By Any Other Name

by zarabithia

Summary

Alone in the 21st century, Steve found comfort through the memories of orphanage fantasies, back alley confessions, and the sigh of his name on Bucky's lips.

Notes

Written for Porn Battle prompts of "comfort, war time, soldier, quiet and loss."

Steve used to think that anything as simple as a name could never matter that much. He'd had plenty of reasons to develop a pretty thick skin about names, as a whole - it was amazing the kind of things bullies could call you when their their fists were covered with your blood and snot.

But the war had changed Steve's ideas about how things should be. Before the war, the only person who had mattered, the only person left, was Bucky.

During the war, there were a great deal many more who truly did matter, who were his friends just as much (if not quite as deeply) as Bucky had ever been. There were many who Steve respected much more than he'd ever respected anyone he'd ever met in a back alley.

But those people, matter as they did ... rarely addressed him by his name. The people who mattered called him by the formal address of "Captain" or "Rogers," or even the slightly less formal, but still not quite right, "Cap." Peggy and Bucky were the only two exceptions to that rule, and the thrill he got each time one of them actually used his name would have given the man he'd
been before the war good cause to roll his eyes.

It was ridiculous. Steve would have agreed with his younger self about that assessment.

It wasn't only ridiculous to be having such a fuss over something as silly as a name. No, it was also ridiculous because Steve knew this was what he'd wanted. He'd tried so hard, for so long, to be a soldier. He had utterly no right to complain for a second that people were treating him like one.

So he didn't complain. He did his job and he stood straight when his rank was used, and answered when Phillips barked his last name, and smiled at the Commandos when they used their affectionate nickname towards him.

And on the occasions when he was very lucky, when there was a spare moment, he crawled into a bed next to a man who had to be reminded not to say *Steve* too loudly.

"But I don't like being quiet," Bucky complained, his fingers running along the red lengths of Steve's costume.

"You'd rather be kicked out of the army?" Steve answered.

"I don't like your costume. Too hard to get you out of," Bucky answered, ignoring the reminder of what they were risking. At least, it appeared to Steve that Bucky was ignoring it; Steve could see no sign that his heartbeat had increased the way Steve's always did when they were taking this chance.

But Bucky had always been brave; wasn't that why the army had wanted him first?

And, as Bucky had told Steve once, in that small alley that seemed so far away now, this was a *war*. Wars involved taking all types of risks.

Some things were more worth risks than others, and Bucky had always been in that category.

So, even though Steve's heart thumped loudly enough against his chest that he was certain the rest of his team could hear it from across the base, he helped Bucky's fumbling and impatient fingers remove both of their costumes.

And although he never stopped straining to hear footsteps nearing the locked door, Steve continued to take risks as he rubbed against Bucky, using first his groin and then his hands to draw forth each treasured gasp, kiss, bite, and whispered dirty encouragement.

Bucky's mouth had always been dirty. In their crowded little orphanage, that mouth had told filthy stories about girls Bucky wanted, and how he wanted them, and every single detail about how he wanted to make them squirm underneath him. Later, away from the orphanage, Bucky's smirk had taken on a daring snarl as he confessed that maybe it wasn't going to be a girl, after all.

Behind that dare had been a very real worry, for a potential loss of a best friend who hadn't yet confessed his own longing.

Steve thought of that confession each time they took this risk - each time Bucky stopped squirming and stiffened, pressing his face into Steve's neck to muffle his own voice.

Always muffled, but always clear, thanks to the serum.

"*Steve.*"
Later, when Bucky and Peggy were gone, and the only people Steve had in his life were people who offered sarcastic addresses of "Captain" in vain stabs at superiority that Steve had no reason to fight them for, Steve would once again retreat to his room for the kind of hidden comfort only his best friend could have given.

And alone in the 21st century, Steve found that comfort through the memories of orphanage fantasies, back alley confessions, and the sigh of his name on Bucky's lips.

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