because I found someone to carry me home

by acetamide

Summary

Steve’s home. Danny doesn’t want to fight about it.

“I take it from your unusual silence that we’re not talking?”

Danny glances up at him from where he’s taking off his shoes by the front door, and can’t help the small frown as he notices that Steve’s tramped straight across the floor in his boots which are still caked with mud from gallivanting through the jungle. Steve seems to realize what Danny’s staring at and raises his hands apologetically, coming to brace himself against the wall beside him and begin to unlace.

“It’s not that we’re not talking,” Danny says with a shrug, and hangs his keys on the hook. “It’s just that I don’t want to end up arguing about this.”

“You’re telling me that you don’t want to tear me a new one about how irresponsible I was to go off by myself, how annoyed you are that I wouldn’t give you specifics on a classified operation, how I’m never allowed to do anything like that ever again?” Steve prods as he follows Danny upstairs, and he sounds somewhat surprised. “That’s usually your favorite part of the whole thing. You’re just going to skip it this time?”

“Yes, I am, because whilst the father in me wants nothing more than to ground you for the next month, the partner in me knows that would never work. But you know what? It’s nearly two in the morning and we’re both about to crash, Wo Fat is in finally in custody, and what I really want is to have the first decent night’s sleep in about four weeks. Please don’t tell me that you would rather argue than sleep, because I know that you’d be lying.”

“You haven’t slept properly without me here?”
“Of course I haven’t, I can’t fall asleep when the room is quiet and I have space in the bed and I’m not woken up at an ungodly hour of the morning by a cold breeze as some idiot gets out of bed to go swimming before the fishes are even awake.”

Steve just grins at him from across the bed, and unstraps his thigh holster, laying his weapon on the table beside the photos of Grace and his parents.

“So there’s nothing you want to say to me?”

“No, there are many things that I’d like to say to you, but I’m not going to say them, because there’s no point.”

“Babe.”

Danny takes his time folding his clothes and laying them out, very much aware of Steve’s gaze on the back of his neck. He makes it as far as the bathroom before he cracks.

“I mean, I get that you couldn’t tell me the specifics – Strawberry Fields, whatever – but I don’t like that you put yourself in a situation where you had to keep classified information from me. That’s your old life, Steven. You’ve made a new one here in Hawaii, with me, with the team, but every now and then you really make the effort to throw it all away.”

“No, I’m trying to do what’s right, what needs to be done!” Steve protests, pulling off his shirt with a scowl, and Danny doesn’t miss the wince as the cotton scrapes over the cuts and grazes on his face. He looks away, and instead focuses on brushing his teeth.

“See, this is why I didn’t want to have this conversation with you, look at you, you’re getting all defensive.”

“I’m not getting defensive!”

“You are, and I haven’t even said anything for you to get defensive about!” Danny shouts, and moves back through to the bedroom so that Steve can get washed up. “I’m never going to be happy about you getting yourself into these situations. I never said that I was going to stop you. You’re a grown man, you can make your own decisions, even ones that I rightfully think are ridiculous and irresponsible and completely insane.”

Steve opens his mouth as though to retort, but then Danny can almost see the moment when his brain catches up and his teeth clack together in confusion and surprise.

“Wait, you’re saying that you’re not about to have a go at me?”

“Correct, thank you for listening, this is what I’ve been trying to say. I am not going to tell you not to go running off after internationally-wanted arms dealers, because that would be like asking you not to keep grenades in your bedside table. But I do reserve the right to complain about it, very loudly, at all points – before, during and after – the fact.”

“Which you do anyway.”

“And from now on, you don’t get to complain about my complaining.”

“You don’t complain, you bitch.”

“Yeah, well you whine.”
“At least I don’t whine 24/7 the way that you do.”

“There’s another rule.”

“How many are we going for here? Should I start making a list?” Steve snipes as he climbs into bed beside Danny, his cold feet brushing against his legs.

“No, there’s just two,” Danny continues as Steve gently pushes and pulls them until they’re lying with Steve’s chest pressed to Danny’s back. “The other rule is that you’re not allowed to leave any more ‘Dear Danny’ letters for me. You don’t get to just run off like that. Even if you have to come round to my flat at three in the morning, in the pissing rain, and you have to wake me up with a foghorn to do it, you tell me that you’re going in person. You don’t have to tell me where you’re going, or why, or when you’ll come home. I just need you to tell me that you will come home to me.”

“You know you’re going to regret that decision when I wake you up at three in the morning with a foghorn.”

“And one more...”

“Danny...”

“One more,” he insists, and he pauses to clear his throat. “You have to accept that I worry about you.”

Steve doesn’t answer for a moment, doesn’t have a quick reply ready for that. Danny knows that he’s caught him off slightly off-balance – the whole conversation has – and it’s with a long exhale and a tightening of his arms that Steve finally responds.

“I know that you do,” he murmurs against his skin of Danny’s shoulder and presses a kiss to the same spot.

“You have to accept that I worry about you, and that when I whine and bitch and moan about you doing stupid things it’s because I’m terrified that one day, I’m going to get a phone call, and yours will be the next funeral that I go to. So please, when you’re doing your stupid things, try to be safe. Try to remember that you have someone who’s waiting for you back home.”

He feels Steve’s huff of breath on the back of his neck as he adjusts himself, hears the small sigh that mixes into the constant ebb and flow of the ocean outside the window.

“You know, I haven’t slept properly since I left either,” Steve admits. As though Danny didn’t already know. “Now, are we done with the emotional sharing for the night? I feel like you came at me when you knew I was going to be unprepared. It was very sneaky of you.”

“Yes, I think we’ve fulfilled our emotional quota for the month, you can return to your favorite Neanderthal state now.”

“I can’t help but feel that you have low expectations of my social skills.”

“I’ve seen you with your SEAL friends, I know that you don’t function well with normal people. Speaking of which, I went to LA whilst you were away. Me and Chin saved the world with some of your buddies.”

“Really?”
“I also got a smallpox vaccine. The other guy got ice-cream because he didn’t cry, so I expect you to buy me a shave ice. Also I didn’t pass out, which he did. And you need to ring him up and defend my honor, he told me my hair looked like it was bulletproof.”

Steve’s reaction is, of course, to stick his nose into the hair at the base of Danny’s neck and nuzzle into it indulgently, whilst his fingers stroke idle patterns on Danny’s ribs over his heart.

“I’ll buy you a shave ice tomorrow,” he promises, and Danny nods and smiles, and closes his eyes.

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