

At War With The World

Avengers One-Shot Series

Von _Kima_

Kapitel 2: Clint: Frost

He's cold.

He constantly is and he doesn't really like it. In fact, he hates it. Even in the midst of a heated battle, he is so very cold and he feels like he is losing his mind all over again. Maybe he has never regained it in the first place, not after Loki poked him with that scepter or whatever the hell it was, and he is now doomed to freeze to death from the inside or something. Clint shudders from the thought and pulls the blankets up to his chin.

He is lying in his bed in the Avengers mansion, trying to shut off his brain, fighting off the cold in his mind. Is that even possible? He doesn't know but it certainly feels like it.

The others have no idea. At least he thinks they don't because nobody has said anything since he's back from Loki's Legion of Doom but then again, maybe they're just being nice. Clint has to fight back a smile – no, Tony Stark is incapable of being nice. They probably really don't know and it's okay that way. Or is it?

He's lying in his bed and he's *freezing* and even with all the blankets he's got, he still feels like he's on the freakin' North Pole, naked. Clint groans and buries his head in the pillows (he's got three because Natasha likes pillows in bed and he likes Natasha, so that's settled). He wants to sleep. He really wants to and he's not Bruce or Tony who can go without sleep for what feels like weeks and he's not Steve, either, who claims to have slept enough in the last seventy years. Clint *needs* to sleep because he has missed at least three targets on practice today and the only reason Natasha hasn't called him out on it yet is because she's away to Washington with Tony, still pretending to be his assistant. He can't keep doing this, lying awake at night and staring up at the ceiling because he can feel the ice and the frost creeping inside his heart and his mind, he can't keep doing this because the Avengers depend on him and his marksmanship. What kind of a master archer is he if he keeps missing his targets because he lacks sleep?

Clint groans again and screws his eyes shut and shivers under four blankets. He feels like he's eight years old again, alone and miserable and sick and so very weak and why won't his brain just shut up and let him sleep? He has no idea what time it is and in the

dark of the night, the freezing blue he can still see seeping from his body is even more terrifying. And cold, so very, very cold.

Maybe it's because he's tired – maybe it's because she's been trained to be silent and efficient in what she does, but Clint doesn't hear her steps on the floor and doesn't notice her presence until he can feel the mattress move. He starts, his hand already on the knife he keeps hidden in the bed sheets, when he hears her say his name.

"Clint." He relaxes instantly. She crawls under one of his blankets, rests her head on two of the three pillows, her beautiful red hair sprawled around her head, and looks at him.

"Back already?" he asks and she flashes him half a smile.

"You know Stark – he insulted everyone at least twice and after that, they were only too happy to let us go." Clint grins. She studies his face for a moment before looking at his blankets and asks,

"Cold again?" So she has noticed, then.

"Hm." His grunt is enough of an answer for her. She shuffles closer, hugging him, and presses a quick kiss to his forehead.

It's almost like Budapest, only this time she holds him while he's desperately trying to fall asleep. A last, shocking wave of cold washes over him and his whole body shivers violently – and then it's over. He can feel the warmth of her almost naked body pressed against his and suddenly, he isn't cold anymore.

With a sigh, Clint closes his eyes, her lips still touching his forehead, and drifts away.