Rest In Pieces

by FoxDragon

Summary

Spoilers for CA:CW

Tony reflects on just how poorly he misjudged as he lays in the rubble.

Notes

I've left the ending open because this may or may not become the prologue to a longer story, I'm still deciding.

Spoilers for Civil War so don't read if you haven't seen it.

If you happen to follow my name because of my Hobbit fics, please read the notes at the end.

See the end of the work for more notes.

“Look at me, my depth perception must be off again, ‘Cuz this hurts deeper than I thought it did, It has not healed with time It just shot down my spine again”

In a way he had known from the beginning they they weren't really on the same page, that he wasn't
communicating himself in a way that was understood. It had always been his weak point, communication. Human communication was just so... imprecise and interpretive. He should have known that her was, once again, failing. He had simply refused to see the things he didn't want to see, had insisted on pushing forward the way he wanted to, pursuing the things he wanted with the same blind insistence on getting his way that had always worked for him in the past.

It was only natural of course, that that wouldn't work on Steve.

He really should have paid more attention in the beginning.

“Tony, what about your relationship with Pepper? We can't do this, it isn't right.”

“Look; believe it or not Cap, Pep and I don't actually have that kind of relationship. It's a media thing. If folks think we're a happy, steady thing they don't pay as much attention. Happy and steady isn't interesting, it isn't news.”

Steve hadn't looked like he completely believed that, and maybe he should have said more, explained better, but… He didn't really want to explain his side of that arrangement in any great detail right then, and hers wasn't really his business to go sharing with people who barely knew her.

And people thought he had no tact. Most people he just didn't care enough about to worry about tact, it was such a tiresome thing.

He should have known then, or if not exactly then, then at least soon after.

“Looking for something?”

An awkward shrug. “I dunno, I guess part of me expected actual notches on the bed post.”

That had stung. Enough to bring whatever walls had fallen back up, enough to spur him to deflect with humor.

“Nah, not the actual bed post. Even for me that's a bit tacky. Jarvis has a virtual bed post file. Much more discreet.”

The way he had taken that, a slightly raised eyebrow, a completely unsurprised look. He should have realized then that Rogers wasn't seeing what he had hoped Rogers would see.

Later it had been impossible to ignore.

“What, leaving so soon?”

“Uhh... yea. That is how this works after all. I know you think me naive Stark but I was a soldier. I do know what a one night stand is.”

And he had let him leave, because what was he supposed to say to that? How was he supposed to explain that wasn't what that had been supposed to be, not by a long shot, to Captain America’s retreating back?

How was he supposed to explain that that was supposed to be the start of something amazing? Clearly he had already fucked it up far too well, better then to salvage what scraps remained of his ego and pretend that was all it had ever been.

It wasn't like Rogers had known. It wasn't like he had told him.

He had told Pepper. She was one of his closest friends and that was part of their agreement after all.
And when she found him hiding in the workshop nearly two days later, dehydrated and miserable from his nearly 40 hour bender, she had done her best to patch him up inside and out, and had flown his very expensive, very discreet therapist out to New York. Good ‘Ole Pepper.

When his head was finally straightened out enough that he could actually think straight he had apologized for the strawberries in his first gift basket with a weekend at a very exclusive French spa.

After that they had settled into rather one-sided holding pattern. Steve focused on being Captain America and not really liking him, but not outright hating him either. If he had any lingering thoughts about their one night, he never showed it, and Tony did his best to manage the same, shielding his lingering hurts, dreams and desires behind sarcasm and crude humor.

It seemed to work well enough. No one really seemed to notice at any rate.

It lasted through the Extremis fiasco, and then that damn bullshit with Hydra in SHIELD and the Winter Soldier (and oh, how hearing about the return of Cap’s good ‘old buddy “Bucky” had hurt because now it made so much more sense and really he never had a chance and he should have seen that, had to accept that) it had lasted just fine right up until she had met someone, someone right, someone who understood.

They had an agreement, had negotiated all possibilities, no matter how unlikely, and they had a plan. So they began their separation. First they would have a ‘discreet’ but far from public separation, then an actual public, but very civil, separation. She would be free in the public eye to ‘start’ her new relationship in weeks. He would find a way to manage with the renewed attention to his ‘love life’ and life would go on.

Except in all of their planning, they had never foreseen the Sokovia. And he should have, he was the futurist after all, he should have realized.

It had started downhill then, because he was a futurist, and after Sokovia, the Sokovia Accords, or something very like them, was rather inevitable if you were paying attention to world politics at all.

He knew Steve would never agree to the accords as they were initially proposed, couldn’t agree to the accords, it wasn’t who he was, and asking him to be patient enough to actually get something changed through the legal channels was asking a lot of the good Captain. He had been prepared to deal with the disagreement. Prepared to deal with arguing and posturing and debating.

But he hadn't been prepared, not really, to deal with Steve. And that was where it had started to get bad.

Where’s Pepper?

And then things had gotten worse, so much worse.

“I’m flying without a stick Tony!”

And then everything had shattered.

“Did you know?”

And everything was in pieces.

“He’s my friend.”
And he was in pieces.

“So was I.”

And after, laying in the rubble, the fog of rage giving way to a fog of pain as the adrenalin wore off and last few days caught up with him, feeling the broken shards of the arc reactor burn into his chest, he had one last thought before unconsciousness claimed him. As the emergency alarms twiddled weakly in his ears he thought that this was the last he could take, after this it was over, he was too damn broken. And all the kings horses, and all the kings men, couldn't put Tony back together again.

“Look at me, my depth perception must be off again
'Cause this hurts deeper than I thought it did
It has not healed with time
It just shot down my spine

You look so beautiful tonight
Remind me how you laid us down
And gently smiled before you destroyed my life

Would you find it in your heart?
To make this go away
And let me rest in pieces (Let me rest in pieces)

Would you find it in your heart?
To make this go away
And let me rest in pieces (Let me rest in pieces)

Look at me, my depth perception must be off again
You got much closer than I thought you did
I'm in your reach
You held me in your hands

Would you find it in your heart?
To make this go away
And let me rest in pieces (Let me rest in pieces)

-Saliva “Rest In Pieces”

End Notes

Poor Tony, CA:CW has given me soooo many feels, it even pulled me back to this fandom after nearly two years of hairy dwarf butts XP

Speaking of... I think the universe doesn't want me writing. Over a year since I've been in the right head space to write, and the day I finally wrote again for the first time in over a year, my parents house got broken into and my mom had a significant reaction to her chemo meds. But I did get this out and I'm hoping to continue.
I am still not considering The Road Less Traveled to be abandoned but that may be my own stubbornness at this point.

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