five years.

Why were you doing this to him? Letting him touch or kiss something so vile?

You were your own worst enemy, but with a great cause.
You had gone head first into this, hoping that something innocent could become something great. That what you had with Bucky would be something you could eventually shove under the rug and that you would eventually work things out with Steve. That’s why you never blew off the idea.

Dating him had been exciting the first few months, but for some reason, as you now sat in his lap and with the way he was looking up at you, it finally hit you how much you did not want him.

What the hell was wrong with you? Did your heart really want to betray you that much?

The soft feeling of his lips on yours caused you to close your eyes even more tightly together.

Maybe if you just tried…

You felt him grasp the back of your neck harder, bringing you down harshly against him. The feeling of his tongue dancing around yours caused him to moan.

It wasn’t until he had flipped you over so you were laying on the couch beneath him, his lips on your neck, and his hand bringing your thigh around his back when you felt the disgust in the pit of your stomach.

You were disgusted with yourself, you were ridden with an absurd amount of guilt.

You couldn’t take it, not when you kept picturing his best friend.

Five years and you still kept hoping.

“Steve, no!”

Your shout came from somewhere inside of you the moment his fingers touched the bare of your tummy, like a natural reflex.

Steve pulled back, startled. You looked up at him with guilt, feeling dirty, as he sat back on his feet kneeling between your open legs.
You tried to close them in shame.

Steve looked confused and worried. He knew you’d kept stalling around this, but he wasn’t expecting that exclamation from you.

“Did I hurt you? I am so sorry—“

What was wrong with you? Steve was perfect, he was a gentleman, he was gorgeous, he was everything you’ve ever wanted in a man, and here you were not wanting to go through with it.

Why? Why couldn’t you just give yourself this opportunity, why did you keep pushing him away?

Damn you, you knew why.

He was cut short as your face crumbled and hot tears started leaking in your eyes.

How could you do this to him? To everyone.

You couldn’t take it anymore. At that moment, you realized you could no longer hold it in, any of it.

Steve pulled back even farther as he rose to stand up on his feet. He had a feeling in his chest that something was really wrong.

He knelt down next to your face on the couch and softly touched the side of your face.

“Stop it, Stevie.” You begged softly turning away but not necessarily pulling away.

“You’re scaring me.” He mumbled, “did I touch you wrong? Please. I’m sorry.”

You shook your head furiously from side to side.
“No, it’s not that;”

He swallowed hard, his eyes narrowing together in concern.

“Tell me.” He pleaded, hands softly touching your forehead.

“I need to tell you the truth.”

His breath hitched in his throat and he paused before asking further. “What are you talking about?”

Your bottom lip trembled as you brought it between your lips.

“I can’t do it.”

His eyes trailed over your features, considering your words delicately.

“If you’re not ready, we can wait, it’s okay. I won’t force you into anything you don’t want to do yet-”

God, why was he so damn sweet? “It’s not that- I can’t,” He looked at you confused. You looked into his eyes and repeated, “I can’t.”

His face immediately changed from sad to blank and he began to understand what you were saying.

The silence became unbearable as you felt him rip his hand off your face. His face was red as he stood up quickly on his feet.

“What are you doing to me?”

The question made a soft sob escape your throat.
“I gave you a place to live, I gave you so many good things—“

“Because you are my close friend and you have a good heart. Not because of your feelings. I know you, Stevie.”

You knew you couldn’t have said anything more heartless.

But your heart was ramming away inside of you now.

“I gave you my love,” he continues. You felt more tears in the back of your throat as you turn your face towards the back of the couch in shame, “I gave you five years of my life because you asked me to wait for you and suddenly you ‘can’t’? You told me to wait. You lied to me.”

“I didn’t lie, Stevie, I always hoped something for us.”

“No. If you did, you wouldn’t suddenly not want this.”

“I want to want this!”

“Then what the hell is the problem?”

You were silent.

He literally recoiled as he observed your face.

“It’s him, isn’t it?” Silence. “Please, for the love of God just for once tell me the truth. Is it because of him?”

There was another silent break before you nodded shortly.

You heard an intake of a sharp breath followed by an aggravated groan.

You said: "I gave you a place to live, I gave you so many good things—" Then, you added: "Because you are my close friend and you have a good heart. Not because of your feelings. I know you, Stevie’”

You knew you couldn’t have said anything more heartless.

But your heart was ramming away inside of you now.

“I gave you my love,” he continues. You felt more tears in the back of your throat as you turned your face towards the back of the couch in shame, “I gave you five years of my life because you asked me to wait for you and suddenly you ‘can’t’? You told me to wait. You lied to me.”

“I didn’t lie, Stevie, I always hoped something for us.”

“No. If you did, you wouldn’t suddenly not want this.”

“I want to want this!”

“Then what the hell is the problem?”

You were silent.

He literally recoiled as he observed your face.

“It’s him, isn’t it?” Silence. “Please, for the love of God just for once tell me the truth. Is it because of him?”

There was another silent break before you nodded shortly.

You heard an intake of a sharp breath followed by an aggravated groan.
Fear crept into your body as you slowly brought yourself to sit up, hiding your face behind your hair.

Steve just stared at you in disbelief.

“How long?” You were confused by his answer.

“For how long have you loved him?” His voice broke, “Since the wedding night? Since before you two met? Since you met me?”

“Steve-“

“No, Y/N. I should’ve known. I always had this feeling, but I thought no that wouldn’t happen. You wouldn’t lead me on for so long.”

“Steve, listen to me-“

I don’t wanna hear your little pleading voice anymore because this is serious. I wasted five years of my life on this. You wasted five years of my life pinning over something that was pointless-“

“It wasn’t pointless, would you stop with that.”

“If it wasn’t pointless then what was it? You know I was waiting for you.”

“But you went out with Shanon.”

“Because I was trying to keep myself distracted. Do you know how hard it is to wait for something, for someone that doesn’t communicate.”

“You should’ve told me.”
“Should’ve told you? You knew this! God, and you kissed him. I can’t stop picturing the two of you ever since you told me. I tried to push it down and eventually I did but it kept coming up.”

There was silence between the both of you for a few long seconds and all you could hear was your breathing.

You had to tell him the truth.

“It wasn’t just a kiss.” You whispered.

Steve raises a brow and tilts his head, not sure if he heard right.

You raised your head up slightly so you were looking him dead in the eye. Some of the strands of your messy hair stuck to the side of your face in a disarray, “It wasn’t just a kiss that night.”

You whimpered.

Steve felt many emotions at that moment. Shock, anger, jealousy.

He literally recoiled as he stepped back.

“No…” he whispered shaking his head in disbelief, “He wouldn’t- he wouldn’t do that to her, to me. You wouldn’t.” You felt his burning gaze on the side of your face as the air between the both of you became hot, "Why would you hide something like that?” His voice was broken.

“Because I wanted to make it go away, I wanted to pretend it didn’t happen!”

“Why? So you could then make a move with me? His best friend?”

“No! Because it was wrong!”

“Then why did you guys do it in the first place?”

“It just happened.”
He scoffed “Shit like that doesn’t just happen, y/n! You don’t just sleep with someone who was already in a committed relationship. Are you kidding? it was in the making. Shit I should’ve known something was up when he went missing that night. He was with you. And That’s why you ran away.”

You sniffed loudly. He still remained in the same spot still and in disbelief. Hurt.

“Why are you telling me this?” He asks pathetically, “Why now?”

“Because I can’t hold it in anymore.”

“I just want you to stop and think about what you’ve done to me, to your sister. Damnit, even that bastard that I call my best friend. He shouldn’t have done what he did, but you shouldn’t have ran out on him like that. Underneath his stubbornness and his foolish acts, he’s a good man. What you did was not right. What you did to any of us. For once, stop thinking about what you want and what others want. Damn it, I loved you. You know I always have. But this breaks my heart. Prove to me that you’re still the strongest woman I know.”

You were shocked at his change of heart. You felt guilty.

“You still love him and I have a feeling there’s a lot left unsaid between the both of you.”

You didn’t deny as you remained quiet.

Steve allowed himself to take a couple of deep breaths, now matter how much pain he was in.

“Does Ashlyn know?”

“No. And I don’t think he would tell her either.”

“She’s going to be devastated when you do.” He added quickly as he spun around to grab your phone off the coffee table.
Fear crept up your chest as you eyed him and the phone in his hand.

“What?”

“She has to know. This was so wrong. What you both did to each other, to everyone around you; it was wrong.” You watched as he blinked violently, trying to keep his tears at bay, “I can’t even stand to look at you right now.” He took a deep breath as his hand stopped over your phone, “I don’t want you here.”

“Steve, please—“

“I don’t want you here because by you staying here all you’re doing is running away. You have to tell them,” His voice was surprisingly calm as he continued, “You have to tell her especially. Because what you both did is so wrong. For the sake of all of us. And you’re just hurting me more now. I loved you. And god, I still do even after all this. Which is why I’m giving you a chance. You can come back, but only after you tell everyone about what’s really going on.”

You shook your head quickly, already imagining your sister’s reaction.

His reaction.

You gulp, “I can’t- I can’t do that.” Your blurry eyes watched as he reached out to you, your phone in his hand,

“Call her, and tell her you need a place to stay. You need to talk this out—“

“-I’m not a home wrecker, Steve. I’m not a damn mistress. I can’t destroy them.”

You both said at the same time.

Steve watched you as he took in a deep breath.

“I didn’t say you were, and I don’t know what happened between the both of you. But You can’t
keep it hidden. I’m making you go there, I’m going to help you stop running away from your past.”

“Steve.” You begged, “I can’t.”

“You will,” He looked you dead in the eye, “You’re lucky I’m not a bawling mess right now for you, because I sure like hell want to be.”

You didn’t know what to say to that as you stared at the throw pillow on the side of the couch in shame, but yet relieved all the same.

Steve finally knew the truth, and something about that felt liberating.

But he was right, you had to stop thinking about you and just you. Right now, you were hurting everyone.

Especially Steve.

“Please, it will make everything better.” He whispered.

Hesitant at first, you take your phone from his grasp. You stare at it for a few seconds longer than necessary.

“I’m sorry.”

“Stop, Y/N-“

“Listen, please.”

You begged. Finally, he met your eye and you saw a flicker of hope in them.

“I’m sorry I haven’t moved on. It has nothing to do with you, I still wanted us to try, regardless of the past.”
Steve stared at you as he took in your words. He nodded shortly.

“I believe you. Look, give her a call. Get this whole thing straightened out, and when you are ready, really ready, to come back, I’ll be here waiting for you.”

You considered his proposal.

If shit hit the fan with Ashlyn and Bucky, at least you would have someone to run back to.

“You’re a selfless man, Steve.”

He knew that by you taking this step, it would finally allow you to heal.

You were finding your sister’s number and about to call her when Steve’s hand landed on your left shoulder.

“There’s nothing wrong with loving someone. It’s how you handle it that makes the difference.”

You pondered his words, and with a deep breath, you finally made that phone call.

You were going back.

While Steve watched from afar, he raged in silence for his best friend. After everything, he still couldn’t believe Bucky had touched her in a way that he always wanted to.

He was absolutely seething.

Call it a rivalry, call it a fight
Call it what you want,
Cause I need you tonight

Chapter End Notes
Next chapter we will be in the present. :) can i hear a FINALLY???
Present time

New York City, New York

You feel your stomach drop instantly and Bucky’s nostrils flare up in anger. Your stomach is in tight knots and your heart is beating so fast you felt like you were going to pass out. Your head immediately snaps over to Ashlyn who’s looking at you with an unreadable face. You swallow nervously. Your palms were sweating and you wanted to run out of there.

This couldn’t happen, not now.

Ashlyn says bye to Steve and then walks back to the table. She pulls out her chair slowly, agonizingly slow and she sits down just as slow, her left arm on the table. She bites her lip as she takes her napkin off the table and then diligently places it over her lap. She smooths it down and then pulls herself back close to her plate.

She clears her throat and then looks at Bucky and then at you.

You were terrified and Bucky looked pissed. You were waiting for it - for the blow-up.
But it never came.

Instead, Ashlyn clears her throat and picks up her fork. You watch her like a hawk, like waiting for an atomic bomb to go off.

“Okay, so who thinks I put too much salt in this?”

You feel your left hand tighten next to you as only one thought crossed your mind:

Steve Rogers, what did you say.

It was an intense sadness in the pit of your heart.

You hadn’t felt the way you were currently feeling since the moment you saw your sister in her wedding dress the night after you slept with Bucky.

You were no longer the martyr you had tried convincing yourself that you were. You feel the heavy air between the three of you and it’s hot and tense. It’s practically palpable.

You didn’t know how much Steve had told Ashlyn, and the last time you spoke to Bucky, he had told you that no man would ever be capable of loving you.

You still feel his intense gaze on you as you manage to your best ability to pick up the fork off your plate. You aim for the little roasted potato bud, missing horribly and catching the edge of the plate.

It bothered you; that heavy gaze. You didn’t know why he was looking at you.

Unless he and Ashlyn had spoken to Steve before you walked out and he now knew the real reason you were here.

You didn’t want to be on the end receiving on requited love again, not yet anyway.
You were terrified.

The next thirty minutes continue on quietly. Failing miserably, you try to eat as much as you can with your appetite now gone, barely making a dent in the mashed potatoes.

Bucky is the exact opposite, he seems to be in his own little world as he tried to chow down as much as he could, eventually going in for seconds. You avoid his eye, and you avoid the gentle air that blows your way each time he walks past you.

It smells like vanilla.

Ashlyn shoots you occasional glances over her plate that you keep feeling on the side of your face.

You hated this.

You didn’t know exactly what it was that Steve told her, and the anticipation of not knowing made your insides burn like a low fire.

You knew that you were sent here with the intention of finally telling your sister and Bucky the truth. But the second you walked in through their door, you felt like you couldn’t do it anymore.

Your sister was so happy, you couldn’t take that away from her, and you couldn’t do that to Bucky.

At this point in your life, you no longer knew good from the bad.

After dinner, Ashlyn picks up everyone’s empty plate and it takes them to the kitchen. Bucky excuses himself and when he’s halfway down the hallway, a deep breath you didn’t even know you had been holding escapes your body.

You fold and unfold the napkin in your lap as you hear the moving of plates being put into the dishwasher behind you.
What were you even doing here? You ask yourself desperately.

You don’t want to be a home-wrecker, and as if Bucky didn’t hate you enough as it was.

You see something moving on your right side and it takes you a second to realize that your sister had pulled out a chair from the end corner and sat it right next to you.

“Hey.”

Her voice is surprisingly calm, with a hint of concern that appears almost out of character for her.

You avoid her eyes as you continue to fiddle with the napkin in your lap, it’s edges now creased from folding it continually.

You only stop when she places a hand on yours.

You didn’t like that she had done that, you didn’t like that it reminded you that she was human and what you had done to her.

You swallow down hard, your eyes drifting up hesitantly to meet hers.

Maybe now was the chance? Maybe this was life telling you this was the moment to tell your sister that you slept with her husband.

Her dark eyes were questioning and sad, her head tiled to the side like a questioning puppy.

Damn it.

“Lets talk for a bit, okay?” She asks tentatively.

What did she know?
You nod slowly, allowing her to take the napkin from you and placing it on the table.

“What’s going on?” You notice that she has lowered her voice to almost a whisper, suggesting that maybe Bucky was unaware and that it all wasn’t what you thought it was. At least, not yet.

This only slightly relieves you of your worry.

You take in her beautiful features and you swallow hard as she brushes a strand of your hair behind your ear lovingly.

It reminded you of when you were kids and you would get hurt after you fell of your break.

“I know you were having troubles back at home and it’s why you wanted to come here,” she starts cautiously, watching your face for any reactions, “sweetie, why didn’t you tell me you were living with Steve?”

Your eyes furrow just slightly, realizing this conversation was going in a different conversation than what you had initially thought.

Steve had called to tell her you were both sleeping together?

There’s a long pause before you respond. You take a deep breath in.

“I wasn’t a big deal at first. He had just offered me to move in with him. I had been living in Brooklyn.”

“Brooklyn?”

You nod, “I sold mom and dad’s home. Shortly after you married.”

Her face is a mixture of disappointment and shock. You don’t blame her, it had been your family
home since you were both babies.

“Why?”

“I wanted to be closer to the city,” You answer truthfully, “But don’t worry I saved the money from the home. I haven’t even touched it.”

Ashlyn thinks for a second, a little aggravated at your admission as she tucked a strand of hair behind her ear.

“Okay, and what about Steve?”

Your fingers return to your lap and you twist them back and forth.

“One thing led to another between me and Steve and we gave it a try. But it didn’t go how we hoped it would.”

Her eyes narrow at you.

“Did you have a fight?”

You pause, replaying the argument in your head, replaying the reason for the fight, and the reason for everything being how it was.

The reason you were here.

You look away. “Something like that.” You say softly.

Ashlyn lets out a long sigh and sits up taller. “I’m sorry. If it makes any feel any better he called asking how you were doing and how everything was going. He’s concerned about your well being.”

A long sigh leaves your lungs at her words, glad that that was why he had called. Still, you try not to roll your eyes at that statement. Steve had called to find out the status of your reveal to the golden couple. His message to Ashlyn had been far from the truth. He wasn’t calling to see if you were okay, he had been calling to see if hell had broken loose.
For some reason, it angered you that he was inserting himself into a situation that had nothing to do with him.

Because of him and his prying, everything could fall apart fast.

“He says you haven’t been answering your phone.”

You narrow your eyes at that. Your phone. You’ve barely even touched it since you got there. You had been too busy dealing with your emotional well being and the fact that you were now rooming with your sister and your one-sided lover.

He probably thought you were ignoring him.

“It’s been on my night stand. I’ll call him tonight.”

Ashlyn smiles sweetly at that.

“Good. Good,” You’re glad that conversation is over as you watch her stand up from her seat. You look up at her as she gives you a sweet smile and a soft pat on the back of your shoulder, “You know, you both deserve each other. I’ve never met two sweeter people in my entire life. You should talk to him. I’m sure everything will work out just fine.”

After that statement from your sister, you didn’t know if you wanted to go through with telling her the truth about that night anymore.

The lights of your bedroom were off except for the lamp on the side table which made the room glow with golden amber.

It was serene and calming; it was nice.

You tried to control your emotions as you took off your necklace from around your neck and placed it on the little mahogany table next to your phone.
You took in a deep breath as you eyed the little pendant. What the hell were you doing?

With a sigh, you change into your silver satin PJs, first your top and then your bottoms. You spin back to your obnoxiously big bed before looking around your room once more.

You didn’t feel right being here. This wasn’t your home. This belonged to a family that was no longer yours, and all this comfort- you didn’t deserve any of it.

Your gut ate away at you in shame.

You were undeserving.

You weren’t made to be loved. Bucky had been right and you should’ve realized this long ago. If your exes weren’t a sign already, especially Eddie, you were blind-sighted. You were going to die, never experiencing love and deep down you always knew, but you had simply hoped for the best.

Not even Steve was willing to look past your broken heart and decisions and sent you away. You had wanted to just forget.

You wanted to move on.

Your sight blurs a bit as you remember the feeling of nausea you had felt when Steve touched you.

You had felt the ghost of his fingers. It had been so long and you still never forget how it felt. The same fingers that belonged to the person that told you to fuck off not even twenty-four hours ago.

What had even become of your life?

A soft sob escapes you as you pull back the comforter of the bed.

A soft knock startles you and your breath catches in your throat.
You swallow harshly that sudden burn of the salty liquid in your throat and you spin around until you’re face to face with the door.

The room is silent and for a second you hear a car hundreds of feet below honking.

It was just *that* quiet.

Your blood runs cold and you find yourself breathing a little bit harsher by the second.

Should you open it or go back and pretend you were asleep?

You wait a few seconds, and there’s another double knock, just as softly as before.

With trembling hands and throat still sore, you drag your feet across the room. You blink away tears as much as you can. Tentatively, you go for the handle and open the door.

You’re not surprised to see Bucky on the other side, of course, you knew it was him.

He was most likely there in another attempt to kick you out or to throw another insult at you that would hurt you more than you already were.

The difference is this time he doesn’t look angry.

To start, he’s not even looking at you. His eyes are gazed down at the floor, a few strands of his hair falling on his forehead.

Still, you’re scared to open the door all the way. You are scared of *him*. If only he knew how much his vile words had hurt you.

Had he even heard you wail?
So you keep it open just enough.

You were afraid of him. You don’t think he knows just how much power he has over you.

“Yes?”

You hate how much your voice shakes and how vulnerable you sound.

“Can I come in?”

His voice is a whisper. You would barely hear it if it weren’t so quiet.

You note how dark the rest of the house is and quickly assume that Ashlyn has already fallen asleep which had given him the safe go-ahead to come to see you.

You still feel the hurt from his earlier words and you take in a deep breath as you eye him down cautiously.

“Why? So you can tell me how unworthy I am again?”

Your question startles him and his eyes shoot up to yours in disbelief. He’s gaping and you’re shocked by the emotions in his eyes that you couldn’t see before when he had been looking at the floor.

They were rimmed red and there we dark bags under them.

“I-“ his voice trembles as he gets lost in your eyes. You swallow the knot in your throat at his tone which sounded so broken, “I shouldn’t have said what I said.”

You felt your heart shatter at his half-apology. You don’t know if it’s your biased feeling towards him- he could throw you to the wolves and you would still love him - or if it was because of how since it was.
“Please, just let me in and we can talk about this.”

You try to ignore the heavy beating in your chest.

You try.

You open the door a little wider, wondering in the back of your head if you would later regret letting him in.

When he walks in, his head is still down and he’s got a hand in one of the pockets of his grey sweatpants, the other runs through his brown hair.

You close the door behind him, trying to ignore that waft of vanilla that is now very hard to do.

When you spin back around he’s already sat on your bed. He looks exhausted as he licks his bottom lip and ruffles his hair with his right hand.

“We need to talk.” He breathes.

Well, this was interesting. You were expecting another wave of insults, maybe some degrading threats.

“Then talk.” You had to maintain cautiously and stand your ground.

His nose flares at your response, noting your stubbornness.

He bites his bottom lip and looks away from you and towards the end of the bed.

You eye him suspiciously as he plays with the comforter with the hand that was in his hair. You hope he doesn’t hear how fast your heart is beating.
“Seven years,” he starts and then pauses, his voice is soft.

He looks around the room and at the lamp, he wanted to shatter.

You’re confused and you echo back his words, not catching on just yet.

“Seven years?”

He takes a moment, his hand pausing in the meantime, but then it returns to move and he continues to talk, “Seven years I’ve known you and we never had a real conversation about us.”

*About us.* You’re stunned.

He looks back up at you at his blue eyes burn you from the inside out. They were digging into you and you’ve never felt so naked.

This time he pulls something out of the pocket where his hand been ever since he walked in.

It’s a note.

“I need to know why you left that day.”

You focus your eyes onto the little paper you and your heart swells. You realize it’s the note you had left him that morning after.

You look back up and you see his crestfallen face. He wasn’t angry.

You see how he’s begging for an answer.

He tilts his head at you.

“I’ve held onto this piece of paper for five years, still not knowing why you did it.”
You swallow hard.

“I did it so you could live your life and be happy. You didn’t need my burden.”

Your little voice shakes as you recall that day and how you had sobbed on his footsteps right after. You knew it had been an awful way to say goodbye.

Your answer shocks him. Almost more than the act itself.

He’s breathless when he asks, “You think you did something great for me?”

You think about that moment in time and you think about your sister. You don’t want to say it but you do.

“Yes.”

He almost shakes his head in disbelief, eyebrows furrowing even closer together and the little paper crinkling in his hand.

“Please explain to me how that makes any sense.” His voice goes a little louder and he lowers it towards the end as he catches himself, “How was what you did okay?”

You suck in a deep breath and close your eyes tightly together. You didn’t want to talk about it. Not yet.

Your emotions were too raw right now. Anytime you were around him, your emotions were raw.

Your voice wavers as you explain yourself, “You think it was okay what we did? When you loved her, when she was your fiancé? I was doing you a favor, I was saving your marriage.”

He curses under his breath and shakes his head, “Then why did you sleep with me in the first
place?"

You look away.

*Because you love him because it felt like the right thing to do.*

You feel his eyes on you.

“Tell me everything. I need to know everything, please.” He whispers firmly through clenched teeth.

*Was this it?*

*Was this finally the moment where you could tell him the truth?*

He notices your hesitation and it bothers him. Bucky was tired of you never answering his questions and he was tired of your secrecy. He’s tired of your attitude and most of all he’s in pain.

You notice this as he stood up and walked closer until he was directly in front of you.

“I was your best friend,” his whisper is fierce and he points a finger at you, “*You were my best friend.* Two years of our friendship, two fucking years. I *trusted* you, I *cared* for you, you *cared for me*—” you could hear the waver in his voice as it slightly cracked making you swallow hard, “-I opened myself up to you, and the entire time you were just trying to take advantage of me, of my *wife,* you were trying to make up lies about her so I could hate her-“ his sudden turn in topic made you confused and you shot up your eyes until you met his and you opened your mouth to retaliate but he continued, “-You were the one always trying to get my money, *my power.* You brainwashed me into thinking you were the one that loved me and not her.”

The sudden accusation makes your blood run cold and you can’t help the anger you feel.

*The utter disrespect.*
“Are you mental?” You practically hiss.

He tilts his head once more, antagonizing.

“Am I wrong?”

You scoff. “Of course you’re wrong.” You try to keep your tone to a whisper even though you’re seething.

“Then why are you back?”

You looked around as you gestured your hands at your sides.

“Because it was the time I told you the truth. And the truth isn’t that I wanted your money or all that stuff, if I did, why would I leave, Bucky? Why would I let you marry her?”

He pauses. You had a point. He still eyed you down and he was glad he had the advantage of being a bit taller than you. It helped him feel less embarrassed.

“I don’t know, maybe you freaked and you got scared and gave up. All I know is that you had me fooled.”

“Fooled how?” You spat.

“You lied to me you made me believe that you loved me!” You’re both breathing hard and you see the smallest of tears in his blue eyes, “I loved you with all my heart,” Bucky tries to keep his voice down as much as he can aside from the anger building in his gut. “You fucked me and then left me!”

But you had thought…

Your mouth opens in confusion, and you’re shaking your head back and forth. Because. no. No. It couldn’t be.
“I left you so you could be with her, I was doing you a favor.”

One of the small salty pools that had been trickling the border of his eye finally slips out and his mouth turns into a snarl as he moves in closer to you. He couldn’t believe that was why you had left him.

“Fuck you,” it hurts just as much as the first time he had said it and you recoil in physical pain, “That’s not a favor. You don’t just sleep with someone and then leave them behind.”

You swallow and straighten yourself tall up on your two feet. With a heartbroken but yet strong stance, you look up into his sad eyes.

“Its been done to me my whole life.”

He looks at you for a few seconds, knowing damn well you were right. But at the same time, you were so wrong.

He moves in closer to you, making you take a half step back.

“But there was a difference, Y/N. I loved you. What you did to me wasn’t love.”

You wanted to tell him you hated him, that you hated him for all the things he’s ever accused you of, especially this.

You never felt so little in your life.

“You know I’m not worth it, it’s not like you were going to leave her for me, ” Your voice was small and pathetic.

Bucky is silent as he remembers his plans for that night. The plans he had for both of you.

His face turns from anger to a more contemplating look of pure…confusion? Had you really thought he had just used you?
That look that is on his face right now. You knew that look, and you take another step back, shocked.

The realization hits you and you find yourself dumbfounded by his silent revelation.

“You were going to leave her for me?” You breathe out.

No.

His voice is low and calm.

“I had a bag packed,” a tear runs down you cheek, “I had a hotel ready for us. I had a plan.”

no. no.

Another tear.

“I wanted to spend my life with you.”

You’re mouth as agape as you stare at him in disbelief and you want to break down right there and cry. But your tears are silent and you are in total shock.

You shake your head at him and yourself.

There was no way that he had wanted you instead of her.

Before you know it he had taken another step closer to you and that finger is poking your chest again.

You stare up at him, still shocked, and your vision is half blurry. They burn.
“You want to know the truth? Yes, I was with her,” For the first time, you hear the pain in his voice and not in yours. You realize the gravity of what you had done to him. The mistake you had made.

“Yes, she was my girlfriend and my fiancé, but I stopped loving her a long time ago,” you’re sure your face looks just like his right now. Wet and soaked with tears, eyes red, “Remember her birthday night? That’s the night I realized I had fallen for you,” he wiped his nose on the back of his hand almost in distaste, but then it goes back to poking you harshly, “You were standing there in your dumb little dress and your dirty little feet all over my apartment, your chipped red toenails, that damn cute little smile,” he whimpers lightly with another tilt of his head, “It wasn’t her it was always you, I was just afraid that you didn’t feel the same way. You never communicate, I thought I was going crazy. It was until a few weeks leading up to the wedding that I had this gut feeling that you did love me, too. So I had it all planned. I was going to speak to you that night, but I didn’t expect us to have sex. And I sure as hell didn’t expect you to run out on me and make me feel so used.”

Your heart hurt for him and it felt amazing all at the same time.

*What had you done?*

“I held onto hope for you. I ran after you but it was too late, you had gotten into that cab. And then for months, for months, I tried to reach out to you.”

His sadness is quickly replaced by anger once more, “Now you tell me, what’s your story? You wanted to get a good fuck out of me? You wanted me to be a damn quickie? Was that all I was good for you? Am I incapable of your damn love? Why would you do that to me? Why?”

You hadn’t realized how much you actually hurt him until now and it pained you so much.

You watched his red face and you realize that he been trying to come off angry and strong all along, but you could quickly tell it was all underlying sadness.

He was heartbroken. This entire time, because of this misconception, he had been broken just as much as you.

You were both practically on top of each other now as he lashed out at you and you wanted nothing more than to comfort him. You wanted to take those tears away.
You quickly grab the side of his face with your hand and you feel him breathing harshly against you.

“No, don’t you dare think that. You are worth so much more than that.”

“Yeah? Because I don’t feel like it.” His voice is small when he says it, “I don’t feel appreciated or loved by you, I feel used.”

You wanted to tell him how sorry you were. You shake your head back and forth as you try to comfort him with your touch.

“I was afraid,” you whisper, “I was a damn coward. I should’ve told you how I felt before you proposed to her. Maybe it would’ve been easier.”

You’re both breathing hard and the air between you is one. Bucky calms down slightly as he takes in your words.

“What would’ve been easier?”

“Us. I didn’t know you really loved me.”

You feel a right grip on the hand that is on his face. He’s holding your hand tightly.

“I told you I did. It wasn’t a lie,” He looks down your pretty face and to your red lips, “We should’ve communicated,” he looks back up at your eyes, “Answer me this, if you knew all this before you left, would you have wanted me to leave her that night?”

The smallest of smiles fill your face and you feel his grip tighten; hopeful.

“I’ve loved before I even slept with you I just didn’t realize it until it was too late. I left you because I didn’t think you would leave her for me. I thought we were too late, I couldn’t say bye to your face. I thought you also thought it would be the last time,” a curse escapes his lips, “I didn’t think you were going to leave her for me. I loved you. And I don’t want your money, I don’t want your fame, all I ever wanted was you,” a whimper leaves his mouth, “I never wanted this mess to happen, you have to understand that. I didn’t want to hurt you.”
“I deserve every awful thing you’ve said to me because that night we shared,” you give soft caress to the side of his temple as you both recall that night, “because, baby it was so good.

A sharp breath leaves his lips and Bucky’s eyes slowly close together.

This is what it had brought you both to this moment. Years of lack of communication and misunderstandings. God, what he would do if Ashlyn wasn’t right down the hallway.

A big wave of cold water hits him and his eyes open. He slowly removes your hands from his face.

“I need to think,” he whispers, “I need space. You need to realize that this is five years too late. I have a wife, I can’t just…” God, he hated it, and he knew you did too. I have a baby on the way. This is dangerous. You have no idea how much I still want you. But these circumstances we’re in is not good. I think it’s best if you leave here tomorrow morning. I think that would be the safest thing for both of us right now. I don’t think I would be able to control myself. Not with this now in the open.”

You nodded understanding and you both said your goodnights, both wondering what else would have happened within those four walls had he not been married.

That night you don’t sleep. You feel like your chest is floating and you’re on an emotional high.

At the same time, you’re also aggravated and unsatisfied.

If you had known five years ago, if only you and he had communicated better, maybe you would’ve been with him today. It would’ve saved you all this heartache and all this time apart.

But he had been right, it wasn’t best for you to stay here, especially when you both knew now how he felt about you. You had to think of Ashlyn right now.

It was wrong.

It was betrayal.
That is why you had chosen to write Steve a long text letting him know that you had spoken to Bucky - finally - and that it had been figured out but that Bucky as you to leave. You also told Steve that you both decided it was best to not say anything to Ashlyn about that night.

Steve was not happy with that, which was surprising, so you backed it up by saying that maybe one day it would be time to tell her, it just wasn’t now.

You knew he was disappointed, and that your choice held no logic. But you just couldn’t do it.

Even if Bucky didn’t love her anymore.

You didn’t know, though, that that had given Steve the impression that what went down between you and Bucky was not good, when in fact it was the exact opposite.

Bucky wanted you just as much as you wanted him.

Little did you know that Steve now had the intention of finally maybe trying to work things out with your starting from blank. Maybe now that you and Bucky had talked it out, maybe you would be ready to officially move on.

But you still didn’t understand. Why couldn’t Bucky be with you if he didn’t want to be with Ashlyn? What did you both have to lose?

You tossed and turned all night, thinking about what to do the next day, thinking if there was anything you should even say.

Eventually, sleep did take over and you were swirling in a dreamless sleep.

That next morning you caught Ashlyn before she was leaving for work. You told her you had found a new place fairly quickly and a new job and that you didn’t need her help anymore (both an obvious lie) and that you would be out of there by the evening.

She was kind of sad about that, mostly because that meant you and Steve didn’t work things out.
The truth was you had paid for a few nights at a hotel in midtown with some of the money from you parents house.

Whatever it took to get away from him as you both decided.

*You were really doing this. You were finally leaving him behind, for real this time.*

But why did it feel so wrong?

You drop a few tears when you’re packing, but they are different tears than the ones you had cried five years ago.

Before, you had cried because you thought you loved someone who didn’t love you back. Now you were crying because you knew he loved you and you didn’t want to leave him.

You wanted to be with him, you wanted to stay.

Bucky had trouble focusing at work today. He’d barely given any attention to anyone who had walked into his office, busy thinking of you the entire time. He kept replaying the conversation in his head.

Was this the right choice? Sending you away to stay with Ashlyn? But he had the prenup to think about, and his baby.

Bucky was beyond stressed at this point and he had resorted to his last hope. He had buzzed Nat in just a few minutes before the end of the day and he told her everything except for the fact that he had slept with you.

He was surprised at her lack of reaction as she sat crossed legged in front of him, popping her gum nonchalantly.

“You’re an idiot just as much as she is. If there’s something you both never did that contributed to this mess was communicate.” She had said.
"I know that. I know that now."

"Bucky, she’s loved you since the moment she met you."

His emotions are on high the entire uber ride to his apartment. He’s clouded with every thought of you.

He manages to arrive home just as you’re hauling your bags out of your temporary room. The room you had only used technically for just three days.

He closes the door lightly behind him as he sees you turn the corner and he’s caught in a trance.

You were so damn beautiful.

You’re surprised when you see him and when your eyes connect, it’s silent.

You feel a deep blush reach the top of your cheeks as you both recall your conversation from last night. It keeps playing on repeat over and over again.

[You have no idea how much I still want you.]

It had been a long time since he’s looked at you the way he was now.

He was timid and shy, utterly and completely flushed.

For a second he almost looked twenty-six again and not thirty-three.

It had been almost a decade since the moment you saw him in that Chipotle. You had just turned twenty-one and barely even knew anything about life. You thought Eddie had been the worst and best of it. Your hair was shorter, his had been a little longer.

You were both kids.
Now you were grown, and this had transpired into something neither of you would have ever guessed.

You had both fallen in love so deeply with each other and it consumed both of you.

It consumed you so much that it scared you.

But he takes that fear away from you when he gives you a soft smile.

The house was dark aside from the hallway light. Bucky knew Ashlyn wouldn’t be home for another hour. She had an important meeting today, something with Pym and Tony.

You feel your heart hammering in your chest as you roll your stuff into the kitchen towards his direction. You look away shyly, letting your hair fan around your face as you do so, knowing you were probably red as a lobster right now.

*Were you really leaving? Leaving this? Leaving him?*

You hear the soft steps of his feet and you know he’s right in front of you now.

“Hey.” You were expecting it but it still makes you shake with anticipation and nerves.

“Hi.” You whisper.

Bucky bites his lip and quickly looks out the window to the city and then down at the floor.

He looks to your bags.

“So, you found a place.” He says.
“Yeah. I’ll be fine.”

“I’m sorry you can’t stay.”

You know there’s underlying meaning to his words, you both do, and you nod shortly.

“Yeah.”

It startles you as he moves even closer, “Before you go I just wanted to say, ”

You look up slowly. He’s looking at you in a way no man ever has. What was that look? You didn’t have a name for it just yet.

“It’s always been you,” he whispers, and your heart floats once more. His eyes graze your face, “I hated you because you made me think that I had no choice.”

Your brows come together.

“You didn’t have to marry her. You don’t have to stay here.” You whisper back.

Begging.

“You shouldn’t have gotten in that cab that night. I ran after you, but by the time I saw you you were gone. I hated you for it.”

“I know that now.”

“You don’t know,” his voice drops an octave lower, “Y/N, I would’ve married you over her in a heartbeat.”

His confession makes your heart stutter and you feel another wave of tears building in your throat.

“I couldn’t marry her after you left, she made me sign a thing,” your brows furrow together again,
“you were right all along, it was some kind of prenup. I didn’t want her with that money because deep down I knew I still had faith for you and me, I wanted to keep everything I own so I could use it for our future. I was saving it for us. I didn’t want it in her hands,” he looks at you sweetly, “I wanted it for you.”

He moves up and brushes a strand of your hair behind your ear and it makes your skin run hot.

“I thought you never loved me. That it was a lie,” his eyes search yours and then his eyes are on your lips, “Do you still love me?”

The rooms is suddenly one hundred degrees hotter and you don’t know how you both have the resistance that you do right now.

“I think I’ve loved you since the second I saw you,” your voice is a rumble as you get lost in his blue orbs, “At the chipotle, when I found out that you were talking to me because of her, I always tried to maintain my distance. I always tried so hard. But that’s something you can only do for so long.”

It shocks him that you had feelings for him ever since you saw him that first time.

And that makes him pull you closer to him until your forehead is against his and you’re both sharing the same air.

He runs the pad of his finger over your cheekbone.

“Since the moment I laid my eyes on you, I knew I wouldn’t ever forget you.”

You whisper almost in pain.

He searches your eyes before closing them, licking his lips.

“We were inevitable from the start, weren’t we?”
Your eyes shut at his words.

You both stay like that with your eyes closed as you both just took this moment in.

“If only I had seen you first.”

“Don’t-“ your voice cracks, “Don’t say stuff like that, please. It doesn’t make it easier.”

He hushes you as he rubs his thumb one more time against your cheek.

“I know, I know. I’m sorry.”

With his other hand, he rubs the soft spot on the back of your head, just like he did that night five years ago.

This was too much. You didn’t know how much of this you could handle.

You don’t want to say it, but you have to. You reach behind your hand and pull his hand off your head.

“I should go.”

“Okay.” His eyes open and he pulls away from you.

You stare at him for a second longer.

“Okay.”

You look down at the floor and take a deep breath before grabbing your luggage.
“Goodbye, Bucky.” You whisper one last time before you turn around to make your way towards his door.

And when he watches you and he wants to grab you.

He wants to scream to make you stay. Because this couldn’t be it.

This couldn’t be goodbye.

He doesn’t think he would be able to handle it again. Not again.

His mouth opens but the only thing that escapes is a low squeak.

You close the door behind you and you lean against it. When you open your eyes, a small tear runs down your cheek.

This was it. That was the last chance of hope you ever had.

Your hand trembles against the handle of your suitcase and you **hate** this.

You hate leaving him every time. You hate that you have to walk away from something right.

The only thing that felt wrong about this was you walking away from it.

You were never going to feel his hands again, his touch, his arms, or his kiss.

You wanted to turn back time.

You wished that he wanted you to turn back in there just as much as you did.
Why were you doing this to each other?

You both did this. You both always ran away from this.

And with what purpose, you think.

You both always run away.

You take in a deep breath.

But not this time.

You spin around and open the door with purpose. Your head is in a swirl and your vision is blurry, breathing hard.

When you slam close the door behind you you’re only a bit surprised to see him standing there in the same position as if he was waiting for you to come back.

Expecting you.

Your gaping at him breathlessly, a few more tears trickling down your cheeks.

You see his Adam's apple bob up and down as he moves in closer to you.

His feet move on a will of their own until he’s right up against you.

He looks down at you, mouth slightly open as his tears escape too. He runs his right hand up the side of your jaw and into your hair.

He moves up closer until your chests are touching and he slowly pulls the handle of the suitcase out of your hands and intertwines it with his.
You lean up until your cheek is touching his and you hug him tightly by his neck with your other hand.

You both stand there, hugging tightly. He inhales you.

He touches your head with his fingertips and the other hand still not letting of yours.

He lets his face hover over the side of yours, allowing your cheeks to touch. It’s only after he lets his lips hover over your ear lobe that he pulls away just enough to where he can look down at you.

He doesn’t give you a second to realize what’s happening before he slams his lips down onto yours in a hungry kiss.

Everything will change.
Nothin stays the same.
And nobody here's perfect

Chapter End Notes

Songs in this chapter are Any Other Name by Thomas Newman, a cinematic piece, and In My Veins by Andrew Belle. Both had been added to the Playlist on Spotify.

I hope you guys enjoyed this one. ;)

P.S before you guys flip out on me for the cliffhanger, just know I was actually going to cut this chapter in half and was going to post the next half as its own chapter. So you’re welcome lol. I didn’t see a need to cut it, so I left it as one entire chapter.
Chapter Summary

The affair has started. SMUT. Sex. Cheating. Dirty talk - ish.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The second his lips fell onto yours, a white flame that you had hidden deep down for so long burst in your stomach and you swear you never felt such happiness like you did right then and there.

You lifted your feet until you were on your tiptoes, the adrenaline pushing your body higher and higher towards his. Your heart fluttered deliciously within your chest, a soft whimper leaving the break of your lips.

You couldn’t believe this was happening. After five years of trying to move, trying to get over something you thought you would never be able to retouch again, here you were. You couldn’t believe Bucky Barnes, the love of your life, was kissing you.

And that he loved you just as much as you loved him.

You felt the fingers of his left-hand bunch up in your hair making it a messy nest within the grip of his fist. You tilted your head slightly to the left as you felt his hot tongue trace the opening of your lips. The slick and wetness of his tongue made you burn and you let him into your equally hot
mouth with a loud groan.

The noise you made triggered something carnal in his body and he pressed up against you until your back was completely up against his front door. When he let go of your hair to wrap his hand around your right thigh, your suitcase fell with a loud bang against the wooden floor.

You both ignored it.

His other hand went to your left thigh next and he bent down slightly to lift you until both your legs were wrapped around his waist.

Your hands pulled at his hair as you kissed him aggressively, never wanting to stop.

But you both knew you had to eventually.

After about two minutes of your intense make out, your kisses turned into soft pecks mingled with sighs of contentment escaping from both of you.

Your lips trailed the end of his lips, down his jaw and to his collarbone. He held you there tenderly as he caressed the back of your head with his thumb.

He opened his eyes and sighed softly.

“What are we going to do?” He asked.

You pulled back and leaned your forehead against his. With a happy sigh, you leaned in and pecked his lips once more which he returned happily. When you pulled back he stared at you lovingly.

Your mind went blank at his question. You had both gotten this far, but where would you go from here?

“I don’t know.”
Bucky stared at you for a second more before he looked to the side, thinking.

He took a deep breath and gently let you down to the floor, but your hands don’t leave the sides of his neck.

“I don’t want you to leave anymore.” The statement makes your heart flutter one more time. His beautiful blue eyes are staring out the window into the city, and the way his jaw is clenched makes him look Godly and it takes all your willpower to not throw your hands on him one more time.

It slightly reminds you of the first time you met him. You had been captivated and you felt something special the second your eyes met. But then he had said your sister’s name and a wave of disappointment splashed over you.

This only further reminded you that this situation you were both in, no matter how much you both loved each other, it was beyond complicated.

“Where am I going to go?” You ask softly. His face turns back to you and his brows scruff together adorably, “Bucky, we can’t live together after all this happened,” you took his face in her hands, and his eyes darted from your own back down to your lips, “Not yet at least.”

He swallows hard, nodding. He raises his hand until it’s on top of yours.

“You’re right, we need to think about how we want to do this.”

“We are right for each other. And I know that us being together is the right choice. I know this now.” Your declaration makes him soar and he leans in for one more soft peck.

“But we’re both good people. We can’t keep inadvertently breaking her heart behind her back.”

You nod.

“Just tell me what you want.” You say.
“I want you with me, I want to be with you. I have to speak to Ashlyn, and if you’re completely sure you’re ready for this we can either tell her together about what happened. Then I’ll prepare for the war that will start once I tell her I want to be with you. I want to be with you. Regardless if she approves or not or how much she’ll hate me. We can’t let this go on or it’ll be even worse for all of us.”

“We can’t have an affair. It has to be done right.” You agreed.

“Sweetheart, we already slept together. This has been an affair since the moment I laid my eyes on you.”

You physically couldn’t take it anymore how much you loved this man that was underneath your fingertips. You mumble a curse under your breath as you give him a long chaste kiss. You both groan, both of his hands going to the sides of your face, pulling you in closer.

“I told Steve I would be going to a hotel.”

“Then go there. I’ll meet you there and we can talk more.” His eyes darted behind you reluctantly, “she’ll be home soon.”

As you took the elevator down to the lobby, as your foot dragged you towards the exit of his building, and as you got into your taxi, you felt light you were floating. The smallest of smiles traced your over kissed lips the entire ride to your hotel.

You had gotten Bucky’s number before leaving his apartment and it felt sinful in the best way possible. You pulled out your phone and quickly sent him a text message.

**The Concorde Hotel. I’ll send you the room number as soon as I get it.**

The text in it self made you hot for him. The situation turned you on in a way you didn’t know it could.

You weren’t sure if it made you a bad person or a bad sister, but you didn’t care anymore about what you and Bucky were doing to Ashlyn. She was your sister, and she could be sweet when she
wanted to, but the truth of the matter is that she was a lying thief. You knew something was still fishy with her and that she was hiding something. What bothered you the most was how she never worked for her relationship with Bucky.

You had spent five years falling apart while she’s been doing god knows what and still being his wife.

You were convinced to find out soon enough.

*Sounds good.*

Reading the words over and over, you threw your head back against the seat of the taxi and took a deep breath. Why were you suddenly so turned on by your affair with Bucky?

As soon as you walked out of his front door, Bucky ran his hand through his hair and let out a deep breath. He pulled on the strands as tried to control every nerve in his body. Every part of him was screaming for you.

He didn’t know how he was able to survive five years without you in his arms. He couldn’t believe he had wasted five years not touching you.

“Fuck.” He breathes out as he turns back around to go to his room to gather his belongings. He knew he had to come up with a great lie for Ashlyn as to why he had to step out for at least two hours.

You and he needed to talk about a lot of things before anything could happen officially.

It didn’t take to long for Ashlyn to arrive. He was in the middle of pulling out his spare phone charger from his sock drawer when he heard the front door close.

“Bucky?” He heard her call out a few seconds later.

He cleared his throat.
“Yeah, I’m in here.”

He rolled up the charger in his hand and then turned around to grab the wallet of his nightstand. “Hey, sorry I ran a bit late.”

He could care less. He picked his head up slightly to look at the figure at the bedroom door. He was caught off guard for a second as his eyes drifted down to Ashlyn’s tummy. She was wearing a tight black shirt that was showing off her small belly for the first time.

His child.

He swallowed hard as he felt something inside of him break again. He hadn’t even told you yet… but he hadn’t even had the time either.

Part of him was afraid to. This baby, his baby, would only make things even more difficult.

He looks back down at his wallet, making sure he wasn’t forgetting anything - some cash, his credit cards, debit card, ID, metro card, and a condom.

He clears his throat.

“I thought we weren’t going to tell her yet about the baby.”

“I wasn’t going to wait until this weekend, but then she decided to leave so suddenly. I’m thinking maybe we could tell her over dinner sometime this week. The three of us.”

Bucky’s heart hammers away in his chest.

“Oh.”

Ashlyn squints at him, “Is everything okay? Are you looking for something.”
Bucky doesn’t answer straight away as he tucks his wallet into his back pocket. He runs his right hand down his face and then walks to the direction of his bedroom door. He avoids her eyes until he’s directly in front of her.

He can’t believe that he once claimed to love this girl. Mentally, he had been a child when he met her. She had him damn fooled.

“What do you want for dinner tonight?” Ashlyn asks, reaching for his hand.

Bucky pulls away harsher than he means to before she even has a chance to hold his hands.

“Look, I have to make a stop somewhere. I should be back not too late, okay?”

After he says it, he takes a couple of seconds too long before meeting Ashlyn’s eyes.

She already staring at him with questioning eyes.

Bucky nods, walking around Ashlyn.

“Sure, yeah.”

She watches as he slides on his leather jacket and leaves.

——

Steve stared at his phone in his hands, re-reading the messages you and him exchanged last night.

I told him everything, got it off my chest. I’m not going to tell her yet, though.
You have to tell her.

I will.

Y/N.

I will, Steve. Just not tonight. I already told one person everything. That counts as something.

Okay. Yeah. You have a point. I just don’t want this to get any worst.

I want you to get better. I miss how happy you used to be. But you did the right thing today… how did he react?

I’m leaving tonight.

This one made Steve especially hopeful. Hopeful that he still had a chance with you. It’s clear that if things worked out between you and Bucky, you wouldn’t leave so suddenly.

I told Ash I found a place. But I just got a hotel for a couple of nights.

I miss you, babe.

You’re the one who kicked me out. How could you miss me?

I just wanted you to make the right choice. You’ve done the best you can for now. Come home.

I need a few days to think. I’ll be at The Concorde.

Okay.
He gulps as he reads the last text he sent that you never responded to.

_I love you._

He did. He was prepared to deal with you getting over Bucky for the next few months as he took care of you. You were still his girlfriend after all.

Right?

The doubt makes Steve pull on his hair. He gets off the couch and goes to his room. He scans around until his eye lay on the little bag in the corner.

He was sorry and he was going to bring you and your broken heart home.

It doesn’t take too long after you’ve unpacked for you to hear a soft knock on your hotel door.

You finish zipping up your suitcase and walk over to the door. You slowly open it only to be met with a beautiful set of blue orbs.

Your toes involuntarily clench at the soft carpet underneath your feet and you give him a small smile.

He returns your smile and uses his left arm to push the door open all the way, shimmying his way in.

His proximity surprises you, and by the time he has the door closed behind him, he’s got you pressed up against the closet door of the hotel room.

You should’ve been ready for it but you weren’t. He leans down and kisses you harshly, one hand on your waist and the other on the wall behind your head.

“Fuck, I wanna take you so hard,” he trails kisses down your neck and throat. He sucks on there
hard making you gasp, “Right here. On this wall.”

“Bucky,” you gasp out, hand going to the back of his head and shoving him closer to your neck.

Apart from your stronghold, he manages to pull away and kiss you deeply once more. Eventually, he pulls back.

You take that moment with clouded eyes to admire him. He looks delicious with his black T-Shirt and a leather jacket. And the smallest of scruff on his face.

“Turn around.”

His voice is a growl and it leaves you panting against his mouth. He leans forward until his head is against the wall and he’s staring down at you.

You want to retaliate and tell him that you both should wait. But all that escapes you is a whimper. You feel the grip on your waist tighten and you moan.

With a snap of his wrist his forces you around and he pushes himself up against you.

He tilts his head down until his face is in the crook of your neck and he breathes harshly against your skin. You’re breathing just as hard as your face is turned sideways, looking straight at him. Your right cheek is pressed hard up against the wall.

“Did you let him touch you?” It’s a whisper but it’s tainted with anger.

You know what he’s talking about and you swallow hard.

“Did he fuck you?”

You gasp as you feel him press even tighter up against you. You feel how hard he is under your ass.
“No. We never did that. It wasn’t like that.”

A low moan escapes Bucky as you feel his handwork behind you. If it weren’t for the sound of his belt unbuckling, you wouldn’t have known exactly what it was he was doing.

You’ve never felt like this. You never felt the rush and heat you were feeling at this exact moment. You’re practically vibrating and panting as you reach both your hands to the zipper of your own jeans.

Bucky reaches his left arm around you to wrap around your torso, and with his right, he uses it to help push your jeans down your thighs along with your underwear. He doesn’t pull it all the way down, just enough to where your ass is accessible to him.

You feel him panting once more against your neck.

“Bucky, please.” You beg breathlessly.

His response is a whimper.

When you feel him drag the head of his cock down your soaking slit your gasp out loud, “Fuck.”

He slides into you easily with a loud groan. His left around tightens around you and his right-hand grasps the wall in front of him.

His first thrust is hard and it presses your cheek even harder against the wall.

It hasn’t even begun yet and you both already don’t know how long you’ll last, already turned on beyond recognition.

He could feel you dripping down his hard dick as he fucked you up against the wall. Your legs widen slightly and he drags his left hand down to your mound. His pointer and middle finger rub furiously against your clit as he pumps himself faster into you.
You scream out your right hand reaching out for his that is on the wall. You hold his hand there as you let him take you.

“God, I’m gonna cum.” You grunt between clenched teeth as he continues to rub you. Your mouth opens again as a loud moan escapes your lips.

Bucky moans in response as he pulls his hand away from your pussy. He leans his forehead down on your shoulder and he looks at where his cock is pulled out between the opening of his pants and he grips your hips tight.

“Oh, god.” He groans, thrusting now at an impossible speed.

His pace has your screaming and you feel the hot coil in your pussy about to burst.

He feels your walls tightening around him and there are little drops of sweat on his forehead, his teeth clenching together.

“Shit,” he whimpers, “are you on the pill?”

You groan as you shake your head no. A groan between exhaustion and pleasure leaves his chest before he stops thrusting. Quickly, with trembling fingers, he reaches into the back on his pants pocket and pulls out his wallet. He takes the little foil packet and rips it open using his teeth.

He slides out of you and you both moan at the feeling. He’s shaking as he pulls back just far enough to slide the condom on. When it’s on, he slides into you one again.

This time, he pulls you even tighter against him and his hips move relentlessly against you. You feel the zipper of his jeans hitting your ass every time.

“Come on, baby.” He pleads.

Your eyes close tight together and suddenly the fire in your core bursts and you’re screaming as you clench around him in an amazing orgasm.
That feeling of your tightening around him makes him gasp and he looks back down at where he’s sliding in and out of you. A loud groan escapes his lips.

“Fucking shit.” He grunts as he cums hot spurts into you, “Fuck.”

One more whimper from him and he collapses on top of you. Both of your right hands are still clasped together.

You didn’t think life could get any better than this as you clenched one more around his cock until you felt his thumb run lovingly across the back of your hand followed by a kiss to the top of your head.

---

**The Concorde Hotel** - Lobby

“Can I help you?”

“Yeah, I was hoping you would tell me someone’s room number.”

“I’m sorry sir, but we can’t disclose that information.”

He slides something across the counter and it almost feels out of character for him to do such a thing. But you hadn’t responded to any of his text messages, especially after he told you he loved you.

The middle-aged lady takes the folder green paper.

Two hundred dollars, she counts.

She looks quickly around to make sure none of her co-workers are nearby and that no one saw the exchanged.

“No problem, sir. Just a moment.”
Chapter End Notes

So from here on out, this story will be a big emotional/sexual affair. Meaning, a lot of cheating. If you are uncomfortable with this type of genre, please refrain from reading it. Thank you guys for your awesome support. I will be responding to your reviews from the last chapter tonight. Love you guys. I apologize for any typos in advance...kinda got this one out fast.
Don’t keep driving

Chapter Summary

Steve catches Bucky and Reader in the act. Girl power ensues and they are all on Y/N's side. Lots of fluff, mentions of sex, crude topics, drama. Cheating.

Chapter Notes

First off, I just want to say how much I really do love you guys for the immense support. It still blows me away each time. Second...if you follow me on tumblr you know i've been sick for the last four weeks. I've had a lot of stuff going on healthwise, including internal bleeding in my skull and it's been not a fun ride. I was in and out of the hospital twice and its been hard. This is the first day where i'm finally feeling good again and i took advantage of it to get this out for you guys. I hope you enjoy it. and i love you so much.

Half of this city turning their lights on

like half of this city has an idea

New York City, New York

The Concorde Hotel

The sound of your heavy panting and a sinful zipper fills the hotel room.

You had expected Bucky to show up and for you two to finally talk out a plan, but you hadn’t expected that.
You’re momentarily stunned as you feel the quick chuckle of his breath on the break of your neck where your coral top was slowly sinking down your flushed shoulder.

“God, I’m so sorry. I’ve just wanted to do that for so long.”

It’s a low timber that could leave any woman weak at the knees.

His sexual confession makes you press your thighs together and a jot shoots from your core making you groan. The quick orgasm was still leaving small chills up and down your spine.

Had that really just happened?

You spin around slowly until you’re fallen up against the wall, its surface the only thing keeping you from falling to your knees. It was obvious how much he had worn you out with such minimal effort.

The smug face that haunted your dreams for seven years is looking back at you with no shame and not even a small trickle of regret. A devilish smirk peeks at the edges of his pretty rose lips. Your heart hammers away in your chest - the reality of what was happening not having yet sunk in completely. Your chest warmed up deliciously slow as your eyes glossed over, a feeling of love and simplicity consuming you.

You’ve felt something similar when you saw that wedding dress, the one you still couldn’t stop thinking about it. The way you had felt when you saw it was the same way you felt right now as you tried your best to keep your focusing on the figure standing in front of you.

Bucky notices the change of air between the both of you, just by that look in your eye, and soon his are mimicking yours; Love. Simplicity.

What was sexual lust and carnal need only a few minutes ago, had now transcended into something delicate and sweet.

A short breath escapes his chest as you hook both your pointer fingers into the loops of his jeans, pulling him forward until his face fell naturally against yours. You didn’t care that your pants and underwear were still pulled down and that you were vulnerably on full display.
You pressed your lips against his and kissed him as your life depended on it.

For the first time since yesterday, you finally allowed it all to sink in. You and Bucky were now in each other's arms, together. A couple? You weren’t sure. All that you were certain of was that Bucky Barnes was in your arms, and you were kissing him like you had wanted to for the last seven years that you’ve known him. He returns it eagerly.

It was a sweet kiss, mostly a peck until you had his bottom lip tugged in between both of yours. You pulled back with a moan.

Your soft eyes slowly flickered open and you were surprised to see him already staring down at you with so much admiration in his eyes, that when you decided to speak, you couldn’t help that it came out so breathlessly.

“And that's all I ever wanted.”

His gaze drifts down to your parted lips.

A curse escapes Bucky as he closes eyes.

With a soft nudge and a twist of his head, he allows his nose to hit the side of yours, and he just stays like that - smelling your sweet perfume and the softness of your bare hips in his hands. He squeezes you there just softly enough to leave his indents on your flesh.

Carefully, he raises his left hand to the top of your head and his eyes open again as he drags his fingers over the top of your hair.

He sighs contently as he caresses your tenderly and watching your face. He couldn’t help but just look sometimes.

You were beautiful.

He continues to trail his fingers until they are down at your arms. You whimper softly as he rubs small circles onto your forearms, the little hairs grazing the tips of his prints.
You allow him to take your hand in his.

Then, you feel it.

You swallow thickly as your eyes land on his lips.

You loved him so much. But the reminder of his commitment killed you.

You hold his hand in yours and bring it chest level. He looks down as you caress his hand, as your thumb grazes the unsettling silver band on his ring finger.

It shines brightly, and it was as if you knew that the insides were branded with her and his initials with a date. The same exact date after the night you and him made love for the first time.

His eyes follow yours when he sees the smallest of tears in the whites of your gaze.

Your name escapes his mouth, almost cautiously.

Aside from the pain and the tormented reminder that he wasn’t yours yet, a sad smile plays on your mouth, “I love these hands,” a long breath escapes your lips as your eyes flicker close again still in a post-orgasmic blaze. You bring his hands up to your lips.

You kiss him there softly, “but this ring.”

Bucky swallowed hard.

“What we just did was so wrong,” You continue softly, “What we did all those years was wrong because we are doing this to her unfaithfully. We need to tell her the truth, Bucky. This can’t keep happening while she doesn’t know. I already feel like an awful person because of it. Regardless of how we might feel about her right now.”
He licks his lips.

Bucky flips his hand around so he’s now holding yours, your fingers inside of his much larger hand. He squeezed tightly.

Your eyes meet his and he’s staring at you without batting a single eyelash.

“I know. I just couldn’t help it.” He moves up until his front is against yours and the heat radiates off his body once more. You react naturally as your body moves in just as close to his, “Do you know how many times I pictured you instead of her?” You gape at him.

Because, no. You never would’ve guessed that the last five years while you were suffering, hating yourself, feeling guilty because you couldn’t be with him and yet you wanted him, that he was picturing you the entire time.

“How many dreams I had of you riding me-” his voice drops several octaves lower and it makes your body tremble, “screaming my name?”

Your eyes bore into his now black ones and you know yours probably look the same. You swore he could feel the pulse on your wrist quicken against his fingers because you could feel it in your bloodstream.

You tilted your head at him almost comically as your body continued to hum for his, hum for a damn second round.

“Bucky.” You begged.

“Baby, you’re my perfect fit. I promise. We will tell her.”

You felt salty tears in your throat as you croaked out.

“When?”
Soon. So I can have you.

You saw the wires turning in his head until he finally spoke.

“In the next few days.”

You bit your lip and nodded. You both stood there quietly in a mix of giggles and soft moans as he helped you pull your undergarments and pants back on properly.

A soft pink-tinted the edges of his cheeks as he buttoned it up for you, almost like he didn’t just take you up against a hotel room wall.

You whisper a small thank you and after one small last peck, you let him take your hand and drag you towards your bed.

He’s the first to sit down, and once you do so yourself, he’s got his hands already on you again. Although this time his hand is in your hair and he’s just holding your head tenderly.

“We have to talk about everything,” he runs that damn thumb over the back of your head, “I especially need you to talk to me about you and Steve. Before I can officially go through with any of this, I need to know the extent of it.”

You let your head fall shamefully as you tried to rack your brain for the correct words to start this conversation right.

You straighten yourself up, taking his hands in your own hand.

“Look-“

A knock on the door startles the both of you and your heads both shoot up simultaneously towards the direction of the hotel door.

Both of your stares linger on it.
It comes in waves, first, you’re both shocked, then afraid, and then confused.

Bucky looks over at you and he sees a look on your face that he notices is probably the same way his own is right now.

He drops his voice down to just below a whisper.

“Are you expecting someone?”

Your eyes stay on the door for a second longer before you shake your head.

“No, no one knows I’m here.”

“Are you sure? Just me?”

Your eyes squint together as you try to think. An unsettling feeling settles in your gut as you think about the only possible person it could be.

“I mean, I told Steve but I never gave him the room number.”

Bucky curses as a hand runs down the bridge of his nose.

You continue to shake your head, more to yourself than anything.

“He wouldn’t bribe someone downstairs would he?”

Bucky sighs.

“This is Steve we’re talking about. He’s been crazy about you since the moment he met you, plus I hired him for a reason. I wouldn’t put it past him.”

You shake your head in denial, once more. Your face quickly pales.

“Or, it could be housekeeping.” You insist.
Another persistent knock rings out throughout the room.

Bucky quickly gets up and your heart jumps from zero to one thousand as you quickly seek out his hand to make him sit back down.

Bucky notices your worried stance and the fear in your eyes and he lets out a small sigh.

He bends down and takes your face in his hands, “Look, I’ll go hide in the bathroom and you go see who it is.”

You bit your bottom lip worriedly and then finally nodded. Giving his hand one last squeeze, you watched him go into the bathroom, shutting it closed behind him.

You wait for it to click.

Taking a deep breath, you make your way towards your door. You weren’t sure what to expect, and that scared you.

When you open it, your worst suspicions are confirmed.

His blue-green eyes softened as his eyes lay on your worried ones. You physically see the weight lift off his shoulder as an exasperated sigh leaves his lungs as he takes a step towards you.

He wraps his left arm around your waist and his right one goes to the back of your head as he hugs you closer towards him.

You never felt so uncomfortable, so guilty.

You allow your hands to linger on his back for just a second, its dark grey texture digging into the crooks of your fingers.

You feel him inhale your scent and that does it for you.
“Steve.”

His hold tightens around you. He walks you both in all the way and shuts the door close behind him. When he pulls back he takes your face into both his hands and he searches your face for anything out of the ordinary. Almost as if you were physically hurt.

“I was so worried. You haven’t been answering your phone.”

He leans into for a kiss but you quickly pull away. It ends up being a small peck as only the tips of his lips catch yours.

Your hand goes to his chest as you stare up at him confused.

“How’d you get my room number?”

“I asked at the front desk.” He shrugs, “I was goddamn worried about you.”

He plays with your strand of hair on your shoulder, twirling it around his finger. The other drags across your face and then catches your hand again.

“Why are you here?”

He stares into your eyes, taken aback.

You hadn’t meant for it to come out so sharply.

“What do you mean why am I here? I’m your boyfriend.”

There’s a long silence that borderlines awkward as your eyebrows lift and your eyes look around nervously.

Steve gives you a confused look. He watches the flicker of different emotions across your face. Finally, you speak out and his hand tightens on yours.
“Steve, you kicked me out.” You whisper painfully, “What makes you think this is still a thing, after what happened?”

It was like you physically slapped him. He literally recoils and you swallow hard at what you were doing to him.

So much guilt.

Steve takes in a deep breath as he shakes his head.

“I told you to go and make things right, and then for you to come back because I would be waiting for you. You told me you still wanted to try. I gave you a chance to make things easier for you, for us,” he moves in closer, eyes on your lips, “I didn’t break up with you.”

You try to make sense of what he’s saying as you back away from him.

“I told you that the reason I gave us a try is that I wanted to regardless of the past. But then that night—“

“That night we couldn’t have sex. And that’s okay. It’s because you hadn’t moved on. But now you can.”

It was like you were punched in the heart. You watched his hopeful eyes and your heart broke in pity for him. He thought that you telling Bucky how you felt would mean he could finally have you.

He takes your other hand in his and pulls you in until you are right up against him. You look away quickly trying to avoid looking at him as much as you could. You could feel his breath on your face and you could feel his heavy glare on you.

Your eyes flicker only briefly towards the bathroom door, where your lover was.

His best friend.
“Is that why you’ve been leaving me on read? Because you thought I didn’t want to be with you anymore?”

“Steve…”

“I love you.”

He says it so quickly and so passionately that for a second you forget about pushing him away. Your heart hadn’t prepared you for his declaration and you’re staring up at him with hot tears in your eyes.

No, this was your fault. You led him on. And now he loved you.

What had you done?

“So much.” He grits out.

You were hurting him and it was hurting him. You physically recoiled just as he had done earlier as you tried to pull away from him.

Sharply, you turn your head to look away.

“Steve.”

Bucky was leaning against the sink as he heard everything. The position you were both currently in was a tough one and his own best friend just told you he loved you, and god knows what else he was doing to you.

Was he trying to kiss you?

Steve’s grip tightened on your hands as rejection aimed a tough blow into his stomach. He felt the pain.

“Please,” and it had him in a vice grip, “Say it back, please.”
God. What had you *done*?

You sniffed loudly as you continued to try and pull away from him. Your eyes flickering once more towards the bathroom door, as if you were involuntary asking for help. It was a subconscious action.

“Why do you keep looking over there?”

You stilled as your eyes slowly drifted back to his. His brows were furrowed as he darted his gaze from the bathroom door and then back to you.

He took your long silence as an answer in it itself. He stood up a bit taller and looked down at your now pale face, like a true woman caught red handed.

He took a step back from you and quickly dropped your hand. You tried to open your mouth to answer but nothing came out.

“Is someone here?” He only allowed you a few seconds to answer - to which you failed miserably - before making his way towards the bathroom door in a heavy stance.

“Steve-“ you tried to stop him, but it was too late.

He quickly swung open the door only for the both of you to be met with a pair of blues that looked nothing short of fearful.

You felt your heart’s pace quicken inside of your chest as you stared at the two men.

Steve’s hand was still tight around the doorknob as his breath quickened at the sight in front of him.

You watched as Bucky’s Adam apple bobbed heavily and as he took a step back. His eyes dart towards yours briefly.
“What the hell are you doing here?” Steve asks. The silence is long - too long. Steve takes another step towards Bucky which makes him flinch slightly, “I mean, I’m sure there’s a good reason as to why you’re in my girlfriend’s hotel room.”

Bucky took a deep breath at Steve’s choice of words.

“Steve-“ Bucky starts.

Steve looks back at you, “because she told me that things didn’t work out.”

You gulp nervously.

“You didn’t let me ex-“ you try.

“Let me explain, man-“ Bucky says at the same time.

“Don’t you fucking dare!” It’s a roar.

Steve’s exclamation startles both of you. Steve’s red now and he’s towering over Bucky, making Bucky bend against the bathroom sink almost abnormally.

“You knew- you knew how I felt about her,” Bucky’s collar is now in Steve’s fists as he’s got Bucky’s face only a few inches away from his, “You knew I liked her and you still went on and chased her. Even after I told you to stay away.”

You were worried about two of the most important people in your life, but Steve’s statement sparks a deep interest in you.

What did he mean he told Bucky to stay away?

Bucky’s hands were wrapped tightly around Steves’ as he tried to pry him off of him.

“Get off of me, Steve.” Bucky was repeating calmly as Steve confined on.
“How could you? And the entire time you had your own damn girlfriend,” Steve suddenly shoves Bucky towards the side making him topple over against the wall, the sound of his head hitting against it echoing painfully around the room.

This stuns you and you wonder if Bucky is hurt, “Steve, stop!”

Steve stares down at Bucky, breathing hard.

“She told me what you did. And on your own wedding day.”

Bucky’s eyes flicker up from the floor to meet yours and you see the question in them. You hadn’t told him yet that Steve knew. One more person out of the two of you knew about that night.

Steve felt the pain in his heart and the betrayal in his blood.

“Why?!” Steve roared. It looked like he was going to pounce on Bucky again and you and him both flinch.

A soft whimper escapes Bucky.

“Please stop!” You begged.

You hated watching him in pain.

Steve’s eyes snap up to yours.

“You’re defending him? Y/N, baby, look at what he did to you for so many years of your life. How much time he wasted. And then you tell him you still love him and he sends you away to some damn hotel? Doesn’t the fact that he hasn’t even told his own wife about this make you concerned? I’m protecting you. Someone who actually loves you.” Steve looks between the both of you, “This isn’t loving. This is some messed up situation that clouded your mind just because he slept with you. Please don’t this just because of one night. If he really loved you he would’ve told you back
when you were still twenty-two.”

“You don’t know anything.” Bucky spats as he manages to lift himself onto one arm on the floor.

“Fuck. I love her.” Steve tried ones more time, pointing a daunting finger down at Bucky, “You knew!”

“I know you fucking did!” Bucky hollers, “I know, man, and I’m sorry. I know you liked her, and I rooted for you, I did, but then I fell in love with her. I tried to stop, but I couldn’t. And I’m sorry. I’m sorry this entire mess happened.”

Steve took a deep breath as he started between both of you, allowing Bucky to finally stand up on his two feet.

Steve’s eyes finally landed on Bucky and Bucky swallowed thickly, wondering if he should prepare for another blow.

Maybe even a punch to the face.

But Steve’s voice is surprisingly calm.

“I used to think you were a good guy. You were my best friend.”

“I’m still all those things, just let me explain it to you.”

“Like hell, you are. You’re a cheater and you’re a traitor. And you stole my girl.”

Bucky’s breath hitched.

“I’m going to tell, Ashlyn! This week. We’re finally going to tell her the truth.” Bucky exclaims, “You’re right because she deserves to know. She deserves to know about all of this.”

“Let me ask you something. Before you came here, did you know that I and her were a thing?”
Steve asks slowly, looking between you and Bucky. Your eyes fall to the floor below you and, if possible, you feel even worse.

Bucky gulps as he looks between you and Steve.

“Yes, I knew.”

Steve nods.

“Steve, I’m gonna tell her. I’m tired of this hiding just as much as you are.”

Steve shrugs nonchalantly. “And then what? You’re gonna let me have my girl back?”

The fire that ignites in Bucky’s chest is severe, and a big wave of jealously washes over him. His nostrils flare as he takes in your body, your gorgeous face.

You.

The love of his life.

The answer is simple and he doesn’t have to think twice before saying it.

“No.”

“No?”

Bucky’s eyes are hard as he eyes Steve down.

“No, because she’s not your girl.”
Your breath hitched and you watched as Steve’s face fell. It was as if his angry and fierce attitude suddenly left his body and all that was left was a broken man.

You could practically see Bucky’s fingers itching to take his friend into a tight hug and apologize.

This situation - you should’ve known that no one would get out of it without getting hurt.

You felt so bad for Steve as you watched small tears fill his eyes.

He quickly blinked them away and cleared his throat.

“Please man, just stop forcing it onto her.” Bucky breathes out, tired.

A small chuckle in the form of a sob escapes Steve’s lips as he looks down towards the floor.

It’s then that he sees it the far left corner of the little foyer:

The filled condom, tied off at the end;

**Fresh.**

He feels his heart break again as he nods his head quickly. He had never felt such pain in his life before.

And from the two most important people in his life.

With eyes brimming with tears, he looked directly at Bucky, meeting his eyes.

“You’re not my friend anymore.”
His voice cracks as he says it.

He spins around to face you and you want nothing more than to say how sorry you are for leading him on for so long.

“Don’t call me.” He tells you.

You’re left stunned as Steve walks out of the room, letting the door slam close behind him.

There’s an dark black Audi SUV with tinted windows parked right outside The Concorde.
The woman inside the car sits in the backseat and she watches the entrance cautiously, a pair of Dior sunglasses framing the top half of her face.

She asks the driver to drive up a bit as she sees a familiar figure leaving the same building where her husband had just walked into about a half-hour before. The man looked distraught, very visibly upset.

The revelation shocks her and she quickly dials a number in her contacts.

It answers after a few rings.

“Meet me at my office. Ask Wanda to come, too.”

She quickly hangs up as she pushes her sunglasses farther up the bridge of her nose.

“Jarvis, to the tower, please.”

The car starts to move out of it’s parked spot.

“Yes, Mrs. Barnes.”

Two pairs of eyes followed the woman in concern as she paced back and forth in front of her desk.
She wore a small coat and tight jeans, her red heels clicking with every step.

“Are you sure it was Steve?” Wanda asked.

Ashlyn spins around almost too quickly and narrows her eyes at Wanda.

“Do you think I’m blind, Wanda? Yes, it was Steve! Five years missing, and one day he shows up out of the blue? I just want to know why he looked so upset. Something happened in there.”

“Maybe it was work-related, Ashlyn. Maybe he’s trying to get his job back?” Natasha inquired as she crossed her legs in front of her.

“I don’t know. Something was really off about Bucky, to begin with, it’s why I followed him. And then…” she trailed out in thought.

Wanda and Nat shared a look with each other.

“I told you how my sister was back, right?”

“Yes.” They both answer without a beat, but both tones lingering in slight fear.

They knew things Ashlyn didn’t.

“Apparently, she and Steve are involved now. Something is going on and I don’t think it’s a coincidence that they’ve both showed up at the same time after five years.”

“I think you’re overthinking this.” Nat quipped.

“Am I, Nat?” Ashlyn asked back. Nat knew for a fact that Ashlyn actually wasn’t far off but she was going to off her boss and a good friend like that.
Nat swallowed nervously and looked away.

“Maybe just ask Bucky, yourself?” Wanda asked innocently. She caught Nat’s eyes, “Or not, I don’t know.”

Ashlyn looked around her desk, “I could, I could. But there has to be another way.”

“Honestly, Ashlyn. What is on your mind? You seem to think there’s more to this than there really is?” Nat asks shrugging, “I’m afraid to know what you’re thinking.”

Ashlyn leaned forward onto her desk as the tip of her left foot tapped on the floor. She was thinking.

“I don’t know yet. But I’m going to find out..”

---

*Cars slowly passing right down on main street*

*don't keep driving, let me say something*

You were sitting on the bed in a lost daze, the used condom was now thrown in the trash, and Bucky was running his hands through his hair, pulling at the strands.

“Do you think he’s gonna say anything?” You ask, staring blankly at an empty spot on the ground.

Truth was, you were still hurt by the way Steve had spoken to both of you. But you were also now afraid. If Steve had reacted that way, you could only imagine how your sister would.

Bucky shook his head back and forth.

“No, I don’t think he would do that,” a long sigh leaves his lips, “But this is still a mess.”

You nod.

There’s another break of silence.

“I think we should talk now, Bucky.”
Bucky’s eyes meet yours and he nods. He sits down next to you and takes your hands into his.

You were still looking away, so damn afraid.

“Look at me.”

You take in a deep breath before tightening your hold on his hands. You look up until your eyes meet.

“I’m sorry about you and Steve.”

You rub your thumb over the back of his hand.

“I’m sorry, too.” You say.

“We’ll have a better chance to talk to him. We can make this better I promise. I know he’s so mad at us right now, and it was wrong of me to cross the line that I did, he’s not wrong. But I think he just needed to get that anger out of his system.”

You nod.

“What is it?”

“I just, he kind of has a point,” Bucky’s eyes narrow at you in confusion, “Why did you wait this long to tell me you loved me? Why not when it was easier?”

“The same reason you didn’t,” He clicks his tongue as he looks away, “Look at the situation we were both in. I was dating someone I thought I was supposed to be with, you were so much younger than me, and I thought you were way out of my league.”

A soft chuckle escapes you.
“What? Me out of your league?”

Bucky gives you a small smile and nods.

“Yes,” suddenly his little smile fades and he looks down at where your hands are clasped together, “Now let me ask you. I need to know why you think I didn’t love you when I so clearly told you I did.”

Your eyes look into each other soothingly and you can’t help but lean in and kiss him on the lips. Bucky moaned as you release your left hand from his, running it up the side of his jaw. You let your lips linger together for a second longer before you look up at him through hooded eyes.

“Come here.”

You whisper almost silently.

Bucky follows you as you climb up the bed towards the headboard. You pull him along with you with your right arm, bringing him to lay down next to you.

It’s these moments that you always longed for with him.

You feel the goosebumps on the surface of your skin as he runs his own hand now up your jaw and into the hair right behind your ear.

“Tell me.”

Your fingers linger on the tips of his nose and his lips as you start telling him.

“Nat had told me something when we were first becoming friends. I think she was afraid I was catching feelings for you and she told me to be careful because you have a tendency of coming off a bit strong. She said you were like that with other girls when you and her were dating,”
“Jeez, I didn’t even know you knew about me and her.”

“Anyway. I thought that I was reading the signs all wrong. I thought maybe that was just how you were - sweet. I was reading too much into our moments. But sometimes those moments became so strong, that I thought it was crazy you didn’t feel the same, but since I wasn’t your girl and because you never actually asked me to be, or let alone told me how you felt, that it was all unrequited.”

“Baby…”

“It was always her. You always gave her everything I wanted. And I don’t mean material things. Your time. You always gave her all your time, and I still loved you through it all.”

Bucky whimpered quietly as he leaned in and captured you in a toe-curling kiss. His hands dragged from your head down to your back and down the side of your arm. He tucks it underneath and grabs you by your waist, pulling you tighter into him.

You feel his tongue play at your bottom lip and your open yours to let him into your hot mouth. You groan and your wrap your left leg around his torso.

He pulls away way too soon, and he’s nudging the side of his nose against yours. He chuckles against your lips, his thumb flicking the bottom one playfully.

“Nat and all her overprotectiveness. All this time we felt this way and we did nothing. All this time wasted.”

“But we have now.” You whisper. You hook your leg even tighter around him, bringing him flush up against you.

Bucky leans his head into you and places hot kisses into your neck and your shoulder.

“I want you in every way I can take you.”

You groan, pulling back once again to kiss him again.
This kiss is more intense and gains heat quickly.

“Steve said something earlier that perked my interest,” you say between kisses, “He said that he told you to stay away from me?” You let out a moan as he sucks on a spot on your neck that makes you grind against him.

“Yes. Remember that one time back before I was married when I cut you off?”

Your eyes squint together in confusion. Suddenly intrigued, you push him away just slightly so you could look at him.

“Wait. Steve, told you to cut me off?”

“He didn’t want me getting too close to you. Said it was getting inappropriate. I think he was afraid I was going to fall in love with you, or worst, make you fall in love with me. Or at least that’s what Sam said.”

“Wait. Sam?”

“Don’t worry. Sam doesn’t know anything. He just knew I had a crush on you, but little did he know that I was really in love with you.”

Your mind was boggled now as you threw your head back against the pillows.

“Jesus. All this was going on behind the scenes and we knew none of it.”

“I don’t know. I think it says something that all our friends saw something there before we even knew it ourselves.”

“And now they hate us.”

“They don’t hate us, things are just misunderstood right now. I’ll explain everything to everyone, we both will. And it will be okay again.”

“I hope you’re right. I miss everyone like crazy,” you run your hands up the sides of his face and look at his beautiful features, “But not as much as I missed you.”
Bucky pecks you softly.

“Look, I wanted to tell you. I am so sorry for all those mean things I said to you.”

“Bucky-“

“Please. Just listen. I called you the worst things possible, but it’s only because I was so hurt. I don’t really think them of you, I would never in a million years. Especially when I told you that you weren’t capable of love,” you voice slightly cracked and he pecked you again for good measure, “It wasn’t true. You are the best thing I’ve ever loved.”

You feel the small burning in the back of your eyes.

“Bucky….“ He shuts you up with a deep kiss. Within seconds he’s got both your legs wrapped around his waist and he’s kissing you hungrily.

Your small fingers go to waistband of his jeans and then he’s helping you by unbuttoning his pants.

“It’s so hard not being able to touch you,” you whimper when you get a chance to pull away from his mouth, “But we can’t. Not until we tell her.”

Wanda is practically skipping down the hall when Nat catches her by her arm. Wanda yelps as Nat yanks on it, causing the perky girl to spin around dramatically in a 360.

“Don’t say that hurt, because I know it didn’t,” Nat says with her hands on her hips, a sly smirk on her lips.

“What do you want, Nat?” Wanda asks shyly.

“I want to know what you know.” Nat narrows her eyes as she walks up to Wanda, like a prey.

Wanda stares up at Nat tauntingly, trying to come off dumb.
“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Nat narrows her eyes at her.

“You know exactly what I’m talking about.”

Wanda quickly looks away and spins around to go back down the hall. Maybe if she just ignored it…

Bucky trusted her.

Nat rolls her eyes.

“Look, I know you know something about Barnes, and I might know something, too. Maybe we could help him.”

Wanda stops in her footsteps at Nat’s words, but she doesn’t fully turn around.

“I know about Y/N, and I might’ve said something to set him to go after her. I know you know something too. Barnes has become a real asshole since Y/N left, but he’s only nice to three other people. Ashlyn, Sam, Me…and you.”

Wanda closes her eyes tightly together.

“Nat, please.”

“Wanda. None of us are on Ashlyn’s side. I’ve been skeptical of her since Bucky’s father was still alive, and I know you can’t stand her either.”

Wanda swallowed nervously. Was this a trap?

“What are you suggesting?”

Nat walks up closer to Wanda and continues in a whisper.
“I’m thinking we find out what’s going on and we help Bucky. Maybe there’s a reason why Mr. and Mrs. Barnes never had sex on their wedding night. Maybe Bucky is the good guy and Ashlyn isn’t. Maybe it’s been Y/N all along.”

“And what about Steve?”

“I’ll track him down. Something about all of this is just off, Ashlyn is right about that. I knew Steve always had feelings for her, but I know for a fact that Y/N never wanted anything romantic with him. Not unless she felt like she had no choice.”

Wanda narrows her eyes at this, finally interested.

“So what exactly are we doing?”

“We’re going to help our friend and get him what he deserves.”

Wanda blinked back at the gorgeous redhead.

“Y/N?”

Nat chuckles at Wanda’s answer and simply replies, “Redemption.”

_There’s nothing wrong with a little space_  

_But not right now, don’t leave_
Chapter Summary

Steve and Ashlyn. Bucky and Y/N. Wanda and Nat. This chapter is very Ashlyn-centric. Every story has two sides.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Work Song

Boys workin' on empty
Is that the kind'a way to face the burning heat?
I just think about my baby
I'm so full of love I could barely eat

Paris, France

She was a sight to behold - a silver tweed dress that fell just above the knees, accompanied by black six-inch heels with red soles; Louboutins.

Her long hair cascaded down her exposed back as she threw her head back in a gorgeous sounding laugh that had all the men around ogling her.

She held a tight grip on the vanilla flavored champagne, the other hand holding onto the clutch that carried her spare euros and a MAC matte red lipstick.

A particular brunette man had his hand on her lower back as she reached over to put her glass down, his wide smile mimicking hers.
Where his black suit hugged his male-model physique, her tan legs ran for days passed the edges of her dress and into her shoes- toned and appearing worked out to perfection.

At least that’s what the envious woman around her thought. Especially little blonde Kelly Sanders who eyed her from across the banquet floor, in a Valentino and all.

Little did they - Kelly especially - know that she was genetically lucky. Not having to go a day to the gym, she’d been blessed with curves in the right spots, a decent speed metabolism, and imperfections that were constantly overlooked, but to Ashlyn were bluntly obvious.

Not that she wanted people to see her imperfections or for them to vocally state their awareness about it - she had enough of that to deal with from her nagging self because of her extremely low self-confidence - but, sometimes, she wondered if the love the people around her showed her was really genuine.

She knew Tony’s wasn’t.

The only genuine thing in her life right now was Bucky, and she was ruining it because she thought she had been doing them a favor. Anything that once had a potential to be good in her life had been jeopardized by her, and she had spent the last five years trying to make up for it.

She’d do anything for her husband.

When you had turned to her in the train that one day many years ago, and brought up Kelly and her boyfriend and how they had gotten engaged after only five months of dating, any doubt she had about moving too quickly with Bucky had left her mind.

There was no doubt in her mind that what she had with him was rare and true love.

When she had seen his perfect blue eyes for the first time and the way he had reached out to flick a snowflake off of her hair, she had been caught in a trance.

It was like something out of a movie and her heart had fluttered when he gave her that iconic smile.
The smile that would soon belong to the man she’d end up marrying.

She knew who he was when she met him, but she had lied and pretended like she didn’t know. She was afraid of coming clean after so many months, afraid that it would make it look like she did it out of using him, when the truth was that she didn’t want him to think that his reputation was why she wanted to be with him in the first place.

They had swapped numbers after their first encounter, and she fell in love with him after two weeks, and she was certain he felt the same way.

Even *you* saw it; that un-denying chemistry.

Bucky was sweet, he was kind, and he was everything she had been waiting for since her parents had died.

After their death, she had felt more alone than ever.

She had already faced bipolar and other emotional issues before their death, you (her little sister), seeming to be the only light in her life anymore.

She knew there was times where she felt like she did things that didn’t make sense, or say things that didn’t make any sense either.

She would most often than not, realize it too late, but she knew.

She did it because of herself. She felt worthless and she felt like she deserved every consequence that was handed her way. She didn’t know why- maybe it was whatever unbalanced chemicals that were being produced in her brain that made her feel a certain way about herself.

Since a child, she never really found her true herself or who she was.

She was never certain about her identity, to begin with.
She didn’t help her mother cook in the kitchen like you did, and she never fit into any clique at school. She’d ditch going out on Friday nights to instead help you with your homework or your hair and makeup so you could go out and meet your friends.

Her senior year she had ditched the cafeteria and resorted to eating her lunch in the bathroom stall, the loneliness and the fear of being alone forever engulfing her.

The echoes of the footsteps in the bathroom from her classmates as she chewed her peanut butter and jelly sandwich - swallowed down by a gulp of chocolate milk - were her lullabies.

Not too long after, she was diagnosed with bipolar and depression by age nineteen, making sure she was keeping it from everyone around her.

The last thing she wanted was to be treated the way she viewed herself.

The reason people were distant wasn’t because she was bullied or because people thought she was weird, she just didn’t know who exactly she was.

She didn’t know who she was until Bucky Barnes showed it to her.

He saved her in many more ways than she could ever say, and she goddamn loved him for it. He was her saving grace, and his presence reminded her just how much she needed to take care after you.

After your parent’s death she had become distant again, her depression was worst and she took it out on you, by no fault of her own.

When Bucky came into the picture, and he had upped her spirits in surprising ways that made her unbelievably happy, it was like a fog was cleared from her eyes and she was reminded that she had to take care of you.

It happened all because of him.

Ashlyn loved him with all her heart, but it came with a price.
Because of him, she discovered herself, and what she liked was material things and doing things for her husband, that in the long run, would benefit him [them].

Everything that she had transformed herself to become, which was now making her happier than ever, she had done it because of and for him.

And now that she’d been doing better mentally, after taking many drugs and lots of therapy, she found herself falling into the arms of another man.

When Mr. Barnes had taken her aside after their first interview, he had looked at her a certain way that made her tummy turn in uncertainty.

She had trembled slightly in apprehension as she saw a familiar form in his hand.

Resting his leg on his desk, his eyes darkened but remained on her.

It wasn’t to deny, Mr. Barnes had been a beautiful man (a silver fox in all ways), but he had made her feel uneasy with the way he stared at her ass when she had greeted her son earlier in the lobby.

The interview had gone well until she saw in his right hand a piece of paper that would either make or break it all.

“You didn’t have to keep this from us. Not me, especially my son, as I’m assuming he doesn’t know. Is there a reason why you chose to not mention this?”

He took Ashlyn’s silence as his answer and makes a sound of understanding.

“Why,” he taps the papers against his legs and walks around to sit in his big chair behind his desk, “did you keep your medical records a secret?”

Ashlyn swallowed nervously, her mouth opening but no sound coming out.
“Did you think this would stop me from hiring you?” Mr. Barnes wasn’t yelling, but his voice was strong. When she doesn’t say anything, he leans over his desk, drops the paper down, and with crossed hands continues, “look, you’re a sweet girl. And I see a lot of potential in you. You have good qualities, you stick up for what you want regardless of if it’s right or wrong—”

She couldn’t help it.

“I’m sorry, you got that from a fifteen-minute interview?” Ashlyn chuckles nervously.

Mr. Barnes smiles.

“Trust me, I have good instinct. Anyway, am I wrong?” When Ashlyn doesn’t respond, Mr. Barnes smirks, eyes drifting once more to her gorgeous legs, “bipolar, depression, anxiety, personality disorder, a manic episode—” Ashlyn flinches with each word thrown at her, she feels it eating away at her bones and most importantly - her dignity. He notices and his eyes soften, “It’s nothing to be ashamed of. Many famous businessmen, celebrities, big figure names—suffer from the same illnesses. It doesn’t make you any less human or capable.”

A breath of relief escapes her lungs.

Ashlyn nodded.

He smirked.

“Come here, I want to show you something.”

She had followed him out to the large window and stood there next to her for a few minutes before continuing.

“You see this?” Ashlyn followed his gaze out into the city, the hundreds of people walking below in the streets, the famous buildings hanging high in the skies like goddamn trophies, “Barnes Enterprises owns about seventy five percent of everything you’re seeing. From the Hudson to the bay—” He turned slowly to Ashlyn and examined her face, “I see the way your eyes shine when you look at it.”
Ashlyn swallows as her eyes drift down, “It’s all really nice. Everything he’s done for me so far, it’s almost like he knows exactly what I need. It’s like he’s cured me.”

She trembled slightly under his heavy gaze and as his finger played with a strand of her that was on her shoulder.

“And what is it that you need?”

Ashlyn thought about it- really thought about it. The answer was simple, and it wasn’t one that she had ever expected to be the answer to all her issues. After Bucky had given her the apartment, the job, and now looking at the city, she knew exactly what it was that she wanted.

“All right, “Everything.”

Barnes’ bit his bottom lip and nodded, looking once more out the window.

“Perfect. Look I think you’ll be perfect for this job more than you think. If anything I’m going to want your help, but it’s something that can only stay between us. It will make you happy and it will help you.”

“Of course, anything.”

Mr. Barnes sighed.

“Look, Bucky’s a great kid, as I’m sure you know. But he’s got some weaknesses. He thinks too much with his heart. I’m going to want you to work under my eye, and there are certain tasks you might have to do that at first won’t make sense to you, but in the long run you will see it pay off. That is, if I choose you to stay.”

His words at first had surprised her. Bucky’s own father wanted Ashlyn to keep a secret from him. She loved Bucky and she loved the things he was doing for her.

“It will help me?” Her voice shook with uncertainty.

“Yes.”
It was on their trip to Paris that it had happened.

It was a simple assistant job, follow Mr. Barnes around like a fucking chihuahua taking his calls, making sure everything was in order, keeping appointments, etc.

She made sure that all his emails were read and she read lines with him on what he had to say to Tony at their meeting the following night.

Everything was all set until it was time for her to go to her own hotel room when Mr. Barnes stopped her.

She spun around with a small frown and asked if there was something she had missed. He simply shook his head and beckoned her with his finger to walk over to him.

She hesitated for a moment until those familiar eyes took her in, shivering at how it sent a weird warmth down her body that she didn’t expect.

Somewhere along the way, she’d ended up between his legs. His hands had been on her waist and her own hands in his silver luxurious hair.

He had started with simple kisses around her belly button around the heavy rummaging of his coarse hands on her denim were the only sound.

In the back of her head, she had that burning guilt of the reminder of her boyfriend and she pushed him away softly, almost painfully.

“Mr. Barnes, this is wrong.”

“Remember that test I was telling you about? This is it, Ashlyn. If you can do this, you can do anything. And you can have anything you want.”

She wanted to be cured, she wanted to be okay again like when she was a child. She hated her
illness, and the only thing that seemed to make her better was what Mr. Barnes was offering her.

He was right. Wasn’t he?

She felt a heavy knot in her throat.

“You can’t tell Bucky.”

“No. Never. That would ruin everything.”

She took in his words and after a few more seconds succumbed to his ‘test’.

She’d gone down on him and she had felt disgusted with herself. When he was finished, she wanted to run out of that room and call Bucky, tell him she loved him.

She was turned away and had wiped her mouth one more time on the back of her hand when that husky voice from behind her started again.

“Have you ever owned a five thousand dollar purse before?”

She had thought that was a weird question, especially after just giving a man a blowjob.

“No.”

“It’d look good on you. I’ll take you tomorrow to get one.”

Her brows furrowed.

“I don’t have five thousand dollars.”
“Yes, yes you do.”

The second he said it everything in her head finally clicked.

Anything she wanted really could be hers.

The first few work ‘trips’ and ‘meetings’ after that night killed her. Her love for Bucky was still so strong and the guilt ate her alive.

But Mr. Barnes promised her that what she was doing would be for him, too. It was good for the both of you, he had said. And Ashlyn believed him.

She had to convince Stark and Pym for a percentage of their company's proceeds and it was up to her. She hated that she was spending more time away from her boyfriend and she noticed how much it was tearing them apart.

But it was strange because part of her was no longer depressed. She finally felt beautiful and happy, like she was *meant* for something.

She felt wanted.

Her happiness soon became bigger than the pain she felt for cheating on Bucky. He still loved her anyway.

He wouldn’t leave her.

Her escapades with Hank had been brief and almost felt pointless.

For the most part, he’d just lay there beneath her like the old man he was and let her ride him until his body jerked.

She’d go back to Barnes’ shower and scrub her skin until it was raw, almost certain that with the way their sex was going it wasn’t going to turn into a good result.
They weren’t going to get the percentage Barnes Enterprises was hoping for.

To say she was surprised when Mr. Barnes told her they’d gotten forty percent of the gross pay, after their disappointing fuck fest, was an understatement.

Maybe she was better than she thought.

Maybe Bucky was right, she really was perfect.

Then she met Tony.

She thought that what she had with Bucky was true love until Tony.

Unfortunately, it was unrequited.

She had been shattered at the thought of what she had allowed her heart to feel and what she had ruined. When Bucky had run out that night to God knows where, she had finally had a taste of her own medicine. And it was fucking bitter.

She needed Bucky in her life. He was her guardian angel.

But she also needed to do it for her health. She couldn’t risk the chance of Bucky finding out about what she had done and and leaving her with nothing.

She was afraid of what would happen to her sanity.

So her and Mr. Barnes came up with a plan. It would not only help salvage the company but it would keep Ashlyn at peace. After all, he’d convinced her that she was mentally stronger at keeping a better financial outcome for the company than Bucky ever would.

His thought process was too logical, hers was more practical.
The moment she promised herself that she would no longer cheat was exactly four years ago, about a year into their marriage.

Her change of heart was mainly because there was no longer a reason for it, she had the money she needed, THEY had it all.

She tried so hard to love him again and to make him love her again.

And one day, it almost seemed like they did.

It almost seemed too good to be true. And now, they had a baby on the way.

This was their second chance.

She thought for many nights of asking Bucky about the one night he ran out on her many years ago. She thought about asking where it was he had ran to, but she knew she couldn’t handle it.

She was thankful he never brought it up again.

For a while, everything seemed great.

Until you showed up again, the so-called light of her life.

It was like Bucky’s switch flipped and it had been how it used to be five years ago.

And that’s how she ended up at Steve’s front door.

It didn’t take more than three persistent knocks for the door to swing open.

She was met with Steve’s distraught expression which quickly turned into shock.
“Ashlyn.”

Ashlyn was momentarily stunned as she looked back at the face that she hadn’t seen in years.

“Steve.”

Steve swallowed hard as his eyes darted down her body, his grip on the door tightening.

“What are you doing here?”

“I think you know why I’m here.”

Multiple possibilities swam through Steve’s head and a strange fear that he couldn’t place crept up his spine.

He tilted his head.

“I can’t talk right now—“

“Like hell, you can’t, Rogers.”

Ashlyn had moved up until her our hand was on his door, trying to pry it open. He stared up at her, eyes still bloodshot.

“What do you want?” He whispered painfully.

Her eyes were just as pained, “I need to talk to you, please.”

He looked at her for a second longer, contemplating if he would be able to handle another wave of
drama after what he had just experienced in his now ex-girlfriend’s hotel room, before finally letting Ashlyn in.

“Please tell me what you were doing with Bucky.”

She says after he has the door closed. She notes the way the muscles in his back tense at her words, the heavy puff of air that escapes his lungs as his fingers flex against the wood of the door.

“Please, Steve. What don’t I know?”

“I-“ his breath catches in his throat as he plays back the image of his best friend and his girl next to a used condom, “You should call him.”

“He’d hiding something isn’t he?”

Steve took in a deep breath as he ran a hand down his face, “Please, Ash—“

“Is it business-related, or does it have to do with something else?” Steve pinches the bridge of his nose, “You don’t know what I’ve been through, how hard I have tried to salvage our marriage. And just when I thought I had him back, he’s hiding something and I know it.”

“I’m sorry,” Steve mumbles as he turns around to make his way to the living room, walking right past Ashlyn with a stern face.

“If you’re sorry you would tell me what you know, you would tell me the real reason you left, you would explain to me-“

“Will you stop?”

His sudden shout shocks both of them. Ashlyn’s breathing hard as she sees the fresh tears sprung his eyes.

“I know it’s hard. It’s fucking hard, I know. But I’m not in the mood right now to be anyone’s psychologist or couples mediator. You want to know everything, why don’t you try communicating with your husband? Why don’t you ask him your damn self, Ashlyn?” He watches as she started to cave into herself, eyes looking away from him in shame.
“I’m afraid.”

It comes out quietly. Steve’s sighs in disappointment - disappointment with himself for the way he snapped at you.

“I’m sorry. I know it’s hard to ask something you secretly don’t want the answer to, and damnit, I feel horrible that I can’t be the one to speak to you about it. It has to be him.”

A few tears run down her face as they both stand there in silence.

Steve’s eyebrows dart up as he sees Ashlyn reach for the buttons of her wool coat, unbuttoning it slowly.

It isn’t until she has it draped over her right arm and she faces him completely -eyes darting towards her belly- that he realizes what she was showing him.

His eyes dart immediately to her stomach. If it wasn’t for her move or for where her gaze was, he wouldn’t have even noticed the small little bump.

He swallows thickly as many emotions course through his body.

“Are you…?” It comes out softly.

She nods.

He was angry at his best friend for doing what he did to his wife - his pregnant wife-, he was confused because did you know about this, and he felt pain for Ashlyn. For the betrayal, she would feel when she found out what Bucky did to her.

He felt pity.
Steve walked over to his couched and motioned for Ashlyn to follow him.

“Please.”

She became timid under his gaze as she brushed a few tears off her face.

“Tell me everything.”

Ashlyn took a deep breath and started from the beginning, but leaving out the inappropriate details that involved Mr. Barnes, Tony, and Hank.

“—I knew we were going through a rough patch, and it was mostly my fault because I was so busy with work, but he shouldn’t have given up on me so easily. I still tried so hard to fight for us, but something was distracting him. I don’t know what, I mean at one point I thought maybe he was even cheating on me- kissing some other girl on the side- but never actually fornicating. He’s too good.”

Steve’s gaze trailed down the side of the couch, his heart grew heavy.

“Right?”

Steve reached over and took Ashlyn’s hand in his, “I’m sorry you’ve both been going through all this. You don’t deserve it. But I can’t tell you what I know.”

“Why?”

“Because it’s not my place. But you need to talk to him as soon as possible,” Steve ran his hand through his hair, “I can’t stand that son of a bitch right now, but at the end of the day. I can’t get it out of my head that he’s still that same little boy I grew up with. I want to hate him so much, but I still have some kind of respect that I just can’t shake.”

“What happened between both of you, if it doesn’t relate to me? You seem shaken up.”

Steve was caught off guard by her questions.
“Look, I think you should go—“

Steve stood up quickly before the tears could make its way up his throat.

“Steve-“

“Please take care of yourself, Ashlyn.”

“It’s so hard not being able to touch you,” you whimper when you get a chance to pull away from his mouth, “But we can’t. Not until we tell her.”

His fingers continued to trail down your chin and you got lost in his touch again.

“James.”

You whimpered softly. You were hypnotized by his presence as he leaned in to kiss you.

You kissed him back deeply, moaning the second his tongue flicked against yours.

You ran your left hand up through his hair and your leg wrapped around his waist. He groaned as he ground up against you.

“Just once more.” He whimpered into the soft skin of your neck.

“We can’t keep doing this—“ your hands drifted down to the buckle of his belt, “we can’t.”

You continued to open up his fly.

He was panting while he looked down at what you were doing.
“Then stop,” he met your eyes in an intense stare that left you shaking, “I dare you.”

Your only response was to raise yourself higher onto your elbows, grabbing him in a harsh kiss.

“One more time.” You breathed out.

He kissed you again and again.

You shuddered as you felt the tips of his fingers on the waist of your jeans and underwear.

Your kisses began to get heated and you had to physically pull yourself away from him.

“Bucky, wait.”

“What’s wrong?”

“We’re good people, but look at what we’re doing to the people around us. I love you so much, but I can’t keep doing this knowing that they are still hurting.”

“So what do you suggest we do?”

“We need to speak to Steve. We need to explain everything. And then Ashlyn needs to know.” You watched as he visibly swallowed hard. You reached for his left hand and played with the ring there, “I can’t keep having sex with you when you’re still married to her.”

“You’re right. No, I agree.”

You’re both sitting next to each other and Bucky reaches over to grab his leather coat when a vibrating sound startles the both of you. Your eyes furrow together as an unknown caller comes up on the screen.

“Hello?”

“Why hello to you, too.”
“Nat?”

Yours and Bucky’s eyes meet briefly.

“The one and only.”

Nat sits in a coffee shop, and she twirls the edge of her mug with a pointer finger. Across from her is Wanda, her face in her hands.

“How have you been? You cut me off and not even an “I miss you” either?”

You let out a long sigh, guilt consuming you.

“Look, Nat. Its been a hard five years,” your eyes flicker up to Bucky again and he gives you a sad look, “I’m sorry, I do miss you. I missed all of you.”

“Listen, tell Bucky I need to steal you for tonight. He wouldn’t mind now would he?” Nat smirked while Wanda groaned into her hand.

You’re shocked, and you’re quite positive Bucky heard her judging by his equally stunned face.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” You add in a fake/nervous laugh for extra measure.

“Who do you think sent Barnes after you in the first place?” You don’t answer still shocked, “Tonight, come out to dinner with me and my friend. We have a plan. I’ll text you details.”

She hangs up on you and you're left fazed and confused as you look down at your phone.

“What was that?”

Bucky asks concerned.
“Nat wants to meet up with me tonight. She says she has some sort of plan.”

“Plan for what?”

“I have no idea.”

Bucky nods. He’s just got his shows slipped on when he walks over to you, planting a deep kiss on your swollen lips.

You part them slightly, letting your hand go to the back of his neck, pulling him in deeper into you.

When you both pull away he smiles at you,

“Everything will be fine. You go meet Nat, as I’m sure she misses you just as much as you miss her. I think I’m gonna go to talk to Steve.”

“Are you sure?”

Bucky nodded, “Yeah. Bro to bro.”

Steve knew that by the second time that evening if one more person were to knock crazily on his front door, he would burn his apartment down along with his body.

He was so exhausted he didn’t even care to look through the peephole before ripping it open.

What he was face to face with was the last thing he was expecting.

He sucked in a deep breath through his nose.

He didn’t hesitate before shutting it closed again in Bucky’s face.

“Come on, man.” Bucky sighed as he ran a hand through his hair. He raised his hand and knocked once more, “Please.”
Steve remained silent, back leaned up against his door.

“I know all of this is a mess, but I want to explain myself. It’ll make sense if you just let me talk,” Steve’s eyes closed tight together. “Steve, please.” Bucky leaned his hand down to the doorknob and jiggled it, “Come on. You’re my best friend.”

Steve let his back drag down the door, bringing his knees to his chest.

Bucky took a deep breath, “Fine. I’ll talk and you can listen.”

Boys when my baby found me
I was three days on a drunken sin
I woke with her walls around me
Nothin’ in her room but an empty crib

Chapter End Notes

I’m sorry this chapter was awful. not my best work. but i wanted to get something out so you don’t think i forgot about you. Its been hard the last few weeks. my depression has been at its lowest point, TMI but i had another cutting episode. its been very very hard. i am sorry. i will probably at some point come back and rewrite this chapter. & i will also respond to your beautiful replies. i hate not leaving my best work.

but yeah. again i am sorry. so sorry.
I keep dancing on my own

Chapter Summary

Ashlyn finds out. Emotional Chapter.

---

_Somebody said you got a new friend_  
_Do you love her better than I can?_

New York, _New York_

---

_In contrast to the events that would occur, ironically, the weather today was gorgeous._

After you and Bucky said your respective goodbyes, you took a shower in the beautiful hotel room. The little extra shampoos, conditioners, and soap bars lined the front of the bathroom mirror that was starting to fog up from the heat of the water.

After grabbing one of the rolled towels and drying yourself, you changed into your most appropriate outfit to go meet Nat.

You felt enraptured by the thought of the activities of the day. Your head felt cold, your stomach greedy, but your core totally _ardent_.

You hadn’t seen Nat in years and your nerves affected your stomach like crazy.

Too much had happened in one day for your mind to wrap your head around it in such a short period of time:

1. You and Bucky finally confessed your love to each other. Again.  
2. You and Bucky finally kissed again.
3. You and Bucky had sex.
4. Steve still thought you and him were a thing.
5. Steve caught you and Bucky in your hotel room where you had sex.

It scared you to think what else would be in stock for you.

Aside from the happiness you felt in your heart, you couldn’t deny the simultaneous doubt you felt.

As much as you truly wanted everything to work out between you and Bucky, you also cared about the people around you. You knew you wouldn’t be able to sleep well until you and Steve were on good terms again, and it bothered your consciences what you were doin to your sister.

You wanted Bucky, if it meant losing the people around you, you were really willing to make the compromises in certain places.

Would you be willing to lose your blood sister over the love of your life?

You sighed deeply as your feet landed on the soft, white, and luxurious rug. You rang the water out of your heavy hair into the towel - twist and squeeze - and your eyes darted over to your phone which laid next to the sink.

You were awaiting Bucky’s text, letting you know everything had gone okay with him and Steve.

The amount of time he left him out there in silence was treacherous.

After telling Steve that he would continue talking while Steve listened, he had gone silent.

Truth was, he was afraid.

Bucky was also silently suffering from the tension he had put on his friendship with his best friend.

At one point, he had almost given up and just turned and walked home.

He was moments away from losing all hope before he saw Steve’s face as the door creaked open.

They share a stinging look and Steve had led him into his apartment, through to his living room.

They sat there for a few minutes on the couch, squirming occasionally.

Bucky swirled the cup of water in his hand that had been given to him.

“Are you going to talk?” Steve asked hoarsely. “You seemed to have had so much to say.”

Bucky looked at his best friend and Steve could see how tired he was.

He could tell how much this whole situation was having a toll over him.

“Steve, you’re my best friend,” Bucky sighed.

Steve played with his own glass as he looked away from his friend, sad.

“I met her the same day you did,” Bucky started softly. “I need you to believe me that when I tell you that my intentions with her from the start was never to win her over, it’s true. I wasn’t
interested in her like that,” Bucky watched as Steve inhaled deeply, “I wanted her for you, we all did,” Steve moved in his seat, resting both his elbows on his knees, “but we know how she wasn’t ready for a relationship. Me and you both know that wasn’t a facade. She wasn’t ready. After we became best friends, you were right - I got too close,” Steve’s eyes flicked up at that and he gulped, “But it didn’t help that Ashlyn was never there for me anymore,” Steve’s eyes fell slowly off Bucky’s face, “It wasn’t like I wasn’t trying to make it work between me and Ash. Hell, I even offered to go away with her on her work trips, but she kept pushing me away.” Steve’s eyes furrowed together, “I tried so hard to make it work. But it was almost like she was pushing me away. And by doing that, I ended up staying by Y/N’s side more,” Steve’s breath hitched and Bucky ran a hand down his face, “It wasn’t like I wasn’t trying to make it work between me and Ash. Hell, I even offered to go away with her on her work trips, but she kept pushing me away.”

Steve’s eyes softened, “I know it’s so right, like it was something that was supposed to happen. And I know it’s god awful, because I was getting married, but you need to understand the position I was in,” Bucky’s eyes were pleading. “I was so in love with her.”

Steve stared at Bucky with a thoughtful face before looking back down at his glass. He ran his finger across the top of the rim.

“You love her?”

Bucky nodded slowly, “I do. And I know you felt the same,” Bucky ticked his tongue, “but fuck… everything just felt so right with her. So correct. It did kill me knowing what I did to Ashlyn and to you, but fuck, it’s like loving Y/N makes it all so much easier to accept.”

Steve thinks for a second, and it’s like he has a change of heart as his eyes soften significantly so.

“Look, I don’t know what happened between you and Y/N. She didn’t give me details, but please believe her when she says she didn’t mean to make you think she lead you on, or that she doesn’t care about you. None of this is black and white, there’s too many grays. We can’t take any of this at face value. We just need to all sit down and talk about it. We don’t want to leave this a mess.”

Steve chuckled.

“We.”

Bucky narrows his eyes together on confusion.

“What?”

“We. You keep saying we. You and her; we.”

They share a look of understanding and Bucky leans over to place his cup on the coffee table.

“Steve, if I— If I had had just a chance to talk to Ashlyn about everything I would have. I would’ve
told her we couldn’t get married because I loved Y/N, and I would’ve married her instead. If I could go back in time and do it right, I would. I wouldn’t have hurt any of you.”

Steve nods, taking a sip of his water.

“I get it. Your love for her. And now, just hearing the way you talk about her, I know it’s not nearly as deep as what I feel. I love her, too. But I love her enough to let her be with a man she loves more,” Steve is compassionate as he looks at Bucky, explaining himself, “She loves you more than she loves me. I see it in those beautiful eyes of hers when she talks about you.”

Bucky’s heart hammers away in his chest at those meaningful words.

“You’re a good man, Bucky. You just went about this the wrong way. You never should have let this go on for so long. If you hadn’t left her available. Shit.”

“I know. I know.”

“I need to ask. If you loved Y/N, why did you agree to still marry Ash that night?”

Bucky sucks in a deep breath as his shoulder cave in a bit, “I-under legal reasons I can’t say.”

Steve scoffs.

“What? So I’m your best friend and you can’t tell me why you still had to marry your wife.”

A small smirk lines the sides of Bucky’s lips.

“You’re my best friend again.”

Steve smiled.

“Tell me before I take it back.”

Bucky considers his options - his lawyer vs his best friend - and the answer is simple.

“Ashlyn, when my father was still alive, they worked on his will alone. I couldn’t divorce her unless more than half of the company went to her, including all the money, all the power; everything my parents worked for.”

Steve’s brows furrow together.

“Wait, Ashlyn? Sweet little Ash? Why the hell would she do that?”

“I still don’t know. But, look, that’s just one of the things about her that never made sense. We ended up not making sense.”

“That still doesn’t explain why you had to marry her. You said the will is only in affect after the marriage. You had all the power in the world to not marry her, it wouldn’t have mattered. You could’ve married anyone else.”

“I wanted to marry Y/N,” his admission makes the room tense, but serene, “She was the only other one I wanted, but I wasn’t sure about where she stood—I didn’t want to risk it. I wasn’t sure up until a few weeks before the wedding. That night, I was just going to speak to her and see if we could start a future, and I know it’s stupid that I didn’t get the guts to do it until the night before
my wedding, but thats when I was going to tell her. I kind of did, and one thing led to another—“

Steve shook head as he sighed.

“And you slept together.”

A beat.

“Yes.”

Steve takes another sip of his water.

“Ash told me about the baby,” Bucky sucks in a deep breath and he swallows hard, “Look, Bucky, if you and Y/N end up together, this baby will love you regardless. As will all your friends. It’s just a tough situation.”

“I know.”

“Congratulations, by the way.” Bucky gave him a tight line with his lips instead of a full smile, “You’re not happy?”

Bucky sighs.

“What do you think, Steve? I mean, I know it’s my baby. It will either be my daughter or my son, but this just made it a lot more difficult.”

“You’re almost a good man. I’ll forgive you, but we all know there’s one last thing you need to do.”

The cool air of the night falling over him on Lafayette St sent a chill down his body.

He watched as a cab ran a red light, picking his iPhone out of his pocket.

He dials the number without a second thought and the voice that answers makes everything almost better again.

“Hey sweetheart, change of plans.”

You were finishing putting on your open sandals as you sat on the side of the comfy bed.

You held the phone between your cheek in your shoulder.

“What’s wrong?”

“I spoke to Steve, everything is good between me and him. For the most part.”

A breath you didn’t realize you were holding escapes your lips.

“Thank god. I’m so glad.” he says your name softly and you smile, “Yeah?”

You hear nothing on the other end except for the honk of a car. Another long second passes by.

“We need to tell her.”

You let your feet fall flat on the floor below you and you take your phone in your hand.
You felt the sudden fear that accompanied the anticipation of telling your sister something so sinful.

“Today?”

“Now.” You suck in a sharp breath, “I know we promised sometime this week, but I don’t think we should wait.”

Telling you about the baby was on the tip of his tongue, but he was afraid. He needed to know he had you one hundred percent first.

“I’m on my way home now. I’d love it if you could meet me there.” He adds before hanging up.

He looks up in the direction of where he could see his building and he swallowed thickly.

This was it.

After sliding his key in and noting the surprisingly lit home, he swallowed the heavy ball of bile that was crawling up his tight throat.

“Ash, I’m home.”

His eyes scan the living room and then the open kitchen for the familiar head of hair. His lungs suck in a painful breath of air when he sees her coming around the corner, her silhouette blending in with the lights of the empire state building out the window, in the distance.

A tight but convincing smile fills her face, “Hey, how was your thing?”

Bucky thinks about his thing and he rubs the back of his neck nervously.

“Look, we need to talk.”

He notices the way her body responds to his words. Afraid, protective mode on.

“Okay.”

He takes a deep breath as he walks up to her.

He takes her hands into his and leads them over to the living room. He sits down on the side couch while Ashlyn sits on the main one - they are both white and prestigiously gorgeous.

Expensive.

Ashlyn has her hands in her laps as she waits for Bucky to speak. The way he fidgets and looks nervous doesn’t help her own nerves.

“Ash, you-“ he takes a deep breath and moves up closer, taking her hands in his once more, “you know I care about you, I always have-“

She stares at where their hands are clasped together.

Was this it? She thinks.

“Yeah?”
“Please don’t,” Bucky searches her eyes, almost desperately, “just listen to me when I talk. I-“ He stops again, looking down again.

“Bucky, you’re scaring me.” Ashlyn whispers.

Bucky gapes up at her from under thick eyelashes

“Ashlyn,” he looks away, shameful, “I cheated on you.” It comes out in a whisper.

For a moment he wonders if he imagined saying it out loud, because Ashlyn doesn’t say anything. Another second passes and he feels her remove her hands from within his grasp.

“When?” Her voice shook with some kind of agony he couldn’t pin point. Bucky looked down at the floor, feeling the sweat building up on his hands, “When?” Her voice was louder this time.

He’s still looking at a spot on the floor. He straightens his back a bit, shoving down that bile once again, “About five years ago.”

Ashlyn took a deep breath.

“And you’re telling me now?” Her voice was tiny.

“I know, I should’ve told you sooner.”

“Well, why didn’t you?” Her voice sounded hurt.

Bucky doesn’t respond as he finally raises his face, letting himself look directly into her own eyes.

His wife’s eyes.

The tears he sees in them makes his heart shatter. “I knew something was always up,” her voice was broken and quiet, “I knew someone was always on your mind,” Bucky looks at a spot behind her shoulder as she eyes his face curiously, “What? Did you guys kiss in your office or something? Was it when I was in Paris?”

The overwhelming amount of questions make Bucky sweat even more under his shirt.

“Ash -“

“Please tell me it was just a kiss.”

He feels his heart beating away inside his body, he feels those tingles of guilt.

Bucky was silent as Ashlyn got up off the couch. He watched quietly as she ran a hand back through her hair.

“Bucky, no. please, no,” she gripped her hair almost painfully with her right hand, her left one holds onto the back of the couch, “please.”

He watches as he knuckles turn white.

“We slept together.” He whispers.

A sob literally racked through her body at his words.
The sound is heartbreaking and Bucky swallows and swallows.

“Why?” She cried, “Why?” She walked up to Bucky and when she got no respond out of him, a loud slap echoes throughout the room.

He feels that sting. It resonates throughout his entire being, and it leaves him feeling hot. His skin burns.

“Was I not good enough for you?” She whispers.

“Ashlyn, please-“ He croaks out.

“You screwed some tramp while you were engaged to me and you never told me-when?”

“What?” He faces himself back to her.

“When did you sleep with this girl?” Ashlyn says louder.

He sees the hot tears running down her cheeks.

Bucky reaches out to grab her hands that are at her sides.

“I-“

“Who is she, Bucky?”

He goes for her hand -

“Ashlyn.“

He tries to grab the other one, too.

“Get the fuck off me, how could you?!“

It’s a scream that echoes throughout the entire house.

Bucky is breathing heavy through his nose, the aftermath of the slap now catching up to him.

He stares at her back.

“You were never there!” He snaps.

“What?”

Bucky stands up so now they’re both standing up.

He feels himself breathing harder, “One day, we were in love, then you were never there anymore, and someone else was!” His confession makes Ashlyn pull harder on her strands. Bucky moves up closer to her back, “I tried to make things work with you but you were always away on your damn work trips-“

Ashlyn quickly snaps back around to face him.

“So it’s my fault you cheated on me?”
Bucky felt his own tears come up his throat. He loved you, but the reality was that he had become that man.

He hated himself for it. He hated that he had become unfaithful.

“You could’ve loved me, you could’ve cared.” He shouted through hot tears, his finger pointing in the air.

“I married you!” Ashlyn gave him a heavy shove, “Of course I loved you with all my heart.”

“Enough that you have to get a fucking will saying that if I divorce you you get all my money? That much love? Huh?”

“Is that what that was about? You got pissed at me because of the prenup so you slept with some woman?”

Bucky gapes, shaking his head.

“No—what, no!”

There’s a long silence except for both their breathing and the sniffing of tears. It scares Bucky the way her brows come together.

Realization.

“Wait, five years ago we were engaged. Was she there?”

He was panic-stricken.

“What?”

He moves up dangerously closer.

“Was she at our engagement party?”

“No.”

Ashlyn tilted her head at Bucky.

“When did you do it? Did you sleep with her while we were engaged?” Bucky didn’t answer, but not letting his gaze lift off hers, “Please answer me, Bucky. When did you sleep with her?” She screams the last part as her voice breaks.

A beat.

“The night—” Bucky swallowed hard, “The night before we got married.”

His wife’s face falls in a way he had never seen before. This hurt him just as much as it hurt her.

He furiously blinked away the tears that clouded his vision. Ashlyn turns around again and he sniffs.

A hard sob racked through Ashlyn’s body as she brought her hand to her mouth. She cries just like that for a good few seconds as Bucky’s breathing becomes shallower.
It makes him flinch - her pained screams.

“No. No. No!”

“That’s why you couldn’t even look at me on our wedding night, because you had been screwing some whore the night before. It’s why you didn’t even sleep with me that night.”

“Would you stop!” He sobs, running a hand up the side of his face.

“You disgust me. You’re a pig.” Ashlyn’s face crumbled, “God why? Why do I still love you? I can’t even look at you right now. I never would’ve thought you would do something so horrible to me. Now I keep picturing you and some girl.”

Ashlyn tried to calm her breathing as much she could, “I know I should have been there more, I know, but I always trusted that one day you would understand me.” He said through strong hiccups.

Bucky sniffed again, wiping tears with his fingers.

“I trusted you to never hurt me. But it was only the one time, right?”

Bucky’s body went stiff at her question. It hang in the air like a big neon light.

“You only slept with her once, right?”

Bucky bit his bottom lip.

“I slept with her twice.”

“While we were married?”

“Yes.”

Ashlyn sobbed again, hiding her face in her hands.

He watches her cautiously.

His wife walks over to the island and in a rage, she tosses everything to the floor: plates, table decor, an iPad. All of it shatters.

But his only concern:

“Ashlyn, the baby-“

Her sobs got wilder. As she stared at all the plates shattered on the floor beneath them.

“Why am I never good enough?” She whimpered, “Why does this always happen to me? What’s wrong with me?”

Bucky’s face fell, a few more tears adding on to the one that had already begun to dry.

“Please, let me explain. I want to explain it to you, I do-“

“You’re a fucking cheater, Bucky!”
“I know, okay! I know!”

“What’s even the point of this, five years so late? Huh? What’s the fucking point? Was the guilt killing you? Did you finally have enough of the guilt—“

“No!” He screams.

“Then what? Were you expecting some kind of forgiveness?”

“I’m telling you this because there’s more.”

She looks at Bucky like he’s got three heads.

“More?”

A soft whine leaves his mouth as he pulls on his own hair this time.

“She’s not a tramp and she’s not a whore.” He says under his breath.

Ashlyn seethed.

“I am so sorry I have to do this to you. That we have to do this to you.”

“What are you talking about?”

Bucky ran a hand through his hair, “Fuck.”

Ashlyn stares at him as he turns around, still pulling on his hair.

She feels something in her stomach she can’t pin point.

“Who is she?” Her voice was so calm it was scary. When he doesn’t respond, she repeats it louder.

“Who is she?”

There’s a knock on the door.

Her furious eyes go up to the door.

“Who is that?” When he doesn’t say anything again, Ashlyn yells towards the direction of the door, “Who are you? You whore!”

You freeze.

Ashlyn’s scream sends a shiver down your back as your hand tightens on the door knob.

You and Bucky had made a promise, and as much as you dreaded the hurt you would cause, you both knew you had to do this. This had to be done, it wasn’t optional.

But how you hated it. You wish you didn’t have to do this.

You go in slowly, so very afraid.

The quietness of the home enveloped you.

When you and your sister’s eyes meet, Ashlyn stumbles back on her feet, shaking her head maniacally. Her eyes were blood shot.
Her hands go to her hair as she pulls on it.

“No. no. no, no, no.”

You looked over.

Bucky also found himself distraught as he walked himself back, still pulling on his own hair.

You swallowed hard at the scenario in front of you.

It was agonizing.

You take in the surroundings more. There were items thrown across the floor, broken and shattered to pieces.

You inhale sharply.

Your eyes meet hers again - they look utterly broken.

You feel yourself start to shake as you attempt to move closer.

“Don’t come near me.”

You’re still and you can hear your heart in your ears.

Your mouth gapes.

“Ashlyn, please let me-“

A sob cuts you off. An tormented cry for help, for relief. Bucky runs his hands down his face and it’s now that you see how much he has also cried.

Ashlyn continues to cry hysterically.

You’re just about to get the nerves to walk up again when she suddenly makes a run for Bucky.

Bucky grabs her arms as she attempts to throw heavy punches at his chest.

“You-you had sex with my little sister!” Bucky’s grip tightened on her wrists, “Five fucking years? Is that why you couldn’t be near her? You fucking piece of shit!” Ashlyn bawls perilously.

“Ashlyn, stop!”

Ashlyn snarls at your voice as she spins around to go at you, but Bucky manages to grab her from behind by her waist.

“Let me go, Bucky,” Ashlyn looks back at you, “How could you do this to me, you’re my little sister. You were the only light in my life!”

Now it was your turn to feel the tears coming up.

“I’m so sorry.”

“No you’re not. If you were you wouldn’t have slept with him twice. My own husband. My own husband.” She repeats it over and over again until her loud cries overpower her will to talk.

You and Bucky both watch her fall apart and it breaks all of your hearts bit by bit.
So many years of betrayal and lies had led up to this moment and it was worse than any of you could’ve ever imagined.

Bucky slowly lowers himself to the floor onto his knees as Ashlyn begins to collapse in his arms.

“Please, just take it back.” Her anguished voice whispers just before her world goes dark.

---

Stilettos and broken bottles
I'm spinning around in circles
And I'm in the corner, watching you kiss her
New York, New York

Same day.

It didn’t take very long for reality to set in.

If it weren’t for the sight of Bucky cradling Ashlyn’s body in his arms as he tried to set himself against the window glass, you would’ve thought this was all some bad nightmare.

His eyes were hollow and staring into the full head of hair of his wife, his fingers trembling as they held onto her scalp.

Your lips started moving. You were trying to communicate with him as best you could.

He knew you were talking to him and that you were giving him some sort of instruction. He could
clearly see you from his peripheral.

Yet all he could do was shake and continue to hold his wife.

Your heart shattered at the scene in front of you. Knowing that you had partially been the cause of this did something terrible to your heart.

You knew that two years - fifty years - down the road, you wouldn’t forgive yourself for causing the amount of pain you did.

It was all because you fell in love with a taken man.

Your sister’s face was lifeless: pale, her lips and cheeks fading color. You knew this was bad.

You continued to repeat the words to Bucky until he finally blinked.

“What?” His voice was hoarse, blue eyes meeting yours.

“We need to lay her down.” You repeat, concerned.

It seemed to take a few long seconds for him to register what you had instructed him.

Bucky nods, pulling Ashlyn in tighter by her underarms.

You’re in pain as you watch the broken man in front of you struggle to oblige.

“Come on, Bucky.” You say exasperated when he still didn’t move from his spot on the floor.

It took about ten minutes for you both to finally get Ashlyn tucked into her master bedroom.
You didn’t intend to, but your eyes drifted around their room. It was warm and comforting. The walls were a soft cream color and the duvet was porcelain white. Five pillows lined the head of the bed.

You don’t allow your eyes to trail for too long as you help adjust the pillows behind her head, but their wedding picture was on the nightstand.

It reminded you of your place.

“I’ll call a doctor, just in case.”

Bucky steps out into the hallway, pulling out his phone to call their family doctor.

You stayed behind, next to Ashlyn’s bed.

Your nimble fingers trailed the side of her face almost opaque face. She looked so peaceful compared to how she had been a half hour ago.

You had never seen anyone so broken. You run your hand up the front of her hairline.

What had you done?

You considered speaking to her even though she probably couldn’t hear you. You wanted to voice out your thoughts and you sisterly compassion.

She seemed to have moved for a second as you felt the mattress shift, and your heart sped up a bit.

It must’ve just been in your head because she continued in the same position.

Peaceful.
You heard a soft shuffling of feet on hardwood behind you. You looked back to see Bucky staring at you with an expression you couldn’t really read.

Was this it? Was this the end?

It’s then that you take in his outfit, the reality that everything had changed so much in just a few hours span.

You slowly stood up on sore knees and made your way over to him. You closed the door softly behind you once you were both in the hallway.

He didn’t hesitate to talk.

“She should be here soon.”

Bucky’s eyes remained on the floor, deep in thought.

You brought your hand up to the side of his face, its digits trailing his cheekbone delicately.

How could someone be so gorgeous? Why couldn’t they just enjoy this for a bit longer?

“Why?”

He was confused by your question as he brought his hand up to your own, holding it closer to his face.

His skin was hot there.

“Why what?” He asked breathlessly.

You think of what was and what could’ve been.
“Why couldn’t you wait?”

“Because it’s wrong.” He says simply.

Clearly you had misunderstood the meanings behind his words and you felt your throat grow tight.

“It’s wrong?”

You watched as he looked over your shoulder and to the door. It was like he was trying to see Ashlyn through the wall.

You watched as his jaw ticked.

“Hiding it from her is wrong. Before you came back into my life, I didn’t think I’d ever see you again. I didn’t think you wanted it as much as I did. I thought you wanted to destroy my life. So I didn’t see a point in telling her what happened. Did it bother me?” He looked down at you again, “Yes. Because I’m not fucking heartless. But I didn’t feel like it would do anything. It wouldn’t bring you back to me.”

You take a moment to process his words, the tick of his watch prominent in the growing silence.

“Bucky…”

You feel the heat of his breath on his face as his nose hits the side of yours, gently.

“But now that you’re here, right in front of me,” he continues, “now that I know I can have you, now that I can have you, I wanted to do it right. I don’t want to be with you and keep hurting her at the same time. No matter what kind of person she’s become, you need to remember that at some point I did love her.”

It was a harsh reality that was always a bit difficult to swallow. Seven years later and it was no easier.
“I know you did.”

“So understand why I had to do this as soon as possible.”

You did.

“I understand now.”

“I shouldn’t have done that to you in the hotel room. Not that it was wrong, but it was under the wrong circumstances. But I just couldn’t.-” Your breath caught in your throat at the way he was staring at you, like he wanted to eat you alive, “I just couldn’t stay away. Five years, sweetheart. That’s how long I suffered without you in my arms. That’s how long I missed you.”

He continued to rub the side of his nose against yours.

“Maybe God can forgive us for our sin, maybe he can understand why I did what I had to do.”

Your eyes closed tightly together as you brought your other hand now to the other side of his face.

“But this feels like shit. What I just did to her. I wish it didn’t have to be this way,” you could practically hear the cracks in his voice now. You felt the warmth of his fingers as he let go of your hand and grabbed your waist, “I wish I knew you were my soulmate before all this. I should’ve met you before her. Because since I met her first, it changes everything. We can try to move on from this together, but she will always be in the picture. She’s your sister; my wife.”

You leaned your forehead down on his chin as your hands traveled down to the sides of his neck.

You took in a deep breath, enjoying each other's proximity.

“She’ll be okay, Bucky.”

You felt his hands travel up from your waist and to your back, rubbing there softly.
It took about fifteen minutes for the nice doctor to arrive.

Doctor Harrity was her name. She was kind, soft-spoken.

She had short black hair and she carried a match black luggage behind her as she walked off the elevator.

Bucky led her to their bedroom, “She’s in here.”

Doctor Harrity looked over Ashlyn for a few minutes, taking her pulse and temperature.

You stood back, arms crossed. Bucky sat at the end of the bed, his hand rubbing Ashlyn’s foot.

“What happened?” She asked, wrapping her black stethoscope around her neck.

There was a long pause before Bucky answered, “We got into a very bad argument.”

“Must have been very intense for her to pass out.” Harrity says, putting her digital thermometer inside her open luggage bag that was on the floor.

“Yeah, it was.”

“Alright, I’m gonna set up my things, get an IV going. I’ll call you back in here if I need anything, alright?”

Bucky nodded and thanked her.

You and Bucky cleaned up the kitchen and living room area. It was a bit heart wrenching picking up the broken plates and shattered iPad.

You wonder if that had been a gift from Bucky.
Minutes later after sweeping away the shards, you took a seat on the couch. Watching Bucky lean on the dining room chair across the large room, you grabbed your cell phone off the coffee table.

Bucky watched as you spoke to Nat and explained to her why you could no longer meet up tonight. She took it surprisingly well and told you she’d be at the apartment soon to help out with anything you both needed.

“Mr. Barnes.”

She was asking him to follow her.

Bucky’s head shot up his eyes meeting the Harrity’s at the entrance to the long hallway.

He felt his blood run cold at the worried look she was giving him.

Bucky followed the doctor into his bedroom, closing the door behind him.

“What’s wrong?”

“Her blood pressure is very high and her feet and hands are very swollen. She needs to go to hospital. I can do what I can, but because she’s pregnant, it’s a high risk for me to treat her here.”

Bucky swallowed nervously, his eyes darting towards his wife’s body on their bed.

The same bed where said child was conceived.

“Alright, that’s fine.”

“I’ll call an ambulance now to come to pick her up. You can accompany her in the back.”
Bucky barging into the living area startled you.

His posture was tense and his movements were radical as he pulled his leather jacket off the back of the chair in the dining area, nearly hitting the glass centerpiece off the luxurious table.

“What’s going on?”

“She needs to go to the hospital, an ambulance is coming. You can follow us in my car.”

“Nat and Wanda are on their way here, I can ride with them.”

“That’s fine,” You were worried about how differently he was treating you until he walked over to you, taking your pretty face in his hands, “that’s fine. I’ll see you in a bit. ” He repeated softly as your eyes met.

You swallowed thickly as he stared at you intensely and then walking away just as quickly.

You watched as Bucky walked back and forth from the kitchen and the hallway, grabbing two bottles of water and a small bottle of some kind.

When the ambulance finally arrived, you were stuck in place as you watched them take her body on the gurney out the front door.

When only the doctor was left you pulled her aside before she could leave.

Bucky had already been out the door.

“Is she going to be okay?”

Harrity seemed distracted as she checked her phone instead of looking up at you.

“She should be alright, health-wise. It’s her baby I’m worried about.”

Those words seemed to have stunned you and the walls around you felt like they were caving you
You felt your body shaking as you walked back towards the couch.

If it weren’t for your hand stretched out behind you, you would have totally missed it and hit the floor instead.

Ashlyn was pregnant? Did Bucky know?

Of course, he had to know.

You felt even worse and you felt betrayed.

Was he going to tell you?

The lights hanging above you suddenly became the most interesting thing in the world. Even after you closed your eyes, they managed to peak their way behind your long lashes.

You knew you were grabbing onto the couch cushion. Out of anger? You weren’t so sure.

You hear a knock and your eyes snap open. You knew you were a bit nervous as you walked over to the front door, surprised they hadn’t resorted to the elevator.

You hadn’t seen either of them in five years. Not since your disappearance act that shook Barnes Enterprises, apparently.

You were met with two pairs of piercing beautiful eyes and gorgeous red hair.

You couldn’t even a word in before you were enveloped into a tight embrace. Your eyes darting over her shoulder and meeting Wanda’s small smile.
“I missed you so much.” Nat hugged you around your waist, pulling you in tighter.

You rubbed her back, “I missed you, too, Nat.”

When you both pull away, Nat walks in followed by Wanda.

She extends a hand out to you and you take kindly.

“Hi, we never spoke much but I’m Wanda.”

“Hi, Wanda.” Your tone is soft.

Nat narrows her eyes at you as you walk over to the dining room, sitting in one of the chairs.

They watched curiously as you shoved your face into your hands, your elbows on the table.

“What’s wrong?” Nat asked.

You ran a hand through your hair.

“It was a mess. It was horrible.”

“She knows.”

“Yeah, she knows.”

Nat and Wanda both take their seats on either side of you. Wanda sat back shyly as Nat extended her hand out to rub your arm tenderly.

Sighing, you remove your hands off your face.
“Did you guys know she was pregnant?” The look of shame they give you answers your question, “You did.”

“Look—“

“I just don’t understand why he wouldn’t tell me.” You cut Nat off.

“Maybe he just didn’t get around to it yet. But just know we are here to help you.”

The two other girls share a suggestive look as you play with the cuticles of your fingers.

“You should’ve seen how miserable he was without you.”

“Really?” Your eyes snap up at Wanda’s words.

“We have a plan.” Nat says with a small smirk.

You look between them, intrigued.

“A plan?”

“Yes. We know you know there’s something fishy about Ashlyn, and we agree. We’re trying to find out what happened while she was dating Bucky.”

“They clearly weren’t happy during their marriage, and the way she always acted was very weird. Long nights at works, meetings nobody knew about.” Nat adds.

Wanda clears her throat.

“I also think there might be a loophole in the will Mr. Barnes left. I need to somehow acquire a copy of it first. I saw it once five years ago, but never again. I think there’s a way around it. And there’s someone who might be able to help us.”

You were interested in what they had to offer and you let them verbally know.
“Who’s gonna drive to the hospital?”

“I will.” Nat says.

—

The room was too warm for a hospital room and Bucky didn’t like it one bit.

His heart was in his ears, matching the one from the heart monitor.

The dingy hospital blue chair he sat on matched the blue and light pink of the walls.

His hands traced the outline of her blanket up the bed and then to his destination - to the tip of her fingers.

He picked each one up, one by one, a mixture of emotions he wasn’t expecting overwhelming his heart as he did so.

As much as he detested the kind of person his wife had become, he couldn’t help the fear he felt at medically losing her.

His throat becomes tight as he holds her fingers in the palm of his hand.

He had one point loved her, he always reminds himself.

He was a good man, wasn’t he?

His sniffs as he rubs her wedding ring with his thumb.

It shocked him when he felt the bed move just slightly. He didn’t know what he had to prepare himself for when Ashlyn finally came back from her deep sleep.
More yelling? More heartbreaking?

His eyes darted up to meet her beautiful ones. She was awake.

Her eyes held hurt and disgust. But she allowed him to hold her hand, she hadn’t pulled away.

He didn’t say hi to her, or if were any other circumstances he would’ve kissed the top of her hand.

Bucky sucked in his bottom lip as he looked away, his eyes burning.

He reached forward for her other hand and held it in his shaking ones for just a bit longer.

“Take it off.” Her voice was hoarse and rough.

Bucky’s eyes darted back to hers, confused.

He then followed her tired gaze. She was looking straight at her left hand.

**Her ring.**

Bucky was startled by her request, knowing what she was asking.

Even though it was quite obvious what would happen between them here on forward, for her to ask him to remove her wedding ring was something powerful.

“Ashlyn, we need to talk.”

“No, we don’t - -” her voice cuts him off, still very rough and mostly air, almost like she had to clear her throat.
Bucky looked at her hands.

He used to love her once…

“You need to know - -“
“Take it off.”

His brows furrowed as he eyed the diamond. The piece that tied him to her hip for as long as it did.

He remembers when he bought her that ring. He hadn’t given it much thought, it was the first one he saw, the one that made him “get it over with”. But now, looking at it, it was taunting.

Terrifyingly haunting.

He let out a shaky breath.

Bucky didn’t look away as he diligently picked up her ring finger.Grabbing it on each side, he slides the ring off, slowly.

He’s remembered of their wedding day when he had slid it on, the exact opposite direction.

He places the ring on the food stand next to her bed.

“Now yours.” She says.

Bucky swallowed as he held his hand in his lap.

He doesn’t know why his heart hurt. He didn’t love Ashlyn anymore, he knows he didn’t, but the situation was killing him.
“Ash-” he whispers.

Ashlyn banged her fist down on the bed and Bucky watched as she threw her head back against the pillows, taking in a deep breath.

He watched her, startled.

This was killing her.
This was the end.

He took a moment and then he took his own off, placing it next to hers.

They sat in silence for a bit, letting the infidelity of both their parts sink in.

“You hurt me. In the worst way a woman could be hurt.”

Bucky’s face was a grimace as he watched her pale face.

“I know that.”

She had always felt worthless and not good enough, but this was the icing on the cake for Ashlyn. She bites her bottom lip harshly, the tears threatening to border her vision.

“Then why? It could’ve been anyone.”

“It just happened.” His voice was desperate.

“No, no it didn’t. No, it fucking didn’t.”
Ashlyn cried silently, gripping her stomach.

“Look what you’ve done.”
The silence around them was overbearing.

Bucky pulled on his hair, his stare lingering on the trashcan in the corner of the room.

“Please, please don’t make me feel worse than I already do.”

“I have every right,” she snaps, making Bucky close his eyes, “You destroyed mine and your daughter’s life.”

Her words startle him and make his chest grow cold with butterflies.

It was like a flower was planted in a pile of shit.

Those words changed his life. It changed everything.

It made it real.

“W-what?”

“I found out yesterday,” she says softly, “I was going to tell you tonight. It’s a girl.”

Bucky took in a deep breath, it trembled slightly as his lips quivered just a bit.

“My god it’s-“

“It’s real,” their eyes meet at her words, “Us, me and you, our daughter, our marriage, our life, it’s real. It’s not some fantasy affair that you’ve been living for the last three years. This is real.”

His jaw tightens at his wife’s harsh, stupid, words.
“It’s not some fantasy. I—what I did, fucking hell Ash, this started years ago. This started before we even got engaged.”

“You’ve been having an affair since before our engagement?”

“No!” Bucky stood up from his chair as he pulled on his hair, walking around the hospital room, “Us! Our toxicity,” he says, finally stopping in front of her bed, “We stopped making sense a long time ago. I don’t know why we kept trying. I don’t know why we kept going on, trying to make it work—“

“We stopped making sense to you! Not to me. I still had hope for us. I still loved you, you abandoned me. I wanted to keep trying. I told Doctor Banner everything and you know that.”

“Well, I didn’t. I couldn’t keep loving you after you kept leaving me behind, you kept distancing yourself from me and keeping secrets. What you were doing to me was not something we could clean up.”

“So it’s my fault?”

Bucky scoffed as he ran both hands down his face.

“Yes! I loved you with all my heart, I did. But please face it, accept that we both stopped loving each other the second you started distancing yourself from me. Don’t lie.”

Ashlyn didn’t say anything for a while as she gazed out the window.

“If you didn’t love me then why did you propose to me? Why did you ask me to spend the rest of my life with you?”

Bucky sighed.

“I don’t know.”

“You don’t know?”

“I wanted to run, but I couldn’t, I—” Bucky bit his bottom lip, “Damnit, I’m so tired of all of this.” A
frustrated laugh escaped his lips as he motioned his arm beside him as if saying *I give up.*

“When did you stop loving me?”

Ashlyn asked.

The answer was simple.

“Five years ago. When did you stop loving *me*?”

She scoffs.

“I never did. Yes, I messed up, and yes I did things that I regret, but I always wanted you.”

Bucky narrows his eyes at her.

“That’s a lie.”

“It’s not. The lie is the life you’ve been living and that you would’ve continued to live with this child in our life if she- *if she* - didn’t show up again.”

Bucky breathed in harshly through his nose, his eyes darting down to Ashlyn’s belly.

That flower was there again.

He felt so many emotions for his little girl.

“I love her,” he whispers, “Our daughter. Don’t involve her in this.” Bucky sniffed, “Please, just let me love her.”

Ashlyn looked away.

Bucky moved up closer to the bed. Bit by bit, as if almost afraid that she would push him away, he moved closer to Ashlyn. his hands going to her growing belly.
Eventually, she allowed him to touch her there and they just sat like that for a few minutes.

Bucky was in awe at the little person he had created.

He hadn’t even met her yet and he knew he loved her with all his heart.

It took him longer than appropriate to notice Ashlyn had started sobbed silently.

“I don’t want you near her. I know you deserve to because you’re her father, but just looking at you makes me want to die.”

Eventually, Ashlyn fell asleep and Bucky left.

He was more than glad to see you, Nat, and Wanda in the waiting room. But especially you.

“Thank God, you’re here.” He said softly, pulling you in for a tight hug.

He missed the hurt in your eyes, the doubt.

You pulled away reluctantly with a hand to his chest, but Bucky barely noticed when he then turned to greet the girls.

“Hey, guys.”

A soft hand rubbed up and down his back comfortingly.

“How’s she doing, Buck?” Nat asked.

“She’s fine for now. We’re awaiting results.” He turned to you, grabbing your hands, “Can I talk to you for a sec?”
He motioned with his head towards the hallway.

You looked back at the girls and then to him, nodding.

Once he pulls you to the side, you were thankful at how empty the floor was. For once, you could get the privacy you deserved.

You kept your head down as he looked at you.

You felt his hand on the bottom of your chin, pulling your face up to look at him.

His expression was tender and longing for you.

“What’s wrong, sweetheart?”

You couldn’t look at him as you felt the onset of tears springing in your eyes. You looked back at the floor.

“Hey, look at me.”

It took you a while but you finally did, and when you did you pulled yourself away from him, harshly.

“Bucky, I can’t,” you shook your head back and forth quickly, “I can’t do this.”

“What?”

Hot tears filled your eyes as you continued to shake your head.

“I, I need to go—” you looked behind you.
“Y/N, stop.” His voice grew concerned, almost mad.

“She’s pregnant,” Bucky’s face fell as your face crumbled, “my sister is pregnant. And you didn’t even tell me. How could you keep something like that?”

Bucky’s face fell. You thought he was going to cave into himself until you felt a hand grab you harshly on the side of your face.

“I was going to tell you but I just didn’t have the right time. You were only in my home for three days and two and a half of those days me and Ashlyn were planning on telling you this weekend.”

It made sense.

You shook your head as he held you.

“But I still can’t do that to your family. I’ve ruined it enough as it is. I don’t even care at this point anymore that she’s a gold-digger, she’s the mother of your child- - she’s going to have your baby, you’re going to be a dad, I can’t,” more tears ran down your cheeks, “please just let me go.” You begged almost inaudibly.

“Y/N, please don’t do that. I don’t love her, I don’t want her. I want you. We’ll make it work somehow, I promise. Please don’t leave me. You and my baby is the only hope I have left to be happy. Please don’t do this to me.”

You cried silently as you fell forward, laying your forehead on his chest.

He allowed you to cry as you gripped his chest desperately.

“What are we going to do?”

“I don’t know, baby. I don’t know.” Bucky pulled away taking your face in his hands, “I don’t know but please don’t worry about that right now. Let’s just worry about me and you. She knows now.”

“How is she in there?”

“She hates me. But all the yelling seemed to have been done back at the apartment. We have to tread lightly.”
Your belly was nervous.

“I can’t talk to her. Not now.”

“It’s okay, take your time. I think I’m going to sit with her for a bit longer, and then we’ll decide what to do.”

Hours passed and Bucky ended up falling asleep on the uncomfortable chair next to Ashlyn’s bed.

There was a soft knock on the door and it startled him out of his sleep.

“Doctor.” Bucky greeted—mumbled—still half asleep.

Anxiously, he reached over for Ashlyn’s hand and shook it slightly for her to awake.

She woke up gingerly, sitting up slightly as she noticed the doctor in the room.

The doc closed the door and then the curtain behind him, giving them privacy.

“I’m going to sit for this, okay?” The doctor said as he sat down on the bed next to Ashlyn’s feet.

Both Bucky and Ashly nodded, clearing their throats.

“Your vitals seemed to have calmed down drastically after we gave you the sedatives. You’re fine. But what you experienced was severe on your vitals and it did cause trauma to the baby,” He looked between Bucky and Ashlyn,

Bucky felt a feeling of impending doom.

He hoped his little baby was alright. His little girl.
Come to think of it, he always envisioned himself having a girl.

“I’m sorry but she didn’t make it.”

The words took longer to sink in for the couple.

Ashlyn and Bucky’s grip on each other tightened simultaneously once they found the hands of each other.

“No, she was a healthy girl, I just spoke to them yesterday, she was beautiful -“ Ashlyn pleaded, her nails digging into Bucky’s flesh.

Normally he would complain of the pain, but this pain of losing his daughter hurt even more.

He was stunned, shocked; frozen.

Bucky’s chest hurt as his breathing picked up.

“What?”

“I’m so sorry. We’ll give you both some time to process, but we will have to schedule you for surgery,” the doctor looked at Ashlyn.

Bucky and Ashlyn didn’t hear anything else the doctor had said, even if it would’ve benefited them.

This pain they were feeling was indescribable.

His baby girl was gone.
When you saw Bucky for the first time again it was sometime around 11:30 that night.

You had been asleep and would’ve continued to be until you felt a heavy presence at the entrance.

You raised your head up to see Nat and Wanda still asleep next to you.

Your eyes raised further to the beautiful man standing in the room.

He had a blank stare that frightened you.

Quickly growing concerned, you walked up to him, taking him in your arms.

You froze as he crumbled in your arms and holding you like his life depended on it.

Sharp sobs racked through his body as he repeated words that you couldn’t fully understand.

He cried harshly into your neck, whimpering loudly.

“My baby.”

Seven and a half years ago

New York City, New York - 42nd street with 5th ave - in front of Zara

She knew she should have worn something a little bit more appropriate for the weather. It was 38 degrees and windy, snow was in the forecast for the late afternoon.

But she had wanted to wear her new wool camel coat and booties. And that hat - she loved her little Bonet.
Something about her outfit just made her like herself a little bit more, which was the opposite of what she usually felt most of the time.

But still, she knew she was an idiot the second she stepped out of Zara and a strong gust came through, making her hat fly off her head and down the sidewalk.

The little red hat flew aimlessly through the air and onlookers watches as she tried as best as she could in her little booties to catch it in the air.

She had just about given up, especially when an old lady inadvertently stepped on it when it rounded the corner onto 5th ave.

She had just turned the corner when she ran into a thick wall of muscle.

She was about to apologize when she was captivated by the beautiful blue eyes staring down at her with a small smile.

It made the sides of his eyes crinkle and it made her heart hammer away inside of her chest.

It didn’t take a second longer for her to realize who was standing right in front of her.

Of course she knew who James Bucky Barnes was.

“Is this yours?” He asked her.

Her eyes darted to his hand where he held a red fabric - her hat.

“Yes, that’s mine. I’m sorry, I was running after it and I was afraid I wouldn’t catch it.”

He smiled at her.
“That’s okay. But you look cold.”

“Yeah,” she looked down at her attire as another wind came through, causing them both to flinch.

Bucky opened his coat to shield her from the gust.

“Oh shit.” He chuckled and stayed with her in that position until the wind stopped.

“It’s really cold today.” She said shyly.

“Yeah, I think it’s supposed to snow later. Are you local?”

“Upstate.”

“Gotcha,” he pulled out his phone and quickly typed something away, “Would uh, would you be down for some hot cocoa? Not that I’m some creep who just picks up girls who lose their hats, but if you wanted to warm up a bit?”

She smiled softly at his offer.

“I’d love to.”

They had gone to a little bakery off Bleecker, chuckling as another strong gust practically shoved them into the shop.

Bucky looked over at Ashlyn - he had finally gathered the balls to ask her on the subway ride- and smiled at how adorable she looked.

She had snowflakes all over her hat and the ends of her pretty hair.

He had bought her hot cocoa with extra whip cream and they ended up sitting and talking for three hours until the clean streets of Greenwich Village were covered in a full layer of white snow.
He knew the moment she looked up at him from her mug, just her little eyes peeking up at him over the cup, that this girl was going to change his life.

The goal is to all of these
Just for a small taste of bliss

A/N:

If any of you are interested, I've made a fan trailer for my fic "ASHENS" which will come this summer 2020, after TIB is finished.

Here is the link to its trailer and FULL soundtrack which you can listen to now. :)

[Ashens Trailer and Soundtrack]

Chapter End Notes

The song used during Bucky and Ashlyn's first date at the end of this chapter is Come on, Come on by Dean and Britta remix. It's absolutely beautiful. You should give it a listen, fam. You can simply click on the little dash before the lyrics at the end of the chapter and it will direct you to it. :)

Again, thank you guys for reading. Much love. Please stay safe during this COVID19 pandemic. STAY HOME.
I'll get through these chains

Chapter Notes

Reminder: Ashlyn is was diagnosed with Bipolar at age 19.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Tell me what you're feeling

I can take the pain

Tell me that you mean it

That you won't leave again

Someone could’ve shouted in his ears and he wouldn’t have budged an inch.

He was too busy cursing at the world for trying to make something sickly entertaining out of something extremely serious.

Ever since he was a kid, his family had been the center of attention when it came to the media and gossip.

But he was always affected the less by it. He was never the true target.

That all changed the second he got appointed as CEO. Now he was the center of every gossip, of every rumor, and lie.
It had reached a point where he had gotten so used to it. His PR and Wanda taking care of everything for him that was necessary to help him focus on real important things instead of the lies of the media.

But *this* one, *this* had to be the worst one yet.

He ran a hand through his hair as he read the article on his phone.

He hadn’t even searched for it. It had come up as a notification on his news app on its own.

He held his head in his hands as his elbows rested on his knees.

You sat next to him, running your hand comfortably up and down his arm, telling him to stop looking at it.

**JAMES BARNES SPOTTED IN HOSPITAL PARKING LOT SUPPOSEDLY FOR FURTHER DRUG TESTING AFTER RECENT OVERDOSE RUMORS**

Below it, there was a picture of him with his back against the brick wall outside of the hospital, looking tired; hair disarray.

“These people have no better shit to do.” He grumbled as he handed you his phone.

“I’ll take care of it, Bucky.” Wanda says, pulling out her own phone, making preparatives to speak to the media and claim that the rumors are false.

“She’ll talk to them. You shouldn’t have to deal with this right now.” Nat agreed.

Bucky ran his hands down his face, his eyes still bloodshot.

It was seven in the morning. Bucky had spent the night by Ashlyn’s side in her room, giving her a helping hand as much as he could in their situation.
They were preparing her for the dreaded procedure the doctors would perform on her today.

“She hardly slept,” Bucky sighed, rubbing under his eye, “She’s terrified. She’s shocked. We’re both so tired.” He grumbled under his breath.

You caressed the back of his hair where it met his neck.

“I’m so sorry.” You say.

Bucky nodded slowly, pinching the bridge of his nose.

He had been all cried out. He knew he would mourn his loss for a very long time, but all the tears he had offered had been spent over the last six or so hours. He knew that all he could do now was try to be there for Ashlyn in the most appropriate way he could be.

He had to make sure she was mentally doing okay, but that was it.

Nat shared a look with Wanda.

“As much I would love to hear it, I’m just not in the best mindset right now. I want to focus one thing at a time, I-“ he took a deep breath, “I just lost my baby girl, I can’t think about anything else right now.”

“I’m sorry, it was tactless.” Nat responded quickly, “We’ll discuss it some other time.”
“Thanks for being here,” Bucky looked over at Nat and Wanda, “Really.”

Both girls gave him a sympathetic smile. A few minutes after much needed comfortable silence, Bucky announced that he was going to head back to Ashlyn’s room for a bit.

When he was gone and out of earshot, Nat looked over at you.

You sat, exhausted, on the too-hard hospital chair. It was a chair that had spent many years holding the weight of lucky and unlucky ones, awaiting news. It was uncomfortable.

Your legs were tucked underneath you, your head laying on the wall next to you.

“How are you doing?” Natasha asked.

You shrugged.

You wanted to come off like you were okay, but secretly inside, you were broken and tired.

“She’ll be okay.” She assured you.

You shook your head, looking down at your hands.

“It’s not even just that anymore either. It’s him. I hope he’ll be okay, too.” You confessed.

You moved to pick at the little coffee table that was next to your chair.

You traced the wood with you finger.

If you were quiet enough, you could hear the distant sound of more heart monitors.
You didn’t like it very much.

“I still don’t know what I’m going to say to her.”

“Just be honest.” Wanda answered.

She was right. But you were scared of being honest with your sister. The truth wasn’t necessarily the prettiest in this situation.

“Yeah.” You say.

“Look, I’m gonna go home. I still need to go to work today, but I promise I’ll be back later this afternoon to say hi and check up on you guys.” Nat announced as she stood up.

“Yeah, I think I’m gonna go, too.” Wanda agreed as she also stood up from her own seat.

You smiled softly, “Thanks for being here.”

“Of course, sweetie.” Nat says.

Nat is about to walk away when you grab her hand. She turns to look at you a bit confused.

“Thanks for your change of heart. I knew you weren’t always supportive of me and him, but it means the world to me that you are trying to help out.” You say.

“A lot has changed the last few years. Especially Ashlyn. I wouldn’t want to stand in the way of true love. You and Bucky? You’re it.” Nat responds.

You appreciate her words, but you’re still left thinking if all this hurt was worth it.

You must have passed out not too long after they left. You checked your watch again and it was close to eight thirty.
Your eyes drift to the television in the upper right corner of the room and you grab the remote off the little table. You decided to watch a little something to pass time.

You were going to give Bucky and Ashlyn the privacy they needed during this hard time. It wasn’t your place to involve yourself. Not yet, at least.

The air between them used to be tense and toxic, but it had seemed that over time, things calmed down.

Bucky sat on the chair next to the bed playing with the bedsheets as Ashlyn looked out the window into the bright sun that reflected off the tall building across the street.

“What’s going to happen when we go home?” Ashlyn asked turning around, her eyes not leaving Bucky’s face. He watched quietly as her eyes darted towards the door, “Are you two going to be together?”

Her tone was soft, worrisome.

Bucky looked at her for a moment before answering.

“We’re taking this one step at a time. We need to figure out our situation first.”

“Our situation? You cheated on me. With my sister. And by the looks of it, it seems like you’ve already made your choice.”

“This isn’t even just about a choice anymore, Ashlyn. If it were some other guy, sure he would just leave you right now and go with another woman-“

“Please, don’t say that stuff. It hurts me.”

“I’m just saying, I’m trying to be careful with this.” Ashlyn finally turned away, looking back towards the window.

Bucky reached out for her hand, “Regardless of the outcome of this, you are still that same girl I met with the little red Bonet,” Bucky traced her ringless finger, “You’re still the woman that carried my child. The child we both lost.” His voice cracked towards the end, “I’m not just going to leave.”
Ashlyn took a deep breath as she felt the tears prickling her eyes.

“*You hurt me so bad, but I still can’t stop* - -“

“Can’t stop what?”

“I can’t stop wanting you.”

“Ash…”

She turned her head *again* to face him.

“What if I changed?”

“W-what?”

She tightened her hold on his hand.

“If we tried again. If you gave me another chance and I gave you another chance, for us to be better.”

Bucky sighed.

“I don’t want that anymore. I don’t want you, Ashlyn. As a woman, and someone who was my lover, I respect you greatly, but we don’t work. We can’t continue this.”

Her grip tightened and Bucky flinched at her hold. He could feel the bones of her knuckles digging into his own. Her eyes were like daggers as she remained eye contact with him.

For the first time ever, he was scared of her.
“I need you. I can’t let you go. I won’t allow it.”

Bucky gaped at her as he tried to pull away.

“Ashlyn, please let me go.”

Aside from frustration over this situation, because he had thought the hard part was over, Bucky was extremely confused.

Ashlyn had told him yesterday to pull off their wedding rings, yet here she was telling him that she needed him in her life?

“It’s okay. I forgive you.”

Her little taunting words sent a cold shiver down his spine as he eyes her wicked smirk and twinkling eyes.

Now he was scared for a different reason. He was scared for her mental health.

As he looked into her displaced eyes, he knew something was very wrong.

You settled on some black and white movie. The volume was down so you couldn’t hear what they were saying.

It was fine that way.

You weren’t really watching it anyway, no matter how much you tried. Your thoughts were too distracted.

A soft knock startles you and your turn your head.

To say you were shocked by who you saw standing there was an understatement.
The darker one gave you a mischievous smile, the little gap between his front teeth lighting up the room.

His greeting was just as friendly.

“What, hello there.” Sam smirked.

Steve walked out from behind Sam.

“Hey, Y/N.” He greeted you softly.

You gulped, not sure exactly how to act with either men.

One of them, you had just broken up with earlier that week, and the other you hadn’t seen in five years.

Because you had disappeared - for a very wrong and very evident (now) reason.

You felt slightly embarrassed.

You pulled your legs out from underneath you and they wobbled as you stood on them.

“Hey.” You said quietly.

Sam was walking up to you but your eyes remained connected with Steve’s.

“Come on, I know Rogers here is pretty and all but come give Sammy a hug.” Sam said, walking in front of Steve to block you of your view of him, even standing on his tip toes for added affect.
You felt a smile perk at the end of your lips as your eyes met Sam’s brown ones.

He smiled back and he wrapped his arms around you in a tight hug, which you returned equally as tight.

“You’re just as annoying as I remember.” You say playfully.

Sam hummed.

“How’ve you been, little nugget?”

“Oh, you know,” Your eyes meet Steves’ over his shoulder, “life.”

When Sam pulls back the three of your stand there a little awkwardly, mostly due to the created tension between you and Steve.

“Where’s Bucky?” Sam asks.

“He’s with Ashlyn. You can go head and see them. Do you need it.”

Sam lifted the paper in his hand, “Nah, the front desk already gave it to us,” Sam looked over at Steve and then back to you, “I’m gonna go say hi to them. I’m sure you two have some catching up to do.”

That left you and the blond behind.

“Steve.” You started, looking down at your feet.

“Hey.”

You felt awkward as he stared at you so intently.
The next thing he says surprises you slightly. Or maybe it was his tone that surprised you.

“Can we talk for a bit?”

You nodded, following him towards the chairs.

“I found out about the baby. I’m sorry. I think that sometimes we get so selfish, thinking about our own needs, that we need to stop and think about the things that really matters.”

You scoffed, looking down at your hands.

“Tell me about it.”

Another pause.

“What you did, It did break my heart. I misunderstood, I thought you - “ he continued.

You raise your hand slightly and he stops.

“Steve. Let me talk. I never wanted anything bad for you. You mean so much to me, but Bucky is different. It’s different. It’s still hard for me to talk about it, especially to you because we have history. But I should’ve made it clear from the beginning what was going on inside my head, hell, I think all of us should have. I’m so sorry I hurt you.”

“It’s okay. I know he loves you. I didn’t realize I had been coming off so strongly. I wasn’t trying to force you. Did I come on too strong?”

You sighed.

“A little bit. But it wasn’t your fault. You told me to tell you if I wanted nothing to do with you romantically, and I never did.”
Steve took a deep breath. He looked away from you and towards the ground.

“When Bucky said what he said about me forcing my love onto you, it really had me thinking. It hurt my feelings. I’m so sorry it came off that way, I just thought you loved me too.”

You took Steve’s hands.

“If it were different, if it hadn’t been for Bucky, maybe we would’ve stood a chance. But I love him. So much.”

“I know you do. And he loves you, too,” Steve chuckled as he looked around, “I mean, look at what he’s done for you. I was expecting him to come clean soon enough, but to do it all in one day? Just to finally be with you?”

Your heart fell at his words. You felt the knot in your throat, the heavy weight in your chest.

“We told her. It’s why we’re here. It’s why his baby is dead. Because of me.”

You sniffed quietly.

“Don’t say that,” Steve whispered, taking you into his arms for a small hug, “Stop doing this to yourself.”

“It’s true. I did this. All of this.”

Steve holds you as you cry in his arms.

Bucky had been happy to see Sam pay them a visit. For a moment in life’s time he had felt like he had almost lost a good friend. And then when he saw Steve, Bucky was even happier.

For a second, it felt like everything was almost coming together again.

He had his boys, and this time the truth was out in the open.

He had only been away from you for about four hours and he already wanted you in his arms again.
You had left not too long ago, tired.

You weren’t ready to talk to Ashlyn just yet.

Your stomach churned at the thought.

He knew he would have to deal with what was going on in Ashlyn’s head later, but right now since he had a clean conscience, all he wanted was you.

And it wasn’t like Ashlyn didn’t know.

He didn’t understand how she couldn’t see that their marriage was over and that there was nothing left to savage.

To him, figuratively speaking, they might as well already be divorced. The only reason they weren’t officially was because he didn’t want her getting all of the money and power.

Before it had been because he thought it was heartless and fucked up for her to choose money over him come the situation of a divorce, but now it was more because he was worried that she wasn’t mentally fit for it.

He knew he would have to speak to you about it later.

He needed to leave the hospital.

He needed you.

He was more than happy when the doctor finally gave them the go ahead and let Ashlyn sign the discharge forms.

Bucky and Ashlyn helped gather her belongings around the room.
They were silent around each other. Bucky still not knowing how to respond to Ashlyn’s earlier statement.

He would deal with that mess later.

He looked up to see Ashlyn slipping on her Chanel Loafers that he had brought over for her.

She looked very tired and ready for a nap.

“Did you get your phone?” Bucky asked, pulling on his jacket and giving Ashlyn hers.

“Yeah.”

“Alright, lets take you home.”

An Uber ride, a shower, and two naps later, Ashlyn was putting some things away in the kitchen when she saw Bucky emerge from the hallway, duffle bag swung over his shoulder.

“Where are you going?” She breathed.

Bucky’s eyes fell as he took in her state. Her hair was in a messy bun. Her face still a little sickly.

“You need rest.”

“Where are you going, Bucky?” Her voice was small and pained.

Bucky sighed.

“Look, Ash. When I told you what I did, I did it so I could move on. I did it to let us go.”
“But we can work this out.”

“No. I don’t want to work things out.” He said simply, “We’ve both been through so much the last few days. Especially you, your body. And it’s something I’ll never forgive myself for. I am sorry for putting you through with what I did.”

“Then stay.”

“I just need space from here for a bit. I need time to think, and I think we need space from each other. The doctor says physically, you should be okay,” He eyed her up and down once more, his face stone cold and serious, “There’s nothing worth saving anymore. We need to move on.”

“So, what, you’re going to divorce me? You’re going to leave me for my sister?”

“I just told you. I’m going to take a few days off. I still respect you. We’re not divorced but consider us separated,”

“What?”

“I’m sorry things couldn’t work out between us. But now its time we move on.”

“You’re going to continue to cheat one me?”

“It’s not cheating. We’re separated.”

“I didn’t agree to this.”

Bucky pulled harder on his strap as he continued his way to his door.

“I’ll see you in a few days.”

“Bucky! Don- -”

He heard her one last time before he closed the door behind him. He took a deep breath.

He knew it was wrong, even if they were separated. The woman had just lost his child. He felt guilty.
But he needed to step out of there for a few days. He needed time to breathe.

He was doing the right thing by going away for a few days, he convinced himself.

He needed time to breathe. To get his emotions in check.

Bucky saw his Audi waiting for him down in his garage. The black car was gorgeous, sleek, and spotless.

He opened the trunk with a click and tossed his bag inside.

He opened the drivers seat and got in, letting out a long breath.

After a few seconds he looked over at you.

You looked beautiful.

He smiled softly.

“You ready?” He asked.

You stretched your hand out to grab his right one. Your fingers interlocked and you leaned your head on the headrest, staring at him.

“I’m ready.”
Tell me what your heart wants

Such a simple thing

My heart is like paper

Yours is like a flame

Chapter End Notes

this felt a bit filler, but important. This quarantine has me pushing out chapters faster than an AK47.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!