This War Of Mine - "In war, not everyone is a soldier."

Summary

The war-torne city of Arkadia is just a ghost of what was once Abby Griffin's house. The only still functional Hospital of the city is now her home. She must survive to save more people she can. But everything is harder since her husband has been executed for a "dangerous behaviour". Marcus Kane is the General of the Army she has to face everyday, there to protect her and the civilians from snipers, scavengers and bandits.

Outside is hell, the night is the only moment people can search for food and medicines, doing everything to survive. Will all of them survive? Or will this war survive them?
Notes

Inspired from the game "This War Of Mine"

Introduction of the characters.

Six months since the first bomb.

Five months since Jake Griffin died.
The pain.
It started to spread rapidly all over her spine burning and biting her flesh, her breath caught in her throat, she tried to inhale and exhale deeply, but she couldn't, she tried to yell but her scream died in the knot that was closing her throat, preventing her from breathing normally.

*What is happening?* She thought.

And then it hit her, her mind ordered her legs to move, and she realized that the left one wasn't able to do that.

*What is this?* Her mind started to work fast around those thoughts.

Her heart was exploding in her chest, the pain in her back was atrocious, her eyes were filled with tears, she was panting heavily.

*What happened to me?* Her mind cried out.

And then finally her voice freed itself and escaped her lips, a long scream flew into the silence around her. The cold room around her reverberated with it, and hot salty tears started to roll down her cheeks.

“Help me!” she yelled. She knew it wasn't a good idea to yell like that, she knew it well, but what was she supposed to do? The pain was *unbearable*.

Then was when the metallic door opened, and someone entered the room.

“We need help over here, Abby!”

Someone yelled, Raven turned her head toward the voice.

“What happened? Help me! I can't feel my leg, help me please!”

She sobbed, tears rolling frantically down her eyes, drenching the white blankets around her body. She hadn't yet had the courage to lift them.
“It’s ok, we are gonna help you, it’s ok.” the young man said. Raven shook her head, the pain was pulsing incessantly in her back, her eyes burning, her head spinning.

“Help me!!” she snapped, yelling with all the strength she had left. Then was when her body collapsed, her mind faded to black, her eyes closed, and she crashed on the bed.

Bellamy & Octavia

Location: Blake’s House

Days without food: One

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

“You don't wanna do this son, trust me!” the soldier yelled, his voice low, it reverberated in her head.

“Let her go, please, take me, but let her go!” Bellamy pleaded. She couldn't see him but she could hear his voice, he was suppressing a sob.

“No, leave him alone!” her mother said, her voice was so familiar, and yet the way it was trembling scared her to death.

“Follow me Ma'am.” the soldier ordered, and then was when it happened, heavy steps on the floor upon her head, then something crashed on the wooden panels, throwing dust in her blue eyes.
“No Bellamy don't!” her mother yelled, then a gunshot, it was so loud and yet so fast, her brain registered it and deleted it in the same instant.

“No! You bastard! No!” her brother's voice roared to life again, and at that she curled up in a ball, hiding her head in her hands, her legs pressed against her chest as a protective shield. “You are a brave girl, aren't you?” her mother's words still echoed in her memory.

After several minutes spent with her palms pressed to her ears to shut off any noise, the floor creaked to life again, and then someone opened the panel.

“No!” she yelled, crying, already pleading for her life. “You are a brave girl, you are a brave girl.” Her mind kept encouraging her.

“It's ok O, it's me.” Bellamy's voice reached her ears. At that she looked up instinctively. He was kneeling down, offering her his warm hand. She took it immediately and he helped her out.

“Bell, what happened?” she asked, crashing against his chest, hiding herself into his familiar scent. He wrapped his arms around her.

“We need to get out of here, now!” he whispered, she looked up at him frowning, he withdrew and started to move fast around the house, collecting everything he founded on his path, throwing in a bag some food, some water, two jackets, a pair of shoes.

“Mum doesn't want us to use them, they are there in case of emergency, you can't take them.” she said, her arms covering her trembling body. Bellamy froze and looked at her. And in that moment she spotted the bodies on the floor, right in front of the door, behind her brother's shadow. The color of the shirt, the long black hair, the tiny shape. It was unmistakable.

“No...” she whispered, her voice was cracking under the weight of her emotions, her mind started to spin, her eyes were already filled with burning tears, her heart started to beat frantically. “No, please no...”

Bellamy took several steps toward her and then wrapped his arms around her. “I'm sorry O.” he whispered in her hair. Octavia said nothing, her breath caught in her throat, she started to sob, heavy tears rolled down her cheeks, her heart broke into pieces, her mind was able to form just one thought.
No, no, no, no, no...please no.

Clarke

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Zero

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

“This isn't a good idea.” she whispered, while looking at the old man on the bed in front of her.

“I know, but it’s so good, and your mother doesn't want me to eat it, but if I'm gonna die, I want to have some chocolate first.” he said, smiling at her, his old eyes were pleading her. Clarke bowed her head, hiding a smile.

“First of all, you are not gonna die, my mother will never let you die, trust me Conrad.” she said, smiling kindly. The old man chuckled.

“I would love that princess, but unfortunately we both now that I'm too old to survive this, and your mother needs all the supplies she can have for the youngest.” he smiled at her, his voice calm. He knew very well what his fate was, and he wasn't gonna complain about it. Clarke felt a pang in her chest.

Don't you dare start crying Clarke. She warned herself.
“So? Are you gonna help me with this last thing? The last wish?” he said again, smiling at her, his face warming up her heart. Clarke nodded, trying to suppress a sob. “Don't cry princess, your smile is so beautiful, you should smile more” Conrad said and Clarke chuckled.

“Ok, ok, you got me, I will bring you some chocolate.” she said, standing up from her chair. The old man's smile grew brighter.

“That's my girl! Be careful, your mother would literally kill me if she finds out.” he chuckled. Clarke laughed and left the room.

She walked toward the storage room where most of their supplies were left, a watery smile on her face. “You should smile more.” his words circling in her head, leaving a heaviness on her heart that she wasn't able to lift anymore.

“Hey Clarke, you're ok?” Monty's voice reached her ears and she turned back. He was sitting on a chair, reading an old comic book, his black hair falling on his dark almond eyes.

“Hey yes, I just...had a talk with Conrad.” she said, bowing her head, toying with her fingers. Monty smiled.

“He asked you for some chocolate uh?” he asked, one eyebrow raised. Clarke looked up, blushing.

“You know that?” she asked, lowering her tone in case her mother was around, Monty chuckled.

“Oh yes, he asked me too sometimes, and trust me, I would love to help that man but your mother scares the hell out of me when she is mad.” he said, grinning slightly and Clarke chuckled.

“Oh yes, she is scary and she knows that.” they both burst out laughing at that, then he looked at the end of the hallway.

“Go now that your mother isn't here, I'll cover you.” he whispered. At that, Clarke sneaked inside the storage room and took one little chocolate bar from a blue box.

“Got it?” his voice reached her. “Yes.” she said back, then stepped outside the room, closing
quietly the door behind her back.

They shared a knowing look and then she walked toward Conrad's room. Then was when a scream filled the hallways.

“Help me!” it was coming from a room to the left, where she knew a new patient was resting. Suddenly Jackson was rushing inside of it “We need help over here, Abby!” he yelled.

Then her mother appeared from the corner, running toward the screaming patient, meanwhile Monty approached her.

“Hey what you think is going on there?” she asked. Her friend shook his head. “I have no idea.” he said, frowning.

“But don't worry, your mother will take care of it, go inside and give him the chocolate he deserves.” he smiled, Clarke nodded and entered the room, casting a last look toward the room, where now a defibrillator was being pushed inside.

“Hey girl, is everything alright out there?” the old man asked her as soon as she was inside again. Clarke nodded, closing the door behind her back.

“Yes, someone needs help but my mother is already there” - she said - “and look what I have here.” she added with a smile, showing him the chocolate bar. Conrad smiled back.

“Oh princess, you are so kind to me.” he said, already stretching out a hand to take it, but Clarke withdrew it before he could reach it.

“T'm gonna give you a piece of it, just a piece, we don't want you to get worse, right?” she said, pointing her index finger toward him. Conrad pouted as a little kid.

“Ok... but you will not take that away, right?” he asked her as she broke a piece of it. “No, but I will check how much you will eat. If you feel sick then my mother will know who helped you. She knows Monty is too afraid of her to do something like that, and Jackson surely would never do that, I mean, what kind of doctor would do that, right?” she said, offering him the sweet square of chocolate.
“Oh you're right, I don't want you to get in trouble.” he said, sniffing at the chocolate in his fingers. “This is heaven, literally.” he said and Clarke smiled, sitting down on the chair.

“My mother loves it too, she always loved chocolate, just like dad.” she said, wrapping the silver foil around the rest of the bar.

“Great parents if you want my opinion.” he smiled kindly, biting at the dark sweet. “This is good.” he whispered, a content expression blossoming on his face. Clarke smiled back, her heart growing with a warm feeling.

“I'm glad you like it.” she whispered. Conrad nodded, looking at her.

“Hey princess, you're ok?” he asked her, while taking another bite. Clarke blinked and then nodded, but the old man frowned.

“Don't lie to me girl, I know you, what's wrong?” he asked her, sitting up, straightening his back and swallowing the bite of chocolate rapidly. Clarke sighed out.

“It's nothing... and it's everything...” she said, looking at the gray floor of the room. It was so dark in there, but the window was broken, and since they couldn’t risk patients getting the flu, the soldiers had heavy wooden panels fixed on it, but it was sad to not even have the view of the sun in there. It was always so gray and cold, but after all outside wasn't any better.

“I'm so sorry, Clarke.” he said suddenly and she looked up.

“It’s not your fault, Conrad.” she said, smiling sadly, and the old man sighed out heavily.

“I know, but I feel responsible, you are so young, you shouldn't be living this hell, we should have offered you a better future. And your father didn't deserve that... and your mother is always doing so much for us. That woman is an angel.” he said, looking at her with his black eyes, that seemed to be carrying thousands of stories coming from a past she had never seen. Clarke smiled and bowed her head toward the floor.

“We should all be better, but apparently... the human race can't do better. And about my father... I
know who to blame for that, and that for sure isn't you.” she said, looking at him again, Conrad smiled sadly. “Don't let the anger grow into you kiddo, you deserve more than that.” he eventually said, sharing a sad smile with her.

They fell silent after that, him quietly savoring his chocolate, her silently studying the floor of the room, trying to escape that world spinning around her, even if just for a moment.

But the hardest thing there, was to forget about the war around, because it was all life was about now.
Chapter Summary

Inspired from the game "This War Of Mine"

Introduction of the characters.

Six months since the first bomb.

Five months since Jake Griffin died.

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The Adults

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Jackson

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Zero

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

He remembered the first bomb, the sound of it still echoed in his head. The silence after it though, that was the thing that he couldn't forget.

“When you hear a scream it means someone is alive, it's when you hear nothing that you need to worry.”

Abby Griffin had said to him, warm hands pressing with worry over his shaking shoulders, when she had found him there, outside his first bombed house, trying to understand how to help everybody. He was still training when the war had started, but Abby had never left his side. Since the beginning she was right where he needed her to be, supportive, gentle, caring, she was the kind of doctor he wanted to be one day.
But what was he going to be now?

“Hey Jackson, you're good?” Abby’s voice silenced his thoughts and dragged him back to reality, Jackson looked at her. She smiled, her brown eyes warm and welcoming.

“Yeah, I was just... thinking.” he said, nodding. She frowned.

“Thinking about what?” she asked, while filling the medical records about the new patient they had found that morning in an abandoned house, with an injured leg. She would never be able to use it again, and she didn’t know it yet.

“Nothing, just... life these days, you know? The war, the bombs, our patients.” he said, roaming his eyes over the hallways around him, the closed doors that were hiding injured people, so many people died there during the past six months.

“Don't go there Jackson.” she said suddenly, resting a hand on his shoulder, once again comforting and warm. He looked back at her.

“Don't lose yourself in those thoughts, not now, it’s not helpful.” she whispered, squeezing her hand around the fabric of his shirt.

“I know... it's hard, but you're right Abby, as always.” he nodded, and she bowed her head.

“I'm just older Jackson. This is what we are here for, help the youngest the best that we can.” she said, smiling kindly. Jackson chuckled.

“You're not that old Abby, you know? And I'm not a kid.” he said, tilting his head. She bit at her lower lip, smiling sombrely.

“You're right, you are a man.” she said, squeezing his shoulder again, and at that Jackson invited her in his arms.
“Hey, don't make that sad face to me.” he whispered in her hair once she was in his embrace. She chuckled.

He kissed her forehead before letting her go. She smiled deeply.

“I need to check on Jeff, let me know if you need help with anything.” she said eventually, patting him on the back before disappearing inside of the room to her right.

He smiled and nodded. After several minutes of quiet calm, as he was filling other papers that were waiting on the table, a scream broke the silence.

“Help me!” it was coming from the new patient's room. Jackson rushed toward it, slammed the door open and saw her, crying, panting, visibly in pain.

“We need help over here, Abby!”

He yelled, then walked inside the room. The girl widened her eyes, tears were streaming down her bronze skin.

“What happened? Help me! I can't feel my leg, help me please!”

She sobbed and yelled, trying to regain control of her breathing without succeeding. Jackson lowered his tone, approaching her slowly, trying to calm his own racing heart. The girl was scared, he had the duty to help her.

“It's ok, we are gonna help you, it's ok.” he said. She shook her head, her skin reddening. She wasn't breathing properly.

“Help me!!” she snapped then, with a last breath, then her eyes rolled in the back of her head, her muscles tensed, and she collapsed on the bed.

Jackson rushed toward her, while Abby run inside the room “What happened?” she asked, her eyes widening when she saw the girl lying rigid on the mattress.
“Bring me a defibrillator!” She yelled. Someone pushed it inside of the room after a few seconds. She immediately took control over the machine and Jackson shifted position, making room for her.

“One, two, three, clear!” the machine buzzed to life, the girl's body reacted to the rush of electricity, jerking on the bed “One, two, three, clear!” she yelled again. Luckily this time, when the electric shock reached the girl’s heart, she jerked and gasped for new air, her lungs stretching inside of her chest, forcing new oxygen inside, pumping it into her veins, desperate for relief.

“Ok, it's ok, it's ok.” Abby started saying in loop, setting the machine aside and raising the girl's head, adjusting her body on the mattress. “It's ok, you're fine.” she kept whispering. Meanwhile Jackson stood motionless. When Abby was sure that the girl was breathing correctly again, still unconscious on the bed, she looked at him.

“Are you ok Jackson?” she asked him. He blinked and cleared his throat, nodding slightly. She frowned, but didn't question him any further. With her stethoscope she checked the girl's heartbeat and then sighed out.

“Ok, she is stable, but I need someone here to check on her since we don't have enough echocardiographs to do that. Is it ok for you to stay here while I finish with my patient's tour?” she asked him, while already moving toward the hallways. Jackson nodded.

“Yes, yes, of course.” he said, nodding mostly to himself than to her.

“Ok, good, I'll be back as soon as I can.” she said, disappearing outside of the door.

With that Jackson was left alone with the girl, that was now silently sleeping on the bed. Her chest was rising and falling, she was calm now, and so he could let out a breath he had been holding since he had entered the room.

What happened? He started asking himself. I panicked, I couldn't move, or do something. I'm a useless doctor. What if Abby wasn't here? She was gonna die.

His mind kept torturing him with an endless loop of heavy thoughts, the weight of his responsibilities crashing over him, and he found himself sobbing on a chair, in the corner of the room.
You are healing quickly Lauren, that's good, you'll recover in record time.” said Abby, writing down the info on the medical records of the woman.

“Are you sure? You're sure I don't need more time to heal?” the woman asked her suddenly, voice trembling, hands gripping at the yellowish blankets draped over her slim body. Abby looked up at her, frowning.

“Yes I am sure, you're in good health Lauren, aren't you happy about it?” she said, smiling kindly, but the woman bowed her head, and bit at her lower lip. Abby left the papers on the table behind her and took a few steps toward her.

“What's wrong Lauren? Talk to me.” she said, resting a comforting hand over her shoulder and one on her hands, joined over her lap. The woman looked up at her, watery eyes, and when she started talking her voice cracked.

“He said that as soon as we were good again we had to leave. I will never survive out there Abby, never.” she said, her shoulders started to tremble under Abby's touch. Lauren's words circled in her mind. He said. She knew that he could be just one person, and that was enough for her to know exactly where to go.

“Give me a minute Lauren.” she murmured. Anger already growing in her chest, her veins pumping
blood toward her legs, pushing her into one specific direction. She rushed outside the room, jaw clenched, walking fast toward the Hospital entrance, where she was sure to find him.

“How dare you?” she snapped at the man standing just outside the building, without even introducing herself, casting an angry look at a soldier who flinched at the sound of her voice, raising his rifle toward her by instinct.

The tall man turned, a smug grin already printed on his face. “Hello to you too, Abigail.” he said, gesturing to his guards to stand down. “You need something?” he asked her, crossing his arms over his chest.

Abby glared at him. “You said to my patients that you will kick them out of the building as soon as they feel better? How dare you decide something like that?” she snapped again, hands on her hips. Anger was increasing her heartbeat, making it hard for her to breathe properly and to keep her from slapping the man standing few feet from her now.

The soldier grinned and then took a few steps toward her, violating her personal space. “I just did my job Abigail.” he said, looking her straight in the eyes, his dark glare settled heavily over her. He was very tall and it was easy for him to make you feel small. She was used to her late husband, but with him it was different: Jake had a kind smile and a warm gaze to compensate the height difference, this man was everything but kind or warm.

She raised her chin, and stiffened her back. “You don't have the power to decide when my patients have to leave the hospital. I'm the doctor here, is that clear enough?” she growled. At that he smirked, a soldier behind him snorted, another one chuckled throatily.

“If I was in you Michaelson I wouldn't mock me, otherwise who do you think will help you again with hemorrhoids the next time, uh?” she snorted, and the young man fell silent, blushing hard. The other soldiers laughed quietly, and Abby focused again on the man in front of her.

Sir, she seems really angry, you should listen to her.” the latter said with a giggle. At that Abby glared at him, her eyes like burning fires.

“If I was in you Michaelson I wouldn't mock me, otherwise who do you think will help you again with hemorrhoids the next time, uh?” she snorted, and the young man fell silent, blushing hard. The other soldiers laughed quietly, and Abby focused again on the man in front of her.

“Go back to work Abigail, this isn't any of your business,” he hissed, leaning even closer, but Abby wasn't gonna let it drop that easily, and the look on his face told her he knew that very well.

“Oh I think it is Kane, you perfectly know how dangerous it is out there. Don't you even try to tell me that these are the orders, because I know how easy it is to buy some guards.” she finally said, raising an accusatory eyebrow.
Behind him the soldiers started to shift awkwardly on their feet. Kane sighed out and rubbed a hand over his face. “Why is it always like this with you Abigail?” he said, and she chuckled bitterly. “It wouldn’t be funny otherwise, right?” she said, crossing her arms over her chest. Kane looked at her and chuckled sadly, shaking his head.

“You really don't get the point, right doctor? Well let me explain it to you again. We can't afford to have too many people inside, they are using rooms we could use for other patients, you understand that? We can't let them occupy those beds without reason.” he said, his hands on his hips. His black jacket stretched around his muscles. Abby glared deeply at him and stepped inside of his personal space, pressinf her index finger over his uniform.

“The reason why they need to stay here is to survive Kane. If we will let them go they will surely die, why can't you get that?” she hussed, lowering her tone, so that he and only he could hear her. At that he snorted and took her by the arm almost violently, dragging her inside of the hospital.

“Hey what are you doing? Let me go!” she complained, but he squeezed harder her tiny harm, then pushed her in an empty corner of the hallway. When they stopped she was already opening her mouth, ready to complain about the gesture, but Kane was faster, pointing his index finger to her face, forcing her to swallow back her retort.

“You don't understand how bad it is for you to keep behaving like that Abby.” he hissed. She glared at him and opened her mouth again, but he preceded her. “You can't just keep demanding and complaining, or I will no longer be able to help you, can't you see that?” he whispered.

Abby frowned. “Help me? How the hell are you helping me? You are just going around ordering things, scaring my patients to death. If this is your way to help me, well let me say you are doing an awful job!” she snapped, slapping his hand away from her face, pushing him backwards.

“You are always thinking to be the good guys here, but you are doing nothing more than protecting your own ass!” she hissed. At that Kane glared at her. “We are protecting you all, it’s hell out there!” he groaned, and Abby laughed bitterly. “Exactly Kane, it’s hell out there, but you have no problems when it comes to pushing civilians into that hell, right? Because their lives are worth less than yours and the ones of your soldiers!”

She was yelling now and she was sure someone was gonna hear that. Kane pressed a hand on her shoulder, pushing her back against the wall “I'm doing my best to make sure that people stay alive” he snapped, glaring at her fiercely. Abby widened her eyes. “That's the difference between us Kane. I'm doing my best to make sure we deserve to stay alive!”
He inhaled deeply, opening his mouth to say something back, when new steps echoed in the hallway behind their backs. “Is everything ok Abby?” Jackson's voice reached them. Abby shook her head, looked at Kane for a long quiet moment and then stepped away from him. “Yes” she said, looking at him one last time. “We're not finished yet” she hissed in his ear, then walked past him.

“Hey, you ok?” Jackson asked her, lowering his tone, as soon as she was close enough. “Yes, I'm ok” she said back, casting a last glance at Kane, whom was now rubbing his chin with a frown engraved over his forehead.

His eyes told her everything she needed to know. “We're not finished yet for sure Abigail”.

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**Marcus**

**Location: Arkadia Central Hospital**

- **Days without food**: Zero
- **Days without sleep**: Three
- **Health**: Tired

His head was pounding painfully, but it was always like that when Abby was concerned. Their arguments left him empty, his mouth dry, a bitter taste on his tongue. He walked toward the nearest bathroom and closed the door vehemently behind his back.

*Why can’t you see that I’m doing my best here?* He thought again, rubbing his hands on his tired eyes.

*I need to sleep.* He told himself, looking at his reflection in the broken mirror on the wall. His black eyes were circled by swollen and greyish skin, that warned him he couldn't go on like that
any longer without collapsing.

The smuggled coffee and alcohol weren't enough to keep him on his feet anymore. His legs felt heavy, his feet were glued to the ground and his head was spinning endlessly.

He huffed, splashed cold water on his face, and clenching his jaw, he walked out of the bathroom. The hallway was almost empty, the howling wind was sneaking inside from various holes in the building. Winter was coming and he didn't know how they were going to manage with it if they couldn't fix them.

“Hey, you need something?” Abby’s young assistant asked him suddenly. Marcus looked at him and frowned. “No, why do you ask?” the young man glared at him. “I was just checking, if you don't need medical assistance then you can go.” he said, his eyebrows furrowed. Marcus shook his head.

“You know that I am the head of the guards here right?” he asked rethoricaly, hands on the hips. The young man grimaced. “Yeah, well” – he took several steps toward him – “your uniform scares the patients, and this isn't helping for the healing process, so it’s better if you just stay out there. This is a safe zone.” he said, gesturing to their surroundings.

Marcus nodded, pursing his lips. “Oh I see, you talked to Abby.” he said. Her name tasted bitter on his tongue. The man snorted, “We all heard you sir, you can't talk like that to her without us knowing.” he said, casting a last glare toward him, before turning on his heels and walk away. “You better go now, trust me.” he said before disappearing inside of a room just behind the corner.

At that Marcus shook his head again, sighing out.

Unbelievable. He thought, walking outside the building.

“Hey sir, is everything in order?” Michaelson asked him once he was out of the building again. Marcus nodded. “Yes everything is in order, now if you would excuse me, I need to rest.” he said, heading toward the tent just outside the Hospital. The soldier took a step back, nodding respectfully, “Goodnight sir.” he said. Marcus nodded and sneaked into the green old tent the government provided them with.

Once inside, the rest of the world fell quiet. For a moment it seemed almost possible to feel alone. But then some far away gunshots reminded him of the world around him. He sat down on the dark
green sleeping bed and took off his shoes.

*It's gonna be a cold night.* He thought while covering his body with the dark fabric. He rested his head on a shirt that served as a pillow and closing his eyes he let out the last heavy breath of the day.

*That's the difference between us Kane. I'm doing my best to make sure we deserve to stay alive!*

Her voice echoed in his head as soon as his eyelids closed. He tried to chase it away, but instead it was replaced by her face, her burning gaze on him, her pursed lips, then her straight back, her raised chin. All of her tiny body came to life in his mind, reminding him of her completely.

*Leave me alone.* He pleaded, but she was now smirking in his head.

*“You will never get rid of me Kane, and you know that.”*

Her projection whispered, and he knew she was right. Even in his mind, even in his subconscious, Abby Griffin was right.

*“We're not finished yet!”* her voice echoed.

*And we will never be.* His mind added.
Chapter Summary

When it's Halloween night and a kid is there to remind everyone about what life should still be about.

Chapter Notes

For this beautiful fanart I have to thank the amazing Oricyaa (Flavia) here the link to the original post: https://twitter.com/paigeturcoita/status/878578359739060225
October 31st

Abby

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: One

Days without sleep: One

Health: Good
“Halloween, it's Halloween mum!” a little girl yelled, rushing inside the room where Abby was checking the third patient of the morning. The girl climbed on the bed, jumping on the mattress with a giant smile on her face “Halloween mum!” her keen voice filled the cold soulless room.

“Hey Lynn, the doctor is trying to work here, don't jump on the bed like that, especially with your shoes on” the mother, named Elizabeth, said mouthing an “I'm sorry” toward her. Abby shook her head smiling, writing down on a paper the patient's conditions. She was healing pretty good.

The woman had came three days ago with a concussion, she had fallen from a great height while trying to reach a stair in an abandoned house where she and a group of other three women, all of them with children, were trying to find a shelter for the night. But luckily for her the damages weren't that bad, a broken wrist was the worst one.

“So Lynn, you like Halloween?” Abby asked to the kid, while the woman was stroking lovingly her hair. “It's the best day of the year!” she yelled, raising her hands toward the ceiling in happiness.

“She always loved it, especially the candies” Elizabeth said, winking at the kid who giggled, hiding her face behind her palms. Abby smiled. “Clarke loved it too when she was a kid, she loved dressing up as a princess, with the crown and everything” she said, throwing the white gloves she was wearing in the trash, swallowing hard at the memory of her daughter dressed as a pink shining princess, all giggling and blushing, while Jake hugged her, whispering that she was the most beautiful princess in the world.

“She doesn't like it anymore?” Lynn asked, silencing the old memory, tilting her head, curiosity coloring her voice. Abby sighed “She isn't a kid anymore, she likes different things now” she said, nodding to the kid. “Oh, I will always love it, it will always be my favorite day of the year” she said, crashing her body on her mother's chest, who petted her on the head, with a warm smile on her lips.

“I hope you will honey” said Abby, smiling at Elizabeth. They shared a long knowing look. “I need to check on other patients now, see you later” she said to the woman, who nodded and kissed her daughter on the head. “Enjoy your mum Lynn” she added. The girl smiled and nodded, while squeezing her mother tightly.

While the door closed itself behind her back, the kid's voice reached her one last time “Halloween mum, Halloween!” at that Abby smiled. The joy kids were able to keep with them was rare and she loved to be showered with it when they were around. Listening to their happy voices, learning about their favorite memories and fairytale made her feel as if a better future was still possible, as if the horizon wasn't hidden behind dark thick smoke and dozens of burning fires, as if life was still beating quietly under the rubbles of what was once their world.
She was walking, a tiny smile on her lips, her mind flying in faraway and intimate places, when the sound of heavy steps, that she knew very well, approached her from behind. She kept her pace, without turning back, pretending to be reading something really important on the medical records she had in her hands. She kept ignoring the shadow behind her while the steps kept echoing. When she turned toward an empty hallway, where the rooms were inaccessible because mostly destroyed, she stopped and the steps stopped with her. She turned her head then, while chewing the tip of her pen nervously.

“Are you tracking me Kane?” she snapped, raising an eyebrow. The tall soldier smirked, his hands clasped behind his back, his black boots squeaked on the dusty floor while he approached her. “I'm tracking everybody Abby” he whispered, his black eyes fell on the papers she was holding.

*Does this man know what privacy is?* She thought.

“Yeah, allow me to doubt that” she said, pressing the pages against her chest, hiding them from his view. “So? What do you want?” she asked him, raising her chin in defiance, trying to compensate the height difference between them.

Kane pursed his lips, looking at their surroundings “I was wondering when Miss Reyes will leave her room, since last time I checked, she was eating in her bed, breathing fine, pretty much alive” he said, leaning his head toward her, his breath reached her nose, it smelled as strong coffee and what was presumably real old alcohol. She suppressed the need to grimace in disgust.

“Why do you care? We have enough rooms for other patients, your soldiers fixed other two windows on the second floor if I remember correctly” she said, smiling innocently at him. Kane remained quiet, his face expressionless, his eyes fixed on hers. “Don't play games with me Abby, you know that we need all the space we can have” he whispered.

“Yes I know, and I already told you what I think about it” she said, taking another step toward him, showing him she wasn't afraid to overstep his personal space. He nodded “Yeah... and that's why I'm asking you, and I would like to receive an answer, when Miss Reyes will leave her room?” he asked her again, taking another step, between them now there was such a tiny space that they could almost touch each other.

“She will when I will say that she can” Abby said, her eyes fixed on him. He inhaled deeply “Abby...” the sound of her name coming from his lips made her shiver, it felt wrong. “I answered your question Kane, now if you would excuse me, I have patients to see” she said, already walking away, when his hand grabbed her arm, forcing her to a stop. “Abby!” he almost yelled, his tone stern and cold, she closed her eyes, swallowing hard the insult that was already rolling down her tongue.
“What?” she asked, glaring at him. He squeezed her arm harder. “You have to tell her that she needs to leave her room, or I will, and you know it’s better if it’s you” he hissed at her. Abby felt the anger rising inside of her, but tried to swallow another bitter insult. “She can't use her left leg, she doesn't yet know how to walk properly, she refuses crouches, I can't let her go outside Kane, she needs help and we are doctors, we have to help her” she said finally, trying to move her arm away from his grip, but he tightened it, it was almost painful now. She snorted quietly.

“If she refuses it’s not your problem, we can't afford to waste time with patients that don’t want help! This isn't a recovery community, this is an hospital Abby, you did what you had to do, now let her go!” he said, his tone reverberated around her, increasing her anger. “She is not refusing help, she is afraid, she lost her leg's functions, she can no longer walk as she has done for her whole life, what would you do if it was your leg uh? How would you react at something like that?” she snapped, pulling her arm toward her, but his hands pushed her closer, his fingers closed as a cage around her forearm.

“Don't make me do this Abby, trust me, you don't want to make me angry” he hissed. Abby felt the burning anger rising in her belly, her heart was beating so fast that she thought he could hear it, she was so mad that her next words flew out of her lips without consent. “Otherwise what? You will kill me too? As you did with Jake? Breaking news Kane, you can't kill me, because you need me!” she said, and at that she saw it, the burning fire behind his irises extinguished and his grip on her arm loosened, until she could regain control of it. “Is that what you think of me?” he asked her, a low whisper. His tone had changed, now he sounded almost... hurt.

Good. She couldn't help but think.

“Why? You can do something else than killing innocent people Kane? You know what mercy, kindness or care is? You know anything of this?” he remained quiet, his eyes lost on her face, his lips parted. Abby took advantage of it. “Yeah, exactly. You don't know what these things are, because nobody taught you that probably, and I’m really sorry for it, because it must be an awful life, always following the rules someone else created for you, always hiding behind the law so that you can get rid of every people that are a threat to your perfect world made of death and desperation. Let me tell you that I really pity you, you think that what you're doing is heroic, that someone will give you a medal for it when all of this will be over. But nobody will do that Kane, because guess what? You will be dead when this will end, maybe it will be a bomb, maybe it will be a gunshot right through your chest’ - She said, pressing her index finger on his beating heart – “or maybe someone will kill you to steal some food. But one way or another you will die, and pray that I will not be the doctor you will come to if someone will hurt you, because I will probably be the one that will let you die then!” she finally said.

She was panting hard, and hadn’t realized how much her voice had raised while talking. She had followed the wave of anger, and she could see now, right on his face, the effect of her words.
“And now, if you could stop from trying to break my arm, I have patients to see” with that she walked fast away without turning back, without bothering to look behind. Leaving him there, alone, in the silence of that abandoned hallway, where everything was destroyed, cold and soulless.

*Just like him.*

“I'm doing my best here Raven” she whispered, her hand moved instinctively toward the girl's shoulder, but she flinched and withdrew, refusing the contact. Abby sighed out and bowed her head, massaging her forehead with one hand. She had spent the last three hours inside her room by now, the girl was refusing help, she was starting to refuse even food and water, and Abby was running out of options.

“I can't help you if you don't allow me to do it, don't you get that?” she said, looking at the girl sitting in front of her. Her black ponytail brushed her back while she turned slightly toward her, her brown eyes looked at her briefly then she smirked bitterly. “I don't want your help Doc” she snorted, focusing again on the floor underneath her feet.

Abby nodded to herself, standing up from the damaged chair that was supporting her weight. “I see, so what? You want to give up? That's what you want for your future Raven?” she said, crossing her arms over her chest, she was so tired and at this moment dealing with her was rising in her new waves of anger, but it wasn't her fault, she knew very well why she was angry, and it was because she couldn't help her, she couldn't give her a new leg. If she had been able to do that she would... but she simply couldn't.

“My future? What kind of future I have now uh?” she snapped, looking at her, her eyes reddened from the lack of sleep and the tears she had shed during the past weeks. Abby exhaled deeply and closed her eyes, swallowing hard. “There is still hope Raven” she whispered, looking at her again. The girl's face was expressionless at first, then anger started to blossom in her features.

“Oh is there? Really? What kind of hope? Outside there is war Abby, in case you haven't noticed, and there's no hope when there's war. Just bombs coming from the sky, just death and desperation, and like this” – she gestured to her damaged leg – “I am condemned to death!” she said, her voice brittle. She swallowed back an incoming sob.

“Raven, you can't really think that about yourself” she said, exhaustion running through her veins. She walked toward the girl, who was avoiding her gaze. “You are strong, smart, brilliant, young.
This is just... an accident, this will maybe slow you down but will not kill you Raven, you still can do many things, you're not useless” she whispered, trying to touch her shoulder again, trying to comfort her tormented soul, but the girl raised her eyes and Abby saw it, the new wave of anger rising again behind her dark brown irises..

“I can't run Abby! How am I supposed to survive out there? Snipers are just waiting for someone like me, I am a human target!” she snapped, punching the blankets under her body. Abby swallowed and exhaled, trying to regain control over her emotions, she was tired and it wasn't helping.

“You can survive this Raven, it’s up to you, you have to decide if you want to give up or if you want to survive. There's still hope, even if you can't see it, it’s there” she said, her voice trembling slightly at that. Raven looked up at her, her big eyes supporting the weight of her tears. “Oh really? And where is your hope in a dead kid? Or a bombed house? Or a shotgun in a leg? Where is your hope in the death all around you? Uh? Where is your hope Abby?” she said gutturally. Abby fell silent at that, and then she felt it, that hot burning wave growing inside her belly, that pushed her next words out of her lips.

“I need to have it Raven, I need to still have hope or I will never survive this, and I can't give up! I have to be strong, for my daughter, for myself, for everybody else. For every kid that wants to celebrate Halloween again, for every old man that dreams to go back to their beloveds, for every woman and man that just wants to go back home and build a new life again. I need to have hope, and don't you even try to destroy that, you can't take this away from me, you can't!” she finally said tautly, her throat closing around her words, her eyes burning with heavy tears. She blinked, some of them escaped her eyelids and rolled down her cheeks, her hands were shaking, her heart was pounding heavily in her head.

Control yourself Abby, it's not her fault, she’s just afraid. Her mind reminded her.

“I'm sorry” she whispered, her heart slowing down its pace, the knot inside of her throat loosening, her mind regaining control of her emotions. Raven was silent now, and was looking at her with her sad big eyes, some tears rolling down her tanned skin, her lips parted, her hands gripping the dirty blankets of her bed. Abby looked at her but remained quiet, respecting Raven's silence. They stayed like that for a few heavy minutes, looking at each other, eyes burning with hot painful tears, their hearts beating slowly in their chests.

“You're lucky” she suddenly said. Abby frowned “To still have hope, you're lucky” she whispered again, wiping away a few wild tears from her skin. With that she shifted her position, leaning her weight on her arms, pushing on the mattress to lift her torso, grabbing the motionless leg with one hand. Abby instinctively started to approach her, feeling the need to help, but Raven glared at her and it was enough. She withdrew, bowing her head.
She then started to walk toward the door, she couldn't do anything more now. “It's not about luck” she said, the door handle in her hand. “It's about surviving” she finally whispered, walking outside, closing the door behind her back, leaving the girl in her own silence, hoping in her heart one last time that she would come around, that she could still have a chance.

Heart heavy with sadness, she walked away, avoiding every other human around her, closing herself inside the nearest bathroom, pressing her back against the cold door, she opened up the gates and let go, she just let go, with every new tear she let go.

One tear, Jake's voice echoed in her memory and then faded.

One tear, Clarke's princess costume was vibrating with colors in her mind, then it blurred away.

One tear, her own laugh came to life in her ears and then turned into heavy silence.

One tear, and her beautiful house fell down into pieces on the ground, under the wave of an explosion.

One tear, and her heart broke into pieces.

One tear, and Raven's voice echoed in her head. “Where is your hope Abby?”

One tear, and she silently crashed on the floor, curled up in a ball, she let go, consuming everything she had left, letting it go away, flowing away from her into the salty tears that were now spreading on the dirty floor under her body.

Where is your hope Abby?

I need to have hope. Or I will never survive this.
“I want to be a witch!” Lynn said, nodding happily, a big smile on her lips. Clarke smirked, her hands entangled in the kid's hair. She was brushing her long brown locks, while talking about Halloween's costumes.

“And what kind of witch?” she asked her, while exchanging an amused look with Monty, who was sitting in front of them.

“Uhm...I don't know, how many kind of witches exist?” she asked. Clarke stopped, and raised an eyebrow toward Monty, who blinked and cleared his throat.

“Well...lots of them” he said, nodding, pursing his lips and faking an intense look. Clarke smirked and cleared her throat, while refocusing her attention toward the girl's hair. “Yeah, lots of them, for example the Northern Witches, you know? They dress in white and light blue dresses, they love the snow and the icy mountains” she said, while working on an obstinate knot in the girl's hair.

“Oh really?” Lynn asked, her voice vibrating with enthusiasm and curiosity, Monty nodded “Of course, and they love wolves, they live inside mountains and they stay up at night to admire the Aurora” he added, while nodding toward the little girl, who tilted her head, her hair escaping Clarke's grip.

“Stay still Lynn” she said, and the girl stiffened her back again. “So, do you want to be a Northern Witch?” she asked, while her fingers kept working on the knot. Lynn thought about it for a moment “Mh I don't know, what other types exist?” she asked, directly to Monty. He remained silent for a moment, then stood up from the chair.

“Well the Rain Witches, I like them you know? They wear long bluish dresses, and live where it
rains a lot” he said, nodding to himself. The girl nodded. “Oh like London?” she asked. Clarke chuckled and Monty blinked, then smiled himself. “Yeah like London, but they prefer wilder places, like forests, for example like…” he stopped, thinking.

Clarke looked at him, raising her eyebrow, when she noticed he wasn't going to find the right place she shook her head. “Like the Rainforests, you know about them?” Clarke asked the girl. Lynn nodded. “Yes, I read a book about it once, it says there’s more than one right?” Clarke hummed. “Yes, exactly, that's why they prefer them, so they have lots of places to hide in” she said, while brushing another knot. Lynn hummed “I see, and then? What other type of Witches exist?” she asked, joyfully. At that Monty frowned, thinking hard about a new answer for the girl. “Mmmmmhh, oh right, the Southern Witches, they live in the deserts, and wear golden dresses, really beautiful dresses in my opinion” he said, while nodding toward the little girl.

“Oooohhh” she whispered in wonder. Clarke smiled, casting a glance toward him. Monty nodded “Oooohhh indeed kiddo”. Lynn giggled. “Tell me more!” she asked, excitement growing in her voice. But before any of them could say something else, the door at their backs opened.

“Hey Lynn you here? Oh hey guys” Elizabeth, the girl's mother, appeared from behind the door, her wrist bandaged, she was smiling. “Hi Clarke, Monty” she said, the latter bowed in respect, while Clarke smiled at her. “Mummy!” Lynn yelled, jumping down the bed, running toward her mother.

“How are you Elizabeth?” Clarke asked immediately, rising from the bed herself. The woman nodded. “I'm good, your mother told me that the wrist will be perfectly functional in less than a month” she said, while patting the kid's hair. “I'm glad” Clarke said, her eyes were asking her what she didn't want to say out loud. Elizabeth nodded in understanding and smiled to her daughter “Lynn, why don't you go to my old room? So you can gather all of your stuff?” she asked her, and Lynn nodded. “Ok mummy, don't talk about me while I'm gone” she yelled, before running away in the hallway.

Elizabeth looked at her back, and when she was sure that she was gone, she turned toward them. “Where will you go now?” Clarke asked immediately. Elizabeth sighed out. “I have no idea, maybe we will try with the old house, where my friends said I could find them” she said, her voice low and sad. Clarke sighed out. “And are you sure they will still be there?” she asked, the woman shrugged. “I have no other options” her chin trembled, her voice was cracking, Clarke approached her and squeezed her shaking shoulder.

“Can't you stay here?” Monty asked, his arms wrapped around his torso. “I would love to” Elizabeth said, wiping away a few tears from her cheeks. “But…he will not allow you to stay” Clarke added for her. She turned toward Monty, they shared a heavy sad look. “It's so unfair” she
hissed. Elizabeth looked at her, watery eyes, a sad smile on her lips. “I know” she whispered, her voice trembling, and she swallowed another sob.

“Mummy!” Lynn's voice reached them from the hallway, Elizabeth blinked and cleared her throat, while the girl rushed inside the room. “I have everything!” she yelled, raising the bags she was holding in her tiny hands. “Good girl” her mother said, stroking her hair, while exchanging a last look with them. “May we meet again” she mouthed, quoting an old traveler’s blessing. Clarke nodded “We will” she whispered. The woman sniffed and nodded sadly, walking away.

Clarke's heart started to pump heavy and hard in her chest, her hands closed in tight fists, she looked behind her back, toward Monty, his almond eyes lost in the floor underneath his feet. She inhaled deeply and looked back to the hallway, where Elizabeth was being hold tightly by Abby, who was whispering something in her ears. A few steps from them Kane was overlooking the scene, arms crossed, back stiffened, his lips pursed. Clarke felt a new wave of anger boiling up inside of her.

Lynn was pulling her mother's shirt, a worried expression on her face. It was so unfair to witness that, to know that they were probably walking right toward their own death. Clarke snorted, and walked toward them, heavy steps that echoed around her. Jackson saw her and widened his eyes. “Clarke no!” he pleaded, but she ignored him and kept walking. With every new step a new wave of anger rose in her, building up the rage. Right when Elizabeth was walking outside the building, hand in hand with her little daughter, she stopped in front of Kane, who was still silently looking at them leaving the building.

“Hey!” she snapped, and he looked at her, without even flinching, as if he was expecting her. Behind her Elizabeth turned toward them, her eyes widened in fear. “How can you do that to them?” she hissed, her eyes carrying her burning exasperated anger. Kane looked at her, then his eyes shifted behind her back, where Abby was standing. “Hey look at me, I'm talking to you sir!” the title rolled bitter and cold out of her lips. Kane sighed out. “Mrs Griffin, would you take care of your daughter please?” he said, talking to her mother, but looking at her.

“Clarke, please” Abby's voice whispered to her. She was approaching, but Clarke glared at her and then took a few more steps toward him. “I can talk without my mother's consent, I'm not a kid, unlike the one you are kicking out of here” she growled, her hand pointed toward the two shadows outside the building. They were hugging, Elizabeth was pressing her hands on the kid's ears, protecting her from their argument. Clarke was feeling guilty about that, but how could she just let it happen right in front of her eyes? Without doing something?

“You know how it works here Clarke, orders are orders, this is the law” he said. His cold, low voice felt like a knife, slowly penetrating her ears, his words empty, carrying nothing more than cold letters. “Is this your excuse? It’s always about law, orders, rules? How can you sleep at night when you know you are sentencing innocent people to death?” she said, her muscles tensed, heart
beating frantically inside of her chest, blood burning hot in her veins, she was feeling it rushing
toward her fists, as if the only instinct she was able to have was to punch him in the face
repeatedly, if only she could do that.

“I am doing what I have to do, I'm following the rules, if we don’t stick to the orders it would be
chaos, we would be all dead! Now if you would excuse me, I have work to do” he said, moving
away, but Clarke wasn’t able to stop now, her rage was wild and was pushing her body in one
direction, right toward him, her thoughts were spinning in her head, she wasn't able to focus
anymore, so she gripped at his jacket and pulled him toward her, forcing him to turn. “Hey we're
not over yet!” she yelled, and Kane glared at her, his eyes almost burning her skin.

“Clarke!” her mother reproached her, but Clarke wasn't listening “Don't run away from this Kane!”
she hissed, her hands squeezing the man's uniform. “Let me go kiddo, trust me it’s better for you if
you just let go” he said, his breath warm and heavy on her face. Clarke smirked “Otherwise what?
You want to lock me up? We don't have cages here, and I'm sure this makes you really sad” she
whispered, her fingers trapping the black fabric. If touch could burn it would probably catch fire
now.

“Clarke please, let go” her mother whispered, her voice was slightly trembling, betraying her own
fear and rage, but Clarke couldn't pay attention now, she couldn't.“Sorry Kane, I'm not like my
mother, you can't get rid of me, I can't accept this, it's simply unfair and I can't let it go” she said,
and at that Kane smirked. “You don't even know what you're talking about, you are exactly like
your mother” he took another step toward her, so close they almost touched. “That's why I am
asking you to let me go, this is already too dangerous” he whispered, lowering his tone.

Clarke tilted her head, his words sinking into her mind. “What do you mean?” she asked, loosening
her grip on his uniform. Kane took advantage of that and withdrew his arm. “Stay away from this
Clarke, it’s better for you and your mother, trust me” he hissed, gripping at her elbow, pushing her
away. At that she stumbled backward, and Abby snapped. “Hey, easy Kane!” she glared at him,
and he glared back, adjusting his jacket. “Control your daughter next time Abby” he groaned.
Abby looked at him in silence, panting heavily. She was angry. “Otherwise? I already told you,
you can't kill us too, so go back to your duties Kane, I'll take care of my daughter” she said,
walking toward Clarke and pushing her away. “Come on Clarke” she whispered.

Right when Clarke was about to protest, Elizabeth’s voiced reached them from outside. “Lynn
no!” and the little girl rushed inside. Kane widened his eyes, while the little girl kept running
toward them, crashing against Clarke, hugging her tightly. Clarke blinked and saw Elizabeth
running inside. “I wanted to say goodbye” the kid whispered. Clarke inhaled deeply and knelt
down, so she could look her in the eyes. “Hey kiddo, we will see each other again” she nodded,
smiling at her, knowing how bad it was to lie to a kid, but Lynn smiled brightly. “We will yes! And
we will show you our house, mum said we will build a new one as soon as daddy will come back”
she said, smiling happily at her own words.
Clarke swallowed back a heavy sob and dragged her in her arms again, stroking her long smooth hair. “I can't wait for it” she whispered in her locks, her watery eyes glared at Kane, who was looking at them, a serious expression on his face, no emotion escaping the man's features. “Now go sweetie, your mother is waiting” she said, withdrawing and stroking the girl's cheek, then she nodded, and kissed her on the forehead. Giggling, Lynn ran toward Elizabeth, who was trying to hide the evident tears that were rolling down her cheeks.

“May we meet again” Clarke said out loud, looking at her. Elizabeth nodded, her trembling hands pushing Lynn outside the building again. “We will!” the kid yelled back, smiling. Clarke nodded, biting at her lower lip. She inhaled, closing her eyes, the anger replaced by an unbearable sadness now. “You got your extra space” she hissed to Kane, walking away, leaving everybody behind, including Abby, who was now wrapping her arms around her torso, saying nothing.

We will meet again Lynn, one way or another, we will. She thought, while walking fast toward Elizabeth's old room. The door closed loudly behind her back and she crashed on the unmade bed and started crying quietly.

We will.

“What now Abby?” Raven snapped, turning toward her. Clarke blinked, the door handle in her left hand, a plastic plate in the right one. “Oh it's you, sorry” the girl said, turning her attention toward the wall in front of her again. Clarke sighed out and walked in, putting the plate on the table, sniffing.

She had cried quietly for almost an hour in Elizabeth's room, and when Jackson had entered to change the blankets in the bed, finding her curled up in a ball, she had quietly apologized and had walked outside the room saying nothing more. Luckily for him, Jackson had respected her sorrow and had not tried talking to her.

Of course once in the hallway her mother had spotted her immediately “Clarke!” she had shouted, trying to stop her, but she had kept walking, ignoring her, feeling the heaviness of her now dry tears plastered on her skin. Abby had ran after her, grabbing her arm, “Clarke!” and at that she had turned toward her. Seeing her red eyes and the tired expression on her face, Abby had kept quiet about her previous behavior and had handed her a plate with some soup in it. “Could you take this
to Raven please? She needs to eat. She hasn’t touched food since yesterday.” she had said, the soup rippling inside the plastic plate.

Clarke had said nothing, nodding she had taken the plate and had walked toward Raven's room.

“I'm not gonna eat it, if that's your purpose. Don't wanna waste your time” Raven snorted, arms crossed in front of her chest. Clarke putted some salt in the soup and sighed out. “I don't care if you want it or not, you have to eat, so you will eat it” she said, her tone low and heavy. Raven snorted again. “Oh for real? You can't force me to do that” she snapped. At that Clarke looked in front of her, at the white wall that was, somehow, staring back.

“Yeah, well, don't try me, do a favor to yourself and eat Raven. Trust me, it’s better if you just stop acting as a whining kid” she said sternly, setting the plate beside the bed. Raven frowned. “Whining kid? Wow at least now I know who the bad cop is here” she said, tilting her head, a smirk on her face. Clarke looked at her, then set a spoon and few crackers next to the plate.

“I'm not the one, and if you don't start listening to us you will soon meet the real one” she said, crossing her arms and sitting down on the chair beside the bed. Raven raised an eyebrow. “You mean that tall guard out there?” she tilted her head toward the closed door. Clarke looked at it for a brief moment and pictured Kane behind it, at the end of the hallway, back stiffened, arms crossed, his cold black eyes checking on every human being walking around him.

“Exactly. So now eat Raven, I'm not gonna say it again.” Clarke said, relaxing her sore muscles on the creaking chair. Raven chuckled bitterly. “Don't you have better things to do? And why you are here? Isn't this your mother's job?” she asked her, while sitting more comfortably on the bed.

Clarke looked at her, her blue eyes painfully rolling in her head. “Why do you care? You don't listen to her, or to me, so just eat it Raven! One way or another we will feed you.” she said, while sighing out, bowing her head and supporting its weight with her hands, looking at the floor.

“What happened?” Raven asked suddenly. Clarke looked up “What do you mean?” she said, raising her head and leaning back on the chair. “Something happened, I heard someone arguing out there. My door was closed, and I surely couldn’t open it” – she gestured to her unusable leg – “so I don't know exactly what happened but I know something happened” she ended, while looking at her with what seemed to be curiosity.

“It's nothing, now can you just eat? I'm tired, I would like to go to bed and just end this shitty day” she sighed out, looking at the ceiling. Raven nodded. “Shitty day uh? Well, at least you can use
your legs” she said, while shaking her head in disbelief. Clarke looked at her again. “Hey stop complaining and start to be grateful that you still have the other one!” she snapped. Raven widened her eyes and raised an eyebrow. “Excuse me?” she snorted, and Clarke sighed out.

“Please Raven, for real, I'm tired ok? I have no time for this” she said, while standing up from the chair, walking around the bed, trying to regain control of her exhausted mind. “Hey I didn't ask you to come!” she complained. “Yeah you're right, you haven't, but since you are here, and since you refuse to eat and act like the adult you should be, I need to be here. Now eat the soup.” she said, looking at her with cold eyes.

“If it were for me I would be already out of here!” Raven said, looking at her with anger in her eyes. Clarke shook her head. “Oh for real? So why you refuse crouches? Why you don't eat and sleep as you should? This is just prolonging the healing process! You will never be able to go away if you refuse to heal!” she snapped, glaring at her, she was tired and angry, and Raven was simply there... it was obviously easy for Clarke now to be mad at her.

“Hey relax!” Raven yelled back, and Clarke swallowed. “Listen, eat the soup, please” she pleaded her. Raven blinked and pursed her lips. Closing her eyes she turned toward the soup and took the plate in her hands, then, without even using the spoon, she started to swallow it.

Clarke said nothing and bowed her head, leaning her weight on the table in front of Raven's bed. After a few minutes Raven pulled the plate back from her lips and put it aside. “Here, done, you happy?” she said, Clarke looked at her, then walked toward the now empty plate. “It's not about my happiness Raven, it's about yours. You'll get it sooner or later.” Clarke said, and with the plate in hands left the room without turning back.

Once outside she saw her mother, looking at her from a chair in front of the room. Clarke left the empty plate beside her and, saying nothing, she walked away.

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**Marcus**

**Location: Arkadia Central Hospital**

**Days without food: One**

**Days without sleep: Two**

**Health: Good**
The night was enveloping the city's skyline, Marcus was checking the perimeter, making sure that no scavenger was sneaking in the hospital to steal medicines or food, while his mind was going through the argument he and Clarke Griffin had had a few hours before.

“How can you sleep at night when you know that you are sentencing innocent people to death?”

He closed his eyes and inhaled deeply, swallowing hard. When he turned his head toward the hospital, its inside glowing as a faraway hope, he spotted her, walking slowly out of a room, papers in hand. She seemed tired. He tilted his head toward a guard who silently took his place, and he walked inside, his rifle hanging on his back, its weight reminding him of the constant presence of the war outside.

“Abby?” he called after her, as soon as he was close enough. At the sound of his voice he saw how her body tensed, how she clenched her jaw, and sighed out. “What?” she growled, her smoky voice low and sharp. “I need to talk to you” he said, leaning his weight on the board beside him. She looked at him briefly and then shrugged. “I’m listening” she said, while writing down something he wasn’t even interested in reading.

“In private, Abby” he said. At that she looked up and then stared at him, tilting her head. She squeezed her eyes for a moment and shaking her head she sighed out. “Whatever”. She left the papers aside, hiding them in a bigger folder and then turned toward him. “Lead the way” she said, her hands clasped behind her back. Marcus said nothing and started walking toward an empty room behind the corner. He opened the door and let her walk in first.

“What a gentleman...” she mouthed bitterly, and Marcus pursed his lips, shaking his head, he closed the door, locking it. At the metallic sound she frowned. “Oh, that kind of private?” she asked, leaning her weight against the damaged table in the center of the room. Marcus walked toward her, relaxing his back, swallowing to clear his mind.

“We need to talk about your daughter Abby” he said, looking at her deeply, Abby was expressionless. “What about Clarke?” she asked, arms crossed in front of her chest, chin raised in defiance, as usual. “She can't keep acting like that and you know it” he said, raising an eyebrow, moving to the nearest chair, sitting down. His legs were demanding some relax and he wasn't going to complain about it, he was tired.
“Yeah well, she knows that too, but you know Kane” – she turned toward him, one hand on the
table, the other one on her hip – “it’s not that easy dealing with kids, especially now. If you haven't
noticed, we are facing a war, and it’s the kind of thing that can make you slightly angry” she said,
sharp brown eyes looking straight at him. Marcus nodded, bowing his head, the chair under his
body was starting to take away his strength, giving him the illusion of rest.

“I get it Abby, but that's the point, I get it, my superiors, well they are starting to give me specific
orders, and I don't know till when I will be able to avoid them” he said, looking up at her. At his
words Abby stopped breathing and frowned. “Specific orders? What do you mean?” she asked him,
crossing her arms again, inhaling with effort. Marcus raised an eyebrow and cleared his throat,
“They are afraid this... behavior will lead to a riot, and we can't afford that, especially now” he
said. Abby blinked.

“Clarke will never do that, she isn't stupid” she said, while taking a step back, putting some
distance between them. Marcus sighed. “I know she isn't stupid, but she is reckless Abby, she is
angry and she can't keep her mouth shut” he said. Abby glared at him, “My daughter has the right
to say whatever she wants Kane!” she snapped.

Marcus raised his hands in front of him, “What I'm saying is that I can deal with her, I can deal
with you, but I don't know till when I will be able to avoid my superiors. They want this to stop
now. If it were for them they would have kicked her out of the hospital months ago” he said,
looking at her carefully. Abby roamed her eyes on the floor at her feet, closed them and raised a
hand in front of her. “Wait a second, are you telling me that your orders are to get rid of my
daughter?” she said, her voice cracking slightly.

“Basically... yes” he said, while looking at his hands. It wasn't easy to tell that, and the weight of
his words hanged heavily on his tongue. Abby took a moment to think about it and then looked at
him. She was breathing heavily and more rapidly, her body showing him her anger and her fear.
“Why are you telling me this?” she said, her eyes lost on his face. “Because I'm trying to help you
here Abby” he said. Abby raised an eyebrow, and involuntarily, she snorted.

“Help me? Yeah, as always right? Because you are the good guy here” she said, looking at him
sharply. Marcus swallowed, her words sinking into his mind, marking him permanently. “I'm doing
my job Abby, as you are doing yours, nothing else” he said, looking at her. She shrugged and
shook her head. Pursing her lips she looked up at the ceiling, a broken lamp was hanging from it,
lighting the cold dark room. “Yeah, always about your work, because you are not a human, right?
You can't make your own decisions, follow your mind and not their rules, right?”

She growled, walking to the corner of the room, Marcus closed his eyes and stood up, “Listen
Abby, this isn't about me, or the fact that you don't like me or my job, this is about your daughter
and her safety” he said, approaching her. She turned toward him, her messy braid brushed against
her coat. “What do you want me to do then? Lock her up in a room? Tell her that if she doesn't stop
complaining about injustices, you’ll kick her out of here?” she asked him, voice heavy with anger.

Marcus sighed, “I want you to protect her, I know that she is the most important person in your life, and that she is your priority, so just... keep an eye on her, don't let her run around wild and free, because this isn't a game, she can't keep doing that” he said. Abby started chewing on her lower lip. “And if I keep her quiet everything will be fine again?” she asked him, her voice low.

Marcus sighed. “Well... it will be a start” he said, his hands on his hips. Abby frowned and crossed her arms again. “A start? Why? What else is wrong according to your... superiors?” she said, the last word rolling down her tongue bitter as an insult. Marcus looked at her, tilting his head, raising an eyebrow, and Abby widened her eyes in understanding, raising her chin. A bitter laugh escaped her lips. “Oh I see, I am the other problem, right?” she said, shaking her head and looking at him.

“Abby... you know how this works” he said, his voice low. He didn't like it either, but she was so blind with rage that she couldn't see how alike they were. “It works that if I don't stick to your rules I'm dead” she said, without looking him in the eyes.

Marcus inhaled, “I don't like it Abby, but these are the rules” he whispered, looking at his feet, his black boots heavy on the dirty floor. “Yeah, the rules... Have you ever thought about the fact that maybe your rules are wrong?” she asked him, while approaching him. Now she was closer, her scent brushed his nose, she smelled antiseptic and also something fruity, probably the hands soap they always used after a long day of work.

“This isn't something I am allowed to ask myself, that's part of the job” he said, looking at her, her brown eyes looking at him deeply. “Maybe you chose the wrong job, don't you think?” she said. Marcus smiled at that, he couldn't help it, and bowed his head, “Yes well, that's the only job I know, and I'm also pretty good at it” he said, looking back at her. Her face was strangely softer now, her features were melting around her expressions, her lips weren't forming a smile but not even a grimace.

“Yeah you are pretty good, but I'd rather you were bad at it honestly” she said, her eyes lowering to the floor. Marcus inhaled deeply, the fruity scent coming from her hands invading his nostrils, and he closed his eyes. “Please now can you promise me you will keep an eye on your daughter?” he asked, Abby looked at him again, then raised her chin. “I always keep an eye on her, you know that” she said, stiffening her back.

Marcus pursed his lips and chuckled softly, he was so tired. “Yeah Abby, well... do it better, would you?” he said, hands on his hips. Abby smirked and snorted, “Yeah yeah whatever, now can we go? I am really tired, I need to sleep if I want to be an efficient doctor tomorrow” she said, tilting her head, waiting for him to open the door. He smiled at that.
“You are always free to go Abby” he said, while walking toward the door, unlocking it. Abby snorted behind his back, “Yeah it may seem so, but we both know it’s not true” she said finally, walking past him and looking at him from behind her shoulder. “Goodnight Kane” she whispered, while walking slowly away.

“Goodnight Abby” he mouthed, closing the door and walking outside the building.

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The night was cold, winter was coming and was greedily consuming the warmness around them, covering with an icy cold all of their surroundings, and sleep wasn’t coming easily for Marcus Kane that night.

He was rolling inside of his tent, his feet entangled in the heavy sleeping bag, his mind working incessantly.

“How can you sleep at night when you know that you are sentencing innocent people to death?”

He simply couldn't, and his soldiers were starting to notice that. This wasn't good, he knew he had to be lucid, ready to guide them if war called. But how was he supposed to do that when his own demons were so heavy to carry at day? And his body refused to let him rest at night?

I need to sleep. He thought over and over again.

When two hours had passed without even a minute of sleep, Marcus sighed out and escaped his green sleeping bag. Putting his boots on, he walked out of his tent. The cold air of the night hit him, making him shiver. His guards were around a glowing fire, talking quietly and fighting back their own tiredness with some bitter coffee.
“Sir? Everything in order?” Michaelson asked him immediately, standing up. Marcus nodded. “At ease Michaelson, I just needed some air” he said, walking away from them. Being surrounded by soldiers all day was enough, the quietness of the night was the only companion he wanted now.

And so he walked inside the hospital, where it was warmer and nobody was a soldier. He walked quietly through the hallways, passing every room one by one, all doors were closed, some of them quiet, others carried the echo of sobs. He bowed his head in respect at each one of them, swallowing hard at every heartbreaking sound.

When the stairs of the second floor came to view he climbed them, following a random path in the building. He had the feeling those walls carried their own story, and sometimes, when night sheltered them from the war, he could feel that story around him, every broken bed told him about a different person, someone that had died there, surrounded by their beloved ones, someone who gave birth to a new life. The walls told him where the bomb’s wave had done the worst damages, the floors told him of every doctor, nurse and person that had walked there when war was just a faraway fear or the favorite topic of the newscast in TV, but not yet a reality.

When his eyes caught a movement out of a window, he stopped, his boots squeaking on the sheet vinyl floor, and he focused his attention outside the blurred window, where a shadow was moving slightly. At first his heart jumped in his throat, his muscles tensed and his hands moved toward the gun that was safely held at his belt. His whole body was ready to fight if needed.

But then he recognized her, the long braid was gone and her caramelized hair were now flowing like a golden cascade on her shoulders. She wasn’t wearing her coat anymore and it was replaced by a heavy sage colored cardigan. She seemed so tiny sitting there on the roof, with the city skyline behind her.

He couldn’t exactly say why he didn’t just walk away, leaving her alone with the moment she had created for herself out there, but his feet walked him outside without leaving him the time to think about it, the glass door opened, and the cold breeze stroked his black thick hair.

After a few steps, he swallowed, his hand flinched as if he wanted to pat her on the shoulder, to make his presence noticed, but she preceded him. “Still awake?” she said, without looking back. Marcus sighed out. “Apparently” he whispered. She hummed, her smoky voice reverberated in her chest, and he smiled to himself at the familiar sound.

“What about you doctor? Shouldn’t you be the first one to sleep at night?” he asked her, while walking toward the edge of the terrace, so that he could see her face. She was holding a steaming mug, her legs dangling in the void. “Yes well, it’s not that easy to sleep when there’s war out there” she said, sipping from her mug.
“Yeah...” he huffed, awkwardly shifting his weight on his boots. She snorted. “For god's sake, sit down!” she snapped, looking up at him, her brown eyes were pitch black in the darkness, one eyebrow raised. He frowned. “What?” he asked, without thinking, and she smirked. “You heard me” she murmured, hiding her lips against the cup.

Marcus smiled awkwardly and sat down beside her. His legs felt heavy and rigid while he adjusted himself, his back tensed, he inhaled deeply, his eyes traveled on the city around them. It felt so different to look at it now, some lights where still shining where someone wasn't afraid to be seen, or maybe wasn't able to turn it off and hide anymore. Dark thick smoke was ascending to the sky, carrying the smell of burned hopes and dreams. The outline of the buildings was jagged, the skeleton of what was once their city, their home.

“Devastating isn't it?” she whispered. Marcus looked at her, her eyes were stroking the destroyed scenario in front of them. He looked down at his lap, his own mind echoing that word over and over again. “It is...” he whispered, his voice low and heavy. She inhaled deeply, closed her eyes and threw her head back. “I just wonder... if things will ever be as they were, if someday, we will be able to start over again” she said to the sky above them.

She wasn't showing any emotion now, except for the deep sadness that was covering her as an halo, and he could almost feel it on his skin, it was warm but also cold, it was dark and also bright, it was light and infinitely heavy. “I don't know...” he said, because he couldn't think of something else now. The way she was talking to him was new, her quiet voice, her relaxed posture, everything was different and he wasn't used to it. But he was also curious to feel more of it, to discover this side of her that was probably always there but he was too blind to see, just as she was with him, and in that moment it felt ironic.

“But you hope it will be over soon, right?” she asked him, lowering her gaze, turning toward him. Her eyes felt heavy, she wasn't judging him, not yet. Marcus swallowed and nodded, “Of course...” he said. She tilted her head slowly to the side and nodded. “Of course” she repeated, sipping from her mug again.

Marcus kept his eyes on her, as if he couldn't stop doing that now. He was noticing details he had never seen before, and it was mesmerizing to learn so much of her features. To see how some wrinkles were adorning her eyes, telling him about all the times she had laughed, cried, screamed. Her lips, that always turned up to the same corner when she was judging you or teasing you, touching sensitive spots, finding your weaknesses. Her cheeks that had carried the weight of her tears, and had stretched her smiles to the infinite. Her eyes that were the color of the rich soil, the morning coffee, the sweet chocolate. Every detail was taking life in front of him, and it was beautiful. Beautiful.
Suddenly, a thought escaped his lips, “I don't like war you know?” he said. She was listening but her eyes weren't on him. “I don't like this job Abby” he finally said, his voice heavy.

Abby looked down at the dark liquid in her hands, “Nobody should like war, and just so you know... your job sucks” she said. They shared a trembling smile at that, then she looked up again. The echo of a shot reached them suddenly, and she closed her eyes, then a scream reverberated inside of a building, she swallowed and inhaled deeply. “May we meet again” she mouthed. Marcus frowned. “What?” he asked. She blinked, as if his voice just reminded her he was there too.

“What?” she asked, looking at him with a frown. “What you just said, what was that?” he asked her, and Abby inhaled. “Oh that...” she smiled kindly, looking at her hands. “It’s just... it’s part of a blessing” she said, taking a few sips of what was probably tea, according to the light smell. “A blessing?” he asked her, curiosity coloring his voice. Abby nodded, “Yes, the traveler's blessing”.

“And what is it?” he asked her, not afraid to ask her questions anymore, and when he realized that, he felt as if something inside of him was starting to open up, as if a heavy knot was starting to melt as cold snow under the warm sun. “It's some kind of poem, it's used to wish people good luck on their journey through this war, to bless their future, to give them hope for a better life” she said, her words whispered in the silence around them. Marcus nodded. “Oh, and you know it all?” he asked her. She turned toward him with an eyebrow raised.

“Are you asking me to teach you that?” she said, tilting her head, a little smile on the corner of her lips. Marcus nodded without thinking about it, “Yes” he admitted. She said nothing more and turned toward the view, then looked at her cup, inhaled deeply and closed her eyes.

“In peace may you leave the shore” she whispered, “In love may you find the next” her voice trembled slightly, “Safe passage on your travels” she licked her lips slowly, thinking, “Until our final journey to the ground” she opened her eyes and looked at him. “May we meet again” she finally said, her brown eyes reflecting the trembling lights of the city. Then she shifted her gaze over his uniform, shivered, and looked back at the city.

“It's really beautiful” he said, his mind recalling the words, learning them, adapting to the sound of each one of the letters. “May we meet again...” he whispered, and she nodded. “Yes, that's the idea...” she lowered her head.

“I'm sorry Abby.” he whispered suddenly, his heart beating faster. She looked at him, “About what?” she asked, but both of them knew why he was apologizing, and her posture, her serious eyes, her frown, all of it told him she knew exactly why, but it wasn't enough, she wanted more, and Marcus wanted to give her more, he needed to.
“I'm sorry for your loss” he said, a whisper that echoed loud as a scream between them. At his words her lips pursed slightly, the hands around the mug flinched, but her face remained expressionless. She nodded. “Thank you” she whispered, and with that adverted her eyes from him, and focused them again on their surroundings.

I'm really sorry. He wanted to say.

If I could go back I would tell you to run away. I would help you do that. Because you deserve to be happy Abby. Clarke deserves it. And Jake deserved it. I'm so sorry.

His heart kept beating heavily in his chest, his mind spinning, his unspoken words circling in his brain, making him feel dizzy. But he couldn't say them, not now, it wasn't yet the time for that. He wasn't ready, and probably she wouldn't even listen. They weren't ready... not yet.

“I'm sorry too.” she said. Marcus looked at her and she shrugged, inhaling deeply. “It's so hard...” she said, closing her eyes, her emotion squeezing her features, her face tensing and then relaxing again while she opened her eyes and exhaled, “It's so unjustly hard.” Marcus was speechless. Knowing about her emotions was a thing, seeing them was another one.

Abby Griffin was many things, and he knew she had suffered, and that she was always suffering somehow, with every broken dream, lost hope, with every death and painful scream, he could see her sadness, her desperation and even the burning anger. But it was different then, because even if she was crying, screaming, or quietly staring into the void, a hot glowing fire was always burning inside her, the fire that carried her hope and determination and he had always seen it, everyday, since the first moment he had met her, and he knew she was gonna be... a pain in the ass because of that.

But now, in this exact moment, on that cold roof, in the middle of another night in that so-called life, Abby Griffin's fire wasn't burning, her usual buzzing light wasn't sparkling, and it felt devastating.

“It will get better.” he said, his left hand flinched on his lap, but his mind controlled his muscles and forced it still there. He couldn't touch her, he wasn't allowed to do that. But his mind kept pushing on his heart, forcing new words out of his lips. “This war will end, and life will start again, you'll see” he said, and he truly believed in that, he needed to.

Abby blinked, and looked at him. Her eyes where shining with some trapped tears. “You think I will survive this?” she asked him, her voice a quiet murmur. He nodded, “Oh yes, if there's someone here who will kick this war in the ass, that's you Abby” he said, smiling, because it was so true, and he felt it for real, she was gonna survive this, because she deserved it.
She frowned at first, and tilted her head, then out of nowhere something happened, something he never saw before, she laughed. Her lips parted and stretched to the sides, her cheeks hugged her eyes and all of her face danced around her voice, and there it was, the first time Abby Griffin ever laughed in front of him.

“Sorry” she said, covering her mouth with her hand, and he almost stopped her, because he wanted to keep staring at it, he wanted to keep seeing that expression on her face and to hear that sound. But he just kept looking, while she inhaled and exhaled, closing her eyes and shaking her head. “I’m sorry, it was just...” she chuckled, “I needed that” she finally said, looking at him, her eyes shining with tears, of joy or sadness, he couldn't tell, but the ghost of her laugh was still there, in her features, in the corner of her lips, on the new color in her cheeks.

“I’m glad I could help” he said, smiling. She smiled back at him, a genuine smile, and it was so beautiful, his eyes were pleading him to have more of it. “I'm glad too, I always thought you couldn't be... funny. Well, now funny maybe is too much but... you know, at least, pleasant” she said, leaning her weight on her hands, stretching her arms behind her back, her palms on the cold cement. Marcus smiled and nodded.

“I am glad you said that” he looked at her and she looked back at him. “I don't like to be seen as an asshole all the time you know?” he said, and the way his words were escaping his lips, without his consent, the way his heart was stretching inside of his chest, growing slowly in his ribcage, everything felt so unreal and yet, it felt good.

“This war is hiding every good detail of the human race” she said, her tone sad and heavy again, but then she smiled, “but sometimes we can still find the beauty of what is part of us, the pureness of a kid, the laugh of a young boy. Generosity. Sometimes I still can see that, and it’s desperately beautiful” she finally said, her eyes soft.

“I am always so busy with making you all follow the rules, that I forget how hard it is for the others to live this war” he whispered. She looked at him, listening. “I know how to shoot, I have a uniform that tells everybody about my title, what I can do, my skills” he looked at the city in front of them, dark shadows in the night “and I have my soldiers, right with me. It’s not safe all the time, but at least we know how to protect ourselves. But what can a baker do if he finds himself right in the battlefield? What can a singer or a writer use to defend themselves? What can they all do? ” he said, his heart heavier.

Abby was silent behind him. When he turned toward her, he saw her looking at him. “Try to remember that in the future” she whispered, “try to remind yourself that not everybody is a soldier, but we all have to live this war” she said, looking down at her lap. Marcus nodded, and lowered his gaze, feeling the weight of her words settling on his shoulders. “I will” he said.
With that she looked up at him again and smiled. “It's good to know you still maybe have a chance after all” she whispered, standing up slowly. “It's time to sleep for me now” she said. Marcus followed her. “Yeah, I should sleep too”. They shared a long look, then he gestured to the glass door at the other side of the roof. He opened it for her and this time she thanked him with a smile. It made his heart jump in his chest, it was so new. Being able to feel in that way even in the middle of a war was something he thought was impossible, and yet... he was living it on his skin, and it felt good.

They walked quietly side by side, down the stairs, into the hallway where her room was waiting. She took the handle in her grip and then looked at him. “I'll talk to Clarke first thing in the morning. Hopefully she will listen to me” she whispered. Marcus nodded, his hands clasped behind his back. “If she is as smart as you are, and I guess we both know she is, she will listen to you” he said. She nodded and bowing her head pushed the door open. “Goodnight Kane” she whispered. He smiled gently. “Goodnight Abby”. They shared a long last look and then he walked toward the entrance of the building.

His boots carrying him outside, his mind quiet for the first time in a long while, he sneaked inside of his tent, nodding toward his soldiers. He laid on his sleeping bag, adjusted himself and closed his eyes.

That night his mind wasn't hunted with the echo of screams and anger, but was filled with the sound of her laugh.

*And it was desperately beautiful.*
Abby wakes up and she finds out Clarke is gone.

READ ME: The Hospital has a big yard (from the building to the fences around the yard it takes something like two minutes of walk) keep it in mind to get exactly how the central scene goes.

1th November

Abby

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Zero

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

The morning sun welcomed her into the new day with a delicate ray upon her eyelids. Abby sighed out, and her muscles started coming to life in silence. She stretched her legs to the limit, her muscles grew and melted under her skin regaining fluidity in her movements. Her hands to the opposite side stretched toward the wall, her wrists turned and her fingers danced to life. She opened her eyes slowly, adjusting them to the new light. It looked like a sunny day. The little window in her room was dirty and broken, so a piece of brown cardboard was hiding the view, but it still seemed to be a sunny day from there.
“Morning honey.” she yawned, without looking at the other side of the room, where Clarke's bed was. When her daughter didn’t answer, she turned instinctively, already wearing a smile that faded immediately when she saw the empty bed. She frowned and stood up fast. Her stomach protested, but she ignored it and put her bare feet on the cold floor. She had seen Clarke the night before, curled up under the blankets. She also had heard her breathing quietly and as every night she had let it lull her to sleep. So where was she?

Abby cleared her throat and stretched her stiff back. The mattress was too small and its metallic skeleton always pressed on her bones and muscles, preventing her from sleeping comfortably, but it was still something and she wasn't gonna complain about it.

She stood up, changed her shirt, put on her pants and boots, took the coat from the hang it was waiting on, then walked outside their tiny room. When she was in the hallway the echoes of voices reached her, and the scent of coffee invaded her nostrils, it was definitely a new day. She walked toward the reception, where she knew Jackson was preparing the medical records for her.

“Hey Jackson.” she said at the young man, who was kneeling under the desk, searching for something. “Hey Abby.” his muffled voice came from under it. “Good morning.” he said with a smile as soon as he was standing again. Abby smiled and looked at her surroundings. “Hey, have you seen Clarke this morning?” she asked him. Jackson frowned and looked instinctively around him. “No, why? I thought she was still sleeping with you.” he said, while folding some papers. Abby inhaled deeply.

“Yeah, I thought that too, but she wasn't in her bed. Yesterday she was, I saw her when I went to sleep... so I thought she was already awake...” she chewed on her lower lip, her mind already working fast around every possible scenario. Suddenly Jackson reached for her hand, his delicate skin warmed her fingers. “Hey, she probably wasn't tired anymore and woke up early, maybe she is on the roof, drinking a coffee. Go and see if she is there, I'll wait here.” he said, smiling at her. Abby smiled and nodded. “Thank you Eric”. With that she strode toward the stairs that led to the roof. When she had climbed them all and the empty hallway came to view she swallowed, hoping to find her there, on the other side of the glass door.

She pushed it open without bothering to look outside, and walked in the cold morning breeze. “Clarke?” she called out, her voice echoing around her. “Clarke are you here honey?” she called again, turning her head, her feet circling her body on the cement. The roof was empty, nobody was there. She frowned and walked inside again, then instinctively searched in every room, even if they were damaged, or empty, but she kept searching, until she was sure she wasn't there. Then she climbed the other stairs, and searched every floor, every room, every inch of the building, until she had climbed the last stair and the most damaged floor prevented her to move forward. “Clarke?” she yelled. Even if she knew it was impossible for her to be there, she still hoped to hear her voice. She swallowed and inhaled deeply.
It's ok, it's ok, search again. She said to herself, and then rushed back to the ground floor, where everybody was, where maybe she was having breakfast with a patient. She sneaked inside every room, apologizing to every still sleeping patient. When she had searched every room, without finding her, she started to panic.

The empty hallway. She thought.

And so she walked there too, searching in every room, but they were all empty. Suddenly her head started to spin, her heart to beat faster, her mouth was dry, she had to close her eyes and inhale and exhale deeply, she was losing control over her body.

It's ok Abby, it's ok. She tried to calm herself down, reassuring her mind, slowing her heart beat. But her legs were trembling, her hands shaking, her blood was running cold, her body was shivering in panic.

“Clarke?” she called instinctively, her eyes burning, a painful knot was closing her throat. She had to calm down.

“Abby?” Jackson's voice reached her from behind her back. “Hey have you found her?” he asked, approaching her. He rested a hand on her shoulder and she turned to him, eyes watery. “She isn't here Jackson, she is gone...” she whispered, her voice cracking under the weight of that statement. Jackson frowned. “What? No it's impossible Abby, she can't be gone.” he whispered, Abby inhaled with effort, her throat was closing and opening frantically.

“I searched every floor, every room, she isn't here.” she said, bending her body, looking at the floor, trying to regain control. It was so hard, everything felt so unreal. Jackson blinked. “It's ok Abby, we'll find her, Clarke can't be gone, she isn't stupid, she knows how dangerous it is out there.” he whispered, squeezing her shoulder. Abby looked at him, her vision was blurred by the salty heavy tears that were forming in her irises. “Where is she then?” she asked, her hands shaking. Jackson looked at her and swallowed, visibly afraid.

“We'll find her.” he nodded. Suddenly the echo of steps reached them, heavy boots on the floor. She closed her eyes. “Is everything ok Abby?” his deep voice reached her. Abby looked at him, inhaling. He frowned. “Abby?” he asked her. His eyes recognized Jackson beside her, but he was too focused on her to mind him. “Abby?” he asked again, now he was so close that she could smell him, he probably had taken a shower somehow, because he was smelling good, something that reminded her about the pine scent of Jake's shampoo. It felt so familiar that for a moment she felt the need to hold him, to press her face in his chest, but then she looked at him and recognized him for who he was, Kane, he was just Marcus Kane.
“Yeah, I'm good.” she said rapidly, but his eyes told her he knew something wasn't right. “What happened?” he asked her. Jackson looked at her, then at him. “It's ok sir, really. Could you excuse us?” he said, taking her by the arm. She said nothing, and casted a last glance at him. Before Jackson dragged her away, she saw him looking at her, frowning. He nodded as if to tell her “We’ll talk later”. She just adverted her gaze, and let Jackson walk her away from him.

“We can send someone after her, we can try to contact some of our friends Abby. Surely if she is gone there must be a reason right? Clarke isn't a fool, and she knows how to be careful, I'm sure there must be a reason why she is gone.”

Jackson was walking from side to side in her tiny room, and Abby was trying to listen, but her mind was completely gone, her body frozen on her tiny bed. She was staring at Clarke’s empty bed, it was perfectly made as if she had decided to leave everything in order before leaving.

_before leaving. She was gone._ It felt so wrong just to think about it. Abby was breathing quietly, whispering reassuring words to her scared mind, at her trembling heart, trying to shake herself from that feeling that was covering her now, just like when you wake up from a nightmare and you struggle to focus on reality again, trying to get your mind out of the fear your own imagination had created around you. The only problem was... that this time it wasn't just a nightmare, she couldn’t shake it off, because it was actually real.

“Abby?” suddenly Jackson was shaking her shoulder, trying to get her attention back. She blinked and looked up. His eyes softened when she saw her expression. “Abby, it’s gonna be alright ok? We will find out what happened” he whispered, sitting next to her on the bed. Abby nodded mechanically, without even wanting to, because right now she wasn't sure about anything, the only thing she could feel was that heaviness around her heart, and it felt bad, it felt terribly bad.

Without asking for her permission, he wrapped his arms around her, and leaned in so that his head was resting against hers, his forehead pressing against her cheekbone, and she let him. Her body reacted at the warm touch, shivering slightly, and she sobbed instinctively, his touch tightening around her frame. She bowed her head and he kissed her in the hair. “It's gonna be alright” he whispered, and Abby wanted to believe it, so she just nodded, tears rolling down her cheeks, burning a long path across her pale skin.

“It's ok Abby, I promise I will help you find her again, I promise you I will be right here” he kept whispering, a low murmur that was now stroking the deepest chords of her heart, making her tremble and melt in his arms like snow under the sun, and she let herself be wrapped up in those words, in those wishful thinking that everything was gonna be ok again, just like that, because it
was the only thing she could do now.

And so he kept her in his embrace, and she remained there until all her tears were gone and her mind stopped spinning, until her heart stopped beating frantically and started beating slowly and painfully in her chest, because the strength to pump in panic was over, she wasn't strong enough now to freak out, all she had left was the strength to feel the void inside.

*And it was enough to break her into pieces.*

It was almost lunch time when she heard knocks on her door. Jackson had left a few hours before, ordering her to stay there, telling her he was gonna take care of everything, and she had just followed his voice, without protesting, saying nothing, because she just couldn't.

So she had kept staring into the void, curled up on her bed, her hands pressed on her heart, her mind circling and moving around images that she couldn't stop seeing. Images of Clarke alone in those rubbles, running, bullets falling on the ground around her, dust and smoke blurring the shape of her body, the color of blood and the smell of gunpowder in her hair, marking her forever.

That knocking sound had startled her, dragging her back to reality again, sweeping away those horrible visions. She stood up from her bed and wiped away a few tears, but they were plastered on her skin, an indelible reminder of her sorrow, and she walked toward the door, opening it.

The murmur of voices and the noises from outside invaded the silence of her room, and she closed her eyes, swallowing hard, to shield herself even if just for a moment from the fragile life out there. When she opened them again she saw him, standing there, his hands behind his back, his posture rigid and tensed as always. But his eyes... his eyes were different, black and deep as always but not cold and sharp now, his gaze was warmer, *different.* It felt so strange that for a moment she just stared at him, in silence.

He bowed his head in respect. “Abby? Can I come in?” he asked her, his voice low, a whisper above the voices around them. She inhaled deeply, one hand resting on her chest. She said nothing, and without giving him a real consent, she walked inside, leaving the door open, so that he could follow her, and he did. His steps echoed inside those four walls. He closed the door behind him,
and locked it. In that moment she couldn't care less that he had decided to lock her in her own room, when she was the one who had the right to do it, she couldn't care less of everything to be honest, so she just turned to the wall behind her bed and stared at it, her arms now wrapped around her torso.

“What happened Abby?” he asked her. Abby flinched, closed her eyes and opened her mouth, but no sound came out of her lips. She closed them again and swallowed, bowing her head. Was he asking her because he wanted to be sure everything was in order as usual? Or he was asking her because he knew already but just wanted to be sure? Why was he asking?

“Abby?” he took few steps toward her, the sound of his boots on the floor warning her of it, but she remained there, saying nothing. “Abby, what happened?” he asked again, and she looked up at the ceiling, then closed her eyes and exhaled heavily. She wanted to say it, she wanted to scream at him that her daughter was gone, that she had sneaked out of the hospital during the night, and that she was now gone, probably following those two women he had kicked out of the building, she wanted to be angry at him, to throw at him all of her rage. But she couldn't, because right now she wasn't feeling angry, she was feeling empty, devastated, and guilty.

Guilty. Because it was her fault, she was gone and it was her fault, she was the mother, she was the one who had to protect her, to make sure she was ok, and clearly, she wasn't. How is it possible that I couldn't see it?

She was now crying, hot burning tears had started rolling down her cheeks without her consent. She didn't want to cry and be that open in front of him, it wasn't right, she had to stop them, she had to regain control of her emotions, but it was too late, he was behind her, and could certainly hear her sobs.

She swallowed and tried to shut everything down, forcing all her emotions to be silent, but it was too hard to fight them now, her tears were letting them out and she wasn't strong enough. When she heard him taking a few other steps toward her, she thought he was gonna leave her alone, and she wanted him to, she desperately wanted to be left alone, while another tiny part of her was hoping he could stay, even if in silence, because it was scary to face all of that alone.

But then his warm touch reached her left shoulder. It was light and comforting, and she sobbed louder, covering her face with her hand. He was closer now, his body heat was tickling her back, and she inhaled deeply. She wanted to tell him to stay back, because this was also his fault, but her voice died in her throat every time she tried to say something. And so his other hand was now covering her right shoulder, and she wrapped her arms around her torso, bowing her head completely, her chin pressed against her chest.

“Abby?” his voice sounded so familiar, it was so frustrating how used she had become to the sound
of it. It didn't matter that they had shared mostly arguments and his voice reminded her of those months in which she had lost everything she had, in that moment it felt just familiar, and the rage and the anger she had always felt around him were fading, leaving space just to an empty feeling that she wanted to delete forever, because it was too heavy to carry inside, she was scared to die in pain from it, it was too much to handle.

“Abby, please talk to me” his voice whispered, stroking her hair. She shivered. She shook her head, some tears fell to the floor. “Abby... where is Clarke?” he asked her suddenly. He knows, he knows. Her mind started to yell, and her heart jumped in her throat, long painful waves of fear ran inside her veins, making her shiver. “Don't...” she choked, her voice weak. She kept breathing heavily while his hands squeezed her shoulders.

What was he doing? Couldn't he just let her go? Let her be? And why wasn't she able to withdraw anymore? To kick him out of the room?

“What is happening? She thought. Why is he so... kind all of a sudden? What happened?

She wanted to ask him what his intentions were, instead she just turned her head slightly, so that she could peek at him from behind her shoulder. He was looking down at his boots, toying with his fingers.

He seems nervous. And it was a completely new side of him, she had never seen him like that, his muscles weren't tensed anymore, his posture was telling her that he was sad, almost hurt.

“She is gone...” she whispered, and saw how his head jerked up at the sound of her voice. His eyes caught her staring and he stiffened his back again, regaining his usually controlled, rigid posture. Abby turned her body toward him, so that she could face him. Kane swallowed. She could see his left eyebrow slightly trembling and he was chewing the inside of his cheek.
“What do you mean with gone?” he asked her, without walking toward her, maintaining a respectful distance between them. Abby smirked bitterly and closed her eyes, bowing her head, then she looked up again. “I mean” - she approached him while talking - “that you can reassure your superiors that Clarke will not be a problem any longer. She kicked herself out of here” she muttered bitterly. She was so close now that the same scent of that morning reached her nose, it was lighter now and it had faded, but he still smelled good, and she blinked to remind herself that this wasn't Jake, he was Marcus Kane and nothing more.

“What happened Abby?” he asked her, and he sounded almost worried. *He can't be.* “I just told you, she is gone. She sneaked outside the building last night, when I was sleeping. She is gone” she hissed, feeling rage building up inside of her. Here it was, the feeling she should be having around him, here it was again the heavy and burning anger, here it was again what she was used to.

“It's impossible, my soldiers would have seen her!” he said, his eyes widening at the realization of what had happened. Abby snorted. “Apparently they are only good at keeping people out of this building, not inside” she said, her eyes fixed on him now. He frowned, and looked down. Now he was breathing heavily. He walked away from her, running a hand through his hair.

“It's impossible, impossible” he kept whispering, over and over again. Abby frowned and crossed her arms in front of her chest. “I searched everywhere, Jackson did the same, she is gone, and...” *and it's your fault.* She wanted to say it, she wanted to mark those words in his brain once again, but he rushed toward her, and took her wrists in his hands. She flinched but his eyes were fixed on hers. Abby blinked. “Have you searched outside too? Maybe she is still inside the perimeter of the Hospital, have you searched outside?” he asked her, his voice was tense and his words were rushing out of his lips frantically. Her breath quickened.

“What? No. We can't go outside in the daylight” she said, frowning. Kane nodded, he seemed almost in some kind of trance. “Right, right. Ok. I will check there!” he said, walking toward the door. Abby blinked “What?”, but he turned, pointing a finger toward her. “I am gonna find her Abby, she can’t be gone” he said, nodding approvingly to himself, and without another word he was gone. The door closed slowly behind his back.

And Abby was left alone in her room again, speechless, staring where he had been a few seconds before.

What the hell just happened?
Marcus

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Zero

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

It can’t be. It can’t be. His mind kept saying to him. He had just left Abby's room, his heart beating loudly in his temples. He strode out of the building. His soldiers flinched when he reached them and grabbed one of them by the arm.

“Where is Clarke Griffin?” he yelled at him and the young man blinked and looked at his fellows. Marcus shook him harder, glaring at him. The boy flinched again and cleared his throat. “I don’t know where she is, sir!” he yelled. He was breathing so heavily Marcus could sense his fear.

He turned toward the other guards. “Where is Clarke Griffin?” he growled to them and they shook their heads. “We don't know sir!” Michaelson said. Marcus glared at him, and his eyes roamed over all of them. They were tense, their faces a mix of confusion and fear.

Marcus said nothing and rushed away from them, walking fast toward the limit of the Hospital perimeter. He found himself looking at what once were its gates, now scraps of metal and concrete.

Come on Clarke, where are you?

He walked to the other side of the damaged yard around the building, and he kept searching, his eyes roaming over every inch of the place. The fences of the Hospital that were separating them from the rest of Arkadia reminded him of where she could be, right in the wrong place. It was too dangerous to go outside, she needed to be there.

Come on. He kept whispering to himself. He had just passed the west side of the building, when a voice reached him, her tone sharp and angry. “Hey! What the hell are you doing Kane?” she
yelled, her light steps echoed extremely loud on the dry grass. “What do you think Abby?” he said, turning toward her for a moment. She frowned and when he started walking again, she took him by the arm. “Hey!” she snapped. Hand closed around his uniform, she dragged him toward her and his forearm crashed against her chest. She was glaring at him, her brown eyes almost burning his skin.

“What the hell are you doing?” she growled, Marcus took her hand and snapped it away. She looked down and then back at him, fury glowing in her irises. “I’m searching for your daughter, Abby! Now go back inside, you can't stay here!” he hissed, and walked away again. But of course she followed him, trying to keep up with his pace. “Why?” she said suddenly. He turned toward her, stopping in his tracks. She was panting heavily, she was angry and he could see it clearly in her posture and her expression, tense and wild.

“Why?” he stepped closer to her. “Why? Are you really asking me this?” he said, hissing at her. She raised her chin even more, stiffening her back, her lips tight. “You think I am a fool Kane? You think I can really believe you are just... helping me here?” she said bitterly. Marcus swallowed and snorted. “I am helping you Abby, you should stop trying to prove the opposite, I'm doing my best here” he said, his heart heavy in his chest. She raised an eyebrow. “Yeah? Then tell me, isn't it ironic that my daughter decided to ran away the night after you told me your superiors wanted to kick her out?” she insinuated.

“We both know why she’s gone Abby” he whispered, lowering his tone, trying to sound gentle and kind, but he failed, and she glared at him, inhaling deeply. She squeezed her hand around his uniform, the fabric stretching between his chest and her grip. “My daughter isn't a fool, if she is gone it’s because someone else pushed her to” her eyes were heavy on him, Marcus swallowed, and sighed out. “Abby, please. Let me just help you” he whispered.

His tone calm, his expression relaxed, he wanted to make her feel how truly he meant it, how honestly he wanted to help her. But Abby pushed him away, his wrinkled uniform adjusting again to his body. “Who do you think you are uh? Why are you acting like this now? What do you want? What is your goal here?” she yelled, without caring about her surroundings and the fact that it was dangerous. They were too exposed. Marcus looked around them, checking if someone was there with them. “Abby please keep it quiet” he whispered, stepping toward her.

She took several steps backward. “No! Tell me what you’re doing! Why are you like this now? Clarke is gone, that is what you wanted, don't try to act as if you care, because we both know you don't!” her words were burning and marking him. He swallowed, trying to ignore them. “Abby, I care, and you can think that I am lying or just pretending, it's ok, you have the right to think so. But trust me” - he kept walking slowly toward her, he had noticed something shining right out of the corner of his eyes and he didn't like it - “I just want to help you. Now please, keep it quiet and move slowly toward me” he said. Abby frowned.

“What? No!” she turned her head around, her eyes looking briefly and distractedly to the
surroundings. Marcus swallowed, and kept moving slowly. She was standing behind a big bush, he was exposed, and the shining light coming from a window on the other side of the street wasn’t reassuring. “Abby, please, you have to kneel down now” he said, his voice low, his tone serious. She blinked. “What?” Her anger was replaced by fear. “I saw something, now please Abby, kneel down, and come toward me” he said, nodding, his eyes wide. She was breathing heavily. And then she did the only thing she wasn’t supposed to, she turned to the left, looking right at the shining reflection of the sun from the window.

“Abby no!” he yelled, but it was too late. The shot whistled over their heads.

He rushed toward her immediately, his body crashed onto hers, and they fell to the ground, his chest covering her face. She was pressed under his weight. The deafening sound faded, and the dust the bullet had created around them descended to the ground again. His heart was beating frantically. His muscles were trembling, adrenaline rushing through his veins. Then he withdrew, keeping his head down, and looked at her.

*Please. Please. Please. Let her be fine. Please.*

She was panting heavily, her eyes wide in horror, her face trapped into an expression of pure fear.

“Abby? Abby?” he shook her shoulder. She looked up at him and blinked, her eyes were filled with tears. “Are you ok?” he asked her and his body tensed, trying not to lean too much weight on her, adrenaline soothing every other feeling. Abby nodded, but then her features squeezed and she sobbed loudly, her voice cracking. “They... They s-shot...” she was panting and her words were coming out of her lips with effort, stumbling on themselves. Marcus nodded. “It's ok Abby, it's ok. It was a sniper, it's ok, I'm here, it's ok” his voice a low soothing whisper. She nodded, her eyes red, tears rolling down her cheeks.

It was devastating to see that fear on her. She inhaled and exhaled deeply, and he nodded, mimicking her breathing, trying to calm her down. She was so tense under him, he could feel her muscles shivering and flinching. “It's ok Abby” he said again. She then stopped breathing, her eyes widened even more, heavy tears trembled inside her irises, her lips parted. “It could have been her” she just said, a broken whisper. Her eyes fixed on him, then she started to pant heavily again, squeezing her eyes. “It could have been her, out there! Oh my god, she is out there alone. Oh my god.”

Her hands shifted under his body and she brought them to her eyes, pressing them hard on her eyelids, shutting everything out. Marcus could only stare at her, he could only witness the way that thought settled in her mind, marking her forever, instilling fear in her whole body. He had to do something.
“Abby no, no, hey!” with his right hand he moved hers away from her eyes, and she shook her head, but he ignored her. “Abby no, don't go there Abby, listen to me, please, listen to me!” She shook her head harder, and this time she tried to free herself from under him, but he pressed his chest down to stop her. She glared at him, watery eyes. “Let me go!” she hissed. Marcus tilted his head toward the building on the other side of the street. Abby froze. “It’s not safe yet” he whispered, swallowing hard.

She widened her eyes, realization settling in, and then she did something he wasn't expecting. She curled up on her side under his body and cupped her hands against her mouth, closing her eyes. She was trembling as a leaf in the autumn wind. “Is he still there?” she whispered, her uncertain voice reaching his ears. “I’m not sure, that's why I’m telling you it’s not safe”. He reached for his belt, but she flinched and took his arm. “No please, don't leave me”. Her eyes wide open, her tiny hand shaking around his elbow. He looked at her, his other hand pressed on her back. “I just need to take my walkie-talkie Abby, I'm not leaving you” he reassured her. She blinked and nodded, withdrawing her hand, curling even further into a ball, resting on her side, just under his body.

“What have you done Clarke? He couldn't help but think.

“Sir? Are you ok? We heard a shot” Michaelson's voice reached him. Abby flinched again, closing her eyes and swallowing with effort. “A sniper. I'm here with Doctor Griffin, we are in the West side of the Hospital yard, no injured for now, we need you here now!” he ordered, his voice trembling slightly. The radio remained silent for a few seconds. Marcus looked down. Abby didn’t meet his eyes, she was staring right in front of her.

“Ok sir we are moving, are you in a safe zone now?” Michaelson asked. “We are on the ground, there is just the wall of the fences beside us, get your ass here now!” Marcus replied, looking at his right. Luckily for them it was high enough to hide them from view. Marcus had managed to push them both against it, shielding them from the sniper.

“Copy that, we're coming Sir” his voice echoed from the other line. Marcus put the walkie-talkie down on the ground and looked at her again. “Abby? Now I need you to focus on me ok?” he said, his body already tensing at the idea of moving from there, but this was his job and he was good at it, he knew how to do it, and he had to be lucid for her. She looked at him, her chin trembling slightly. He swallowed and smiled weekly. “Abby, you need to follow my orders and it will be ok, my soldiers are coming, they will shoot the sniper, but we have to move from here” he said, looking briefly in front of them, where there was a perfect corner that could offer a better shelter.
She looked in the same spot and swallowed. “Can we make it?” she asked, her voice tensed.

He looked at her deeply, her dark eyes fixed on him, trembling with some tears that she wasn't going to let fall, her muscles tensed. “Yes, we can do this. Now you have to-” but then another shot echoed, this time toward the building.

“Sir? The sniper saw us! Sir are you ok?” Michaelson voice yelled from the radio beside them. Abby was covering her head, hiding her face against her arms. He grabbed the walkie-talkie with anger. “We are still here, what the hell happened?” he growled, looking at his surroundings. He couldn't see them yet.

“Sir, there must be another sniper, he shot in our direction. We are almost at the corner of the building, but we can't move if we can't see him. Can you move from there sir?” he asked. Marcus cursed under his breath. “Negative. You need to open fire toward the western building, the sniper is there. I can't shoot from here, come on!” he yelled, throwing in frustration the walkie-talkie to the ground. Abby flinched and he rested a hand on her shoulder again. “Abby, we need to move now” he said. She looked at him, fear reflecting in her eyes, but she nodded, swallowing and clenching her jaw. “Ok, we can crawl to that corner there”. He pointed toward the higher walls of the fences, where they could hide and he could have a clear shot on the sniper. “It’s a better hiding spot. Can you do that Abby? Can you crawl with me there?” he asked her. She remained still for a moment and then nodded. “Yes” her voice trembling, her eyes shifting, her head giving him an uncertain consent.

“Michaelson, come in” he said, grabbing the radio again. “Yes sir?”. “We’re gonna move to the North-West corner of the fences, cover us while I move Doctor Griffin there. Is that clear?” he said, while instructing Abby with his hands. She followed his gestures and pressed her chest to the ground. He shifted slightly backwards, and pressed a hand on her lower back. “Ok, now start crawling slowly toward there” he whispered. She nodded, and her hands grabbed the ground under her body, her feet pushed her forward. “Copy that sir, we will cover you as best as we can” Michaelson's voice trembled on the other side of the radio.

“Ok good Abby, you're doing well” he said, while Abby kept pushing her body forward using her hands and her feet, too afraid to lift her chest from the ground, her clothes rubbing against the dirty dry grass. “Just like that” he whispered, while his eyes kept roaming around them. They were almost there, when the radio crackled to life again. “Sir? Sir come in. We see you! You can't move forward Sir!” Marcus grabbed Abby's foot, and she froze. “What is it?” she whispered, her voice broke for a moment.

“What happened?” he said. “There's a hole in the fences sir, you can't move forward, the sniper could see you” he snapped. Marcus groaned, and Abby shivered under his touch. “There's a hole? What? What do I have to do now?” she asked him, her body pressing itself even further on the ground, she looked at him from the corner of her eyes, her voice trembling, her muscles rigid.
“Nothing, it's ok Abby, stay here, I will take care of it now” he said, raising his head slightly up to look at the other side of the wall.

A bullet whistled in front of him, the sound filled his ears, but luckily it hit the wall. Abby flinched, covering her head with her hands, cursing under her breath something that sounded as **oh for the love of god.** “The sniper is still targeting us, you need to shoot him now!” he yelled into the radio. He bowed his head further on the ground, and moved closer to Abby. She was pressing her head against the ground. “Abby, are you ok?” he asked her, she shook her head. “No I'm not ok, why are they shooting us? We are in a hospital, they can't shoot us” she hissed, her voice muffled by the arms around her head. Marcus sighed out and crawled over her again, his chest on her back. She was right, snipers weren't allowed to open fire over civilians in a hospital, but he knew that bandits were around them, and they wanted just to take control of the structure, not caring about civilians and soldiers. “It's probably a bandit Abby, but we will take care of him ok?” he whispered, his voice stroking her hair.

Then another shot echoed a few steps from them. Abby flinched and he pressed his body onto hers to protect her. A soldier had rushed toward them and was now kneeling behind them, his back against the wall, panting heavily. “There are two snipers sir, Michaelson and the others will take care of the second one, I'll cover you from here, you can move Doctor Griffin there, the other will take her back inside once it's clear!” he yelled. Marcus nodded, while the boy rose on his feet and shot one, two, three times toward the building. The sniper shot back and he ducked down. “Now sir, move move!” he said, then Marcus shook Abby's shoulders. “Ok Abby follow me now, quickly” he said, and shifted in front of her, while grabbing her hand. She looked up and he tilted his head behind his back. “Now you have to run ok?” he said. She widened her eyes, still pressed to the ground. “What? No, it's not safe no, there is a hole there, no he will shoot you!” she hissed. “It's ok, do you see that soldier behind you? He will distract him, so we can run to a safer spot, you have to trust me Abby!” he said, and she looked back where the soldier was nodding at her. “It's ok Doctor, I'll cover you!” he said, his rifle ready in his hands.

Marcus looked down at her, she wasn't moving yet, chewing on her lower lip she was focusing her attention on the hole behind his back, Marcus leaned forward, and took her face in his hands without thinking. “Trust me Abby, I'm gonna protect you, I promise!” he said. She looked at him and inhaled deeply. Without saying more he helped her on her knees, then he covered her side with his body. She squeezed his uniform, pressing her face into his chest. “Ok now we have to run, keep your head down and be as fast as you can, ok?” he whispered to her and she nodded, inhaling and exhaling deeply against his jacket. Then she looked up and he smiled, trying to reassure her. “It's gonna be ok, trust me” he said. She offered him a shaking nod, and then he looked at his soldier. He nodded and looked up again, his rifle already targeting the sniper.

“Go, go, go!” he yelled, then shots started to echo behind them. Marcus forced Abby on her feet again, and she closed her eyes, trusting his hands on her back to guide her, then she started to run, faster as she could. They ran those few meters where the fences was broken. “Go, go, go!” the soldier's voice echoed again, and Marcus looked at his right side and saw it, the sun reflecting on the sniper's weapon, while he turned it toward them.
No. He thought in horror, and he pushed her forward with all his strength. She yelped and fell down on her face, right behind the higher wall in the corner. “Go!” he ordered her, while taking his rifle in his grip, trying to aim to the sniper, but he was faster, and the bullet hit him. His right shoulder burned and he groaned, but his hands were already in position, and he shot, one, two, three times, while falling down to the ground, a few inches from Abby. “No!” she yelled. “Sir!” another soldier screamed. Marcus closed his eyes, the dust from the ground invading his nostrils, preventing him from breathing properly. He was rolling on his back, right in front of the hole. Right when he thought the sniper was gonna finish him, two hands grabbed him from the shoulders and pulled him away.

“Come on Marcus, come on!” it was her, whispering frantically, pulling him with all her strength toward her. He was now behind the wall, the hole right at his feet, he was safe. His shoulders tensed on her lap and he opened his eyes. She was looking down at him, panting. “It's ok, we'll fix it” she said, tears pricking at her eyes, fear plastered on her face, but she was smiling.

Marcus parted his lips. “Abby you need to go back inside” he whispered, the pain in his shoulder soothed by the adrenaline, pulsing numbly. She shook her head. “Not without you, come on Marcus” she said, and then it hit him.

Marcus. His name sounded so peaceful coming from her lips, the way the sound of her voice played around those six letters made him smile. “I'm ok, it’s just my shoulder Abby” he said, feeling tired all of a sudden. The adrenaline was fading, making room for the pain, and it was spreading now from the hole in his flesh.

She chuckled softly, sniffing, her hands moving on his wounds. He hissed in pain and her eyes shifted from his shoulder to him. She smiled slightly. “It's not too deep, I can fix you” she said, nodding. Marcus nodded back, and smiled. “It's ok” he said.

“It's clear! Come on, take them inside!” the soldier yelled from behind the wall, his rifle pointed at the perimeter around the Hospital. Then the others approached them. “Sir? Are you ok?” Michaelson asked, kneeling down. From the other corner of the yard another shot echoed. “Clear! The second one is down!” another soldier yelled. Marcus looked at the man, kneeling down over him, not looking at the woman that was holding his head. Marcus grabbed his uniform and dragged him closer. “Take her inside, now!” he hissed, and the soldier blinked, looking at her. Abby said nothing, focused on his shoulder. “I'm ok. You need to take him inside now, he needs stitches” she said, while raising his head from her lap. Marcus was about to protest, when she shifted and was now at his side, her hands pressing incessantly on his wound.

“Abby...” he looked at her, and she nodded at him. “It's ok Marcus, it’s ok, now you have to trust me.” she said. He nodded, then she glared at the soldier. “So? What are you waiting for? Go and take a damn stretcher!” she ordered. Michaelson flinched and blinked, then raising on his feet he rushed inside the Hospital. Abby shook her head and shifted her attention to his wound. Marcus
looked at her.

She was focused on his shoulder, her eyebrows furrowed, a little wrinkle forming on her forehead. “Abby?” he said. She hummed. “Are you ok?” he whispered. She froze and looked at him, then shook her head chuckling slightly. “I'm surely better than you, I'm not the one with a bullet in her shoulder right?” she smirked, looking at him. Marcus chuckled softly. “Yeah” then he looked up at the sky above them. It was clear and blue, so peaceful.

“Are you ok Doc?” another voice reached them, the young soldier that had covered them from the wall was approaching them. He knelt beside her, she looked at him and nodded. “Yes, I'm fine” she said, her hands pressed on his wound. Marcus smiled when she huffed and looked at the Hospital's entrance. “What is taking them so long?” she hissed. The young soldier looked in the same direction and then rose on his feet. “Let me check ma'am” he said. Abby looked up at him but he was already walking away.

“Well... at least you have some decent humans in your unit” she told him. Marcus chuckled softly. “Yeah, some of them are not that bad” he replied, while she pressed harder on his wound. “Yeah, some of them” she whispered, looking at him with some sort of amusement. He chuckled bitterly and before he could add something, the young soldier was back, carrying the stretcher with the help of Michaelson. “Ok Sir, you ready?” he said. Marcus nodded and Abby withdrew.

“Be careful with his wound” she said, while standing up again. The man nodded and took hold of his feet, while Michaelson grabbed him from the shoulders. Marcus hissed. “She said be careful, damn it” he muttered. The soldier apologized and then lifted him. “Take him inside, come on” Abby ordered, walking beside them. Her eyes fell on Marcus one last time, and she smiled.

When they entered the building, the smell of antiseptic and the murmur of voices rushed at him. He looked at his surroundings, the white walls, the cold lights.

*They were safe again.*

“Abby!” a young male voice echoed from the other side of the hallway. Abby looked up and smiled weakly. Her young assistant rushed to her and dragged her in his arms. “Oh my god Abby!” he whispered. She smiled, and casted a last glance at him, while the soldiers kept dragging him to the other side of the hallway. He could only hear the echo of her voice now.

“I'm ok Jackson, I'm ok.”
The bed wasn't comfortable, surely more so than the stretcher, but the mattress was too thin and the metal bars were pressing on his back. The wound was now painful, a burning hole that was biting at his flesh and bones. Marcus was hissing in pain, while waiting for Abby to be back. His soldiers where in the room, checking on him.

The door was open, showing him the hallways, where people were walking slowly, casting glances inside to see the soldier that was wounded, the soldier that had been shot. He closed his eyes and swallowed, turning his attention toward the ceiling, when suddenly the echo of steps reached him.

“Sorry for the wait!” she entered the room and then stopped abruptly, looking at the two men with him, her hands on her hips. “So? What are you waiting for? Let me do my job!” she said, while gesturing toward the door. The men looked at her and then at him. Marcus nodded and they walked outside, closing the door behind their backs. Abby shook her head and approached him.

“They are never gonna leave you alone again uh?” she said, while wearing two white gloves. Her hands were now clean. Marcus chuckled. “Yeah well, it was my fault” he said, swallowing another hiss of pain. Abby frowned and took the hand he was pressing around his arm. “Take your hands off from there Marcus, they are dirty” she said while forcing him to let go. He huffed and she smiled while opening his jacket. “I need to take off your clothes now, ok?” she said, while unzipping his uniform. Marcus nodded and chuckled. “As you order Doctor” he said. She glared at him, but a quick smile appeared on her lips.

“Ok, let me see” she said, once the jacket was gone. It had been painful for him to take it off. She huffed. “Ok, you need to stand up so I can take off your shirt too” she added, and he did as she asked. She helped him lift it over his head, his muscles stretched at the movement and he groaned. “Come on, it's not that bad” she said, while discarding the jacket and the shirt on a chair beside the bed. He chuckled softly. “That's because it isn't your shoulder” he said, and she nodded. “Yeah well, it still would have been nothing too serious” she added, while helping him on the bed again.

“No, it would have been worse” he whispered, and at that she looked at him, while unwrapping some bandages. “Yeah? And why?” she asked, while cutting a piece of them. Marcus chuckled softly. “Because I am expendable” he said, looking at her, meaning it. She froze, looking at her hands, then put the bandages and the scissors on the tiny cabinet beside him and sighed out. “No, you are not” she said, while moving to the other corner of the room, opening a locker, taking out some bottles he couldn't recognize. “You are a good soldier, and we need you to protect us” she said, while reading the labels of the medicines. Marcus shook his head. “That's not what I meant Abby” he said, and she looked up at him. “I know” she whispered, while putting down the bottles.
and taking his arm in her hands.

The gloves were shielding her real touch, and she felt cold and unfamiliar. He wanted her to touch him with her bare hands, but he also knew she couldn't. “I'm sorry for what I said before” she said suddenly, while cleaning his wounds with a cotton swab that burned his skin. “Don't be” he replied. She looked at him for a moment and then focused again on the warm blood on his skin. “But I am, it’s not your fault if...” - her voice trembled slightly, she closed her eyes, throwing the now red material into the trash and taking a new one - “if Clarke decided to run away. She made that decision, and you were right, we both know why she did it” she said, sniffing quietly and blinking away a few tears.

Marcus swallowed. “Hey” he said. She hummed without looking at him. The wound was now almost completely clean. He grabbed her hand, stopping her. “Look at me” he whispered. She closed her eyes and inhaled deeply, turning her attention to him. “I'm gonna find her, I promise” he said, and at that she chuckled bitterly. “Yeah, of course you will” she replied, then threw the cotton away, standing up on her feet.

“I'm serious Abby, I will find your daughter” he promised, while she took off her gloves and put on a new pair. “I believe you Marcus, but this is not gonna happen, and we both know that” she snorted, walking again toward him, this time taking some metallic and shining objects from the cabinet. “Now you have to remain still ok?” she said, without waiting for him to reply. He nodded but kept staring at her. “I will make it happen Abby” he said. Her eyes flinched on his skin and she shook her head.

“But you can't” she whispered, while starting to move toward the bullet in his flesh. “Stay still please” she ordered, and then the cold objects that he couldn't name entered the hole. He closed his eyes and had to suppress a loud scream. The bullet shifted inside of his flesh, while Abby kept working with it, then she pulled it out. The pain was sharp and burning. Marcus was shaking, his other hand gripping at the blankets.

“Ok, now stitches” she said, and he flinched. “You really have to?” he asked her suddenly and Abby blinked, chuckling bitterly. “Of course I have to, would you prefer to get an infection?” she asked, while already preparing the needle. His eyes fell on her hands, and her face lit up in realization. “You are afraid of needles?” she whispered, her voice low, her tone not amused, just surprised. He closed his eyes and shook his head. “It’s not about being afraid, it’s just...” he sighed out and Abby smiled. “It’s just that you are afraid of needles” she stated, while looking at him from behind her eyelashes.

“You’re not allowed to tell anyone, get it?” he groaned. Abby smirked and then shook her head. “Of course, it will be our secret, I promise” she said, while shaking her head and focusing on his wound again. “Now look somewhere else Marcus” she said and he did it, his eyes fixed on the ceiling.
“Now tell me, how is it possible for a soldier, a General, to be afraid of needles? I mean, you use weapons all the time, and you shoot people. But you are afraid of something that actually saves them?” she said, and at that he sighed out. “Yeah well, it’s not the same thing. And by the way it’s a fear, an illogical one, it’s like fear of the dark or of heights” he said. Abby hummed. “Yeah well the height must be frightening, it’s dangerous. The dark is illogical, yes, but it’s something that traces back to our childhood, you know... but needles? That is really irrational.”

Marcus swallowed. “Yes well, I'm sorry but I am not good at controlling my mind when it comes to these things, you are the doctor here” he said, and she chuckled. “I am a surgeon Marcus, not a therapist, and by the way it seems to me that you can perfectly handle it” she said, withdrawing from him. Marcus blinked and looked at her. She was smirking, tilting her head toward his shoulder. The wound was closed, several stitches were now shining on his skin. “What?” he asked, and she rose on her feet again.

“See? Sometimes we focus so much on our fears and make them grow, that we are no longer able to see we are not afraid anymore. We just convinced ourselves of that” she said, taking off her gloves and washing her hands in the sink. Marcus blinked and shook his head. “Well, you are good at your job” he said, still casting glances at his wounds. Abby nodded and hummed while approaching him again, taking the clean bandages in her hands.

“Yes I am, and you better remember that the next time” she said, while wrapping the bandages around his now numb wound. The local anesthetic was still working. “I will never forget that Abby” he said, his voice low. She looked up at him and smiled, then gestured for him to get up. He did as she asked and she wrapped the bandages around his shoulders, lifting his arm so that she could fix them. Her scent reached his nose. She smelled as dust and blood, sweat and mud, but also as something sweet that was still trapped in her hair and her skin, something hers that was still hiding there, behind the tracks of the frightening accident with the sniper. She guided him back again and sighed out.

“Ok, now you have to rest. I will come back later to check on you” she told him, taking all of her stuff in her hands. But before she could walk away, Marcus reached for her, his hands grabbing her dirty coat. “Abby?” he said. She turned toward him, saying nothing. “Don't give up” he whispered, and he saw how her breath stopped for a moment and her lips parted. Then she closed them again and nodded, her eyes shining with new tears. She smiled weakly and walked outside. Leaving him alone.

Don't give up. I will find her. He thought, right before falling into a dreamless sleep.
Abby can't sleep with her daughter gone, and an idea starts to dig into her head.

Marcus will not be that happy about it.

2 November - 01.45 pm

Abby

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Two

Days without sleep: One

Health: Good

Trying to sleep wasn't useful. Her mind couldn't let her do that, the ghost of the day she had just faced was trapping her into an endless loop of quiet sobs and paralyzing panic attacks. She had refused Jackson's help multiple times by now. He had quietly whispered to her that everything was gonna be alright again, that Clarke was ok.

He was still shocked at what had happened to her. Snipers were always around them and they all knew that, but hearing shots faraway was one thing, hearing them right outside the wall of their shelter was another matter. When he had hugged her, right when she had entered the building, she had felt his fear. It was painful to feel it in the strength of that embrace, on the way his arms had squeezed her, almost lifting her from the floor. He had asked her if she was ok, what had happened, whispering how sorry he was, but the soldiers had blocked them inside of the building. And Abby had started to feel powerless, feeling guilty because he had searched for her, and when he had
realized she wasn't there, the shots had started.

It was unfair to put him through all of this pain, the fear of losing her was unbearable for him, and she knew it well, she knew it well because it was the same fear she had of losing him too. Jackson had grown up with her. When his mother died, after a long and heartbreaking period in which the cancer had consumed her piece by piece, he had decided to be a doctor. She had been so happy to take him under her protective wing.

He had always been like a son to her, kind and respectful. His need to learn and to help made her feel proud, proud of the man he had become, proud of the gentle soul his body enclosed.

And now here they were, forced to face a war that could kill them all at any second, and she was the usual reckless Abby, always sacrificing herself for others, without sleeping or eating if it meant being able to help someone. Many times Jackson had found her sleeping on the floor near a patient's bed, many times he had carried her in her room at night, with Clarke’s help.

And how kind he had been to her when Jake had been executed, always there to help her and Clarke. He had swallowed his tears to be strong for her, just as Abby had done for Clarke. Each one of them had supported the other's sorrow and had shared the same painful sadness.

She was so grateful to have him at her side, that young caring and honorable man. But right now, right now she couldn't let him see her like this. So she had pushed him out of her room, asking him to leave her alone.

She had seen his eyes, the way they were glassy with tears, and his lips had trembled, but he had nodded and had whispered just a faint “goodnight then” walking out of her door.

She had locked it to shut out everyone else, and had crashed on her bed, and all her emotions had started overflowing her. The fear, the devastation. She had cried and cried, consuming all of what was left inside of her, but what was left inside of her? She felt so empty, how could she still feel something? Is there a limit to the amount of pain a person can feel?

She didn’t have an answer to those questions, but she knew perfectly how hard it was for her to even breathe now. Clarke’s cold, empty bed was there, beside hers. She stood up and without thinking she laid on it, and when she did she felt she could answer one of those questions.

*Is there a limit to the amount of pain a person can feel? No.*
Clarke’s scent invaded her, the sweetness of the fruity hands soap she loved using before bed, the unique smell of her skin Abby had learned to love from the first day she had come to life. The mattress still carried the shape of her body, and it felt so terrible to be there, knowing that she could already be dead. Her throat was burning and it was painful to breathe. Her tears kept falling down her eyes, her hands squeezed the pillow that had supported the weight of her daughter's dreams.

It was unbearable. Her chest was so tight around her pumping heart, her body was shivering and flinching with every sob, and her mind kept asking her to stop feeling, even if just for a moment, because it was too much, she couldn't handle it anymore.

But her heart kept pumping, sending waves of emotions into her system, making her break over and over again, as if she could break even more.

And so she cried and cried, until her body couldn't make any more tears. She had forgotten to eat and drink, and her body was now reminding her that she needed to.

*I don't want to.* She thought. *But you have to be healthy if you want to go and search for her.*

*Search for her. Go and search for her.*

Then she snapped back up, her mind spinning from the abrupt movement. She stood up quickly and walked toward the door, unlocked it and rushed outside into the empty hallway.

*Go and search for her.* Her mind ordered her, her heart pumping heavily, her body had regained new strength. *Go and search for her.*

*I will.* She thought, disappearing into the storage room in a quick movement, locking the door behind her back.

*Marcus*
It was late, he knew it from the silence around him. His body was aching and his mind was slowly waking up. He had slept for a few hours, skipping dinner, but he was so tired, and the medicines Abby had given him the last time she checked on him, had knocked him out in a few minutes.

He blinked his eyes to life again. His room was dark, his door closed. It felt so different to be there, surrounded by concrete walls, instead of a tent outside. It felt safe somehow. Hospitals should be safe places all the time. He knew very well this wasn't true right now, but he lingered onto the feeling that for once he was safe and this wasn't just imagination.

The illusion ended when the sound of footsteps echoed outside his door. His body tensed, *is someone inside the hospital?* Of course people were there, but weren't they supposed to be sleeping?

He tried to get up from the bed, his right shoulder protested, the stitches preventing him from moving smoothly. The blanket over his body fell onto his lap and a cold breeze hit him. He looked down at himself, he was still shirtless. He groaned and looked around, his clothes resting on the chair beside his bed.

He reached for the shirt and his muscles protested again. He was still recovering and his body reminded him of that with every movement. He tried putting it on, and found himself incapable of it. It was a simple gesture, but right now his wound was blocking his arm and he couldn't do it.

*Great.* He thought, while discarding it again, throwing it on the chair with a snort. Then another sound reached him again, this time louder. He needed to check on it, to make sure no scavenger or bandit was inside.
After the sniper he was expecting almost everything to happen. There’s no limit to how many bad things can happen in a day. He jumped out of his bed, well maybe not jumped but tried to, and when he was on his feet again he huffed, pushing his body up with his good arm. He looked at his feet, they were bare.

*When had he taken off his shoes?* He couldn't remember, but probably Abby had done it for him. He smiled to himself at the scene that pictured itself in his mind, and then walked toward the door. It was cold, barefoot as he was, but at least he would be quieter. He opened it carefully and peeked outside.

*Dark.* An endless darkness was in front of him. The room he was staying in, was farthest away from the entrance of the building. His soldiers weren't close enough to see him. He walked back in his room and searched for the one thing he knew could help him more than anything, his gun.

But of course it wasn't there anymore, his soldiers probably had to take it away from him. He could already imagine Abby yelling at them how dangerous it was to carry a weapon inside the hospital, leaving it in the room of an unconscious patient. And if he had to be honest, it wasn't a bad idea. Still... now he had to do without it. He inhaled deeply and took the most threatening thing he could find.

*A crutch.* Ok, it wasn't the best weapon of the year, he could tell, but it was still something. He grabbed it and lifted it, adjusting to the weight of it. It wasn't heavy enough to kill, but maybe if he threw it at the right spot on the head, it could knock out an average-sized man.

Satisfied with his new weapon, he walked out of his room, listening carefully to the sounds around him. He closed the door behind his back, trying to be quiet. The noise of something crashing on the floor startled him.

Surely the intruder wasn't trying to be subtle. Good, he could spot him sooner.

He walked slowly in the hallway, breathing quietly and focusing on the surroundings. His eyes were slowly adjusting to the darkness around him, and he could see now where he was going, the white walls, the door's room. Then another sound made him stop. It came from the storage room. *Scavengers.* It was probably someone searching for food or medicines, and he was already making up in his mind, the speech he would give his soldiers about being more careful when patrolling the perimeter, when the door opened and a shadow walked outside, carrying some stuff in its arms.
He lifted the crutch, feeling embarrassed at the lack of a gun, when she turned to him and flinched, yelling, all the stuff in her arms falling down to the floor.

“Oh for god's sake, you scared me Marcus!” she snapped, resting a hand on her chest, breathing frantically. Marcus blinked and then recognized her, the long hair, the thin figure, the white coat.

Abby.

“What the hell Abby? I scared you? What about you? What the hell are you doing?” he said to her, lowering the threatening weapon at his side and approaching her. She huffed and knelt down, collecting the stuff she had been holding.

Some dry meat, few bottles of water, some chocolate bars and also some bottles with something he couldn't really name right now.

“I was making inventory” she said, while taking everything in her hands, trying to hide them from his view, pressing them against her chest. Marcus raised an eyebrow. “Oh inventory uh? In the middle of the night?” he said, while kneeling down in front of her. His shoulder pulsed, but he ignored it.

“Yeah, so? What's the problem with that? It's my Hospital, I can make inventory whenever I want” she snapped, then, snorting to herself, she decided to use her coat as a bag for the stuff she couldn't apparently hold anymore in her arms.

“Bottle of water, dry meat, chocolate, you are collecting stuff Abby, are you planning on going somewhere?” he asked her, raising up, while she adjusted one bottle on the top of the objects. “What? No. Why do you ask? It's just inventory of... necessary supplies, that's all” she said, forcing a smile on her lips, already turning her back to him. But Marcus preceded her and grabbed her shoulder, careful to use the functional arm.

“Abby? What are you doing?” he asked her. She huffed, glaring at him when a bottle almost fell down from her coat. “Why do you care? Go back to sleep, it's nothing really” she said, while turning back again. Marcus walked after her and she stopped. “Marcus what are you doing? Your room is over there” she said, tilting her head to her back. He shrugged. “Yeah, but I feel the need to take a walk, mind if I join you?” he asked her, while resting the crutch on his good shoulder. Abby frowned, then looked at the object in his hand, a curious expression blossoming on her features. “Where you gonna try to kill me with that?” she asked, shaking her head and resuming her walk.
“Yeah well, since my gun wasn't in my belt, I had to figure out something” he said, smiling to himself, still focusing his attention on the stuff in her arms. “Yeah well, it’s not safe to keep guns inside the hospital, especially in an unlocked room. Someone could take it and, you know, kill you” she said, lowering her tone and looking directly at him. Marcus smirked. “Yeah, I bet you would have been sorry for it” he whispered.

“Oh don’t be like that Marcus. I do hate you, but not enough to kill you with your own gun” she said, walking faster. Why was she walking faster?

“Oh well this is very kind from you, would you prefer using something else to kill me?” he asked her. Abby turned toward him, stopping in her tracks, and Marcus did the same. She walked a few inches from him. “I would use poison, you know? I could pour just the right amount in your food every day and it would slowly kill you, leaving no tracks behind” she whispered, her eyes fixed on him. He stood motionless, staring at her.

“Wait, what?” he managed to whisper, and she smirked, shaking her head. “You are quite a view when you're scared” she chuckled softly and started walking again. Marcus shook his head and followed her. “Hey that wasn't a confession, was it?” he asked. She turned to him without stopping. “Who knows, right?” with that she stopped in front of her room. “Now, if you could excuse me, I have work to do” she said, already opening the door of her private space.

“Hey wait, please tell me why you need these things” he said. She bowed her head and sighed out. “I told you-” but he preceded her, “The inventory yeah, ok, now could you please tell me the truth?” he said, leaning his weight on the wall beside him. Abby smiled and shook her head. “This is the truth Marcus, you can believe me or not, I don't care. But now you really should go back to sleep” she whispered, and then her eyes shifted for a moment on his injured shoulder and she snorted. “For the love of god Marcus, how did you do that?” she said, and Marcus looked at his shoulder himself.

Fresh warm blood was escaping the bandage. “What? I did nothing!” he said, and she huffed, pushing the door open with her foot. “Come inside, I need to stitch you again.” she groaned, while walking inside, leaving the door open for him.

He walked in, looking at his shoulder, the once white bandages were now bright red. “I swear I didn’t do anything” he said. Abby snorted and let the stuff she was holding fall onto one of the beds. “Sit down” she ordered him, washing her hands in the little sink on the other corner of the room.

He looked around himself, adjusting to the new surroundings. He had been in her room before - sometimes he had just peeked inside from the hallway, call it curiosity - and he already knew what it looked like. It was tiny, patient's rooms were bigger, so as to take as little space as possible. It
was once used by doctors and nurses to take a nap between shifts. Two beds were resting one in front of the other, the walls were once bright blue, but now the color had faded in a pale bluish gray.

The only source of light was a broken lamp, enveloping the entire space in a delicate white halo. It felt intimate and familiar to be there. He was sitting on her bed. He knew Clarke usually slept in the other one, now empty, looking cold and out of place.

She cleared her throat while drying her hands on a clean towel. “I need to check your wound. If the stitches are gone I need to put them on again, so... it means needle, ok?” she said, while taking a med kit from the only cabinet in the room. Marcus nodded, grimacing slightly at the idea. “Hopefully it’s nothing too serious” he said. She knelt down in front of him.

“Yeah well, leave that to me” she said, smirking and reaching for his shoulder. He sighed out and tried to relax his muscles, but her hands were cold, especially now that she had washed them with fresh water, and he flinched, his muscles tensed under her fingers. “Sorry” she whispered, withdrawing her hands and rubbing them on her pants. “Here, let me try again” she touched him again, this time her skin was warmer. He smiled and nodded and she nodded back, lifting the bandages and peeking at the wound.

“So?” he asked her, looking carefully at the way she focused all of her attention on his shoulder. She looked at him and smiled slightly. “Nothing too serious, a stitch shifted, I just need to put it in place again” she replied, already taking a scissor from her med kit. “Ok then, we should talk about the weather, or our favorite movie, or something like that” he said, averting his gaze and focusing on the ceiling above his head. “Our favorite movie? Yeah if we were 16 years old we could do that” she snorted, moving her hands under the bandages. Marcus swallowed, the shining needle resting beside him already making him shiver. “Ok then, what about our favorite memory in life? Or what we believe in? Deepest topics for older people?” he said, looking at her. She smiled, taking a cotton swab and cleaning the blood from his skin.

“So Marcus Kane believes in something? That's new to me” she said, looking at him for a brief second and focusing again on her hands working on his wound. “I can be surprising Abby” he said, and she chuckled bitterly. “Happy to hear that” she whispered, without looking at him. He sighed, and when she took the needle from the med kit, he closed his eyes, averting his gaze and focusing on the wall in front of him. For a moment he felt nothing and then it started to burn. He flinched.

“Stay still, it will only take a second” she said, leaning a bit forward, her hot breath stroking his pulsing skin. “I bet you are enjoying this” he said, meaning it as a joke. Abby froze, her hands lingered on his skin and then she shook her head. “What kind of person do you think I am, Kane?” she said. His surname from her lips felt strangely unfamiliar, cold, stern and completely wrong.
“I was just joking” he whispered, looking at her from the corner of his eyes. She said nothing, biting at her lower lip, her hands moving slowly on the stitches. He sighed out and smiled to himself. “Besides, as you said before, you prefer poison” he added, then fell silent, still peeking at her. Then he noticed the way her lips curved into a smirk. “You are such an asshole” she muttered, looking at him, covering his wound again with the bandage. He chuckled softly, “I know”. She tilted her head, sighed out and threw the dirty cotton swabs in the trashcan.

While she collected the scissors and the needle to clean them, he had time to look around again and saw something he hadn't seen before. A brown leather bag was resting at the bed's feet, it was open and he could saw some clothes folded inside. His eyes shifted to the stuff that she had gathered from the storage room, the water bottles, the dry meat, the chocolate bar. Then he saw another thing that captured his attention, a yellowish piece of paper that was escaping the bag's pocket.

Then it all clicked.

She closed the med kit and replaced it in the cabinet, saying nothing, and right when she was close enough, he grabbed her arm. She froze and looked down, his eyes fixed on the bag at their feet. “Marcus?” she raised an eyebrow, while he kept silent, trapping her wrist in his hand. He looked up, his jaw clenched, his eyes deep and stern, and she frowned. “Are you planning on going somewhere?” he asked, voice low and deep. She tilted her head. “What? No. Why you keep asking?” she replied back, swallowing slightly, and he saw how her eyes shifted rapidly from him to the bag on the floor.

He sighed out, the answer already clear in his mind. He left her wrist, giving her permission to take a few steps backward, then he grabbed the bag from the floor, the movement stretching painfully his shoulder's muscles. “Hey! That's mine!” she snapped, but he glared at her and threw the perfectly folded clothes out of it. Then he took the yellowish paper out of the pocket and unfolded it. “What's that Abby?” he asked, looking at the black cross on it, the inked names written down between the outline of mountains and roads. It looked like some kind of map. “None of your business” she groaned, her hands reaching for it, but he withdrew his hand and hid it behind his back. She froze midair, almost falling in his lap.

“You want to sneak out and go looking for Clarke, tell me if I’m wrong” he said, his voice low. He was mad, he was really mad, but at the same time he felt almost... hurt. As if he expected more of her, as if her behavior was letting him down.

She is a smart woman, she can't really think about doing it. He kept telling himself. There has to be another reason why she got this stuff.
She swallowed and withdrew, crossing her arms in front of her chest, stiffening her back and looking at him sharply from above. “Give me my stuff back” she said, and he clenched his jaw.

“She’s not answering, she is going to do this.”

“Damn it Abby!” he snapped, raising on his feet, the mattress jumping at the loss of weight. She didn't flinch. “What the hell are you thinking?” his hand reached for her arm instinctively and he grabbed her by the elbow. She looked down and kept staring at a random point on his bandage. “Answer me!” he ordered. At that she raised her eyes, a bitter smirk blossoming on the corner of her lips. “I’m gonna do whatever it takes to find my daughter, Marcus” she hissed.

His grip on her elbow loosened and she took a step backward, putting more distance between them, then, glaring at him, she rushed to the bed and grabbed the bag, hiding it behind her back, turning toward him again. “You should go now, it’s late and you should sleep, you're still recovering” she said coldly, Marcus blinked, and looked at her. She was avoiding his gaze.

“Please tell me you’re not gonna do this for real, Abby”. He took a few steps toward her, his hand cupped against his mouth. “Tell me you aren't this stupid” he pleaded, his voice low and slightly flinching. She looked at him and shook her head, her eyes were shimmering with new forming tears. “Go to sleep Marcus” she whispered, her voice trapped in her throat. He inhaled deeply and then took one last step toward her. His hands squeezed her arms and this time she flinched, her features trembled, one tear rolled down her cheek.

“Please, Abby, don't do this” his voice was a faint whisper. She inhaled and parted her lips, shaking her head. “I have to” she choked out. The sound of her voice was heartbreaking, it trembled and escaped her lips with effort. Her words though, they sounded clear and strong in his ears. “Abby please” - he shook his head - “you can't. It’s too dangerous” he continued. She closed her eyes, another tear rolled down her cheek. “I've made my decision, Marcus” she said, her smoky voice vibrating with a heavy sadness. He squeezed her harder and she opened her eyes again. “You can't do this!” he hissed, at that the bag she was holding fell on the ground, and she used her free hands to push him backwards. His shoulder pulsed in pain.

“Go away Marcus!” her voice was now filled with anger, her eyes burning. “You can't change my mind, it’s too late!” she said, and then gestured to the door. “Go away!” with that she turned and wrapped her arms around her torso, bowing her head. Her shoulders started trembling.

Marcus was motionless, speechless, looking at her, shivering in front of him. His heart pounding in is temples, his shoulder pulsing numbly and burning slightly. His legs trembling and his mouth dry. He couldn't just let her go, he couldn't let her go away out there, she wasn't ready to face the
world outside, she was gonna die. Then a promise he had made few months ago came back to his mind.

*Watch out for them. Protect them for me, please.*

“I can't let you do this, you know that” he suddenly said. She snapped her head back up again and turned toward him, her arms still wrapped around her torso. “You have to” she hissed. Marcus shook his head. “I can’t” he shrugged as if it was unavoidable. “Marcus...” - she took few steps toward him, her chin trembling - “you have to let me go” she whispered, her eyes watery. He shook his head, clenching his jaw. “I can't Abby” he whispered back. She huffed in anger and pressed her hands on her face. “For the love of God, you don't understand!” she circled on herself, her muscles tense and rigid, she was angry. “I need to find her!” she hissed, inhaling and exhaling deeply. She was losing patience. “You will die Abby” he whispered, but she wasn't listening. “I can't stay here doing nothing, while she is out there alone, doing who knows what, who knows where, alone, in the middle of the battlefield. I am her mother, I have to protect her!”

“You will die...” he whispered again, his voice too low for her to hear. He inhaled and then stepped in her tracks. She was walking randomly from corner to corner while talking in anger, but at that she stopped abruptly. “You will die Abby!” she snapped, taking her by the arms. She blinked. “No” she just said. He nodded. “You will, trust me, it’s too dangerous” he said again, but she shook her head. “Don't say that” she whispered. He looked down at his feet and exhaled sadly, “it’s the truth”. She took a few steps backwards, “shut up”. He looked at her, frowning. She was staring at the floor with watery eyes. “Don't say that” she shook her head.

“Abby, you know how it is out there, you are a doctor, you saw what happens to the people out there” he said again, taking a step toward her. She raised her hand and he stopped. “Don't say that” she closed her eyes, a few tears rolled down. “If you keep saying that, I will break Marcus” her voice was trembling. He blinked and then realized.

*Don't say that I will die, or I will keep thinking that Clarke is already dead out there, alone.*

“Abby I-..” she looked at him, her eyes carrying heavy salty tears she wasn't letting fall down. “Please, just go” she hissed, clenching her fists. Marcus swallowed.

*Tell her. He told himself. Tell her why you can’t let her go. She deserves to know.*

“Abby I-” she snorted and grabbed him from the good arm. “I said” - she opened the door, and pushed him outside - “Go away!” with that she closed the door loudly on his face, locking it. He blinked and realized he was alone in the middle of the hallway now, her closed door the only thing
he could see in the dark.

The hospital was quiet, outside was quiet, but his mind was loud, screaming and yelling at him to stop her, to do something. He made a promise once, he had promised to someone he was gonna look out for her, and for Clarke. He had already left one of them, he wasn't gonna do the same mistake again. He couldn't.

He wanted to knock on her door, to yell at her that he couldn't let her go. But his feet walked him away from her room, toward his own and his mind kept working fast around the memory of that day, the day he had promised to a dying man that he was gonna protect his family.

5 months earlier

It was heartbreaking to witness that. The way he was holding his wife tight, the petite woman shaking as a leaf, gripping his shirt in her hands as if letting go meant literally dying. He was taller than her and he was holding her so tightly that she was lifting from the floor, her feet barely touching the cold concrete. She was crying, squeezing her eyes, holding him close.

“I love you Jake” she whispered, he could read her words on her tight lips. Then she opened her eyes again, and for a moment, a quick instant that faded almost immediately, she looked at him, and he saw it, the desperate rage behind them, burning in her dark watery irises.

Marcus averted his gaze, and she was already looking back at her husband. They had stopped hugging and where now looking at each other, her chin was trembling, her eyes were roaming over Jake's face.

“I love you too Abby” he said, and at that she sobbed louder, crashing her face in his chest. Then the sound of footsteps reached them in the hallway. “Dad!” Clarke Griffin was rushing toward them. Marcus saw how Abby froze and widened her eyes, turning immediately toward her.
“Clarke! What are you doing here?” she stepped back from Jake and stopped her. Clarke was crying, her face red, her lips trembling. “You shouldn't be here, honey” Abby whispered. The girl shook her head, looking at her mother briefly and then focusing on her father again. “Dad...” at that Abby looked back at him, he nodded and she let her go.

Clarke rushed toward him and he welcomed her in his big arms immediately. She pressed her face in his shoulder, crying loudly, and he held her tight. “Hey kiddo” he whispered in her blonde hair. Marcus had to avert his gaze, and by doing that he met Abby's eyes. She was looking at him, her cheeks reddened, tears plastered on her skin, she was breathing heavily. He parted his lips. She averted her gaze and then walked toward her family.

Jake opened his arms, making room for her too, and she hid her face in his chest. Clarke did the same, and Abby wrapped a protective arm around her daughter. He kissed both of them on the head. Marcus saw one of the guards moving toward them and stopped him with his arm. The guard widened his eyes and Marcus nodded. “I got this” he whispered, then approached the Griffins.

“Jake...” he whispered. At the sound of his voice the man held the two women tighter. Clarke shook her head. “No..” she breathed, her voice muffled in her father's shirt. “It’s time Jake...” Marcus whispered. Abby lifted her head, her eyes shifted on him for a moment and then focused on her husband again. She whispered something to him, something that back then he couldn't get, but that now made sense, her lips moving around those words, her hand stroking his cheek, “May we meet again”. Fresh warm tears rolled down her cheeks. Jake nodded and kissed her hard on the forehead. “Dad...” Clarke's voice broke under the weight of her sobs.

“Could you give us a minute?” Jake asked suddenly, turning toward him. Marcus inhaled and nodded, taking a step backward. He could feel the pointed eyes of his guards on his back, but what was he supposed to do? Was he supposed to take him away from his daughter and wife as if he was a threat to them? Was he supposed to break their hearts even more?

“Hey kiddo, take this” Jake said, taking off the watch he had always kept on his wrist and putting it in his daughter's hand. Clarke looked down and squeezed her eyes, then she looked up again. “I love you dad!” she chocked. He nodded, dragged her toward him and pressed a long kiss on her forehead. Abby was beside them, hiding her face in her palm, crying quietly.

Then he looked at her and Clarke withdrew, holding the watch against her heart. He took off his finger the black ring that was shining under the cold lights. Abby inhaled deeply. “Keep this for me Abby”, he opened her palm, and put the ring on her skin, her eyes fixed on the metallic object. “I love you” he whispered. She looked up at him again, her hand trembling, her features tense. She squeezed her eyes and sobbed. “I love you too” she mouthed, and with that she dragged him to her, pressing a long kiss on his lips.
Marcus averted his gaze again, giving them some last seconds of privacy, then looked at the guard behind him. The man bowed his head. “Jake...” Marcus said again, and the man nodded. “I know” he whispered, and Clarke started sobbing loudly again.

“Dad...” Abby took her in her arms. Jake started walking backward. “I love you kiddo” he said, forcing back a sob. Clarke was choking in her tears, while Abby kept sniffing, suppressing her own sobs and tears, circling her daughter with an arm. Marcus walked toward him and took the man from the arm. Jake looked at him and then bowed his head.

He nodded one last time toward them, and they nodded back, Clarke collapsing in her mother's arms. Marcus sighed and guided the man out of the building. Jake casted a last glance at the trembling women, who remained behind in the hallway. Clarke was sobbing quietly, while Abby was whispering reassuring words in her hair.

They left the building behind them and reached the empty street in front of it, where two cars were waiting. They were driving him away enough from there, where he was gonna die, far from his family's eyes.

The car felt incredibly small when Marcus sat in the driver's seat, Jake beside him, his hands handcuffed now, resting on his lap. He drove in silence, while the man condemned to death kept staring outside, where the buildings were still not completely destroyed, gazing at the empty streets. It felt so unfamiliar, seeing the city like that.

Arkadia had always been alive, a city filled with colors, scents, voices, life. But now it was becoming a ghost of itself, the buildings in the suburbs of the city were still intact, the one in the center got destroyed when the first bomb had fallen from the sky. It was devastating to see the rubbles scattered all over the central square, the fountain and the benches completely gone.

Memories of days spent under the summer sun, sitting there, listening to the falling water, the murmurs of voices, the kids yelling and laughing, started to fill Marcus' mind. He shook his head and swallowed, focusing again on reality.

And when the car in front of him stopped, right in front of the general quarter of his unit, he felt his heart jump in his chest. He parked the car himself, and when the engine fell quiet, the heavy silence in the car filled his ears and made him feel sick.

Two soldiers were approaching them, ready to escort the man inside. Marcus loosened his belt, and
then suddenly Jake was grabbing his hand with his own. Marcus looked up, feeling a rush of fear in his veins, but when he saw the man's expression the fear turned into regret, sadness, devastating pain.

“You have to promise me one thing, Kane” he whispered to him, casting a quick glance at the soldiers that where approaching. They didn’t have time for this now, and he knew it. Marcus swallowed, and without a second thought nodded. “Anything” he said, because it was right, he felt as if he had to listen to him, to promise him whatever he wanted him to promise. Jake smiled weakly. “Watch out for them. Protect them for me, please” he pleaded, his bright blue eyes were trembling, but his voice wasn't even shaking.

Marcus froze, his heart pounding loudly in his chest.

*Protect them for me. Please.*

But Marcus couldn't say anything back, because suddenly the door beside Jake opened and a soldier dragged him out. He didn’t even have the time to say something that he was immediately pushed inside the building. Marcus climbed outside the car quickly and followed them, his mind twisting around Jake's words.

*Watch out for them. Protect them for me, please.*

They reached the door that opened to the backyard, hidden from view behind high walls, where they used to execute bandits, rebels, criminals. And they were going to do the same to Jake Griffin, the man who wanted to give civilians more food and water, that wanted to warn them about the incoming bombs on the poorest district of the city. He wanted to save those people, and he was gonna die now for that.

The soldiers pushed him in front of a wall, and Jake swallowed, closing his eyes. One soldier walked a few steps from him, right in front of Marcus, his rifle in hands. Then the man's blue eyes fell on him again and Marcus clenched his jaw. Jake's lips mouthed something, something that for a moment Marcus almost couldn't get.

*Promise me.*

And at that Marcus nodded, his head moving without warning, his lips mouthing back at him the promise the man needed.
I promise.

At that Jake smiled, his eyes watery, then the soldier pulled the trigger, and he fell on the ground, a hole on his chest, dark blood flowing on his shirt, his eyes closed, the echo of the shot in their ears.

Jake Griffin was dead, and Marcus had just promised him to protect his family.

And he was gonna keep that promise, at any cost.
The Siblings

Chapter Summary

Abby sneaks out of the Hospital. Leaving behind her no tracks, just few words.

Chapter Notes

No beta this time, all mistakes are mine!

2\textsuperscript{nd} November 04:45 am

\textit{Raven}

\textit{Location: Arkadia Central Hospital}

\textit{Days without food: Two}

\textit{Days without sleep: Zero}

\textit{Health: Injured. Recovering.}

She was hungry. Her stomach was protesting for the lack of food since hours by now. Outside it was still dark, the sun wasn't yet shining in the sky, but the night was almost over, she could tell because she had woken up in the middle of it hours ago. A loud sound had dragged her out from sleep, and the murmur of voices had kept her awake after it.
Then silence had descended again almost an hour later, but her mind couldn't stop thinking about the loud voice of Abby that she had heard at last, yelling to someone “Go away!” and then the sound of a slammed door that had startled her.

**What was going on?** She had thought. She knew about the sniper, she had heard people talking about it, and she had also heard the shots echoing outside the building, she was as always on her bed, when she had sensed something was wrong. Jackson was rushing toward the entrance of the hospital, when a young guard had stopped him, yelling something like “Is too dangerous, you have to stay here!” and at that the young assistant had walked away, suppressing some tears.

After that she could only hear the soldiers yell, the shots outside, the people murmuring with worried voices. “The doctor and the general are out there, are they gonna die? Is Abby gonna die?” and she had kept asking herself if it was gonna happen.

Was Abby going to die? And if she died, what was going to happen to them? She had to shook her head several times to stop asking herself that, and had to focus on something else, but how hard it had been to do that, when she was stuck in her bed, her door open, the worried hallway drawing her attention back to the shots and the yelling soldiers.

When after almost an hour she had seen her walking inside of the building, looking scared but pretty much alive, she had released a breath she didn’t know she was holding, her muscles had relaxed and she had smiled to herself.

Because she cared, she had eventually realized, she cared for that woman. That stubborn woman that had saved her life, that had feed her and that had argue with her about her being still useful. That woman that, according to the others, was vital for them, she was always there to help people, always sharing food and medicines, always fighting the law that forced her to let people go away, without any kind of protection, without the permission to come back unless if on a stretcher.

How stupid it was for the government to do that. Civilians had the right to live, and war wasn't for everybody, soldiers were meant to fight to protect them, they were meant to be on the battlefield, with their weapons and their skills, not ordinary people, not mothers and fathers, old and children. Not farmers and librarians, teachers and writers.

It was unfair, and it was stupid. She knew very well how dangerous was out there. She had faced it all since the beginning, because she wasn't the daughter of a wealthy man, she wasn't important, she was just a talented mechanic, without relatives, and apparently without friends.
She shook her head and looked at her door, the silence out there was almost deafening, she was bored and hungry, but she couldn't reach the door. And it wasn't just because of her leg, but it was because she had refused to use crutches when Abby had asked her to, she had yelled and she had protested. Abby had tried, day after day, saying to her that it was important for her to move, to lift herself from the bed, that she was never gonna heal if she was going to keep acting like that. And oh how well she knew that. But it was as if she couldn't stop acting as a whining kid, she always felt the need to be the stubborn pain in the ass she had always been.

But now this was preventing her from learning how to live again. She knew that it was bad what had happen, and she knew that nobody was asking her to smile and pretend as if she wasn't missing her leg, Abby had said it multiple times.

“I know is hard Raven, I can only imagine your pain. But trust me, acting as if there isn't anything else you can do is not gonna help you. You deserve to try again, to give yourself a second chance.”

And right now, thinking back at her words, it made sense to her, she had always been right, it was stupid from her to act as if it was over, as if trying to get up again was useless. Because it wasn't useless, it was complicated, it was hard, but not useless. Her life would have changed, yes. She was never gonna walk again as before, yes. But she was still alive.

“Stop complaining and start to be grateful that you still have the other one!” a familiar voice echoed in her head, she smirked. She was right, even Clarke had been right since the first time.

Clarke. Then her mind fell quiet for a moment, and her body tensed. Clarke.

She hadn't seen her since two days ago, when she had forced her to eat, looking upset, angry, as if something had changed and shifted inside of her. And right now she started to think back at the day that had just passed, the sniper had forced her mother outside with the head of the guards, her mother had almost died, and in all of this, where was Clarke?

She hadn't seen her walking in the hallway, she hadn't seen her rushing toward Abby as Jackson had, she hadn't seen her at all.

How was it possible? The hospital was big yeah but not that big, and even if it was, Clarke couldn't let her mother face such a thing without being worried. So... where was she?

As if someone had heard her thoughts out loud and wanted to silence her, her door opened, quietly,
just a bit. She froze in her bed, it was still too early for people to be awake and working, and yet someone was opening her door, but she couldn't see whom was behind, hiding in the blue morning darkness.

She blinked and kept peeking at it, when suddenly a hand entered the room, she hold her breath, half afraid, half curious, and then saw that the hand was holding something.

_A folded paper._

She frowned, then when the door opened a little bit more, and a shadow appeared behind it, she closed her eyes, pretending to be asleep. The sound of light steps reached her ears, and then she peeked, because damn it she wanted to know if someone was entering to kill her, and then recognized the figure.

_Abbie._

She wasn't facing her, but was resting the folded paper on the table at the other side of the room, then she reached for the crutches that were resting on the farthest corner from her, and the turned. Raven closed her eyes again, slowing her breathing to a sleeping pace. She heard Abby moving, then the sound of something metallic touching the wall beside her bed, and then something else, something she wasn't ready to feel.

_A stroke._

The warmness of Abby's hand reached her cheek, and the delicate skin of her palm made her shiver, she couldn't move, not even breathe, she was motionless, enjoying the new and unfamiliar touch. It was such a delicate gesture, but it felt so intense, so warm, so protective. Then for a moment she thought Abby was gonna wake her up, instead she moved her hand and stroked her hair.

“May we meet again.”

She whispered, her smoky voice trembled around those words. Raven swallowed, hoping she wasn't gonna notice it. Then as it had started, the gesture ended, and when Raven opened her eyes few seconds later, she was alone in her room, the door close again.
She blinked, a tear rolled down her cheek, why was she crying now? She got up, with effort, and then looked at her side. The crutches were resting against the wall, close enough for her to use them. And then she looked at the table, where the piece of paper was resting, it was too far away for her to reach it without standing up and walking and...

Oh.

She smiled to herself, a new tear escaped her eyelids, and she wiped it away, sniffing. Without thinking about it too much, she reached for the crutches and turned her body, her legs fell down from the mattress, the good one tensed when the cold floor met her bare foot, the motionless one felt just heavy and... well and nothing else.

She swallowed, and shook her head, then took the handhold of the crutches and put pressure on it with her fingers, lifting her body from the mattress. For a moment her head started to spin, she almost feared to fall back on the bed, but her hands were gripping the metal handhold with strength.

“You are not gonna fall.” Abby's voice echoed in her memory. “Trust your body, it knows what it's doing.”

Raven smiled again, and sighed out, while adjusting the crutches under her arms, then she looked at the table, where the paper was still waiting, and swallowed. Her good leg trembled, and she looked down.

“Move your arms first, put pressure, then the leg will follow, your muscles will push you forward.”

She nodded to herself and did as Abby's voice in her head was saying. The crutches lifted from the floor and crashed again on it, few inches forward, then her hands and arms putted pressure on them and the leg followed, her good foot lifted from the cement, while the motionless one crawled on it. She smiled to herself, and did it again.

Step after step, feeling weak and trembling, she reached the table, she was crying quietly, the fact that she needed so much time to walk few steps was painful yes, but the fact that after almost a month she was up again was as breathing fresh air after a long apnea under the water.

She wiped away the tears that were rolling down her cheeks, and took the paper in hand, without opening it, she turned and then forced herself back on the bed. She was too weak to walk more, and
she knew she needed to sit down again, at least until she hadn't eat something. When the bed was close enough, she turned fast, even too fast, and the crutches fell down at her sides, one rested on the bed, the other one crashed on the floor, but she laughed at herself, and lifted the bad leg on the mattress.

Without wasting another second, she opened the paper, and started to read, squeezing her eyes. It was too dark to see something. She turned so that from the window the fragile morning light could show to her what was written on it.

Then it appeared, in the beautiful handwriting of Abby, she needed a moment to adjust to it, it wasn't perfect and clear but it was still beautiful, the ink stretched in the trembling letters and smoothly ended the words with elegance.

When she read the first word, her heart skipped a beat, she wasn't used to it, and she had to adjust to the feeling of being... dear for someone.

Dear Raven,

I'm sorry it has to be like that, but I couldn't wait until morning. I know we don't know each other that well, and I know you will probably think that a letter just for you is probably too much, I can already hear your voice in my head, “Wuo Doc chill, I'm not your beloved!” and it makes me smile.

But I needed to write this letter to you, so please forgive me for the “pretentious gesture” but I had to tell you something important. Probably it will be already clear to everybody that I am gone. I will leave as soon as this letter will be in your room, is not even 5 in the morning, so I guess that when you will wake up, people will already be running here and there for the “missing doctor”.

I know that it sounds stupid, why would I leave the hospital? Well... there is just one thing that I care more about that saving people, and is my daughter. Clarke needs me, and I have to be there for her. You probably don't know what I am talking about but, trust me, the less you know the better.

I couldn't wake you up and tell you that I was leaving, but I had to leave you this letter
because there is something you must know. You are almost healed, and this is great, probably the greatest news I’ve heard of in months, but is also a curse around here. As you probably know, the rules are clear, if a patient isn’t dying, it needs to leave the room and the building as soon as possible.

I tried my best to keep you here Raven, I wanted to help you recover from the accident, I wanted to help you get used to the new life you will have to face, and I know that it will not be easy, but I know you are strong enough to make it through.

Unfortunately without me there, I can’t ask Jackson to put himself in danger even more to keep you inside, and I am afraid the soldiers will ask you soon or later to leave. This is why I am writing this letter to you, and please, promise me you will keep this to yourself, even if I know you like to have your own secrets, so I am not afraid of you showing this to the nearest soldier.

There is a place in the suburbs of Arkadia, almost out of the city, in a hidden district, is a shelter house. I will try to go there, to reach that place and to hide myself in it, luckily with my daughter by my side. But even if I will not be able to make it till there, I want you to have this chance. So yes Raven, they will kick you out of the Hospital, but you will have a place waiting for you outside.

You are not alone Raven, and if you will give me the chance, I want to be there for you.

I left the indications behind this letter, I will try to be there in three days, maximum a week, if you will still be able to stay inside the Hospital, stay there, but if you will need a place, follow the map and meet me there.

Hopefully I’ll be waiting for you.

Don’t give up Raven, I have faith in you.

With love (yes I wrote it),

Abby
The paper fell on her lap, and Raven stared at the void in front of her bed, tears rolling down her cheeks.

*Don't give up Raven, I have faith in you.*

She didn't want to, she really wasn't even thinking about doing it, but she started to sob, quietly, keeping her sadness for herself, her throat burning, her heart pounding heavily in her chest, she cried and cried, the letter resting on her legs.

When she had regained control over her emotions, she wiped away the last tears and turned the letter, to reveal a detailed map behind it, with names and roads, even places where she could hide during the day. She smiled to herself, she knew some places around, but the shelter house Abby had marked with a big x and a “Right here.” felt already too good to be true.

Then in the last right corner of the map, there was another note, she squeezed her eyes to read it.

_P.s. Kane isn't stupid, be careful around him. Don't argue with him, don't fight him, trust me, is better for you if you keep a low profile. May we meet again._

Raven nodded to herself and then folded the paper again, pressing it against her chest, she laid back on the bed, and stared at the ceiling.

_May we meet again._ She whispered to the quiet room around her.

_Marcus_
If you will keep saying that, I will break Marcus.

Her voice was still echoing in his head, her words were loud and clear, but her tone was exactly as it had been, a trembling choked whisper, a warning to not push forward, because Abby Griffin was a strong woman, but she was also just human.

He still remembered the first time he had seen her. That day he had been assigned with his unit to the Arkadia Central Hospital for the first time and he had to camp outside of the building, get to know all the people inside, reassure them that he was there to protect them, and of course prepare himself to the amount of fear and rage he was gonna get from them in return. But that was part of the job, he was used to it.

“You have to be sure nothing happens to Doctor Griffin, she is our only chance for survival right now, we don't know where the other doctors are, she is the only one alive, and we need her.”

That was what they told him while dismissing him that day, clear orders. Protect the doctor, keep an eye on everybody else. But nobody knew till then that the Doctor was also the one that he needed to keep an eye on more than the others.

He had entered the building that day with a cold but reassuring smile on his face. His uniform immaculate, his rifle loaded, heavy on his back, his gun secured at his belt, his hair plastered to his head, his chin raised and his back stiffened. He had walked in, his soldiers behind his back, to introduce himself, he knew that they were already informed of their arrival, but it felt just the right thing to do, introducing himself in person, face to face, get to know them all as the humans they were. He was a soldier yes, but still a human being, and they were at war, it meant that human contact was a rarity, and he was going to try his best to make those people feel comfortable around him.
“I am glad to meet you all. I am General Marcus Kane, this is my unit, and we are here, as you already know, to protect you and the Hospital.” he started to say, roaming his eyes over the people in front of him. He recognized one of them, a tall man, blonde hair, blue eyes, Jake was his name if he remembered correctly. They had shared a long month on the battlefield, when he had been trained as a soldier, but had then quit, too pussy for it his superiors had said, too human he had always thought. Jake looked back, he recognized him too, he could see it in his eyes. Right beside him a blonde girl was holding his arm, looking at him with fury eyes, he could tell they were probably father and daughter, same bright blue eyes, same blonde hair. But the look she was throwing at him, that was only hers, it was almost burning him, sinking into his mind, he felt as if she was trying to rip him apart and study him. He had to blink and swallow to focus again on the crowd.

“I know that this isn't easy, war is here, and we know how dangerous and critical the situation is, that's why my unit and I are here, to protect you, and to be sure no bandit or scavenger will try to sneak in. We will make sure that you will all receive a good ration of food and medicine, when it will be needed. Till then, I hope you will get that resources need to be spared equally between all of us, so... we will need to be more generous and share what we can.”

He said, his speech echoing in his head, as if he was reading it from the papers where he had written it that exact morning. The people in front of him kept staring at them, murmuring inaudible words, hiding their lips behind their palms, shifting their weight on their feet. The air was tensed already, but it was still better than the outside, at least there there wasn't smoke filling his nostrils, but just the smell of antiseptic and... coffee, probably.

“I'm sure you already managed to settle in, I also know you already made inventory, and that is good, very good. Organization and order is exactly what we need if we want to survive the chaos out there.” he said, nodding approvingly to himself. Two men shook their heads, the blonde girl beside Jake, snorted. He casted her a glance, but she stiffened her back, without adverting her gaze.

“I will need to ask you to be patient with me a little longer today, we will need to register all of your names, and also to inform you of the new rules that from now on you will have to respect and follow.” at that the murmur of voices grew, and he swallowed, he knew it was coming, and he had prepared himself for it.

“I know that you now feel confused, and is perfectly normal. But I need you to understand that is important for us to keep this place in order, this will be our home, not just an hospital or our headquarters, we will need to stick together, to follow the rules, or we will never be able to survive this.” he said, raising his hands in front of him, trying to reassure the worried people around him.
“I will present to you the new rules in few minutes, but first I will need to register all of your names, so...” - he gestured to the surroundings - “If you can show to my soldiers the biggest room you have, where we can settle in and start to do it, I will be grateful.” he said, smiling, trying to at least.

For a moment the people around him remained quiet and motionless, then, Jake nodded and took a step forward, escaping the crowd and gesturing to his left. “Come on, do as he says.” he ordered them, gesturing toward the hallway beside them, they shared worried glances with him, but he nodded and smiled, taking the blonde girl under his arm, he walked them all away, sharing a last look with him.

He said to his soldiers to follow them, and once alone, he let out a breath he was holding since he had walked in, and rubbed his hands on his face. After few seconds of silence, the sound of new light steps echoed around him.

“What a noble speech.” a low smoky female voice said, he withdrew his hands from his face, and blinked to adjust his eyes again to the light. In front of him now there was a tiny woman he hadn't seen before in the crowd, standing with her arms crossed, her chin raised, a white coat around her shoulders told him who she was without her needing to say it out loud.

“You must be Doctor Griffin.” he said, holding out his hand, she acknowledged the gesture but didn't followed suit. “You must be the soldier that came here to... bring order.” she said, a bitter smirk appeared at the corner of her lips, her tone sharp. Marcus frowned, and then withdrew his hand, getting that she wasn't gonna take it.

“I am General Marcus Kane, and yes me and my soldiers are here to help you regain control of the structure, to help you survive this war.” he said, his hands clasped behind his back, she nodded and rested her hands on her hips, the coat shifted open, revealing the dark and already worn clothes she was wearing under it.

“You really think you can just come here and start making new rules for us? And then also demanding us to follow them?” she asked, taking few steps toward him. Marcus frowned. “Well yes, I bet you all wanna survive this war.” he said, nodding. She pursed her lips and bowed her head, then shook it in disbelief, sighing out. “You know that I refused the order the first time your superiors told me? You know that I didn't want you here?” she said, her brown eyes burning with something he couldn't name yet, but that felt strangely familiar.

“I've heard yes.” he said, and it was true, his superiors had told him that Doctor Griffin wasn't happy at the idea to have a unit of soldiers right outside her hospital, she had said that it could have been nonproductive, and also that civilians didn't trust them. “Good. I just want to be sure you know that here I am in charge. This is my hospital I am the doctor, and what I am here for is
helping people.” she said, taking other few steps toward him, the space between them consuming rapidly, he was starting to feel slightly uncomfortable, this woman was... too bold. “I don't want you to go around here and start ordering stuff to my friends, my family, my patients. You are here just because we need protection and that's all you will be, watchdogs, nothing more.” she hissed, her eyes burning a hole in his head, her breath warm on his face.

He had to swallow, the heat she was radiating was making him feel dizzy, and also worried, she seemed to be reckless and he knew this wasn't gonna end up good. “I'm here to make sure we all survive, that's all. You are the Doctor that's true, but I am a General, a soldier, I know how war works, and I had clear orders, you need protection and new rules.” he said eventually, at that she squeezed her eyes, as if she was scanning him, trying to see deeper inside of him. And his mind recalled the blonde girl he had seen few minutes before, the same posture, the same intense gaze. It made him feel weak and exposed.

“Be careful General Kane. I will keep an eye on you.” she added, her smoky voice heavy. Marcus swallowed, and when was about to answer her, she withdrew and walked fast toward the room where the others were waiting. He blinked, the trail of her scent lingered in the air behind her, and he closed his eyes, shook his head and then followed her.

When he had entered the room, he saw all the people of before waiting for him, chewing on their lower lips, sharing worried and angry glances, his soldiers were preparing the things they needed to register them all, and he had the time to search for her in the crowd. He spotted her not far away from him, beside the blonde girl and the man named Jake, that he now supposed to be her husband. She petted the girl on the hair, and kissed her forehead, nodding and saying something to the man beside her. Then reached for his hand and turned toward him, her eyes burning with a new fire. He felt the need to advert his gaze.

They didn't talk again for the rest of the day, but had kept looking at each other, both of them making sure to track the other.

That was the first time he had ever seen her, and she had already started to make room for herself in his brain, as an uncomfortable and insistent itch to the corner of his mind, a pulsing fire that reminded him of her, over and over again.

Just as now.

He was sitting on his bed, in silence, his hands on his lap, his injured shoulder pulsing numbly. The painkillers weren't working anymore, he will need them again soon. But right now what was making him feel uncomfortable was the incessant and burning thought of Abby, especially of Abby sneaking outside the building, to go and search for her daughter, alone on the battlefield. He had to swallow several times at the images that had presented themselves inside of his brain. Abby
running, followed by bandits. Abby falling down on the ground, with a bullet hole in her head. Abby screams in pain under the rubble of a bombed house.

*You will die...*

His thoughts were heavy and loud, and he was starting to loose lucidity over the idea of her out there alone. That was why he couldn't sleep, he had to be awake so he could hear if she tried to sneak out. She had been loud before, she was gonna be loud again, she wasn't a soldier but a doctor, she didn't know how to be quiet and how to walk around without making any noise. That was why he couldn't let her go, she wasn't trained to survive on a battlefield, she wasn't able to use a gun, she wasn't able to fight if needed. She was a great surgeon, a great mother, a great woman yes... but not a soldier.

And he couldn't let her go.

When morning came he climbed out of his bed, putting on his jacket, without his shirt since he had found out he wasn't able to do it by himself. He had opened his door to go to her, to talk her out of that idea. And when the hallway had presented itself, still empty and quiet, he had spotted immediately the folded piece of paper at his feet. And he already knew it was too late.

*Abby was gone.*

It was the fifth time he was reading the letter, since he had found it on the floor. Her handwriting was inked on the paper, and also marked in his brain, engraved on his heart. It was painful to read it over and over again and it left him emptier every time a little more. She felt every second more distant, more in danger.
Marcus... I'm sorry. I know you thought I was better than that, but unfortunately for you, I am not.

I am a mother, something you can't understand and that you probably never will. I need to find her, and I'm sorry if you think that the fear of dying will stop me, because it isn't enough, nothing will ever be enough to stop me. My biggest fear is to loose her, and I can't do that, I simply can't.

I've promised myself to protect her, especially after Jake's death, and I'm not even gonna say that is your fault, because right now it doesn't matter. I lost her once, I am not gonna loose her again. I have faith that she is still alive out there, I know that even just one day is enough to kill a person in that hell, I know it and I don't need to be reminded of that. But as we both know, Clarke is smart, she is brave and she has a lot of fight in her, just as her father.

I am writing this to you just to ask you to let me go. Let me go and everything will be fine. I know that I will be condemned to death if I will try to come back, because I left my position, I disobeyed clear orders to stay in the structure, but honestly, Clarke would be condemned too, and I have no intention on living here without her.

As a doctor I shouldn't be doing this, you probably would say, my patients without me will die, well that's not completely true. I trust Jackson, he is able now to take care of them, and I'm sure you will find new doctors sooner or later, your superiors will make sure to find new people that will be able to help you. At least, I hope it will happen.

For now, let me just say thank you for saving my life, I owe you.

But I have to go, and you have to stay back, to make sure Jackson will be able to keep working, to make sure that place will keep saving lives. I have to ask you another favor though, Jackson will probably be really mad at me, and I know he will have the need to find me, because I know him and I know how his mind works. Please keep an eye on him. Can you do that for me?

And also, I hope you will make sure that Raven Reyes will recover completely before you will need to kick her out, I know you can't do it, because orders are orders, but now a room is empty, you can keep her inside a little bit longer, right?

I hope you will be able to forgive me one day, because I know I will probably put you and your soldiers in trouble, but I will make sure to make it look as if it was...
unavoidable, as if I was indeed to good to be caught. Because we both know that I am, and don't make that face that I know you are making, I am.

Be careful Marcus and be good.

Don't come after me.

May we meet again. (even if we both know it will not happen)

Abby

He had to swallow several times after the last part, he had to close his eyes and to inhale deeply. Because it was hurting him. He wasn't aware of how important she was, until she had decided to go away. And now that she was slipping out of his fingers, it was becoming more clear, how desperately he needed her.

Because he had promised to keep an eye on her for Jake, yes, he had do that because a man that was condemned to death had asked him, pleaded him, to do that. But in the last months, he had seen her around him, he had seen her strength, the way she was able to help and sooth people's souls, and she had started to change him somehow too. Without even wanting to, she had started to change him, and he had started to like that change. But without her now, he had the feeling that change was gonna stop and that he was going to fall back into the himself he had been at first, and he wasn't ready for it to happen.

He had to go after her. He didn't know how, but he had to. Because Abby Griffin mattered, not just for the Hospital, not just for her patients or her friends. She mattered for him.

He folded the letter and put it in his jacket's pockets. Then stood up and wiped away a lonely salty tear that had rolled down his cheek. One thought burning in his mind...

We will meet again Abby.
Abby

Location: Arkadia, Artists District

Days without food: Two

Days without sleep: Two


It felt *surreal* to be out there now. The air was thick and heavy, her lungs felt too small, the air around her was hot and felt dry. Her body was asking her water, water that she wasn't ready yet to consume. She had forgotten to drink before living, *stupid Abby*, but her mind had been too busy with the letters she had to write, with the light steps she had to take in the hallway to not be heard, with the frightening jump she had to take from that roof.

And now her ankle was pulsing, pain radiating from it through her leg, forcing her to limp. Because it had been *stupid* to jump from that height, and she felt lucky to still be able to walk, but it was the only way she could sneak out without the soldiers noticing her. They patrolled around the building with a precise timing, she had been carefully observing them in those months, just in case, she had told herself multiple times. So when she had found herself up there, kneeling down to be quiet, she had waited, long minutes that felt as hours, until it was clear and then she had jumped.

Her mind had protested several times, pondering about every possible injure she could get from that kind of jump, but her heart had kept pumping, telling her that it was the right thing to do. When a faraway scream had reached her, reminding her of why she was gonna do it, she had closed her eyes, swallowed hard and then had jumped. Trying to keep her legs steady, to overcome the blow. It helped, but not enough.

She had suppressed a scream, and had swallowed, cursing under her breath. Then, trying to be quieter as possible, she had rushed toward that damn hole in the fences, where she saw that the
soldiers had started to left the stuff needed to repair it, and had climbed it, running as fast as she could.

At first it had made her feel free and alive. Running in an open street, toward the damaged buildings, but after the first moment of enthusiasm, the adrenaline had started to fade, and the pulsing ankle had forced her to slow down to prevent a dramatic and painful fall on the ground.

She had then plastered herself against a wall, and right when her heart had stopped beating loud in her ribcage, and the Hospital was just a glowing light in the distance, she had started to feel the fear. It ran through her veins, her legs had started to feel weaker, her fingertips were pulsing with every frantic heartbeat, her breath quickened.

What am I doing? She thought. Around her it was dark. Electricity wasn't working anymore in those districts, just in the necessary buildings, as the hospital, the headquarters of the army, of course not houses and places meant to protect civilians. And so where she was now, right in the middle of the Artists District, it was pitch black, and every sound into that darkness scared the hell out of her.

Ok, keep calm Abby, you are a smart woman and you have a map, use it. Her mind reassured her.

She nodded to herself and took the yellowish paper from the bag's pocket. She opened it and tried to read it, but of course it was still too dark to see a thing. She blinked several times, trying to focus on the things that she had drawn and wrote, but that of course now she couldn't remember. She swallowed and took courage, withdrawing from the concrete wall behind her and starting to walk.

Is still dark enough. She thought.

She dived her hand in the heavy jacket she had on her shoulders, Jake's jacket, and took out of it the little digital watch she had been able to steal from the lost and found box, she was feeling slightly guilty for that, but those things where there because someone else had lost them, or more correctly had left behind, it wasn't actually stealing but more borrowing because needed.

05:10

The sun was coming, with it the daylight and the chance to be seen by snipers. She clenched her jaw, threw the clock back in the pocket, and limping slightly, she walked forward, where the street was big enough to move smoothly, but to not be too exposed, because some building where
surrounding it, covering her, making her feel slightly protected with giant damaged concrete walls, and broken creaking windows. She tried to read the map again. Her eyes were adjusting to the bluish dark of the early morning and she could now see better.

The first shelter she could use was not that faraway from the hospital, she looked in front of her and recalled the words she had heard from the patient that had informed her of the shelter house, also the one that had left behind the map she had used to create her own.

*Walk for 100 steps after the building n°23, then turn to the left, walk for other 207 steps, as soon as you see a red rose on a wall, if it still there, walk to the left, there will be a rusty door, check if there is someone there and then go inside.*

She swallowed and turned her head toward the building at her side.

*N°23*

She inhaled and exhaled deeply and started to count her steps.

1, 2, 3, 4...

When her mind echoed 100 she looked at her left, a long street, tinier this time, appeared at her side. She turned and then started to count again. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...

207. She looked at her left, no roses there, then to her right, at first she saw nothing more than a damaged wall and a giant building without the higher floors. But looking at it more carefully she saw it, it was probably bright red once, and it was drawn with extreme care.

*A rose.*

She smiled to herself, the first shelter was even too easy to find. Then she walked to the left of it, trying to be quiet, her feet stumbled on the rubble scattered on the street, she swallowed when her ankle pulsed in pain. Her right hand supported her weight when she almost fell, then she started to scan the wall, trying to find the door that was supposed to be there.
She kept walking for other few meters, when she was ready to call it a waste of time, she saw it, a little brown metallic door, she widened her eyes and started to walk faster. The rubble under her feet collided one on the other, she slowed down her pace and then stopped, right in front of it.

*It was open.*

Abby swallowed, fear starting to grow inside of her. If it was open it could mean several things, all of them bad. She closed her eyes, and cursed under her breath. Then, without thinking twice, dived her hand in the other pocket of Jake’s jacket, and when her fingers tightened around the shelf of the scalpel she had stolen from the hospital, she approached the door.

*Ok Abby, open your eyes and your ears, be quiet, and really careful.*

She started to open the door quietly, the rusty metal coughed, the rubble in front of it shifted, making a too loud noise that echoed around her. She stopped, trying to hear if someone inside had made any sound.

*Quiet.*

She kept opening it, when it was enough for her to sneak in, she swallowed, inhaled deeply, counted to three and then walked inside. The scalpel shining in front of her face, her muscles tensed, her eyes running from corner to corner, ready to fight if needed.

*It was empty.*

She froze, her breath loud in the tiny space where she had found herself. Now that she was inside, it was clear why it was empty. The floor right upon it had crashed down, and several heavy rubble were now taking more than half the space of it. It was once the boiler area of the apartment block, and it had never been big enough to be comfortable. But right now it was basically impossible even to lay down.

She huffed, and lowered the scalpel, putting it inside of the pocket. She looked around, trying to get if she could stay there until dark without trapping herself. Apparently she could, the rubble were quiet and seemed stabilized by now, but she couldn't lay down to sleep, and she needed to.

“Great” she muttered. When she turned toward the door to close it, she saw why it was open in the
first place. The metal around the padlock had been deformed, probably from the people that had tried to open it after the floor had fallen. Somehow they had managed to take away the first amount of rubble, that explained the amount of rocks and cement right outside of it, but probably had stopped when it was clear it was impossible to go forward without being trapped.

She sighed out, and then took off the bag from her shoulder, her muscles relaxed immediately. She opened it and took out a luggage rope she had found, always in the *lost and found box*, and then tried to tied the door to a metal hook that was sneaking outside the concrete walls. She had to use all of her strength, and it wasn't that much since she hadn't slept in two days, but eventually the door remained close enough to feel protective somehow.

She sighed out when she was done with it, and then tried to find a comfortable spot where to sit on the floor. It wasn't that easy, the rubble where right at her left side, making her feel trapped, the only window of the room was blocked behind them, only a tiny corner of the glass was visible, and she couldn't open it, the air inside of that tiny space was already oppressing. But she closed her eyes and tried to concentrate.

*This is better than nothing, now try to sleep.*

She nodded to herself, took off the jacket and folded it, to create some kind of pillow, where she could sit on. When everything was settled, and she had managed to silence her mind, she closed her eyes. But something was making her feel uncomfortable, something was pressing incessantly under her thigh from the jacket's pocket, but she had emptied them. She looked at her side, the digital watch, the scalpel and... *oh.*

She dived her hand rapidly inside of the pocket, and when her fingers met the cold metal she swallowed. She took it out, and relaxed again her back on the wall behind her. The long silver necklace with the two rings felt heavy and cold in her hands.

She smiled weakly, her eyes burned slightly, but she forced herself to *keep it together.* She closed her hand around them and pressed them both on her chest. It felt so weird to not have them on anymore, but she remembered all too well how badly it had been the last time someone had seen them on her.

*"It's not safe to wear those things Abby."* Kane had said. *"You should take them off, both of them."* She had glared at him so fiercely he had froze, and fell quiet, dismissing her with a wave of his hand and muttering something she still couldn't get.

But *damn it,* he was right. She still remembered vividly the day she had to follow his advice.
A man had been found with a broken leg right at the entrance of the Hospital. When she had fixed his bones, and had bandaged his wounds, he had started to look at her neck, in particular at the necklace she was wearing, with the black ring of Jake. She had thought he was just curious, that he was feeling interested in the story behind that ring.

But that wasn't true. Two nights after that episode, she was alone in his room, cleaning his wounds, giving him the medicines he needed to not get an infection. She was leaning over him, her ring swinging in the void under her cleavage. It happened fast, really fast. His callous hand reached for it, she hadn't been able to withdraw fast enough to avoid it, and he had pulled it with strength, the silver chain broke and the skin on her neck burned.

She had yelled in shock, the man hiding the necklace on his chest, tightening his grip around the ring. She widen her eyes, it felt so wrong to see him holding tightly Jake's ring. She tried to take it back, trying to open his palms to get it, but the man was stronger than her, and with a quick movement dragged her on him, forcing her still on his chest.

"This is now mine." he had hissed in her ear. "Give me the other one and nothing bad will happen." he had said, at that she had felt a cold sharp blade pressing on her neck.

A knife. How was it possible that he had a knife? Soldiers weren't supposed to check all the patients? But she hadn't the time to think about it, because he was pressing it right on her pulsing point, the delicate skin broke, and she felt the burning pang that warned her that some warm blood was now flowing from the little hole it had created.

"Come on doc, give me the other ring." He had said, his voice sharp, cold, scary. She swallowed and shook her head. "Please no, this is all I have left of him, don't take it away from me, please." He had laughed bitterly. "Oh what a shame right? I don't give a fuck about your heartbreaking story doc, I need it more than you do, so now give it to me." His voice sinking into her mind, her heart beating fast.

She couldn't say how long she had been trapped in his arms, probably just few minutes, but they had felt as hours, long and scary. When Jackson had entered the room, carrying the patient's dinner, she had widen her eyes, and had tried to free herself, but the man pressed her even further against him. The plate Jackson was holding crashed on the floor, and the sound echoed loud around her.

"Don't make a move boy, or I swear I will slaughter her." He had said, hissing with such a coldness in his tone that made her feel sick to her stomach. She closed her eyes. "It's ok Jackson, it's ok." She had whispered, looking at him with the corner of her eyes.
After few other seconds, Jackson blinked and moved closer, but the man tightened his grip around her. "I said don't make a move." He hissed, Jackson stopped, and Abby swallowed. "Don't move Jackson." Right when the man had nodded in approval, trying to sneak his free hand under her body to reach the hand she was hiding under her stomach, the knife slightly withdrawing from her skin, new steps echoed behind the corner. And she had never been more grateful to have him inside the hospital.

When Kane had seen her, his eyes had widened, he had pushed Jackson away, and had been so fast that the patient hadn't the time to react, his hands had took her from the shoulders and he had hid her behind him. Abby hadn't the time to say anything, because Kane had already punch the man in the face, and had took out from his grip the shining and broken necklace, throwing the knife on the floor. The man screamed in pain.

She was panting in Jackson's arms, while he was holding her tight, Kane was immediately reached from other two soldiers, that blocked the patient on the bed, while the latter kept trying to free himself, muttering, "I deserve to have them more than she does." over and over again. Then Kane had turned toward her, eyes sharp, and had took her by the shoulder, dragging her outside the room.

Abby was still shocked for what had happened, and didn't even protested, especially when Clarke, that had heard something was wrong, had started to approach them. But Kane glared at her and she stopped, looking at her mother, Abby had shook her head, while Kane pushed her in an empty corner and she found herself with her back against the wall.

He was breathing heavily, and she was still trembling, his dark eyes were roaming over her face, scanning her skin inch by inch. "Are you ok?" he had asked, and at first she said nothing, tilting her head, when he asked her again his tone was lower, calmer, and she nodded. "Yes, yes I am ok." she had said, trying to regain control over her breathe. He kept scanning her face, when his eyes fell on her neck, he turned her head without asking for permission and his fingers touched the little wound.

"What a bastard..." he muttered, and his fingers stroked her skin, she frowned and swallowed, and then he blinked, realizing what he was doing, and withdrew, stiffening his back again. "I told you Abby, you should keep those things somewhere else, don't wear them, it's dangerous." he had said, offering her the necklace. She had took it without saying a word, diving it in the pocket of her coat, and had nodded. "You were right. Sorry..." she had whispered eventually, rushing away from him. After that day, she had always kept it hid inside of Jake's jacket, where she knew it was safe enough.

And right now, feeling the metal warming up under her touch, every feeling attached to those two rings came back to her, one after the other. How much had she missed those two little jewels, she
knew it was stupid somehow to feel that close to inanimate objects, but the thing was... that she really had just them. Nothing more. Every object she had ever possessed, her house, her clothes, her things from her childhood, her parents mementos, the pictures of her family. All was gone, because her house had been destroyed by the bombs, and the only thing she could still keep were those two rings, that reminded her of the day Jake had proposed to her, of the day Clarke had came to life, of the days spent with her family, growing up together.

And now, she was feeling even worse, because she had forgotten. How could she have done that? She told herself she had been through a lot lately, when Clarke had disappeared she hadn't been able to think clearly, and she hadn't been strong enough to hold onto something that reminded her so much of her late husband, it was too painful.

She kept telling herself several reasons why she had forgotten about those rings, but the truth was that she hadn't, she couldn't, she had just kept them away, to protect the memory they held. And with that thought, she finally fell asleep, the necklace warm against her chest.

The sun was setting down when she opened her eyes again. She flinched abruptly, her eyes blinked painfully, her chest rising and falling with effort. She coughed. The air was heavy with dust and it was hard to breathe. She blinked again, the necklace she had been holding was plastered to her sweaty skin. She looked at her chest, looked at the rings one last time and put them back in the pocket.

*It's better to keep them there.* She tried to stand up, at first her legs trembled, her arms shivered, but her hands were strong enough to help her climb the wall, and to stand up. She wiped away the dust that had descendent on her pants and shirt, then coughed again.

*She needed fresh air.* She looked at the window behind the rubble, no light coming from it. She glanced at the watch that was resting on the floor, beside the jacket.

*08:58 pm*

She nodded, it was safe enough to go out. She took the rope from the hang on the wall, and the door creaked open. She pushed it forward slowly to have better access, then blinked, adjusting her eyes to the darkness outside. The sun was setting and she was still able to take a good look at her
surroundings.

It was devastatingly empty, she felt so small in that instant. She took one step outside, the shoes met the rubble, she looked up, the sky was dark blue, some gray clouds were covering it. She sniffed, the air smelled as rain, it was good, she could at least drink without wasting water. Hoping that the rain wasn't too acid to do that.

She breathed in, her lungs welcoming with pleasure the new air, it wasn't that fresh and pure, but it was still better than nothing. Unfortunately war wasn't kind with the nature, it didn't care that much. The air carried the smell of death with itself, and that filled the lungs, it felt oppressing and unpleasant. But it was still air.

She looked at the horizon, where the sun was slowly descending, enveloping the city into the darkness of the night. She nodded to herself, it was going to be a long night. She entered again the little shelter she had found, and without pondering about it, took some dry meat from her leather bag. She needed to eat if she wanted to walk all night long. It wasn't the best meal she had ever had, but it was still good, the salty meat tickled her tongue, she closed her eyes and kept chewing on it, until there wasn't anything left. She ate two more pieces, then wrapped the plastic around it one more time and putted it back in the bag.

Then she satisfied her thirst with few sips of fresh water, her throat thanked her, her brain regained lucidity almost immediately, even her lungs felt better, more flexible and light. She needed to drink more. She took the wrist watch from the floor, the scalpel, then unfolded the jacket and wiped away the dust from it, she wore it and secured the bag on her shoulder, the luggage rope back in place, she looked at her surroundings, unfortunately nothing helpful there to take for the trip.

She sighed and walked outside, the map in her hands, the big black X reminded her of where she was going, of where she needed to take Clarke. She started to walk then, folding the map and putting it again in her bag's pocket.

Her steps echoed around her, she felt so lonely. It wasn't just the absence of humans around her, it was the lack of her daughter at her side, this wasn't supposed to go like that, how many times she had said to her that they were going to go there together, in the shelter house, where the maps they needed to escape the city were kept.

She smiled to herself, shaking her head, she knew it wasn't the time to linger on that thought, first she needed to find Clarke, then she could plan their future, together.

Her legs weren't trembling anymore, sleep and food had helped, also the jacket she was wearing
felt comfortable, especially with the winter coming, every night was colder than the previous one. But inside the destroyed center of the city, it was always warmer. The sky was almost pitch black when she saw another human being.

Her blood ran cold, and she froze, right in the middle of the street, her bag heavy on her shoulder, her eyes widened, the dark around her felt suddenly threatening. She blinked and swallowed, trying to see who was there, if he or her was a threat, if she needed to run, her ankle wasn't hurting that much, luckily for her it hadn't swollen badly, but it was still damaged and needed at least one more day of rest to work again properly. Her left hand fell inside the pocket almost immediately.

The scalpel felt cold against her skin, she squeezed her eyes to see better in the darkness. The shadow was moving slowly, probably bowing, she tried to see if it was holding a gun, or something, it wasn't. From the size and the outline it was probably a man. She inhaled deeply, taking few quiet steps forward. The man kept moving slowly around a pile of scattered rubble.

*scavenger.* She swallowed, it was better than a soldier or a bandit, but she still needed to be really careful. She looked around herself, to be sure no one else was around and then started to walk to her left, trying to avoid the man as better as possible.

Luckily for her she found a tiny street where she could sneak in and hide, walking slowly and without making any noise. When the scavenger was behind her back, she released a breath she had been holding all along. She put the scalpel back in the pocket and kept walking.

The night protected her for other four hours. In the end the rain didn't come, the clouds moved away, carrying it somewhere else. She kept walking as the map suggested, whenever she was close to a shelter, she stopped, and tried to see if they were empty or if her daughter was there. But luck wasn't with her that night. She kept walking and walking, asking herself if she was ever gonna find her. Arkadia was big and Clarke could had been anywhere, hiding in a shelter that she didn't know anything about. But she couldn't loose herself in those thoughts, she just couldn't. So she kept walking, hoping in her heart that with every new step she was getting closer to her.

Morning was approaching, she could already see more details of her surroundings. The quotes about war someone had wrote on the broken walls, the intimate objects that were once part of a life now broken inside of the rubble. She needed to find a shelter for the day and try to sleep and eat. She had already walked for almost half of the map, she was fast even with her injured ankle and felt pretty proud of herself.
Now it was time to rest and also *prey* for Clarke to be safe.

The closest shelter took her just ten minutes to be found. As she had to do with the others, she approached it in silence, walking carefully, holding her breath. The scalpel cold in her hand, she plastered herself against the concrete wall of the little damaged house. She closed her eyes and swallowed, hoping to find a specific blond girl inside of it.

The wooden front door was closed, she tried to force it open but it seemed locked from the inside. She frowned, it was weird to still find people in that zone, the most of them had already moved toward the *still functional* districts, and they were far from where she was. But maybe someone had to run away from the back, and the shelter was still empty. She inhaled deeply and tried to sneak inside from the backyard.

The rubble under her feet made her ankle flinch and shiver. She swallowed hard and climbed the little wall that bordered the property. Her muscles felt weak, but she made it in a bunch of seconds, luckily for her it wasn't that tall. The backyard was filled with trash and rubble, someone had use it for a long period since the war had started. She blinked in the bluish morning light, the windows were dirty and it wasn't that easy to look inside the building, just to be sure nobody was there.

So she walked to the door and took the damaged metallic handhold with care, the door opened almost immediately, making a lot of noise. She cursed under her breath and sneaked in, the scalpel raised in front of her, she was ready to *fight* if needed.

The floor under her feet creaked with every step, her eyes tried to catch the details around her, it was so damn dark that she couldn’t really say where she was going. When she had almost reached the middle of the room the sound of different steps made the floor creaked behind her.

It happened fast, she turned, the scalpel moved rapidly in the air in front of her, but the shadow beside her grabbed her by the arm and when the unmistakable sound of a loaded gun reached her ears, and the cold of the metal touched her temple, her muscles tensed and she froze.

“Put that down.” a low male voice ordered her, she opened her eyes and looked at her hand, that was squeezing the metallic *weapon*.

“I said *put that down.*” the shadow said again, she nodded, tears of fear prickling at her eyes, then she opened her hand and the scalpel fell loudly on the floor.
"Is this how I am gonna die?" She asked herself.

"Now tell me who are you, and what are you doing here." she couldn't see her interlocutor, he was hiding in the dark and she was facing the locked door of the house. She wanted at least to see the face of her killer, if she was gonna die.

"I'm nobody, and I was just searching for a shelter for the night, nothing more." she said, trying to breath properly, but it was so hard right now even to think.

"Why you have a weapon then?" he said, his hand was trembling slightly around her arm, the gun against her temple was now warmer and her skin there was becoming numb, senseless.

"Same reason you have a gun, to protect myself." she said, swallowing. Then the sound of new steps startled her.

"Bell? She doesn't seem dangerous to me..." a female voice whispered this time. Abby tried to look at her left where the voice was coming from, right into the darkness, just behind the man that was pointing a gun toward her. "Stay behind me O. I told you, I handle this." he said again, his voice cracking. Abby licked her lips, thinking, their voices sounded young, younger than hers without any doubt. If they were teens she could try to convince them to let her go. She was ready to face the daylight outside if it meant staying alive.

"Listen, she is right, I'm not a threat." she said, at that the hand around her arm squeezed her harder, and the gun pressed further into her temple.

"I will decide that, get it?" he said, rising his voice, as to mask his own fear. Abby closed her eyes, she needed to be really careful, but maybe she could convince them. "Ok, you're right, of course. You found this place first, it's all yours, I don't want anything, I just need to stay alive."

She said, her back was aching for the uncomfortable position she was in, and also for the tension in her muscles and bones. "Yeah well, people do horrible things to survive." he said, his hand loosening the grip around her arm.

"Yeah, I know. You are right. But I am not here to do anything stupid, and I'm sure you don't like the idea of using that gun against me right? Because you are just a survivor, like me." she said, trying to swallow the trembling sobs that were forming in her throat.
“Shut up. You don’t know anything about me!” he said, the hand squeezing her harder again. Abby nodded and blinked, a tear rolled down her cheek. “Sorry... What I mean is... I know you don't want to kill me.” she said, trying to regain some confidence and courage.

“How can you say that uh?” he said, his voice shaking. She inhale deeply. “Because you haven't pull the trigger” her words carrying the hope that what she was saying was true. “She is right Bell...” the female voice said again. Abby nodded, trying to control her twisting emotions. The fear, the sadness, the tiredness, the anxiety that were running into her veins.

“We can't let you go, you get it right?” he said, Abby squeezed her eyes and then exhaled loudly. “I'm not looking for troubles, please, just let me go. I swear I will go for good, without turning back, I don't even need to see your faces, I just want to survive, please.” she said, and realized how desperate she was sounding, her voice cracking, her tongue tasted the salty flavor of her tears on her lips.

She was crying. Because the thought of dying there, without being able to find and protect Clarke was braking her in the inside.

“Bell, please.” the female voice cracked behind him, was she crying too?

“I can't...” he whispered, a broken low murmur. “Please... let me go.” Abby pleaded, trying to regain control over her own voice, but it was so hard to have the control right now, it was just too hard.

“Listen” - she started suddenly to talk, without thinking - “Why don't you put your gun down and we talk? Face to face? We are still humans after all right? We don't need to do this like that.” she said, her voice regaining a bit of stability.

“No.” he growled. “Ok, ok, then why don't you just let go of my arm? I have nothing with me, I can't hurt you!” she said, and at that felt the shiver that ran through the man at her side. “Why should I trust you?” he asked her, Abby bit her lower lip. “If I had a better weapon don’t you think I would have use that instead of the scalpel?”

With that she looked down at her feet, it was still there, she could kneel down and grab it, but the man could shoot her. It was too dangerous. So she followed just her instinct, and kicked the scalpel in the farthest corner of the room. “Here, now I can't hurt you, and since you seem to be a young man you are probably stronger then me, you have nothing to worry about, really.” she said, trying
to sound the more innocent she could.

“Come on Bell, let her go...” the female voice said, the man, that apparently was named Bell, snorted. “If you try to hurt us I'll shoot you. If you try to run away I'll shoot you. If you try to do anything stupid at all, I'll shoot you. Is that clear enough?” he said, his voice cold and stern this time. She nodded vehemently. “Absolutely clear.” she said out loud.

After few heavy seconds, that made her ask herself if he was ever gonna do that, he left her arm, and instinctively she flinched, her feet walking her several steps backward. She inhaled and exhaled deeply. Her eyes got the shapes of the gun raised against her.

“Hands up.” he said, she could see just a dark figure into the darkness of the room, he was tall, and had probably curly hair. She blinked, trying to see if she could spot the girl that had convinced him to let her go, but apparently it was too dark for her to see, or maybe it was because of the tears that were forming in her eyes, blurring everything.

“Ok, why don't we start again? Why don't we try to do it properly?” she said, using her own words to sooth her scared self. “Why don't we introduce ourselves?” she asked, her hands shaking in the air, she couldn't dare to put them down, she knew how dangerous guns were, she had always hated them, always, and right now the man that was holding the weapon seemed too tensed, and a gun in the wrong hands was too dangerous.

The dark figure remained quiet, the gun still raised, then the sound of footsteps coming from the dark startled her. “O. no, don't!” at first she wasn't able to say what was happening, then from the darkness a figure came out.

A girl. Black long hair, blue eyes, pale skin, she was walking with heavy steps and her back rigid, Abby felt the need to walk backwards, to put distance between them, but she forced herself still. Show them you trust them, so they will trust you, and besides... she is just a girl. Her mind tried to calm her.

The girl was looking at her with curios and scared eyes, behind her the shooter had stepped out of the dark himself, to grab her arm. He was young and tall, and his hair were indeed curly and colored in the same black as hers. His skin was darker, and he had few freckles on his nose and cheeks. His face seemed so innocent, just a tiny scar on his lip felt out of place. But for the rest, they both seemed to be just... kids.

The girl withdrew from the young man, and he raised his gun again when noticed how close to he her they were now, his dark eyes shivering on her face, Abby swallowed and forced a smiled,
looking at the girl. “Hi.” she said, a broken whisper. The girl tilted her head, and frowned. “She isn't a threat Bell, put that thing down.” she said, but Bell shook his head. “No, and now you should step back O.” he ordered her.

She rolled her eyes, a thing that almost made Abby smile, then she looked at him. “Seriously?” she said, pointing at her. “Do you think she can kill us both? Have you looked at her?” she snapped. At that Abby for a moment asked herself if she should have feel offended by that, but she was right, she wasn't dangerous at all.

And that made her think of another person that thought that too of her, but she mentally slapped herself, she couldn't lingered on her private and intimates memories now. It was time to focus and to be really careful.

“O. please, you don't know what war can take out of people.” he said, at that the girl turned toward him, her fits tight, her back rigid. “Yeah, and you know why I don't? Because I lived under the freaking floor all my life!” she yelled. At that Abby saw how the boy lowered his gun, his expression softening, his eyes focused now only on the girl in front of him.

Abby could had use that exact moment to run away, but in hindsight she was glad she didn't. So she just stared, keep looking that scene in front of her with some kind of interest.

“O. I-” but the girl raised her hands in front of her. “Don't! Don't say you're sorry, I know! But now please, trust me ok? For once listen to me, I'm not a kid anymore Bell, I have the right to decide, to be part of this messed up world ok? I came out of the floor finally and I want to live it. Even if it sucks, even if it dangerous, I don't care!” she had lowered her tone while talking.

Bell lowered his eyes and pursed his lips. “You're right but... I'm just so scared of loosing you O.” he said, the gun resting against his leg. Abby was still keeping her hands raised, her muscles were aching, but she wasn't able to relax. “Let me handle this now, let me try, you have a gun, you don't have to worry about me ok? You can use that to protect me if needed. Ok?” she asked him in a gentle tone. The boy smirked, then the girl turned toward her again and at that Abby swallowed. “I'm Octavia, this is my brother Bellamy.” she said innocently, holding out a hand to her. Bellamy had his gun raised again against her.

Octavia looked at him. “Bell? Could you please...” she gestured to the weapon, he looked at her, and his face told her he wanted to do everything apart from that. Octavia glared at him and at that he lowered it, looking straight at Abby, his eyes sharp. She swallowed. Octavia looked at her and smiled. “You can relax, we are not gonna hurt you.” she said, at that Abby swallowed.
She wanted to put her hands down and to trust them, but she was also afraid this could cost her her life. But then she looked at them one more time. The girl was smiling, trying to look welcoming, gentle, even if her own posture told her she was afraid. The boy... he was probably more scared than her, the serious and stern expression a way to mask his own discomfort and tension. She closed her eyes and lowered her hands, her arms thanked her, her muscles relaxing again.

“Good, so, what's your name?” Octavia asked her suddenly, Abby looked at her, her heart slowing pace, the way the girl was talking to her started to make her feel more comfortable. She couldn't say if it was just the lack of sleep, the adrenaline fading away, or the fact that that girl made her think about her own daughter, but she smiled.

“I'm Abby.” she whispered, at that the girl nodded. “Nice to meet you Abby” - she offered her her hand again and Abby took it this time, squeezing it weakly - “and sorry for... that.” she said, gesturing to the young man. Bellamy huffed and shook his head. “You shouldn't be doing this O.” he said, at that the girl snorted. “Shut up Bell.” then she gestured to a table that was resting at Abby's right side. “Come on, sit.” at that Abby nodded and followed her. Still casting worried glances at the gun the boy was holding.

The girl sat down and offered her the chair that was resting between hers and another one, where Bellamy took his spot. Abby swallowed while sitting down. “So, what are you doing out here Abby?” Octavia asked her. Abby inhaled deeply at that.

Was she really gonna say to them the truth? No. She couldn't let it out as she did with her name, that was another thing, she needed to protect her daughter now. These were kids yeas, but she knew one thing for sure: In war you can trust just yourself.

She smiled. “Surviving.” she said, at that the girl nodded, smirking. “Tell me about it. And how long have you been around here? We never saw you, and you don't look that damaged.” she said, at that Abby shrugged, trying to make up an excuse in her brain. “I was hiding. I decided to start traveling just lately...” she said, biting her tongue when the memory of the night when Clarke had gone, came back to her.

“Oh, and where were you hiding?” Octavia asked, at that Abby widened her eyes and parted her lips. “O! She doesn't need to tell you everything.” Bellamy said, his eyes focused on Abby. She looked at him and closed her mouth, lowering her gaze. Octavia huffed. “I was just asking, you are so boring Bell!” she said, crossing her arms, snorting and resting her feet on the table. At that Abby couldn't hide the smile that blossomed on her lips. She raised her eyes again and saw that Bellamy was still looking at her.

“So, you walked all night long?” he asked her suddenly, at that Abby stiffened her back and nodded. “Yes.” Bellamy nodded himself. “You probably need to sleep, you can use my spot there,
on the floor.” he said, gesturing to a blanket resting few feet from her. “Oh I-” but Octavia stopped her. “That's stupid, let her use mine, is more comfortable, and I don't need it now!” Octavia snapped, at that Bellamy sighed out “O.” he said, his tone reproaching. But Octavia tilted her head, changing position, crossing her arms on the table. “What? She can't use mine? Is mine, I can decide if she can sleep there, right?” she said.

Abby lowered her gaze and then cleared her throat. “It isn't necessary I can-” but Octavia raised a hand in front of her, Abby feel silent. “So?” she asked to her brother. “O...” he whispered. Octavia looked at him in silence for few more seconds, then turned toward her again. “Use mine, that one on the sofa, is not a king size bed but is better than the floor, and I know a lot about it.” she said, casting a sharp look at her brother and standing up again on her feet.

Abby blinked and cleared her throat, whispering a weak “Thank you.” and then stood up, looking at Bellamy with the corner of her left eye. He was looking at his sister. It felt weird for Abby to sit on a sofa, in a bombed house, with two strangers with her. But what was she gonna do? She needed to sleep if she wanted to go after Clarke.

She thought she was never gonna sleep, she was too tensed and afraid, but after few minutes of confused thoughts about what she was going to do next, her body gave up and she fell asleep.

And while she was lost into that heavy and dark sleep, she didn't saw the siblings casting angry glances at each other across the table. She didn't saw how Bellamy kept staring at her with worried and sharp eyes. Or the way he kept toying with the gun in his hands. And she also didn't saw how they both dived their hands in her bag, to checked if she had more weapons.

So Abby didn't saw that Octavia found the map, unfolded it and studied it with curiosity. And she didn't heard how she whispered to her brother to “Take a look at this thing.” and how they both studied it, tracking with their fingers the paths she had drawn on it.

She kept sleeping, while her mind kept sending her dreams trapped inside of dark heavy shadows.

And than night came, and she finally woke up.

The house dark, silent and completely empty. She stood up and stretched her muscles, when her eyes fell on the leather bag, open on the table, she jumped on her feet and ran to it. She emptied it on the wooden surface, her clothes, the dry meat, the water bottles, the medicines, all was there, except for...
The map. The map was gone, just as the siblings.
Chapter Summary

Abby is gone, and now everybody know. This means not only Marcus, but also her friends. Will he be able to sneak out and go after her? And will Raven be able to stay back?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

2nd November – 11:00 am

Marcus

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Two

Days without sleep: One

Health: Injured. Recovering.

Marcus was feeling useless. He was feeling lost and completely powerless. That morning when the hospital had woken up, the chaos had started to spread and mess up with everything. When Jackson had woken up and couldn't find Abby he had freak out. Marcus knew it was going to happen, so he had dragged him in his room as soon as he had walked in front of it, scaring him to death.

“What the hell?” he snapped. Marcus gestured at him to keep it quiet and closed the door behind his back. “I know.” he just said, and saw how the young man for a moment froze, a shocked expression on his face. “What are you talking about?” he said, sniffing slightly, trying to recompose himself.
Marcus raised an eyebrow that said basically “Seriously?” But then got that the man wasn't gonna let it out if he didn't said it first, and how wrong it felt to say it. “About Abby. I know she is gone.” he said, his voice low. Jackson swallowed and squeezed his eyes. “Damn it.” he muttered, plastering his hands on his face. “Damn it!” he kept hissing. Marcus pursed his lips and crossed his arms, keeping quiet, giving him the time to process it.

“She told you?” he snapped finally, his eyes filled with tears. Marcus smirked bitterly and sadly, swallowing. “Well she didn't have to, I caught her.” he said, at that Jackson widened his eyes. “What? You... wait you caught her? And you let her go?” he snapped, at that Marcus clenched his jaw. “No. You know how Abby is, right?” he said. “I- I just caught her packing...” - his mind recalling the leather bag, the tears in her eyes, the way her voice had broke several times while talking, he had to swallow and close his eyes to recollect himself - “And then she sneaked out while I wasn't there. Trust me Jackson, I asked her to not do that, but you know how stubborn she can be.” he said, taking few steps toward him.

Jackson sniffed again. “You let her go,” he said, pointing an accusatory finger toward him. Marcus swallowed. “Jackson I-” but the young man glared at him. “You let her go! You are the soldier here, it was your only job, protect Abby. And she is gone, just as Clarke!” he snapped, Marcus had to swallow several times to prevent himself to yell back at him.

_He is suffering, and besides... he is right and you know it._

“I'm sorry...” he managed to whisper, Jackson kept looking at him with fury in his eyes. “You better be. But that's not enough, because now they are both gone. And what have you done to prevent it? Nothing, that's what!” he said. Marcus swallowed again, and closed his eyes. “Listen...” but the man pushed him on the chest, forcing him to take few steps back. “No! Don't Listen me Kane! You had one job, and you screwed everything, you let her go and she is gonna die because of you!” he said, and with that rushed outside the room.

Marcus was speechless. _She is gonna die because of you._ He shook his head, and sighed out heavily. His legs felt suddenly weak.

_She is gonna die because of you._

He couldn't let that happen, he couldn't live with the thought that because he was apparently incapable to do his job, Clarke and Abby Griffin were missing, and probably dead. He had to do something. But what?
He was the General of his unit, he couldn't just let them there alone, and he also couldn't take them with him, because even if they could help him to find her, they would cage her, till a new doctor would come and then they would have her killed.

And he couldn't let this happen. He needed to go alone, he needed to find her, protect her, and then he could decide what they were going to do, but first, he needed to find her.

Arkadia was a big city, but she was following a map, she wasn't walking randomly, and if he could recall correctly, the map started right outside the West side of the Hospital. It was a start.

And then the idea was there, pinned into his brain, a plan to escape growing in his mind, without him even thinking about it, but feeling the need to make it happen. He had to.

*I'm coming Abby.*

________________________

*Raven*

*Location: Arkadia Central Hospital*

*Days without food: Two*

*Days without sleep: Zero*

*Health: Injured. Recovering.*

She knew that what she was eating was probably tasteless and almost disgusting, but the hell with it, she was hungry and her stomach was singing happily while her mouth kept chewing on what was supposed to be bread, drinking a delicate, really too delicate, warm milk.
Someone had brought her breakfast as soon as she had yelled “Food over here!” and she had welcomed the poor plate with enthusiasm. Her body was vibrating with a new kind of life, she still was pissed off and snorting around, feeling bored and annoyed, but she also was better, now that she had made the first step, taking those crutches and using them, she could lift herself from the bed, go to the bathroom, walk in the hallway.

That... and also the map that was hid behind her pillow, she knew she should be afraid about the idea of leaving the hospital, limping here and there in the middle of Arkadia, but she couldn't care less, when the thought of a shelter house with Abby appeared in his brain.

She cared finally for another human being after so long, and it was so new and so good, that she couldn't help herself, and smiled the entire time while eating. When the plate was empty, and she had used the bathroom for the first time alone, without a really embarrassed Jackson hiding his face in his palm, while she would have yell, “How is that these things are so fucking uncomfortable?”, she left her room.

Being able to stand in the hallway, just outside her room made her smile. Some curious faces turned toward her, and some people smiled when they saw the girl with an injured leg walking again. She adverted her gaze, ignoring completely the crowd around her, and walked in the hallway. She knew the news of Abby being gone had spread through the building. She also knew the soldiers didn't know yet.

But it was a matter of time, they had to know, because it would soon be clear enough even for them that the doctor wasn't around anymore. She wasn't paying attention where she was going, too focused on the feeling of being able to move around, when suddenly a shadow appeared in front of her and a voice she didn't recognized at first, startled her.

“Reyes?” she looked up and her smile faded immediately. Kane was staring at her, his eyes scanning her body, her leg, the crutches, he looked somehow surprised and shocked to see her. “Sir.” she said, stiffening her back the best that she could. He blinked and smiled. “Is good to see you out of your bed.” he said, clapping his hands behind his back.

He was trying to smile, but she could see on his face that he was tensed, and that something was off, even if she didn't know the man at all, she could sense the heaviness of his emotions. “Yeah... it was about damn time.” she said, smirking. Kane nodded and then cleared his throat. “Well, I'm glad you made it, now if you could excuse me, I have to go, have a nice day.” he said, and without waiting for her to respond, walked away.

She frowned and bit at her lower lip, remembering the last note Abby had wrote to her.
“Kane isn't stupid. Keep a low profile.”

According to his tensed back, his worried expression and his shifty eyes, he knew that Abby was gone, and was now probably going to say it to the guards outside. Raven swallowed, and then focused again on her feet. She wasn't going to be there for long, she needed to learn how to move smoothly around with those thing, so she kept training in the hallway.

When she reached the entrance for the fourth time, and her arms were burning since probably almost twenty minutes, she spotted Jackson walking outside of a patient room, his eyes red and swollen, his chin trembling, he had been crying and was probably still suppressing a sob or two. She approached him, while he was writing down something on some medical records.

“Hey...” she whispered, trying to keep her voice low, he flinched, even if when he saw her, his tensed muscles relaxed, and he also managed a weak smile. “Raven, I'm glad to see you are finally following your doctor orders.” he said, while sniffing, at the word doctor she heard how his voice cracked. Raven chuckled softly. “Yeah, I needed to go to the bathroom, you weren't there, I had to figure out something.” she said, tilting her head.

Jackson at that froze and then turned toward her, his expression softer. “I'm so sorry Raven, I had been busy and completely forgot about it.” he said, his eyes melting on her. Raven shook her head. “I was just kidding, I was supposed to walk with these things since the beginning, I'm sorry if I had been a... pain in the ass.” she said, lowering her gaze in shame.

Suddenly Jackson was stroking her shoulder, she looked up, his eyes were glassy with new tears. “It's ok to be afraid Raven, and nobody ask you to do more than what you can.” he said, sniffing again. Raven smiled weakly back at him and then he focused again on his papers, his hands trembling. “Jackson...” she said, he hummed absentmindedly. She thought about what to say, or more correctly, how to say it. But she knew that Abby had left him a letter too, she knew she couldn't just go without giving him some kind of proof that she cared, that she loved him.

She also hoped in the bottom of her heart, that he knew about the shelter house, and that he was going there too, to meet her. He looked at her then, when she had kept quiet for too long, and frowned. “What is it?” he asked her, his eyes so swollen and red that made her feel sick to the stomach. Her own eyes were now watery, and he immediately got what was going on, he closed the medical records, and then looked around himself, his eyes worried, he swallowed and tilted his head to the empty hallway. She blinked and nodded, he started to walk and she limped behind him.

They reached it quietly, and when they were alone, far away enough from the other civilians and soldiers, she looked him straight in the eyes. “She left one to you too right?” she said, at that he swallowed, and his hands were now in tight fits, his knuckles turning white, he nodded, one tear escaping his brown eyes, rolling down his olive skin. She pursed her lips. “What did she wrote to
“Don't. I know she told you about the shelter house” - he nodded with himself - “I know she did because I know her, and she knows me, that's why she probably told Kane to keep an eye on me.” he said, his voice growing heavier with every word. Raven blinked. “Wait, Kane?” Jackson smirked bitterly. “He knows.” he said. Raven nodded. “Yeah I think that too.” but Jackson shook his head.

“No Raven, he actually knows, he caught her, and according to him, he tried to stop her but failed.” he hissed, his muscles now were so tensed, she could sense his rage. “Wait what?” she asked, but then her mind recalled Abby's voice in the middle of the night, she wasn't sure back then, but now it all made sense, the two muffled voices were a man and a woman, the yell, the slammed door.

It had been them, arguing about it, he knew, and he let that happen, he let her go alone out there. “He let her go Raven, he let her go.” his voice breaking. Raven blinked, a tear escaped her brown eyes, and she could tell, by looking at him and the way he was staring at the floor under his feet, that he wasn't talking just about Kane, he was talking about himself too.

“It's not your fault.” she said, approaching him with some effort, her muscles were so tired, she still needed to get used to those things. He looked at her and shook his head, running a hand on his face, wiping poorly some tears away. “Yes it is. I was supposed to feel that she was going to do something so reckless, she had always been like that. I was supposed to...” for a moment Raven thought he was going to say stop her, I was supposed to stop her but of course this wasn't what he was thinking. “I was supposed to go with her.” she whispered then, and Raven closed her eyes, her hands gripping with rage and regret the handholds.

“You can still do that.” she choked, sniffing. Jackson turned toward her. “What?” he asked, she nodded. “You can come with me, we can go after her, tonight.” at that he frowned, and walked again toward her, closing the gap between them, almost touching her. “What are you talking about?” at that Raven looked around them, nobody was there, they were completely alone. “I want to sneak out tonight, and go after her.” she said, the inappropriate enthusiasm back in place in her belly, making her feel warm and hot with anticipation.

Jackson shook his head. “No you are not.” he growled, at that she snorted. “For once I am following my Doctor's orders, you should be happy about that.” she said, and at that his eyes widened. “Abby asked you to follow her?” he said in shock, she nodded, but then bit her lower lip. “I mean, not exactly like that, but basically yes. She said that if needed, I have to meet her you know where and that she will try to make it there with... Clarke.” she said, at the mention of her name, Jackson flinched.
“Oh for the love of god,” he whispered, pressing his palms on his face. Raven licked her lips, bowing her head. “Where’s Clarke, Jackson?” she asked him, even if the answer was pretty clear, and he turned toward her, shrugging as to say “You really need me to say it out loud?” Then he swallowed. “She is gone, she left, almost two days ago.”

Raven nodded, chewing the inside of her cheek, and then looked at him. “Then this makes a lot more sense.” she said, and Jackson pressed a hand under his chin. “Yeah...” Raven was about to say something, when suddenly she sensed someone was behind them. “Jackson? Can I talk to you for a second?” Kane was waiting respectfully at the end of the hallway. Raven looked behind her shoulder at him and then back at Jackson, and saw the rage burning behind his eyes while he was looking at the soldier. “I have nothing to say to you.” he said, at that Kane nodded. “I know, but I do. Meet me in her room in two minutes.” with that he was gone.

Raven frowned and looked at him, Jackson was pursing his lips. “What does he wants from you?” she asked him, whispering, feeling suddenly too exposed. Jackson shook his head. “Trust me Raven, I have no idea.” with that he walked away, following the path Kane had walked on few instants before, and Raven was left alone in the empty damaged hallway.

She was sitting in front of her room, the crutches left behind her on an empty chair, she was resting her head against the wall. She was tired, and her muscles were burning in pain, she was chewing at her lips, cursing under her breath her damn leg. If it wasn't for that she was probably gonna be just fine outside, but how was she supposed to sneak out the building when she couldn't walk for more than twenty minutes without slowing too much her pace?

She was so focused on her thoughts, that didn't get someone was sitting beside her, until he actually talked to her.

“What a mess uh?” she flinched, and turned, an asian boy was beside her, his hands clasped on his lap, his eyes lost on the floor. She couldn't quiet recall his name, she had seen him sometimes walking behind Clarke, talking quietly with Abby outside her door, but they never actually introduced each other.

“What?” she managed to say, he looked at her then. “What a mess, with Clarke and her mother
gone.” he said, Raven blinked and swallowed, the boy knew all of course, she nodded. “Yeah, a mess indeed.” she sighed out, relaxing her body again on the chair. He cleared his throat. “I'm Monty by the way.” and held out his hand. Raven looked down at it, then at him again, he was trying to smile. She smiled back and took his hand. “Raven” she said. He nodded. “Yeah I know.” he said.

Raven frowned. “Oh you do?” at that he chuckled. “Clarke talked to me about you.” he said, and swallowed, she licked her lips, thinking. “Yeah I saw you two were close.” she said, and at that he shrugged. “Well yeah, sort of.” he said, and at that she tilted her head, getting that she was interested in understand what he meant.

“Why sort of?” she asked him, Monty looked at her then and smiled. “Her mother saved my life, and we just get close because you know... same age.” Raven nodded, but kept silent. “She seemed to be really happy about the idea to have someone else to talk to, after her father died, she had been so lonely. I just tried to stick around. I will never do enough to thank her mother.” he said and at that Raven nodded. “Yeah, me too.” he looked then at her leg, it was heavily resting beside the functional one.

Raven cleared her throat, and he blinked, adverting his gaze. “She did so much for so many people.” Raven whispered and Monty nodded. “Yeah, she deserves better.” he said, and Raven could just nod at that, feeling a painful knot forming in her throat. “This world sucks.” she whispered, and Monty chuckled. “Yeah, it sucks indeed.” at that they bot laughed softly.

They kept talking for a while, getting to know each other, sharing some words over the heavy silence that had covered them both since Abby was gone. He told her about the day Abby had found him, under the rubble of his house, he was alone, his parents had died in the explosion and he had been the only survivor. She had cured him, saving his life, and when he was healed, and was about to get kicked out of the building, she had found out his skills as an engineer. And had managed to keep him around.

Since then he had spent everyday with Clarke and had been grateful to have a place like that hospital, where he could find always a bed and some food, never left alone. Raven told him about the accident, how she had been found herself in the middle of a fucking shitty situation when she had sneak inside of a bombed house, searching for some food. Someone shot her in the leg, to protect themselves, they were probably a couple or something, then they had took away everything from her, everything she had left, it wasn't that much but was her stuff. She told him about how stubborn she had been since the beginning, hiding behind her sass, because showing weakness wasn't for her.

And she found out how could made her feel to be that kind of exposed finally to someone, someone she had never met before and that was basically a stranger. When they were talking about how disgusting the food was, but also how delicious it tasted after a long period of starving, the door of
Abby and Clarke's room opened, few doors after hers, and she froze.

Jackson walked away, his eyes red, some tears plastered on his skin, and Kane followed, he was clenching his jaw, his bones moving under his skin, were the ghost of a beard was growing. He looked at her, and his eyes softened for a moment, then he turned and walked inside his own room, closing the door behind his back.

“What was that?” Monty whispered, and Raven shook her head. “I really don't know, but I'm about to find out.” she said, and with that he smiled toward her.

They were about to find out.

“What the hell does this even mean?” Raven shouted, while leaning her weight on the mattress behind her. Jackson shrugged.

“As I said, he told me to stay behind, mind my own business, that he will take care of it.” he said, leaning his shoulder toward the closed door of the room. Raven sighed and raised her hands to the ceiling. “This is insane, he can't ask us to just stay behind.”

“Well technically he didn't said that, he asked just him to stay behind.” pointed out Monty suddenly, at that Jackson looked up and Raven turned toward the boy. “Right. Right!” she stood up, forgetting for a moment about her leg, and then fell on the bed again, but ignored it, just as the two men in front of her. “That's absolutely right, he ordered you to stay behind, but not us.” she said, gesturing between her and Monty.

“Yeah so? You are going to sneak out? You think you can really do that?” he said, and his eyes fell on her leg for a fraction of a second. Raven raised an eyebrow and clenched her jaw. “I'll figure out something, and besides I will not be alone.” she said, gesturing to Monty. “Right?” she asked, at that Monty nodded, his arms crossed against his chest. “I'm with you.” he said and at that the girl smirked.

“Guys seriously?” Jackson suddenly said, and they both turned toward him. “What? You're
surprised? You knew we weren't gonna just let it happen, this is stupid, we can't let it just happen without doing something.” she said, shrugging as if it was obvious. Jackson tilted his head and then sighed out. “Is too dangerous Raven, I can't let you go outside like that.” he said, at that Raven snorted.

“That's what Abby wanted, she wanted me to follow her.” Jackson shook his head. “No, she just told you where the shelter house is if needed, she said to stay here if you can.” he said, pointing his finger toward her as if that could sink the words in her brain, but Raven shook her head. “But that's stupid Jackson, I can't just stay behind, she saved my life.”

“Mine too,” said Monty suddenly. Jackson shifted his gaze between the two of them and then sighed out, running a hand in his black short hair. “This is insane.” he whispered. “I know you want to come too, but you have to stay behind. At least for now.” she said, because she knew the real reason was that he couldn't follow them. “Yeah... because of course then the war will end and I'll be able to meet you again.” he said, his voice trembling, at that Raven shook her head. “No, because when we will be all together again, we will come back for you.” she said and at that saw how his muscles softened.

“You can't do that.” he said, Raven smirked, raising her chin. “You already know you can't tell me what I can or can't do!” at that he couldn't stop the slight smile that blossomed on his lips, he shook his head.

“That's absolutely reckless.”

“I know.”

“And you could get killed.” he said again.

“I know.”

“And you don't have guns or weapons.” he walked few steps toward her.

“I know.”

“And you don’t even know where she is now.” she looked up at that and smirked. “Actually...” - she took the letter and the map from under her pillow - “We know.” and at that Jackson took the
map and unfolded it. “This is such a bad idea.” he said, while studying the map in his hands.

Raven smirked. “I know.”

Marcus

Location: Arkadia Central Hospital

Days without food: Two

Days without sleep: One

Health: Injured. Recovering.

It was almost midnight when he found himself out of his room. His gun in his belt, his backpack on his shoulders. He had managed to take few necessary supplies for the trip he was going to take that night. Dry meat of course, water bottles, also clothes and bandages, a needle, a pair of scissors, and bullets. It wasn't that much but was something and he couldn't put too much weight on his shoulders if he wanted to be fast, also his wound was still fresh and painful.

Jackson had checked it few hours before, cleaning it and giving him some painkillers, also helping him collect some stuff for the trip. He had been quiet the whole time, and Marcus knew he had slowly cursed him in his mind, because he thought this was also his fault and he wanted to follow him, to fix what he had done, but he couldn't. Not just because Abby had asked him not to, but also because without him the Hospital wasn't going to save more lives, and Abby had hoped this was enough to force him back. And she had been right.

The young man wanted to save people, he wanted to save Abby as well, but at least he knew Marcus was going to take care of it, even if he didn't trust him that much, also... he hated him. But Marcus couldn't blame him for that, he hated himself too most of the time, so he could feel him on that.
He sighed and fixed the backpack on his shoulder, clenching his jaw, he looked at the empty hallway. Now was time for him to sneak outside without being seen, because even if he had told to his guards that he was going patrol the area from outside, and he could actually do that, they would have followed him, because that were the rules. At least two soldiers needed to patrol the area outside the perimeter of the safe zone and he knew he couldn't ask them to stay behind without making them suspicious.

So he had to figure out a way to sneak out now, and if Abby had managed to do that, he could too. He climbed the stairs, reminding himself of the floor where he and Abby had been that night, when Clarke in her room was patiently waiting for the right moment to sneak out. And he reached it, opening the glassy window. The cold breeze invested him and he breathed in the fresh air.

He walked toward the edge and looked down, he knew his guards were patrolling right under him, but he also knew, as probably even Abby had known, that there was a specific moment when the area was clear, for not even a minute, and he had to use that moment to jump and then run outside, using the hole in the fences. He knelt down, scanning carefully the surroundings, when a voice startled him.

“"This seems as a really bad idea to me." he flinched and turned abruptly, his hands trembling, his eyes wide open, behind him, into the dark of the night, Raven Reyes was standing, crutches under her arms, a smirk on her face. "What the hell are you doing here Reyes?" he snapped, his eyes moving fast around them. "Exactly what you are doing sir." she said, and he stopped, swallowing. "What are you talking about?" He asked her, stiffening his back. She smirked again. "Oh I think you know exactly what I'm talking about." with that she limped few steps toward him. "Here me out, we know what you are up too, and we will totally follow you." she said, her brown eyes fixed on him.

For a moment Marcus just stared, thinking about her words, then he frowned and cleared his throat. "I'm up to nothing Reyes, and you should watch your tone when talking to a General." he said, at that she snorted and shook her head. "Don't you even try Kane, we both know what's going on here, so you can pretend that you still don't know what I'm talking about or, you can follow us and do as we say. We are gonna help you get out of here." she said, raising her chin, pursing her lips.

Marcus tilted his head. "Wait, we?" at that another shadow appeared behind her, and a black haired boy appeared, his almond eyes pitch black in the night. "Sir, we have a plan to go outside, using the front door. And we also have a map." he said, his hands clasped behind his back. Marcus widened his eyes.

“So, are you gonna listen to us now?" Reyes said, smirking.
This is going to end so badly. His mind kept saying to him. So so badly.

He was dragging Monty right toward the entrance, while Raven was panting behind him, her arm trapped inside of his hand. “Hey let me go you moron!” she yelled, while limping with effort. “Sir! You can't do that sir!” Monty was yelling.

The soldiers outside turned immediately and widened their eyes when spotted them coming. “Sir? What's wrong?” Michaelson asked him immediately, Marcus reached them, the teens still trying to free themselves. “I have to escort these two out of the building, let us pass.” The soldier frowned. “What? Sir, we can do that for you.” he said, and Marcus felt sick at his stomach wen he didn't even asked him why he was doing that, offering to do it himself, as if for him it didn't matter.

And in the end it didn't matter for real.

“No, I will take care of that, let us through.” he said, at that Raven yelled. “You bastards, you can't do that!” Monty kept cursing under his breath himself, and the soldiers, after a long moment of silence, let them pass. “Let us know if you need anything sir.” Michaelson said. Marcus kept walking, while beside him Raven and Monty kept panting with effort.

“I'm gonna come after you, you douche-bags, you are gonna regret it so badly!” she kept yelling, right when they were outside the perimeter, and had turned the corner, Marcus let them go. Raven was giggling. “Oh god that was awesome!” she said, panting and regaining balance on the crutches. Marcus shook his head, while Monty nodded. “This is going to end up badly, that's the worse idea ever.” he said. Raven snorted. “No time for that now Kane, come on, we don't have much time.”

At that she inhaled deeply and then screamed. “You asshole, let me go back inside!” she then looked at him and Marcus cleared his throat, while fixing his backup on his shoulders. “Go away and never come back! You know the rules!” he yelled, at that Raven grinned. “Well you seem pretty good at it.” she said, raising an eyebrow. Marcus ignored the innuendo and then Monty appeared at their side again. When had he left their side? “Here.” he said, handing to her a backpack. Marcus frowned. “How?” he gestured to the bags that were now in the boys' hands.
He looked at him and then at Raven, she smirked and looked at Marcus. “The less you know, the better.” at that she tilted her head behind her back. “Come on, we need to move out.” and with that she was limping away, bowing as best as she could.

They had to be quiet and really fast, moving out from the Hospital perimeter and hide in the buildings around it. Marcus' soldiers could come after them at any second and they couldn't risk to be caught. Raven was trying her best to be fast, but the crutches weren't helpful, she was slow, and panting, he could see how her arms' muscles were trembling with every frantic step, but he didn't dare to help her, he knew very well what the girl thought about that.

They walked around the fences, hiding in the dark as best as they could. Monty was fast and quiet, really good at hiding, Marcus of course as well, he had been trained for that kind of situations, being quiet while sneaking out of places, hiding in the dark while carrying heavy weapons was exactly what he had been doing his entire life. On the other hand Raven was having hard times at being fast and quiet.

She was trying, he could tell, but the injured leg wasn't helpful at all, and her heavy panting was echoing dangerously around them, dragging toward them too much attention, also the crutches were making a lot of noise on the dirty ground. Without thinking too much, and already apologizing in his mind, he shifted closer to her, and scooped the young girl in his arms.

She managed to suppress a yelp, and the crutches fell at her sides, Monty took them before they could crash on the dirt, and Marcus mentally thanked him. Raven smacked him on the chest, without even thinking. “What the hell?” she hissed, her face a mask of anger. “You can yell at me later, right now we need to move.” he growled, at that she fell silent, while her hands clasped behind his neck, anchoring herself in his arms.

She was slim, but really muscled, her young body was heavier than what he had thought just by looking at her. But Marcus managed to run, carrying her against his chest, the heavy motionless leg resting over his arm. Monty was few feet forward, carrying the crutches, and running fast, really fast, he liked that, he was going to be really useful.

Get it together, these aren't your soldiers, these are civilians, they are your equals. He reproached mentally himself.

They finally reached the Artists District as the map Abby had left to Raven suggested. The plan to get out of the Hospital had been really simple, faking the two of them needed to be escorted out of the building, because they didn't need to be cured anymore, and then as Raven had said. “Run run run” and that was what they had done.
The teens had told him about them having a map and had also showed to him the piece of paper. He had tried to grab it and look at it carefully, but Raven had withdrew, smirking slightly. “Uh uh not so fast.” she had said, and so he had been forced to follow them to take a look at it.

They were now hiding behind a tall building, the hospital glowing far away from them. The night was pitch black, and also cold. Raven freed herself from his arms, when she noticed he wasn't letting her go, he apologized under his breath and she snorted, while Monty gave her the crutches and she took them, leaning on the wall beside her.

“Never do that again Kane!” she snapped, still keeping her voice low. Marcus nodded and then shook his head. “Trust me, I just wanted to help you ok?” he said, while looking at their surroundings. Raven snorted. “Yeah whatever. So, now I can move by myself or you need to drag me in braid style all the way?” she growled, raising an eyebrow.

“Don't be like that, you are slower than us, that's just the truth.” Monty said suddenly, while kneeling and diving his hands in his bag, he took the map out of a pocket and unfolded it, rising on his feet again. “Besides, we don't have time to argue, we have to move, fast.” with that he turned, his backpack on one shoulder, his eyes shifting from the map to the surroundings.

Raven looked at Marcus, he looked at her, she shrugged and then pushed herself forward. “Come on.” she whispered, and he followed her. He was silent after that, following without saying nothing the boy and the limping girl, he felt awkward and out of place. He didn't know these two people, at his eyes they were just kids, and he felt as if them having the upper hand, controlling the situation and ordering him what to do, was simply not good.

But he also had to remind himself that he was here to search for Abby and her daughter, this wasn't a normal mission, he wasn't marching on the battlefield with his soldiers, trained to follow his orders. These were civilians, and he knew so little about them, also he knew how lucky he was that they had asked him to follow him. Well asked him wasn't the right word for it, they basically told him they were going to sneak out too, and that their plan was better than his.

He smiled to himself, the situation felt surreal, but at the same time it felt good to be with someone else out there. He wasn't scared, because he had walked between those roads before, patrolling the city during those months with his soldiers when bandits and scavengers had approached too much. But it didn't mean that company wasn't welcomed.

Sure, he didn't know them, they weren't even talking, and he could tell that they didn't like or trust him, especially Raven. But at the same time he was glad they were with him, or more correctly, that he was with them. He could protect them, and could prevent them to get killed.
It was dangerous to be that kind of exposed, walking in the middle of Arkadia, between scavengers, bandits and snipers. But he had a rifle and a gun, skills and also a motive. He wasn’t' gonna let them all die that easily, and looking at the way the girl held herself, how her brown eyes scanned the street in front of her, and how her muscles didn't stop a second even if she seemed tired, he knew she wasn't gonna let go that easily either.

“Here.” Monty said suddenly, pointing toward a huge street in front of them, they stopped, Marcus approached the boy. “Can I take a look at it?” he asked, the boy looked at him and showed the map to him, without letting it in his hands, as if he didn't trust him enough yet. Marcus pursed his lips and looked at the map.

He recognized immediately the hand behind those inked roads and words. He smiled to himself, that was the exact copy of the map he had seen in Abby's bag, they were indeed following her steps, and luckily for them they were about to find her sooner than later. “So we will keep going, scanning every shelter to see if she is in there?” he asked, the boy nodded.

“Hopefully she is slower than me.” Raven snorted, while keep pushing herself forward, Marcus shared a glance with Monty, he shrugged almost imperceptibly and then started to walk again. After almost half an hour, of just walking in silent, with Marcus forward, scanning the perimeter with his rifle in hands, Raven snorted and cursed under her breath. “Fuck. Guys? I need a moment.” she said, Marcus turned toward, Monty approached her. “What's wrong?” he asked her.

Raven snorted. “Girl's stuff, I need to go behind a wall or something.” she said, while scanning with her eyes the empty street. Marcus frowned. “What is it? Can't you do whatever it is here?” he said, used as he was to be present when his soldiers needed private moments, it was the usual for them to witness each others intimate privacy, because privacy wasn't something you could have on the battlefield. Raven raised an eyebrow. “I don't think so.” she turned to her right and pointed to a dark spot with one of the crutches.

“There, Monty can you follow me?” she said, but Marcus preceded him. “No, I'll escort you.” Raven smirked. “Of course you will.” Marcus nodded to the boy, and he nodded back. As soon as he looked at Raven again he saw she was already moving. “Hey wait for me.” he growled, she looked behind. “I'm not that fast Kane.” she whispered, shaking her head.

They reached the wall she had seen before, and he stopped, looking at her and their surroundings. Raven tilted her head. “Could you give me a moment now?” she asked, her voice sharp and slightly amused. Marcus widened his eyes in realization. “Oh right, of course.” and with that he turned. He heard her snorting and chuckling with herself behind him. Then he heard her curse under her breath while unzipping her pants.
It wasn't awkward for him, he was used to it, privacy was a luxury for soldiers, and he had seen women kneeling down on the battlefield, using the ground as basically a bathroom. And not just that to be honest with himself, he had witness even other things, more private and awkward, and he had get used to them too. Humans were still humans, even on the battlefield, and sometimes they couldn't just wait to satisfied their own needs.

He cleared his throat, when heard her huffed with herself. “For fuck's sake.” she hissed. Marcus inhaled deeply. “You need help?” he asked, realizing immediately how award the question was. Raven chuckled. “No thank you, I don't.” she said, but kept cursing and huffing. Marcus frowned, what was that hard in kneeling down and just go on with it? But then he slapped mentally himself, the girl couldn't use both of her legs, kneeling down was probably too hard for her now.

He swallowed, feeling guilty for a moment, for even just thinking that she was being to slow, when she appeared beside him. “Ok, done.” she said, and smirked at him. “We can go back, and thank you for your help.” she said, smiling. Marcus shook his head and followed her, carefully scanning their surroundings. “You know... You don't have to be ashamed, these things are natural, and I'm used to it, if you need any help, just ask.” he said, trying to sound reassuring and calm, knowing it could sound all but that.

Raven shook her head. “I would never ask you to do something like that, not just because I don't know you, I dislike you and you are a man. But simply because you can't be helpful.” she said. At that Marcus snorted himself. “You can't know that.” Raven nodded. “Actually I can. When I said girl's stuff I meant literally girl's stuff. You know...” she said, gesturing awkwardly at her womb. Marcus winced his eyes. “Oh.” Raven nodded biting at her lower lip.”Yep. Blood all over the way.” she said, laughing amused when saw the micro disgusted expression Marcus couldn’t suppress.

“It must be really uncomfortable.” he said, thinking of how personal hygiene was hard during a war, and how women were forced to get over their period without complaining. “Yeah well, it was never comfortable, but Abby managed to teach me few tricks to get over it.” she said, at the mention of her name her eyes grew sadder, and her smirk faded, replaced by a melted heavy expression. Marcus smiled to her, and she blinked, smiling back. For a moment he felt a new connection with the girl, an intimate one.

“She cared for Abby too.

“Everything good?” Monty asked them as soon as they were close enough. “Yep.” Raven said, nodding. Marcus nodded himself, and Monty pursed his lips tilting his head in front of them. “Then we must keep going.” and with that they all resumed their walk.
The night was cold, but the walk kept them warm enough, especially Raven that was panting and sweating, the effort of keep pushing with her arms on the crutches couldn't make her feel too cold, she also had scattered her jacket, throwing it in Marcus' face when he had dared to say “You shouldn't.”

They had managed to sneak inside of three shelters by now, but unluckily for them, they had found nothing. No Abby, no Clarke, nobody. They kept walking under the dark sky, encountering even a pair of scavengers that they easily avoided, hiding behind a building, Marcus aimed at them the whole time, "just in case" he had said "very rude" Raven had snorted, causing a chuckle from him.

When the path was clear, they had started to walk again, the night was slowly turning into day, and according to Monty, that had managed to find lots of technological stuff before leaving, including a watch, it was 05:05 am and they needed to find a safe place where they could hide and rest for the incoming day.

They reached the closest house in less than half an hour, just in time to see the sun rising. Marcus had left them behind him, and then had opened the door, that wasn't locked, and had sneaked in, rifle raised. The house was empty, he could tell, someone had lived there, there was a blanket on the floor, it was dirty and damaged, but could still be used. When he was sure that nobody was there, hiding in a dark corner, he told them to come in.

He kept scanning the house, it was damaged, no electricity, no water, as they all expected, those districts weren't functional anymore, and they weren't hoping to find something still useful. Monty tried to see if he could do something, with the help of Raven. Marcus had found out they were both really great at fixing things, she was a mechanic, a really good one, and Monty was an engineer, very young but already really skilled.

When they turned toward him, shaking their heads, he knew nothing was reparable in there. He locked the door, and Monty did the same with the one that faced to a really dirty and damaged backyard. And then he sat on a chair in front of a table. “So, nap time?” Raven asked, looking at the sofa where Monty was sitting, looking at the map. “Yes, try to rest, I will stay awake.” he said, rubbing his hands on his tired face.

“We can take shifts.” Monty said, looking up at them. Marcus shook his head. “No, it isn't necessary.” he said, knowing he could easily look after them. “Oh come on, you need to rest too, or you will not be able to protect us, right?” she said, while limping toward the sofa. Monty nodded. “Indeed, so, you can take the first one, wake me in two hours.” he said, and with that left the bag at his side, right beside the sofa. Marcus shook his head and then nodded. “Ok, ok. Now try to sleep.” he said.
Monty sighed out, when Raven sat beside him, relaxing her body and resting her head on his lap. “Goodnight.” she whispered, he smiled to himself, his arms crossed against his chest. “Goodnight.” Marcus smiled too, the image of the two of them on that sofa was warming up his heart. He sighed and left his rifle on the table, keep looking around him.

Unfortunately there wasn't something he could do to keep his mind busy. The house was damaged, nothing was left, whoever had passed from there had took everything he could. The furniture were broken and dirty, the walls were filled with bedding cracks, no objects that could look interesting, and so he left his eyes roam all over the place, while his mind started to work by itself.

And so he thought, he thought about the surreal situation, about Abby out there alone, probably in another shelter house as this one, with her little leather back on her shoulders, her tiny fragile body shivering, for the cold or the fear, he couldn't tell. He saw Clarke too in his mind, she was dirty, covered in dust and blood, alone in a corner, some kind of knife in hands, trembling in rage.

He knew Clarke wasn't a soldier, but he also knew she was her mother and father’s daughter, and that was saying something. She was a tough girl, and cared for her life. Also he knew she had sneaked out for a reason, to find those women, to protect them, and he knew she was going to stay alive to be sure they could make it through.

The night kept quiet, when almost two hours had passed, and he was going to let the boy sleep without waking him up, his eyes caught something resting in a dark corner, right beside the door. He stood up, drown to it by curiosity, and knelt down, closing his hands around the object. At first he squeezed his eyes, trying to see something in the heavy darkness, then a ray of moonlight reflected on its glassy shape and he widened his eyes.

“Guys?” he snapped, without thinking, they both flinched, Raven snorted and blinked. “What? What?” she said, panting hard, raising her head, nudging by accident with her elbow in Monty's stomach, he hissed, she apologized. Marcus said nothing and turned the glassy bottle toward them. Their eyes widened when they could read the label on the bottle.

*Generic Antibiotic*

*Active ingredient: Amoxicillin / Clavulanate Potassium*

*Dosage: See accompanying prescribing information.*
Arkadia Central Hospital Property.

The air grew heavier and the silent kept hovering upon them, until Raven, with a broken voice, managed to whisper what they all were thinking.

“She has been here.”

Chapter End Notes

Still no beta, all mistakes are mine. I would love to thank all of you for keep reading, and i know is hard when Kabby are apart, but hey angst is beautiful when there is a happy ending, and since I am not a The 100 writer, but a fanficition one...well you already know there will be one!

Also, when the trio enters the house is the early morning of 4 November, Abby had left the late evening of 3. (i needed them to walk during the day because otherwise they could meet Abby, and nope not yet.)
Reunited

Chapter Summary

Bellamy and Octavia found themselves in a dangerous situation, while Abby will meet again someone she thought she wasn't going to see ever again.

3rd November – 04:30 pm

Bellamy

Location: Arkadia, Blacksmiths District

Days without food: Zero

Days without sleep: One

Health: Good.

“Watch out!” he whispered carefully, when he noticed that Octavia was almost diving her feet into a hole in the street. She snorted. “Damn it, is too freaking dark, if only we had a flashlight.” at that Bellamy shook his head. “A flashlight is too dangerous O. You know it!” he said, at that his sister mumbled something that sounded as “of course, whatever” and they kept walking.

He had decided to go outside to search for some food, while Abby was sleeping, going in circle around the house, so that if she had tried to sneak out he could see her. He also had ordered his sister to stay behind, but she had refused, and had followed him.
“Can't we go forward? There's nothing here.” she whispered, Bellamy shook his head. “We can't leave her alone, or she will try to escape, that's why you were supposed to stay behind.” he growled, at that she smacked him on the neck, he snorted.

“I'm tired of being left behind Bell, now shut up and keep moving!” with that she walked past him, fury in her blue eyes. “O. Wait for me, you don't know this place.” he said, while scanning carefully the perimeter. “Oh well, actually I do!” she said, and turned toward him, without stopping, waving in the air the map she had found in Abby's bag.

Bellamy froze. “Wait, is that?” she nodded, humming quietly, unfolding the paper. “I thought it could be useful.” she said and Bellamy huffed, approaching her. “O. you stole that from her?” he asked, even if it wasn't actually a real question. Octavia raised an eyebrow. “What? Now you are sorry for her? You wanted to kill her remember?” she said, while starting to study the map.

“That's not the same thing, I didn't know who she was, I still don't, but this” - he gestured to the map - “This is different O.” his sister looked up at him, and then rested her hands on her hips. “Different? Why? We are just survivors, and this could may be useful, don't you want to survive?” she asked him, smirking slightly.

“Yes, of course, but stealing?” at that she snorted. “Yeah because going around as scavengers, stealing food and medicines from the rubble isn't exactly the same damn thing?” at that Bellamy stiffened his back and swallowed. “No it is not, and you know it. We take what we need to survive in places were there's nobody, and we also are not the only ones.”

Octavia rolled her eyes. “Keep telling yourself that Bell if you want. We are still thieves but that's ok, that's normal. Besides, I guess this could help us survive, so is just as stealing food or bandages or whatever. Right?” she asked him, even if she wasn't exactly asking. Bellamy huffed and ran a hand in his dark hair. “I don't like this, we should go back.”

Octavia at that snorted and kicked in frustration a stone on the ground. “For god's sake Bell, you are unbelievable, we have a way to know where to hide, other places, shelters, even this freaking big X over here. It has to be something important right?” she said, Bellamy at that looked back at her, his eyes heavy.

“Yeah, it could mean that people are waiting for her there, people that could kill us at sight.” at that Octavia blinked and froze. “Why do you always need to be this kind of dramatic?” Bellamy chuckled bitterly. “That's how it works here, everything is... dramatic. And besides, I'm not always being dramatic.” he said, slightly offended. Octavia chuckled, looking at the map again. “Oh yes you are, trust me!”
“Hey, what's that supposed to mean?” he asked, approaching her. She raised her head toward him, an amused expression on her face, when suddenly her blue eyes fell behind his back and she froze, her body tensed. “O.?” he said, she swallowed and then managed a whisper. “Bandits!” at that his blood ran cold.

She instinctively tried to walk in front of him, but he pushed her down on the ground, when the shot whistled in the air, she was at his feet, and Bellamy felt the burning pang of the bullet sinking in his leg. “No! Bell!” she yelled, her eyes filled with tears, her voice heavy with terror. “O. run!” he yelled, falling on his back, she shook her head. “No. No! I'm not leaving you here!” she whispered, while crying quietly. “O. go, please; it's dangerous, save yourself!” he hissed, while pushing her away, but she was shaking her head, refusing to move away from him.

When he looked at his back, he couldn't see them, they were probably hiding somewhere, waiting to see if they were going to fire back. “Ok, O. take my gun!” he said frantically to her. She sniffed. “Wait what?” he took the gun from his belt and gave it to her. “Hold this, and hide somewhere, please do that for me, please!” she kept shaking her head, when another shot reached them and a bullet get lost in the rubble just behind them. Octavia screamed in fear, and Bellamy managed to push her faraway, so that she could hide behind a concrete column that was supporting the damaged building over them.

“Bell!” she yelled, but he gestured her to stay plastered against it, hiding. She was crying, and it was heartbreaking. Bellamy kept casting glances at his back, his heart hammering so fast in his chest, his fear for his sister was bigger than the one of dying himself, but he also knew that without him Octavia wasn't gonna survive.

He managed to crawl behind a pile of rubble, his legs pulsing, the adrenaline soothing the pain for now. From there he still could see the street from where the bandits were shooting, but couldn't see them moving in the dark. “Bell?” Octavia's voice reached him, cracking and shivering as a leaf. He swallowed and nodded at her. “It's gonna be ok O.” he said, his eyes kept shifting from her to the street. “I'm so scared Bell...” she choked out. Bellamy closed his eyes and pursed his lips, feeling guilty.

He was feeling guilty, because this amount of pain and terror wasn't fair, his sister had been through so much already. Always forced to hide under the floor, because they were a poor family, and his mother had done everything she could to keep them alive, and so sleeping with the soldiers around was one of the best ways to make sure they had some food, water and blankets. But a younger girl? Showing to them Octavia was as inviting them to take advantage of her, to use her as exchange goods, and neither he nor his mother were gonna let that happen.

So she had lived in a hole under the floor for mostly every instant of her life, because soldiers always came inside without warning, dragging their mother outside to satisfy their needs at every hour. Octavia had never be able to go outside, because they were camped few meters from their
And so Bellamy felt guilty everyday a little more, he had felt guilty when she had to starve for
days, he had felt guilty when she had cried over the dead body of their mother, he had felt guilty
every second of every day because he couldn't protect his sister the way he wanted to. And right
now, he was bleeding, feeling weaker with every second that passed, the adrenaline fading, the
pain pulsing and biting in the hole in his flesh. He was dying and couldn't protect his sister.

“Bell? Are they gone?” she asked, her voice trembling, she was clenching her hands around the gun
as if it was the only thing that was keeping her alive, but also as if it was at the same time, the most
threatening thing ever. Bellamy shook his head, and casted a heavy look at his back. “They are
waiting, probably to see if we have guns.” he said, and then swallowed. “O. throw that to me.” he
said, looking at the gun in her hands.

“Why? What do you want to do with it?” she asked him, and he closed his eyes, inhaling deeply. “I
will distract them, so you can go back in the shelter house, you have to lock yourself in there, and if
Abby is there, stick together, ok?” he said, lowering his voice as best as he could. Octavia shook
her head. “No. I'm not leaving you, no!” she was crying again, shivering.

“You have to survive O. Please!” he whispered, his own voice cracking, his black eyes filled with
tears. She sobbed, choking in her tears. “Not without you big brother, no!” at that he shook his
head, feeling overwhelmed with lots of emotions, the regret, the sorrow, the heavy sadness that was
pressing on his heart, the enormous love for his sister that was running in his veins, keeping him
still lucid somehow. “O. I love you and I want you to live, please, you have to do what I say, do
that for me!” he said, holding out a hand. Octavia looked at the gun and squeezed her eyes shut.

“I can't live without you.” she whispered, her voice trembling. Bellamy swallowed back a sob. “Of
course you can. Besides, I'm not dead yet.” he said, smirking, trying to at least. Octavia kept
staring at him. When another shot reached them, and another bullet hit the ground between them,
she flinched and covered her head in her hands. “O. please, you have to go!” he said, she was
sobbing, but then looked at him.

Her blue eyes sinking into his memory, her black hair plastered with sweat on her face, her tiny
hands, her face, her whole being, everything was marking itself in his heart, under his skin. She
threw the gun at him and it landed on his lap. He took it, sniffing, looking up at her, she was curled
up against the concrete behind her back, her eyes watery. “May we meet again.” she whispered.
Bellamy sniffed loudly, few tears escaped his black eyes. He nodded, and then gesture her to go
away, then he turned and aimed to a wall, where probably the bandits were hiding.

“Now O. Go!” he yelled at her, and heard the sound of her moving away on the rubble, running as
fast as she could away from him, and he pulled the trigger, the bullet whistled and the sound
echoed around him.

His hand gripping the gun with strength, while his eyes were blurred by the tears. He couldn’t dare to look at his side, to see Octavia running away, he couldn’t because otherwise he would brake even more. And so he waited, until the bandits responded at his shot.

They did.

Bellamy bowed his head, few debris and chippings fell in his hair, in his eyes. He snorted and then looked again, and saw one of the bandits running toward him, he inhaled deeply and his hand stopped trembling.

He pulled the trigger. The sound of the bullet flying in front of him sank in his ears, and then the body of the bandit fell on the ground, motionless. Bellamy closed his eyes and swallowed, tears still rolling down his cheeks.

Then he opened them again and waited to see how many of them were still alive, ready to kill them all if needed. But nobody was coming outside, he kept waiting, his eyes shifted for a moment where Octavia had been before, but she wasn't there anymore. Then the sound of a muffled scream reached him and he aimed again in front of him, toward the street, his eyes glued to the rocky wall.

Then to his surprise and horror, Octavia appeared from behind it, she was too faraway to see if she was injured, but she was running toward him, and when she was close enough his eyes caught something he had always hoped to never have to see.

Blood, lots of blood. Her blue jacket was soaked in dark blood, her face had drops of it plastered on her skin, her eyes were wide open, she was panting heavily. She wasn't trembling anymore, at least not in fear, her right hand was still gripping a stone, covered in the same dark blood, that was covering her hand, hiding completely her pale skin from view.

“O...” he whispered, looking at her, she was silent, then she swallowed, looked at the hand that was still gripping the stone, and let it fall down. She then knelt down in front of him. “I'm gonna help you stand now, ok?” she said, her voice was sharp, cold, and felt completely unfamiliar. Bellamy swallowed several times, his heart beating so fast in his chest that it was almost painful.

“O, what have you done?” he asked her, his voice weak. She looked at him for a moment, but then she clenched her jaw, and sneaked one arm under his back. “I survived.” she said only, pulling him
on his feet. Bellamy hissed in pain and she stopped. “Come on Bell, you can do it.” she whispered, and he pushed himself up from the ground, using the functional leg. He groaned when the pain of the hole in his leg reached every nerve in his body.

“O. Please, go and save yourself.” he whispered. Octavia shook her head adjusting him on her, supporting his weight on her tiny body. “Not gonna happen Bell. Besides, they are all dead.” she said, and Bellamy didn't want to think about what that meant.

Because it was pretty clear what she had to do, it was obvious from the way her eyes were wide open, staring at her surroundings with a new kind of fire in them. It was obvious in the blood that soaked her clothes, that marked her skin. It was obvious in the way her voice wasn't trembling anymore in fear, and sounded cold and sharp, so different from the one he was used to.

She had killed. And this was already changing her, marking her forever.

He couldn’t dare to say another word, while his sister kept supporting him, walking as fast as she could toward their shelter again, and right when he thought she was gonna let him fall, since she was having problems at breathing properly and at walking straight, the sound of steps in the dark startled them both. She froze, the hand around his waist squeezed his jacket. Her blue eyes snapped back up, and he felt the need to throw up when saw that she didn't look afraid to die, but mostly... ready to kill again.

“O. you have to let me go and run away.” he whispered, the steps approaching. “I'm not gonna leave you.” she said, and then pulled him with her against a wall right at their side. Bellamy suppressed a groan, his wound pulsing in pain. She left him on the ground, and then shifted forward, he grabbed her arm, stopping her in her tracks.

“O. don't!” he said, his voice a low plead, she looked back at him, her eyes wide open, her teeth clenched, and then he noticed that she was already gripping another stone. “I will save us both, don't worry.” she said, and then turned her head toward the sound of the steps.

Bellamy swallowed with effort, and right when a shadow appeared out of the dark, and his sister had started to rise from the ground, the stone in the air, he screamed. “O. no!” at that the shadow froze and Octavia looked back at him, furious eyes. She hissed at him something that he couldn't get, when suddenly the shadow talked.

“You two.” and he immediately recognized the smoky voice. “Abby?” he managed to whisper. Octavia lowered the stone, but her muscles were still tensed, ready to fight. “You.” Abby walked in the light, her brown eyes sharp, her face a mask of anger.
"You stole my map." she hissed, her low voice reverberating in her chest. Bellamy swallowed. "Abby I'm so-.." but Octavia stopped him. "I did. I stole it, not my brother." at that Abby looked at her, the anger not fading, she held out a hand. "Give it back to me." she ordered, her voice sharp, heavy. Octavia pursed her lips. "Listen, it wasn't my intention to just go away with it ok?" she said, and Abby snorted.

"I don't wanna hear it, give it back to me and then leave me alone." she said. Suddenly she didn't look afraid anymore, she didn't look scared to death, and wasn't trembling with the fear of dying. Bellamy couldn't tell what had changed, but it seemed as if that map was too important for her, the kind of importance that could turn the fear into a burning rage.

"O. give it back to her, come on." Bellamy said, Abby lowered her eyes toward him, and when was about to look at his sister again, she saw the hole in his leg. "You're injured?" she asked him, her eyebrows furrowing. Bellamy coughed. "Yeah, pretty much. But I'm gonna be ok." he said, while swallowing several times. Abby sighed and he saw how her eyes shifted from him to his sister, as if she was pondering on what to do.

Then she snorted and knelt down in front of him. "Hey what are you doing?" Octavia snapped, but Abby threw at her a sharp look. "I'm gonna save his life." she said, already moving her hands on his leg. Octavia frowned. "You know about these stuff?" she asked her, kneeling down herself. Abby smirked bitterly. "I'm a doctor, so yes." she muttered, while snatching open the fabric of his pants.

"And you didn't said this before because?" Octavia said, looking at her in disbelief. "Because it wasn't any of your business." Abby said, and Bellamy could tell that even if she was trying to sound stern and cold, her tone was already turning into a new one, kinder, worried, compassionate. "Is it that serious?" Bellamy asked her suddenly. Abby looked at him, and shook her head. "I don't know yet." she said.

Then took her bag out of her shoulders. "I need to clean it, but I don't have much with me." she said, while rummaging her hand in the bag. "Well at least we left you all of your stuff." Octavia muttered, at that Abby glared at her, and Bellamy did the same, but she ignored them both, sitting on the ground in front of him, right at Abby's side. "Shouldn't we go back to the house?" Bellamy asked her, but Abby shook her head. "The less you move the better, so I will have to work here."

Then she looked at them both, scanning with her eyes their clothes. They were both dirty, covered in dust from the rubble where they had to hide during the shooting. She huffed and then took off her jacket, and lifted her shirt, right under the line of her breasts. Bellamy adverted his gaze respectfully. While Octavia kept looking at her, not feeling ashamed in doing so. He heard the sound of the fabric of her shirt when she torn it apart, and then looked back at her.
She was leaning again over his wound, and was now tiding the piece of shirt around his leg. "This will stop the bleeding for now." then she took a bottle from her bag. "What's that?" asked Octavia, looking at her hands carefully. Abby turned the bottle toward her. "Alcohol" she read on the label. Abby nodded. "Yes, to prevent infections, also to clean the wound, so I can see where the bullet is." she said, at that Bellamy shivered. "Wait, are you gonna pull it out?" he asked, Abby looked at him.

"Well, if it's not too deep I can try." she said, and Bellamy swallowed. Octavia looked at him and her cold expression melted with empathy. "It's gonna hurt him?" she asked, Abby froze for a moment, then opened the bottle and poured some of the liquid on her hands, the acrid smell of it reached Bellamy's nose and he grimaced. "I'm not gonna lie, it will hurt as hell." she said, and without wasting another second, she poured a bit of alcohol on his wound.

It was excruciating, Bellamy shut his eyes closed, his body started to shiver, the pain biting at his flesh as a ravenous creature. Octavia hissed for him and Abby kept pushing. Then she stopped. "Here." she muttered, then her index finger dived deeper in his flesh. Bellamy screamed, because at that point he couldn't suppress it anymore, and felt the warmness of Octavia's hand on his cheek. "Hey Bell, It's gonna be ok." she whispered to him.

"Stay still Bellamy." Abby said, while her fingers kept pushing, and then pulling. "Come on, come on..." he heard her muttering, when his eyes started to roll at the back of his head, his body trying to escape the pain by fainting, he felt her withdrawing. "Here, done, it's out!" she said, and he blinked, his leg was pulsing numbly, he couldn’t sense the pain as before anymore, everything was pulsing and burning, and he was feeling suddenly heavy, tired, weak.

"Ok, now what?" Octavia asked her, while stroking his cheek, Bellamy wanted to say something too, but his tongue was heavy in his mouth and he gave up, closing his eyes. "Hey Bell?" Octavia said, slapping tenderly his cheek. "Bell?" at that he opened his eyes again, his vision blurred, he could recognize just the shifty dark shadow of Octavia in front of him.
“Bell? Abby what's going on?” he heard her asking. He couldn't see them now, his eyelids were heavy and opening them was suddenly too hard. “He lost too much blood, I need to put pressure on the wound. Help me here.” she ordered, and he felt Octavia withdrawing from him.

After that everything went dark.

Abby

Location: Arkadia, Blacksmiths District

Days without food: One

Days without sleep: Zero

Health: Good

Blood.

All she could see now was blood, it was dark and warm, covering her hands. Beside her Octavia was panting, her eyes watery, her own hands following Abby's orders. “Ok Octavia now put pressure on it I need to sterilize something to use as a bandage.” she said, and then looked around her. Nothing was useful, every piece of fabric that she could see was dirty and useless, then she looked at herself, and sighing out she took the hem of her shirt and pulled it over her head. The cold breeze of the night hit her skin. She opened the bottle of alcohol and soaked wet the fabric with it.

“Ok now lift his leg,” she said, the girl sniffed and nodded, lifting her brother's leg from the ground. Abby tied quickly the shirt around the boys' leg, trying to fix it tight enough, but not too much so the blood could still flowing in his veins. “Ok now what?” Octavia asked, wiping away some tears from her cheeks, plastering some wet dust on her pale skin.
“Now we have to wait.” Abby said, at that the girl frowned. “Wait? Where? Here?” she asked her, gesturing to their surroundings. Abby sighed, taking a new shirt from the bag at her side, it was dark blue, ad had some holes in it, but it was all she had left, it smelled as her room in the hospital, it smelled as Clarke. She wore it quickly, shielding her torso from the cold breeze, clenching her jaw when new tears formed behind her eyelids. “You think we can carry him till the house?” asked Abby rhetorically.

Octavia looked at her brother, sniffing. “Do you think he is gonna wake up?” she asked her, her blue eyes fixed on his sleepy face. Abby sighed, she knew she couldn’t promise anything, especially where they were, if they were still at the hospital she could tell almost for sure that he was gonna survive. But there, in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by bandits, rubble, dirt, well... she wasn't able to promise anything.

“I hope so.” she then simply said, at that Octavia looked at her, and Abby could recognize in her eyes the understanding, also some kind of gratitude, as if not lying to her was as to put her on her same level, as an adult, not a kid anymore.

“I have some antibiotics too, we should give some to him to prevent more infections.” she said, and dived her hand in the bag. She took out from it all the bottles she could find but the one she was searching for wasn't there. “What...” she searched again, then huffed in frustration. “It's not here anymore, you took that too?” she asked suddenly with a sharp tone, Octavia blinked and looked at her, her eyes swollen, she wasn't paying attention to her. “What?”

Abby pursed her lips and sighed. “Have you took a bottle of antibiotics from my bag too?” she asked again. Octavia frowned, thinking, then shook her head. “No, why?” she asked her, wiping away some tears with the back of her sleeve. “Because apparently I can't find it anymore, and I'm sure I had it yesterday.” she sighed out, at that Octavia looked at her lap, shaking her head, toying nervously with the fabric of her bloody jacket.

“I'm sorry.” she said, Abby sighed. “It's not your fault apparently...” she said, trying to remember where she could had lost it. But Octavia shook her head again. “No I mean... for the map. I'm sorry.” she said, and Abby at that fell silent, looking at the girl in front of her. “I wanted just to find a safe place, for me and Bell.” she said, her voice cracking. “I just wanted us to survive.” Abby swallowed, and looked at the boy, unconscious on the ground, his skin pale, his black jacket soaked in his own cold sweat. He was still breathing but was weak, and seemed so fragile right now.

“I just thought that maybe that X was some kind of safe place, where we could stay till the end of...” she gestured around her, looking at the sky, it was still dark, some stars kept shining faraway from them, carrying the wishes of other survivors, a blue halo coming from the horizon warned her
that morning was approaching. “I know...” Abby whispered then, the girl looked at her, her bright blue eyes dark in the night.

“I'm sorry Abby.” she whispered again, and then, without warning, the girl crashed her body against her chest, her face pressed in the crook of her neck, her tiny arms wrapped around her waist. Abby closed her eyes, the warmth of the girl against her tiny body made her shiver, she swallowed, the girl was sobbing. When she felt her starting to withdraw, she couldn't help herself and hugged her back.

Octavia flinched when Abby returned the intimate gesture, sobbing in her shirt, “I'm so sorry” she whispered and Abby had to close her eyes shut with strength to prevent herself from crying out loud. She didn't know this girl, they weren't close, they weren't even supposed to be there together, but suddenly it didn't matter anymore, because she was just a girl, that wanted to survive the war, to protect herself and her brother. And Abby felt the sudden need to soothe her somehow, to help her.

Abby kept her in her arms, while Octavia kept consuming all of her tears against her chest, soaking her blue blouse. Her hands instinctively patted the girl on the head, stroking absentmindedly her black hair, and when she closed her eyes again, she pictured a different girl in her arms. Same blue eyes, but long blond hair, lower voice, different smell.

At that she felt a tear rolling down her cheek.

“It's gonna be ok.” she whispered, while hot tears burned a path on her cheeks. Octavia shivered, sobbing. “It's ok Octavia, it's ok.” she kept whispering, rocking on herself, lulling the girl in her arms, while Octavia kept sobbing quietly. After what felt as just few minutes, but probably had been more than that, Abby opened her eyes again, the girl was motionless in her arms, and Abby asked herself if she had fallen asleep, she started to withdrew but the girl tightened the grip around her.

“Don't move.” she hissed, and Abby swallowed, widening her eyes. “What is it Octavia?” she asked, the girl shifted slightly, so she could peek better from over her shoulder. When she talked now, her hot breath stroked her neck. “I see someone walking, he's coming toward us.” she said, and at that Abby shivered.

“We can't move him yet, he's still unconscious.” said Abby, casting a glance toward Bellamy, motionless on the ground, his chest rising and falling slowly. She hadn't even realized that night had passed, and that the weak morning light was now surrounding them.
How long have they kept that embrace for?

“I know, I'll take care of him, let him come closer, I already took a stone, I'll take care of him.” she whispered, sharply, mechanically, Abby blinked and tried to look at the girl's hand, but Octavia held her strongly against her chest. “Don't move.” she hissed.

Abby remained still then, waiting for what was coming. When suddenly a voice, that she surely wasn't expecting, reached them.

“Abby?”

She widened her eyes and turned, ignoring Octavia's protests.

“Marcus?”

He froze in his tracks, his eyes widened, she suddenly felt the urge to cry.

What was he doing there? She asked herself. Even if she knew the answer already.

“Abby who is that man?” Octavia muttered beside her. But Abby didn't answer.

“Abby what are you doing?” Octavia asked, when Abby rose on her feet without answering.

“Abby?” Octavia yelled this time, when she started to run toward the motionless man few feet from her.

“Abby?” Octavia said again, but she wasn't listening anymore, and without even knowing what she was doing, without even asking herself why she was feeling that urgent need, she crashed herself against his chest and closed her arms around his neck.

“Marcus.” she whispered, closing her eyes, sniffing in his scent instinctively.
“Abby...” he whispered back weakly, but then with a strength that she had never experienced before, he hugged her. He hugged her as if by doing so he could glue her to him, he hugged her with such a force that he lifted her from the ground, and this made her smile.

He pressed her so fiercely against him that for a moment Abby felt pain in her bones, but she squeezed him even tighter, and then realized that she was crying. Her tears were soaking his black jacket, and a voice in the back of her mind reminded her that he was injured, and that she probably was now hurting him, but she didn't care, and from the way he was holding her, diving his face in the crook of her neck, he didn't care either.

“You're alive.” he whispered, his hot breath sneaking into her shirt, stroking her skin, she shivered and nodded, and kept hugging him, with all of her strength.

It was ridiculous how good she was feeling in that moment. Hugging a man she disliked so much. But he felt familiar, he still smelled as fresh bandages and antiseptic, he smelled as gunpowder and pine shampoo.

He smelled as Marcus and it felt familiar, and Abby wasn't asking herself any more questions, because it didn't matter in that moment, she was feeling safe and she didn't care how she was supposed to feel, she cared about how she was actually feeling.

“You're alive.” he whispered again, and this time she answered. “I am.” she whispered, and at that felt his left hand diving in her hair, pressing her head against his shoulder, while the other one squeezed her waist against his solid body.

“Sorry to interrupt the cute moment, but who the fuck is this man Abby?” Octavia suddenly snapped.

At that Abby chuckled absentmindedly, and withdrew, at least tried to do so, but Marcus was still holding her tight, when she pushed a little stronger, he let her free to move again. She blinked, adverting her eyes without looking at him, and turned toward the girl.

“Octavia this is-” but she froze when noticed the gun that was shining in the girl's hand, pointed toward them both, her eyes shifting with fury from her to him. “Octavia what are you doing?” she asked, and then felt Marcus' hand on her arm, pulling her toward him.

“Who the hell is this man?” she asked again, approaching them, her gun raised. Marcus raised a
hand in front of him, keeping Abby close to him, one arm wrapped around her, pressed against her chest, she was feeling slightly out of breath.

“Put that down, I'm not a threat.” he said, and Abby at that looked at him, he was looking at Octavia with wide eyes, his jaw clenched, then he sensed her eyes on him and looked down. When their eyes met for a moment time froze. He was looking at her with such an intense wonder, and fear, and something else so deeply sank into his black irises that she couldn't name,

She blinked and turned toward Octavia again. “Octavia, put that down, he isn't a threat.” she said, Octavia shook her head. “Who is he? I thought you were alone.” she hissed, her tone betrayed her stern expression, she sounded hurt.

“I was Octavia, I swear I didn't know he was coming after me, please Octavia you have to trust me he isn't a threat, he is...” then she turned toward him again, he was staring at her and she suddenly realized what she was doing, where she was.

In Marcus Kane's arms, she was plastered against his warm chest, she had cried in his neck, she had also smelled him, sniffing at his scent, feeling safe, at home.

She withdrew immediately, widening her eyes, and he flinched, grabbing her by the arm. “Abby no what-” but she threw him a cold stare, his mouth fell shut, then she turned again toward Octavia. “He is just a guard Octavia. He is one of the soldiers that were outside my hospital. I didn't tell you before because I didn't know if I could trust you, I sneaked outside the city's hospital few days ago because I need to find my daughter, nothing else, you have to believe me, he wasn't supposed to follow me.” she said, approaching the girl.

Marcus was silent behind her. “Why are you here?” she asked at him directly, Abby turned toward him, biting at her lower lip. Marcus blinked and cleared his throat. “I wanted to make sure Abby was safe.” he said, and his eyes shifted from Octavia to her, at that Abby adverted her gaze and focused her attention back on the girl.

“He is telling the truth, trust me Octavia, put that down.” she said, now she was so close she could almost touch her. Octavia looked at her, her blue eyes fixed on hers, Abby smiled. “Trust me, it's gonna be ok.” she whispered, and at that the girl lowered her arm.

Abby left out a breath she didn't know she was holding, and closed her eyes, then smiled. “Thank you, And besides, now we have two more hands to carry your brother back home.” she said, Octavia blinked. “You want to show him the shelter?” Abby was about to respond when Marcus reached them, resting behind her, his body heat sneaked into her shirt.
“Actually... I think we've already found it.” he said, resting a hand on her shoulder, Abby frowned and turned toward him. “We?” she asked. Marcus bowed his head in what seemed to be shame and then swallowed.

“Abby I-” but then someone else's voice echoed behind him.

“Abby!” and at that she widened her eyes even more, Raven Reyes was limping toward her, the crutches under her arms crashing loudly on the ground. Abby couldn't help herself even this time and rushed toward her. Raven was limping fast, a bright beautiful smile on her lips, she crashed herself on Abby's chest, leaning all of her weight on her body, the crutches falling on the ground.

Abby didn't even flinch and supported her weight immediately. “Raven...” she whispered, the girl was laughing in her hair, while some tears were rolling down her cheeks. “It's so good to see you again Doc.” she said, holding her tight. Abby closed her eyes and plastered the girl against her, diving one hand in her deep black locks.

“What the hell are you doing here?” she said, and at that Raven laughed bitterly, withdrawing so that she could look her in the eyes. “You asked me to come remember?” she said, at that Abby wiped away a tear from her bronze skin. “You did it Raven.” she whispered, they both knew what she was talking about. Raven nodded. “You were right. I can still be useful.” she said, and then smiled, hugging her again.

Abby was feeling overwhelmed, first Marcus, and the weird need to hug him close, now this stubborn sassy girl, hugging her with such a tenderness that made her feel weak on her legs.

“Abby!” at that she blinked and turned, behind her Octavia was kneeling on Bellamy, that was slowly waking up, coughing. Abby turned toward Raven and then to Marcus, he approached them and helped Raven back on the crutches.

“Bell? Hey how are you feeling?” Octavia started to ask him frantically, Abby rushed toward them and forced Bellamy back on the ground, he was trying to stand up, without success. “Easy Bellamy easy, don't put that kind of pressure on the wound, lay down.” Octavia was smiling, but her eyes were glassy with tears. “He's going to be ok right?” she asked, already forgetting about the two strangers, the gun she had been holding resting beside his brother, on the dirty ground. Abby smiled. “Yes, if we take him back inside.” at that Octavia's smile faded and she looked behind Abby, where Marcus and Raven was staying, looking at them in silence.
“Trust me, they are good people.” Abby whispered, at that Octavia looked at her deeply, studying her. “What if we are the bad ones?” she said in a broken whisper, at that Abby inhaled deeply and then smiled. “I saw bad people Octavia, you aren't one of them.” she said, and at that felt the warmness of a new hand on her arm, she turned and saw Bellamy looking at her.

“Thank you.” he whispered, meaning it for saving his life or for saying that to his sister, she couldn't tell. Abby smiled and nodded, suppressing some tears. “Come on, we have to go.” she said, standing up, wiping away some dust from her pants, turning toward Marcus. “Could you help us carrying him inside? We're lucky that we haven't met any snipers yet, we should move.” she said.

Marcus said nothing, but his eyes lingered on her while he walked in front of the boy, then he lowered his gaze. “You're lucky you met her.” he said to Bellamy, he looked up at him and then at her, Abby smiled and he smiled back. “I know sir.” he said, recognizing the uniform, addressing him as a soldier.

At that she looked at Marcus again and saw that he was staring at her, and in that exact moment, his black eyes fixed on her, didn't made her feel uncomfortable, far from it, she was feeling warm and at home, again that feeling she wasn't supposed to have around him. She shook her head and looked back at Bellamy. “Ok, let's go, come on.” she said, and then started to approach him.

“No, let me do that Abby.” said Octavia, stopping her, the girl was already moving behind her brother's back, securing her hand under his shoulders, lifting him from the ground. “Are you sure?” Marcus suddenly asked her, Octavia glared at him. “Absolutely.” and at that they both lifted him from the ground.

Abby turned toward Raven that was patiently waiting behind her, they left them move forward, with the daylight it was easy to see where they were going, that also meant they were exposed, but Abby shook the feeling away, shaking her head and blinking, and turned toward Raven.

“Let's go.” she whispered, the girl smiled. Abby gathered her bag and secured it on her shoulder, then started to walk side by side with Raven, following the others. “Who are these people Abby?” Raven suddenly asked her. Abby blinked and turned toward her. “Just other two survivors.” she said, smiling. Raven said nothing, nodding slightly, smiling at her and leaning a bit, her head brushed Abby's cheek, she took advantage of it and kissed her on the hair. The girl giggled.

Luckily for them the house wasn't too faraway. They walked around a block of houses, surpassed the wall of the backyard, and then found themselves in front of the wooden door again. Marcus kicked it two times with his boot. The door opened, to Abby and Octavia's surprise.
“What the-?” then from the inside a dark haired boy peeked outside. “Abby?” he said in awe as soon as his eyes met hers, Abby blinked. “Monty?” they shared a bright smile, when finally Octavia snorted.

“Yeah ok, that's pretty cute, can we just go inside now? Not to be rude, but he's heavy.”

Abby blinked and nodded, while Monty withdrew, letting them through. Octavia and Marcus carried Bellamy on the sofa, and lowered him on it carefully. “Lift his leg, so the blood will keep flowing.” she said, while closing the door behind her back once everyone were inside.

She then turned toward Monty, whom was silently looking at her, she smiled and then, without asking for permission, approached the boy and hugged him tightly. “It's so good to see you again.” she whispered, and sensed the initial uncertainty of the boy, but then he grew more confident and hugged her back, nuzzling in the crook of her neck. “It's good to see you again too Mrs. Griffin.” he said, at that she chuckled. “Call me Abby.” she whispered, withdrawing and stroking the boy's cheek.

At that the boy smiled and nodded. Abby inhaled and cleared her throat, then her eyes roamed over the people around her. Raven was looking at her with watery eyes, sitting down on a chair, relaxing her tensed body. Octavia was stroking her brother's forehead while he was silently falling asleep again, ignoring the rest of them. Marcus was staring at her in silence, she adverted her gaze and then frowned, looking at Monty again. “That's all of us?” she asked, swallowing loudly.

Monty pursed his lips. “He wanted to come, but...” Abby at that raised her hand. “I know. I asked him to stay back.” she managed to whisper. And it was true, she had left Jackson a letter where she clearly ordered him to stay behind, to take care of the patients, to have faith in her. Stay safe. She had wrote, don't come after me, and she meant it, she wanted him safe, she wanted someone behind to fix what she had left broken.

But she also had hoped, in the deepest corner of her heart, that he was going to disobey her, following her. Because she was being selfish, because right now she wanted to hug him too, she wanted to hug Clarke, she wanted to hug all the people she had ever met and, some more than others, had loved.

Those few days out there had already consumed her, sinking into her the fear, the sadness, the heavy realization that it was true, it wasn't a bad dream, it was actually true, all they had left were rubble and debris, broken dreams and false hopes. It was overwhelming and she was already exhausted.
But she couldn't stop, not now, not ever. She needed to keep up, for Clarke, for every wish they had made upon the shooting stars in the Arkadia's sky during the past months, for all the times she had promised her that this was going to end and that they were going to rise and live again. She had to keep up. She had to survive, she had to save her daughter.

Suddenly she felt dizzy, her head spinning, she lost her balance, but in a split second two big steady hands were behind her back, supporting her weight. “Abby?” it was Marcus of course, his low rich voice stroked her ears, his breath warmed her sweaty skin. “I'm ok.” she said, withdrawing, he felt her rejecting his touch and stepped back, but stayed close enough to support her again if needed.

“Hey Abby, you need to eat something.” Raven said suddenly, Abby chuckled bitterly. “Yeah...” then she took the chair the girl was offering, and then rested her head in her cupped hands, upon the table. “Here.” the girl whispered, a piece of dry meat in hands, Abby smiled weakly and took it, staring at the brown piece of food in her palm. “Eat.” Raven said, raising an eyebrow, at that Abby managed a smile and chewed on the gummy meat. “It's pretty disgusting, but it's something.” Raven said, smirking.

Abby hummed and kept eating it slowly. Suddenly she felt as if everyone were looking at her, she blinked, looking around herself. Apart from Bellamy, that was sleeping in his sister arms, everybody were indeed staring at her. She cleared her throat. “Guys, stop staring.” she said, Raven smiled, Monty bowed his head, blushing, while Octavia kept staring, her eyes sharp. Behind her she could sense Marcus hadn't stop looking at her either.

“How are you?” asked Raven suddenly, Abby blinked and looked up, taking a sip from a bottle water Monty had just left beside her on the table. “Good.” she said, nodding, swallowing the warm liquid down her throat. Raven sighed. “Yeah, I can see that.” she said, tilting her head. Abby sighed out and smiled. “I'm good Raven, as long as I'm alive, I'm good.” she said, nodding. “I'm glad we've found you.” Raven said, reaching for her, stroking her knuckles with her warm hand. Abby looked down, and pursed her lips, suppressing back a sob. “I'm glad too.” she managed to choke out.

“Hey, you're bleeding.” Monty suddenly said, at that Abby frowned, looking at her body, searching for a scratch or a wound somewhere, then looked up again and saw that Raven was frowning, looking behind her back, Abby turned. Marcus was touching his shoulder, his fingers now covered in dark red blood. “Oh...” he said, at that Abby swallowed and stood up, approaching him, her eyes focused on his shoulder.

“I'm ok Abby.” he said immediately, she threw him a sharp glance and looked at his shoulder, “Follow me.” she muttered then, tilting her head to a door that was few feet from them. “I'm fine.” he said again, Abby opened the dirty damaged door she had found last night, when searching for her map, that opened to a little broken bathroom. “You're bleeding, you're not fine.” she said,
entering the room without waiting for him.

Marcus

Location: Arkadia, Blacksmiths District

Days without food: Two

Days without sleep: Two

Health: Injured. Recovering.

He sighed out and walked behind her, casting a last glance toward the kids in the room, Raven nodded toward him, just as Monty, while the girl named Octavia kept shifting her eyes sharply between all of them. He walked inside the tiny room and Abby turned toward him. “Close the door.” she whispered. He did as she asked, clearing his throat.

She raised an eyebrow, arms crossed in front of her chest. The gesture caused him a smile, he had missed that, she had been gone for only few days and he had missed her as if he hadn't seen her in months. He had missed her sharp, yet intriguing, glares, the way her mouth turned into those teasing smirks of her, the way her smoky voice stroked her words when she was talking to you in private. He had missed Abby Griffin for more than one reason, not that he was ready yet to admit all of them to himself of course.

“So? Are you gonna stop staring at me and start taking off your jacket or what?” she snapped suddenly, he blinked, feeling the warmth of a blush creeping on his neck, when she tilted her head toward the yellowish toilet beside her he nodded, sitting down. He kept quiet, while unzipping his jacket, suddenly the pain in his shoulder made its presence noticed, and his muscles froze, preventing him to take it off completely. He hissed and at that Abby approached him, helping him out of the heavy uncomfortable fabric.
“Gosh Marcus how couldn't you feel that?” she muttered, frowning at the soaked in blood bandage around his shoulder. He looked himself and suddenly felt dizzy, his blood was flowing down the red cotton, rippling down his arm, over his pulsing bicep. “It looks bad.” he said, at that Abby sighed and knelt down beside him. “Probably you just lost a stitch or two, you should be more careful.” she whispered, while diving her hands in her shoulder bag. When has she took it with her?

“Well, it wasn't me who threw herself in my arms to hug me.” he said, a wild smirk appearing in the corner of his mouth, feeling warm again all over his skin at the memory. At that Abby froze, adverting her gaze, was she blushing? “Yeah well, I was happy it was you and not a sniper. Also... Octavia was about to smash a rock on your head, I had to do something right?” she said, swallowing, taking a bottle from the bag, pouring a bit of the colorless liquid on her hands, it smelled acrid, alcohol he thought.

“Of course...” he muttered, she glared at him, sighing out, then leaned closer, her fingers lingering on his skin. “You have to take off your shirt too, I need to unwrap the whole thing.” she said, standing up, Marcus blinked and looked up, she was expressionless now, in her doctor mood. He nodded and started to lift the hem of his shirt. The good arm was free in few seconds, when he had managed to sneak out his head too, she helped him slipping out from the shirt completely, discarding it on a broken cabinet at their side.

“Let me see.” she whispered, resting her hands behind his back, pushing him forward, Marcus bowed his head, his hair brushed against her stomach, while she leaned herself more against him, he felt her warm hands pressing on his skin, her long hair brushed his skin, and he shivered slightly. “Sorry...” she whispered, withdrawing immediately, looking at her hands, Marcus shook his head. “No, no, don't worry, it wasn't your hands.” he said, she blinked then. “Your hair, I'm... I'm maybe a little ticklish.” he said, pursing his lips, feeling suddenly embarrassed.

Abby smirked at that, and raised an eyebrow, as if she was storing the information for later, then she cleared her throat and withdrew even more. “I see.” she whispered, while collecting her hair and fixing them in a loosened ponytail. “Let me try again like that.” she said, and this time her hair didn't touch him.

But it didn't mean that he didn't shivered. He couldn't tell if she didn't notice or decided to say nothing about it, but he shivered every time her fingers brushed his skin. When she unwrap the first part of the bandage he shivered, when her hands pushed him up again, pressing her fingertips on his chest to granting her access, he shivered, when she lifted his shoulder, careful to not make him feel pain, he shivered, when she leaned again on his back, her warm breath sneaking below the last bandage's layer, he shivered.

“Ok, now let me fix you.” she said suddenly, when the bandages were all off, Marcus' skin
prickled to life, finally able to breathe again. She knelt down, inhaling deeply when her hands touched his warm blood, the black stitches were all covered in blood but still attached to his skin, except for the last two the were barely still gripping at the sides of the hole in his flesh, little droplets of blood kept flowing down his tanned skin. “Damn it Marcus.” she muttered, and he looked at her, she was frowning, focused on her hands and his wound, a deep wrinkle forming between her eyebrows, he felt the need to stroked it away.

“I don't have a needle with me, nor a suture wire.” she cursed, at that Marcus blinked. “Actually I have them both.” he said, Abby blinked and frowned. “Wait, what?” he nodded. “Jackson gave them to me, just in case...” he whispered, at the mention of the man's name, Abby swallowed, her eyes trembled slightly, then she managed a smile. “That's good, were can I find them?” she asked him, he tilted his head toward the closed door behind her back. “My backpack.” he said, she nodded and stood up, leaving the room quickly.

Marcus released a breath as soon as he was alone again, then bowed his head, his hands were clasped together, his elbows resting on his knees, he swallowed, knowing that as soon as she was inside again, they had to talk about what they were gonna do now. He knew she had been probably too shocked to see him there, and that was why she hadn't yell at him in pure anger, throwing bitter insults toward him for following her.

Instead she had hugged him.

She had took him by surprise, practically shocking him. When he had walked outside the shelter house that morning, saying to Raven and Monty that he was going to come back quickly, that he just needed to check if she was maybe still around, he had hoped to find her. But when he had actually spotted her there, sitting on the ground, holding that stranger in her arms, he had froze, time had stopped, his blood had ran cold. He wasn't expecting to be that lucky, honestly... luck was a luxury during war, he knew that well, and finding Abby Griffin alive, in the middle of Arkadia, right behind the shelter where he and the others had decided to stop, well that was probably more than just luck, it was an actual miracle.

And so he had whispered her name, in disbelief, noticing the girl that was looking at him with fury eyes, her muscles tensed, but more interested in the woman with the long caramelized hair, the tiny trembling shoulders, the blue blouse he had recognized immediately as hers. She had turned and her eyes had widened in terror, then surprise, shock and finally something that looked like... relief. The girl had tried to get her attention, forcing her on the ground with her again, but Abby had stood up ignoring her, her eyes fixed on him, and how much he had felt them sinking into him, under his skin, twisting his stomach up and down.

She had then started to run, and he didn't know why, he didn't know what she was going to do, but a faraway tiny voice in the back of his head already told him that she was gonna crash herself against him. And she did. She had ran toward him fast and then had jumped on him, wrapping her
arms around his neck, knocking the air out of his lungs. In that moment his wound had stretched open, his shoulder had pulsed in pain, but he couldn't care less. Abby Griffin was hugging him, her nose was brushing the skin of his neck, and she was panting heavily in his hair, whispering his name. He had hugged her back, his arms wrapping themselves so strongly around her tiny body that for a moment, he thought he had broke her spine.

But she had tightened her grip, without stopping him, without flinching. And it had felt so right to be there in that moment, it had felt so good to hug her. He had never touched her before like that. During those six months he had took her by the arm dragging her between the hallways, squeezing her muscles under his palm to shut her mouth, pushing her by the shoulders, forcing her against the wall to look her in the eyes while arguing. She had pointed her fingers toward his chest, pushed him backwards when he had her trapped in a corner, smacking him on the chest, with pure anger and disgust.

But this had been completely different. It wasn't just the amount of skin, flesh and bones he could feel in his arms, it wasn't just the fact that he could lift her and drag her away with him if he wanted to, it wasn't just the warmness of her body sinking into his jacket, enveloping him completely. It was that this gesture, so intimate and delicate, yet strong and consuming, that gesture wasn't a warning, it wasn't a way to constrict, to make a point clear, it wasn't wrapped in anger and wrath, it was completely made of affection, relief, hope, also the faint ghost of happiness.

And it had felt terribly familiar.

He couldn't say when exactly, but his mind had somehow registered and memorized Abby Griffin's scent, he had trapped inside of his memory the fragrance of her skin. The acrid scent of antiseptic and disinfectant, the bitter one of her morning coffee, the fruity smell of the hand soap she used after every workday, and that day he had discovered a new one, the delicate, alluring, and incredibly enticing one of her body, the unique smell of her hair and skin, the one you could smell just if she allowed you to.

And he had lost himself in her, savoring the feeling of her body pressed against him, smiling at the pulsing and frantic beats of her heart against his chest, loosing himself in her scent, while his mind had kept saying she is alive, she is alive.

And in all of this, he had completely forgot the anger that had dragged him out of the hospital in the first place. The argument they had had when he had found out about her plan, the fear of loosing her that had froze him in his bed, forcing his eyes wide open, trapping his heart in his chest. He had felt betrayed and hurt, because he thought at that point, that he could trust Abby, he had thought that she wasn't gonna act as the usual reckless doctor, always acting against the law, refusing rules, acting just by her own will.
But he had been wrong, of course she wasn't gonna just bow her head and accept that she had to stay behind, of course she was going to sneak out and search for her daughter. Because that was who she was, because that was what she thought was right.

And he knew, deeply inside of him, that she had been right since the beginning. It wasn't fair to stick to those rules, it wasn't fair for a mother to be forced to suffer in silence, without knowing if her daughter was still alive. It wasn't fair, and he had asked her to just accept it, but she had refused, and had escaped that cage of law and rules, without fear, without regrets, facing the war all by herself, just to find her daughter.

In that moment, right when Abby was walking again inside the room, his backpack in hands, closing quietly the door behind her back, in that exact moment he got it.

Marcus Kane wasn't angry because of what she had done, Marcus Kane wasn't shocked because she had been that reckless.

Marcus Kane was proud of the woman she was, of the giant heart that tiny body carried inside, of the overwhelming and blazing strength and power she irradiated.

Marcus Kane was proud of Abby Griffin. And he suddenly felt the need to tell her.

“Ok, let me finish this.” she whispered, kneeling down again, opening his backpack, taking out from it the little med kit Jackson had gave him before he had left. Marcus was speechless, looking at her, without knowing exactly why suddenly he couldn't talk anymore.

But he couldn't help it. Abby Griffin was alive in front of him, her skin sweaty, her hair dirty, some dust covered her caramelized locks. Her brown eyes were focused on her hands, that were covered in blood, his blood. Her black pants were stained with dust and mud. Her tiny body tensed, her expression furrowed.

Abby Griffin was alive in front of him, and he suddenly couldn't talk anymore, because he had realized that he wasn't angry with her, he was just happy that she was still alive, and now he knew that she had been right since the beginning, and he needed to tell her that. He needed to tell her that she had been right, and that he was sorry.

“Abby...” he said, at the sound of her name coming from his lips, she looked up, the needle ready in hand, she hummed. He swallowed. Tell her, tell her. She was looking at him, waiting for him to
say something, but he remained silent.

He knew the words. *I'm sorry.* It was easy, three simple words, to begin with at least.

But Abby had sighed out already, leaning forward toward him. “I promise I will be quick, you will not even feel it.” she said, cleaning his wound with a cotton swab she had took from the med kit. Marcus nodded absentmindedly, cursing under his breath his luck of courage.

*Come on say it, it's simple, say to her that you are sorry. Be a man.*

“Abby I...” she didn't say anything this time, and kept working on his shoulder. “I...” at this she looked at him, stopping, tilting her head. “What?” she asked him, impatiently. And Marcus turned toward her, her brown eyes making him shiver. “I'm glad you're still alive.” he whispered eventually, she blinked, for a moment he thought she was going to cry, but then she just nodded. “I'm glad you're still alive too.” she whispered, and get back to work on his wound.

*Coward.*

“But you shouldn't have come.” she said suddenly, while starting to fix the first stitch back in place on his skin. Marcus flinched, from the shrill pain or her words, he couldn't tell. “Abby, you know I couldn't just stay behind.” he said, she pursed her lips, closing her eyes in impatient. “You shouldn't be here, nor you, nor them.” she said, sniffing slightly, wiping away few drops of blood from his skin. “Abby, they would come after you anyway, I didn't plan this.” he said, searching for her eyes, but she wasn't looking at him, her eyes were fixed on the last stitch. “It's too dangerous out here.” she said, her eyes watery, a ear rolled down her cheek, but she seemed to not care about it. Marcus felt the need to wipe it away for her, but restrained himself.

“This is exactly why we're here.” he said then, his voice low, his eyes soft on her. Abby at that looked up, her hands stopped moving. She started to breathe heavily, her chest rising and falling more rapidly, her nostrils opening and closing with effort. “I'm scared Marcus...” she choked out, her voice broke him into pieces.

Her eyes were filled with tears now, and her hands, covered in his dark blood, were trembling, he could feel the shivers running from her to him. “Abby...” he whispered, at that she closed her eyes, bowing her head, withdrawing from him, her body gave up, her hands left go of the needle and she completely forgot of his wound, just as Marcus.
He didn't asked himself if it was the right thing to do, he didn't thought that she could reject him, but he didn't honestly care, and so he just followed his instincts and knelt down himself, wrapping the trembling woman in his arms.

“I’m here Abby.” he whispered hoarsely, his voice breaking. Abby sobbed louder, her face hid against the inside of her forearms. “We’re gonna find her Abby, together.” he said again, she shivered, and inhaled with effort, her smoky voice trembling between her heavy sobs. “I-I'm so scared Marcus.” she said again, her voice fading to silence at the end of his name. He clenched his jaw and closed his eyes, tightening his arms around her.

At that he felt her hands touching the skin of his chest, as if she wanted to grip him there, but since he was shirtless she couldn't, so she sneaked her arms out from where their chests almost touched, and closed the gap between them, wrapping her hands behind his back.

“It's gonna be ok.” he whispered again, a hand was absentmindedly stroking her hair now, pressing her face even deeper right where his heart was beating frantically, she was definitely feeling it. She kept sobbing, until her body stopped shivering, and she started to just breath heavily on his skin, with every inhale and exhale his skin shivered. “Do you really think she survived till now?” she asked him suddenly. Marcus opened his eyes, he had been keeping them close the whole time, losing himself in that embrace, without even noticing. He cleared his throat. “You want the truth?” he asked in her hair, at that he felt how she tensed under his touch.

Then she withdrew slightly, pushing with her hands on his chest, looking up at him. Her brown eyes were red and swollen, her tears had tracked long path between the dust on her skin. She studied him for a long moment, and he let her, when suddenly she parted her lips. “The truth.” she said, her dark eyes sinking into his own.

Marcus thought about it for a long moment, without never withdrawing from her, keeping her in his arms, then he sighed out. “I hope so.” he said, because it was true, and at that her chin trembled, her breath caught in her throat, then she bit at her lower lip and nodded, stiffening her back. He took it as a clue to let her free again to move, but before he could stand up again, she had closed her arms around his neck. She was resting on her knees, he was sitting on the floor, his legs crossed in front of him. So she was taller than him and when she hugged him, her cheek pressed against his temple.

“Thank you Marcus.” she whispered in his hair, he was staring in front of him, while his lips were involuntary touching the skin of her neck. He could taste the saltiness of her sweat. “Always Abby.” he whispered back, at that she squeezed him one last time and then withdrew completely, standing up again. Sniffing and wiping away her own tears.

Marcus was still there on the floor, while Abby kept cleaning her face with the back of her sleeves.
He was motionless and speechless. The embrace out there, that had been shocking, overwhelming, powerful, strong and almost passionate.

But it had been instinctive, as if she couldn't help it, and he had felt how she had then realized what she had just did. He had seen on her eyes the realization sinking in. The way she had then withdrew, flinching away, as if the only thought of touching him could burn her skin.

But this, this had been different. This had been an intimate gesture, a different kind of hug. This time he had decided to hold her because she was scared, because she had seemed so fragile and powerless. He had felt the need to soothe her worried mind, to give her some kind of comfort, and she had let him do that, she had let him carry her broken heart for a moment, she had let him stroke her shivering soul.

And this had left him speechless, and had filled him with a warm feeling that he hadn't felt in years, maybe he had never felt it before. She was now collecting the needle from the ground, adverting her gaze, not looking at him, still sniffing, trying to recompose herself somehow. When she talked to him he was still staring at her, speechless. “Marcus?” she said again, waving a hand in front of his face. He blinked, clearing his throat.

“Mh?” she licked her lips, frowning. “You need to stand up, so I can wrap again the bandages.” she held out a hand to help him, and he took it, standing up. She then moved back again toward the cabinet and took the bandages, cutting the dirty part, clearing her throat. She wrapped them in silence, he kept looking at her without saying a word.

Once she was over she took a new shirt from his backpack and helped him wear it, he thanked her and took the jacket in his hands, following her outside the room. When they were finally back again with the others, Raven raised a curious eyebrow, when she noticed that Abby had been crying she glared at him, but Abby raised a hand and shook her head, ignoring everybody, loosing herself in making some kind of inventory of what they had been able to carry from the hospital.

Octavia was sleeping, sort of, on the sofa armrest, her head tilted to the side, her arm pillowed under her cheek. The injured boy was still sleeping. Marcus didn't know these two kids, but if Abby trusted them enough, he could do the same. So he sat down on a chair, far away from Raven, that was still glaring at him, and sighed out. When he closed his eyes, he fell asleep almost immediately.
**Thoughts**

Chapter Summary

Abby is alone with Marcus, and has the time to think about how she feels when she is with him.

Chapter Notes

Things will be slightly different from now on, I will still use more than one character POV in a chapter but will not add information about them or about the day, unless is necessary, this simply because I was confusing myself and I need to be more focused on the story itself!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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**Raven**

“I swear to God Marcus, if you'll say one more time “No, it's too dangerous” I'll have to kill you.” Abby was annoyed, not angry, angry didn't suit the woman in front of her now.

She was arguing with Kane, as always, because she wanted to go after Clarke that night too and he wanted her to stay behind, saying that he would take care of that. Of course she had immediately rose from her chair, rolling her eyes, raising her hands to the ceiling, muttering something that had sound as “For god's sake not again.” and from then, things had escalated quickly.

“No, no. I listened, I did, for months I followed your stupid rules, I obeyed you and your soldiers. But now, here, no, sorry but no Marcus. I'm not gonna stay behind, this time you can't force me back.” she said then, her throaty voice hissing at him.
“I'm not forcing you back, I just want you to stay safe.” he said then, lowering his voice even more, as if he wanted to whisper it just to her, but of course they could all hear that.

“I'm gonna be fine, I survived till now, I can keep doing that.” she growled, her voice reverberating with something that sounded as proud. At that Kane smiled, it had been fast and someone whom wasn't paying real attention could miss the way his lips had turn into a soft heartwarming smile, but Raven saw it, and it made her wonder.

“I know that you see yourself as... invincible now, but trust me, you aren't. You can die out there, and what kind of help can you be for your daughter if you die?” he said suddenly, approaching her very closely, his hands reaching for her shoulders. Abby was looking at him with wide eyes, her lips slightly parted, he touched her then, squeezing slightly the blue fabric of her blouse between his fingers.

“I can't stay behind.” she just whispered then, closing her eyes, sighing out. Kane's eyes at that softened and he approached her even more, his breath stroked her hair, Raven saw how his eyes shifted to one of Abby's caramelized locks, as if he wanted to put it behind her ear, stroking her cheek.

At that Raven felt the sudden and urgent need to advert her eyes from them. She knew that they were... well what they were to each other wasn't exactly clear, friends? No, that wasn't correct, they were many things, but for sure not friends. They... tolerated each other, but maybe more than just that. Whatever they were, in that exact moment, they seemed to be sharing something intimate, something that they weren't allowed to see.

Raven knew almost nothing about that man in front of her, she knew almost nothing about Abby too honestly, but her... she had been able to see her in her intimate moments, she had seen her crying when she thought nobody was watching. She had seen the burning fire behind her eyes when she had talked to her about how useful she could still be, as if by looking at her she could make her feel the hope she had toward her. She knew little about Abby, but that little was enough for her to like the woman.

About Kane though... well that was another story, she knew nothing more than what they had told her, that he was a stern, cold, somehow soulless soldier, that wanted everything to be in order, that didn't care for the others, but just for himself. If she had to be honest, right now he seemed everything but that kind of man.

Right now, watching them exchanging those glances, witnessing the way he held her gaze and tried to reassure her with a smile, she knew something between them was happening, something was shifting, finding a new place to grow in silence, hiding from view, probably not even them were aware of that.
And as if they had heard her thoughts out loud, Kane withdrew, clearing his throat, adverting his eyes, and Abby did the same, sighing out, wrapping her arms around her torso, as if to shield herself, casting a last glance at him, frowning slightly, as if he was behaving in a way that she didn't recognize at his, as if the man beside her wasn't the same man she had known till now.

“I need you to stay safe Abby, I came here to protect you.” he said suddenly, shaking both Abby and Raven out of their thoughts. Abby looked at him then, tightening her fits around her elbows, and right when she was parting her lips, to say something back, the girl named Octavia interrupted her.

“If you don't want her to be outside alone, I can go with her.” she said suddenly, standing up from the sofa where she had fallen asleep few hours before. “I want to help you find your daughter.” she said, her blue eyes shifted between the two of them, sharp and cold on Kane, softer and warmer on Abby.

“Octavia...” she whispered, but then the injured boy behind Octavia coughed and cleared his throat. “Mind your own business O. this has nothing to do with you.” he said, his voice hoarse and heavy. “Oh, shut up Bell!” she snapped, turning toward him.

“He is right kid, this has nothing to do with you.” said Kane then, looking directly at the girl, she pursed her lips, squeezing her fists, taking few steps toward him, her chin raised in defiance. “She saved my brother's life, I owe her. And if you are not going to help her, I will.” she growled. Kane looked at her in silent, clenching his jaw, his eyes held her gaze, Abby approached them and rested a hand on the girl's shoulder, at the touch she flinched, looking at the woman at her side.

“That will not be necessary, me and Kane will find an agreement. Right?” she said, directing her gaze toward him, he held the girl’s gaze for few more seconds then lowered his eyes toward the woman in front of him, and after a long quiet moment, where it seemed as if their eyes had been having some kind of... conversation, he nodded. At that Abby turned toward Octavia again, the girl tilted her head, her eyes uncertain, but then nodded and withdrew, sitting beside her brother again.

At that Abby sighed out, looking at Marcus, at the siblings on the couch, then at Raven and Monty.

“Ok, so... let's plan our next move.”
“The point is that we don’t know if it is still possible.” Monty said, looking up at the group of people around him. They were all sitting at the table, apart from Bellamy, Raven had asked him his name, introducing herself as well, he had smiled, shaking her hand, the boy was injured and needed to rest on the slightly more comfortable couch. They were all talking about what to do next, they needed to search for Clarke, but also to reach the shelter house. And when Octavia had asked, “So we will just go in this better house yeah?” Monty had raised his eyebrow, giving voice to the heavy doubt they all had.

“What do you mean?” asked him the girl, he sighed out, looking at Abby that was now chewing on her lower lip, focusing her attention on the map in her hands. Kane was beside her, looking at her with apprehension.

“I mean that anything could have happened during these months. The man whom left the map and the indications died four months ago, since then we heard nothing else about this... mysterious shelter house in the Rebels District.” he said, toying with the pen in his hands. He had managed to steal lots of stuff from the Hospital before they had sneak out.

“Well then, we must go and check, right?” Octavia asked, looking at them all. “Abby?” she called for her suddenly, but the woman said nothing and didn’t look up, still looking carefully at the map in her hands. “Mh?” she hummed, raising her head, blinking, Raven smiled sadly and looked at her with concern, she seemed lost in thoughts, the kind of thoughts that can keep you awake at night. Octavia swallowed, lowering her gaze. “You think we should check if the house is still there?” she asked with a tiny voice, Abby licked her lips, lost in thoughts, then nodded.

“Of course, is our only chance to get out of here.” she said then, at that both Octavia and Bellamy frowned. “Is still just a shelter house, isn’t it?” asked Bellamy, at that Abby smiled, her eyes on her hands, she put the map aside and rose from her chair. Kane kept looking at her, his eyes focused with intensity.

“Is more than that.” she whispered, wrapping her arms around herself, everyone in the room was looking at her now, and she must had sensed those eyes on her, waiting for her to explain herself, so she shrugged and looked up, sighing out.

“That house is just a cover, a decoy.” at that Raven tilted her head. “What do you mean?” she asked then, Abby smiled. “The house is functional that's true, water and electricity are still available, that's because it's in one of the farthest districts of Arkadia, where rebels have their base. Or at least this is what they made us think.” she said, looking at them carefully, to be sure they were listening.
“So, is not true? The rebels don't live there?” Octavia asked, at that she shook her head.
“Absolutely not. Rebels never lived inside the city Octavia. They wanted people to believe that, they also wanted the gouvernement to believe that.” she said, looking briefly at Kane, whom was frowning, focused on her words. “They live in a far better place than Arkadia.” Abby said, reaching a window that overlooked the street, night was approaching and the outline of the damaged houses outside where dark and threatening.

“So where do they live?” asked Bellamy then, his body heavy and tired on the couch, his eyes lucid and focused on Abby. She smirked. “That's a good question.” she walked away from the window and approached the table again. “I don't know.” she said, leaning her weight on the table, her hands pressed on the wooden surface.

“So you know that they live somewhere else, but without knowing where?” asked Octavia, frowning, confusion coloring her voice. “I know just what I was supposed to know Octavia. To find out more, we need to go here.” she said, pointing her finger to the black X on the map.

“But we don't know if we can reach that place, we don't even know if it's still there, they could have destroy it.” Monty said, looking at her, Abby smiled. “Maybe yes, or maybe not, either way we have to find out.” with that she withdrew from the table again, stiffening her back, arms crossed in front of her.

They all remained quiet at that, looking at each other with confusion, then Marcus turned his head toward her, looking up to meet her eyes. “You think Clarke is there, don't you?” he asked her, Abby looked down at him, expressionless at first, then Raven could see the ghost of a heavy sadness growing between her features. “I hope she did exactly what we were supposed to do together.” she said, and at that they all frowned.

“Together?” Raven asked suddenly, because she couldn't help it. Abby looked at her and smiled, nodding slightly. “We had a plan, we wanted to reach the house, find the information to get away of here and start a new life. We were supposed to leave as soon as the gouvernement had found a new doctor for the Hospital.” she said, looking down at Kane, that was looking at her with wide eyes, half in surprise half in something else Raven couldn't name.

“So, this was you and your daughter plan? Why she left without you then?” asked Octavia, whom wasn't aware of how exactly things had happened. “It's a long story.” said Abby, sitting down again, adverting Kane's eyes. Octavia nodded, bowing her head, getting that she wasn't going to have more information for now and then Raven smiled. “Ok then. Let's go find your daughter Abby.” she said, looking at her, the woman turned and smiled herself.
In her brown eyes Raven could see the spectrum of her emotions, the sadness, the fear, the anxiety, but also, faraway into a bright corner of them, she could spot the sparkling and burning fire of hope.

“Yeah, let's do that.”

Abby

“I don't like this.” Marcus hissed, walking very close to her. They had decided to start their trip by splitting up. Raven and Bellamy couldn't walk fast so they had to stay behind and wait for them to be back. Monty and Octavia took the safer road, searching for some food in the abandoned houses, because, as Marcus had said, he wasn't going to let them get killed that easily, and Abby and him were on the more exposed one, walking straight to where, according to the map, there was a chance to find a car, in what was once the Arkadia Wallmart parking lot.

They needed a vehicle if they wanted to take Raven and Bellamy with them, the girl had tried her best, but the crutches slowed her down too much, and the boy needed several days of rest before he could walk properly again, but he had been luckier than her and was going to heal completely. They had argued about the idea of being left behind, but then Abby had managed to convince them, especially Raven, by offering her to fix and take control of whatever they would have found. That had been enough for her to sit back, with a wide grin on her lips, already daydreaming about working on something mechanical again.

And so here they were, walking enveloped in the night's dark shadows, side by side, Marcus holding his rifle with anxiety while Abby kept scanning their surroundings carefully. “How long before we reach the parking lot?” he asked her suddenly. Abby blinked and looked at the map in her hands, flashing for a brief instant the blue pocket flashlight Monty had gave to her. “Two minutes probably?” she said, not really trusting her ability in reading maps.

Marcus stopped and looked at her, she blinked in the dark, she could see his face but not quiet recognize every detail of it, he approached her then, and she flashed the blue light toward him, he squeezed his eyes and snapped the map out of her hands, sighing he took the light, casting her a long look, and looked himself at the piece of paper. “Mh. Mh mh.” he kept humming at himself, ignoring her completely.
Abby raised an eyebrow, waiting for him to say something, then she snorted. “So? How long before we reach the promised land, captain?” she asked, tilting her head in amusement, he glared at her. “Surely not just two minutes, but more like... ten, fifteen? Also, we are going in the wrong direction.” he said, looking at her, flashing the light in her face. It was Abby whom squeezed her eyes in discomfort this time. “What do you mean with wrong direction? I've been using that map since I left, and I never get lost!” she said, taking it away from his hands, trying to at least, because he raised his hand, and since he was taller than her, she couldn't reach it anymore.

“Uh uh, now it's my turn to read this thing.” he said, stepping back, putting some distance between them, Abby raised an eyebrow. “Oh for real? So I suppose I'll have to take that in your place?” she asked him, pointing her index finger toward the rifle in his hands. Marcus looked down and chuckled bitterly. “Oh very funny Abby.” he said in a low voice, starting to walk again in the opposite direction of where they were going just few minutes before.

“Hey, give that back!” she hissed, walking fast behind him. He shook his head. “No, apparently you can't read a map as you're supposed to, and we can't get lost between these streets, it's better if I handle this.” he said, smiling at her from his shoulder, keep walking. Abby froze at that and crossed her arms.

“No.” she said, at that Marcus stopped himself and turned. “Excuse me?” he said, raising an eyebrow. Abby approached him, stepping into his personal space. “I said no. I will take care of the map, you of my protection, that was the deal.” she said, raising her chin, trying to compensate the height difference. Marcus at that blinked and frowned. “Abby, is just better for us if I lead the way, we can't waste time.” he said, bowing his head, looking at her deeply, lowering his voice.

It was a dark night yes, and she could see only what the stars or the flashlight showed to her, and since he had took that too she was left in the dark. But from this distance, and since her eyes had adjusted to the darkness, she could see his eyes better. His dark eyes, that she had been able to study in those past six months, weren't heavy on her now, and weren't sinking into her the cool and unpleasant feeling she had been so used to, no they were warm and steady, they were deep and she was feeling the sudden and urgent need to dive into them, loosing herself into their impossible thick blackness.

She blinked, shaking her head, clearing her thoughts, he frowned even more. “Are you ok Abby?” he asked her, and at that she looked back up at him,. And there it was again. That feeling of impossible warmness he had spread to her that same day on the bathroom floor, when he had wrapped his arms around her, lulling her and shielding her when she had been vulnerable. And she had let him do that, she had let him take care of her for a moment, he had held her there, using his body heat to soothe her worried mind, silencing her loud thoughts with his whispers, stroking her scared heart with his gestures.
And here he was again, looking at her with that careful attention, wearing that worried expression she was not used to see on him. She had to blink again and advert her gaze. “Abby?” he asked her again, his hand reached for her arm and he squeezed it, she looked up then, feeling the warm touch of his skin sneaking inside the blue fabric of her shirt. She shivered. “Are you cold?” he asked her, already taking off his jacket, Abby shook her head, stopping him. “No, no I'm fine.” she said, and he frowned. “You don't seem fine to me.” he said, and she smiled weakly. “I am, let's keep moving, come on.” she said then, adverting her gaze and starting to walk frantically, wanting to put more distance as possible between them.

It was surreal to feel like that around him, Abby was sure something was terribly wrong about that feeling. It wasn't just the fact that he seemed to care for her safety, she could easily take that as him doing his job, as a guard, a soldier, he was meant to protect people, especially civilians. But it was also that need she was feeling inside of her of holding him again, of being held by him at least one more time. It was different and it felt wrong. She knew it was definitely wrong.

Because she was supposed to hate him or at least to dislike him. He had took Jake away from her and Clarke, well it had been his superiors, the gouvernement, not him personally, but still.. he had followed the orders, he had been doing that since the beginning. He had brought rules and order, demanding them to follow his lead without asking questions, bowing their heads in respect without demanding more of what they were receiving. And how that had infuriated her, how that had made grow the anger inside of her.

And now, now what was different? Why was she suddenly feeling as if that didn't matter anymore? Why was she feeling as if this man that was now walking behind her, his heavy steps echoing on the rubble, wasn't the same man she had met six months ago?

*He is still Marcus Kane.* She said to herself. *He is still the same cold and stern man you know, nothing more.* She tried to sink those words in her mind.

But it was hard now to think of him as just that, because now she couldn't stop herself from seeing something more behind that uniform. She couldn't stop from taking a glance or two behind her back at him, to take a look at his face once again, to feel those black eyes on her for one more second. Because he made her feel safe. And it wasn't just because he had skills and a rifle in hand, a gun in his belt and years of military training on his shoulders. No, it was because of the way he had hugged her, it was because of the gentleness he had used with her on that bathroom floor, it was because of the way his eyes couldn't apparently stop staring at her, not to track her but to be sure she was still there, as if she could disappear at any second.

Marcus Kane made her feel safe, and if this wasn't enough to shock her fragile self right now, there was also the fact that her, Abby Griffin amongst all, wanted him to keep her safe.
“Watch out!” he warned her, but she had been so lost in her thoughts, that didn't register the hole in the street under her feet, and her foot got stuck in it, forcing her body forward, her light weight heavy enough to drag her fast and hard on the ground. But he had been faster then her at reacting, and years of training, and probably even the fact that he had been staring at her since she had started to walk again, had pushed him forward in a second, his arms around her waist, to pull her back on her feet.

“Abby, are you ok?” he asked her, his warm breath stroked her hair and Abby nodded, blinking, pulling her foot out of the hole that a bomb had caused, a fracture in the asphalt of what was once 18th Marple Street. “I'm ok.” she whispered, nodding, pushing on his arms with her hands to free herself. He let her able to move again, but kept his dark eyes on her, steady and warm, carefully watching and studying. She swallowed and smiled. “I wasn't looking where I was going, I'm good.” she said again, trying to sound reassuring and convincing. Marcus kept staring quietly for a long moment, then nodded himself and gestured at her to keep walking.

She did that, bowing her head again, wrapping her arms around herself. They had started to walk since not even a minute, when suddenly she felt the pressure of his heavy jacket on her back, as he adjusted it to her tiny frame. “Don't even try to say you're not cold Abby, I am walking right behind you, I can see you shivering.” he whispered, without giving her time to protest. She blinked then and took the collar of it with her hands, adjusting it to her tiny body. It was heavy and warm, it smelled as leather and dust, while she adjusted it more comfortably on her body, sneaking the arms in the big sleeves, a note of masculine fragrance reached her nose, and she had to swallow hard to prevent herself from dive her nose into the fabric.

It was just so familiar, and it felt so reassuring, she wanted to feel it completely, she wanted to smell him on that jacket, closing her eyes, giving herself the illusion that she was safe. But she shook her head, and mentally reproached herself. It was just a jacket, it couldn't protect her, especially it couldn't make her forget about what she was doing, where she was and why. She knew that probably, all of those feelings she was having, all of those weird thoughts, were there just because she was afraid for Clarke, she missed her daughter and she was painfully aware of how it was destroying her, and probably Marcus' presence beside her, and his kind voice, his warm hands, were somehow able to make her forget for a second about her worries and her fear, and that was why she couldn't stop thinking of him as a safe place.

“We're almost there.” he whispered suddenly, dragging her out of her thoughts, Abby blinked and realized they were in a new zone of Arkadia, at least it was new now since it was basically unrecognizable. The Central Bank of Arkadia was completely destroyed, the signboard was broken in pieces, and she could read just Cent k o dia on the big piece of marble attached to what was once the front of the building. It was now just the skeleton of the big white skyscraper she had found herself in multiple times during her first year in that city, to argue with them when her credit card wasn't functional anymore, or when her bank account had been deleted by some kind of invisible force.

And it was on one of those days that she had met Jake Griffin for the first time.
It was a hot day of August, she was 19 years old, and had moved in Arkadia since just few months, she was still learning how to adjust to the big city, since she had born in the country side of the state, she had always been used to little towns, little bars, simple little people.

Finding herself thrown into that chaotic city, where nothing was little or simple, still confused her, making her feel uncomfortable and out of place.

She was sitting in front of the glass wall that leaded to the offices, where she had to wait for her number to be called, when a shadow had appeared at her side, and she had looked up, and had spotted this tall young man approaching the door without sitting as she had done, without waiting for his number to be called. She clenched her jaw and stood up.

“Hey!” she snapped, at that the boy stopped, the back’s muscles under his gray shirt flinched. “You have to take a number and wait in line as everybody else.” she said, trying to sound stern, cold, but also a little polite, just a little though. It was hot as hell, she was hungry because it was almost lunch time, she hadn't been sleeping at all that night and she was waiting for her turn since two hours, yes she was slightly pissed off.

The boy at that turned, revealing bright blue eyes and a charming smile. “I'm sorry Miss, it wasn't my intention, please forgive my rudeness.” he said, approaching her. Abby blinked and raised her chin. “Good, then take a number and wait as everybody else.” she said, nodding to herself and sitting back on the white plastic chair.

The boy smiled and followed her, sitting right beside her, she blinked and looked at him, he was smiling at her, a really heartwarming smile that made her wonder for a moment. “What are you doing?” she asked him. He shrugged. “Waiting for my turn.” he said, at that Abby blinked, casted him a last glance and then turned her head, facing the glass door once again.

They remained quiet for few more minutes, when suddenly she started to feel the heaviness of his stare on her, she sighed out and turned toward him, he didn't even flinch and kept staring. “What is it?” she asked him, raising an eyebrow, crossing her arms in front of her chest, causing the fabric of her neckline to fall slightly lower, exposing a portion of her breasts.

He didn't look down, he saw that in the corner of his eyes, he saw the inviting strap of creamy skin appearing over the dress, but his eyes remained on her face, respectfully.

“What?” he asked her then, Abby pursed her lips. “You're staring.” she said, tilting her head, curious more than annoyed. At that he smiled, a bright and charming, she had to admit, smile. “I can't help myself.” he said, and at that Abby raised an eyebrow in amusement. “Oh I see, we have a Casanova over here.” she said, shaking her head, smiling.
“It was that bad uh?” he said blushing, running a hand in his blonde hair, Abby thought that they looked soft, and that she wanted to touch them, to feel them under her fingertips. *Wait what?*

She was about to say something back, when suddenly a mechanical voice called for her number, or at least tried to, since the sound came out as a chocked hiccup. “It's my turn... I guess.” she said then, standing up. “And they probably need to fix that thing.” she added, while turning toward the glass door that leaded to the offices inside. At that the young man stood up himself “Yeah, I think that's my call.” he said, and Abby blinked, turning toward him.

“What?” he smiled at her, and raised the metal box he was holding, so that she could see it. *Was it there all along?* “I'm the repair man, and I have to fix that thing over there.” he said, gesturing to the speaker, that was now trying to call number 83, failing miserably.

Abby at that raised her eyebrows and widened her eyes in surprise. “Oh, so, you weren't trying to step over the line. You're the repair man.” she said, pursing her lips, closing her eyes in shame, and hiding her face in her palm. “Yes, that would be me.” he said, nodding, laughing.

“Ok, that was embarrassing.” she muttered, and started to walk toward the offices, to leave that stranger behind herself as quickly as possible. “Jake.” he said, when she had almost completely open the door, she turned toward him and saw him smiling. “My name I mean, it's Jake.” he said, tilting his head to the side.

Abby smiled and bowed her head, shaking her head she pushed the door open completely, when she turned her head, before disappearing in the hallway, she smiled. “Abby.” she said and with that she was gone, leaving the grinning boy behind her.

When she came out of the office half an hour later, anger boiling up in her stomach, since she had to come back in two days because “We need to take a look at it before we can actually do something, Miss.” she found him waiting for her.

His blue eyes searched for her, his smile matching hers, they walked outside the building together in silence. They said nothing until they were on the street again, under the summer sky. She smiled at him and before leaving, biting at her lower lip, she approached him, took a black pen from her purse and wrote her number on his wrist, stroking the inside of his arm, *by accident* she told herself, but she knew that would be a lie.

Just as it was a lie when she had kissed him the night after, calling it *Just a friendly peck on the cheek, but you turned your head and I wasn't expecting it.*

Or that time she lied, saying to her mother *No, he's just a friend.*

Or when she lied to herself with that *I don't love him, I just care for him.*

Till in the end she had stopped lying and had started to tell herself the truth, and she had then fell in love with Jake Griffin,

And then they married.

And they bought a house.
And they had Clarke.
And they had lived together, happy, in love.
And then war came.
And then Jake died.
And here she was now, 23 years later, looking at the ruins of what was once the place where she had met the love of her life.
And how heartbreaking that was. And how desperate she was feeling.

Get it together. No time for this. She said to herself.

“Abby?” Marcus whispered again, so close to her that when she blinked away her tears, his breath stroked her cheeks. “Are you sure you're ok?” he asked her again, she nodded, sniffing, and he surely heard that. “Abby? What's wrong?” he asked her, his black eyes scanning her face carefully. “Nothing. It's nothing, I'm ok.” she nodded again, still feeling the warmness of her tears pushing inside of her eyes, trying to free themselves.

Not now, not here.

“Ok, stop lying. Tell me what's wrong.” he said again. His voice stern and steady, he wasn't about to let it drop that easily this time. Abby swallowed and shook her head. “I'm not lying Marcus. I'm ok.” she said again, bowing her head, fixing her gaze on her fingers, that were toying with the blue fabric of her blouse. He nodded, pursing his lips, when she thought that he was going to accept her answer, he surprised her, by taking her hands between his palms. “Abigail?” he said, her full name from his lips forcing her to look up again. “Please, talk to me.” he whispered again, why was he always whispering? Why was he now always checking on her? Asking if she was ok? What was wrong with him?

“I have nothing to say to you.” she said then, coldly. At that she saw something flashing in his eyes, for a fraction of a second, it was as a dark shadow, something that felt heavy and sad, something that she could name just as pain. “I see.” he said then and withdrew, resuming his walk, giving her his back. Abby closed her eyes and cursed herself under her breath.
She looked up again, to say something, to explain that she was just tired and that she didn't mean it as it had sounded, when she realized that Marcus was motionless, few feet from her, looking in front of him with worried eyes. “Marcus?” she whispered, feeling the urgent need to lower her voice. He raised a hand toward her and gestured her to approach him. She did so, walking very quietly, trying to make as less noise as it was possible.

“What is it?” she asked him when they were close enough to whisper without needing to raise their voices, he squeezed her arm then, and pulled her toward him, she said nothing and followed him. He kept walking, his eyes never leaving the black darkness in front of them, whatever was there in those shadows, she wasn't able to see it, and this was probably even more frightening.

When he had managed to walk them in the street beside the old bank, and they were already at the other side of the building, shielded by two walls at each sides of the tiny road, he turned toward her. “I saw someone moving between the rubble, maybe scavengers, maybe bandits, I'm not sure, but is better if you stay here while I go and check.” he said, and at that Abby widened her eyes, stopping him by squeezing his arm.

“No, you are not going back there without me.” she hissed, looking him in the eyes, trying to at least, it was too dark to see exactly where his eyes were. “Abby, I have to clear the way, or we will not be able to reach the parking lot.” he said, and then tried to free himself from her grip, but Abby tightened her hands around his arm. “There's no need for that.” she said, and at that he turned his attention back at her. “What do you mean?” he asked her, at that Abby tilted her head toward the street at his back, where a dirty, old, but pretty much intact car was parked. “Maybe we can use that.” she whispered, and at that she saw, or at least she thought to see, a smile forming on his lips.

“Let's find out then.” he said, and took her by the hand. It was a new intimate gesture, he had hugged her yes, she had hugged him back true, they had shared an intimate long moment in that bathroom, absolutely. But taking her by the hand was a new thing, he wasn't dragging her somewhere using force, he wasn't squeezing or pressing her to push her away from him, he was holding her hand to walk with her, to be sure she was right there with him, following his steps, always close enough to wrap his arms around her.

Or at least this was what she thought when he took her hand, and it made her shiver. He felt it because he looked back at her, his eyes already asking her if she was ok.

*This man, couldn't he just stop checking on her?*
But she nodded and smiled. “I'm ok, come on, let's go.” she whispered and then they walked to the other side of the street, where the car was silently waiting.

Chapter End Notes

This was just an introduction of something that I will explain better in the next chapter (the rebels thing I mean), I wanted to write something, and hadn't much time to do so, I hope you will still like this chapter, also... Jake wasn't supposed to be in this one but hey, my mind wanted it so I wrote it. Next chapter everything will be more fast and we will finally move to the beating heart of this story!!!

Also... I will write a lot probably about Abby and Marcus' thoughts about each other, because hey I am here for the feels, and you are too right? Right.
Chapter Summary

We're just survivors

Abby and Marcus share a moment of needed comfort.

But they will not have much time to enjoy it.

Chapter Notes

I want just to say, I didn't plan this, but in the end I had to write it, so everything will be faster from now on, just hope my mind will stop giving me shitty angsty ideas ok?

Also, tell me if you like it, I'm better with feels and smut moments than...well than this. (also no beta, english isn't my mother tongue, so just keep that in mind)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marcus

“So? How bad is it?” Abby asked him, while Marcus was bowing in the inside of the damaged car. “Well, surely we will need gasoline and I can't be sure, but it seems as if someone had tried to steal it, damaging several wires.” he snorted.

Abby was wrapping her arms around her torso, his leather jacket was too big for her tiny frame and she was basically swimming inside of it. Her brown eyes were wide open, scanning their surroundings, her muscles tensed, she flinched at every noise.

“Ok, so we will need to show this to Raven.” she said, approaching him, Marcus nodded, his hands on his hips. “Yeah, the thing now is... how can we take it to her without gasoline or... a functional engine?” he pointed out, stroking his new growing beard with his fingers.

“Well, we could take her here to fix it.” Abby said, tilting her head, Marcus raised an eyebrow. “Yeah we could, but the problem remains. How do that?” he asked, looking down at her. She was shorter than him and right now she looked terribly small, with her head bowed, her arms
wrapped around her torso, her body shivering for the cold and the fear, he felt the sudden urge to hold her in his arms.

*She is not a child, she doesn't need you to carry her in your arms.*

“Well, I guess we will have to think about this in the morning, we will find a way, with a car we will be faster, and even if roads aren't clear yet” - she gestured around them, where the main road was indeed filled with rubble and was basically useless - “We will at least have something more than nothing. We will find a way, as we always do.” she said, loosing her eyes in some private thoughts.

“Ok, then we should go back to the house.” he said, resting one hand on her shoulder, the black leather fabric fell down several inches before his touch could met the solidity of her body. She looked up at him and nodded, pursing her lips. “Do you think we will still find the car tomorrow, if now we go back?” she asked him. Marcus looked down at her and shrugged. “I hope so, for now we can't do much with it.” at that she sighed and started to walk away from him.

He followed her in silence, his trained eyes scanning the street and the buildings around them, careful to spot any possible threat if needed, walking very close to Abby, whom was now avoiding his gaze, looking at the ground under her feet.

She had been distant since they had left the house. Surely Marcus wasn't expecting her to be kind, friendly and open all of a sudden, just because she had let him help her in a moment when she had been fragile, it didn't mean that suddenly they were friends.

*Friends.* The word circled in his mind for a while, while they kept moving in silence, and he asked himself when was the last time he ever had a friend. His soldiers weren't friends, you can't have friends on the battlefield, you can't care for someone else than yourself, he had learned it very well. Because if you let your guard down, and you start to care for someone, than this will be able to destroy you.

Marcus Kane was nobody's friend, and he had always been ok with that. And yet...

Looking at this tiny woman in front of him, he started to wonder how could it feel to be Abby Griffin's friend. Just the thought of being someone she could care for, made him feel warm. It was something he had never experienced, being friend to a woman like her.
Sure he had met several people in his life, he had cared for some of them, especially when he had been younger, but that wasn't the same thing. Because Abby Griffin was a different kind of human being.

She was different, the kind of different that force you to stare and ask yourself, why am I staring?

Surely she was a beautiful woman, and sometimes he had found himself staring at her, because he simply wanted to look at something beautiful. But that wasn't what had kept him awake at night. That wasn't what had kept his mind busy with several thoughts and questions the past six months.

The thing was that she had something, as a sparkling light, a burning inviting fire, that drawn him to her. As if he couldn't stop asking himself how was it to be part of her life, how was it to see her when all her defenses were down, he wanted to know. He wanted to have a part in her life.

That thought made him stop in his tracks. She turned then, frowning. “Is everything ok?” she asked him, in a tiny whisper. Marcus nodded and she blinked in confusion, then shrugged and resumed her walk once again.

He wanted to have a part in her life. That was a new realization. Or at least he said that to himself, because honestly, he had been thinking several times about that, but couldn't ever find the right words to explain that weird feeling he always had around her.

He cared for her, and that was true, but why he cared for her, that was another matter. He couldn't explain to himself if he was still following her carefully because he felt as if he had promised to do that. But probably, the promise he had made to her late husband, wasn't the only reason why he had sneaked out of that hospital few days ago.

He knew that something else had pushed him in the darkness of Arkadia, condemning himself to not ever coming back, without a second thought.

But he wasn't ready yet to tell himself what was it exactly. And so he kept following her, carefully watching her every step, to be sure she was safe, because he wanted to.

He wanted Abby to be safe.

“Do you think we will be able to make it?” she asked him suddenly. Her voice was low, she had
slowed down her pace, so that now they were walking side by side, their shoulders almost touching. Marcus blinked, clearing his thoughts. She wasn't looking at him, but was waiting for an answer, her eyes lost in the darkness in front of them. “As I said, I hope so Abby.” he said, because it was the only thing he could say, he wasn't going to promise her anything. He couldn't do that, so he stuck with the truth, because he really hoped they could all survive and find her daughter.

“You are a really hopeful man.” she whispered to him, and she said it as a matter of fact, she wasn't asking, or judging, it was as if she had just realized it herself. “Yeah, I try to...” he said, his heart felt heavy all of a sudden. *Hopeful man* wasn't exactly what he thought of himself, but the way she had said it, made him feel as if it was true and possible, as if he may could be a *hopeful man*.

“I like that.” she whispered, and then looked at him, he couldn't see her face, the sun was still hiding behind the horizon, so he couldn't really read her expression, but he knew she was watching him, he could sense her eyes on him. “I like that too.” he whispered, and she smiled, this he saw it, the white of her teeth reflected some of the poor night lights, and he smiled back.

They walked in silence for the rest of their trip. When they reached the shelter house, and they could see the sun starting to rise again, she stopped and turned toward him.

“I'm sorry Marcus.” she whispered, her eyes shifty. Marcus tilted his head, he knew for what she was apologizing, she didn't need to say it out loud. “Don't be.” he said, because he also knew that he was the one that owe her an apology, he had wanted to tell her that when she had been in his arms, but he hadn't had the gut to do so. It was time to find the courage and spit it out. “I'm the one that should say sorry.” he whispered, at that she lifted her eyes, parting her lips, she looked surprised.

“Marcus Kane wants to apologize to me? I must be dreaming.” she said, smirking kindly. At that he chuckled. “Yeah well, I guess we took a really big step forward today.” he said, and at that Abby bit at her lower lip, her lips stretched into a smile, it wasn't fond and rich with happiness, but it was kind and tender, and he couldn't suddenly stop staring at it.

“We should be proud of ourselves.” she said, he looked up again, her brown eyes were fixed on him, he nodded. “Yes, we should.” with that he squeezed her left shoulder and she didn't flinch this time, but smiled and then tilted her head toward the house at their backs. “Let's go get some sleep.” she whispered, and he followed her inside.
It was a new kind of intimacy to sleep side by side with her, and he could tell he wasn't the only one thinking that, she wasn't relaxing, her muscles were tensed, she had her eyes closed, but her chest was rising and falling rapidly.

She was nervous.

The reason why they were now sleeping side by side, basically hugging each other, was simple, they had to rest, both of them. The couch was occupied by Bellamy, he had of course offered to take a sit on a chair, but both of them had refused, especially Abby. Octavia had smiled at that, she had took a spot right beside him, making herself tinier as possible to fit on it with him, without touching his wound.

So Abby and Marcus had to find another place where they could sleep, a chair was out of the question, they couldn't rest properly if they couldn't even lay their backs down, they weren't that old yet, but not that young either. And so that left them with the floor, it wasn't comfortable, and if his sore back wasn't a clear clue of that, you could have ask to his painful limbs. But it was better than nothing.

She had laid herself down almost immediately, curling up in a ball, her head resting on her leather bag, her jacket, that Raven had managed somehow to clean while they were gone, was draped over her torso. But it wasn't big or heavy enough to shield her from the cold, and she had started to shiver almost immediately.

Monty was already snoring, his head against the armchair of the couch, his own jacket on his body, he looked peaceful and Marcus couldn't bring himself to wake him up. Raven was overlooking the city's streets from the window, sitting on a chair, she seemed completely lost in her thoughts. So Marcus found himself walking toward her.

She was in the farthest corner of the room, under the window of the backyard, he had decided to stay close to the front door, just in case, so he stood up and walked toward her quietly. When his shadow fell over her, she stopped shivering and he sat beside her. He could tell that she was awake, her fingers were now nervously toying with the collar of the jacket over her shoulders. He laid down himself and wrapped his own jacket over her, so that she could use them both, then he rested his head on his arm, and watched her relaxing once again.

He closed his eyes, resting close enough to her to feel her body heat, but without overstepping any kind of line, without touching her. After a bunch of minutes, it was his turn to shiver. His muscles
flinched when a cold wind blow sneaked inside from the hole in the roof. It was then that she moved, turning her head toward him, he opened one eye to peek at her. “Marcus?” she whispered. He cleared his throat. “Yeah?”

He mumbled, she kept quiet, then inhaled deeply. “You're cold?” at that he chuckled bitterly. “I’m fine, get some sleep Abby.” he said, snuggling better on his arm, trying to find a comfortable position, she snorted. “You are shivering Marcus, I can feel the floor trembling.” she added, a hint of amusement coloring her throaty voice. “Come on, take your jacket back.” she said, already discarding it, pushing it toward him.

“No Abby, I'm fine, you're slimmer than me, you could get sick, please keep it, it's ok.” he whispered then, forcing the heavy fabric on her once again, at that she huffed impatiently. “You're impossible.” she muttered, and then took him by surprise, lifting both jackets, offering him some room under them. “What are you doing?” he asked her, half shocked, half intrigued. “You don't want me to get sick, I don't want you to get sick, so I guess is better if we do ourselves a favor and we share what we have.” she whispered, lowering her voice so that only him could hear her.

Marcus swallowed, uncertain on what he should do, then another wind blow hit him, his skin prickled with goosebumps and he shifted closer to her. Suddenly there wasn't any more space between them, and his chest pressed firmly against her back. She said nothing at that, but he felt the way her body, instinctively, leaned backward against him, as if she wanted to take all of his body heat to envelop herself completely with it.

“Is that ok?” he asked her then, because honestly, he was feeling slightly uncomfortable, that was intimate and he wasn't used to be intimate with people, especially not with her. She chuckled. “Marcus, I asked you to come closer, of course it's ok, come on now, try to get some sleep.” she whispered then, and relaxed her body again, or at least pretend to do so, because he could feel how her muscles were tensing under her blue blouse.

He nodded to himself, adjusting the jacket over his shoulder, trying to keep her covered in doing so, and so his back ended up unshielded, and he shivered again. “Come closer.” she muttered, her throaty voice heavy already with the ghost of sleep, he blinked but said nothing, resting tensed on his side, without moving closer, he was already close enough to feel her back pressing on his chest every time that she inhaled, how could he come closer?

She huffed then, and sneaked a hand behind her, reaching for his arm, then, shocking him and her both, he could feel it in the way her hand trembled around his wrist, she wrapped it around her waist. “Like that we'll share more body heat.” she whispered, then fell silent. Marcus was motionless, his hand was resting against her stomach, her own was touching slightly his skin, he could feel her fingertips stroking absentmindedly his wrist bones.
He closed his eyes and swallowed, then hissed quietly, his neck was hurting painfully since he couldn't dare to lay down his head, if he did that, his nose would dive into her hair, and that was something he couldn't do. *He just couldn't do it.* But then his body gave up and he had to relax his muscles, his head laid down, and his nose fell indeed into her honey colored hair. She smelled good, too good for him not to inhale in her scent, so he just did that, inhaling deeply and clenching his jaw when her smell reached his brain, she suddenly flinched.

At first he thought she was going to push him back, to regain some private space, instead, she lifted her head and collected her long hair with one hand, adjusting them under her cheek, so that he could breathe properly, without suffocating, even if in that moment, he couldn't care less, he wanted to dive his nose in her hair, he wanted to get lost in her scent.

But now he couldn't smell her anymore, at least not her hair. Now when he looked down, he could stare at her bare neck. Her creamy skin was exposed to him, he sighed out involuntarily, and she shivered, his hot breath reached her bare skin and he could see goosebumps forming on it. He closed his eyes, and tried to relax once again. He leaned forward, the tip of his nose brushed against her neck, she shivered, but didn't flinch or moved, so he stayed there.

His right hand pressed involuntarily against her stomach, it was flat and rigid, he could feel her muscles tensing under her shirt, she wasn't relaxed enough to sleep. “Goodnight.” he whispered then, his hot breath bounced from her neck to his cheeks. “Goodnight.” she said back, and then the hand that was resting on his arm shifted, but she didn't withdrew, instead she moved closer to his own, and covered his fingers with hers.

At that he swallowed, with his eyes still closed, he lifted one finger tentatively, she responded to his gesture, her index finger circled around his. Then she moved for both of them, intertwining their fingers together, she squeezed them so hard that he almost felt pain.

He sensed the *need of comfort* hidden behind that gesture, he felt it as if she was whispering him to help her, and so he did the only thing he could think of, and pulled her even further against him. His arm dragged her so close that her lower back collided with his hips, they were plastered one against the other, so tight that Marcus felt as if they weren't two individual people anymore, but more as two halves of the same person.

She then moved their joined hands toward her face, and he could feel the warmthness of her skin on the back of his hand, he lifted his head then, because like that his muscles were stretching uncomfortably, and laid his cheek on her head, her hair were soft under his skin. “It's gonna be ok Abigail.” he whispered in her ear, at that she sobbed quietly, *she was crying.* He closed his eyes and squeezed her, holding her in his arms. Without asking her for permission, he sneaked the other arm under her body, and wrapped it around her.
She let him do that, and so now Marcus could hold her with his whole body, suddenly she pulled up her legs against her chest, and he followed suit, so that they were curled up in the same ball made of the same bones and skin, flesh to flesh, heart to heart.

Marcus had never felt warmer in his life, it wasn't just her natural body heat, it wasn't just the jackets over them, or the shy sunrises sneaking from the window upon their bodies, it was her. She was burning with life, and she felt so comfortable, so inviting, he let himself enjoy it, that moment that they were sharing was the first and probably the last one of their life, and so he enjoyed everything of it.

The way her body fitted perfectly against his, the smell of her skin, the way her breath stroked his fingers, the feel of her toned muscles and fragile limbs between his arms, also the pleasant pressure of her arse cupped against his crotch. Everything of that moment felt right, beautiful, intense, alive.

And Marcus fell asleep with his heart filled with lots of feelings he wasn't able to name, all of them letting grow something inside of him, something new and intense, something powerful and bright.

*Hope.*

*Abby*

*Warm.*

The first thing she felt as soon as she started to wake up was the incredible warmthness that was enveloping her. Every part of her body was warm.

Her legs, her arms, her cupped hands, even her cheeks and her neck.
She opened her eyes carefully, adjusting her irises to her surroundings, light was still coming in from the window above her, the sky was darkening, the sun was setting. She stirred, stretching her legs first, and then felt the pressure of something behind her, something was preventing her from stretching her limbs, no it wasn't something, it was.. someone.

She widened her eyes and froze, then she blinked, regaining lucidity, and it all came back to her.

The cold of the early morning, she shivering under Jake's jacket, Marcus approaching her, him sneaking under the jackets with her, his strong arms around her, her hand in his, him holding her, she crying in his arms.

She swallowed and closed her eyes. She could still feel the unpleasant feeling of her now dry tears plastered on her cheeks. And now, she could feel the unmistakable solidity of him laying right behind her, his arms were still around her body. His hand was resting against her chest, right where her heart was beating fast.

“Abby?” he whispered suddenly, his hot breath stroked her neck, she swallowed. “Mh?” she couldn't trust her voice right now, so she just hummed and he squeezed her hand. “Are you alright?” he asked her immediately, she couldn't help it and smiled. “Yeah.” she nodded, eyes still closed. “I'm ok, what about you?” she asked him, and how ridiculous was for them to whisper to each other, while being entangled like that, without turning to look the other in the eyes.

“I'm fine. You slept good?” he asked her, his voice was heavy with the ghost of sleep. She bit at her lower lip, “Yeah, I did.” she whispered, and then fell silent, because it was true, oh so true, and it was making her feel so uncomfortable to acknowledge that.

It wasn't a bad thing, sleeping with someone else was good for the spirit, the heart and the mind. Also, sharing the same spot during cold nights helped stay warm enough, and if you were warm you could sleep better. That was scientific, it was undeniably true.

So why was she feeling as if something about the fact that she had slept so good, was wrong?

She hadn't the time to answer herself though, because suddenly someone walked toward them. “Hey lovebirds, have you two slept good?” asked them Raven, amusement vividly coloring her voice. At that she felt how Marcus flinched. “Reyes, good morning to you too.” he hissed, then withdrew, at first she tightened her grip around his hand more fiercely, by instinct, but then, when he bent slightly over her shoulder to look at her, she let him go.
“You sure you're ok?” he asked her again, resting his hand on her shoulder, Abby nodded, trying not to look at him. But when he stood up, giving her a quiet nod, she turned and could see him stretching out his sore muscles. His black hair were messier, they looked wilder somehow. His eyes were still half closed, but they were shining with a regained light. She smiled to herself, he seemed so... human.

He must had sensed her eyes on him, because he turned toward her, a smug grin adorning his lips. He said nothing, but kept his black eyes on her, for a long moment she said nothing and kept staring herself.

“Ok you two, time to wake up, I have a car to fix, remember?” Raven snapped abruptly, Marcus turned toward her and Abby could close her eyes and advert her gaze, sighing out in relief. She stood up then, yawning quietly. “Don't be too hopeful about it Raven, it might not work.” she said, while standing up, taking both jackets in hands. Marcus turned toward her at that and she offered him back his own, he took it, smiling at her, she smiled back but then bowed her head and turned to the girl.

“Hey don't be such a buzzkill Abby, first let me take a look at it.” she said, grinning. At that Abby could just smile and raise her hands in surrender. “Ok, but don't yell at me if it will not work.” she said, while sitting down in front of her, running her hands in her hair, trying to smooth some of the knots that the night had formed. Trying not to think of how warm they still felt between her fingers.

“Ok so, how are we going to do that? You take me there and I do the magic?” she asked them, tilting her head, her eyes shining with enthusiasm. “Well, that's the thing, actually we don't know if you can fix it, but most important, even if you could, and it's a big if, where are we supposed to find the parts you will need?” she asked her, at that Raven smirked. “If I am not wrong there is a gas station near the bank, where you found the car, so, we go there and check if there's still fuel under the structure, and with gasoline we solve one big problem. Then I will see what I can do with the rest, but let me take care of it ok? Nobody is allowed to get near that car apart from me, and Monty maybe, yeah you can come.” she said, when the boy looked up from the dry meat he was eating.

They shared a wink and a smile, and at that Abby shook her head. “Whatever you prefer, I'm off for tonight, I guess you'll not need me either way, so, it's all yours.” she said, standing up and pressing a soft kiss on the girl's black hair. “You sure you don't want to witness a real mechanic at work? I'm quiet a view when I fix a car, you should check me out for yourself.” she said, grinning.

Abby laughed, and shook her head. “I'm sure you are, but I'll let this pleasure to Marcus, I will stay behind, so I can check on Bellamy and make inventory, so we'll know exactly what we'll need for the trip.” she said, leaning her back to the wall at the table's side.
“You're really staying behind?” Marcus asked her suddenly, she looked at him, blinking, as if she had forgotten that he was there with them, or more correctly, she had tried to. “Yeah, for once I will stay behind, so you will be able to lead the group without me messing things up. Of course about the car you'll have to listen to Raven.” she said, when the girl had opened her mouth to protest, at that she smiled, and fell quiet.

Marcus kept looking at her, then bowed his head, smiling quietly. “Ok then, let's get ready.” And so, when they started to prepare their bags, while Raven was already talking with enthusiasm about all the things she could do to that car, Abby walked outside in the backyard, to take a long breath of fresh air.

That was when two heavy and dirty hands covered her mouth, trapping the breath in her lungs, she screamed instinctively in fear, but her voice died in her throat.

Raven

“I'm not saying that I am better than you Monty, but I actually am, that's just a matter of fact!” Raven said, smiling fondly. Monty snorted. “I can fix that car in half the time.” he said, raising a challenging eyebrow toward her, at that Raven smirked and tilted her head. “That's bullshit.” she snapped, Monty held out his hand. “Wanna bet?” he smirked. She looked down and took his delicate hand with strength. “Absolutely!” she said, at that they both chuckled softly.

“You're both such nerds.” Octavia muttered behind them, while adjusting her backpack on her shoulders. Raven shrugged, and Monty chuckled. “Nerds and proud.” at that even Kane managed a smile, while casting a last glance behind his back, where the door of the backyard was. Raven cleared her throat and closed her bag.

“So, we're all ready?” she asked, Kane looked at her then, thought about it for a moment and then nodded. “Yes, we must hurry up.” he said, Raven nodded. Then the door of the backyard opened, and she smiled instinctively. “Hey Abby we're ready, we'll be bac-” but her words died in her
throat as soon as Abby walked in. She was wide eyes, her mouth covered by a hand that surely wasn't hers, a group of four men, that she recognized immediately as bandits, walked in, the taller one pushed her inside, keeping her still against his body. That was when Raven saw the giant knife pressing in the side of her neck, the shining blade pushing incessantly at her delicate skin, she could already see a drop of blood flowing down her throat.

Kane turned toward her himself, and when his eyes saw her and the group of men around her he froze too. “Abby...” he whispered. Raven swallowed hard, beside her she could feel the tension hovering upon everybody. Monty was silent, his hand reached for hers and she squeezed it strongly.

Octavia was few feet from them, right behind Kane, her blue eyes wide open, her jaw clenched, her hands wincing at her sides. Bellamy was froze, but silently trying to reach for the gun in his belt. “Don’t you even think about that kiddo, or I swear I’ll slaughter her.” said the bandit behind Abby, she squeezed her eyes, muffling some kind of curse against his dirty skin. “Shut up.” he hissed in her hair, the way his dried lips touched the skin of her temples made Raven feel sick to her stomach. Kane raised his hands then. “At ease Bellamy.” he hissed to him, the boy looked at him with hopeless eyes but then withdrew his hand. A slim man walked toward him and took the gun out of his belt. “That's mine now.” he hissed. Walking back to the group around Abby.

“Listen, we don't want any troubles, take everything you want, but please don't hurt anybody, don't hurt... her.” Kane said, his back was stiffened, his body seemed ready to react, but his voice was trembling, he swallowed hard and deeply. The bandit wrapped one arm around Abby's waist and pulled her even closer toward him, she growled again, closing her eyes. “Let's talk about this, what do you think?” he said, gesturing to everybody in the room to sit down. Raven was paralyzed on her feet, her muscles felt too heavy to move, she was glued to the floor. “Sit down and let's chat.” the man said again, pushing Abby forward, without withdrawing the hand from her mouth, without letting her free to move.

Kane nodded mechanically. “Yes, let's do that, ok.” then he turned, his dark heavy eyes roamed over them, he nodded. “Let's sit down.” he whispered, Raven blinked, her eyes were filled with tears, Monty squeezed her hand harder, she squeezed it back, then they shared a long look and finally managed to sit down. Octavia though, she was still standing.

“O? Sit down, please.” Bellamy hissed at her, but the girl didn't even flinch. The man that was trapping Abby in his arms laughed bitterly at that. “Hey, we have a rebel over here.” he said, at that the men behind him laughed. Octavia clenched her jaw. “Octavia, please.” Kane whispered to her, Abby was looking at her with wide eyes, she wasn't crying yet, but Raven could see that see was just holding back.

“Oh kiddo, you should listen to your daddy over here, trust me.” he growled, leaning slightly forward, dragging Abby with him, at that she muffled something and he turned to her, pressing his
lips against her temple. “What is it dear? No don't worry, we'll be good, I promise.” he said, sniffing at her hair, at that Abby muttered another insult, her muscles tensed, and she tried to withdraw, but his grip on her was too strong and she froze again. “We're gonna have so much fun later.” he whispered in her ear, and they all shivered at that, Raven swallowed, her heart skipped a bit, and from the corner of her eyes she could see how Kane closed his eyes, clenching his jaw, his hands closed in tight fits, so tight that his knuckles turned white.

Then Raven looked at Octavia, pleading her with her eyes, the girl looked back and silently sat down. “Good girl.” said the man, pushing Abby against the table, freeing her from his arms. She gasped for air at that, her hands moving frantically on the table's surface, as if she was searching for something, but Raven was too focused on the bandits in the room to pay attention at her. Kane reached immediately for her, but the bandit pushed him back on his seat. “Not so fast daddy!” he growled, sitting down himself, pulling Abby on his lap, forcing her to sit with him, she closed her eyes and swallowed. Kane clenched his jaw in visible anger, his eyes never leaving her.

“So...” said the bandit, relaxing on the chair, stroking Abby's side, she was shivering and her mouth betrayed her clear discomfort, her left hand was closed in a tight fist on her lap. “Here's the thing, we are here to steal everything you have, food, water, weapons, supplies, everything is ours now.” he said, roaming his empty black eyes over all of them. “Also, you are coming with us, especially you uh?” he said, pressing his face against Abby's back, she pursed her lips in disgust, clenching her jaw. Kane widened his eyes, his nostrils opened and closed in fury, Raven had to advert her gaze, she felt Monty squeezing her hand, she looked at him with worried eyes, he mouthed at her a “Don't worry.” at that she swallowed and turned again over Abby.

“Why don't you just take our stuff and leave? We don't want troubles, we're just survivors.” Kane said suddenly, at that the man, that had kept his nose pressed to Abby's shirt all along, laughed bitterly. “That's not gonna happen, you can be really useful, besides.” - his hand squeezed Abby's arm - “I can't let go such a pretty thing as her, can I?” he said, looking at her face, laughing with himself, his men behind him followed suit. Abby opened her eyes again and her gaze found Raven, she shivered, feeling a tight heavy pressure hovering upon her heart. But the woman in front of her gave her a slight nod, as to say “It's ok”. Raven swallowed and then her eyes caught the movement at her side.

When his hand found her arm, she couldn't help it and yelled. “Hey, I like this one, can I have this one?” a slim, pale man said, looking at her with hungry eyes. Raven swallowed, and widened her eyes, a burning fear rushing in her veins. “Leave her alone.” this time was Abby whom growled, her eyes sharp and heavy on the man that was gripping Raven's arm. “Hey boss, you're girlfriend finally managed to talk.” he said, the man behind Abby smiled. “Hey honey it's ok, we are sweet lovers you know?” he whispered, his hot heavy breath sneaked between her hair, and Raven saw how she shut her eyes and grimaced.

“Take me, but not her, you don't need her, you already have me.” she hissed, her voice still not breaking, her lips tight in a sharp line. At that Raven shook her head, sniffing slightly, and saw how Kane parted his lips, widening his eyes in horror. “You don't have to do this, you don't have to be
savages, please, just... take what you want and go.” he whispered again, trying to sound reasonable.

Abby at that looked at him, they locked their eyes for a moment and Raven saw the desperation shining in his black irises, matching the profound horror in hers. The bandit behind Abby laughed throatily. “That's exactly what we are going to do, taking what we want.” with that he pushed Abby on her feet again, she snorted, his hands closed around her elbows, he pushed her forward, forcing her to walk with him. “Stand up, everyone of you.” he growled.

At that Octavia instinctively turned toward Bellamy, cold sweat prickling at his temples, his eyes were shifting in panic between her and Abby. When they all had managed to stand up, Raven flinching slightly, forced on her feet by the pale hand of the man at her side, one of the bandit reached for Bellamy, pulling him from his jacket, trying to make him stand. “Hey hey, he can't walk!” Octavia yelled, and if it wasn't for Kane, that had managed to keep her still at his side, she would have jumped on the bandit, punching the life out of him.

“Boss, what are we going to do with him?” he asked, the bandit behind Abby huffed. “Well, he is useless, take everybody else and then kill him.” he said, pulling Abby with him while walking outside. Abby was wide eyes, her lips parted in horror, she managed to whisper a chocked “No” and Raven and Monty shook their heads, tears in their eyes.

But the one that was completely paralyzed was Octavia, she was looking with wide eyes at her brother, tears of panic, horror, anger and sadness forming in her blue irises, her fists tightening the hem of her jacket. “Bell...” she whispered, her brother nodded. “It's ok O., stick together, go, it's ok.” he kept saying mechanically.

Raven tried her best to free herself, while the pale man was dragging her outside, her feet were crawling on the floor, her crutches had fallen on the ground, nobody had paid attention to them, she was now unable to walk. The man behind her kept dragging her, panting heavy breaths, she was crying silently, eventually he managed to scoop her in his arms, adjusting her uncomfortably on his shoulder, his pale hand pressing on her lower back. “Hey boss, look, I have a girlfriend too now.” he said when they were outside the house, while the other man laughed bitterly, pushing Abby inside of a jeep that was parked few meters from the shelter.

“Search the house, take everything, including the girl and the men, then kill the boy.” he ordered, while closing the door of the jeep behind him, smiling dangerously at Abby, she was biting at her lower lip, suppressing her rage, closing her eyes, her fists tight on her legs, she was so tensed that Raven could almost sense pain in her own muscles for her.

“Here we go sweetheart.” the man said, pushing Raven in the jeep's backseats, she growled when her shoulder hit a metal bar in the fall. “Hey, take it easy!” Abby snapped, looking at him with fury eyes from the front seats, Raven swallowed and tried to sit up. “Where are her crutches?” Abby
asked suddenly, Raven looked at her saying nothing, Abby was panting in anger. “Hey I'm talking
to you, where are her crutches?” the pale man beside Raven shrugged and looked at his boss. The
man smirked. “Go and take the crutches Ilo.” he said, the man frowned. “Why? Who the fuck
cares if she can walk or not?” he said, huffing in frustration. Abby at that glared at him so fiercely
that Raven was sure she was trying to liquify his brain in his head.

“Now Ilo.” she hissed, the man beside her laughed. “You heard her.” he said, at that the man
named Ilo huffed and climbed out of the vehicle. “You are gonna be a real pain in the ass, aren't
you?” the boss asked, looking at Abby, she lowered her gaze, casting a last glance at Raven, the
girl shivered but managed a nod. “Oh you can't even imagine.” she hissed, turning again to face
him. The man hummed, his eyes roamed over her body as a beast looks out for its prey. “I can't
wait already.” he said.

At that Abby lowered her left hand to her side, from where she was Raven could now see
something she hadn't been able to see before, when panic had took control over her body and brain.
She was holding something, Raven squeezed her eyes to see better, it was tiny and sharp, shining
and...

A scalpel. Raven widened her eyes, realization sinking in. When the bandit had pushed Abby on
the table, Raven had been too busy with the fear for the bandits in the room to get what she exactly
had done. Nobody in the room had paid attention to what was resting on the wooden table, and so
nobody had seen the scalpel, that was too tiny to get enough attention, but Abby had. She had seen
it resting there, because she had been the one that had left it there in the first place.

When the man had pushed her against the table's edge, she had moved frantically her hands, as to
support her own weight, Raven had saw that, but she had been so fast that she had missed the most
important thing, she had missed the way Abby's hand had closed tightly around the scalpel,
pushing it inside of her sleeve. The bandits too had been too focused on taking the gun out of
Bellamy's belt, while ordering them to sit down to see what she was doing.

And so here they were, alone in the jeep, waiting for the other three bandits to be back, the scalpel
in Abby's hand the only thing balancing them between dying and surviving. Raven swallowed,
looking at the man sitting beside Abby. He was grinning, his eyes were dark, empty and hungry,
looking at Abby with such and intense and paralyzing strength, that Raven for a moment felt the
need to throw up. She knew what they were going to do to them, she knew what would have
happen if they followed them wherever they were used to hide.

And so, when the man leaned over Abby, parting his lips, she saw the smile that the woman forced
on her mouth, and Raven wanted to close her eyes, because one way or another, she wasn't gonna
like what was going to happen. But she couldn’t, it was as if whatever was happening was forcing
her to watch, to witness. So she remained wide eyes, looking directly at them.
And then was when it happened. Fast, cold and terrifying. Abby knew exactly what to do, she pushed him further toward her with one hand in his dirty hair, when his lips fell hungrily on hers, she followed suit, but what the man didn't know, was that her other hand was rapidly moving toward his neck, the scalpel reflected the light of the moon right before she pushed it on his skin and then slashed it open. The man widened his eyes instinctively, choking between gasps. From his throat now crimson blood was flowing, Abby had managed to cut his carotid and so lots of bright red drops of blood where gushing on her face, in rhythm with his heartbeat.

He withdrew from her, his eyes wide in horror, his own hands instinctively reached for the cut, his fingers trying to push the blood back inside, as if he could do something to prevent himself from dying. Abby was panting heavily, looking at him with wide cold eyes. Raven was paralyzed, her muscles were painfully tensed, her heart was beating so fast that she could hear the blood rushing in her temples, blurring her vision. The sounds that he was making now where feeble and almost inaudible, but inside of that car, in the quiet of the young night, it seemed as if he was screaming, but he couldn't, he couldn't physically do that, because his vocal cords were torn apart, his skin had been opened completely, and the crimson blood flowing outside the deep cut on his neck was taking away his life.

The man struggled to breath, slowly falling on his back, his body was melting on his seat, life leaving his eyes slowly, his dark irises kept staring at Abby, she kept looking at him, unable to tear her eyes off of him. He was choking in his own blood rapidly, while his hands gave up and fell on his lap, he died like that, his head tilted to the side, his eyes wide open rolled in the back of his head, his chin pressed on his chest, his own blood covering his jacket and his seat completely.

Everything for a moment was still, silent, as if time had frozen. Raven was wide eyes, some tears were balancing dangerously on her eyelashes, then Abby blinked and everything started to move frantically again. She turned toward her, it was dark but not enough for Raven to not see, and so she spotted how her cheeks, the tip of her nose and even her chin were covered in droplets of blood. The man's blood.

“Get out of the car Raven, now!” she hissed, but Raven was motionless, Abby pursed her lips and then slapped her cheek strongly, to wake her from her trance “Now Raven!” she hissed again, at that the girl blinked and nodded, her hand stroking her cheek instinctively, then they opened their doors. Abby jumped out of the vehicle rapidly, then rushed to her, helping her out. “Abby? Oh my god, what are we going to do now? There are other three men inside.” Raven whispered, her voice trembling and cracking. But Abby wasn't even shivering, her eyes wide open, her mind working fast, she was breathing heavily.

“It's ok, we're gonna get out of here, we're gonna survive this.” she forced Raven to lean her weight on her, and then helped her walking toward the wall beside the jeep, turning around the corner. “Stay down and hide, I'll be back with the others.” she said, nodding. Raven blinked. “Wait what? No, don't go there, they'll kill you Abby.” Raven said, sniffing, her heart beating rapidly in her
Her heart had never beat that fast in her life, her blood felt hot in her veins, almost burning her from the inside. Her eyes where wide open, all of her senses were acute and alive. She could smell the blood on her face, the smoke in the air, the dust and the mud of the ground. She could feel the drops of blood on her skin, the cool sharp blade in her hand, the tensions of her muscles under her skin, the sweat on her forehead. She could also taste the disgusting flavor of the bandit on her lips, where he had crashed his mouth, where his tongue had tried to lick her lips open. She could hear the sound of her panting heavily, the hammering of her heart in her ribcage, her boots pressing on the stones at her feet. And finally she could see the dark in front of her, her hands still at her sides, her fingers gripping at the scalpel with strength.

She swallowed and closed her eyes, breathed in and then plastered herself on the house's wall. It was dark enough for her to not be seen immediately, and so she waited, she waited for the bandits to get out of the house, she waited for them to walk toward the jeep that was few feet from her. She waited, her heart beating rapidly in her chest, her blood rushing with adrenaline in her veins, her eyes scanning carefully her surroundings.

And then, the door of the house opened again and a shadow walked outside. Ilo, the man that had dragged Rave on his shoulder, was walking slowly outside, the crutches in hands, Abby's bag on his shoulder. “I swear to god, if that woman will try another time to tell me what to do, I'll kill her.” he hissed, toward another man that was walking behind him, some stuff in hand, while dragging Octavia with him. “You know you can't do that, Ekyo owns her now, and he is the only one that can kill her.” the man said.
At that Abby felt a wave of anger boiling up in her stomach, but she suppressed it and swallowed, looking carefully at the group walking in the shadows. “Whatever, but she must shut the fuck up with me, women should just keep quiet and do as we want.” Ilo growled, while opening the Jeep's trunk, without spotting the dead man sitting inside of the car. The man that was dragging Octavia nodded and hummed approvingly, the girl was rigid on her feet, her hands clasped in front of her. Then when the third man walked outside, pushing Marcus and Monty forward. She held her breath, stiffening her back.

“We put these things inside and then I go back and kill the boy.” the man said, at that Abby heard how Octavia muffled something, they had gagged her mouth with a thick piece of fabric, so her growl died in her throat. The man beside her pushed her against the jeep, her tiny body crashed painfully against it. “Hey shut up.” he hissed, Abby saw how Marcus flinched at that, restraining himself. Monty was bowing his head, adverting his gaze, as if he couldn't bring himself to witness the whole scene.

When the third bandit followed Ilo to the trunk, to settle down the stuff, Abby started to move slowly outside of her hiding spot. She was holding her breath, trying to be as quiet as possible. When she was close enough, the man beside Octavia started to open the jeep's door, and that was when the girl turned, spotting her. Abby widened her eyes, Octavia blinked and then her eyes fell on her hand, where the scalpel was visible. At that the girl nodded and turned to the man. She muttered something that sounded as “Hey why don't you shut the fuck up?” and glared at him, the man at that stopped and turned toward her, and then Abby did the only thing she could think of. Now that the man was giving her his side, facing Octavia, she could aim for his throat and so she did it. She rushed toward him and the scalpel dived in his tender flesh easily. She managed to aim for the right spot, and when she pulled the blade outside of his neck, the man started to fell heavily to the ground, blood spilling out of his throat, unable to make a sound, the girl managed to stop his body before it could hit the ground.

Abby hadn't the time to look at him, but she was sure he was going to choke in his blood, just as the other one, she tried not to think about how easy this was starting to feel for her, slashing people's throat was something she didn't want to adjust to. Then she turned and saw how Marcus was froze behind her, wide eyes. “Abby...” but she silenced him and then mouthed a “Go.” looking at Monty too, that was now widening his eyes toward the trunk, where the two men where adjusting their stuff. Abby swallowed and started to think about what to do, if they tried to run away they were going to find them immediately, if they stayed she had to try and kill those men too, since their weapons were already in their hands.

But her thoughts stopped immediately, as soon as Marcus grabbed her by the arm and pulled her at the other side of the jeep, she stumbled on her feet, Monty followed them, they were plastered to the jeep's front. His eyes were searching for hers, and she was panting heavily, then she blinked.

Where was Octavia?
That was when a muffled scream reached them from the other side of the car. “You bitc-” and then another scream filled the air around them, and the heavy thud of a body crashing on the ground startled them all. Abby flinched and closed her eyes, swallowing hard. Then the sound of rapid steps on the ground preceded a panting Octavia, now covered in fresh blood. She knelt down in front of them. “They're dead, come on, let's get the hell out of here.” with that she was on her feet again, rushing inside the house. “Bell?” she yelled immediately.

Abby was blocked in her own body, her muscles tensed, her eyes wide open. Her mouth was dry and her cold sweat was plastered to her neck uncomfortably. “Abby? We have to go.” Marcus whispered, and pushed her on her feet again. Abby blinked, looking at him, and when she saw his dark eyes, worried and heavy on her, she couldn't suppress it anymore and choked out a sob. “Marcus...” her voice was cracking painfully, her throat was closing on itself, Marcus nodded, and dragged her in his arms, pressing her face against his chest. “It's ok Abby, it's ok.” he whispered, over and over again.

All the adrenaline and the self control she had managed to keep since she had slaughter the man in the jeep, to save her and Raven, were fading, leaving her shivering on her weak legs, opening a deep crack in her heart, that was painfully biting at her soul, marking her forever.

“What have I done?” she whispered, because she couldn't manage to raise her voice, she couldn't manage to even look up at the man that was holding her. “You saved us Abby.” he whispered again, his voice heavy and warm on her hair. She sobbed, flinching between his arms. She remained like that for a long moment, tasting her own tears on the tip of her tongue, sniffing and sobbing, paralyzed in what was a spiral of fear and pain. Her heart felt heavy in her chest.

Then was when she sensed that somebody was walking right behind them. “Abby?” Raven said weakly, Abby looked up then and withdrew from the man that was holding her. The girl was looking at her with her brown sad eyes, her chin was trembling, Monty was supporting her with one arm around her waist, Abby nodded. “It's ok sweetheart, we did it, we survived again.” and with that the girl crashed in her arms. Abby held her strongly, while the girl started to sob in her shoulder. “It's ok.” Abby kept whispering, trying to sink the meaning of her words in her own mind, in her heart. Soothing the girl, while trying to do the same for her.

“We have to move!” yelled suddenly Octavia, dragging her brother with her, he was snorting, limping at her side. “She's right, bandits are organized, if this group will not be back when the sun will rise again, someone else is going to come and check what happened. We should move now.” Bellamy said, while Marcus nodded and turned toward them. “We should take everything and leave.” he said, his voice heavy. Abby nodded, and Raven withdrew, sniffing. Monty offered her the crutches, and she took them, smiling sadly.

“At least now we have a working jeep, that's progress.” said Octavia. The way she was acting, as if what she had done few minutes ago wasn't a big deal, made Abby feel sick to her stomach. She had
done the same yes, but she was feeling torn apart in pieces, as if her whole being had been threw in the void and she was never going to be the same again.

Then a heavy thud on the ground attracted her attention, and then was when she looked up, and couldn't suppress it anymore. The body of the man she had slaughtered in the car fell on the ground, as soon as Octavia had opened the door, he was lifeless, his eyes were vitreous, his neck was covered in dark blood, his lips parted slightly. She fell the ground at her feet shifting rapidly, her head spinning, she then collapsed on the ground and threw up, her stomach painfully squeezing and turning upside down, her throat burning. She threw up, following every wave of painful nausea, she let it all go, she emptied her stomach on the dust, but she hadn't eat anything and so she basically threw up burning acrid water.

“Let me.” She heard Marcus whispering behind her, then she turned and saw how he pulled the body away from the car, and did the same with the others form behind the trunk. Abby adverted her gaze, feeling another ferocious wave of burning nausea growing up in her stomach. Her body convulsed again, her throat closing and pushing, but she had nothing else left inside of her body, so she managed just to choke out air and a bit of acrid saliva.

She felt disgusting, not only on the outside, where the blood and the sweat met the dust and the mud. But in the inside, she was feeling disgusting in the deepest parts of herself, where the light of hope was slowly fading away, making room for the dark and thick shadows of the guilt. She squeezed her eyes and then raised her head to the sky, her eyes pricked with tears, she inhaled deeply and then screamed.

She screamed with her all strength, she screamed so loudly that her own head seemed to explode. She screamed and emptied her lungs. She screamed for the blood on her hands, for the lives she had taken away, for the empty eyes that had stared at her while slowly living the land of the living. She screamed for her husband, that had left her alone, facing that world and that war, living that hell that was slowly burning her from the inside, living nothing left behind, and she screamed because she was feeling guilty for thinking that this was his fault, and she cried, and she felt the pain.

She screamed for her daughter, that was somewhere there alone, without her, living probably the same painful things on her skin, forced to make decisions she wasn't ready to make, pushed on paths that weren't meant for her, she screamed until her voice faded and she couldn't form any other sound than the quiet sobs that matched her heavy heartbeat.

She cried then. When her lungs were burning and her throat was dry, she cried and cried, pushing out the pain and the exhaustion, trying to find herself inside the rubble of what was once herself, but it was too hard to find it again, she wasn't there anymore.
So she collapsed on the ground, her face few inches from the water and the regret and the pain she had just threw up. And she looked up at the sky, her body shivering and melting at the same time, she felt heavy and light, her head was pounding and spinning, her tongue licked her lips, she was thirsty but she didn't care. Her eyes fell shut then, and she inhaled deeply, asking to the universe to end it here, to let her die, to let her feel nothing else.

And it was ironic how she was pleading to die in that moment, because she had just done all of that to survive, because she wanted to live, she wanted to find her daughter and rise again with her. But now, everything seemed so far away, she was feeling as a stranger inside of her own body, her limbs were numb, shivering and pulsing, she was holding her breath, and her lungs were burning, desperate for some oxygen, she knew she couldn't choke herself to death, she knew it, but she was trying to.

She was trying to.

Then two warm hands sneaked under her body, and she found herself in Marcus’ arms. “Let me take care of you now, Abby.” he whispered, and she said nothing, her eyes opened for a fraction of a second, he was looking in front of him, while walking them both in the jeep. She closed them again and then her body gave up, her mind obeyed her, and she passed out.

Chapter End Notes

I swear the fluff will come sooner or later, they will be able to have a break, just... you need to give me time to get to that part of this story, now I will hide in my corner, keep writing, because I can't stop, I need to push these people to the edge over and over again, I'm such a bad person.
Monty was driving the jeep since almost an hour, when a wheel got stuck in a hole, the vehicle jolted and Abby's body reacted, dragging her back from her unconsciousness, her eyes blinking rapidly to life, her breath trapped in her throat.

“No!” she yelled, instinctively, her hands frantically searching for something she could use as a support. Marcus reached for her rapidly, resting a hand on her shoulder, his own throat closing in a tight knot. “Abby? Abby it's ok, you're safe.” he whispered, from the front seats he could spot Raven looking at them from the corner of her eyes, while Monty tightened his grip on the wheel.

Abby widened her eyes, and turned immediately toward him, he tried to keep his face still, to show no fear or pain, she blinked, adjusting to the image of him, her brown eyes scanning his face, recognizing his eyes, his lips, his features, and she relaxed.

“Where are we?” she asked him then, her eyes looking outside the dirty window, trying to catch a glimpse of their surroundings. “We're driving to the shelter house Abby.” he said, his voice a low whisper. Behind them, in the trunk, Bellamy was laying down looking at them, his head on his sister's lap, while she had her eyes closed, faking some kind of sleep.

“What?” Abby turned abruptly toward him, Marcus nodded. “The shelter house, we took the jeep, and the supplies, we are heading toward it.” he said, his hands had shifted at some point, and where now resting on hers, cupping them on her lap. She blinked again, frowning, advertiring her gaze, the information sinking in, then she pursed her lips, her eyes started to fill with new tears. “What have I done?” she whispered, her voice sounded terribly desperate.

He frowned and followed her gaze and saw it, blood. There was still blood covering the seat where Raven had took a spot right in front of her, they had covered it with a blanket, but of course it needed to be cleaned. “Abby.” he said then, she was already squeezing her eyes shut, avoiding him, plastering her palms on her eyes. "What have I done?” she muttered, her voice muffled by her hands. “Abby, listen to me.” he said again, taking her hands in his, she shook her head, but didn't withdraw and let him cradle her face in his hands, he turned her toward him, looking her deeply in the eyes.
“Listen to me really carefully. You did what you had to do, you had to survive, and you did that, you saved yourself and Raven.” at that the girl froze in her seat but remained quiet. “You saved us all.” he whispered again, his eyes fixed on hers, desperately trying to make her understand how much he meant that. She was still crying, but her chin had stopped trembling, she was parting her lips, and then inhaled deeply. He saw a dark shadow of guilt hovering upon her irises, passing over her rich brown eyes and disappearing, even if he could tell it was just hiding, waiting for the right moment to sink in again.

She nodded then, withdrawing from his touch. “Surviving, it's always about surviving.” she said, sniffing, wiping away her tears with the back of her sleeve. Then was when she froze again, the dark shadow covering her eyes in a second, her shirt was soaked in blood, and her skin too, she touched her face then, her cheeks, her nose, her chin, and he could tell that she was feeling the dried drops of blood covering her pale skin.

“Abby...” but she wasn't listening, instead she raised her eyes in front of her, clenched her jaw, and then lowered her arms on her lap, motionless. “Abby?” he whispered again, but she didn't even flinch, she said nothing, she just kept staring in front of her. Marcus swallowed, but didn't advert his gaze, keep staring at her.

It was heartbreaking to witness that side of her, Abby Griffin had shown to him multiple sides of herself, the hopeful bright one, that side that had been so inviting and had made him feel so many new things. The sad, heavy, painful one, that had broke him into pieces multiple times. The afraid, fragile, shivering side of her vulnerability, that had forced him to take control, to protect her, to save her. But this one, this one was different.

She didn't seem angry, or sad, or in pain. She seemed empty. Completely empty, and it was scaring him to death. He knew that look, he knew what that meant. She was hopeless, she was feeling the dark heavy guilt digging inside of her, he knew the feeling, and knew he had to do something before it was too late.

Monty kept driving the car without ever stopping, they had another can filled with gasoline and could keep driving all night long. So they did.

Arkadia around them was lesser and lesser destroyed, it was still a giant pile of rubble and memories, but with every new district the roads were cleaner, the buildings were higher, the debris were rarer.

Then suddenly Raven gasped. “Look” she said, pointing out of her window, and Marcus adverted his gaze, that had kept silently staring at Abby all the time, and looked outside. Streetlights. Feeble, cold flickering rays of light were showing them the road. “We made it.” Raven whispered, and he could hear the smile in her voice. He couldn't help it and smiled himself, and lowered his
gaze to Abby again.

But she wasn't looking outside, her eyes were fixed in front of her, she was still motionless, he swallowed and clenched his jaw. She was stuck into the darkness, and couldn't get out of them now. He clenched his fists and made a promise to himself.

* I'm gonna get you out of there, I will show you the light again. *

The jeep slowed down till it stopped, and at that Octavia snorted. “Are we finally there?” she asked, her voice heavy and thick with the ghost of sleep, Raven turned toward them. “Yes.” she said, at that the girl snapped her head back up and blinked. “Great, let's have a shower then.” she said, but Marcus stopped her, resting a hand on her arm. “Wait.” he said, she glared at him. “We need to be sure that it's safe.” he said, at that she smirked, a lopsided grin that turned his warm blood into ice. “Don't worry, I'll take care of that.” and without waiting for an answer she climbed off the trunk, closing it behind her back.

Marcus froze and looked down, where Bellamy was staring at him, his eyes wide open, heavy and sad. Monty opened his door and jumped on the street. “Octavia wait!” he yelled, but the girl was walking without looking back. “Stay back, I'll handle this.” she snapped, and Monty at that stopped, turning toward them, Marcus swallowed and looked at his side, Abby was still silent, she wasn't paying attention to them.

He snorted and then opened his door. “Stay here.” he ordered to the others, Raven and Bellamy nodded, Abby ignored him. He rushed toward Octavia, the girl was holding something in her hand, he squeezed his eyes and then ran faster when saw that it was her brother's gun.

“Octavia!” he growled, she turned toward him and snorted. “I said that I'll handle this!”

“Well that's stupid, you can get yourself killed!” he snapped, taking her by the arm, she rejected his touch immediately. “Stay out of my way Kane, I don't need protection!” she growled, and resumed her angry walk. Marcus sighed in frustration and followed her. “It's reckless to do it by yourself and you know it. I'm not gonna stay behind.” he said, taking his rifle in hands. The girl shrugged. “Whatever, do as you want, but don't you dare to stop me.”
With that she surpassed a pile of rubble in a fast leap, and knelt down, hiding behind a wall. The house was right in front of them now, the windows showed just the darkness inside, it seemed as if nobody was there, but they had to be sure before they could walk everyone inside.

“Ok, now let’s think about wha-” but the girl had already started to walk toward the door, without waiting for him, the gun raised in front of her. Marcus snorted and followed her, his rifle scanning their surroundings. “Octavia, slow down.” he hissed, but she just huffed and then kicked the front door open, it creaked loudly and slammed against the wall. Marcus cursed under his breath the girl’s lack of care and followed her inside the structure. When he entered the door a quiet *bip* attracted his attention, but then Octavia was already walking further in the dark of the house and he forgot about it, following her.

Everything was quiet, the hallway in front of them seemed empty, he was breathing quietly, trying to make less noise as possible, but the girl was ready to slam her foot against another door, he rushed toward her, stopping her. “For god’s sake, stop!” he hissed, she glared at him. “I said-” but Marcus raised a hand in front of him, silencing her. “I’m not stopping you, but you have to keep it quiet.” he hissed again. Octavia at that rolled her eyes. “Whatever.” she growled and opened the door using the handhold. They found themselves in the middle of an empty dirty room, the walls filled in cracks, the windows were broken, some giant pieces of plastic used as a shield for the cold wind. She huffed and walked outside, he followed her. And they started to carefully check every corner of the house.

The entire structure was dirty and broken, it was made mostly of wooden panels and it creaked with every step and wind blow. They searched every room, going upstairs too, it seemed as if nobody had lived there in a while. There were several empty rooms, no furniture at all, where they could storage stuff, or sleep on the floor. There were two bathrooms, but just one was functional, and it had also a shower, it was little and dirty but it was still a “Damn shower!” as Octavia had said, grinning.

They tried to turn on the lights too and they still worked, but just in halves of the rooms. The basement had one warm yellowish light that buzzed to life immediately, there were two beds, one at each side of a wall, in the corner of the room there was also a stove, with pipes that connected the entire house, spreading the heat in ever each one of the rooms. “This is freaking amazing.” the girl said, walking toward it. “There are also wooden sticks.” she said, grinning and standing up again. Marcus frowned, worry starting to sink into his mind.

She climbed the stairs again and after a minute of silence, she screamed. Marcus reached her in a rush, ready to open fire, but Octavia was jumping on her feet, smiling brightly. “That’s a freaking fridge Kane!” she said, her eyes shining. “There’s also food!” she said, clasping her hands, already taking outside of it something wrapped in a piece of gray cotton. “Oh my god that’s cheese!” she said. Marcus at that reached for it and snatched it away from her hands. “Hey what the hell are you doing?” she snapped. “You cant just eat it, we have to be sure is still good.” he said, and then
sniffed at it, it smelled good, too good.

He blinked, Octavia raised an eyebrow and smirked. “So? Can I eat it now?” she asked him, without waiting for him to respond and taking it back, biting at it. “Oh my god that’s amazing.” she hummed in pleasure. Marcus frowned even deeper.

*Something was wrong.* The house seemed too much as a heavenly place, something was definitely wrong. But he hadn’t the time to keep thinking about it, because suddenly Monty was peeking inside the room. “Guys? Oh here you are.” he said, behind him appeared Raven, limping on her crutches. “Oh guys, you have to try this, it’s like the best cheese in the world.” said Octavia, at that the boy widened his eyes. “Is that?” Octavia nodded, her mouth filled with the creamy food. “Yeah” she hummed while chewing on it.

“Where are Abby and Bellamy?” Marcus asked immediately and Raven tilted her head to the back. “In the car, just outside.” she said. “Help me get Bellamy out of the trunk.” he said to Monty, the boy blinked, adverting his gaze reluctantly away from the cheese in Octavias’ hands. “Mh? Yes, sure.” and followed him.

Walking outside the door, to the street where the jeep was parked, his ears registered again that weird *bip*, he froze and looked around him, but nothing was visible from there. And when Monty called after him, asking to help him take Bellamy inside, he shook his head and reached him.

And so he didn’t saw the red light pulsing in a corner of the ceiling, while a micro camera followed him outside.

Abby was silent, staring at the broken window in the kitchen. The *kids* were organizing their stuff, deciding where they where going to sleep, and chatting happily, they had all took a bite or two of the giant cheese Octavia had found, and that had managed to push some kind of newfound happiness in them.

Marcus smiled to himself when Octavia yelled, “Oh my god is that soap?” and then froze in his tracks, when he spotted Abby there, silently overlooking the street. He approached her quietly and looked down at her. Her brown eyes were still trapped into that dark fog of guilt, he swallowed. “Abby? Do you want to eat something?” he asked her. The fridge had lots of food in it, even too much, he still thought that that wasn’t a good sign, but as Octavia had pointed out. “*We have two guns, a freaking rifle and I’m here, there’s nothing you have to worry about.*” that had made both
Monty and Raven chuckle, but had froze Bellamy in his seat, he had to close his eyes, clenching his jaw.

He had to admit that they were able to protect themselves, but still, something in that house made him feel as if they were missing a piece of a puzzle, as if there was something they weren't thinking about. But when his eyes fell on the woman at his side, and on her empty expression, all of those thoughts faded away and he rested a hand on her shoulder, feeling the sudden need to scoop her up in his arms and hug her.

*Why was he always feeling that need lately?*

“Abby? Do you want to talk?” he asked her, his hand trembling on her shoulder with the need to stroke her hair, to sooth her mind. She blinked and turned, as if she hadn't realized that he was there. “What?” she asked him, her voice thick, she had been silent for too long. “Do you want to talk?” he asked her again, his eyes roaming desperately over her features. She was expressionless, it was breaking him.

“About what?” she asked him, her voice sounded so distant, her eyes so dark. He swallowed. “Why we don't just sit for a moment?” he asked her then, she frowned. “Why?” and then her eyes fell on his hand, that had started to squeeze her blouse without thinking. “I may need to take a shower.” she said, and looked up at him, then smiled, a weak, dark smile that made him feel sick to his stomach. “I have blood all over my shirt.” she said, and then withdrew.

Marcus blinked. “Abby?” he called after her, she stopped and turned toward him, a heavy silence hovering upon her. He parted his lips, and she smiled again, another pang in his chest, it was such a wrong way to stretch her lips. “I'm fine Marcus, I told you.” and with that she walked outside the room.

Marcus closed his eyes, swallowing hard. Then he inhaled deeply, collecting his thoughts. “Hey Kane, after Abby it's my turn to take a shower, you should to, you stink as a trashcan.” Octavia said, while passing outside the door, heading to the room near the bathroom where the others were. Marcus nodded instinctively, but he wasn't listening.

Then he heard someone knocking on a door. “Abby? I forgot to give you the soap, can I come in?” it was Raven, her voice muffled by the walls between the kitchen and the bathroom. “Abby? Can I-” but she then stopped abruptly. “Abby?” her voice cracked, Marcus widened his eyes.

“Kane?” she yelled, at that Marcus rushed outside the kitchen, toward her. She was shivering, the soap had fell down at her feet, resting on the floor, right beside Abby that was curled up in a ball,
her eyes blank, she was breathing but her body was motionless. The girl turned toward him, her eyes shining with tears. Marcus looked at her, she was gripping her crutches with strength, looking powerless, she wanted to kneel down, scoop her up in her arms, but she couldn't, at that Marcus entered the bathroom and nodded. “I'll take care of her.” he whispered, Raven inhaled deeply and nodded. “Sure.” and then walked outside, closing silently the door behind her back.

Marcus at that looked down at Abby, she wasn't paying attention to him, her arms and legs pressed tight to her chest, he knelt down in front of her. “Abby?” he whispered, but she didn't move or looked up. He sighed out and stood up again, opening the shower taps. The water started to fall down loudly on the once white tiles. “Let's take a shower, what do you think?” he said.

His hands moved toward her and he felt how rigid she was, he swallowed and pulled her up toward him. She didn't move at first, then her legs instinctively supported her weight and she stood up, her eyes fell down on the floor, he positioned himself in front of her. Then he turned to the door. “Let me call Octavia, she can help you-” but Abby was looking up at him now, her eyes dark and heavy, he fell silent.

She said nothing for a long moment and then parted her lips. “Help me Marcus.” she whispered, and it felt so desperate, so heartbreaking, he knew she wasn't just talking about the shower, and that thought squeezed his heart and made him shiver. He immediately nodded, his hands found the hem of her shirt in a second. Without ever taking his eyes off of hers he helped her sneak out of it. She closed her eyes once it was on the ground, he focused immediately to the belt of her pants, without paying attention to the fact that she was shirtless in front of him, this was an intimate moment, but not that kind of intimate.

His fingers found the buttons immediately and he opened them, his eyes looking up at her again, she was staring at him without really seeing him, when the zipper fell open, she took a step back, rested one hand on his shoulder, supporting her weight, and pushed her pants down to her ankles, kicking her boots off without unlacing them, the socks followed.

And here she was now, her black bra and underwear the only thing left on her body, Marcus nodded to her, she swallowed, closing her eyes, and he helped her get inside the shower. Leaving her dirty lingerie on, leaving only that light barrier of fabric between him and her. She silently entered the water jet. It wasn't that hot, but it was warm enough to cause just a tiny gasp from her lips. “It's ok, I got you.” he whispered, and she nodded, opening her lips, gasping for air.

At that he heard that she was sobbing quietly, he let her cry out everything that she needed to discard from herself, he would clean her on the outside, while she would clean herself from the inside. He took the soap from the floor, and poured some of it on his hands. He was still fully clothed, and the water droplets that bounced on Abby's slim back were soaking his gray shirt, but he couldn't care less.
Abby needed him now and he would have dive fully clothed in a icy ocean if that could help her. “I'm gonna clean your back now, ok?” he said to her, she nodded quietly, her hands pressing on the wall in front of her, he then started to spread the white soap over her skin. The water was falling rapidly on her spine, the soap joined the fall, flowing down to her lower back, disappearing in the black fabric of her soaked underwear.

Under her feet the water had turned brown, also few droplets of crimson red were vividly marking the little waves that her feet were creating. She sniffed, looking up at the ceiling, while Marcus kept spreading the soap delicately over her skin, once she was clean, he knelt down and stroked her legs.

She was so slim, he could feel the bones under her skin, her muscles were flinching slightly with every sob she made, but he clenched his jaw, ignoring it and kept spreading the soap. His hands stopped respectfully once he reached the line under her butt and he stood up again. “Turn around.” he whispered, she did it.

Her eyes red, her tears were hid between the droplets of water that were descending on her face. He inhaled sharply when saw that some blood was stubbornly still plastered at her cheeks. He then reached for her face, she closed her eyes sighing out, she knew what he was doing, she knew what he was seeing, and she sobbed when his fingers started to work on her skin.

He massaged her temples, her cheekbones, caressing the corner of her mouth, she swallowed, squeezing her eyes, then his palms pressed the delicate skin of her neck, the soap flowing down, first brown then white, sneaking in the valley between her breasts. She was breathing heavily, her ribcage moving up and down with every inhale and exhale, her bones were pressing on her skin, he swallowed sadly.

*She needs to eat more.* He said to himself.

Then his hands traveled on her arms and he washed away the blood from her hands, one finger after the other, while she stared at him working to wash her clean, then he looked up at her, she looked at him, he managed a smile and a nod, she nodded back, and his hands spread the soap on her stomach.

It was flat and rigid, her muscles tensed under his touch. The water kept flowing, the fabric of her underwear welcoming in the soap that escaped his hands when he washed her hips carefully. Then he bent down again, adverting his gaze immediately when he came face to face with her womb. She sighed out when he stood up and then he looked at her hair.
“Do you want me to wash your head too?” he asked her, and she nodded, parting her lips slightly. At that he nodded back. “Ok, then turn around Abby.” at that she lowered her gaze, turning and tilting her head back. And his hands get to work immediately. He took his time. His fingers worked slowly between her caramelized lock, that now were darker, heavy with water and soap. He took away a piece of rock that had got trapped inside of them, smoothing some knots, careful not to hurt her. She had started to relax in his touch, so much that suddenly her back hit his chest, she apologized and stiffened her muscles again.

Marcus smiled to himself. “Don't worry, we're almost done.” he whispered, and then, when he had collected all of her hair in his cupped hands, massaging them with the soap, he washed them clean, helping the water sink between them, pushing away the foam.

Then she turned, her eyes found him smiling at her. “You're clean.” he said, she said nothing and then nodded. Marcus was about to withdrew, leaving her some privacy, when she started to breath rapidly, her nostrils opening and closing with effort. “Abby...” he whispered, recognizing the heavy shadows blurring her eyes once again, she looked at him and then shook her head. “I'm so scared.” she hissed, choking out a sob. Marcus at that clenched his jaw, and ignoring completely his mind, that was suggesting him to not do it, otherwise he was going to cover her in his own sweat and dirt, he stepped inside the shower himself and wrapped his arms around her, she immediately crashed her face against his chest.

The water jet was still warm, his hair were soaked in a second. Abby was sobbing against his heart. He closed his eyes, ignoring the uncomfortable heaviness of his now wet clothes and held her there.

One, two, three, four, five minutes. He didn't let go, neither did she. Six, seven, eight, nine, ten minutes later, he withdrew slightly, looking down at her. She had stopped crying almost immediately, but he had found comfort into that embrace, she had to, and so they hadn't been able to end it. But now the water was cold, and he could hear Octavia pacing nervously outside the door, cursing them under her breath.

“We should let Octavia in.” he whispered in her hair, some water droplets falling in his mouth, he swallowed them. Abby sniffed, nodding. “Yeah.” she whispered, and at that he withdrew, his hands resting on her shoulders. He looked down at her, growing a reassuring smile on his lips, she looked at him for a long moment, then she must have realized that she was almost naked in his arms and blushed.

It made him chuckle softly. She looked up at him then and smiled, he shook his head, giggling, and at that she followed suit, their chuckles turning into laughs, and they ended up gasping for air.
“Hey what’s so funny?” suddenly Octavia’s voice reached them from the other side of the door. Abby looked at him and smiled kindly, she had turned the water off and was now shivering. Marcus cleared his throat and then took the towel that Octavia had conveniently left inside the room. “Here.” he whispered, Abby smiled at him, and suddenly Marcus was very aware of her nakedness and felt the need to turn around.

She said nothing and he kept his eyes fixed on the door, then she appeared at his side, the bluish towel wrapped around her body, her shoulders covered in water droplets, her damp hair were plastered to her cheeks and forehead. “Thank you.” she whispered quietly, and then her eyes looked up at his hair, she smiled and absently stroked a black lock away, adjusting it to his head, but it stubbornly fell again. At that she pursed her lips and lowered her gaze. “I must get dressed now.” she said, Marcus nodded, keep staring at her.

She then frowned. “What is it?” he asked her, afraid of another brake, but she then looked up, her eyes weren’t foggy, she bit at her lower lip. “I have no other clothes.” she said, shrugging. At that Marcus raised his eyebrows and hummed. “Mh, well, that may be a problem.” she licked her lips thinking. “Maybe I can ask Octavia or Raven.” she said. “Or you can take one of my shirts.” he said without thinking, at that she stopped, a blush creeping up on her neck, she raised an eyebrow. “Oh, can I?.” she said, Marcus widened his eyes. “I mean, until yours are clean and ready.” he said, nodding to himself, resting his hands on his hips, stiffening his back, clearing his throat. Abby at that smirked. “Obviously.” she said, then took the handhold of the door in her hand and opened it.

“I’ll take the offer then.” she whispered, walking outside, the amused smile on her lips making him feel warm all over. Before he could say something back, Octavia rushed inside, widening her eyes when she saw his wet clothes and hair. “Hey what the hell Kane? Couldn’t you take those off?” she snapped, then turned to the shower and then to him. “It’s finally my turn?” she asked him, crossing her arms in front of her chest. Marcus blinked. “Uhm, I guess so?” he said, she then approached him and sniffed, grimacing slightly. “You haven’t showered yet, tell me if I’m wrong.” she said, raising one eyebrow, Marcus shrugged and the girl huffed in frustration. “Oh for god’s sake, make it quick!” she snapped, walking outside the bathroom, slamming the door behind her back.

“Unbelievable!” he heard her muttering from the other room, and couldn’t help the smile that blossomed on his lips, then he discarded his soaked clothes on the floor and jumped inside the shower.

The water was cold, he shivered as soon as it started to fall down his back, but then when he looked down, and spotted the visible reaction that Abby’s smirk, with just a towel around her wet body, had caused, he said to himself that in the end a cold shower wasn’t a bad idea.
She was kneeling down on the floor, Marcus' backpack open in front of her. “Or you can take one of my shirts.” he had said. She blushed, she could feel the heat warming up her cheeks.

It's just a shirt Abby. She said to herself, smiling and shaking her head. It wasn't a big deal, for real, it was just a piece of fabric that she could use to cover her now naked body. And she should. It was cold and she was still wet, her skin covered in goosebumps, her limbs shivering, her damp hair uncomfortably plastered to her shoulder blades.

She shook her head and dived a hand inside the bag, when she reached something soft, she pulled it out. Her hand squeezing the light gray fabric, she unfolded it, and then a folded piece of paper fell down her lap. She frowned, and took it in her hands, ready to put it back, when she recognized it.

Her letter.

She closed her eyes and swallowed, she wasn't going to open it and read it again, she perfectly knew what was written on it, she swallowed and put it back in his backpack, without thinking too much about the fact that he had decided to take it with him.

He probably had done it so that nobody could find it, or maybe because he wanted to threw it in her face in anger once he had found her. She blinked and cleared her throat, without asking herself more questions, and then casted brief glances around her, just to be sure nobody was walking on her while undressing and unwrapped the towel, discarding the wet lingerie too, it felt too uncomfortable. She then dived her hands inside her bag, and cursed under her breath when found just a pair of underwear, no bra.

Oh well, better than nothing. She said to herself, putting on the dry underwear and then sneaking inside of Marcus' shirt.

It fell comfortably around her shape, it was big enough for her to swim inside of it, she stood up and adjusted it to her damp body, the fabric covered her almost to the knees. She nodded to herself,
it was enough to not scare the hell out of the boys. Then she knelt down again, taking the towel with her and the damp dark lingerie.

“Abby?” suddenly Raven's voice reached her from behind, she turned and smiled. “Hey honey.” she said, the girl at that smiled warmly. “How do you feel?” she asked her, Abby could see how tensed she was by the rigid muscles in her arms, shifting under her bronze skin, she tilted her head, smiling quietly. “You feel better?” asked her again the girl, pursing her lips, suppressing a sob. At that Abby felt her heart squeezing and jumping in her chest, she nodded and discarded the stuff she was holding on the floor, and in two quick strides reached the girl, wrapping her arms around her.

“I'm fine darling.” she whispered in her hair, Raven at that nodded, when half a laugh half a sob escaped her lips, she sniffed. “I'm happy to hear that.” she said, and Abby withdrew a little, to look her in the eyes, stroking her cheeks, wiping away a wild tear from her skin. “How are you?” she asked her, the girl shrugged. “I survived.” she whispered, at that Abby hummed, nodding. “You always will.” she whispered, meaning every word. The girl looked at her with her big brown eyes. “You too.” she whispered back and Abby smiled weakly, nodding, few hot tears pricking at her eyes. “We will find her Abby.” said Raven suddenly, her tone serious. Abby fell silent. “We will find your daughter, and we will bring her back home.” she said, and Abby at that could just drag her back in her arms, pressing her body firmly against hers, closing her eyes, nodding while diving her nose in her hair. “We will, yes.” she whispered, trying to believe in those words as she had never believed in something before.

“Oh finally!” Octavia snapped in the other room, at that Raven withdrew giggling. “That girl has zero chill.” she said, and Abby chuckled. “Teenagers.” she smiled, Raven nodded. “Yeah, tell me about it.” at that, both women burst out laughing. Then Abby fell silent again and fixed a lock of Raven's hair behind her ear. “Oh, I'm so glad you're here Raven.” she whispered, the girl at that bit at her lower lip.

“Me too.” she said, sniffing. “I don't know if I could do it without you.” Abby whispered taking her face in her hands, at that the girl smirked, withdrawing. “But you have Kane.” she said, raising an eyebrow. At that Abby fell silent and widened her eyes. The girl's smirk grew deeper. “I don't have Kane.” she said, discarding the girl's suggestion and at that Raven laughed loudly. “Of course not. Just as this.” - she withdrew from her arms, pointing to Abby's clothes - “Is not Marcus' shirt, right?” she said, amused. Abby blushed at that, her hands immediately reaching for the hem of her, no Marcus', shirt.

“That's not, it's not-” but the girl raised one hand in front of her. “Don't. That's ok, we all need someone to survive with, right?” she said, and with that printed a kiss on Abby's cheek, and smiling, she limped away. “Is Octavia finally getting that damn shower?” she yelled once inside the room, the boys laughed. Abby herself smiled, bowing her head.
“It suits you.” at that she snapped her head back up, widening her eyes. Marcus was staring at her, grinning slightly, a towel around his hips, his bare torso prickled with droplets of water, he was leaning his good shoulder to the wall.

*When did he get here? Had he heard the whole conversation?*

“I hum, thank you?” she said, closing her eyes, shaking her head, trying to recompose herself. Marcus chuckled. “Well it suits you more than it suits me for sure.” he said, walking toward her. Abby at that hummed. “Oh well, we all know that they create males shirts so that they can look good on women right?” she said, crossing her arms, raising her chin smugly. Marcus at that smiled. “Feel free to borrow anything from me from now on, ok? We need to share everything.” he said, his tone suddenly serious again.

Abby at that smiled. “Thank you.” she whispered, he squeezed her shoulders.

*Was that a thing between them now? He squeezing her shoulders, she letting him do that? Wanting him to do that?*

Wait...

He walked past her then, heading for the room at her back. “Does this mean that you will use my bra?” she mocked him, turning, at that Marcus froze and looked at her, wide eyes, Abby was smirking. “Hum.” he mumbled in visible confusion, and at that she bit at her lower lip and nodded. “Get dressed before you catch a cold.” she whispered and walked away, heading for the kitchen, leaving a pretty confused Marcus Kane behind her back.

It was when she was biting with immense pleasure the last piece of cheese, she had carefully sliced it in tow halves so Marcus could have one, that she remembered she had left her lingerie, along with the towel, in the room where freaking Marcus Kane was now dressing.
“Oh shit.” she cursed, swallowing the last piece of the creamy cheese and heading for the kitchen's door, when she crashed against a solid warm chest. “You were looking for these?” he said, amused, she closed her eyes, her palms plastered against his torso, she looked up then and saw her bra and underwear hanging from Marcus' index finger. She pursed her lips and swallowed, taking the lingerie away from him and hiding it behind her back.

“Thank you.” she whispered, walking backward outside the kitchen, looking at him with a bright fake smile. Marcus frowned, grinning smugly, then she hit the wall at her back and slowly walked to her right, disappearing inside the room where the others were, hiding inside of it.

*That was embarrassing*. She thought, covering her face with her hands.

“Hey Doc? You're good?” Monty suddenly asked her, she looked up at him, the boy was tilting his head, while chewing on a piece of dry meat. “The fridge is stocked with lots of fresh fruit, can you just take something from there?” she asked him, looking down at the food in his hands, he blinked and swallowed, then shrugged. “I like it.” he said between a bite and an other.

“Let it drop Abby. I already tried.” Bellamy said from behind his back, Abby discarded her wet lingerie and towel in an empty bag beside the bathroom's door. She smiled approaching the injured boy. “How do you feel?” she asked him, kneeling down, careful to not expose too much bare skin in doing so. Bellamy smiled. “Better. What about you?” he asked her, and she knew what he meant. “Better.” she said, at that the boy nodded. “Good.” Abby smiled and then the bathroom's door opened, a really wet but surely more relaxed Octavia walked outside of it. “Hey, next time I go first, you guys don't know how to spare hot water.” she said, pointing an accusatory finger toward her, Abby blinked but nodded, sharing a glance with Bellamy, the boy lowered his chin to his chest, grinning.

“Raven? It's your turn!” Octavia yelled once outside the room. Abby smiled. It was already so familiar, the whole situation was weird and new, but she already felt comfortable around these kids, not just Raven and Monty, but also the Blakes, not to mention Marcus.

As if he had heard her thoughts out loud, he walked inside the room, casting a glance at his side and suddenly closing his eyes shut, blushing. “Octavia? Could you close the door when you have to do that?” he muttered, swallowing the piece of cheese he was chewing. “Hey have you never saw a naked lady before?” the girl snapped, slamming the door.

Abby bit her lower lip then, standing up again. Marcus shook his head, and then smiled when his eyes fell on her. “So? Have you found a most proper place where to put your *private stuff*?” he asked, approaching her, biting at the cheese in his hands. Abby smirked, holding his gaze. “Yeah,
you will not have to worry about my private stuff anymore from now on.” she said, tilting her head, and he grinned. “Mh.” he hummed, while swallowing the piece of cheese, his tongue darted out to lick his lips clean. “Good to know.” he said in a low whisper.

At that Abby had to advert her gaze, stiffening her back, to wipe away the weird warm feeling that was growing in her belly. What was that?

But then Marcus was kneeling in front of Bellamy, they started to talk quietly, Raven walked in the room, a towel in her arms, she smiled at her and closed herself in the bathroom, Monty had disappeared in the kitchen, and she found herself smiling while feeling tears in her eyes at the same time.

If only Clarke was here, this would be perfect. She couldn't stop herself from thinking. She then shook her head, inhaling deeply and closing her eyes. When she opened them again, she spotted Marcus looking at her, from where he was sitting on the floor, he nodded toward her, as to check if she was ok, she smiled and mouthed an “I'm fine” and then walked outside the room.

“Well we surely don't need to go and check for food tonight, I would die for something cooked and… guys? We actually have a cooker over here.” Octavia said, pointing to the old consumed but still functional hob at their sides.

Abby smiled and turned to where Marcus was sitting, he smiled back at her. They were all feeling better suddenly, the shower had managed to pour in them some good vibes, the warmness of the water, or at least that had been Abby and Marcus' case, had warmed up their hearts too, and now they were all sitting in the kitchen, including Bellamy that was sitting beside his sister. They smelled good, really good, they all had managed to wash away the smell of blood, dust, desperation and death that had covered them, and like that it was almost possible to forget about where they were, and how things could still go wrong at any seconds.

“I suggest to let the adults cook.” Raven said, turning toward her and Marcus with a smug grin. Abby blinked and chuckled. “You want us to make you dinner?” she asked, Marcus snorted, but he was smiling. “Yep, let's mum and dad do their work, while we just relax a bit.” she said, standing up from her chair, her crutches supporting her weight. Abby was looking at her carefully, the girl was smirking, a knowing look on her face, Marcus was shaking his head absentmindedly, then he froze and looked at Abby. She raised an eyebrow and he looked down at his lap, suddenly lost in deep thoughts.
“It works for me.” said Octavia, helping Bellamy on his feet. “I can use a nap before dinner, and please this time,” - she pushed her chair back so that Bellamy could move smoothly - “Try not to screw it up as you did with the hot water.” she said, her tone slightly amused and slightly irritated. Monty smiled and stood up. “Call if you need help.” he said, while following Raven outside the kitchen. “Yeah call if you need anything, a spoon, a pot, a bed maybe.” she yelled eventually, when the door closed behind her back.

Then they were left alone in the room, the tension growing in the air around them. Abby at that sighed out and stood up. “Better start immediately, so we can both eat and then get some sleep.” she said, while opening the fridge, her eyes scanning the food in it. Then she heard Marcus standing up himself, his feet, that were now covered just in a pair of soft black socks, made a silent muffled noise on the floor that made her smile.

“What was that?” he asked her suddenly, resting behind her, his arms crossed. Abby blinked and looked up at him, a pack of fresh meat in hands. “What was what?” she asked him, while closing the fridge and unwrapping the foil around the steaks. Marcus leaned his back on the kitchen counter where Abby was working. “That thing with Raven.” he asked her, his head tilted to the side, Abby shrugged. “She just needs some sleep I guess, and want us to take care of her.” Abby said, avoiding completely the real question in his words. But Marcus knew better and raised an eyebrow. “Abby?”

At that she kept ignoring him, while scanning the meat with her eyes, to be sure it was still good, it looked pretty delicious already and she had to restrain herself from biting at it without cooking them first. Then suddenly he was reaching for her, one hand resting on her shoulder.

Again that gesture, again that comfortable warm feeling spreading over her skin.

“Is everything alright?” he asked, and at that Abby chuckled. “Yes Marcus, everything is alright, Raven is just... being Raven.” she said, grinning slightly, at that Marcus nodded. “Oh yeah sure, and this means?” he asked her, while following her hands with his eyes. “Nothing.” she said, looking up at him. “Now, could you stop talking and instead start helping me?” she said, holding out a slice of meat toward him. Marcus looked down, thought about it for a moment and then took the steak from her hands. “What are we gonna cook so?” he asked her. Abby smiled. “I will go with steak and potatoes.” she said, Marcus nodded and hummed approvingly.

“Great idea.” he said, while adjusting the meat inside of a pot. They started to work silently, she kept working on the meat, while Marcus started to wash the potatoes.

It felt so surreal to be able to cook again, to be able to touch real food after so long, and right when
she was adjusting another steak in the pot, she frowned, a thought kicking in.

“Marcus?” she said, he hummed beside her. “Have you found a map while you checked the house?” she asked him. Marcus at that stopped and blinked. “A map? No, why?” he asked her, she sighed out. “Well, because that was what we were supposed to find.” she said, looking at him. Marcus frowned deeper. “What do you mean?” his hands stopped working on the tubers. “Well as I told you the house is a decoy, from what I've heard here there should be a way to get outside of the city and... what is it if it's not some kind of map?” she asked him then, turning toward him. His dark eyes lost in thoughts. “Maybe we should check better tomorrow, if there's a map, be sure we will find it.” Abby smiled at that nodding, he smiled too and they got back to work.

It was comfortable and it was familiar, and she was almost feeling happy, yes there was still that heavy dark empty spot in her heart, where Clarke was missing, that sometimes took her by surprise, forcing her still, while her breath would get caught in her throat, forcing her to inhale and exhale deeply to regain lucidity. But also, the warm presence of Marcus at her side, while cooking, doing something so... domestic, made her feel safe.

Because Marcus Kane made her feel safe, and what he had done for her before in the bathroom had been helping her, rescuing her, and what was safer than that? She found herself staring at him, she was leaning her back to the wall, sipping some fresh water, while he was checking the potatoes in the pot. She smiled to herself, that man...

They had been through a lot lately, and had connected to each other more in the past few days that in the six months at the hospital, something had changed, something had somehow shifted, and she found herself asking herself if that man had always been there, hiding behind that uniform. His cold dark eyes were now making her feel warm, protected, she knew that wherever she would go, they would follow. His stiffened back and pursed lips were now soft solid muscles that supported her, carrying her when she fell, and lips that stretched in smug grins and tender smiles.

*Had this man always been there?* She kept asking herself. Than was when she realized that he had spotted her staring at him. He smiled, tilting his head.

“What is it?” he asked her. Abby blinked and bit at her lower lip, shaking her head. “Nothing.” she whispered, swallowing a bit of fresh water. He hummed. “Abby?” he asked her again, crossing his arms in front of his chest, his shirt stretching around his defined muscles.

“What is it?” he asked her, Abby blinked and bit at her lower lip, shaking her head. “Nothing.” she whispered, swallowing a bit of fresh water. He hummed. “Abby?” he asked her again, crossing his arms in front of his chest, his shirt stretching around his defined muscles.

“Is just...” she said, looking up at him. “Is just so different.” she said, and at that his expression softened, he started to listen carefully. “I mean, look at us. What are we doing?” she asked, Marcus
blinked and turned his head toward the cookers, where two pots were reverbarating with the sound of food heating up. “Hum, cooking dinner?” he pointed out, raising an eyebrow, at that Abby smiled. “Yeah exactly.” at that Marcus frowned, wearing a curious smile. “I mean Marcus, we passed from yelling at each other to cooking together. That's something undeniably different.” she said, smiling kindly.

Marcus at that chuckled. “But it's a good kind of different right?” he asked her, without really asking but also with the slight ghost of worry coloring his voice. Abby smiled brighter and nodded. “The best kind.” she whispered, sipping at her water again, without adverting her gaze from him. Marcus nodded, his eyes fell on the glass that was stroking Abby's lips, the water lapping at her tongue. “Yeah...” he whispered, Abby felt the sudden need to swallow, and he chose that exact moment to look up at her again.

Those black eyes of him where sinking into her mind, and she was suddenly feeling hot and cold all over. What was going on exactly? Right when he had lowered his gaze again, roaming his eyes heavily, almost hungrily, over his own shirt, that was falling down one of her shoulders, exposing her bare skin to him, the door of the room opened and Octavia rushed in. “Guys? What's taking so long?” she snapped, at that Marcus flinched backward and cleared his throat, Abby blinked and swallowed. “Uh...” Octavia hummed, looking at them carefully.

“So? How long?” Raven's voice echoed from the other room, Octavia tilted her head, while both Abby and Marcus avoided her gaze in silence. “Not so much, they are almost burning already!” she yelled, grinning, closing the door behind her back.

At that Abby sighed out, closing her eyes, when she opened them again Marcus was already working on the dinner again, and she followed suit, they both kept working, avoiding each other, without looking in the eyes, without talking.

When dinner was ready, and the others joined them in the kitchen, they ate without sharing words or glances, until Abby laughed at something that Raven said and when she looked up she caught Marcus staring at her. She fell silent then, and lowered her eyes, but could feel the heavy warmness of his black eyes on her, he never stopped staring during the whole dinner, a fond rich smile printed on his lips.
Nobody's Fault

Chapter Summary

Marcus & Abby found themselves alone at night.

Chapter Notes

I am sorry it isn't a longer chapter, and that I stopped for "so long" but I had been busy with my family, my daughter and stuff. So I am back, I wanted to give you something, so instead of finishing this chapter, because I wanted it to be longer, I will cut it in two parts, so at least you will have this for now. And I can go back on keep writing it, so maybe before tomorrow I will be able to post the other one, ENJOY THE FEELS and let me know :D

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marcus

“Oh my god!”

Marcus stepped in the basement right when Abby was kneeling in front of the stove, her eyes wide open and her mouth forming a surprised “O”, he tilted his head and kept observing her in silence, till when she rose on her feet again and spotted him watching her, she smiled.

“That's quiet impressive, isn't it?” she said, he nodded, looking at the stove, that was slowly burning a wooden stick, it was cold, not that cold to waste all the sticks but enough to at least use one. “Yeah, it is. I think it's too beautiful to be true though.” he said, approaching her, she crossed her arms in front of her chest, raising an eyebrow.

“You have that feeling too?” he blinked and smiled, of course they were thinking the same, not as the kids, they were the adults here, as Raven had kindly reminded them several times during the evening, and they were the ones that could see that this was too perfect to be true.
“Yes, do you think we should worry?” he asked her, sitting down on the bed behind her back, she shrugged. “When we don't have to?” she pointed out bitterly, pursing her lips, Marcus nodded. “Right... Maybe we should, I don't know, take shifts and check the house, just to be sure.” he said, looking up at her. She licked her lips, lost in thoughts. “Well we could do that yes.” - she approached him, sitting right beside him on the bed - “Or, we could all take advantage of this night and get the rest we deserve.” she said, tilting her head, smirking kindly. Marcus at that smiled. “Maybe we should do that.” he whispered, and at that she lowered her eyes, looking at his lips, his chin, his chest, then sighing out, she stood up again.

“Good, so you'll sleep here?” she asked him, pointing her index finger toward the bed below him, Marcus blinked and looked at the mattress. “Yeah, I wanted to give the spot to Raven or Bellamy, but they fell asleep almost immediately after dinner.” he said, smiling. He had thought about waking them up, and help them down here, to rest properly on something more comfortable than a couch, but they were all looking so tired and in peace, with those lazy smiles on their lips, that he hadn't had the gut to do that.

“Good, then I think we will be roommates.” she whispered, tiptoeing at the other side of the wall that divided the beds. Marcus smiled. “Do you want me to use that one?” he said, raising his voice so she could hear him. She remained quiet for few moments, then appeared again on his side. “Uhm, actually... I think we should move it here.” she said, Marcus frowned. “What?” Abby sighed.

“The bed I mean, there's a leak from the roof.” she said, pointing at the ceiling. Marcus blinked and looked up, and spotted the consumed concrete, from where, on the other side of the wall, few drops of water were falling down. He stood up and walked toward her, looking at the bed at the other side of the wall, half of the mattress and the blankets were soaked in cold water. “Oh damn.” he hissed, touching the wet fabric.

“I can always go upstairs and sleep on the floor.” she said, shrugging, Marcus turned toward her, shaking his head. “No, that's stupid. We can move the bed beside the other one, it will dry in front of the stove.” he said, smiling kindly. Abby smiled back and nodded, the two of them pushed the bed on the other side of the wall, placing it right beside the one Marcus was going to use. “Ok, now we just have to wait.” he sighed.

Abby hummed, her arms wrapped around her torso. “You cold?” he asked her, already moving toward the blanket on his bed, Abby shook her head. “No, no I'm fine.” she smiled “Ok then, go to sleep, I'll catch up as soon as the bed is ready.” she said, already moving toward the only chair in the room.

“No, you take mine, I'll wait.” he said, approaching her, to push her toward the bed, Abby shook
her head. “No way, I'm fine Marcus, you need more rest than I do, come on.” she gestured to the bed, her tone stern, she was ready to fight him on that. “Abby?” he reproached her, she raised her chin in defiance immediately, and at that Marcus groaned. She frowned. “What is it?”

He hissed, all of a sudden his shoulder was pulsing, burning waves of pain digging inside of his flesh. “My shoulder.” he huffed, while sitting on the bed, his hand squeezing the arm, as if that could soothe the pain. Abby rushed at his side, and slapped his hand away. “Let me take a look.” she whispered, her eyes already focused and concentrate. “It's ok, probably is just—” he almost yelled when she lifted the shirt from the shoulder, the fabric felt as a piece of his own skin, as if she was tearing it apart. “Damn it Marcus, you are getting infected.” she hissed, her eyes wide open, her lips tight in a sharp line. Marcus was sweating cold. “Am I?” he asked, peeking at her from his shoulder. She looked up, and sighing out, stood from the bed. “I'll be back in a second, don't move.” she said, and then climbed the stairs, rushing upstairs.

Marcus was clenching his jaw, his shoulder pulsing, it felt as if thousands of burning pins were digging inside his flesh, deeper, till his bones would break. He snorted, his hand squeezing the pulsing arm again, his fingers clenching around his muscles, that were flinching under his skin. “Hey, stop doing that Marcus!” suddenly Abby was beside him again, a med kit and a bottle in her hands. “Marcus!” she reproached him, slapping away his hand when he kept it there. “Sorry.” he hissed, pursing his lips, the pain pulsing and burning. “I know that it hurts.” she whispered, looking at him. Marcus looked at her and she smiled. “Now let me take care of it ok?” she said, and he nodded, adverting his eyes, bowing his head and trying to breath normally.

“He's soaked with water.” he whispered, she said nothing for a moment, then her hand froze on his skin. “Oh...” and he knew that she was thinking again back at the moment he had stepped inside the shower, wrapping his arms around her, not caring about his own clothes, also forgetting completely about his badnages. “It's ok.” he said, looking at her, managing a weak smile through the pain he was feeling, she was avoiding his gaze. “I'm sorry Marcus, I wasn't thinking at your shoulder, I—” he touched one of her legs, to get her attention, Abby looked up at him again, she was biting at the inside of her cheek. “It's ok Abby.” he whispered, she looked at him for a long moment in silence, then she nodded and he withdrew his hand, at that her leg flinched slightly, but they both ignored it.

“We will have to take some new bandages then, also dry the old ones, we can't waste anything.” she said, Marcus nodded. “Actually, I saw some medicines in the cabinet in the bathroom, maybe there's something we could still use.” he said, at that Abby frowned, without stopping her work. “Medicines?” she scoffed. “That's unbelievable, fresh food, medicines, beds, a stove, what is this place?” she said, asking it to him or to herself, he couldn't tell. He hissed, when Abby had to press the cotton swab on a particular deep part of the wound. “Sorry.” she mumbled, but kept working. “You said this place was a decoy, right?” he asked her, trying to focus on something else than the pain in his shoulder. She nodded. “Yes, they told me that.” she said, Marcus frowned. “They?” and peeked at her, without turning his head, because he was afraid to move, his skin felt as if with every movement it would brake into pieces. “Yes, the people who met the rebels.” she said, smiling to herself, shaking her head.
“I listened to them, I know it was a long shot, but if what they were saying was true, I had to give it a try right?” she said, looking at him, smirking slightly. “You were already safe Abby.” he whispered, at that she stopped doing what she was doing, and looked at him, her long hair weren’t damp anymore, but she hadn’t dry them properly and so now they were slightly messy, with long caramelized curls falling down her shoulders. His gray shirt was too big for her, one of her bare shoulders was exposed, the orange halo of light the stove was casting on her head and back, made her glowing in front of him, he had to blink to focus again when she started to talk.

“You know that is not true Marcus. Also,” - she resumed her work on his wound - “I needed to be sure that I had some kind of... plan B.” she said, casting brief glances at him, while cleaning his wound with the antiseptic. “I just...” she stopped, and swallowed, sighing out, pushing away from her eyes one wild curl. “I just needed to know I could do something if... if I needed to, to protect Clarke, I needed to know if there was a place where we could go and start all over again.” she whispered. Marcus sighed. “This war will end sooner or later Abby,” he whispered, she smirked bitterly.

“Yes, probably. But how many people will have to die before this will happen? How much of Arkadia will still be here in the end?” she asked him, her brown eyes now were looking at him, and he had to force himself to answer and stop staring. “I don't know.” he said, his voice heavy. She pursed her lips. “Exactly.” and then she focused again on his wound, her hand moving the cotton swab absentmindedly on his skin, she wasn't thinking about his shoulder anymore. “What I know, is that someone has to still be here in the end, to build everything again,” he whispered, leaning toward her involuntary. She looked up at him again, her hand fell slowly down on his bicep, stroking his elbow, falling on her lap.

“They destroyed everything, and we have to build it again.” she whispered, her smoky voice was thick and heavy. “Isn't it a little bit hypocritical?” she asked him, tilting slightly her head. Marcus smiled weakly, bowing his head, pressing his chin to his chest, sighing out. They remained quiet after that, him looking at his hands on his lap, she collecting the dirty cotton swabs.

“I used to love this city.” he whispered, turning slowly toward her, her eyes weren't on him, but she was listening. “This is my home.” he said, and Abby looked up at him again. “It was mine too.” she said, “Now I just want to let this place behind my back, forever.” she added, swallowing hard and sniffing, standing up rapidly. “I will go and check those medicines.” she said, without waiting for him to respond, and went upstairs fast.

Marcus closed his eyes and sighed out. His shoulder was still pulsing, and was still painful, but it wasn’t burning anymore, he still couldn't trust to move. So he staid there, motionless, listening to the quiet murmur of the stove, consuming the wooden stick in its flames, waiting for Abby to come back to him. When she did, she was quiet, her hands were holding a bottle with some pills and a tube with some kind of cream. He looked up at her, but she wasn't looking at him.
“I found these, they seem still good, I will give you one of these,” - she pointed to the pills - “It's to prevent infection, and this,” - she putted the tube of cream on the bed - “It's for the wound, it will help it heal quickly.” she said, and took a pill out from the bottle. “Here, swallow it.” she said, putting the white pill in his palm. Marcus looked down, and without saying a thing, swallowed it. “Now, I'll have to spread this on the wound, ok?” she said, her voice sounded heavy and sad, he nodded.

“I'm sorry.” he said, when she had poured some of the cream on her fingertips. “For what?” she asked, without looking at him. Marcus chuckled bitterly. “For everything.” he said, and looked at her, she forced him to turn again pushing him on the cheek. “Stay still.” she ordered him, while starting to spread the cream, it was cold and he flinched. “Don't move.” she said, Marcus swallowed. “I'm trying to.” he hissed, she was delicate, her fingers working slowly and without putting too much pressure, but it was still burning. “Yeah well, try harder.” she whispered, her hot breath reached his wound, he shivered.

She kept working in silence for few more minutes, while Marcus kept silent, getting that right now she wasn't in the mood to take his apologies or to talk about anything at all. He asked himself if she was ever gonna forgive him. He asked himself if she was ever gonna listen to him for real, he wanted to apologize for so many things. He wanted to be able to look her in the eyes and not feel guilty for what he had done.

_Six months._

They knew each other since just six months, and yet he had a lot to say sorry for. Six months and he had found a way to take her husband away from her, to make her daughter escape, to force her into the battlefield too. He sucked at his job, that was obvious.

He had always been so good at it, always a good soldier, he was general for a reason, and yet... that woman. She had been able to throw in the wind a life of training, every rule, even his common sense and had dragged him with her, into that hurricane, into that storm that she was. Abby Griffin was a force of nature, that was undeniable, he knew he had to stay behind, he knew he couldn't risk his career, his life, for a girl and her mother, and yet.

He told himself he had made a promise to Jake Griffin, to protect them both, and it was true, he had do that, and that had probably affected his judgment, but also... when Clarke Griffin had escaped, he had freak out, internally he had broke into pieces yes, but he hadn't sneak out in the night, searching for her, he hadn't collectsupplies, to mess up with his career and follow her. No. He had done it when Abby had decided to follow her.
He had told himself it was because he had already lost one of them, but that wasn't exactly true, not completely at least. He knew something else had pushed him outside of that building, forcing him to follow those two kids on the battlefield.

The reason was because he couldn't apparently bear the thought of losing her. He couldn't let that woman die, because that woman had suddenly took a place inside of him that he wasn't able to take back.

And that was killing him.

Because that woman was also mad at him, he could see it in her eyes, he could see it in her smiles, she was kinder, she was gentler, they had managed to talk, they had managed to help each other, they also had managed to share an intimate moment, she had needed him, he had helped her, yes, that was true. But he could still sense the anger, behind the kindness of her gestures, she was still blaming him, because she couldn't just blame the war, she had to look in the eyes someone and blame that person for the pain she had to suffer, for the pain they all had to suffer. So she had started to put the blame on him, and she was still doing that.

But that was ok, he had said to himself, that was something he deserved, he was going to be guilty for every crime, he was going to carry her anger, her rage, he was going to do that because he owe her that, even if she wasn't asking him to do that, he was going to support the weight of her hate, if that meant she was going to follow him, and that he could protect her.

He was going to take the blame of the world for her.

“Ok, done.” she said suddenly, cleaning her hands on a piece of fabric she had took from the med kit. Marcus blinked, looking at his shoulder, it was bandaged. When she had do that? Abby sighed out. “Now you need to rest, those pills will start to make you feel tired, and maybe dizzy, so it's better if you lay down.” she said, and he nodded, blinking at his wound.

He had been so lost in his thoughts, that hadn't registered that she had kept working on his wound carefully and now she had bandaged him, it was a smaller bandage, covering just the wound, not all of his torso, and he was able now to move the arm without feeling as if his skin was catching fire.

“Ok, I will maybe take the chair then.” he said, standing up, but his body wasn't ready for that and his head started to spin rapidly, he felt the need to throw up, Abby was there in a second, her hands on his biceps to help him steady. “Marcus? Stay down.” she hissed, pushing him slowly on the bed. He huffed. “Damn, I am dizzy.” he said, she raised an eyebrow and snorted. “I told you, now
lay down and sleep, I will take care of myself, don't worry.” she whispered, helping him under the blanket. Marcus was feeling suddenly too weak to protest, so he just nodded, swallowing, he was thirsty. “Can I have some water?” he asked her, without opening his eyes, she hummed. “Yes, I'll take you some.” she whispered, and then he heard her steps echoing away, on the stairs.

Then he fell asleep immediately.

Abby

She was carrying a glass filled with water to the brim, tiptoeing at the end of the stairs, inside the basement, when she heard him.

Snorting. She bit at her lower lip, shaking her head and smiled. Her eyes adjusted to the dark yellowish atmosphere in the room again and she saw him, sleeping deeply, his head slightly tilted to the side, his chest rising and falling heavily. She nodded to herself and let the glass on the floor, right at his reach. Then she stroked his forehead, to check his body heat, he wasn't feverish, yet.

She sighed and sat down on the bed, avoiding the soaked blankets, feeling wet fabric on the skin was always uncomfortable, but being wet in the cold of that rigid autumn was worse. She crossed her legs then, sitting on her pillow, sighing out, looking at the stove that was quietly spreading the warmth in the house.

Then her mind started to travel by itself and she asked herself where Clarke was now, if she was warm enough, if she was alone, or with someone else, maybe other survivors, she asked herself if she had the chance to eat something. She had felt so guilty earlier, biting at that steak, chewing to those creamy potatoes, drinking that fresh clear water. But her stomach had started to protest for the lack of food as soon as the scent of cooked dinner had reached her nose, she had felt so dizzy that she had to eat. And how good that had been.

She shook her head, trying to discard those thoughts away from her mind, then her eyes fell
absentmindedly on the man sleeping at her side. And she froze, feeling a pang in her chest. She frowned.

Why all of a sudden she was so affected by his presence? She sighed out, and tried to advert her gaze, but her eyes seemed to be drawn to him by an invisible force. Something about him was pulling her into his orbit, as if she couldn't stop staring, asking herself questions she wasn't able to answer to.

Why I feel the need to smile when he looks at me?
Why I feel the need to know always where he is?
Why suddenly I feel so comfortable around him?
Why I feel the need to stroke that wild lock of black hair from his forehead?
Why he has to look at me like that?
Why when he does that I feel so... so... so?

She closed her eyes and shook her head.

Shut up. She told to her mind. Then she looked up at the ceiling and sighed out, trying to recompose herself, then suddenly Marcus coughed, and she looked at him again, he was shivering.

She took the blanket from her bed, careful to not cover him with the wet part, and adjusted it on his body, as soon as the heavy fabric covered him, he sighed out and a tiny smile appeared on his lips. She couldn't help it and smiled herself.

“I like that.” he suddenly whispered, and Abby froze, blinking, she then saw that one of her hands was stroking his forehead. She hadn't even thought about doing that, so why was she doing it?

“Sorry.” she whispered, withdrawing, he groaned. “I liked it, don't stop.” he said again, Abby frowned and tilted her head, looking at him carefully, he had his eyes closed, and his breath was heavy, he seemed asleep. She shook her head, and cleared her throat.

“Marcus?” she whispered slowly, not sure if she was ready to look him in the eyes, but she had to get if he was sleeping or not. He kept silent, motionless. He was sleeping so.
She pursed her lips, resting her chin on her knees, pressing her legs against her chest, wrapping her arms around them, supporting her weight, looking at the stove, and the way the wooden stick was being consumed by the flames. “Abby...” suddenly he whispered, at that she hummed instinctively, but he said nothing, she then turned toward him, her cheek on her knees. He was still sleeping.

“Abby...” he whispered again, she frowned, and leaned closer toward him, in doing so her eyes fell on the chair in front of his bed, where the bottle of pills was. At that she raised an eyebrow, realization sinking in. *The pills.* She smiled to herself, and shook her head.

That kind of pills were strong, and the collateral effects were, among the many, dizziness, confusion, state of delusion, body temperature fluctuations and many others. She bit at her lower lip, knowing that she was probably going to have to deal with a really talkative and delirious Marcus Kane.

*What a night.*

When she was sure he was responding to the medicines in a good way, without showing any collateral effects, and she had started to close her eyes, the bed almost completely dry, he started to moan in discomfort.

Abby peeked at him, trying to look asleep, but he kept groaning and snorting. His skin prickled with sweat, she cursed under her breath, trying to ignore him, she needed to rest after all.

“It's so hot.” he suddenly hissed, and she heard the blanket falling at their bed's feet, and then the sound of fabric shifting and moving on skin, when he hissed in pain, she opened her eyes and saw that he was squeezing his arm, he had probably tried to take his shirt off, forgetting completely about his injured shoulder.

“Marcus, Marcus hey.” she whispered, standing up, resting a hand on his chest, he was breathing heavily, he opened one eye and peeked at her. “Who is it?” he asked, then when his vision had stabilized her image in front of him, he widened his eyes and she smiled. “It's Abby.” she said, nodding, her hand never leaving its spot on his hammering chest. “Abby?” he said, she nodded again. “Yeah.” and at that he smiled. “Abby...” he whispered, his voice low, a whisper escaping
his lips as a stroke, she averted her gaze and focused on his shoulder, his muscles were relaxing and his grip on his bicep was loosening.

“Let go Marcus.” she whispered, taking his fingers between hers, withdrawing his hand from his wound. Marcus huffed. “It hurts.” he said, and pouted. He actually pouted at her, his eyes half closed. Abby bit at her lower lip to suppress a laugh. “I know, but like that you are going to hurt even more.” she said, while guiding his hand on his stomach, adjusting his shirt again to his torso, sighing out she looked at him again, he was staring at her, his head tilted to the side, his hand still in hers. Abby smiled at him, he sighed out, his eyes roaming all over her features, as if he was searching for something, or more correctly...as if he was learning something.

“You have the most beautiful...” he started to say, Abby froze, waiting for him to say whatever his confused mind was pushing him to say, when he closed his eyes and pursed his lips, then he opened them again and looked at her, smiling. “...hands, the most beautiful hands.” he said, toying with her fingers, Abby at that parted her lips and raised one eyebrow, then licked her lips and bowed her head, looking at the way his thumb was suddenly brushing her knuckles, a tender gesture.

“Uhm, thank you?” she said, looking at him, tilting her head, amusement coloring her voice. Marcus smiled. “You're welcome.” he said, nodding to himself. Abby cleared her throat and withdrew from him. “Ok, time to go back to sleep, isn't it?” she said, trying to put some distance between them. Marcus swallowed and nodded. “Sure, sure, time to sleep, sure.” he kept mumbling, and Abby bit at her lower lip again, he then started to open and close his mouth rapidly, popping his tongue. “Water...” he whispered.

Abby at that turned toward him and nodded. “You have a glass of water right there Marcus.” she said, but he kept his eyes closed, his tongue darting out on his lips, licking them. “Water...” he said again, his voice thick and heavy. Abby sighed out and basically climbed on him, her hands at his side, her hand reaching for the glass on the floor. She was kneeling toward it, so her hair were falling down her shoulders, stroking his chest, she heard him sighing out, while her hand closed around the cold glass.

“God, you smell good...” he whispered, Abby froze for a moment and then stood up rapidly, the water almost falling outside the glass, she looked at him, he was smiling, his eyes closed. “Here Marcus.” she whispered, trying to ignore him. He opened his eyes, and when he spotted her his smile grew brighter. “Water.” he said, and Abby nodded. “Yeah, take it.” she said, holding the glass out for him, he stood up then, luckily using the good arm to lift his body from the bed and took the glass from her hand.

Their fingers brushed together, she shivered and withdrew, bowing her head, avoiding his eyes, she was suddenly feeling too close to him, almost suffocating. He swallowed it, and she could perfectly hear his throat pushing down the fresh liquid, then he sighed out, humming in pleasure. “That was
“Good.” he said, and then suddenly his index finger was under her chin, lifting her head up, so they eyes met, he was smirking, his black eyes felt heavy on her, they were somehow... burning. “Thank you.” he whispered, withdrawing, offering her the empty glass. Abby blinked, and looked down, taking the glass, at that he sighed out, she looked up, he was still looking at her.

He was quiet, his eyes so intensely fixed on her, he leaned so close to her that for a moment she thought he was going to do something really really really wrong. But to her surprise he cradled her head in his hand and pressed his lips to her forehead. His fresh wet lips printed a soft kiss on her skin. “Goodnight Abby,” he whispered without withdrawing, his hot breath burned her skin, she shivered, and clenched her hands around the glass.

*Here it was again.* That feeling of need, that warmness spreading in her belly, that ache in her chest suddenly fading, the way her heart had started to jump in her ribcage. She wanted him to stay close to her, she wanted suddenly to feel his arms around her, to feel protected, safe.

He withdrew then, and laid down on the mattress, a smile on his lips. Abby blinked her eyes to life again, her breath caught in her throat, her cheeks flushed, she could feel them burning.

“Goodnight.” she managed to choke out, Marcus smiled, looking at her, then closed his eyes, and in a bunch of seconds he was already sleeping.

*Lucky him.* She thought, standing up from her bed, putting the glass down on the floor, breathing heavily, feeling hot all of a sudden. She was nervous. She was feeling weird. As if every feeling she was having were in the wrong place in her body, as if she wasn't supposed to feel like that, and she knew she wasn't.

But still, her body wasn't able to stop from warming up every time he touched her, making her feel so good, even if just for a fraction of a moment, she felt good. And when he had held her, close, tight, wrapping those strong arms around her, she had felt protected, every single time, she had felt comfortable, at home, safe. That wasn't a feeling she was supposed to feel with him.

Because he was Marcus Freaking Kane and she was supposed to dislike him, surely not to want him close, with his arms around her, while whispering kind words in her ears.

But suddenly her whole being seemed needing his presence, as if she wasn't able anymore to feel fine if he wasn't there. *Why? Why all of a sudden he had took that place in her life? Why all of a sudden she wanted him with her? By her side, guiding her, supporting her, leading her somewhere? Why she had done all the things she had done with him? The shower in the first place.*
It had been a moment of fragility, she was vulnerable, she needed help, he was there, he had helped.

Still...

She wasn't feeling weird because he had washed her, or because she had been almost naked in front of him, she was a grown woman, not a teenager, and her husband had died just six months earlier, it wasn't like that. She wasn't embarrassed for that, she wasn't even embarrassed at all.

The thing was that she had let him in, she had let him in and he had seen her vulnerable, and he had staid, and he had helped, he had carried away some of her guilt, her sorrow, her sadness, and had poured in her the confidence, the warmness, the.. hope.

And the truth was that Abby wasn't feeling ready to share these things with him. Because she blamed him for Jake's death, she did... right?

She turned toward him, he was sleeping peacefully, his lips were still carrying the shape of that smile he had shared with her. She felt guilty.

It's not his fault. Her mind told her, her heart beating heavily in her chest.

It's not your fault either. Another voice whispered to her. It sounded so much as Jake's.

She felt tears forming in her eyes, she pushed her back against the wall and then slowly fell down on the floor. Covering her face with her hands, and started to sob quietly.

It's nobody's fault, it happened, it's nobody's fault. Her tears burned her cheeks. It just happened, you can't blame him, you can't blame yourself, you can't blame nobody. Her heart was aching, she was feeling powerless, her limbs felt heavy and light at the same time. She was trying to be quiet, and her throat was burning painfully, suffocating the loud sobs her body needed to make, but she wanted to be quiet.

It's nobody's fault. And that was what made everything so painful, she couldn’t blame nobody, she couldn't blame him, her, or the soldiers. She couldn't blame anybody in that moment, in the back of
her mid, she knew that it wasn't that true, because someone had decided to take him away, following the law, the rules they had created, knowing that this was going to let innocent people die. But in that moment her mind was trying to soothe her, and the only way to push away the guilt, to make room for something better, was to admit that it was nobody's fault, it just happened.

That was the hardest part though, and so she kept sobbing quietly, slowly bending on her side eventually, falling asleep on the cold floor.

Chapter End Notes

Feel free to leave here a comment, because I love your comments, really, also, if you have doubts, or if you want me to...i don't know write something specific (something that fits with the story of course) let me know and I'll see what I can do :D (for example if you want them to say something specific, or to do something specific, of course not smut and love before it's time for it, so something that fits with the... current "couple status")
The survivors wakes up, and they are suddenly trapped.

Monty

Bip.

He groaned.

Bip.

He sighed out.

Bip.

His eyes started to move under his eyelids, forcing him to open them.

*Just five more minutes.* He told himself.

Bip.

He groaned, allowing his muscles to do what they wanted to, opening his eyes.
Bip.

A cold white light hit his black irises, he snorted.


He tried to press his palms on his eyes, shutting out the light, giving relief to his painful irises.

He tried.


His eyes were wide open in a second, his hands clenching in tight fists, to look at them he had to raise his head from the... *cold metallic thing* under his body.


His heart racing in his chest, he tried to move his legs. *Stuck.*


He was tied to something. He couldn't move. And where was he?

“*Patient 23 is awake.*” a metallic voice said, around him.


He tried to look at his surroundings, but he couldn't, everything was just white.
“Stay still Mr. Green.” that metallic voice said again. Monty froze.

“What is this place? Who are you?” he yelled, or at least tried to, because his voice came out hoarse, thick, heavy, as a broken whisper.

“The Doctor is coming.” the voice said, Monty was still breathing frantically, his body tensed, his neck hurting.

“Doctor? Abby? Is Abby here?” he tried to ask, his voice trapped in his throat.

Suddenly the sound of a door opening reached him, compressed air released into the room, then footsteps. Monty tried to look at the source of the sound, but his head was dizzy, and suddenly he felt the need to throw up.

“Stay still Mr. Green. You're still not ready to walk.” a female voice said.

It's not Abby. He thought, his eyes searched for the source of the voice, and suddenly his vision adjusted to the lights around him, and a figure started to appear in front of him.

A woman. Black hair fixed in a ponytail, big brown eyes staring at him, a giant cold smile printed on her lips.

“I'm glad to see you're awake Mr. Green.” she said, her voice thick, deep. Monty blinked and swallowed.

“Who are you? Where am I? How do you know my name?” he asked, his heart racing in his chest. The woman smiled and tilted her head.
“Everything will be explained. Now, I need to run some final texts on you, then you will meet the others.” she said, stiffening her back again, writing down on a datapad something.

“What? The others?” Monty asked her, his eyes roaming painfully in his head. The woman looked up at him, tilting her head, smiling. “Yes, the others.” she said, smiling. “You're fellows should be all awake by now.” she said, looking at some random corner of the ceiling. Monty swallowed.

“Raven? Abby? Kane? Are they here too?” he asked, the woman finished to tap whatever she was tapping on her datapad and then looked up. “Yes, we wanted all of you.” she said, and with that disappeared from Monty's peripheral vision. “Hey, what do you mean? You wanted us for what?” he yelled.

“Everything will be explained, I'm asking you to have a little bit more of patience Mr. Green.” she said from the other side of the room.

“Now take a deep breath, I'm about to start the exams.”

She said, and Monty was about to say something, when suddenly she was putting an oxygen mask on his face. “Stay still Mr. Green. It will all be over soon.” she whispered, and everything went dark.


Bip. Bip.

Bip.
She opened her eyes immediately, and her muscles tensed. *Grey metallic walls* where surrounding her. She jerked up from the *bed* she was sleeping on. Her heart racing in her chest. She blinked, shaking her head, trying to wipe away whatever weird *realistic dream* she was having. But when she opened her eyes again and stopped shaking her head, feeling dizzy, everything was still the same.

She stood up, her legs slowly walking her toward what seemed to be a door. *A cell.* She was in a cell. Panic started to run in her veins, and her body started to act on its own will. Her fists punching hard on the metallic door.

“Hey! What is this? Let me out!” she immediately started to yell, punching her hands on the cool metal, feeling the pain spreading throughout her muscles. “Let me out of here!” she yelled again. Suddenly a weird *buzz* attracted her attention and she turned her head, her eyes running fast on the wall at her back, then she saw it.

*A surveillance cam.* She clenched her jaw and jumped on the bed, taking the object in her hands, a red light beeping incessantly. “Hey! You! Let me out of here, now!” she yelled in pure anger. The pulsing light went off.

Then was when the sound of the door unlocking at her back made her turn again. She widened her eyes, her body tensing even more, ready to fight.

A black woman stepped inside, short hair, a tribal green tattoo around her eyes. “You need to come with me!” she hissed, her voice deep and low, Octavia jumped down the bed, rushing against her, her fists in the air, her teeth clenched painfully. But the woman snorted impatiently and stopped her, forcing her to put her arms back at her sides, she kept her still without effort.

“I'm not the enemy, you have to follow me if you want to get out of here!” she hissed again, her black eyes almost burning a hole in her head. Octavia tried to free herself, and when she opened her mouth, ready to yell, the woman plastered a hand on her lips.
“I said, it's time to get out of here!” and with that her hands shifted rapidly on her neck, she could feel the pressure of the woman's fingers on her throat, and then her eyes rolled in the back of her head, and her body crashed in her arms.

“Finally.” she whispered, dragging her outside the cell.

_Abbey_

Steps.

The sound of steps was echoing around her, _was she in some kind of tunnel?_

_and why wasn't she feeling the ground under her feet? Why her eyes were closed?_

She opened them, with effort her eyelids started to welcome in the dark lights around her, then was when she felt it.

_A solid chest against her cheek._ She blinked, looking up, she had to shut her eyes two or three times before she could actually see something, then was when she saw him.

_A tall black man_ was... _carrying_ her in his arms. She started to pant heavily, her eyes wide open now, her blood running from freezing cold to burning hot in her veins. Her muscles tensed, and that attracted the attention of the tall stranger. He looked down, his black eyes fell on her and widened.

“Damn it. She's awake!” he hissed, starting to walk faster. “What?” another voice said in front of her, she turned her head, her eyes wide open in horror. Another man was walking in front of them, he turned toward her, his blue eyes fell on her, then he looked up at the black man.

“We have to be faster!” he hissed, and that was when they started to run. Abby at that felt the urge to escape the man's arms.
Easier said than done.

She tried to push on his chest, his big arms tightening the grip around her. “Not now!” he hissed, casting at her a worried glance. Abby at that froze, thought about it and then, the hell with it, she smacked the man on the chest, his muscles felt heavy and solid under her palm.

Oh she was so screwed.

That was when she gave it all, and her body gave up to the panic, her heart starting to pump blood in her veins rapidly, her legs starting to kick the air, her arms moving frantically to free her body from the grip, her hands smacking heavily on the man's chest.

“Let me go!” she yelled, her voice thick, heavy and rough. The man clenched his jaw, still running. “Quiet! We're almost there!” he hissed, Abby snorted and tried to punch him harder, the man groaned.

Good. She tried it again, but this time one of his hands stopped her, trapping her wrist in his fingers. “Hey!” he hissed, looking at her, Abby was panting heavily, sweat prickling at her forehead and drops of it falling down her neck. “We don't have time for this, you can punch me later, now we have to save you!” he said. Abby at that felt a burning wave growing in her belly. “I don't need to be saved!” she hissed, her hands smacking the man's chest.

“Lincoln! Just tell her!” the man in front of him hissed, Abby ignored him, trying to lift her hips so that she could roll off of his grip, but the young man was strong, his arms powerful around her tiny body. “But she said-” the man in front of them glared at him. “Just tell her!” he growled.

Abby was still punching the man's chest, so he stopped, snorting, shaking her in his arms. “Stop!” he hissed, Abby froze, looking at him. “Let me go.” she grewled, panting heavily, she was tired already, she was never gonna survive a fight, but if she was going to die, she was going to go down fighting. The man huffed. Then his head jerked up, his eyes wide open. “Guard! Nyko, hide!” he hissed, the man in front of him disappeared in a second, running away, and her kidnapper changed direction, rushing into a little, very little gap, between two metallic walls.

Then was when he decided to let her free. Abby jumped on the floor, more correctly she tried to, ready to run away, but he squeezed her shoulders and forced her toward him, her back hit his chest, he trapped her tiny frame against his body. “Don't move.” he whispered in her ear. Abby was panting heavily, panic running in her veins, her legs shaking, adrenaline rushing in her blood.
When she heard the sound of footsteps, even if she didn't knew if she was going to run right in front of her death, she tried to yell. But the man wasn't stupid, and he pressed his palm on her lips. Her scream died in her throat, she saw a shadow moving in the hallway outside the walls where she was trapped.

She tried to free her mouth, but with the other arm he was trapping her body, forcing her still against him. Her muffled cry made the shadow stop for a second, she widened her eyes, praying in her head that he was going to come and check, she heard the young man curse under his breath, and she smiled instinctively.

But then the shadow took out from his belt what looked like a walkie talkie and said something that Abby couldn't get, walking away from them. She jerked in the man's arms, her body desperate to free itself, his grip on her tightened. “Sshhhh,” he whispered in her ear, a shiver of fear ran down her spine. She closed her eyes and swallowed, then was when the man pressed her even further against him.

“Ok, now I need you to listen to me really carefully.” he whispered, his hot breath made her flinch. “We are not the enemy here.” he said again. Abby was panting heavily, her mind already trying to figure out a way to escape him. “We're here to save you.” he said, Abby at that snorted, she couldn't help it. The man groaned. “She told me you were going to be a real pain in the ass.” he chuckled, Abby frowned, her heart slowing its pace. Her muscles relaxed for a second.

“She?”

“I wasn't supposed to tell you, but since you leave me no choice...” he whispered, the grip of his hand on her mouth loosening, Abby thought about biting at his fingers, so that she could use that exact moment to run away, but what the man said next, froze her in place.

“Clarke is alive. She is with us, and she's waiting for you.” he whispered.

In that moment time froze. Her blood ran cold, her heart stopped beating, her breath got caught in her throat, and he used that exact moment to knock her out.

Two fingers pressing on a nerve in her neck, she saw dark and her head fell down, her body crashing in the man's arms. Snorting, he scooped her up in his arms and rushed outside.
“Where the hell are they?” a voice was saying around her. “Nyko and Lincoln went to take the
Doctor, Echo was with Roan, they were after the Soldier.”

Raven frowned instinctively, her eyes rolling under her eyelids, she coughed involuntary. “Is she
awake?” a voice asked, then she fell the pressure of a hand on her throat. “Yes, we have to get out
of here, where are they?” at that her heart started to pound rapidly and heavily in her chest.

“Help me here!” a deep female voice said. “Is that the boy's sister?” some girl asked.

Boy's sister? Bellamy? Octavia?

Then she felt the need to open her eyes, in doing so, a ray of light hit her weak irises and she
snorted. “Why is she awake already?” the same deep voice asked. “Hey we can't knock them out
forever.” another voice said back. The woman snorted and approached her, she felt her body heat
reaching her. “Don't do anything stupid.” she groweled. Raven at that opened her eyes, a black
woman was kneeling in front of her, and she was inside of a... truck?

“What? Where?” she tried to form a question, but the words died on her lips almost immediately.
The woman sighed out. “No time for questions now, keep an eye on her, if she starts to yell or kick,
you know what to do!” she said to someone behind her back, and then Raven heard the sound of
steps on the metal of the vehicle and then a body jumping on the ground. She tried to open her eyes
again, this time she managed to do that properly.

She was indeed inside of a trunk, she was sitting on the dirty floor of it, her back was against the
cold metallic structure, her head was pounding, she frowned and coughed again. She blinked, her
eyes adjusting to the light. A girl was looking at her, curly fluffy hair framing her face, her brown
eyes looking deeply at her. “Don't do anything stupid.” she whispered. Raven blinked faster, her
heart starting to drum in her temples.

“What am I?” she managed to choke out, the girl chuckled bitterly. “In a trunk.” she said, raising
an eyebrow. Raven was breathing with effort, her eyes roaming over her surroundings, then was when she spotted Octavia, unconscious, right at the girl's side. “O?” she whispered, the girl in front of her looked at her side, where Octavia was laying. “She's alive.” she said, tilting her head. Raven licked her lips, she was thirsty. “We will give you water when we will be safe, if your friends can stop fighting us it will not take too much time.” she said, Raven frowned.

*Her friends.*

*The doctor, the soldier.*

*Kane and Abby.*

“Where are you taking us?” she asked instinctively, the girl smiled. “Somewhere safe.” she said, then was when the sound of new steps reached them from outside, the girl tensed, her hand flew to a sword hanging at her side. Then was when Raven noticed that she was fully armed. She swallowed, panic starting to grow in her belly, but she needed to keep it together, with her leg in those conditions, she was never gonna survive a fight.

“Oh finally!” the girl said, when a tall man peeked his head inside. “I swear, the adults are worse than the kids.” he snorted, the girl chuckled, then his bright blue eyes fell on her. “Oh she's awake.” he said, then disappeared outside again, and then a young woman jumped in. “Come on!” she said, stretching out her arms, a body was being pushed inside, at first Raven couldn't get who he was, but then his head fell toward her side, the growing beard, the black hair.

“Kane...” she whispered, her eyes widening. “He's alive.” the young woman said, adjusting his body at her side, snorting. “But he's heavy” she added. “Lincoln needs to buy us a drink! He got the tiniest one!” said the man, jumping inside the trunk, the two girls laughed. “Yeah well, if what Clarke had said is true, he surely didn't enjoy it!” said the taller woman.

Raven at that blinked, freezing in her seat.

*Clarke.*

An alarm bell started to ring in her brain, she was about to ask something, when suddenly Kane jerked awake at her side, his body flinching, his elbow nudged her on her side, she groaned involuntary. “Easy, easy!” the man said, approaching him, one hand pressing on his chest. Kane coughed, and Raven thanked every god in the universe that he was indeed still alive.
“You think he's going to be a problem?” the young tall woman asked, the man huffed. “Of course he will.” he said, Kane opened his eyes. “What?” his voice died in his throat when the man pressed a hand on his mouth. “Keep it quiet, we don't need to attract attention now!” he whispered. Kane widened his eyes, and then he turned slightly, and spotted her, he mumbled something. “Hey, hey she's ok!” the man said, when Kane started to move frantically to free himself.

“I'm ok.” Raven whispered, nodding, trying to calm him herself, even if she wasn't completely sure if that statement was true. The man nodded. “Good.” and withdrew his hand, without taking away his eyes off of them both. Kane swallowed, and focused his attention on her. “Are you sure you're ok?” he asked her, Raven nodded, suppressing some tears, she was afraid and right now the kind voice of someone known was too much to handle.

“Hey they're here!” the curly girl said. Then was when a tall black man jumped in. “Hey why are they awake?” he asked, looking at them both, Raven snorted and he raised an eyebrow. He chuckled bitterly, stretching his arms outside, helping the black woman of before inside.

“Ok we're all settled, we are going with the other truck, we'll separate at the lake spot and then don't ever stop till you are back at the camp, we'll meet again there, is that clear?” said the woman, the others nodded, then she jumped outside the vehicle. Raven frowned, looking at them moving in front of her. “Ok Roan you'll go with them, I'll stay here.” the young man said, the man named Roan nodded and jumped outside the vehicle.

That was when Raven felt the warmness of Kane's hand on her shoulder. “Where's Abby?” he asked her, Raven looked at him and then shook her head. Kane's expression froze, his features got trapped into a tragic vortex of pain, she felt her heart tightening in her chest.

“The doctor is alive. She's in the other truck.” said the curly girl. Kane at that turned toward her, panting heavily, he clenched his jaw. “Who the hell are you?” he growled, Raven smirked, because she liked the way that man was angrily and fiercely looking at those strangers, but at the same time resting protectively a comforting hand on her shoulder.

“Hey we just saved your life!” said the taller woman, snorting. “They don't remember Echo.” said the black guy, that was sitting beside Octavia now. “Oh they were still in phase one?” asked the curly haired girl. “Yes.” he whispered. Kane at that was about to say something, when around them the sound of the engine roaring to life warned them they were moving. “Oh finally” the girl named Echo whispered, relaxing on her back. “I'm gonna take a nap, wake me up if anything happens.” she said, curling up in a ball.

Kane turned toward her and Raven looked at him with hopeless eyes.
Where the hell were they going? Who were those people? What was going on?

The truck started driving fast on the damaged ground, carrying them away, somewhere safe as they said, and Raven felt every second more confused and afraid. When her mind recalled the name of Clarke, that had escaped the girl's lips, she decided to keep quiet, whatever was going to happen, she was going to figure it out, but for now, she needed to keep a low profile.

Abby

It was when the truck slowed down the pace, that she started to open her eyes. Her body felt heavy, as if her muscles had grew bigger since when she had fell unconscious. She licked her lips, feeling thirsty all of a sudden, really thirsty. Her hands instinctively reached for the floor of the vehicle, pushing her up.

She groaned. “Abby?” a voice whispered to her, she frowned. Who was talking? Then she turned toward the voice, her eyes adjusting to the darkness around her, she blinked and swallowed.

Bellamy was peeking at her, his body tensed as hers, his arms wrapped around himself as a shield. “Bellamy?” she whispered back, the boy sighed out in relief. “Thank god, you're alive.” he said, Abby at that coughed, her throat was burning for the lack of water, this attracted someone else attention.

“Hey ma'am, don't worry, we are almost there.” at that Abby turned, and widened her eyes. A man she had never seen before was looking at her, blue eyes, brown long hair, defined muscles under his blue shirt. He was looking at her in a way that made her feel small and defenseless. “What is this?” she asked. Her voice thick and heavy, the man smiled kindly. “As I said, we are almost there, everything will be explained.” he said, nodding to himself.

Abby swallowed again and tried to sit up slowly, the man let her move, so she relaxed once her back was plastered comfortably against the metal behind her. “Where are we going? Who are
you?” she asked, her voice trembling with the effort to speak. The man smiled again, amused, was it that funny for him?

“As I said, everything will be explained, you people need to learn how to be more patient.” he said, shaking his head. Abby frowned and heard how Bellamy snorted at her side. “You kidnapped us, and you want us to be... patient?” She scoffed, at that the man looked at her, his eyes sharp all of a sudden, his lips tight. “Hey, we didn't kidnap you, we saved you.” he growled, Abby at that raised her eyebrow. “Oh is that so? You keep telling that, but to me this, whatever this is, looks more like kidnapping than saving.” she hissed, her voice growing more confident, her belly warming up with anger.

“Let them be, they will understand once they will be there.” another voice said, at that Abby blinked, turning, and spotted another woman sitting not too far away from them, at her side there was another man, that she recognized as one of the two kidnappers that had took her into that tunnel. Her eyes frantically searching for some of the others, they weren't there, just her and Bellamy. She widened her eyes in horror, breathing rapidly, trying not to panic, failing miserably.

“They're alive.” said the woman, without bothering to look her in the eyes, her voice stern, cold, Abby looked at her with fury. “Who the hell are you? What the hell is this? If you are gonna kill us at least you owe us an explanation!” she yelled, tried to, her voice was still too hoarse to allow her to do that. The woman snorted, shaking her head, finally looking at her, her eyes were black and deep, and felt cold as the sharp of a knife sinking into her head. “Nobody is gonna kill you.” she growled.

“Yeah? And of course I have to take your word for it, right?” Abby said, feeling the need to get up and fight them all, realizing how unlikely that was going to be, since she had just saw how fully armed they all were. The woman smirked, and Abby felt the need to punch her in the face, she was mad. “Now I see where she got her... temperament.” she said, sharing a glance with the man beside her, he smiled too. Abby at that frowned again and blinked. “What are you talking about?” she asked, something in her mind was trying to get her attention, some kind of memory that was trapped inside of a thick heavy fog, she was struggling to get it back, when suddenly the truck stopped.

“We're here!” a voice from the front seat yelled, and then was when the truck's doors opened, and the light of the sun sneaked in, blinding her. “Now you'll get your answers.” the woman said, standing up, climbing off the vehicle, ordering something to someone she couldn't see.

Abby was still trying to understand what was happening, when a voice from outside got her attention.

“Where is she? Where is Abby?” she widened her eyes, her heart starting to beat frantically in her
chest, she turned toward Bellamy, the boy was looking at her with the same expression. Abby looked outside, trying to get a glimpse of the man she knew had just yelled her name, when the man in front of her took her by the arm, forcing her on her feet without effort. “Come on, it's time to get down.” he said, Abby was still shocked when he dragged her outside the truck, forcing her on the ground with her, she was ready to fight him, ready to escape his grip and run away, when suddenly she turned to her back and saw him.

“Abby?” there he was, fighting the grip of a black man, that she recognized as the other kidnapper, his eyes wide open, his lips parted. “Marcus?” she managed to whisper. Out of the corner of their eyes, the black woman nodded toward the people around them and suddenly Abby felt the grip of the man's hand loosening, and she was suddenly free to move, she blinked and looked down, and right when she was about to run toward Marcus, two big arms were closing around her, lifting her from the ground.

“Abby...” he whispered in her hair, and she instinctively hugged him back, supporting her weight on his body. “Marcus, oh my god...” she closed her eyes, diving her nose in the crook of his neck, and feeling safe and protected for the first time since that nightmare had started. His arms were tight around her body, she smiled, because that strength was making her feel at home. “You have to stop doing that to me, I thought you were dead.” he whispered, and Abby chuckled bitterly. “You people have a real problem with trusting.” a voice behind them said, they ignored it, and right when she started to withdrew, too look him in the eyes, tears adorning her eyes, a smile printed on her face, the sound of someone running on the dry grass reached them.

She was too focused on the smile Marcus was wearing to turn and take a look at whom was running toward her, so she didn't saw her when she stopped in her tracks, her eyes widening in shock at first, and how her frown melted into a smile, and her eyes filled with tears when she recognized her.

“Mom?”

Chapter End Notes

I swear I'm gonna post the next one sooner as possible, I like suspense but... not too much!
The Rebels

Chapter Summary

Abby finally sees Clarke again.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Marcus

It all happened incredibly fast and endlessly slow at the same time. Abby widened her eyes, Marcus sensed how her breath got caught in her throat, the smile she had offered him when he had hugged her faded, the relieved expression changed into one of surprise, a deep shocked one.

She blinked, he saw her long eyelids stroking the air, then she turned abruptly at her left, from where the voice had came. And then her hands squeezed his biceps, her lips parted, her eyebrows jumped higher on her forehead and in a fraction of a second, she was rushing away from him.

He turned himself, and his eyes laid on the girl, with mud on her shoes, dirt on her clothes, her hair filled in knots, tears in her eyes, wearing the brightest smile he had ever seen in his life. Clarke was staring at her mother, opening her arms, her feet glued to the grass, she was squeezing her eyes, swallowing a sob, when Abby enveloped her in her arms, with such a strength that Marcus thought they were going to fall on the ground.

“Clarke...” was the whisper that Abby managed to say before diving her nose into her hair, Clarke wrapped her arms around her mother, her hands squeezing so tigth the woman's black shirt, where did she got that?, that he thought she was going to tear it apart. “Mom...” she whispered back, closing her eyes, in her voice the sound of relief, tears wetting her happy laugh. Abby was holding her as if she wanted to become one with her, as if their bodies could melt into one.

And Marcus thought that if Abby could, she would do that.
Time had froze around them during that hug, while Abby started to sob in her daughter's hair, and the latter was shaking her head whispering, “I'm ok mum, it's ok, I'm ok.” Marcus felt the need to advert his gaze, even if the moment was beautiful, he felt as if it wasn't his moment, but theirs. He turned then, rubbing his chin, hiding the smile he couldn't suppress anymore.

**Clarke was still alive, and they had found her.** He looked up, where the black woman with the green tattoo around her eye was watching, she was expressionless and he felt the need to ask her how they had managed to find the girl, when suddenly Clarke called for him. “Kane!” her voice came out hoarse, he turned immediately.

The girl was trying to escape her mother's grip, Abby was fighting back the gesture, trying to held her closer, but when Clarke pushed on her shoulder, casting her a smile, the woman blinked and swallowed, withdrawing enough to let Clarke breath. But the girl withdrew completely, at that Abby shook her head, “No Clarke...” her hand reaching for her daughter's wrist, to keep her close to her. The girl smiled at her one last time, taking her hand and withdrawing it slowly and gently, “Give me a second, I'll be right back.” she whispered, so quietly that Marcus almost missed it.

Then she turned again, her blue eyes fell on him, she took some steps toward him, Abby behind her was fighting hard against the visible need to follow her and drag her back again in her arms, Marcus smiled and nodded, “It's good to see you're still alive.” he whispered, Clarke said nothing, her face expressionless, if it wasn't for the tears that were drying on her cheeks, living clean tracks on the delicate patina of dust that covered her pale skin.

Then was when she, without warning, wrapped her arms around him, kicking the air out of his lungs, Marcus was shocked, his eyes traveled at the girl's back, Abby was widening her eyes, parting her lips, his same shock mirrored into her features. “Thank you for keeping her alive.” Clarke whispered against his shoulder, her arms tightening strongly one last moment, before she withdrew, her chin raised again in defiance, her eyes sharper, her lips tightly closed, Marcus nodded. “I will always do that Clarke.” he whispered, his eyes fell on Abby for a brief second, she was wrapping her arms around herself, looking at her feet, hiding something that looked like a blush.

When Marcus looked back at the girl, she was staring at him deeply, studying him as usual, he felt the need to smile at that familiarity. But then someone interrupted the moment. “Clarke?” at that behind Abby a girl appeared, long brown hair braided with some delicate flowers, big green eyes where roaming over them with intensity, Clarke looked at her, the stranger smiled. “When you're ready, you can meet me inside.” she whispered, bowing her head in a respectful gesture, Clarke nodded, a brief smile appeared on her lips. “Thank you Lexa, we'll be there in a minute.” with that the girl named Lexa smiled and walked back from where she had come.

Then was when Marcus looked better at their surroundings, and noticed that they weren't standing just into an empty field, quiet the contrary. They were standing in front of giant gates, they were
rusty ad some of the bars were bent but they were monumental. It was the entrance of what looked
like a... village, there were high walls bordering it, from where he was standing he could see just a
big road leading inside, at the sides there were tables covered in stuff he couldn't recognize, there
were also buildings, built with wooden panels, wreckage of various vehicles and structures, he also
noticed that some people were building several new houses inside.

Curiosity started to grow inside of him, he wanted to go in there, to see better what was waiting
behind those gates. Clarke seemed to sense his need and smiled. “Come on, let's go inside.” she
said, at that her eyes fell on Raven, that had looked at them in silence for the entire time, she
smiled instinctively. “Raven.” was all she said, the latter blinked, “Clarke? Is that really you?” she
asked, the girl smiled and nodded, Marcus thought she was about to hug her too, but instead she
walked back to where her mother was waiting, as soon as she was close enough Abby dragged her
inside her arms one more time.

“Mum!” the girl complained, but Abby tightened her arms around her. “I missed you so much
Clarke,” she said, tears prickling at her eyes, her voice cracking in her throat. Marcus felt the need
to hug her too, to hug them both honestly, but restrained himself and looked at Raven, the girl was
crying quietly while witnessing the same scene. “I know mum, but now we really have to go
inside.” Clarke whispered, forcing a stop to that embrace one more time, Abby's face was
desperately sad when she had to let her go again. “We will have more time later for that.” Clarke
whispered, fixing one of Abby's strands behind her ear, her mother took her hand in hers and kept it
between their bodies, nodding. “Sure.” she whispered, Marcus could tell she was fighting hard the
need to hug her, to touch and stroke her without ever stopping, Clarke smiled and turned toward
him, but her eyes fell on the woman behind him.

“Take them all inside Indra, even the unconscious.” she said, “Yes.” the woman said back, Marcus
turned and looked at her, she ignored him and moved toward the truck from where Abby had
jumped off, “Come on, it's time to get down!” she ordered to someone. “What is this place
Clarke?” he heard Abby asking her, the girl smiled at that, took a deep breath, and looked at the
gates at their backs, “This is a new start mom.” she whispered, and with that started to walk,
dragging her mother with her.

It felt surreal, like a dream, one of those dreams where you don't know if you are actually sleeping
or if you are not, and even if your mind keeps telling you that something is definitely wrong into
what you are seeing, you don't want to wake up.
They had walked inside the gates and found out that it was indeed a village, Marcus could smell the scent of food, the sounds around him were rich and warm, people talking and laughing, kids were screaming while playing not too faraway from them. The street they were marching on was bordered not by tables but by stalls, each one of them filled with different objects, there were leather clothes and bags, wooden objects he couldn't define, food, jewels, also flowers and plants. His eyes traveled on every stall with awe, it felt as if they had traveled back in time, when stalls sell hand made things and all of those seemed coming from centuries ago, the materials where wood, metal, silk, cotton, wool, nothing technological was available apparently.

“What is this place?” he heard Abby ask again, she was walking few feet in front of him, hand in hand with her daughter, Clarke smiled. “This is exactly where we were supposed to be since the beginning mum.” she said, Abby looked at her, and her eyes told him she was confused, but then her expression changed. “You are saying...?” she whispered, Clarke nodded. “Yes mum, we made it!” she said, her hand squeezed hers tighter. Marcus frowned, behind him Raven was limping on the crutches. “What is she saying? Honestly I am confused now!” she said, at that Abby and Clarke stopped, the latter smiled. Marcus then looked up instinctively and then surprise filled him, before them there was a giant castle, scraping the sky with its angel towers, white curtains were flying outside some open windows, they were too faraway to see every detail but it seemed pretty much intact, and he suddenly felt the need to go inside, to explore the rooms.

“I'm saying that... we're in Polis, the rebels village.” Clarke whispered, smiling, and resuming her walk, her mother right behind her. “Wait, what?” Raven mumbled, Marcus smiled to himself, “We did it.” he said, and his eyes fell on the tiny woman that was walking in front of him, she turned for a second toward him, she had tears in her eyes and a tiny smile was adorning her lips, he smiled at her and she turned back again, following Clarke further toward the castle in front of them.

“Let's go inside, everything will be explained.” said the woman named Indra, walking past them, dragging a stretcher were Octavia was laying, still unconscious, the black man he had learned was named Lincoln was following her. Behind them the girl that had took him into the trunk was dragging a really tensed Bellamy, that was casting worried glances at his sister. “Why can't they just tell us now? Why we have to wait for every explanation?” Raven complained beside him, Marcus turned toward her and smiled. “Clarke trusts them apparently, we maybe should do the same.” he whispered, the girl raised an eyebrow, “Oh really?” then was when she turned at her back, her expression changed. “'Wait a second...’ she whispered, Marcus looked at his back himself, nobody was walking inside the gates anymore, they had all walked past them, Raven looked at her left and right several times. “What is it?” Marcus asked her, then was when she looked at him with wide eyes. “Where the hell is Monty?”
They were into what Clarke had named war room, a giant space where a table and several chairs were used to take meetings apparently. When Raven had found out that Monty wasn't in the trucks she had immediately rushed behind the others, as soon as she had reached for the woman named Indra, that was dragging Octavia, she had stopped her in her tracks. “Where the hell is Monty?” she had snapped, and the woman had stopped and clenched her jaw, visibly annoyed by her gesture, “Who?” she had asked, Raven had felt a burning wave growing in her belly at her indifference. “Monty Green, the Asian boy that was with us.” she explained, at that the woman had nodded. “Oh him, he is still in the bunker.” she said, and with that walked past her, leaving a confused Raven at her back.

She had followed them once again, limping faster as she could using the crutches, Kane followed her with worried eyes. “What bunker? What are you talking about?” she had asked, but the woman had ignored her, and that was how she had found herself sitting on a creaking chair in that unfamiliar room. Broken windows were overlooking the village and the hills around it, long white curtains were flying in the wind, she wasn't able to say what time was exactly, but the sun was visible on the horizon, the sky was pricked with orange and pink, night wasn't that far away.

They had all took a sit, except for Bellamy that was laying on his stretcher on the floor, right beside his sister, that was still sleeping. Clarke had started to talk when a weird heavy silence had settled on them. “I'm glad to see you all again,” - her eyes had fallen on her mother, she had smiled - “Also to meet you for the first time.” she had said, looking at Bellamy, he casted her a quick glance and then had focused on his sister once again. “I can tell you all have questions, and you feel confused, as if you are living some kind of weird dream, and... that is exactly what happened to me.” she said, her voice grew heavier at that.

Raven saw how Abby looked at her, her eyes searching for invisible scars over her daughter, Raven felt a pang of something that felt as jealousy, but she shook her head immediately, focusing again on Clarke. “We will explain to you everything, but befo-” Raven at that couldn't take it anymore with those we will explain later, and slammed her hands on the wooden table in front of her. “Enough!” she yelled, Clarke blinked, Abby flinched and managed to tear her eyes off of her daughter for a brief moment. “Where is Monty?” she yelled then, her eyes scanning the group of people around the table, Clarke at that frowned and looked at Indra. The woman raised her chin, her eyes hard on Raven. “We couldn't get to him.”

“What do you mean with, we couldn't get to him?” she snapped, her eyes falling on Indra, the woman was looking at the table with sharp eyes now. “Exactly what I said, we couldn't get to him.
He was still inside the exams room.” she said, her voice low and thick. Raven blinked and shook her head. “What exams room?” she asked, Clarke at that looked at her mother, Abby was chewing on her lower lip, right beside her there was, as usual, Kane.

“Monty was with you too?” Clarke asked, looking at her mother, she nodded. “Yes, he... he followed Marcus.” she whispered, her eyes looking at him, Raven saw how Clarke frowned when the man's first name escaped her mother's lips, but she then nodded, looking back at Indra. “There's a way to get him back?” she asked, Raven at that widened her eyes, focusing on the woman, Indra pursed her lips. “Maybe, if we are still in time.” she said, at that Raven frowned. “What does this mean?” she asked, leaning her weight on her elbows. Clarke at that bowed her head, Abby squeezed her arm. “Clarke?” she whispered, the girl sighed out. “It's time we explain to you what happened.” she said, and with that stood up and walked toward a shelf on the wall, taking away from it a pile of pages.

“Let's start from the beginning.” she said, putting the papers on the table, her expression worried.

“Let's start with the Eligius Corporation.”

All

From: Eligius Corporation

To: Dr. Becca Pramheda

Dear Dr. Pramheda, we are writing to inform you about the beginning of the work on the Bunker you designed. Everything will be built following the memo you sent us. We would love to meet you as soon as possible, to discuss the final details of the project.
“What is this?” Raven asked, looking up at Clarke, whom was passing the pages around. “These are all the information the rebels could find about the Eligius Corporation and Becca.” she said, sitting down again once every one of them had a copy. “And why we should care about any of this?” Bellamy asked suddenly from the floor where he was laying.

Clarke looked at him as if surprised he had managed to say something. “Because that bunker is where we found you, and where Monty is still trapped in.” she said, looking at her mother, that was now frowning, looking at her with worried eyes.

From: Dr. Becca Pramheda

To: Eligius Corporation

Dear E.C., I’m pleased to know that the works had begun, I will not be in town for the next three months, but as soon as I will be back we can settle up a meeting, it would be my pleasure to finally meet you. I hope I’ll be informed if something wrong happens.

Sincerely,

Dr. Becca Pramheda

“So these people built a bunker for this doctor, to do what?” Bellamy asked, looking at the pages in his hands. Clarke sighed out, feeling the weight of the lack of sleep hovering upon her, Abby sensed her discomfort and her hand automatically reached for her shoulder, her eyes worried, scanning her with care, she managed a broken smile. “The bunker was built to run tests.” she said, looking at the page she had read several times during the last days.
“What kind of tests?” her mother asked, casting glances at the page in her hands. Clarke swallowed, “They wanted to see if the human race could survive nuclear radiations.” she split out, at that her mother froze on her seat and frowned, then blinked and turned toward her. “Excuse me?”

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**From: Dr. Becca Pramheda**

**To: Chris**

*Stop calling the E.C.! I am serious! I have to do this! I have to save the human race, I am doing this just to save us all, can't you see that? War is coming, we are running out of time.*

*Stop calling them, I can't quit now, I need them and they need me.*

*I hope you will understand one day.*

*With affection,*

*Becca*

“**You are telling me this doctor knew war was coming?”** Raven asked, Clarke nodded. “She didn't just know, she also helped them start it.” she said, and her eyes fell on her lap for a long moment. “Who is this woman exactly?” suddenly Marcus asked, his eyes landing on Clarke. “She is the creator of the A.I. that started the war.” she said, at that Abby's frown grew even deeper. “What do you mean with... A.I.?” she asked.
To: Dr. Becca Pramheda

From: Chris

You have to stop this Becca! A.L.I.E. Has to be stopped, NOW! We can't let her do this, people will die, lots of people, probably the entire human race!

Stop this madness, NOW!

“Are you saying that an A.I. started the war?” Raven asked, Clarke nodded. “Basically yes.” she stood up again, everybody's eyes following her. “At first this wasn't her intention, she created A.L.I.E. to make life better for the mankind. The technology is pretty amazing, but there's just one problem...” she said, stopping by the window, looking outside for a quiet moment. “What is it?” Abby asked her, standing up herself, Marcus' eyes followed her. Clarke looked back at her mother and a sad smile appeared on her lips. “Too many people.” she said, turning fully toward them. “Too many people? What does that mean?” asked Raven. “A.L.I.E.'s core command is to make life better right?” she said, without waiting for an answer. “According to her... calculation, the major problem for the human kind is that there are too many people.” she said, walking toward the table, leaning her weight on her hands.

“You're saying that this... A.I. wanted to kill us all with nuclear bombs?” Raven asked, Clarke looked at her for a long quiet moment. “I am saying that she will.” - her eyes roamed over every person in the room - “Unless we stop her.” she added finally, her voice growing heavier. “Stop her?” Abby asked, her eyes heavy on her daughter. “We are here for that.” Indra said suddenly, without looking at them. Clarke nodded in silence.

“We could use some help though.” suddenly a new voice said, they all turned toward the door of the room, where the girl named Lexa was standing, looking at them, her hands clasped in front of her. “How can we help you doing something like that?” Raven asked, her face a mask of confusion, the girl smiled. “You have skills we don't have.” she said, walking inside the room, approaching Clarke, that was now stiffening her back, raising her chin. “We know about you for example.” she said, her eyes laying on Raven, the girl raised an eyebrow. “Oh you do?” Raven said, Lexa smiled. “Yes, we know you were the best mechanic the Ark College had in 52 years. We know about your skills Raven.” she said, the girl raised her chin. “That's funny, because I don't know a thing about you.” she said, tilting her head, crossing her arms in front of her chest.

“We will have time to get to know each other better.” she said, her eyes traveling from Raven to Abby. “I'm glad to finally meet you Doctor Griffin.” she said, her voice low and respectful. Abby blinked and looked toward Clarke. “Clarke told me a lot about you.” she added, looking at the girl,
Abby smiled slightly. “I'm glad to see you provided to keep my daughter safe.” she said, the girl nodded. “I will love to keep talking with you all, but unfortunately one of you is still inside the Bunker, that's why I already sent an exploratory group toward it, to check the situation, if you're friend is lucky enough, he will still be recoverable.” she said, her eyes searching for Clarke at that, she sighed out quietly.

“What do you mean with recoverable?” Raven asked, Lexa looked at her. “I mean that we don't have much time to take him back safe and... lucid.” she said, at that Raven's confusion grew even further. “What kind of tests were they going to take on us?” Abby asked suddenly, leaning forward on the table. “It's a bit complicated to explain, as far as we know it's nothing good.” Clarke said, her eyes making contact with Lexa. “We just know we don't have much time before everybody inside of that place gets some kind of brainwash.” Lexa said, looking at the doctor, Abby blinked. “Brainwash? Is some kind of lobotomy? Drugs?” she asked, her mind already working in doctor's mood. “It's more than that.” Clarke whispered, her eyes locking with her mother's gaze. “We will explain everything in the morning, now we all need to rest.” Lexa said, seeing the look Raven was casting her. “We will do everything we can to take him back, you have my word.” Lexa said, looking at her deeply.

Raven kept quiet for a long moment, then she simply nodded. “Good, let's move you toward your rooms.” Lexa said, gesturing to Indra and Lincoln to take the stretcher where Octavia was still motionless. “Give them both the blue room.” she whispered, then she turned to Abby and Marcus. “You two can take the room at the end of the hallway, the green one.” she said, at that both of them, including Clarke, froze. “No she stays with me.” Clarke said suddenly, approaching Lexa, the girl widened her eyes. “Oh, I thought...” her eyes fell on the two, really embarrassed, people in front of her. “Nothing, sure, then you can come with me.” she said, gesturing to Marcus. He nodded, and without looking at Abby, walked right behind the girl.

“Awkward.” escaped Raven's lips, Clarke frowned, looking at her, the girl smirked, trying not to look at Abby, whom was now bowing her head, staring with interest at the floor. “Let's go mum.” Clarke said then, taking her mother's hand, the woman looked up smiling, and nodding she followed her.

“Yeah don't mind the cripple.” Raven mumbled under her breath when they both were gone, limping toward the door, when suddenly the girl with curly hair appeared behind her, one hand resting on her lower back. “Let me help you.” she whispered, looking at her, Raven stopped, her eyes scanning the girl's face, she was smiling kindly. “I just want to help you.” she whispered, Raven inhaled deeply and then nodded, letting her guide her outside. “I'm Luna by the way.” she said, when they started to walk into the hallway.

“Raven.” she said, the girl smiled. “Nice to meet you.”
The green room was *breathtaking*. Lexa had walked him in, informing him food was on the way and that he could take a bath while waiting, the word *bath* made him smile without thinking and Lexa smiled back, closing the doors behind his back, leaving him alone. So now Marcus was staring at the room he was going to sleep in.

It was big, really big, probably the biggest room he had ever seen in his life. The walls were colored in a deep sage color, shining stones were embedded in the marble, at the touch it was cool enough to gave him a chill, but then his body heat warmed it up and he smiled. There were two giant windows in front of him, overlooking what seemed to be a path of the village, and then there was just green, trees and hills, the woods looked inviting, he also spotted a shimmering lake not too faraway from the palace. He breathed in, the wind sneaked between his hair, and for a moment Marcus forgot completely about the war in Arkadia, the things the rebels had told him, the worry in Clarke's eyes, the heaviness of Abby's voice when she had asked for an explanation, the fact that Monty wasn't with them and he just enjoyed the moment.

When he turned again he spotted the bed that was waiting quietly in the middle of the room, it was a king size, with brown and dark green velvet blankets draped all over it, and creamy pillows that seemed so soft that a yawn escaped his lips. A chandelier hung from the ceiling, it was made by bluish green crystal and spread a cold but comfortable light into the room. Marcus was in awe, looking at every detail, from the broken mirror, framed by golden painted wood, that was attached to the wall, to the white curtains that flew into the fresh wind coming from the windows.

But it was when he stepped into the bathroom that his legs shivered, he almost lost his balance. A *bathtub engraved* into the marble of the floor was waiting for him, hot water was steaming into it, candles were lightening the room, enveloping the dark green shadows into a golden halo. There was a window even there, if he dived inside in the right spot he could look outside of it and watch the blue sky. He smiled to himself and took off his clothes immediately, his feet met the burning water, his skin protested but he couldn’t care less and dived in, a sigh of relief escaped his lips.

Then his mind fell quiet and his eyes fell shut, his body collapsing under the power of the steaming water and he lost himself into the bath.
The food had been amazing, grilled meat, warm soft bread, creamy cheese, fresh salad and juicy fruits. His stomach was hurting for the amount of food he had managed to swallow, he knew his body wasn't ready yet to eat that much, and he smiled in disbelief to himself when noticed that there was still enough food to feed another person.

He then laid on the bed, wearing just the white towel he had found in the bathroom, his hair still damp, he closed his eyes, and fell into a delicate heavy sleep.

Until quiet knocks on his door woke him up. He blinked and groaned, standing up, running a hand on his face.

“Come in.” he said, his voice already hoarse and thick with sleep. The door creaked open, and the sound of bare feet walking on the marble echoed inside the room. He yawned, trying to focus on something in front of him, to regain control over his eyes. “Oh sorry, I didn't know you were sleeping.” her smoky voice made him shiver, he widened his eyes and turned so fast that a pang of pain burned the nerves of his neck. “Abby? What are you doing here?” he said, standing up from the bed in a hurry, when her eyes traveled over his body and she bowed her head, he realized suddenly that he was wearing just a towel.

“Oh, could give you me a moment?” he said, trying to hide the embarrassment in his voice with a cough. Abby nodded and turned around, facing the door. “I-I should just go.” she said. “No, gosh no Abby, just, give me a second.” he said, taking the clothes a cute girl had brought him with the food. They were clean and smelled good, made of dark leather, the shirt was sleeveless, but the room was warm enough to make him feel comfortable in it. The pants were colored in dark gray, a velvet leather that felt soft on his skin and cause a pleasant shiver running on his spine.

“Abby?” he said eventually, to let her know he was ready and she could look, then was when she hummed and turned, walking out from the shadows she had been hiding. And then was when he noticed she had took a bath too. And she was wearing new clothes...

Her hair were cascading over her shoulders in golden smooth logs, she, or more probably Clarke, had brushed them, and the moonlight from outside was making them glow into a silver halo that
made his fingers wince with the need to stroke them. She was wearing a long baggy black shirt, the plunging neckline on her chest was framed with crossed laces, that covered and exposed at the same time her creamy skin, it was long down to the hips, where it fell diagonally on her right side. Her cabri pants were black and clingy, very clingy to bee honest, but they seemed comfortable enough to let her move smoothly, she was wearing basically some kind of really modest and yet too inviting pajama.

“I just wanted to thank you.” she whispered suddenly, crossing her arms in front of her chest, when he had kept staring without saying a word for the whole time. He smiled instinctively. “I did nothing.” he said, and at that Abby shook her head. “You came after me, even if I asked you not to.” she said, taking involuntary a step toward him, he chuckled softly. “Well you knew Clarke was still alive, and you were right, and I wanted you to stay back, you shouldn't thank me.” he said, his voice low. At that she bit at her lower lip, walking past him and heading toward the window. “I hoped she was alive, but I wasn't sure.” she whispered, Marcus approached her, looking outside himself.

The view was beautiful, the moon up in the sky casted shadows and lights over the dark green grass and the wind caressed the wires, making them dance under the stars, it looked like a velvet green see, singing into the night. “But still you had hope, and you were still right.” he said, his eyes falling on her, she licked her lips and turned toward him, looking up to lock their gazes. “You are even too kind with me lately, you know that?” she said, a slight smirk blossoming in the corner of her lips, his eyes fell on her mouth and he kept them there. “Mh mh.” he hummed quietly, at that she lowered her gaze, bowing her head.

“You room is beautiful.” she whispered suddenly, roaming her eyes on the space where they were standing. “Yeah, it is.” he whispered, his eyes didn't follow hers though, but kept staring at her, she sensed them somehow and looked up at him again, then he smiled. “How is Clarke's room?” he asked her suddenly, and at the mention of her daughter's name her smile grew brighter. “Beautiful as well, she got the golden one.” she whispered, walking away from him and the window, pacing the room randomly. “Apparently every room of this palace has a specific color, Clarke saw them all and told me that till now her favorite one is the red one.” she said, smiling, her fingers traveling on the stones in the marble. “They built this place years ago, before the war started, they wanted to create a safe place for their... community.” she said, turning toward him, Marcus had kept staring at her the whole time, leaning on a wooden table.

“What?” she asked suddenly, crossing her arms and tilting her head. Marcus blinked. “What?” he whispered, and at that Abby bit at her lower lip, “You deserve some sleep.” she said, heading to the door, and at that Marcus felt the urgent need to stop her. “No Abby wait!” he said, rushing toward her, resting a hand on her shoulder, the fabric of the shirt had fallen down at some point because she was too slim, and so his hand made contact with her bare skin, she was warm, but he probably wasn't, because at the touch she shivered. “Sorry...” he apologized, and she shook her head. “What was it?” she asked him, looking up. Marcus tilted his head. “What?” he asked her. Seriously?
Abby pursed her lips to suppress a smile. “Are you ok?” she asked him, Marcus chuckled, running a hand in his hair. “Yeah, yeah, I'm... I'm just...” - his eyes got lost into hers one more time - “…tired.” Abby hummed at that. “Then you should let me go back to my room.” she whispered, tilting her head toward the wooden door. “Oh...” he said, his eyes fell on the handhold, that was shining in the darkness, a ray of moonlight casting a silver light on the golden material. “You should.” he said, and Abby smiled at him.

Then she took the handhold in her hand, without opening the door yet, Marcus kept staring at her back, when she inhaled deeply, as if she was gathering the courage to do what she did next, and then turned toward him. Her hands flew to his face rapidly, and her lips fell delicately on his cheek. His breath got caught in his throat, his eyes widened, and his heart stopped beating for long heavy seconds.

The sound of her lips stroking the skin of his face echoed in the silence of the room, the warmth of her fingers on his growing beard made him shiver where the cool breeze hit him, the wetness on her lips marked his cheek, and his hands fought hard against his mind, with the need to rest on her hips, to keep her with him in that moment forever. Then as it had started it ended.

She withdrew, her hands fell at her sides slowly, her eyes were staring at him intensely, he looked down at her, his breath trembling in his lungs. “What was that?” he asked her, because his mind couldn't quiet form other words in that moment, and her eyes focused on a random spot in the corner of the room, then she looked up again, the ghost of a smile on her lips. “Let's call it hope.” she whispered, then opened the door and disappeared in the dark hallway.

Chapter End Notes

As the rebels love to say... everything will be explained.
It feels as home. It feels as family.

Chapter Summary

Our survivors starts to settle into Polis.

Chapter Notes

I regret nothing.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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Clarke

The room was quiet, the window overlooking the village was broken into it's right corner and a cold breeze was coming in, forming goosebumps on her bare shoulder. She shivered, curling up even further into a ball, then was when suddenly her mother's arm wrapped around her and pulled her toward her warm body.

She let out an involuntarily sigh, and Clarke smiled, Abby's hot breath stroked her hair, and she felt the need to turn, so she did it. Her body moved slowly under the fur blanket, that was heavily draped over them both. Abby groaned, her eyes still closed, she was sleeping. Clarke stopped face to face with her and observed her. The room was dark, but the moon outside was bright in the sky and casted silver lights on her features, her mother was sleeping with the ghost of a smile on her lips. They had talked the entire evening, until both of them had fallen asleep side by side, during the night she had shifted forward on the bed's edge, and had withdrew from her touch.

But now they were the more close they could be without suffocating. Abby's arm had laid on her side once more, and her hand was making her spine shiver, she had always been ticklish, since she was a kid. Her heart was beating quietly, and she felt the need to smile herself, when her mother
giggled in her sleep.

*What was she dreaming about?*

Her hand found her mother's cheek instinctively, her fingers stroked her skin. She was still paler than the rebels, they had lived for six longs months inside the hospital after all, without being able to walk outside, nor during the day nor during the night, her fingertips circled on her cheekbone, and she felt how hollow her cheeks were.

*She needs to eat more.* She told herself, biting at her lower lip with worry.

She adjusted her head better on the pillow and smiled, her fingers petting her long hair, she had took a bath, Clarke had been sitting in the room with her, talking and helping her wash her hair, she had always loved to do it to her since she was a kid, so for once she had took advantage and had returned the favor.

Then they had brushed each others hair, she had to admit she hadn't been thinking too much about herself lately, and her mother had immediately noticed that, when her fingers had to work for almost an hour on the knots in her blonde hair. They had then shared a comfortable dinner, talking about the strangers she had with her.

Abby had explained to her how things had happened, how she had found herself into that house, searching for her, and how they had simply agreed on sharing the space. Clarke knew her mother wasn't saying her everything, she could read her very well, but had kept quiet, since she had do to certain things herself since she had left the hospital that night.

And how she was still feeling guilty for that.

It wasn't about the reason why she had left, she knew she was doing something good for those two women, but she was feeling guilty because she had left her mother behind, without leaving her something she could hold on to. But her mother knew her well, she knew why she had left. And probably the worse part was that she hadn't even thought about taking her with her.

But how could she have done that? Her mother was reckless, yes, she had disobeyed the law many times to save her patients, absolutely true. But she was never going to let her daughter escape from a safe place, to run into a battlefield. Clarke knew that well. She had to do it by herself.
And yet, her mother had followed her. At first Clarke had thought she was going to come back one day, if she had managed to survive, and that she was going to take her with her into the safe place she would have build for them both. But her mother as always had surprised her, following her without thinking twice, and if she had to be honest, she was glad they had found that shelter house, that decoy, otherwise they were never going to find them again.

The shelter house was once a real rebels house, it was used to offer a place where people could go and talk about the problems their city had, it was there since years, a place where young people could meet and discuss various topics. That before war happened. When they had left that place and the Eligius Corporation had decided to use it as a decoy, offering food and water to civilians, checking on them, living them the illusion for a night, drugging them with gas during their sleep and kidnapping them, dragging them into that bunker where they could keep running their tests.

The rebels were working on Polis since years, that palace was an old ruined castle, located in the hills outside of Arkadia. It belonged to an old king and his family, back in time it was glorious, and served as a home for his children and wife and the many Arkadia's natives, those whom the colonizers had kicked out of the city's borders when civilizations had started to grow, building boundaries, rules, laws.

One day the king died, his family followed him during the years, until they all disappeared and the palace kept offering a shelter to many natives for years. Then was when the real rebels were born, and grew the palace into something more. Creating walls to border it, gates that could protect them from outside. The village was one day of walking from the bunker, that was two days of walking from the city. They were faraway enough to build without stepping inside Arkadia's jurisdiction.

Polis was in no man's land. That was why it had grew so freely, welcoming in every person that wanted to live a different life. There everything was simpler somehow. The society worked differently, people growing their food, breeding their animals, creating their clothes, their houses.

Years had passed, while Polis had kept growing, Arkadia's government knowing everything, pretending not to see, checking on them the whole time, just as the rebels had kept an eye on them.

Then the bunker had appeared, growing their suspicious about what was going to happen. Then was when, three months before the war, they started to collect information. And that was why they knew what was going to happen before the Arkadia's population. War came, and they were ready for it.

Luckily for them Polis was too faraway from Arkadia to attract attention from the bombs. Even because the bombs weren't from the Korea, as the government had sad. They were coming right from the United States.

Government and military powers had decided to start that war, because too many people wasn't just
an A.I. idea, they had used her to run calculation, to start revolutions in the poorest districts of the city, just as her father had said.

At the memory of him Clarke felt hot tears forming in her eyes, she sniffed them back and sighed out, Abby sensed her discomfort even in her deep sleep and tightened her grip on her, her slim warm arm enveloping her better in her hug, pressing her against her, and Clarke gave up, following her lead. Her nose dived in the crook of her neck and she wrapped her arms around her torso, holding her close.

Tears started quietly to flow from her eyes, soaking her mother's black shirt, wetting her bare skin, but she knew she wouldn't mind, and so that night Clarke let her mother carry away her demons and fell asleep in her arms once again, the quiet beat of her heart lulling her into the oblivion.

A bird chirping outside her window woke her up. She blinked, the warm light of the morning was sneaking in, enveloping the golden room into a glowing halo. When her view adjusted to her surroundings once again, she noticed that her mother was sitting on the bed, her back on the headboard, she was reading a book she had probably found on the shelve attached to the wall, where Lexa had left her some books, pencils and papers, so she could distract herself during the rescue mission to get them back, of course she hadn't be able to stay in her room and had followed her in every each one of her steps.

Abby was reading quietly, while stroking her hair with her right hand, Clarke smiled. She felt so lucky to still have her at her side, she felt so grateful to still be alive, here in this moment, with her mother. She had somehow sensed she was awake and her brown eyes shifted from the book to her face, when she met her blue gaze she smiled. “Good morning baby.” she whispered, and Clarke smiled back, feeling how her heart squeezed in her chest at the sound of her morning voice.

Rougher, lower, smokier. She had missed her so much.

“Morning.” she said, standing up, adjusting her back at her side. Abby smiled, closing the book on her lap, the sun coming from the window enveloped her entirely, her mum was so beautiful, her smile was so bright, she seemed so well rested that Clarke felt the need to hug her. “How are you?” she asked her, petting her blonde hair, Clarke’s smile grew brighter. “I'm good. You?” she asked her, Abby nodded. “Never felt better.” she whispered, her hand still stroking her hair, then was when Clarke gave up once again to her needs, nestling at her side, nuzzling her nose into her hair, Abby giggled quietly, her quiet laugh reverberated in her chest and Clarke sighed out, closing her
eyes, breathing her in.

She smelled as she had for her entire childhood, the unique scent of her skin was a delicate aroma she had grown up with and that she had learned to love. Her mind recalled the tracks of it and her heart started to sing in her chest. Her scent was rich, warm, almost exotic. Her hair now smelled as the oil she had used to wash them, amber and cinnamon. Her skin had won over the scent of the cream she had used before bed, so there was just the faint and delicate ghost of it's citrus perfume. The fabric of her shirt had trapped some notes of the sandalwood incense they had burned during the night, and she was intoxicated by all the fragrant smells she was sensing and wished she could just stay in her mother's arms forever.

But of course someone had other plans for them.

“Where is she?” a voice came from outside their door. Clarke frowned, she didn't recognize the voice, but her mother looked up with a frown that told her she knew exactly whom was outside. “Octavia?” she whispered, and withdrew from her, standing up, stroking her cheek before withdrawing completely. Clarke stayed on the bed, her eyes following her, she walked toward the door and opened it. Then was when the brunette girl, that had remained unconscious the whole time the day before, rushed in. “Abby?” she whispered, crashing her body in her mother's arms.

At that Clarke couldn't help it and raised her eyebrow, confusion settling in. Abby blinked, her arms wrapping gently around the girl, her eyes searching for her on the bed, Clarke was frowning and Abby licked her lips, looking down at the girl, that was now smiling. “Oh gosh you're alive, I was so afraid!” she whispered, looking up at her, her blue eyes bright, smiling. Abby smiled herself. “I'm fine, glad to see you are too.” she whispered, stroking her hair. Octavia smiled even further, then turned and for the first time knowledge Clarke's presence on the bed, she widened her eyes, looking from her to her mother several times, before withdrawing, clearing her throat. Abby sensed her confusion and laughed.

“Octavia, this is Clarke.” she said, gesturing to her, Octavia looked at her for a moment, then blinked. “She's my daughter.” she said, looking at her with a bright smile, Clarke smiled back. “Clarke, this is Octavia, the girl I talked to you about.” she said, and Clarke nodded. “Nice to meet you.” she said, standing up from the bed herself. The girl smiled briefly. “Nice to meet you to.” she said, her hands clasped behind her back, her head bowed. “Are you ok?” Abby asked her, while Clarke approached them, standing right at her mother's side, feeling the sudden need to have her at her side, as to emphasize the fact that this was her mother.

*Silly? Probably. Still...*

“I'm good.” she said, looking up at her again, smiling. “I just wanted to check on you, so yeah, you seem to be pretty good.” she said, her blue eyes landing on Clarke for a moment. “I can go back to
my brother then.” she said, and started to walk away. Abby stopped her, taking her by the wrist. “Hey, would you like to join us for breakfast?” she asked her, and Clarke glared at her, even if she wasn't watching, she suddenly wasn't ok with the idea to share her mother with a stranger. Octavia looked shyly at her, Abby was smiling, she smiled back. “Yeah...” she whispered and nodded, Abby's smile grew brighter. “Good, go get your brother too.” she said, and squeezed the girl hand before letting her walk outside.

When the doors closed themselves at the girl's back, Clarke sighed out. “I didn't know you two were that close.” she said, Abby blinked and tilted her head, studying her face for a long moment, then smiled. “She is a good girl.” she said, at that Clarke hummed skeptically. “Mmmh, yeah she seems so.” she mumbled, walking toward where her clean clothes were resting. She took off the creamy shirt she had used for the night. “Are you ok Clarke?” Abby asked from behind her, tossing away her shirt herself. “Yeah, why?” she said absentmindedly, putting on a new bra and sneaking inside a white comfortable cotton shirt Lexa had brought to her. Abby stepped into her peripheral view, her shirt stuck at her elbows. “Because if I didn't know you, I'd say you're jealous.” she said, tilting her head in curiosity. Clarke snorted, wearing a light green leather jacket on her shoulders. “What? Why should I be jealous about her?” she said, diving her feet in comfortable black boots.

Abby smiled, putting on a black clingy and sleeveless cotton shirt. “Because I am jealous too, of you.” she whispered, diving her legs into the leather black pants she had found on the chair. “What?” Clarke frowned, crossing her arms. Abby closed the buttons on the waistband and looked at her. “Lexa.” she said, collecting her long hair into a ponytail. “Lexa?” Clarke blinked. Abby nodded, humming, sneaking her arms into a leather black jacket that fitted her perfectly. “Yeah. I was faraway and you were here with her, I am your mother, I have the right to be jealous.” she said, approaching her, kissing her on the forehead.

“But you don't have to worry honey.” she said, walking past her. “There's just room for one Clarke in my heart.” she said, smiling at her, opening the wooden golden doors of the room. “Come on, let's go, I'm hungry.”

Octavia
The room used for meals was magnificent. Several long tables were filled with many different kinds of food, from fresh fruit, to fresh backed bread, there was also milk, several cereals and also cookies. Octavia's stomach growled, pushing her toward one chair, helping her brother sitting down at her side, and her eyes kept shimmering with happiness over the delicacies.

Other people she had never seen before were already sitting on the other chairs, talking quietly, casting them curious glances, they probably had heard about their arrival. Octavia shook away the uncomfortable feeling of being observed and smiled at her brother when he pointed his finger toward the chocolate cookies in front of them, she nodded and they both laughed as kids when they ate them in one bite, their mouths filled with the crispy and rich food.

“Oh my gofsh.” she mumbled, Bellamy chuckled, swallowing down his cookie with a sip of warm milk. “I think I will like this place.” he whispered, and Octavia smiled. They kept filling their mouth with cookies, accompanying them with long sips of warm milk.

“Hey slow down, I don't want to look at you two choking to death first thing in the morning.” Raven said, sitting down in front of them. Octavia chuckled, Bellamy smiled. “Good to see you again Reyes.” he said, the girl smiled. “You too Blake.” she whispered, taking an empty mug in her hands. “Seriously though, slow down with those.” she said, pointing her index finger to the cookie that was hanging from Octavia's mouth, she nodded, swallowing it down without chewing. Raven shook her head sighing out, and then took a piece of what looked like a donut covered in honey.

“Damn, this is glorious.” she hummed, filling her mouth with the soft bread. Octavia giggled and they all kept eating in silence, humming in pleasure here and there, attracting weird looks from the people around them.

Then was when finally Abby stepped in, followed by her daughter. Raven turned her head as soon as the whispers around them grew louder, and widened her eyes, her mouth open, the third donut of the morning hovering in front of her lips. “Look at that hot woman over there.” she said, loud enough for Abby to hear, the woman glared at her, but a smile graced her lips. “Good morning Raven.” she said, walking right behind her, patting her head, the girl giggled, following her with her eyes, leaning her head behind her back. “You're good Doc?” she asked her, biting at her donut once Abby had took a seat at her side, Clarke right beside her.

“Absolutely yes, and you?” she asked, smiling kindly, waving an hello toward Bellamy, whom responded with a smile. “Oh yes, that room was amazing.” she said, swallowing down the bite she had took. “Good to know.” Abby whispered, then was when her eyes looked up and she smiled. Octavia followed her gaze, right from the door Kane was walking in, his eyes scanning the room, when he spotted her a smirk appeared on his lips, he waved toward her an hello, and she turned her head to the empty chair beside Octavia, inviting him to sit down. He looked at her and nodded,
walking toward them.

“So, you are close to him too now?” Clarke whispered in her ear, Octavia was close enough to hear that, and her eyes landed on Raven, the girl was biting at her lower lip, she had heard that too. “He’s not that bad.” Raven said absentmindedly, while licking from her lips some honey. Clarke frowned, while Abby lowered her eyes on her lap, clearing her throat. Both Octavia and Bellamy shared a confused look, but then Kane appeared behind them, one hand stroked Octavia’s shoulder, she looked up. “Good morning.” he whispered to her, she smiled. “Morning.” He sat down and smiled toward Clarke, “Good morning Clarke” he whispered, she kept silent, glaring at him, Abby cleared her throat again and nudged her daughter in the side, Clarke looked at her and then sighed out. “Good morning Kane.” She said, adding some bitterness on his surname. The man pursed his lips and nodded. “So, you managed to sleep?” Abby asked him suddenly, and he smiled. “Yes.” he whispered, and she smiled. “No nightmares?” she asked him, while taking a slice of bread and spreading some honey on it. “No, quiet the contrary.” he whispered, at that they both shared a brief look, and Abby lowered her eyes, a delicate blush creeping on her cheeks.

Clarke’s frown seemed engraved in her features by now. Octavia bit at her lower lip, hiding a smirk, Raven glared at her, and she kept quiet. “So, when can we meet with Lexa to talk about Monty?” Raven asked, when Clarke had started to stare at Kane with something that looked like a promise to kill him in her sleep. The girl blinked, her features relaxed and she managed also a smile toward the girl. “Right after breakfast.” she whispered, Raven smiled back and nodded.

The change of topic lightened the mood somehow, Abby started to talk quietly with her daughter, basically ignoring the rest of the people in the room, so Octavia found herself talking about their favorite foods with Kane, her brother, and Raven.

After half an hour they whole stood up, Clarke dragged her mother away without giving her the time to even say goodbye, and Raven frowned at that, following them quietly, limping on her crutches. Kane cleared his throat and walked outside with them, offering to help Octavia with Bellamy.

“My people searched the area all night, we think we will be able to find him in the pavilion B. If we are lucky enough he will be alone into a cell, like the one we’ve found you.” Indra said, pointing her index finger toward Octavia, she nodded. “Ok then, when will we do that?” Raven
asked, looking directly at Indra, the woman pursed her lips, and shared a glance with Lexa, the girl nodded. “If nothing changes, tonight.” she said, Raven nodded. “Great, count me in.” she said, and Indra's eyes fell on her crutches. “For what purpose exactly?” she asked, her tone heavy.

Octavia sensed Raven's anger growing, the girl tightened her fists, but Abby squeezed her arm, and smiled at her, the girl looked at her with hopeless eyes and sighed out. “Fine, then give me something to do.” she said, and Indra turned to Lexa, the girl was sharing glances with Clarke since the meeting had begun, the latter turned toward Raven. “You can help us with the surveillance cameras.” she said, at that Raven nodded. “Sounds good to me.”

At that Abby smiled, Clarke nodded and then Lexa sighed out. “Good, so it's planned, Roan, Echo, you two will go with Indra.” she said, the two nodded in silence. “Clarke will show Raven where the tech room is, the rest of you...” - she smiled - “Enjoy the capital.” she said, nodding to Abby with a smile. Then was when Octavia stood up, sensing her brother's eyes on her. “I want to help.” she said, Lexa stopped, Indra at her side remained expressionless. “With what?” Lexa asked, Octavia shrugged. “Rescuing Monty of course.” out of the corner of her eyes she saw how Raven was looking at her, a brief proud smile appeared on her lips, on the other hand Abby was widening her eyes in horror, and she sensed that Bellamy was restraining himself from reproaching her already. “Oh, you know how to fight?” Lexa asked her. Octavia nodded. “Yeah, well... I survived till now, so...” Lexa at that kept silent for a long moment and then turned toward Indra. “Take her to the training field.” she said, the woman nodded, saying nothing, and Octavia couldn't help it and smiled.

“Octavia what the hell you think you are you doing?” Bellamy asked her as soon as both Indra and Lexa where busy into a quiet talk with Clarke in the other corner of the room. “I am helping.” she hissed, her brother glared at her. “You can't fight.” he said, and at that Octavia snorted. “Yeah, tell that to the men I've left dead on the ground.” at that his eyes grew wider, and he swallowed. “Bellamy is right.” suddenly Kane said behind her back. Bellamy nodded instinctively, Octavia sighed out. “I want to help.” she said, Kane rested a warm hand on her shoulder. “I know, and this honors you, but you are not a warrior. You survived that's true, but this doesn't mean you have the skills to fight.” he said.

“I can learn.” she said, Kane nodded. “Yes, but not into one day.” he said, his voice low. Octavia looked up and spotted Abby looking at them, biting at her lower lip with worried eyes, while Raven was talking to her about something she couldn't hear. “I can't stay behind.” she said, looking at him. Kane nodded. “You can't get yourself killed either.” Octavia sighed out. “You're ready?” suddenly Indra said behind her back. Octavia and Kane turned toward her. “She isn't gonna do this.” Bellamy said, Octavia clenched her jaw, Indra remained silent. “I will.” Kane said. Octavia looked up widening her eyes. Indra looked at him.

“You are a soldier, sounds reasonable to me.” Indra said. Then was when Abby rushed toward them. “No he isn't gonna do this.” she spat, Kane looked at her and rested a hand on her shoulder. “I'll be fine Abby.” he whispered, Abby was breathing heavily. “You don't know that!” she said. Kane smiled. “I promise that I will be careful.” he whispered, Abby shook her head,
pursing her lips. “You can't promise me that you will come back alive.” she said. Octavia saw how Indra was restraining herself from saying something at the two of them. “Mum?” suddenly Clarke said, walking toward them, her arms crossed. “What's the problem?” she asked. Abby kept her gaze on Kane for a long moment and then turned toward her daughter. “I...” she casted another glance at him, he was looking at her intensely, his hand never leaving her shoulder. “Nothing...” she sighed out then, pursing her lips, taking a step back, his hand fell heavily at his side.

“Good, then how many of you will join us on the training field?” asked Indra quietly, Kane took a step forward, the woman nodded, and right when she turned to the door, Octavia followed her. “O?” Bellamy snapped, but she ignored him. “I want to train too.” she said, looking at Kane, that had stopped, sighing out in resignation. “Then follow me.” said Indra without turning back, Octavia nodded and followed them both out of the room.

Behind her Bellamy had smashed one of his hands on the table, startling everyone in the room, everyone except Abby, that was too busy looking with sadness Kane walking away from her.

**Marcus**

“Get up!” Indra growled. Marcus snorted, pushing on his hands to get up from the dirt on the ground. “Again.” she ordered to a tall man with a black tattoo on his cheek. Marcus inhaled deeply and putted his hands in front of his face, ready to shield the punches that he knew were coming.

“Ready.” he said, the man raised his punch in the air and then let it fall heavily on him, his forearm blocked it, his bones reverberated, his nerves burning in pain, he groaned and attacked back, his punch broke the skin on the man's lip, drops of blood fell on the ground.

“Good. Again.” Indra said, her hands clasped behind her back.

They were fighting since almost two hours, his body was tired, but his mind was lucid. He adjusted himself on his feet once again, raising his hands in front of him, that was when his eyes flew to the
window overlooking the field, and he saw her.

She was leaning on her shoulder, her arms crossed in front of her chest, her brows furrowed and her lips tight. She was shaking her head slightly, her leather jacket had went off at some point, and she was standing there in just her sleeveless black shirt and the clingy pants, her bare skin seemed so pale into the shy sun of the morning. Her ponytail brushed her when a breeze of wind hit her. They locked their gaze, and did nothing else then stare at each other for a long moment.

Then was when Clarke appeared at her back, while talking, Abby kept staring at him and the girl frowned when she didn't answer to something she had asked, Clarke followed her mother's gaze, when she spotted him she sighed and pursed her lips, forcing her mother away from the window. Abby blinked, as if she hadn't noticed her, Clarke glared at him briefly and closed the windows, the white curtains obscuring the view, shielding both of them from his view.

Marcus sighed, and then was when the rebel punched him, hard and heavily on the nose.

Marcus fell on his back. “Again.” Indra growled.

He was back in his room since half an hour by now, he had consumed a pleasant meal with Octavia, whom was enthusiastic for all of what they had learned that day, according to Indra she wasn't strong enough yet but certainly wasn't going to give up, that was her strength, also she was fast. Marcus had being able to take a quick shower when he had returned back to his room, and Abby had disappeared since the morning, Clarke had somehow managed to keep her for herself all day long.

It was late in the afternoon now, the sun was weaker in the sky and his muscles were protesting already for the amount of pressure he had put on them. His lower lip was bleeding, he had few scratches on his back and chest, and his shoulder was pulsing, he had warned them about his wound, but Indra hadn't seem worried, and he had found out that even if it was painful and still sore, he had been able to knock out few tall men without too much effort.

Then was when someone knocked on his door, flashes of the night before invaded him, he cleared his throat. “Come in, it's open.” he said, and he knew whom was even before she had entered the
room, her slim tiny shadow was unmistakable for him. She walked in and closed the door quietly at her back, her dark eyes were heavy on him, she was carrying a medkit.

“I have to check on you.” she whispered, walking toward him. Marcus stiffened his back, withdrawing the cube of ice he was keeping on his swollen lip. “I'm fine Abby, Octavia probably need you more than I do.” he said, she knelt down in front of him without looking him in the eyes. “I already checked on her.” she cut him off. Then she looked up again, and her expression changed, her features melted and her eyes grew worried.

She reached for his hand on his lip and withdrew it gently, her eyes fell on the cut on his lower lip, she sighed out and rummaged in the medkit. Then she moved on the floor using her knees, and poured something on a cotton swab, casting him a brief glance, she took his chin on her left hand and with the right one started to clean the blood from the wound. She mumbled something that he couldn't get. “What is it?” he asked, she clenched her jaw. “You're impossible.” she hissed, this time making it clear. Marcus chuckled. “Said the pot to the kettle.” at that she froze and sighed out heavily.

“At least I am not going into a rescue mission in my 40 something, into a bunker filled with trained soldiers and surveillance cameras in every corner.” she snorted, resuming her work. Marcus hummed. “Exactly, this because I am going.” he said. At that she glared at him deeply, as if her eyes could burn a hole into his brain. “What's wrong with you?” she spat, throwing the cotton swab in her medkit. “I just want to save that kid.” he said, while Abby took a white plaster from the little bag at her side. “Yeah, and the hell with your life right?” she mumbled, while adjusting it to his lip, shielding the cut from the dust and the dirt.

“I will be fine.” he growled, at that she raised an eyebrow. “Of course you will, because you are the soldier right? You have the skills.” she said, her voice had grew bitter. Marcus stopped her hand, that was now cleaning the scratch on his forehead. “Abby.” he growled, her name coming out stern and cold. She clenched her jaw and looked at him. “Stop.” he ordered, her chest was raising heavily, she bit at the inside of her cheek and snatched her wrist away from his grip. “You should stop sacrificing yourself.” she hissed, her smoky voice vibrating with something that sounded as anger.

She stood up and threw the cotton swab at her feet, running her hands in her hair, fixing absentmindedly her ponytail. “You don't see it, do you?” she said suddenly, turning toward him, she was taller then him since he was sitting on his bed, so he had to look up to look her in the eyes. “What?” he asked her, his voice heavy with impatient, that woman was impossible. Abby chuckled bitterly. “You think you can just go outside and do your... job, without caring for the people you leave behind?” she said, her hands on her hips, her muscles tense.

“I can help them Abby, why is that suddenly a bad thing?” he said, frowning, Abby was biting at her lower lip. “It isn't.” she said, and Marcus' confusion grew bigger. “This really honors you
Marcus. If you will succeed, you will be a real hero.” she said, taking a step toward him, Marcus had to suppress a roll of his eyes. “But what if you will die?” she whispered, her voice cracking slightly at that, or maybe he heard what he wanted to hear. “I will not die Abby.” he said kindly, even if honestly he wasn't that sure about it. “You better.” she hissed, approaching him another time, kneeling down, taking a new cotton swab from her medkit. “Otherwise I will bring you back and kill you myself.” she hissed, and he heard her sniffing, she had the ghost of unleashed tears in her eyes. He swallowed. “You have the skills to do that too now?” he said sarcastically, she breathed out.

“I'd like to.” she whispered, and this time he didn't imagine the way her voice cracked, suddenly her hands were rigid on his skin, he looked at her, and in doing so he noticed one thing he hadn't seen that morning.

*The necklace.* She was wearing that silver chain with hers and Jake's rings on, he hadn't seen her wearing it since the day that man had tried to steal them from her. He swallowed and adverted his gaze, closing his eyes.

*What were you thinking?* He asked himself. And honestly... what had he been thinking exactly? He couldn't tell, but surely he had seen something in her eyes that wasn't there, he had read something in the kind gesture she had shared with him the night before that wasn't meant like that.

He had hoped something had started to grow between them. He wasn't able to explain even to himself what exactly had passed in his mind. Surely now it was clear that she wasn't thinking about anyone else except for her daughter and her late husband.

*She was just afraid for her daughter, you were there, she took comfort from you.* That was all that had happened. And while those thoughts started to settle in his mind, and Abby kept working in silence on his wounds, he said to himself that if she needed someone at her side, ready to be there when things started to brake, he was going to be that person. If she allowed him, he was going to be there for her. As her friend.

*Friend.*

He peeked at her, while she was carefully cleaning his wound on his shoulder, adjusting the stitches and the bandages, cursing under her breath “*this man*” and he smiled to himself. *Yes.* He could be her friend.

*Just a good friend.*
That night had been endless, she hadn't been able to sleep at all, and Clarke had kept awake with her. She had asked her to take some sleep, but she had refused, she could read worry in her eyes too, they both weren't going to relax until everyone was back.

Lexa had gone with the group too, to check on the mission herself, taking the responsibility for the missing boy, and Clarke had kept looking with worried eyes at the gates, just as Abby, and she wasn't so sure but she had the feeling that something different had grew into her daughter's expression since the girl had gone, honestly since Clarke herself had escaped that night.

The night grew into morning, and right when her body was about to collapse on the floor, demanding some rest, the gates started to open and the sound of the horn they used to announce people on the line of sight, echoed in the village.

Clarke rushed outside the war room where they had been all night and Raven jerked awake, she had reached them when her work on the cameras wasn't needed anymore, and Abby blinked, a regained energy rushing in her veins, she was wide eyes now and Raven sighed out. “Go, I'll wait here.” she said, gesturing to the door, where Clarke had disappeared without waiting. Abby nodded absentmindedly, and walked toward the door, but stopped and turned, Raven was already closing her eyes again, she approached her quietly and kissed her on the head. “You did a great job.” she whispered in her hair, Raven blinked and looked up, a tired smile appeared on her lips. Abby smiled back and then was her time to run outside the room.

“Go get your man!” Raven yelled at her back, and honestly, Abby really wanted to stop and go back to slap off the girl's sassiness, but she just shook her head, and with a long trembling sigh, she kept running.
The village was waking up, while Abby was running on the cold ground, she had took off her jacket during the night to give it as a pillow for Raven that had fallen asleep on the table, and so she was now running in the cold, really cold morning breeze, with just her cotton shirt on. But she couldn't care less, she needed to know everybody were back safe and sound.

Octavia had followed them too, without her brother's blessing, as Indra's second, whatever that meant. According to Clarke, it meant that Octavia wasn't going to move forward in the battlefield, but had to stay behind Indra and the others, ready to back them up but without ever being alone. Abby knew that if Marcus was with her, the girl didn't need to kill anybody, and she had used that to reassure Bellamy, that had been so worried, and so angry, that she had maybe gave him some more painkillers than necessary, and he had fallen asleep a couple of hours ago.

When the gates appeared in front of her, the long empty road extending at her feet, she stopped, panting heavily, her lungs burning, Clarke was already approaching the truck that also Abby could see from there, she swallowed and started to walk slowly toward it.

At first she saw Indra, jumping off the vehicle, followed but what looked like the girl named Echo and then... Octavia, and if she was able to jump off like that it meant she wasn't that damaged. Abby let out a long sigh of relief, and kept walking. Clarke was talking with them, when Lexa climbed out from the front seat, and she smiled brighter, took a step toward her but stopped herself, and bowed her head, Lexa nodded and gestured to someone inside the truck. Then was when Abby saw Roan climbing off carrying what look like a stretcher.

Monty was on it, unconscious, but he was on it. Abby smiled, relief rushing in her veins, her pace grew faster, forming clouds of dust around her boots. Then was when she saw Clarke looking inside the vehicle and then at her, Abby smiled, but Clarke turned again and talked to someone. Then was when Abby started to feel anxiety growing inside of her chest, that was why she started to run.

Her legs carrying her rapidly toward the gates, her heart pumping new blood in her muscles.

Please be fine, please be fine, please be fine.

When the gates were right in front of her, and she could define more details of every person in front of her, she saw Clarke helping someone climbing down the back of the truck. And she stopped, her boots meeting the fine grass outside the village, she swallowed. Lexa turned toward her and nodded, a smile appeared on her lips. Abby said nothing and walked slowly toward the back of the vehicle.
“Can you walk?” she heard Clarke asking. *Damn it.* She thought to herself, then turned the truck's corner and stopped, the man whom was leaning on her wasn't Marcus. But another rebel she couldn't name. “He broke one of his legs, you will probably need to work a bit before bed, sorry mum.” she said, helping him walk inside the gates. Abby said nothing and just nodded. Then was when she started to panic.

*Where was Marcus?*

She parted her lips, as to ask that, everybody seemed so relaxed, as if everything was perfectly fine. When suddenly she heard the sound of steps jumping on the ground behind her, she turned abruptly, and her body instinctively tensed, she gasped. “Hey doctor.” Marcus was smirking at her, a backpack on his shoulder, sipping from a bottle of water, Abby sighed out and then reached for him and smacked him on the chest. “You scared me, you idiot!” she snapped, Marcus spit out few drops of water, and chuckled, wiping away the water from his lips using the back of his sleeves. “I'm sorry.” he said, Abby sighed again, bowing her head, resting her hands on her hips. “You're alive.” she whispered, looking back up at him, Marcus smiled, nodding. “I told you so.” he said.

Abby pursed her lips and shook her head. “Oh shut up.” she snorted, and he chuckled. “Yeah I'm fine too, thanks for asking.” said Octavia suddenly, Abby turned and tilted her head, smiling. “Octavia, I'm glad you are still intact.” she said, the girl raised an eyebrow. “Yeah, I sensed you were dying without me.” she said, her eyes fell on Marcus for a moment, but then she smiled and welcomed Abby in her arms. “Bellamy will be happy to know you're fine.” she whispered in her hair, the girl sighed. “He had been a real pain in the ass uh?” she giggled.

“Yeah well, I took care of him.” said Abby, kissing the girl’s head. Octavia looked up at her again. “Oh gosh, you killed him?” she mocked her, and Abby squeezed her in her arms. “No... I think.” she said and they both chuckled. Then Abby turned and spotted Marcus watching at them, leaning on his good shoulder, sipping at his water, she smiled and he smiled back. “Let's go get some sleep.” she said, Octavia nodded and followed Indra inside, when the woman managed a smile toward her. “You did good.” she heard her whisper in the girl's ear.

Abby was speechless, blinking, when Marcus reached her. “Yes, the woman isn't that bad when you get to know her.” he said, Abby looked at him and couldn't help the smirk that blossomed on her lips. “Oh really? So... you two got closer tonight?” she insinuated, crossing her arms in front of her. The bottle he was carrying to his lips stopped midair and he raised an eyebrow. Abby's smirk grew deeper. “Yeah... well, she isn't my type to be honest.” he said, sipping deeply. Abby hummed. “So Marcus Kane has a type?” she asked him, while they started to walk inside the gates, followed by Echo and Roan, that were carrying Monty. “Yeah, why? I can't have a type?” he asked her, and Abby shrugged, raising her hands. “Of course you can. So, what's your type then?” she asked, while walking slowly at his side. Marcus chuckled. “No, I'm not gonna fall into this trap.” he said, wiping away some drops from his lips.
“Oh come on, give me something I can talk about when you are not around.” she said, pouting at him, he looked at her and chuckled, shaking his head. “You're an impossible woman.” he said, and at that Abby giggled herself. Marcus Kane was able to make her feel so comfortable that she actually giggled. “Impossible men needs impossible women at their sides, am I right?” she said, raising an eyebrow, Marcus hummed. “I guess so.” and with that they smirked and fell silent, walking inside the palace.

They both shared a goodnight between loud yawns, Abby stopped in the injured warrior's room and took a look at his leg, it wasn't broken, but he needed rest, she stitched up the worse wound, and when her vision started to blur for the lack of sleep, she informed him she was going to check on him again later. She walked to her room, a smile gracing her lips, she laid herself on the bed, without even bothering to change her clothes, and fell asleep.

Without noticing that Clarke joined her just two hours later, a smile gracing her lips too, she kissed her forehead and fell asleep at her side, one arm over her stomach, her cheek on her shoulder.

Both women didn't move till the late afternoon.

And then three months passed

All

Home.
That was what Polis had become for everybody by now.

At first it hadn't been easy to get used to everything, like the fact that they needed to learn how to grow their own food and that they needed to respect the rebels culture, that surely wasn't like their own. But the more time passed, the more they all got to settle in better.

When Monty had woken up the morning of his rescue, he had found himself in that weird palace, and panic had started to rush in his veins. But then he had found a sleeping Raven at his bed's side, and he smiled, peace settling in his heart. Then when he had woken up again he had found himself surrounded by everybody, from Raven, to Octavia, passing from Abby, Kane, a smiling Bellamy and to his immense surprise Clarke, tears shimmering in her eyes.

They had hugged for a long moment, Abby had to hide her face behind the palm of her hands, and Kane had smiled at that, squeezing her shoulder. Everything at first had been difficult, explaining to them what he had seen inside of that bunker for example.

Since he couldn't remember.

They had ran tests on him, that doctor had kept talking about being extremely crucial for saving the human race to keep him there. Promising him he was going to see his fellows soon. That had been of course a lie, since they had been all taken away.

What he knew was that the people inside that place knew who did it, they knew the rebels had managed to save them, even if Becca had kept saying they had just sentenced them all to death. Monty wasn't able to recall much from the place, but surely he couldn't forget the fear he had felt the entire time. And when he had found himself face to face with Octavia that night, whispering to him she was going to help him get out of there, with the help of those strangers, he had followed her without complaining.

And then time had passed.

Day after day he had get to know the capital, as they called it, and he liked it. The hills around them were as a shield from the rest of the world, and also they could take long walks inside the woods, hunting for food, growing their own, and his family had been formed by farmers, so he had loved that part even better.
Unlike Raven. Many times he had found himself arguing with her on how to sow the soil. They had screamed, yelled, she would have limped away with frustration in her eyes, muttering bitter insults under her breath, and he would have found himself walking in her room many nights to share with her a cup of hot chocolate, ending up laughing and giggling about how adorable Kane the soldier was with his hands covered in mud.

And if he had to be honest, he was pretty good at it.

Marcus had grew up with a mother that loved nature, and even if he had always refused to follow her lead, he had learned a lot from her, and to Abby’s surprise, he still remembered. Monty had to fix some things here and there, but in the end he had been able to grew his personal garden.

Many times Abby had found herself staring at him working, frowning, trying to understand how exactly that thing worked, and many times she had just raised her hands to the sky, muttering, “I can do and open-heart surgery but not this, why is this so hard?” and Marcus would have chuckled, following her, offering her some water, they would have sat down, while arguing about how it worked, and what she did wrong.

Marcus had tried many times to explain to her, really he had, but Abby simply seemed not able to take care of plants. Clarke on the other side was pretty good at it, her and Lexa had shared long mornings and afternoons, also probably even nights, working on their gardens, while talking or simply sharing long looks above their cucumber plants.

And so time had keep passing, they all, apart from Abby, growing plants, Octavia learning to ride the horse Indra had gave to her, Bellamy healing till he could walk again, and was now able to follow her sister in every step, not that she appreciated that, her rolling eyes and her long sighs a clear clue of that. But she never really forced him to stay back.

Clarke and Abby had spent many days alone in the woods, or in their room, if you walked outside their door you could hear them laugh, talk, and many times Echo, Roan and basically everyone else except the Griffin women, had found a giggling Marcus Kane leaning on the wall at their door’s side, eavesdropping their conversation. They would have stopped, raising curious eyebrows, forcing him to blush and find awkward excuses, before he would walk away without looking back, pretending to have really important things to do.

The war seemed so faraway from there, where the children could play in the open field around the village, and the kids could ride horses and nights were made by laughs and dinners shared under the stars and the moon, bonfires warming up the hearts, people improvising songs while playing hand made instruments.
And to everybody's surprise, except obviously for Abby, Clarke had showed them very good skills with it and had entertained all with her soft thick voice and her tiny hands stroking the guitar's chords. She had been the only one, followed sometimes by a really drunk Lincoln, that loved to follow her lead even if he really couldn't sing.

Till one very cold night Abby had found herself wondering the palace's hallways, not feeling really into sleeping, and had stepped into a singing Marcus Kane. She had froze in her steps, the quiet singing voice was coming from one of the balcony of the castle overlooking the hills, from where she was standing she could peek at him sitting on the concrete parapet, the moon casting lights behind his back, obscuring his details from her view. She leaned her shoulder to the wall and kept listening, his fingers were dancing on the chords with gentleness and he was singing in a language that she recognized as Spanish.

He could speak Spanish? He could sing? He could play the guitar?

She had simply smiled and had kept listening, the song wasn't familiar, but she didn't care, his voice was warm, thick, and desperately low, shivers were running down her spine, and she couldn't say if it was because of the chill air or because of his voice. She relaxed so much that she closed her eyes, a smile gracing her lips. Till when his voice stopped, and he stood up from where he was sitting.

“Abby?” he whispered in the dark, she blinked and stiffened her back, clearing her throat. “Yeah?” she pretended now to be really interested in the way the marble wall at her side was made. “Since when were you standing there?” he asked, approaching her, now she could see his face better, but he was still in the dark, she was the one bathed by the moonlight. “I uhm... not so much.” she confessed, leaning again on her shoulder, she was wearing a long black satin nightgown that she had managed to get from a tailor of the village, offering him, by his request, one dance on the Christmas party that was about to come.

“Mh.” Abby bit at her lower lip and then raised her chin. “So Marcus Kane can sing?” she said, raising an eyebrow, Marcus chuckled. “Sort of.” he said, bowing his head, she couldn't really say it, but she was almost sure she saw a blush on his cheeks. “I think you can sing, and with a very beautiful voice.” she whispered, smiling kindly. Marcus at that looked up. “Oh really?” he asked her, and she heard the ghost of his smirk coloring his voice. “Yeah...” - she withdrew from the wall, crossing her arms - “But Clarke is still my favorite.” she said, pointing her index finger toward him. Marcus had kept approaching her, so they were now moving quietly in the darkness of the hallway. “Yeah, she is my favorite too.” he said, Abby smiled. “Yeah... so, see you in the morning?” she asked him, while walking backwards, he kept walking toward her, the guitar in his clasped hands, behind his back. “Sure, goodnight...” he whispered. She stopped when her shoulder
hit the wall at her side, she suppressed a groan and Marcus' smirk grew bigger. “You're ok?” he asked her, approaching her even more, Abby nodded. “Yes, absolutely fine.” she said, withdrawing from the wall, turning on her feet so she could see where she was going. She kept walking until Marcus cleared his throat.

“You're room isn't there Abby.” he whispered, leaning on his shoulder, a smile coloring his voice. Abby sighed out, closing her eyes and then turned. “You’re right.” she whispered, tiptoeing in the other direction, she was bare feet, so she made no sounds at all on the marble floors, but she still felt the need to tiptoe away from him. “Sweet dreams Abby.” he said, amused. Abby waved at him an impatient hand and shook her head, groaning, he chuckled and she smiled, casting at him one last glance before disappearing in her room, his smile was bright in the dark of the night.

During those three months Octavia had grew closer with Lincoln, that was one of Indra's warriors, and this had started to create really lit discussions between the Blake siblings, and consequently this had dragged toward them a lot of attention from the rest of the village.

Now bets were on the agenda, and Raven had started to love it, she and Monty had created some kind of really secret, but not that secret in the end, group of people that speculated on the people in Polis, about their relationships and their private stuff.

For example “How long before Bellamy will give up on the two lovebirds?” or “How long before Clarke and Lexa finally will come out of a room all messy and giggling?” (even if honestly about this one they almost got a kick in the ass from Indra, till she waged three chickens and a sword on two weeks, the woman probably knew something the rest of the village didn't know) and then there was the most secret one, the one they all kept quiet about, even if everybody knew about it, except for three people.

The two people involved, and Clarke, for obvious reasons.

That was the most discussed bet, “How long before Kane and Abby will finally admit they are actually married?” that had attracted a great amount of attention from the rest of the village, and Raven had also thought about shutting it down, but when Monty had showed her how much people had actually bet on them, she had sighed out and approved.

Yes, Indra had waged on them too, this time she had decided to use one of hers thoroughbred. This had of course encouraged her on pushing on the two of them even further, trying to create awkward situations where they could find themselves alone, as if they weren't already always finding themselves alone somehow.
For example that time when she had asked them to follow her into the woods, to search for some plants Abby could use for medicines, and Marcus... well she had just asked him to follow her so they could protect her from both sides, and at that of course he had agreed.

Then she had faked some kind of weird emergency, knowing it was going to rain really soon, she was more used than them to read the weather. And they had so got stuck in the forest for four hours, Indra had been waiting for them at the gates, wearing already a victorious smirk, when they had came back, pretty damp from head to toe, smiling to each other, but without taking hands, without showing visible clues of illicit activities, she had snorted, causing them both to ask her if she was ok, and had walked away mumbling under her breath curses and insults.

Then there had been the time she had asked them both to go into a specific storage room of the palace, that could be opened just by the outside, they both of course agreed and had found themselves inside it at the same time, the room was big enough to ensure them enough space to move, but not that big to not create some tension. Indra had managed to lock them both inside, smiling to herself, they had been so deep into a conversation that at first they hadn't realize, then after almost half an hour Marcus had started to slam his hands on the door asking for help, followed by her. She had kept sitting on the floor, waiting for them to fell quiet, when one of his seconds passed in front of it and walked toward them, as to let them free, she had glared at him, and that had been enough to make him turn on his heels and walk back from where he had come.

After two hours, they had fell silent since almost one, she smiled to herself, and decided it was time to open the door, when she did so though, she found them both sitting on the floor, all the clothes on, sleeping quietly, yes Abby's head had fallen on Marcus' shoulder, but that was not even close to what she wanted from them.

She snorted so loudly that they both jerked awake, blinking in confusion.

After that she had tried several other times, forcing them to take a bath in the lake together, of course they both had refused, adverting their gazes and blushing awkwardly. The time she had suggested to Marcus to teach Abby how to defend herself, the discussion between the two of them about it had reached every person in the village, especially when Abby had yelled, “I don't need to do something like that! I'm perfectly able to defend myself!” that had force Marcus to step outside her room, cheeks flushed, his eyes dark and heavy, panting hard.

And if only Indra hadn't been that focused on muttering under her breath about how stupid the two of them were together, she would have noticed the way Marcus was particularly... hard on his feet, and not just on his feet honestly. And she would have understand how to force them to face the evident sexual tension between them.
They had to argue.

Three months had passed, and the nuclear war threat was still hovering upon them. They kept monitoring the bunker, and for now it seemed as if the A.I. Was under control. They kept saving people from there every time they found out there were still recoverable civilians. Abby had found herself arguing about that several times, saying that she could try to cure them, but Clarke and Lexa had tried to explain to her it wasn’t a simple drug, it was something else, something that could shut the mind off completely, permanently.

They all kept working everyday, Abby kept studying the tests Becca was running, and kept patching up the warriors after every rescue mission. Marcus kept going on those missions, followed by an everyday better Octavia. Abby and Bellamy had found out that those nights they couldn't quiet sleep, and had created a space for themselves where they liked to share hot chocolate, quiet talks and pleasant stories.

Clarke had kept working side by side with Lexa, both of them had found themselves night after night into the latter's room, planning the next move. And not just that if you asked Raven.

Monty had kept growing plants with success, Marcus took care of Abby about that, and not just about that if you asked Raven again.

Octavia had kept training as Indra's second, and had kept also seeing Lincoln everyday a little longer, till the both of them had forgot to lock his room, the groan Bellamy had let out when he had entered it to ask him something and the “Oh for the love of god!” he had then let out had been a clear clue for the entire Polis.

Raven had worked, with Monty's help, on a brace that she could use instead of the crutches, and she was now able to walk faster, using it as a support, her arms and hands were free to move now and she had started to learn how to feel more helpful. The pain was still there, but she had kept checking with Abby everyday, that had also make their bond grow.

Three months had been able to build new relationships, to reinforce old ones, to create a new kind of harmony between those people, they had started as strangers, and ended up now as something that felt a lot like family.

Chapter End Notes
As I said, I regret nothing. AND WAIT FOR CHAPTER 16, BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT IS COMING.
Chapter Summary

Marcus is going on a dangerous mission and Abby suddenly needs to make him feel how much she actually cares for his life.

Chapter Notes

You waited enough.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Abby

She was mad. Really mad. Her steps echoed loudly on the marble floors of the palace, the hallway were empty but with the effort she was putting on being loud, it seemed as if at least 12 people were marching behind her.

She was so mad that if it was physically possible you would see her head catch fire in rage.

Ok, the reason why she was that mad was pretty simple.

Marcus had decided to go on a suicide mission.

And no, she wasn't being dramatic, that was more a Bellamy kind of thing. She was being realistic, because honestly how couldn't it not be a suicide mission if it was about sneaking inside the bunker to get the backpack that apparently controlled that crazy A.I. and that could shut her down permanently? And yes that may be useful, but that wasn't the point.
She couldn't let him just go off into a mission like this one. This was never going to happen, Abby Griffin wasn't going to let Marcus Kane die on her watch.

That was why she was marching, snorting to herself, right toward his room. And when she slammed the door open, and of course he wasn't there, she groaned even louder and closed it shut again, heading toward the place where she was sure to find him.

The weapons room. It was where everybody went before a mission, to select the weapons they were going to use, or where they could fix their broken swords or their whatever, she wasn't into weapons at all honestly. She rushed toward it, her nostrils opening and closing vehemently, her heart beating fast, her fists tight.

She stormed in, the wooden door creaked loudly when she slammed it open. She glared at the man that was there to keep an eye on the weapons, “Leave us.” she growled, the man shared a worried glance with Marcus, he was giving her his back, and then, swallowing loudly, left the room, closing the door behind his back.

Silence fell heavily on them, it felt as an uncomfortable velvet blanket in a summer day. She crossed her arms in front of her chest and leaned her weight on her right leg. She was sweating, and outside was still winter, and she was wearing just her sleeveless tight black shirt and her leather pants, but her anger was forming drops of sweat down her neck.

“What the hell Marcus?” she snapped without too many compliments. Marcus sighed out, as if he knew this was coming. “Well is good to see you too Abby.” he said, turning on his heels so he could face her. Abby raised an eyebrow, her tongue popped in her mouth impatiently, she was patting her left foot loudly on the floor. “Don't you even dare.” she growled, taking few steps toward him, pointing her index finger toward him. “You are going on the A.I. mission!” she said, her finger pressed hard on his gray shirt, she felt his solid muscles shift under her touch. “As a matter of fact yes, I am.”

She inhaled deeply, he kept his eyes locked with hers, without even flinching. “And you thought it was good for me to get to know this from Clarke because?” she was glaring so hard at him, that if she could she would engrave a hole into his brain. He shrugged, pursing his lips. “I just thought it wasn't that new that I was going on a mission. That's what I do.” he whispered. At that Abby's anger grew heavier, her blood rushing in her veins. “That's not as every other mission.” she said, her voice sadder.

Marcus sighed out. “I will be careful.” he said, as usual, and this pissed her off even more, if that was still possible. “Damn it Marcus! Why can't you just stop saying that?” she yelled, her voice
 echoing in the marble room. Marcus blinked but kept his face expressionless. “That's just the truth, I am always careful.” he said, Abby inhaled deeply and squeezed her hands tight. “But this isn't enough and you know that!” she said, her smoky voice vibrating with anger and also a touch of fear, maybe more than just a touch. “I will be fine, why don't you behave like that toward Octavia or Lincoln? Or even Bellamy? Why do you always act like that just with me? I am the soldier here, not them!” he said, shaking his head in disbelief, focusing on the weapons on the table. Abby fell silent at that. Her eyes staring at his back.

Because they aren't you. Her mind told her. She swallowed and closed her eyes. Marcus turned toward her then.

“Abby?” he whispered her name as he was used to do when they were sharing quiet conversations, in the privacy of his own room, late at night, and that made her bit at her lower lip, sighing out. “Gosh you are impossible.” she whispered, looking at the ceiling. Marcus at that smiled. “Yeah, we already established that.” he said, focusing again on the sword in his hands.”No, you are really impossible!” she said, shaking her head, her hands on her hips, her tongue wetting her lips.

“Oh come on, I'm not that bad.” he whispered, his eyes never leaving the sword in his hands, he was looking at it as if it was some kind of beautiful painting.

She would never understand what was so fascinating about weapons.

“Seriously Marcus. Why haven't you told me?” she said, her voice was deep now, her tone calmer. She crossed her arms once again. Marcus at that sighed out and lowered the sword on the table. “Because I knew you were going to reproach me.” he said, looking at her intensely. Abby raised an eyebrow. “R-reproach you?” she blinked and he nodded. “Yes, you do that a lot lately. Sometimes, I swear, I think you are some weird... reincarnation of my mother.” he said, his eyes at that roamed over her body from head to toe, then he raised an eyebrow and shook his head. “Yeah, well maybe not like that but... you get me.” he said, pursing his lips and turning again toward the sword.

Abby at that tilted her head. “You really think I treat you as a kid? Acting as if I am your mother?” she said, approaching him, leaning her back toward the table, facing him. Marcus hummed, casting her a glance. “You basically are my mother.” he said. Abby at that licked her lips and hummed. “I see... then, since I am officially your mum, if I ask you to stay in your room and do your homework, will you do that?” she asked him, amusement coloring her voice. Marcus smirked at that and looked at her. “I never listened to my mother.” he whispered, leaning further toward her, his hot breath stroked her cheeks, her eyes fell involuntarily on his lips, she parted hers and looked up. His expression had suddenly changed, and he blinked, clearing his throat, withdrawing, taking a step back.
“By the way, I must get ready, it’s indeed an important mission so...” he said, waving the sword in the air. Abby's expression changed again, her lips tight in a sharp line, her eyes dark. Marcus sighed. “Abby...” he said, his tone reproachful. “Don't Abby me Marcus.” she said, raising her chin in defiance. “Listen...” - he approached her, putting the sword down again, his voice a low whisper - “I promise you that I will come back safely. And that I will take everybody with me back home. Ok?” he said, his hands had suddenly found a place on her shoulders, his warm palms on her cold bare skin made her shiver. She sighed out. “Why can't you just stay here?” she whispered, looking up at him. Marcus at that smiled weakly. “I have to be there Abby.” he said, and his hands fell between their bodies, he cupped them around hers.

“Just as you needed to be there for Clarke, when you escaped from the hospital.” he said, Abby at that closed her eyes and swallowed. “Is not fair to use the Clarke card.” she said, glaring at him, trying to at least. Because the way he was looking at her made it hard for her to be mad right now. “I will come back Abby.” he said, nodding. Abby at that lowered her eyes to their joined hands. “Yeah...” she said, raising them a bit, toying with his fingers, she could sense his eyes on her. “Do that... come back. Come back to me.” she whispered, and as to make her point clear she did a thing she, for sure, hadn't plan.

She leaned forward, one of her hands flew to his cheek, her fingers stroked the beard he had let grow wild during those months in the capital, and then she raised on her tiptoes and pressed a delicate kiss on his lips.

It was a faint touch, her lips closed, she felt the warmness of him, the way his beard felt rough, but not uncomfortable. She felt him tense under the touch, and guessed he had his eyes wide open in probably pure shock. She withdrew then, lowering her gaze and her hand from his cheek. “Abby...” he whispered, and she closed her eyes, clenching her jaw, she wasn’t ready to give him an explanation for what she had done, gosh she wasn’t even able to give that to herself, but to her surprise, when she looked up at him, parting her lips to say something his eyes were glued on her mouth. “I-” but he stopped her, knocking the air out of her lungs, a hand cupping her head with strength and then he, oh so mainly, crashed his lips against hers.

Time stopped. The whole world stopped, damn it, the nuclear weapons could had started to fall down from the sky in that moment and she wouldn't even notice.

Marcus Kane was making out with her, hardly, powerfully, strongly, passionately. And Abby Griffin had never felt more alive in her life.

His body pressed instinctively against hers with desire, his solid chest crashed on hers, his lips were devouring hers, and she moaned, because honestly how could she be quiet? He groaned at the sound, one of his hands, she wasn't lucid enough to get which one, grabbed her arse with strength and he scooped her up, at that her stomach grew lighter, her mind shut out every thought. Her hands had found their place behind his neck, her fingers were messing around with his black hair,
he had let them grow longer and she had been lying if she said she had never dreamed about doing that.

He pinned her on the table, some swords fell on the floor, he didn't notice, she neither. Her lips were moving frantically on his, his beard giving her sensations she had never experienced before, and she knew her delicate skin was going to reddened, it was already burning, but she couldn't care less. His hands were resting respectfully on her hips, and he was pressing involuntarily his visible throbbing desire against her core.

She sucked on his lower lip, and her teeth followed, grazing at his skin, he groaned and opened his eyes, he parted his lips, she could already hear her name coming from them as a question, she shook her head. “Shut up.” she whispered hoarsely and trapped him into another bruising kiss. He moaned, his hands shifting from her hips to her back, her spine reverberating with a long shiver that flew directly toward her head, and she gasped, her hot breath melting with his. They both parted their lips at the same time and simply breathed into each other's mouth, panting heavily, her arms around his neck, his on her back.

“Abby...” she shook her head again, pressing another kiss, then another, and another one, on his lips. He groaned, his hips bounced toward hers, and at that she giggled involuntarily, he let out a breathy laugh. “Abby...” she kissed the corner of his lips then, and his cheek, his neck. He swallowed, he felt his Adam's apple going slowly up and down under his warm salty skin. Her tongue darted out involuntary, her eyes fluttered shut, and she sighed when his hands squeezed her hips. She was dying to feel his touch on her body.

“Promise me you will come back.” she whispered in his ear, biting at his earlobe, he was panting heavily, for a moment she thought he wasn't going to answer her, but then, when she shifted and leaned her temple against his own, their breath heavy and hard, he stroked her spine. “I promise.” he whispered back in her ear, and without waiting for a response, his teeth attached the delicate and sensitive skin of her neck.

Abby at that leaned her head back, one of her hands gripping at his hair, guiding his lips on her body. She moaned loudly this time, and felt how his body responded, his hips pressing even harder against hers, as if there was a chance to be much closer than that.

Apart from...

She swallowed, licking her lips to wet them, she was suddenly thirsty, and not just for water.

“I have to go...” he whispered, his hot breath marking her skin with every word, but he didn't stop,
he kept his lips on her skin, traveling on her neck, circling and forming roads he only knew how to march on. “I know...” she whispered, her eyes shut, her chest rising and falling heavily.

When suddenly she heard people walking outside the door, she lowered her head again, Marcus was lost into the crook of her neck, panting heavily, his hands were squeezing the fabric of her shirt, he seemed as if he was praying against her body, and Abby for a moment could just stare. But then the voice grew louder, she swallowed and took his face in her hands. He locked his eyes with hers, his face was a mask of so many emotions that she couldn't read them all.

She saw the desire into his deep dark eyes, but also the faint ghost of a terrible sadness in his features, and also the delicacy of a smile on his lips. “Listen to me,” she said, her eyes fixed on his, her breath heavy in her lungs. “You have to survive, and you have to come back to me.” she said, her hands gripping painfully at his hair, but he didn't complain. “I will.” he nodded, his voice low and heavy. Abby at that could just nod herself. “Good...” she whispered, and her eyes fell on his lips and once again, she kissed him. Slowly. Melting her lips in his, making him feel her desire for him to stay alive, feeling his quiet promise to come back to her.

He was warm and wet, his tongue darted out slowly and she welcomed it in, this time the kiss was slower, they took their time, savoring, learning. She angled her head so she could taste his flavor on the tip of her tongue, he moaned quietly when she found a specific spot into his mouth. She smiled against his lips, sucking at them, taking with her some of his taste, swallowing quietly, kissing him again briefly, looking at him deeply in the eyes.

“I will be waiting,” she whispered, his eyes grew even darker, and she felt her breath get caught in her throat. He cupped her face in his hands and kissed her again, passionately, strongly, sucking at her lips, his tongue leaving in her mouth a promise for more to come and she sighed when he withdrew, he leaned his forehead against hers. “Do that.” he said, nodding, she chuckled softly, and he smiled. Then someone knocked on the door.

“Kane? Are you there?” Octavia yelled from outside, Abby smiled to herself, luckily for them the girl knew that when the weapons room was closed, there was only one reason. Abby knew that because many times she had found her and Lincoln in it and had to wash her eyes with cold water to wipe away the image. “I'm coming.” he said back, at that Abby raised an eyebrow, he blinked and then widened his eyes, realizing what he had just said.

“Good for you, but make it quick!” Octavia yelled back, giggling quietly and walking away. Abby at that chuckled, Marcus bowed his head and sighed. “That kid will question me for the entire time.” he said, and Abby smiled at that, stroking his cheek, she sighed out. “We will have more answers for her when you will be back.” she whispered, her eyes roaming over his face. “Abby...” he whispered, one of his finger raised her chin, forcing her to look up, she was feeling the burning persistent presence of new tears in her eyes. “We don't have to talk about this if you don't want to.” he whispered.
At that Abby felt the need to face-palm herself and to slap him. *He thought she had already regret it?*

“Marcus what are you talking about? Of course I want to talk about this... well, *talk* maybe isn’t the word I would use but... we will take our time to figure this out.” she said, smirking. Marcus at that studied her carefully, to get if she was joking just to hide a different feeling, then he smiled. “I’ll look forward to it.” he said, and at that her smirk grew deeper. “I bet you will.” she whispered, and then dragged him by his shirt toward her, pressing a breathtaking kiss on his lips, she felt how his legs gave up under his weight, and he had to support himself on the table, his hands at her sides. She parted. “Now go, and shut down that *bitch.*” she whispered, her nose pressed on his, her eyes closed, he hummed. “Yeah.” he said, trapping once again her lips in his, sucking at her lower lip, biting at it, she moaned, her body leaning forward, while he started to withdraw from her. Then with a smirk he withdrew completely, leaving her with her lips parted, blinking in confusion.

He was smirking, she stiffened her back again, cleared her throat and jumped off the table, adjusting the shirt again to her body. “What are you still doing here? Go, save the world.” she said, gesturing to the door at his back, raising her chin, crossing her arms in front of her chest. He smiled and nodded, walking toward the door, opening it, before he could disappear in the hallway though, he turned toward her, and smiled. “May we meet again.” he whispered.

At that Abby smiled back and nodded. “We will.” she whispered, and with that promise he walked outside, reaching a really annoyed Octavia.

“Well that was quick!” she said, smirking, her eyes glued to him, then, without looking at her she added. “Be good Abby, I promise I will take backyour husband safe and sound.” she said, patting Marcus on his back, and pushing him away.

Abby shook her head, blushing, but chuckled softly when she was far away enough to not hear her.

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*Marcus*
The mission was simple. Get inside the bunker, steal the backpack, destroy it.

They were a big enough group of people, of rebels as Octavia liked to call themselves, Marcus wasn't sure that was an appellation that suited him. But still he was glad those people trusted them that much. Indra wasn't an easy woman, she was a strong and fearless warrior, but he had seen some of her softer spots, for example when she had rescued Octavia on the battlefield, running in front of everybody else, even himself, dragging her away when she had fallen unconscious. Marcus knew the two of them had started to grow a deep bond.

He had seen the same happening between Abby and Raven. At first it had been hard for them to find a balance, but since the girl had followed him to get to her, things had escalated quickly, and now where Abby was, Raven followed. That meant of course that she was close to Clarke too, the two of them had bonded somehow over the month in the hospital, Clarke had got to know her better in Polis, had seen the profound respect the young mechanic had for her mother, she had also probably sensed the need she had to have that kind of maternal figure at her side. And so the three women now liked to share quiet evenings in their rooms, and worked together quietly efficiently.

With Octavia things had been different. The girl had found in Abby a protective and caring woman, and even if she was always trying to hide it, she had that need too. Since her mother had died, she had missed a strong woman in her life, that spot had been taken by Abby at first, then when Indra had appeared, well let's just say things had changed.

Clarke had been almost relieved to know that the girl had another woman she could count on, as if she was afraid her mother wasn't able to handle too many needy kids. That was a lie. Marcus knew, deeply in his heart, that Abby could handle every kid of the world, and that was something that made him feel proud.

Abby had been worried for Octavia, as if she was feeling her slipping away from her fingers, what she didn't know yet, even if he knew she was aware of that, was that he had the same feeling. Yes she was there with them, yes she was always sharing a meal and a quiet talk with every each one of them. But she also had lost herself into her role as Indra's seconds, always fighting another battle, under the proud eye of the woman. It was as if she wasn't a young girl that had been through a lot of pain anymore, but more a warrior, some kind of weird Indra's surrogate, that showed unconditional love just toward Lincoln. Even with her brother things had started to crack somehow, they still talked and shared moments together, but Marcus had the feeling she was slipping away from him too.

*That's part of life.* Her mother would have said. He smiled to himself at the memory.
When they arrived at the bunker's perimeter they had to split. Him and Lincoln on one side, Indra and Octavia covered the opposite one. While the others took the remaining spots. Everything kept quiet for a long moment. They whole held their breath, recalling the plan in their mind.

When Indra sent them the signal, Echo and Roan entered the perimeter as they were meant to. Raven was checking on the surveillance cameras from Polis, and he knew Abby was there with her, checking on them, followed by Lexa and Clarke, the two overlooking the situation, being sure they all followed the plan.

He and Lincoln followed after few seconds when the second signal came. They took care of the nearest guards, knocking them out with the fingers technique Indra had taught them. Then the other groups followed, one by one, in a perfect silence.

There was no room for mistakes. They entered from the bunker's gates, sneaking around the rovers that were parked inside. Two other guards were being knocked out by Echo, the girl was fast and strong, defined muscles under her pale skin moved gracefully.

“Go.” Lincoln whispered, Marcus followed. They all walked inside the first tunnel. The rebels had managed to steal a map of the structure months ago, and since that was a bunker, there was no way they could somehow change the structure of it, especially without them knowing.

They kept moving quietly into the hallways, hiding into the wall's darkest corners when some wild guard would appear. Roan took care of the two that kept an eye on the door of pavilion D, where they knew there was the core room, where A.L.I.E.'s backpack was kept.

When the doors were being opened by Raven, thanks to a remote control she and Monty had created, Marcus and Lincoln sneaked in, Roan and Echo were on the door, keeping an eye on the hallway, while Indra and Octavia remained right behind the corner, the other rebels followed, every couple of warriors kept a specific distance in the perimeter of the tunnel.

“Ok, make contact.” Lincoln whispered to him, referring to the earphone Raven had gave him. It was connected to the long waves receptor she had attached to his belt, whatever that meant, he hoped it meant he could talk to her. Because without her help he wasn't gonna make it.

“The Soldier to The Black Bird,” - yes they had also code names - “come in.” he whispered, his finger pressing on the button of the earphone. It kept quiet for a long moment, then a low beep made him groan in discomfort. “Here's Black Bird from the nest, you hear me Soldier?” Marcus let out a sigh of relief. “Yes, I can hear you. What's the procedure?” he asked her, moving slowly to the bluish glass case that was quietly buzzing in the center of room. “Ok, here's the thing. You
have to disconnect the backpack to the core in less than ten minutes, then is when the next two guards will come to check on the pavilion. Got it?” she asked him, Marcus nodded, then remembered she couldn't see him. “Got it.” he said, and walked right in front of the room, where of course a door with a digital keypad was waiting for him to press the right buttons. “Ok, what's the code to open the door?” he asked her. “Give me a second.”

She then fell quiet, when she connected again he could hear other muffled voices in the room. “Ok, it's 4 8 15 16 23 42” she said, but then groaned. “You have to digit it with real care though.” she said, muttering something to someone behind her. Marcus frowned. “What does this even mean?” and waited, sensing Lincoln’s worried eyes on him. “Damn it Monty I got this! Ok listen, here's the thing, you can't simply digit the numbers, you have to do it waiting the right amount of seconds between every which one of them.” she said, and at that Marcus rolled his eyes.” Great, how much for every number?” he asked her.

“We're still working on that.” she said, while keep mumbling something with whom, he supposed, was Monty. “No you have to check the other code.” he heard him say to her. “But this doesn't make sense, this registers the hours when they open and close the door, it isn't about the keypad at all.” then he lost them when they started to talk about algorithms and probability theory. “Guys? We are running out of time, what’s the time for each number?” he said again. “It changes every hour. Fuck.” she muttered under her breath. Marcus sighed out. “So? Which one is now?” he muttered, his forehead prickled with sweat.

“What's going on?” he heard someone else asking at the other side of the line, Abby. “Nothing, we're cool don't worry.” Raven said and Marcus sighed out. “Don't lie to her, she gets mad.” he muttered, at that the girl snorted. “Let her be mad at me, she will be everything but surely not mad at you when you will come back.” she whispered, the ghost of a smile in her voice. “Can you figure out what I have to do or not?” he asked her, when noticed that Lincoln had grew anxious. “Hell yes I can, I just need another minute.” she said, Marcus sighed and closed his eyes, praying every God he didn’t believe in.

After the longest minute of his life, where he feared the communication had been shut down, she came back. “Ok here it is, these are seconds so, be really careful. 2, 7, 3, 6, 8, 14.” she said, and Marcus started to press his fingers on the keypad.

The buttons made a quiet beep every time he pressed them, his mind counting really slowly the seconds, with the help of Raven's voice in his brain, she could check exactly what he was doing, reading it in some kind of code strings she was seeing in the screen in front of her. When he pressed the last button the door buzzed and opened slowly, he took a step but Raven stopped him. “Wait!” he froze. “What? What?” he hissed, and heard the girl's fingers working fast on the keyboard. “Let me.. just.. take care of it.” she said, while chewing on her lower lip. He looked at his surroundings, the room was cold, the lights were low and bluish, he started to shiver in his black leather jacket.
Suddenly a series of red light wires appeared in front of him, an intricate web of lights that seemed to cover the entire room. “What the hell is this?” he muttered, trying not to breathe too loudly. “That's another security system. They use also a key card to access once they use the keypad. Damn, these people are paranoid.” she muttered, at that Marcus nodded. “I wonder why...” he muttered, Raven chuckled. “Ok, here.” at that he heard a buzz coming from the walls of the glass cage and the lights disappeared. “Go.” she whispered, and he did so.

He walked toward the brightest thing in the room, a metallic backpack, open in front of him, several silicone cables connected it to what seemed to be a control unit. “Ok, now you have to be fast but careful.” she said, Marcus nodded, ignoring the fact that she couldn't see him. His hands wee shivering, and he swallowed. “What I have to do?” he asked. Then Raven started to guide him, step by step, he took off the first cable, nothing happened, he took off the second one and kept going on, following a random order, that apparently wasn't random at all, at least to her and Monty.

“Ok, now you have to take out the cable and press your fingers on the center of the core, slowly, not too much pressure, also you have to do it in sync, don’t let the button until the cable is off.” she said, Marcus pursed his lips, took a long breath and his fingers hovered on the button, shivering slightly, adrenaline rushing in his veins.

Then was when the girl gasped, he stopped. “What? What?” he heard her mumbling something, and wasn't that sure, but he thought he heard Abby complaining and protesting, but then everything fell silent. “Raven?” he said, and then was when the girl sighed. “We have a problem.” she said, and Marcus sighed out. “What is it?” Raven cleared her throat. “I was checking the surveillance cameras, and I saw something... I mean, someone.” she said, Marcus frowned. “Who? A guard? I have Echo and-” but the girl stopped him. “No, not a guard, I saw inside of one of the cells.” Marcus frowned even deeper. “What is it?” he asked her impatiently, he wanted to get out of there. “They took Jackson.” she said.

And everything stopped.

Jackson.

They had talked about the young man during those months, he and Abby. She had shared with him many stories about him, funny things hat had happened, also she had shared delicate details of those longs months in which his mother had been sick, dying eventually in her son's arms. They had grew closer, remembering Abby's young assistant, he had been there when she had been overwhelmed with the memories, crying curled up in a ball at his side. He had tried to reassure her that he was fine, taking care of the patients, sending her his love and hope. Abby had tried to keep up with that hope, with the help of Clarke too. Then eventually she had simply... settled into the idea that she wasn't ever going to see him again, at least till the war ended.
And now they knew he had been closer to them more than what they all had thought. Raven was pressing her fingers rapidly on the keyboard, mumbling something, trying to find his specific location. “Where is him?” he asked, Raven sighed. “He is in a cell, Pavilion A.” she said, Marcus nodded and hummed. “Good, I disconnect this thing and then I go and take him.” he said, pursing his lips, Raven sighed. “You can't do that Kane,” she said, and Marcus groaned. “Of course I can.” He said, and Raven sighed even louder. “Once you disconnect the A.I. It will take them something like 10 seconds to know you are there, you can't just walk in the bunker and take him with you.” she said, Marcus squeezed his hands at his sides. “Once I disconnect this things they will know, right?” he said, Raven hummed. “Good, then it will be chaos, I will use that exact moment to take him out, Lincoln can drag the backpack with him, the others will run toward the truck, me and Jackson will sneak out from the back. I can do this.” he said, nodding approvingly to himself. “Kane..” but he stopped her. “You take care of the surveillance cameras, and the doors, I will take care of the rest.”

And without waiting for an answer, he did what Raven had told him to do. His fingers working rapidly, a new strength and lucidity rushing in his body, his mind worked fast. Once the backup got disconnected, the lights in the room went off, but Raven told him it was part of the plan. They would give them darkness for at least two minutes, so they could use that to hide and rush outside.

Marcus walked outside the cage glass, informed Lincoln of his new plan, secured the backpack on his back, the man frowned at first, but then remembered the name from the stories Abby had shared with him, and patted him on the back. “I'll cover you.” he said, and rushed outside, giving the core to Roan, talking quietly to him, the man nodded, and without waiting another second, he and Echo rushed away.

Marcus and Lincoln then started to follow Raven's quick orders. “Left. Right. Wait... Go. Two guards. The code is 1, 67, 90. Hide. A guard, wait... Ok it's clear, go.” and she kept whispering orders in his ear, Lincoln following Marcus' steps, that until the lights came on again. “Damn, we can't shut them down for at least thirty minutes.” she said, and then was when a deafening serene alarm started to echo around them. They both groaned, even Raven snorted at the other end of the line. Then everything happened fast.

Marcus and Lincoln sneaked inside of one of the last doors. The man knocked out one of the guards, Marcus sneaked inside of a dark corner, waiting for the other one to run in front of him. Everyone inside the bunker were freaking out, running here and there. Suddenly the hallway was empty, they used that moment to rush toward the door of Pavilion A. Raven kept scanning the surveillance cameras, and was able to warn them when someone was running toward them.

Suddenly they stopped, the cell where apparently Jackson was been taken was the one in front of them. “You have to open that door. No keypad though.” at that Lincoln nodded and rushed toward it, his hands working fast on what seemed to be an old rusty padlock. “Two guards coming from your left.” she whispered, Marcus gestured to Lincoln, the man nodded in understanding and kept working, while Marcus rushed to his left, plastering himself toward the wall. The two guards walked in fast, talking to each other. When they spotted Lincoln working on the padlock they froze.
and shout out. Marcus used that moment to sneak behind them, and smashed their heads one against the other. They fell unconscious at his feet. Lincoln sighed out and nodded, then was when the padlock fell loudly at his feet.

Marcus rushed toward the door, and opened it. The cell was dark and cold, at first he thought nobody was there, suddenly Raven yelled in his ears. “Watch out!” he turned instinctively and saw Jackson jumping on him, growling. “Let me get out of here!” he snorted. Luckily for Marcus the man wasn't that strong, nor that heavy. He stumbled on his feet, while the young man tried to punch him in the face, but Marcus stopped him. “Jackson, Jackson it's me!” he yelled, the man blinked in the dark and frowned. “What?” then he recognized him, and widened his eyes. “Kane?” Marcus nodded, Lincoln behind his back was shifting rapidly his weight on his feet. “We don't have time for this.” he said. Marcus looked at Jackson and squeezed the man's wrists in his hands. “We have to get out of here, now.” he said, the man nodded. “But how? What?” Marcus knew he had million of questions now, but he couldn't answer to them now. “Listen, there's no time for this, now we have to get out of here, come on.” he hissed, and dragged the confused man with him.

“Ok now what Raven?” he groaned, while walking fast in the hallway, preceded by Lincoln, and followed by Jackson. “You know that I love you right?” the girl said, causing him a chuckle. “Gosh with this you surely won Abby's heart forever.” she said, at that Marcus cleared his throat, blushing, luckily for him she couldn't see him. Raven giggled. “Ok, now listen to me.”

Ad he did. She guided them inside the more isolated parts of the bunker, since the backpack was already in the hands of the rebels, they could take their time, using the air ducts to escape from the back of the structure. They crawled in them and started to move with effort, panting, it was hot as hell in there, Jackson groaned and snorted, while Lincoln was able to keep it quiet hissing through his teeth.

When they reached the end of it, Lincoln smashed his hands on the metal grating, huffing he pushed himself out and Marcus followed, helping Jackson out. And they were free. To their surprise the truck was few meters from them, Indra gestured to them, informing them to reach it quickly. Marcus frowned, “How?” and Raven chuckled. “You can thank me later, now get your ass back here, your wife is freaking out because I had to lock her out.” she said, and at that Marcus shook his head, dragging a really confused Jackson with him.

They didn't need to explain anything to the rebels though, Raven had informed them all already using the radio in the vehicle, Marcus helped Jackson on the truck, and the man grew even more confused when everybody turned to him, looking at him with curiosity. “What the hell is going on?” he hissed toward Marcus when they both were sitting on the floor. Marcus chuckled, patting the man on the shoulder, at the gesture he frowned. “It's good to see you again.” he said, the man raised an eyebrow. “Oh really?” Marcus at that chuckled and then the truck started to drive them away from that place.
And while they traveled Marcus explained to Jackson what happened. He talked about the bunker, the Eligius Corporation, the nuclear threat, the mission they had been on. Then he talked to him about Polis, the rebels village, and when he mentioned Abby and Clarke, the man started to smile, and didn't stop.

When Marcus walked inside the gates of Polis, he was followed by Jackson and Lincoln, the others few steps behind. The first thing he saw was the palace, then he got a glimpse of a long caramelized ponytail, and Abby turned toward him, her frown shifted and her worried expression changed, a bright smile blossoming on her face. Marcus smiled himself, Jackson was tinier then him so she still couldn't see him from where she was standing. She started to walk closer, restraining herself from running toward him, he could see the tension in her body, Clarke was watching them from a window overlooking the gates, she had to keep a low profile. When they were close enough to talk, he raised his hands in front of him and Abby stopped, frowning. Marcus smiled and shifted, giving her the chance to see whom was walking behind him.

When he did so, Abby looked at the man that was scanning in awe the capital, shock and surprise took control of her features, she parted her lips, suddenly Jackson turned himself, when he laid his eyes on her he froze. They kept staring at each other for a long long moment. When Octavia snorted behind Marcus' back, he and Lincoln glared at her and she sighed out, shaking her head. Then was when Jackson rushed toward Abby, that was now crying, and enveloped her in his arms, he scooped her up, without effort, her feet lifted from the ground, and they laughed and cried, holding each other.

Marcus smiled, and adverted his gaze, in doing so he spotted Octavia smirking at him. “You sure it was a good idea to take him back?” she said, raising an eyebrow, Marcus frowned, ready to protest, when she tilted her head toward them and he turned again. Jackson was laughing, tears running down his cheeks, his hands stroking Abby's cheeks, her hair, she was squeezing the collar of his shirt, laughing throatily. “Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.” Jackson was whispering, while they both kept crying. Marcus kept staring, a mixed up emotion growing in his stomach, then Octavia nudged him in the side. “Oh I bet she still prefers you.” the girl said, and without adding another thing dragged Lincoln away with her and disappeared.
He remained there for a long moment, witnessing the scene in front of him, how Jackson kept hugging Abby, how she squeezed him in her arms with strength. He knew he didn't have to worry, first of all Abby wasn't... she wasn't some kind of property, he had no right on her, just because they had kissed that... that meant nothing right? And secondly, they knew each other since ever basically, they loved each other as... mother and son, right?

He shook his head, and sighed out. Then, when he thought the two were going to part, so he could be greeted by one of Abby's hugs, Indra patted him on the shoulder, whispering to him they needed to go inside and report to Lexa immediately. He sighed, and waited a little bit more, but Abby didn't advert her eyes from Jackson, she was now laughing, still trapped in the man's arms. He pursed his lips and walked away with Indra.

*They would have plenty of time later.* He told himself.

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*The wait was driving him insane.* He had reported to Lexa, had managed to talk to Clarke too, before she had disappeared to meet with Jackson. He had took his weapons to Fio, the man that took care of them, he had walked in his room, had also got the chance to take a long hot shower and to eat some fresh fruit someone had left for him.

And Abby still hadn't even pass by to say hi.

Honestly Marcus was feeling stupid, she had seemed so desperate to keep him there in Polis, pleading him to stay back, she had kissed him for god's sake. Yes he had kissed her back, and really he had been wanting to do that in a long long time, but the point was that now that woman was somewhere else, with another man instead that with him, to at least check on him, asking him if he was doing ok.

Marcus knew he was being needy and he had to get that she was just enjoying her friend, spiritual son, assistant or however she liked to call him, he was mad yes, and now he had to wait patiently for her to wipe away her tears of joy and come to him to at least ask him if he was ok.

He shook his head and rubbed his hands on his face.
Don't be greedy. He told himself. You can wait.

Then, when two hours had passed already, he sighed out and stood up from his bed, shaking his head, if Abby wasn’t going to visit him then he had no reason to stay in his room. When he opened the door though he found a panting and smiling Abby Griffin on the other side. Her left hand was raised in front of her, as if she was about to knock. He blinked, she smiled. “Hi.” she said, her voice sounded joyful, filled with happiness, for a moment he froze, enjoying the echo of that sound, then he cleared his throat. “Hi.” he said, clasping his hands behind his back, pursing his lips.

Yes ok maybe he was being a little childish.

Abby tilted her head and smiled. “You were going somewhere?” she asked him, and Marcus thought about it, then shook his head, saying nothing, at that she smiled and nodded. “Good, because I wanted to talk to you.” she said, and without waiting for an answer she pushed him backwards and forced him inside of his room, closing the door at her back. Marcus cleared his throat and stiffened his back again, Abby turned, smiling brightly. “Jackson...” she whispered, and Marcus couldn't help it and smiled slightly. “Jackson, yeah.” he said, at that she giggled, clasping her hands in front of her chest, she was spreading in the room a light so bright, that he thought he could almost touch it, if that was possible, probably it would have feel warm and pleasant.

“I can't believe he is back, I really can't believe he is still safe and sound.” she said, biting with enthusiasm at her lower lip, she was really happy and at that sight Marcus could feel nothing more than gratitude toward the universe. He nodded, following her with his eyes, she was pacing the room, without ever taking that smile off from her lips. “I- I really can't believe this actually happened. You left for that kind of suicide mission and you take back not just the backpack but also Jackson. I mean, I don't know if it's part of the rebel's culture but, you seriously deserve a medal.” she said, nodding, her hands had found their usual place on her hips. Marcus shook his head. “I just did what everybody else would have done.” he said, crossing his arms in front of his chest, at that Abby shook her head. “That's a lie, and you know it.” she said. Her voice had grew lower. Marcus shrugged. “I am just glad I could find him there.” he said, Abby smiled. “Raven told me you didn't know, and that she also had told you it was too dangerous. And still...” - she took a step toward him - “You didn’t listen and rescued him.” she said, now she was so close that Marcus could smell her scent, and as always she smelled good. “Yeah well, you apparently have a terrible influence on me, I can't listen to my common sense anymore.” he said, smirking. At that Abby hummed, her eyes fell on his lips for a moment, an intriguing smirk appeared on her lips. “Is not that bad to do the right thing though uh?” she said, looking up at him again. Marcus raised an eyebrow. “I always do the right thing.” he said, and at that was her time to raise an eyebrow. “Oh you sure?” she said, amused, taking a final step toward him, their bodies almost touching now.

“Pretty much...” he whispered, the strength in his voice had started to fade as soon as her eyes had grew darker, she parted her lips, looking at his beard, his neck, then slowly, purposely slowly she
looked up at his eyes again, then she smiled, and reached for a wild lock that was stroking his forehead. She took it between her fingers, and delicately, adjusted it back on his head, at least tried to, because it fell again, and she shook her head. “Your hair are rebels too apparently.” she whispered, her hand shifting from his forehead to his shoulder, her palm pressing on his jacket. Marcus was staring at her in silence, and then, when she had played with the collar of his jacket for a while, her lips forming a slight smile, she raised an eyebrow, without looking at him. “So... are you gonna kiss me or-?” he didn't give her the time to end the sentence, his hands pulled her toward him pushing on her back, closing the gap between their bodies, he leaned toward her, she looked up, her words dying in her throat, her slight smile growing into a smirk.

Then he crashed his lips on hers, and he kissed her. Her hands flew immediately at the back of his neck, as she had done with the first kiss, and she dived her fingers inside of his locks, and how he liked that. Shivers of pure pleasure started to spread from his head through his spine, till even his heels trembled in pleasure. He took his time with her, savoring her lips, inch by inch, his hands squeezing her leather jacket, desperate to touch her body under that heavy fabric.

*It wasn't yet the time for that.* So he decided to enjoy that kiss, he sucked at her lower lip, she tasted sweet, he too probably since he had just ate that juicy fruit, she was moaning quietly, her tongue darting out to lick at his lips, savoring, learning. Her hand found a place on his beard and she pressed her fingertips on his cheek, she was so warm, he shivered for the contrast with the chill coming from the window. She sighed when one of his hands found her cheek and he squeezed her, feeling the silkiness of her hair under his fingertips.

“Gosh I can get used to this.” she whispered, while kissing him. Marcus smiled, she felt it and bit at his lower lip, slowing down the pace, he followed. They were now forehead to forehead, panting heavily, his fingers stroking her jaw, hers toying with his beard, their eyes fixed on each other's mouth.

“I had been thinking about this since we left Polis. “he whispered, she smiled. “I bet you did.” she said, leaning and making contact with his lips another time, he groaned when her tongue explored his parted lips, she pushed him backwards using her hips. He let her lead them toward the wooden table at his back. He liked the way she was basically *devouring* him now, fast, hard, passionately. He let her guide their lips for a little longer, till he decided he wanted to be in charge and so he took her by the hips. She smiled, her lips plastered on his mouth, he switched their position and his hands traveled lower, stroking her sides, she parted then, they kept panting heavily, their breath dancing together, she looked up at him, he looked down at her, his hands stopped on her tights, she smiled, her lips parted, he pushed on her with his forehead, she obliged him and pressing her hands on his shoulders, jumped in his arms.

In doing so her warm core hit his throbbing bulge, he sighed, she opened her mouth and stopped for a second, her body suddenly rigid in his arms, he looked at her, worried that suddenly something wasn't right, but then he saw her, she was smiling, her eyes closed, bowing her head toward him. She then wrapped her legs around his hips, and adjusted in the new position, she opened her eyes and licked her lips absentmindedly. She smiled and leaned forward again, trapping
his lips in another bruising kiss. He smiled and she chuckled. He walked forward then, but didn't lower her on the table, instead he pinned her against the wall at its side.

When her back hit the cold marble she gasped, and he used that moment to kiss her again, hard. Abby moaned, and he felt how her body melted in his arms, under his touch, thanks to his lips. He felt so powerful in that moment that the feeling started to overwhelm him. His hips were pressing incessantly against her, and he was sure she could feel through the fabric of her pants how hardly and painfully he desired her.

And when she pushed forward toward him, he was sure she could feel it, he groaned. “Abby...” he reproached her, she giggled, throatily, her smoky voice sending shivers down from his belly to his groin. “I did nothing...” she whispered, withdrawing from his mouth, traveling with her lips and tongue on his neck, biting at his sensitive skin there, Marcus tilted his head back, his eyes rolling in the back of his head. She raised her head, without withdrawing from him, her cheek and her lips stroked his skin and beard, till she stopped so that she could whisper directly in his ear. “Why don't we try to use that big bed over there?” she said, her voice so low and smoky that Marcus thought he was going to come just with that.

His grip on her tightened, and she sucked in a breath. “Take me to bed Marcus...” she whispered, her hands squeezing the collar of his jacket. And Marcus at that stopped thinking, stopped breathing, his heart probably was shocked too now. “Abby...” he groaned, and at that she pushed on his hips another time. Marcus had to bit at his lower lip to suppress a moan. “It's ok Marcus, I want this too.” she whispered, and at that he shook his head, withdrawing a little. Abby groaned, sighing out in frustration.

But he had to explain to her what that step meant to him. He searched for her eyes, she was tilting her head, raising an eyebrow. “Not like this...” he whispered, and at that her expression changed, she blinked. “What? You want to take me to dinner first?” she joked. And Marcus smiled, feeling his heart jumping in his chest. “Yeah... also that.” he whispered, at that the woman in his arms stopped smiling, her expression changed. “Oh...” she breathed out. Marcus smiled again and helped her on her feet.

She was speechless, looking at him with a mix of confusion, surprise, awe. “I want it to be special for you Abby.” he said, and at that she raised an eyebrow. “You do know that I'm not a virgin right?” she said, she was joking but he could hear in her voice, and could read in her features that she was just hiding something else, something that looked as uncertainty. “Yeah I guessed that.” he said, smiling, trying to follow her lead, to help her lightening the mood. Abby swallowed at that and bowed her head, she was nervous. “I just want it to be a perfect moment for you.” he said, approaching her, resting a comforting hand on her shoulder, she looked up again.

Her lips were swollen from the kisses, her cheeks were slightly bruised for the contact with his beard, her ponytail was loosen and messy, her jacket crumpled, and she was simply breathtakingly
beautiful. “You really deserve a medal Marcus Kane.” she whispered, at that he smiled kindly, she bit at her lower lip, her eyes fell on his lips one more time, and then she nodded. “Ok then, take me out to dinner.” she said, smirking and Marcus at that nodded. “Glad you accepted my invitation.” he said, at that she chuckled. “How could I say no to such a gentlemen?” she said, adjusting the collar of his jacket, stroking away the fabric's folds. “I'm so glad you came back to me.” she whispered then, looking up at him. Marcus at that smiled, feeling his heart grew bigger in his chest. “I will always come back to you.” he whispered, at that Abby smiled and raised on her tiptoe, pressing a delicate kiss in the corner of his lips. “And thank you for what you did with Jackson. I owe you.” she said, at that he smiled. “You owe me nothing Abby.” he whispered, meaning it, his breath stroked her hair.

“I do.” she said, and then smiled, taking his hand. “Come on, Jackson wants to thank you in person.” she said, and he raised an eyebrow. “Oh, so will he kiss me too?” he joked, at that Abby bit at her lower lip. “For his sake he better stick to words.” she said, opening the door, his hand still in hers. “You are allowed to kiss just one person from now on.” she whispered then, smirking and guiding him with her in the hallway.

Marcus followed her, his heart warm in his chest.

"...from now on" sounded as a promise, and he liked that.

Chapter End Notes

And yes I am evil I KNOW but, trust me, the next chapter will be all about Marcus and Abby sharing a moment, an not just a moment if you asked Raven.
Something special

Chapter Summary

Marcus decides he wants to create a special night for Abby.

Chapter Notes

You asked, I finally did it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Saying he was *nervous* would have been reductive.

He was basically *dying* from anxiety. He was pacing the same section of the floor since almost ten minutes, rubbing his hand on his chin, right in front of Clarke's room. He had to talk to her, actually... or more correctly, he had to *ask* her something.

*A day earlier.*
When Jackson had stopped thanking him, basically bending on his knees, for saving Abby, finding Clarke and also rescuing him, he had left him with Abby, he had immediately rushed outside, to take a breath of fresh air. Octavia had spotted him immediately and had approached him with a bright smile on her face.

Everyone was happy in Polis that day, since they had been able to take back the backpack with the A.I. Raven and Monty could work on it, shutting it off and also doing something better. They would collect all the information they had about the Eligius Corporation and would have spread the word throughout Arkadia, and even further, about what they had done and what was the actual truth.

Lexa had agreed about that, saying that the truth needed to came out, Clarke had been more than happy to help her select the information they were going to share and they whole had started to work on it immediately.

The warriors had took time to rest and recover, but luckily for them they were all pretty much intact, it felt as if some kind of bless had kept an eye on them that day, granting them the success.

Octavia stopped as soon as she was close enough to him and looked outside the walls of the city, toward the mountains that stroked the blue sky. “Today is a beautiful day, isn't it?” she whispered. Marcus looked at her, a smile grazing his lips, the girl seemed in peace with herself. “Stunning.” he said, and at that she smirked. “So... I guess Abby thanked you for bringing back her little minion.” she said, tilting her head, curiosity and amusement lighting up her voice. Marcus shook his head, chuckling. “She's grateful yeah.” he whispered. At that the girl raised an eyebrow. “I bet she is.” and then nudged him in the side.

“Look at how cute is General Kane when he blushes.” she said, biting at her lower lip to suppress a laugh. Marcus cleared his throat and stiffened his back. “Octavia...” he reproached her, she giggled. “Oh stop it, it's no secret really.” she said, crossing her arms, scanning the hills around them. Marcus blinked. “What's no secret?” he asked her, lowering his voice. The girl looked at him and smiled. “We all know that you basically are head over heels for the Doc.” she said, shrugging, as if it wasn't such a great matter. Marcus froze. “What?” at that Octavia sighed out. “What? You think we're blind?” she said, at that Marcus turned his head toward the village.

People were laughing and chatting quietly, without even looking at him, and he suddenly started to ask himself if actually all of them thought he was... how had Octavia said? Head over heels for Abby. “Hey...” she whispered suddenly, dragging his attention back to her. She was smiling kindly. “It's important to have someone you care for.” she whispered, her eyes searching absentmindedly for Lincoln in the crowd of people around them, he smiled at her when she spotted him, she smiled back. “It's good to have a place you can call home.” she said, and looked at him again. Marcus smiled at that. “Lincoln is good for you.” he whispered, and the girl nodded. “Just as Abby is good for you.” she said, walking backwards toward the other warriors.
Before she had turned she smirked. “And by the way, she likes you too.” she said, and with that turned and disappeared in the crowd of people. Marcus smiled, yeah she actually did.

He wanted to do something special. It wasn't as if he needed to create a fancy night to take out Abby, but he wanted it to be... more than just a night. He wanted to create a perfect moment, where she could find herself comfortable, in peace. He wanted to give her something she could remember for the rest of her life, and that she wasn't going to regret the morning after.

Marcus Kane wasn't a romantic man, not really. But he cared, he cared especially for a woman. And that he knew since a bit by now. He wasn't sure when exactly things had started to grow between the two of them, he just knew he couldn't be more grateful for what the universe had provided for him. With Abby at first things had started in the worse possible way, and he knew he still felt guilty for what had happened.

But at the same time, the more time passed, the more he had started to learn what forgiveness meant. That thanks to Abby. She had taught him so many things, how life mattered, how living it especially was the most important thing. When she had followed her daughter on the battlefield, as the usual reckless she apparently couldn't help herself to be, he had thought he was never going to see her again.

And that had broke him, and in that moment he had realized that he cared for her, that she meant something more. It wasn't love, the love that you know you can't live without, and that you know you want to keep with you forever. It was something different, it was the hope that love could grow, the feeling that something else was there, that there was maybe a chance to feel something more, to live something new.

And even now he couldn't name exactly what he was feeling, well he probably could, four letters could held basically all of his feelings toward that woman. Four letters could explain maybe what he felt.

But he didn't want to give himself that explanation, he didn't want to use those four letters, simply because he knew he didn't deserve to use them.

At least not yet.
The fact that he could somehow see a future, where that feeling was reciprocated, made him smile. He wasn't a hopeful man, he had tried many times, usually it was just too hard for him to be hopeful. But then Abby had walked in his road, and she had taught him how hope felt, how to hold onto it could make him feel, powerful, strong, simply better.

Abby Griffin was a hopeful woman, and she had been able to teach him how to follow her lead on that. And Marcus knew, deep in his heart, that it wasn't just that, she had given him something more... she had given him many things, among them all, she had given him a reason to live.

When Indra came to him that night, carrying two glasses of Monty's moonshine, he surely hadn't expect her to start the conversation as she did.

“So, how are the things between you and Clarke's mother going?” at that Marcus chocked on his sip, his throat burned when his muscles flinched. “Excuse me?” he said, wiping away few drops of alcohol with the back of his sleeves, the woman smirked. “You heard me Kane,” she simply said, sipping quietly from her glass. Marcus sighed. “Damn... is it that obvious?” he snorted, and at that the woman smiled.

“Yeah, well you two are not that subtle.” she whispered, raising an eyebrow, at that Marcus shook his head. “I swear, we did nothing, we are not... that's not...” he tried to explain to her what exactly he and Abby were, but honestly... he could have done that better if they hadn't kiss, twice.

“You don't owe me an explanation, I'm glad you two found each other. It's important to have someone you care for.” she said, nodding, raising then her index finger. “But this doesn't have to mess up with your duties of course.” she said, nodding again, Marcus frowned but nodded back. “Yeah... of course.” the woman at that smiled and patted him on the back. “She is a good woman, strong, intelligent, very attractive if you ask to the village's men, and to the women too, also... you two look pretty good together.” she said, smirking. At that Marcus chuckled in embarrassment. “So the whole village actually think we are a thing uh? Great.” he said, emptying his glass in one gulp. “Hey don't worry, they know everything about everybody, that's basically what we did our entire life, we keep an eye on people.” she said, nodding.

Marcus cleared his throat. “Well, then I guess Clarke it's ok with, you know, us.” he said absentmindedly, then was when the woman froze, for just a second, and then swallowed another
“Mh.” she hummed, frowning, without looking at him. Marcus sensed something was off and raised an eyebrow. “She knows too right?” he whispered, and at that Indra stiffened her back.

“Actually... I think I really need to refill my glass, could you excuse me for a second?” she started to stand up again, but Marcus stopped her, grabbing her arm. “Indra...” he glared at her, at that the woman sighed, sitting down again. “No. She doesn't know.” she said, clearing her throat, sipping another time from her alcohol, without even flinching, as if it was simple water. “Oh...” Marcus whispered, chewing at his lower lip. “How?” he asked, Indra sighed out. “Well... we aren't stupid Kane. And we know her story. So... it was pretty obvious that we had to keep quiet with her about this.” she said, nodding. Marcus at that bowed his head in shame, and fell silent. “We don't blame you by the way.” she said suddenly. At that Marcus raised his head, the woman was looking outside, where the moon was traveling between the woods, dancing with the clouds and the stars. “What we do to survive, and what we are, are two very different things.” she said, casting him a brief glance, pursing her lips, standing up in silence when Octavia called for her.

Marcus was left alone then, he and his thoughts. And few hours later, when he walked back in his room, he decided what he had to do first thing in the morning.

He had to talk to Clarke.

Present day.

When he knocked on the gold wooden door of her room, he held his breath, waiting for her to open it. The door reverberated when his punch hit it, and then he heard the sound of steps coming from it, also he heard the sound of a muffled voice whispering something. “One second!” he heard Clarke yelling eventually and he nodded to himself, swallowing.

After few more seconds the door opened and a messy Clarke appeared behind it. She was wearing a creamy relaxed shirt that reached her knees, her legs and feet were bare, her blonde hair were a mess of knots, and he wasn't sure, but he thought he saw some bruises on her neck. “Is a bad moment?” he asked her, when saw that she was panting and biting at her lower lip, casting worried glances at her back. “No, absolutely no. Kane, hum... come in.” she said, swallowing, welcoming him with a wave of her hand.
“Thank you.” he whispered, walking in. His eyes fell immediately on the bed, where he knew Abby hadn't slept that night, since she had been stuck in the medical tent with a case of appendicitis. The fur blankets were scattered all over it, a pillow was on the floor, while other two were resting randomly on the mattress. He also spotted what looked like a pair of underwear in a corner of the floor. He adverted his eyes immediately. Clarke cleared her throat and smiled.

“So, you needed something?” she asked him, leaning against the table at her back, her eyes were shifting from him to her bed nervously. Marcus nodded and cleared his throat. “Yes, I actually need to ask your... permission about something.” he said, his voice trembling slightly. Clarke nodded absentmindedly. “Mh mh.” she hummed, biting at the inside of her cheek. Marcus started to pace the floor in front of her, he was nervous.

“Ok, here's the thing. I think it's important for you to hear this from me, I think you deserve to know this before... well before it is too late.” he said, nodding, trying to calm himself down. Clarke at that frowned, and blinked, focusing completely on him. “What are you talking about?” she asked him, crossing her arms in front of her chest. Marcus at that stopped and swallowed, the girl's bright blue eyes were staring at him with intensity, he felt the need to take a step back. “I... I...” he suddenly wasn't able anymore to talk apparently. Clarke squeezed her eyes. “Kane?” she encouraged him, he nodded. “Yeah, ok the thing is... We know each other since how much by now? Nine months? Is not that much but is pretty a lot around here, right?” he said, avoiding completely what he actually had to tell her. At that the girl raised an eyebrow. “Uhm... I guess?” she said, raising her chin.

“Exactly. So, during this period, well let me say I had been a real asshole at first, I have to admit this.” he said, resting a hand on his heart. At that Clarke nodded absentmindedly, but kept silent. “And I swear, I would never ask for something like this if I wasn't sure I really want this.” he stopped, realizing that like that it sounded really bad. “I mean... That I know I want this to go slowly, and that I really don’t want to hurt anybody.” he said, avoiding completely what he actually had to tell her. At that the girl raised an eyebrow. “Uh... I guess?” she said, raising her chin.

“Ok Kane cut it off, what are you trying to say? I've lost you.” she said, tilting her head, Marcus at that sighed out, rubbing his hands on his face. “Ok, ok.” he whispered, Clarke kept silent. “I would like to know... how do you feel about the idea of me, and... Abby,” - at the mention of her mother's name he saw how the girl tensed - “as... you know, I mean, we are friends, I guess that's pretty clear by now” - he was now mumbling to himself - “and I really am grateful for that, but.. that's not what I am here for, ok the thing is-” but she cut him off, raising a hand in front of her, taking a step toward him. Marcus fell silent, stiffening his back.

Her eyes on him felt heavy, as if she was judging him, her chin raised, her arms crossed tight in front of her chest. “You are asking for my permission to date my mother?” she said suddenly, Marcus felt the need to squeeze his eyes shut at that and to excuse himself and hide into the farthest corner of the world. “I... “ he sighed then, reminding himself he wasn't doing anything wrong, he just wanted to be honest with Abby's daughter, he wanted to play fair. “Yes.” he said then, lowering his eyes on her. Clarke at that kept silent, her eyes on him, the tension in the air was
almost palpable.

Then was when Clarke withdrew, turning and walking back toward the table. For a moment Marcus thought she was going to kick him out of her room, yelling at him to forget about it. But she instead took a box from the corner of the table, and opened it. Marcus frowned, but waited in a respectful silence. She took something out of it, and then turned, holding that thing in her cupped hands. “She came to me this morning.” she whispered, without taking her eyes off of him. “And she gave me this.” she said, opening her palm, and then was when Marcus recognized it.

**Abby's silver necklace.** There it was, shining under the shy morning light, the rings shining even brighter, Marcus swallowed and looked up at the girl, she was smiling with nostalgia, looking at them. She then wore it in silence. “She told me that she wants me to keep it. She also talked to me about you. The things you did, the way you protected her, the way you acted toward her.” she said, and then she smiled. “This is just a silver necklace.” - she said, gesturing toward it - “The memory of my father will always be with her, in her heart, in the color of my eyes, in the sound of my laugh. That is what she told me.” Clarke's eyes were now filled with tiny tears. “She also said that I have to give you a chance.” she whispered, biting at her lower lip. Marcus was staring in silence, feeling how his heart was heavily pumping in his chest.

“I don't know how Kane...” - she said, adjusting a strand of hair behind her ear - “But you make her happy.” with that her eyes settled on him. “And I broke her heart already once, I will not do that again.” she said, sniffing, wiping away a tear from her cheek. Marcus felt the need to hug the girl, but restrained himself. “So... if you can make her smile, and if you make her feel happy, then.. you have my permission to do that, forever.” she whispered finally, her fingers toying with the hem of her shirt. Marcus was too focused on the girl to hear the sniff that came from behind the bed.

“I-” he started to say, but the girl stopped him. “But if you will hurt her.” she said, her tone serious. “I will kill you with my bare hands.” she said, looking at him firmly. Marcus at that pursed his lips and nodded. “I will never do that.” he said, Clarke at that managed a smile. “I know...” she whispered and then shrugged. “But I like to be clear.” she said, nodding. At that he smiled and she followed suit, the two kept staring at each other for a long moment, two tiny smiles on their lips. Then she cleared her throat. “Ok then, go and... do your things with her, I don't need the details.” she said, closing her eyes in disgust. Marcus nodded, chuckling softly.

He started to walk toward the door, his heart lighter, when he stopped. “Clarke?” he said, the girl hummed, looking at him, the rings of the necklace in her fingers. “Thank you.” he whispered, and at that she nodded. “Be good with her... Marcus.” she whispered, at that he blinked, suppressing the urgent need to hug her. “Always.” he eventually nodded, and walked outside her door.

When it closed at his back he heard something he probably wasn't supposed to hear.
Oh my god, I have to tell Indra, she wagered a lot on those two!” and at first he didn't recognize the voice, but then it took just what Clarke said right after to make it all click, and he smiled. “Lexa keep it quiet!” she mumbled when he started to walk away, a smile gracing his lips.

Marcus & Abby

The night finally came.

The rebels had decided to celebrate the incoming end of the war with a party, since the one for Christmas they had planned almost two months earlier hadn't been able to take place in the end, since that same night a new group of civilians had been found in the bunker, and they all had been running here and there to rescue them. But Marcus still remembered the hot chocolate Abby had let them all find when they had gotten back, also the package he had found on his bed, that contained a book of poems. She had never admitted that, but he knew she had been the one living it there. He had managed to find her a new coat, he hadn't signed the letter that followed it, that said simply “Merry Christmas Abigail” but when she had walked the next morning, outside of medical, wearing it, she had smiled at him, and he had raised his cup of coffee, smiling and starting again to read the book he had on his lap.

And so Polis that night was breathtaking.

All day long people had worked in the village, fixing endless strands of lights from roof to roof, tree to tree. Marcus had managed to take some of them with the help of Raven, when he had asked her if she could do that she had raised an eyebrow, smirking. “Lights uh? So romantic.” she had whispered, adding “You'll get your lights Casanova!”.

The streets of the city had been cleaned, the stalls filled with flowers and decorations. The palace itself had been lightened up with thousand of candles, it had something to do with Lexa, according
Kitchens had spread throughout the capital the smell of fragrant inviting food for the entire day. Kids were laughing, running between the streets, carrying boxes filled with decorations. Marcus had tried to avoid all day Abby, not to get her mad, but simply because he wanted to surprise her.

Since the war had started, when she had been surprised it had never been a good kind of one, apart from the one of finding Clarke and Jackson again, and so he wanted to make her feel good. She deserved that.

And to his surprise, almost everybody in the village wanted to help him do that. Jackson kept Abby with him, inviting her on a trip into the woods, to collect herbs and talk, trying to keep her faraway enough from the village as he could. Indra had managed to find him a specific place into the woods, where they could be near enough to call for help, but faraway enough to get the privacy that “You two will need at some point” as she had said. Octavia had offered to help with the decorations, and Raven had managed to grant them some background music, fixing a speaker inside one of the trees with the help of Roan.

Monty had found them some really old but really fancy wine, when Marcus had raised a curious eyebrow at the bottle the boy had simply shrugged, saying: “She deserves fancy wine.”

When he had found himself in the kitchen, searching for something he could cook for them he had found Lexa, that was there to check on what was going to be served. The girl smiled politely and helped him pick the fresh ingredients, also she managed to find him an old portable gas cooker and a grill.

What Marcus didn't know was that, while he was managing to create that special corner for them, outside from the city, right into the forest, Abby had been planning something herself. She had managed to find a pretty beautiful guitar thanks to Clarke, the girl had also asked Raven to engrave the letters M.K. on it, to Abby's surprise. When she gave it to her, begging her to not cry in front of her, Abby had nodded, sniffing and pursing her lips, suppressing the sob that was growing in her throat.

“I just thought you would love to give him a personal gift.” she had said, and at that Abby hadn't
been able to restrain herself anymore and had dragged her daughter in her arms. “I love you Clarke.” she had whispered in her blonde hair, the girl had simply nodded, holding her tight.

And then she had come back from her trip in the woods with Jackson. She had rushed toward her room as soon as the sound of music reached her from the center of the village, she was running out of time. She showered quickly, and spread an oil Lexa had left for her in her bathroom, it smelled as almond and coconut.

The fragrance was rich but delicate enough to not overwhelm her. She thne brushed her hair, taking her time to loose the knots, she let them dry on her shoulders while picking up something to wear. She was staring at her modest, terribly modest, wardrobe, when suddenly Raven knocked on her door. The girl limped inside, wearing a huge smirk on her lips, in her arms there was a carton box that she quietly left on the table. When Abby approached it, the girl stopped her, smiling. “Promise me you will pick this one.” she said, raising an eyebrow. Abby frowned, and when the girl squeezed her wrist tighter, she just nodded.

At that the girl smiled and pecked her on the cheek, living the room in silence. When Abby had found herself alone she had opened the box, with uncertain hands, peeking inside, afraid of what she was going to find. Then she let out a gasp in surprise. “Oh...”

The party in Polis had started since ten minutes by now. Marcus was waiting right outside the gates for Abby, he had asked Raven to let her know that he was ready. And honestly he maybe was wearing the right suit, the spot for them was perfect, the night was warmer than usual, and his heart was in the right place... but saying that he was ready was going too far.

He was freaking out, his stomach was twisting and shifting upside down, his mouth was dry and the palm of his hands were sweaty. He was nervous. And it made him feel stupid.

If you get nervous is because you care. Once his mother had told him. He smiled and tried to reassure himself that he just cared for Abby, he cared for that night, he cared for every detail he had sat up with the help of the kids.

He just cared.
Then his mind stopped torturing him with anxious thoughts, and his stomach stopped twisting, everything just... *stopped.*

Because Abby had just appeared at his side.

He didn't know whom he had to thank for it, but Abby was wearing a *dress,* and not a simple dress, it was a black half silk and half satin long dress. It cascaded endlessly over her body, tightening around her torso, clingy enough to show him the shapes of her hips and her slim sides.

Since they had came to Polis she had been able to eat more and now the hollows on her cheeks had gone, she was still probably the skinniest woman he had ever seen, but she had managed to tone up her muscles by working in the garden, that also had gave her skin a richer color, a warmer one.

He knew he was staring, saying nothing, but he couldn't help it. The dress fitted her perfectly, hiding and exposing at the same time, her breasts were adorned by the delicate fabric of the neckline, she was wearing a tight bra that pushed them upper on her chest, the valley between them had disappeared, and now he could just see... *flesh and creamy skin.*

The braces that secured the dress to her body were so thin that if he sneaked under them his finger, the dress would have fall down at her feet. That thought made him swallow.

And while he kept staring, he didn't notice the way Abby was looking at him.

Lincoln had found him an old pinstripe suit, he had also found a necktie that matched, and under it he was wearing a white shirt that had been cleaned up by Luna, that had managed to take out the old yellowish color from it, and it was now so white that it almost shone in the darkness.

And Abby was wide eyes, taking in the sight of him wearing a suit. She parted her lips at some point, while Marcus kept restraining himself from touching her right in front of the gates, simply because if he touched her now he knew he wasn't going to stop.

“Gosh, you're beautiful.” she whispered suddenly, and the sound of her voice dragged him out of his thoughts. “I am?” he said, and then chuckled softly when she nodded, her eyes never leaving his body, roaming over every detail of it. “Have you looked at yourself?” he asked her, and at that she looked up, when her dark eyes met his stare, his heart missed a bit. She smiled then and quickly bowed her head, blushing.
She was blushing. *That woman.*

“You're breathtaking Abby...” he whispered then, approaching her slowly, his hands found hers, that were clasped in front of her body, her fingers toying with one of the layers of the gown, she looked up. Her breath had grew heavier and then, after a long moment of silence, she giggled. “Look at us, all dressed up for dinner, I am also wearing make up Marcus, make up! I needed the help of Raven to remember how actually that worked.” she said, biting at her lower lip. Marcus at that squeezed his eyes, to take a better look at her face, he couldn't see anything specific though, it was too dark. “You don't need make up Abby.” he whispered then, and a that a throaty laugh escaped her lips. “You are being cheesy.” she whispered and at that was his turn to blush.

She squeezed his hands. “I like it.” she added, and he looked up, they shared a long smile and then he cleared his throat. “Come on, follow me.” he whispered to her, Abby at that nodded and they walked away from the capital’s gates, hand in hand.

After not even a minute Abby giggled and tilted her head. “Where are we going?” she asked him, and Marcus smirked, turning toward her. “It's a surprise.” he whispered, and at she let out an amused “Oooohhh”.

Until the little corner he had created appeared, then was when she gasped, her lips parting and forming an “Oh” of pure surprise.

*Lights.* The first thing Abby saw were lights, warm and sparkling as stars, they created some kind of *roof* between two giant oaks. Her hand slipped absentmindedly from his and she started to walk slowly toward the sparkling trees. Then she spotted the folded table in the middle of them, there were also a portable cooker and a grill, waiting quietly at the table's side. Her eyes grew bigger, to take in every detail.

From the wild flowers that were adorning the table, and the rose petals that were scattered all over the meadow around it, to the candle that were burning in the center of the white cloth, spreading a sweet scent in the chilly air. She smiled involuntarily, her cheeks stretching, her lips were probably
reaching her ears now.

She turned on her heels and looked at him, he was smiling, looking at her with such a warm and gentle gaze that she thought she could physically melt. Then she laughed and shook her head in wonder. “You like it?” he asked, approaching her, his hands in his pockets. Abby at that nodded and then chuckled. “It's... it's so beautiful.” she whispered, her eyes roaming over every detail.

“Yes, it is.” he whispered, she turned toward him then, and of course he was looking at her, at that she smiled and then did the thing she had been dying to do all day, she raised on her tiptoes and kissed him.

Slowly. Gently. Her lips parting the right amount to taste him but not enough to let his tongue slip in. “Beautiful.” she whispered, biting at his lower lip, at that she sensed how his breath get caught in his throat, he smiled then. “There's also food.” he said, resting his forehead against hers, and at that she giggled, stroking the back of his head. “Then feed me Marcus.” she said, raising an eyebrow, biting at her lower lip and withdrawing, reaching the table.

Marcus nodded in silence, cleared his throat, fixed the collar of his suit and then helped her sit down. “Thank you.” she said, looking up at him, smiling. He smirked and then walked toward the grill. “Ok, here's the thing.” he said suddenly, Abby blinked and rested her chin on her knuckles, her elbows pressed on the table. “We can have meat with vegetables, vegetables with meat, meat and... meat, or what was it? Oh right, vegetables and vegetables.” he said, at that Abby laughed and then pursed her lips, looking up at the intricate web of lights, humming in an obviously fake concentration “I think I will have... Meat and vegetables.” she said, and at that Marcus raised an eyebrow. “Oh really? Well then I will go with vegetables and meat.” he said, and they both giggled.

Then he started to lay the steaks on the grill, the meat started to sizzle once the heat of the embers reached them, and an inviting scent invaded her. She hummed, closing her eyes, her muscles relaxed and she felt as if her bones too had started to melt under her skin. “You're hungry?” he asked her quietly, his eyes focused on the food. She nodded. “Starving actually.” she said, tilting her head, smiling at him. He smirked, but then pursed his lips. “You had lunch?” he asked her, his voice heavy. Abby bit at her lower lip and stretched her arms on the table. “Sort of?” she said, averting her gaze.

“Mh.” he just hummed, as if taking a mental note of that, then he withdrew from the grill and walked toward the table, Abby smiled brighter and he smiled back. “And now milady, from the prestigious Green's wineries,” - he started to say, growing his voice into a deep and formal tone, causing her a giggle - “May I present you, the... whatever that was 1930 red wine” he said, showing to her the consumed label, the name wasn't visible anymore, just the year, Abby hummed. “Wow, a whatever that was 1930? You are spoiling me tonight.” she said, raising an eyebrow, at that Marcus grinned. “Always.” he whispered and at that she licked her lips involuntarily, and his
eyes fell on her mouth briefly, then he blinked and poured the red wine into the tulip glass in front of her. “Thank you.” she whispered.

He bowed his head and poured some wine himself, then she stood up from her chair and took her glass in hand. “To this night,” she whispered, raising it toward him, at that he smiled and leaned his closer, but before the glasses made contact he took her hand, and kissed her knuckles. “To you.” at that Abby's heart shivered in her chest, and her stomach lifted higher, if that was possible, and she blushed, then the glasses tinkered, the sound reverberated into her hand and wrist, sending a shrill in her spine. “To you.” she whispered, leaning the glass toward her lips, sipping at the red rich liquid. He followed suit and tasted the alcohol himself.

Abby's tongue prickled when the acrid wine touched it, then it spread some sweeter notes into her mouth, and a final touch of bitter stroked her throat, her belly grew warmer. “Oh I love it.” she whispered, looking at the deep red liquid shimmering in her hands. Marcus hummed. “Yeah, Monty has a good taste.” he said and at that Abby nodded, stealing another sip of it from her glass, closing her eyes when it flew down her throat once again, leaving a warm path from her taste buds to her stomach.

Marcus approached the grill, turning the steaks on the hot embers. She sighed and walked toward him, turning toward the bright moon in the sky, it was greeting them with silver rays that fell on the dark grass, dancing with the wind into the wires, growing a pleasant feeling in Abby's stomach. She absentmindedly leaned toward Marcus, her hand sneaked under his arm, her head rested on his shoulder, him turned toward the grill, she toward the field at their back. They remained quiet in that moment, both of them smiling, sipping at their wine, while the scent of grilled meat and smoke hovered upon them.

The cheerful voices coming from Polis made them both feel safe, and when the music started in the center of the capital, and Abby smiled, picturing her daughter dancing surrounded by her friends, other notes started to spread in the silence around her. She blinked her eyes open, and withdrew from him. Marcus was still checking the steaks, a smile grazing his lips. “What is that?” she asked him, looking around her, the notes growing louder around her. Marcus peeked at her. “That is what we call music Abby.” he whispered, at that she sighed and smacked him on the back. “You know what I mean.” she snorted and at that he nodded. “It was Raven's idea.” he said, looking at the oak at his left. Abby looked herself and then spotted the black cable that ran from it to the walls of Polis.

She smirked. “I like her.” she said and Marcus chuckled. “Yeah, I like her too.” at that they both chuckled and Abby closed her eyes, leaning another time on him, this time facing the grill herself. Her head in the crook of his neck, her glass emptying quickly while she kept sipping at the rich wine, her hand squeezing his elbow.

“I like it in here.” she whispered, he hummed quietly. “I like it too.” he said, cutting a piece of
meat, offering it to her, she leaned toward the fork and took it between her teeth, it was hot but she
didn't complain, Clarke had always said she wasn’t able to get burned from hot food, it was as
some kind of weird gift. Her tongue enveloped the piece of meat and she chewed on it quietly, her
palm covering her mouth, then she nodded, humming. “It's delicious.” she said, swallowing it.
Marcus smirked and nodded, taking the two plates that were resting on the table, withdrawing from
her. Abby sighed in pleasure, sipping at her wine, and then walked toward the table when Marcus
pushed her away, “I am the chef over here woman, let me do my things.” he said, while she
giggled and sat down.

He left the plate with the perfectly grilled steak in front of her, around it there were chicory leaves
and lettuce hearts, she smiled when he sat down. “Thank you.” she said, and then he smiled,
looking up at her, she lowered her eyes few moments later, cutting a piece of her steak, while he
kept staring.

Under the warm lights of the candles, the silvery cold one of the moon and the sparkling bulbs
above them, Abby was even more beautiful, if that was possible. Her caramelized hair were
cascading over her shoulders, smooth, delicate, silky curls framing her cleavage. He took a mental
note to ask her if he could brush them. Her skin was glowing, as if it was made of liquid amber,
and then was when he noticed the make up she had been talking about before, when he hadn't been
able to see it.

Her eyelids were covered in a delicate smoky black powder, that reflected the lights around her.
Her eyelashes, that had always been long, where even longer now, dancing slowly every time her
eyes closed and opened. There was also the ghost of a black eyebrow pencil in her eye's contour.
He kept staring, because he couldn't help himself. Her lips were touched by a delicate light peach
lipstick that sparkled under the moonlight.

She looked up suddenly and frowned. “Is everything ok?” she asked him, tilting her head, and
Marcus blinked. She let her fork on the plate, he could sense that she was growing worried. He
reached for her hand so and his thumb stroked her knuckles. “Is just that... gosh, you're beautiful
Abigail.” he whispered to her, his breath stroked the flame of one of the vanilla candles between
them, at that she smiled, and her body relaxed, her head tilting to the side. “You should stop saying
these kind of things.” she whispered, and he raised an eyebrow. “Oh, and why should I?” he asked
her, her fingers intertwining with his own. “Because otherwise I will have to jump over this table
and tear apart that beautiful suit.” she said, her smoky voice low and rich. Marcus's pants at her
words felt suddenly too tight, and his heart started to jump rapidly in his chest. “Oh, I see...” he
whispered, trying to advert his gaze from her, but the way her dark eyes were looking at him was
“Let’s eat first.” she whispered, and it sounded as a promise, and he now was desperate to swallow that steak in one gulp and let her tear those clothes apart. She smirked and withdrew her hand, taking a piece of meat and parting her lips, when her teeth chewed on it he looked down, and quietly started to cut his meat in pieces.

And they kept eating quietly for few minutes, sharing shivering glances over their plates, trying to stop staring at each other’s lips. He poured her more wine when she had finished her first glass, and then even when she had finished her third one. Then she started to giggle with herself, attracting his attention and she started to tell him funny stories that came from her past. Every each one of them kept them company while they filled their stomachs, their hearts grew lighter and the wine flowed freely between the two of them, the candles consuming on the white cloth.

When their plates were empty, they kept talking, they talked about everything they could think of, from the first day of school of Clarke, to the first time his mother had took him to church. And their voices grew lower and lower with every new topic, until suddenly they both fell quiet.

She was circling her index finger on the glass’ border. Her tongue wetting her lips. They were both slightly tipsy by now, but still pretty lucid to sense the tension that had started to grow between them. Marcus' eyes fell on her exposed bare skin, and he sighed. “You said something before...” he whispered, she hummed, blinking. “What?” she asked him, her finger never stopping circling on the glass' circular shape. “Something about tearing apart my suit.” he said, faking a shrug, pursing his lips. At that Abby froze, her tongue plastered to her lower lip, she looked up then and raised an eyebrow, leaning forward on the table, pressing her breasts to the wooden material, that cause him to cough. “I did.” she whispered then, he nodded. “Yeah you did.” and then it all happened fast.

She blew on the candles, the flames vanished into thick smoke. Then her arm flew on the cloth and in one quick gesture she smashed the plates, the candles, the flowers and everything else, even the now empty wine bottle, on the grass. And then did exactly what she had promised to do, she jumped over the table and her hands found the collar of his jacket, and her hips crashed angrily on his.

Marcus responded immediately, his tongue pushed on her lips, she welcomed him in and her hands sneaked under his jacket, her warm palms almost burned his skin through the fabric of it, she then shifted position, sitting on the table, her legs fell at his sides, and his hands found their place on her gown. She was panting hard, her hands dancing in his hair, her teeth grazing his delicate flesh, and her hot breath filling his lungs.

“Marcus...” she whispered hoarsely, and that unstitched him completely, his hands squeezed her by the hips and he forced her on his lap, she pushed the table backward with her hips and then sat
down on him, her legs spread open, her feet laying on the grass. With every kiss she pushed herself more against him, the chair started to swing dangerously under their weight, but neither paid attention to that. Her hands squeezed his shoulders and she started to sway on his lap, forming hot waves in his stomach, he groaned and at that she moaned in his mouth.

A chill breeze hit them both, but in that moment they were burning. Their skin was catching fire under the palm of their hands, and they were already both panting and sweating. Abby was greedy on him, her hands gripping his hair, her lips devouring his, her nails marking his neck.

And he loved it.

She was so light and tiny, and yet she was so passionate, with such a power in her hands, with such a strength in the way she tasted and learned his body. Her lips traveled down his neck, her hips never stop pressing on his groin, Marcus was almost sure he could see fireworks behind his closed eyelids. “Abby...” he whispered to the sky above them when her teeth found that sensitive spot of his neck, and she gasped. “Yeah?” her hot breath sneaked in the collar of his shirt, and he was burning.

His hands pressed on her hips and she looked up at that, her hair were a mess of golden curls, her lips bruised, her lipstick was gone and she was so erotic in that moment that Marcus had to kiss her again, closing his eyes, sucking the taste of wine and meat from her lips. She moaned and her fingers slowly started to unbutton his shirt. Her lips withdrew from the grip of his teeth slowly, her eyes so dark that his skin prickled, then she focused on her hands, exposing piece by piece his chest to her hungry eyes.

“We can’t ruin such a beautiful suit, can we?” she whispered, lifting briefly from him, adjusting better on his lap, pressing purposely on his hard length, he groaned and shook his head. “No, we surely can’t.” he whispered and she nodded. “Indeed...” her mouth crashed on his one more time, this time she pushed further and they fell on the ground, she giggled in his mouth and he chuckled. “Gosh we are terrible at this.” she said against his lips, and he shook his head. “No, you surely are not terrible at this.” he whispered, cupping her face in his hands.

At that Abby lifted her chest from his and plastered her hands on the grass, each one of them at his head's side. From this angle he could peek inside her neckline, and her hair brushed his cheek and the strip of bare skin on his chest. She then smirked and leaned toward him one more time, her lips grazing his without really touching them. “Let’s find a more comfortable place to do this.” she whispered, her dark eyes traveling from his eyes to his lips. Marcus at that pushed on her hips and rolled her on her back, pinning her on the meadow. She gasped and giggled. He took her wrists in his palms and secured her hands on the ground. “We will, just... let me take my time with you.” he whispered, and leaned closer.
She said nothing and her eyes fluttered shut when his hot breath stroked the skin of her neck, her lips parted and she swallowed. His lips never gave her the relief to being actually *touched* and he kept stroking her skin with his breath. “Marcus...” she whispered to the night breeze. He smiled, his nose capturing every note of her scent. She smelled as almond, cinnamon, wet grass, fresh sweat, smoke and... and something that he could name just as *Abby*.

“You smell good.” he whispered, diving his nose on the fabric of her dress, right upon her flat stomach. She hummed quietly, he could hear her quiet but strong heartbeat under her skin and muscles, it sounded so alive and powerful that he felt the need to kiss her there.

And so he did that. He kissed her stomach, through the silky fabric. She kept breathing quietly, her eyes closed, her face toward the night sky. He then traveled his lips on her body, kissing her bare arms, her shoulders, the hollow between her clavicle and her sternum, her neck, her jaw. His hands stroked her sides, her hips, traveling backwards on her legs, and then was when he noticed the her gown had a long split, he sneaked his hand under the light fabric and when his fingers met her silky thigh she moaned, her hands gripping at the blades of grass under her palms.

He leaned forward and captured her lips in his, at that she moaned, sucking at him. They kept kissing, while his hand squeezed her creamy and warm flesh, her muscles flinching under his touch, her hips lifting from the ground to make contact with his body.

He then pinned her down again and withdrew, his nose stroking hers. “Come with me.” he whispered, and at that she giggled. “Yeah, that was the idea.” she joked, and he smirked. “Get up.” he ordered her, his voice low and heavy, then he kissed her and rose on his feet, helping her do the same. She almost lost her balance but he supported her. Then he took her by the hand and started to walk into the empty field. She followed him, saying nothing, panting heavily, her hand squeezing his strongly.

When they reached the woods she slowed her pace, “Where are we going?” she asked him, looking around her. Marcus pulled her toward him, encouraging her to keep walking, she obeyed him. After another quiet minute he sneaked between a berry bush and she followed him, snorting when the branches scratched at her skin.

Then he stopped and she almost crashed against him, he turned toward her and smiled. “Here.” he whispered, and withdrew enough for her to take a look.

Abby's eyes grew bigger and her lips parted. “No way...” she whispered.

Marcus had managed to burrow something really special from one of the kids in Polis. *A tree*
house. But it wasn't a simple wooden little cabin settled on a tree. It was more as a circular wooden house, attached to a giant oak.

Around it hundreds warm lights were sparkling in the darkness, intertwining with the branches. “Marcus...” she whispered, taking a step toward it. Then was when she realized there was a river in front of her, that was quietly gurgling between the grass, and a little wooden bridge granted them access to the house. “This is the place where I wanted to take you.” he whispered, and at that Abby turned toward him. Her eyes were glassy with tears, and for a moment he though that was too much, but then she smiled and sniffed. “That's... Is...” she shook her head and gave up, jumping in his arms, holding him close. “I love it.” she whispered, her voice coming out tiny and delicate. He smiled and held her strongly in his arms.

After a quiet long moment she withdrew. “Let's go.” she whispered, taking him by the hand, wiping away some tears with her fingers and dragging him toward the oak and the tree house.

They climbed the stair that leaded to it, and he opened her the door once they found themselves in front of it. When she walked in she gasped in surprise. And when her eyes fell on the white bed in the center of the room, adorned with fur blankets, rose petals and white lilies resting in glass vases, she turned toward him and raised an eyebrow. “Well... you surely wanted to win all the awards with this.” she said, and dragged him toward her, pushing him on the bed.

Marcus jumped on the mattress and blinked when she didn't reach him, he raised his head from the fur blanket and looked at her, she was smirking, one of her hands was gripping one of her dress braces. “Now it's my turn to surprise you.” she whispered, and with that slowly, agonizingly slowly, she started to lower it down on her bare skin. Marcus swallowed, his body tensing, his pants grew tighter around his pulsing sex.

She raised her chin, parting her lips, and the first braces slowly fell off her shoulder, then the other one followed, grazing her skin while falling down. Then Abby simply breathed in, holding it in her lungs, and the dress fell down at her feet.

And there she was. Wearing a black lace body, it hugged her curves and kissed her skin with every inch of light fabric. She staid there for a long moment, giving him the time to take a look, and then walked toward him, taking off her black sandals. “It's time for us to give an answers to the kids questions about us.” she whispered, lowering herself on him. Pinning him on the bed, her hands dived on the soft blankets, her long hair fell from her shoulder to his chest and her legs parted, she sat on his lap. “We waited enough.” she whispered and then kissed him.

Her lips moved slowly on his mouth, her tongue stroked his sensitive flesh and her hips slowly pushed on his length. “Let's take these off.” she said, unbuttoning his shirt and exposing completely his chest to her. “Better.” she whispered, lowering herself on him, her mouth started to
kiss him slowly, leaving burning marks on his black chest hair. Her hands stroked his side, sending shivers through his body. “Abby...” he moaned and at that her teeth bit at his lips, causing a groan from him. “I'm right here.” she whispered, her hot breath made his nerves flinch.

Then she lifted herself from him and he took advantage of it, pushing her on her back, straddling her, at that Abby gasped in surprise, but a smile appeared on her lips when he took off his jacket and shirt, loosening his tie. “No, let me.” she whispered, her hands stroking his chest luxuriously, loosening the tie slowly, tossing it on the floor. He smirked at that and then leaned forward, his hands finally able to touch her lace body. “You had this on all night?” he panted, while devouring her lace body. “Yes, it isn't that bad when you get used to it.” she said, her voice dying in her throat when he bit a specific spot under her ear. “Damn it Abby.” he hissed, and she half moaned half laughed, her hands gripping at his hair and the skin of his neck.

He kept kissing her while traveling lower on her body, she tasted good. She was salty and sweet at the same time, she tasted as the almond cream she had spread over her skin, the fresh sweat that prickled at her skin was salty and stung the tip of his tongue, the feminine and alluring taste of her made his heart beat faster. She gasped when his mouth savored the line of her breasts, that were still trapped under the fabric of that lace body.

“So beautiful.” he whispered, and kept marking those words on her body, nuzzling on her stomach, his lips kissing the skin right upon her hip bones, her legs parted at that and he let himself fell down between them, his knees adjusting to the wool rug on the floor. “Marcus?” she whispered, without looking at him. “I'm here.” he whispered, and she shivered. “Yeah... I can feel that.” she giggled breathlessly. Marcus smirked at that, his eyes staring at the way the body lace fell between her thighs, enveloping her warm creamy core. “I really do love this thing you are wearing,” his hands were palm open now, traveling on the silky lace, feeling her body heat through the fabric. “But I bet you look better without it.” he growled and at that she bit at her lower lip, nodding. “What are you gonna do about it then?” she asked, her dark eyes peeking at him, at that he smirked, feeling how his blood rushed rapidly to his groin, growing his desire even further, it was almost painful now.

His hands traveled to her sides, slowly sneaking under her back, she lifted her hips from the mattress, and his fingers found the cotton buttons that secured the lingerie to her slim figure. “Let's see if it works like that.” he whispered, leaning forward toward her, his hot breath forming goosebumps on her bare skin. Abby sighed out when his fingers worked fast on the buttons, the silky fabric loosen the grip on her body and he started to withdraw it from her, slowly.

The first thing he saw were her creamy soft breasts that came to view slowly, while the black fabric shifted lower on her body, they popped out of it, and she sighed, filling her lungs with new oxygen, as if the corset she had been wearing all night, purposely for him, had been too tight and she was finally able to breath properly. His stomach twisted upside down when his hot breath hardened her peach colored nipples, that rose strong and sharp toward him, as if inviting his mount to lower itself on them. And he wasn't surely going to waste that opportunity.
His palms pressed on her ribcage, that was still hiding under the silky fabric, he lowered his head, his nose diving in the natural valley between her breasts. She sighed at that, the sound of a smile in her low breath, she was eyes closed, her hands gripping at the white fur under their bodies. He smiled himself when her rich scent reached him, there it was stronger, as if that strap of skin had caged few drops of the exotic and floral perfume she had poured on her skin, even that just and purposely for him.

Those thoughts started to drive him mad with desire. The fact that she had decided to wear that body lace under that, already breathtaking, dress. The make up she had adjusted with balance on her beautiful features. The way she had combed her hair, the cream she had spread on her skin, and now the drops of that perfume she had poured in a spot that him, and only him, could reach.

He had to stop at that, his forehead pressed on her sternum, he breathed in, exhaling and inhaling deeply, as if he could sniff that scent away from her and keep it inside of him forever. He stood quiet and motionless for so long that Abby tensed under his body. “Marcus? Is everything ok?” she whispered then. He hummed against her skin, without withdrawing though, and suddenly her hands were stroking protectively his head, her fingers toying with his black curls. “You're sure?” she asked, keeping her voice low, suddenly her whole mind was focused on him, worried for him, as if she could turn on and off just like that, one minute she was panting with desire under him, and the other one she was whispering to him quiet comforting words, petting him with affection. At that he smiled and then, to make his point clear, kissed her skin, sucking slightly at it, wetting the warm spot with the tip of his tongue. At that she tensed and then relaxed under his touch, the hand in his hair tough rested there, she started to stroke and grip with a different strength.

His mouth shifted then, slowly, toward her left breast, and he nipped at her peachy nipple, his teeth caged it delicately between them, that drew a sharp gasp from her, he felt her flinch under his body. Then he savored the sweet flavor of the delicate bulge of nerves, and she moaned, his name left her lips as a prayer.

With that he traveled toward the right breast and worshiped it with the same care, taking his time, learning how she liked it, drawing other gasps and moans from her lips, that made it too hard for him to keep a slow pace.

Then he started to shift the body lace slowly down on her stomach, every new inch of skin his hands exposed, his lips tasted. And so he now knew how tone and flat her stomach was and how sweet and delicate the skin there felt under his lips. When his hands met her hips, his fingers sneaked under the fabric, and slowly guided it down, he purposely withdraw his mouth from her, and at that she snorted in frustration, he smirked, while tossing the body lace on the floor, her long and impossibly toned legs kicking it away with impatience.
And then she was naked, completely exposed, completely at his mercy. He had to stop and stare for a long moment, the inviting strap of silky dark hair between her thighs, her long legs that reached him on the wool rug. Her stomach that was beating in sync with her heartbeat, her breasts that fell slowly at her sides, her hands gripping at the sheets, her eyes closed, her lips trapped between her teeth. Her hair, spreading all over the fur under her naked body.

She didn’t look as she had for months in his deepest and secrets dreams, no... she was better.

It seemed as if time hadn't even tried to hit her, on the contrary, it had made her more glorious. He surely wasn't aware of how she had looked naked in her twenties, he had seen just a picture that was hanging in her room in the hospital, of a younger Abby Griffin smiling, with wavy golden hair, an infant Clarke in her arms, and a smirking Jake right behind her. She was radiant in that picture, and saying she was beautiful was reductive. But now, in her forties, she was even better.

She was breathtaking, the delicate wrinkles adorning her lips and eyes carried the story and the memories of her life. The white faint stretch marks on her hips and under her navel, told him about the nine months her body had took care of another life, creating and shaping the baby that had grown up into the strong blonde young woman that Clarke had become. Everything of her told him of the amount of time she had walked in this world, and he was suddenly overwhelmed by the beauty of the life that was running all over her skin.

“You're staring.” she whispered suddenly, getting up on her elbows, smiling at him, he wasn't sure but he thought he could see a blush coloring her already flushed cheeks. “Can't help it.” he said, at that she smiled, and it wasn't meant to seduce him, it was shy and grateful, as if she had been afraid to not been... enough.

That silly woman.

Then he fell quiet and his hands reached for her legs, without braking the eye contact with her, he lowered toward her warm cor, and nudged on her thighs, asking her to grant him access. And she obliged him, her legs opened up slowly, he adjusted them on his shoulders, the rich feminine scent of her wetness invaded him and he had to swallow to not devour her, taking her over the edge fast and rough.

He lowered slowly toward her center, his nose stroking the sensitive bulge of nerves at the top of her folds, and she parted her lips, her eyes grew darker, and then, biting at her lower lip, she fell on the matters, hiding her face behind her palms. He smiled and looked down, taking in her intimacy, thanking the entire universe for the chance he was having, to actually being able to offer that woman some relief, some pleasure.
When his tongue darted out of his lips, and he tasted her though, he knew she wasn't the only one that was going to enjoy this. She tasted good. Very good. She was rich and warm, strong and delicate at the same time, and she was so incredibly wet, but not too much, just the right amount to send shivers of pleasure throughout his spine. When his tongue started to stroke her folds with reverence, she sighed, and her hands flew instinctively toward his hair, she kept them there, her fingers diving slowly between his dark locks, he sighed, and she moaned when his hot breath stroked her.

“Oh god.” she breathed out, and at that he had to agree with her.

Oh god indeed.

She was panting quietly, as if restraining herself, probably she had been used to that, since she was a mother, she had probably lived her love life in the quiet silence of her blanket, suppressing moans and gasps, keeping it together.

But now they were alone, into the woods, into a wooden house up on a tree, she had the right to let it all out, and so he tried to make her being loud, to drew from her all he could, using just his lips and tongue.

And so he started to discover her warmness with his tongue, going slowly up and down, sneaking inside her labia minora, tasting the way she was almost burning there. At that she gasped, but it wasn't loud enough yet. And so his lips joined the journey, and he kissed and licked every inch he could reach, his nails stroking her thighs in the mine time, until he traveled toward her clitoris and there he sucked.

At that she gasped louder, her breath trapped inside her throat, her hips jerked forward toward him, her hands gripping his hair so hard that for a moment he felt pain. “Marcus Marcus Marcus.” she panted his name over and over again, her voice shivering on the six letters that formed his name, and he sucked again, drawing another low moan from her.

“Oh yes, yes, yes.” she whispered, and he kept sucking and licking, until he felt her muscles tensing and shaking, warning him that she was close, really, really close to the edge. At that he slowed down his pace, and started to move lazily his tongue on her wet folds. She sighed and flinched at every touch, too sensitive to bear more than just a faint touch without coming in what he hoped, would have been an explosion of screams and moans.

He started to pepper a long path of kisses up from her core to her navy, her juice spreading over her creamy amber skin, and he kept going higher and higher, stopping by her breasts to kiss her
sensitive nipples, and then she dragged him by the hair toward her face, his cheeks between her hands, she was panting heavily, her cheeks flushed, her dark eyes were shining and she was smiling, such a relaxed and happy smile that his heart melted in his chest. She shook her head then, parting her lips. “You...” she said, her eyes falling on his lips, “You...” she whispered again, then she bit at her lower lip, swallowed and leaned forward, trapping his lips in her mouth. “You're an amazing...” - she sucked the rest of her juice from his lips - “Gentle...” - she shifted on his neck, nipping at his delicate skin - “Caring...” she licked a long path from where his neck met his shoulder right to his ear, and stopped there, breathing heavily - “Impossibly handsome man.” she eventually said, biting at his earlobe, drawing a deep growl from him.

“Now... take me Marcus, take me hard and fast right here, right now.” she hissed in his ear, her hand gripping at his hair, and with that she nudged her hips against his and gasped when his hard length pressed on her stomach. He was sweating and panting, the hollow between his chest and hers was prickling with drops of sweet sweat by now and he couldn't take it anymore. Her hands worked fast on his waistband, and he tossed his pants on the floor, kicking his shoes in the process, using his toes to sneak out of the socks, and then she gripped his throbbing dick and he shivered. “Abby...” he let out and she nuzzled in the crook of his neck, panting hard, her breath burning his skin. Her hand moving agonizingly slowly on his hardness, his nerves flinching with pure desire, he could see sparks in front of him, this time he was sure of it. She kissed his shoulders, while her hands kept stroking and learning, weighing it in her palm, feeling it. Her thumb wiped away the juicy precum from the tip of his sex and she smiled on his skin. Then he withdrew and she looked up.

“You're ready?” he whispered, searching for the answer in the deepness of her irises, she nodded. “I am.” and with that he kissed her, hard and strongly. She moaned and withdrew her hand from his hard length, so he moved closer to her warm center and then, oh so slowly, the tip of his cock met her entrance and she arched her back, and then he pushed inside, filling her inch by inch.

They both let out a slow guttural moan, and their foreheads met, their heartbeats beating heavily and fast in their rib cages. Her breath shortened in her throat and he sneaked his hands between her hair, she looked up, and when he had filled her completely, and was trapped inside of her completely he looked at her.

She was panting slowly, her lips parted, her hands resting on his shoulder blades. He nodded, asking her permission, she smiled and nodded and then he withdrew, his length moving between her warm and wet inner walls, her muscles flinching and squeezing him, she closed her eyes and her nails dug into his flesh, marking him. When he was almost completely out from her he pushed inside once again and at that a smile graced her lips and she arched her back, her muscles relaxing to grant him further access inside, and he sighed out.

“Oh damn.” she whispered, opening her eyes, locking gaze with him, Marcus looked at her,
without stopping his slow journey inside of her. “Oh damn indeed. “he said, at that she chuckled, the reverberation of her laugh made him groan. He inhaled deeply and then started to thrust in her heavier, and faster. At that she stopped laughing and instead started to pant rapidly, her eyes shutting out everything else, her lips parted. “Oh god.” she moaned, his pace growing faster, heavier, stronger. He could feel his muscles tense, his forehead prickling with drops of sweat, his toes curling in the sheets.

He was already so close to the edge. She seemed not too faraway either, her back wasn't apparently able to stick to the matters anymore, her legs were shivering under his and her chest was rising and falling heavily, her skin was burning.

“Faster...” she whispered suddenly and he obliged her, smirking, he withdrew from her so that he could support himself on the palm of his hands, but before he could do that she rose her legs and adjusted them on his shoulders, raising a challenging eyebrow, and he smiled, stealing a brief but hot kiss from her lips, and in that new angle he started to push in and out again.

And the moan that escaped her lips then was anything but restrained, she was finally opening up herself to the pleasure he could give her, and that unstitched something deep inside of him, his hips started to move faster and to slam harder against hers, and she arched her back impossibly high from the mattress, leaning her head to the back, a guttural moan escaping her lips, his name followed, and he whispered hers too then, panting heavily.”More...” she whispered, looking at him, and he pressed further then, in doing so the tip of his sex reached her sensitive G spot and she sucked in a breath, “Yeah...” she gasped, and he groaned, doing it again.

He slowly withdrew and then pushed forward inside, hard, burning a path inside of her, and at that she screamed, an actual scream. Her lungs let her voice flew freely in the silence of the room around them and her legs tensed on his shoulders. “Oh for god's sake!” she panted, her voice louder than ever. Marcus couldn't help it and chuckled at that, even if when she clenched her inner walls tight around his shaft the chuckle turned into a loud moan himself. “Oh god...” he whispered and she giggled, “Yeah... do that again.” she whispered, looking at him, her make up was slightly messed up, her hair plastered to her sweaty forehead. Marcus didn't waste a second and withdrew another time, slowly, and then pushed inside, so further that for a moment he thought he could tear her apart from the inside, but she was still intact under his body. And she was smiling, moaning freely, without restraining herself.

“I'm close.” he groaned and she nodded, “Me too, finish me Marcus, finish me.” she panted, her eyes were rolling in the back of her head. And so he let out all himself and his body took charge over his mind.

His hips slammed hard and firmly against hers, her whole body tensed and flinched, her legs so tensed he felt pain for her, but she kept smiling, until he sensed the burning wave growing from his core into his whole body and so he leaned forward and she followed suit, their lips met and they
kissed, passionately, strongly, her hands lost in his hair, his hips thrusting so desperately that he thought he was going to faint over her.

Then the waves of their climax hit them both and they moaned loudly and heavily in each other's mouth, she parted her lips and kept panting and gasping in his throat, her hands squeezing his cheeks with strength and they were now wide eyes, the waves of pleasure washing over them, Marcus started to slow down his pace, softening into her, he was emptier and fuller at the same time, his body was satisfied, and his heart had grew so big that his chest was hurting.

They were both panting, slowly now, their hearts regaining a controlled beat, their skin still burning, it was prickled with sweat. She stroked her nose on his cheek and smiled. They kept quiet while he withdrew from her, drawing a final shivering gasp from her, he sighed once the chill hit him, and thought about going back inside, enveloped by the warm and welcoming wetness of her. But then she took him by the shoulders and dragged him on the bed with her again.

They laid side by side, their legs entangled, their naked body adjusting to the loss of warmness form the other, she was circling a finger on his cheek, and he was stroking her side. “You're beautiful.” he whispered, and at that she looked up at him and smiled. “You are too.” at that they leaned forward toward the other and their lips met eventually, they kissed gently, with tenderness, their tongue stroking slightly each other and their eyes were close.

Then they withdrew and Abby sighed. “That had been indeed a special night.” she said suddenly, the same joyful smile still printed on her lips. Marcus smiled himself and nodded. “You liked it?” he asked her and at that she shook her head. “No... I loved it.” she said and then grinned. “You were serious when you said you wanted this to be special.” she said and he nodded because of course ha had been serious. “I just want to see you happy.” he whispered, looking at her face, enjoying the beautiful woman that was laying right in front of him.

“Oh but I am.” she whispered, leaning closer, pushing on his chest with one hand, he laid on his back then and she curled up at his side, her head resting on his beating chest. “You make me happy Marcus.” she whispered on his skin, her hand stroking absentmindedly his stomach. He smiled at that and swallowed, feeling overwhelmed and happy, right when he thought he couldn't be happier, she surprised him.

“You make me happy too.” he whispered, looking down at her, his hands had started to dive into her curls and he loved the feeling of her silky strands between his fingers. She raised her head then and looked at him. “Then I think we both are lucky we have found each other.” she said, and her eyes were kind on him, her voice low, she seemed content where she was, right there, with him.

“I am the lucky one.” he whispered, stroking the bare skin of her shoulder, and at that she snorted. “I am lucky too.” she whispered then, her eyes were now lost on his chest. “I thought that I was
never going to feel like that again. I thought... I thought I was going to be alone forever after...” she didn't need to say it out loud, Marcus knew exactly what she meant, so he squeezed her shoulder and she shook her head. “It's ok...” she whispered smiling at him. “I am ok.” she said again, stroking his cheek, her smile growing wider. “Actually... I am feeling great.” she whispered, her eyes locked with his. “You make me feel that way.” and at that he pulled her toward him and kissed her.

They kissed and kissed, over and over again, whispering words of affection, promises for the future, and they smiled and moaned quietly, their body too exhausted to make contact again, so they just laid there between the furs, their lips dancing together. Until they both fell into a quiet sleep, in each other's arms.

Chapter End Notes

And don't worry the guitar will come around again!
Hope

Chapter Summary

Abby & Marcus go back to Polis after their special night, starting their new life together.

Chapter Notes

The end had to come at some point. Hope you will like it guys.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Abby

The morning after she woke up with the ghost of his kisses on her skin. Her naked body was warm and softly curled up at his side, his heartbeat in her ears, his taste on her lips, his skin under her palms. Outside the sun was shining in the sky, the wooden room was bright and warm, the furs under their body were comfortable and smelled as them.

She opened her eyes slowly, blinking away the sleep's fog, and a smile graced her lips as soon as she sensed his hand on her spine, stroking lazy circles on her skin. “Good morning...” his low voice reverberated in his ribcage and prickled at her cheek. “Morning.” she whispered back, looking up at him.

He was tilting his head, his black hair were a mess of soft curls, framing his strong features, his beard adorning a lazy but happy grin, she smirked and leaned forward, her lips stroked ever so slightly his, and he sighed out. She withdrew and licked his taste from her lips.

She was happy, really happy. Her heart had grew since last night, and was now bigger but lighter, swinging in her chest, her mind was at peace, her spirit, that had broke into pieces in the last months, wasn't just stitched up, it was born again, she was born again. She smiled at that thought and leaned forward again, her hand flew in his beard and she offered him a better kiss this time, deeper, longer, warmer. Eventually their tongues met and their quiet sighs grew into heavier gasps, their body waking up again, their skin prickling to life.

His hands started to squeeze the skin of her back, pleasant and familiar shivers started to run down her spine, waves of anticipation growing inside of her belly. “We should go back to Polis...” she whispered between kisses. He hummed, but rolled her on her back, the blankets entangled between their legs. “We will...” he growled, and his mouth started to devour her neck. She sighed and smiled, biting at her lower lip.

She could get used to this. Waking up in the morning to his mouth and hands, feeling that beautiful and desired first thing in the morning was something she had missed. Her thoughts stopped when
his teeth bit at the delicate skin under her ear, her eyes rolled in the back of her head and she let him guide her toward her, already growing, pleasure.

She gasped louder when he traveled down on her naked body, licking at her skin, remembering where she liked to be kissed, and where she wanted him to suck or bite. His nails circling and teasing her hips, his nose nuzzling on her stomach. Her whole body was alive now, a new and powerful energy rushing in her veins, her muscles tensing and relaxing under his touch, her skin catching fire under his hot mouth.

She arched her back when his hot breath reached her between her thighs. When he had done that last night she had thought she was going to die in pleasure, and right now, even if she had obviously survived, she thought the same thing. Her body wasn't that needy anymore, or at least that what she had been thinking, but when his tongue found her entrance, and he thrust in her slowly, her whole body started to shiver and pulse, and she knew she was never going to get used to him, because she already knew that every time was going to be as the first one.

A feeble “Oh God...” left her lips, flying in the air, her arms stretched at her sides, her hands roaming randomly on the pillows. She was gasping loudly and he was basically tasting her, as if she was a delicious piece of cake, and he wanted to discover every ingredient of her with his tongue. She chuckled to herself when that thought formed in her head, but her chuckle grew into a new moan when his index finger sneaked inside her entrance. She arched her back even further, her hips pushing slightly toward his face, and he groaned and whispered her name.

It was ridiculous how good that was making her feel, it was ridiculous how extremely happy she was feeling, it was ridiculous how she had completely forgot about how was to feel bad, sad, or in pain. Because in that moment all that mattered was Marcus' face between her thighs. All she could think of now was how she wanted to return the favor later, and how she wanted him to do that forever, to do everything of that forever with him. All she was feeling was a ridiculously amazing joy, and a desire to live endlessly with him in that exact moment.

When a second finger joined the first one inside of her though, her joy mutated into pure desire and need. “Oh Jesus...” she gasped and his pace quickened, his fingers moving in circle and thrusting deeper inside of her, his tongue licking her folds clean and her heart was beating so loudly and so heavily that she thought it was about to explode.

“Marcus...” his name escaped her lips, trapped into a loud moan, and at that he withdrew his mouth from her and traveled up toward her lips, when he was close enough she dragged him toward her, his hands still trapped between her thighs, inside of her, and she kissed him, hard and passionately, tasting herself on him, she moaned and he whispered her name another time in her mouth. “Don't stop.” she gasped in his mouth, while biting at his lower lip. “Never.” he growled. “I will never stop.” his voice had grew so low and so heavy that Abby thought she was about to come simply with that, but then he sneaked in a third finger and she screamed, her nails digging in the flesh on
“Oh god, Marcus!” she loudly gasped and his lips attacked her neck when she tilted her head back on the pillow. Her hand moved on his arm and she could now feel his muscles tensing and flinching with every thrust of his fingers inside of her. And how beautiful that felt. She raised her head, and from where she was she could see his hand disappearing between her thighs and she smiled, breathlessly chuckling and moaning.

She cupped his face in her hands then and kissed him over and over again.

Then was when she felt how hard and strong he was against her stomach, her hand traveled without her needing to think about it and she took him under her palm, at the touch he shivered. “Together. Let's come together Marcus.” she whispered in his mouth and then she started to slowly stroke him. His pace inside of her slowed too, adjusting to hers.

Their hands moving in sink, slowly pushing them over the edge, he was deeply buried inside of her, and she was enveloping him in her grip with care and desire, they never stopped kissing, and when the waves of burning pleasure started to grow inside of them they quickened the pace, their hands both undoing them completely. They reached their climax hardly and powerfully, both gasping each other names between their hot kisses.

Then he collapsed on her body, his fingers slowly withdrawing from her, her inner muscles flinching and shivering, her hand covered in his thick and warm juice, them both wearing two matching smiles.

“Can we stay here forever?” she whispered eventually, and he chuckled, his breath burning her shoulder. She laughed too and they kissed. “I wish we could.” he said then, his nose stroking hers, she smiled. “But I bet they have beds in Polis too, and we can use those.” he added, his voice soft. At that she smiled and her heart jumped in her throat.

They were going back to Polis, back to her daughter, their friends, the rest of the world, but things weren't going to stay the same as before, no. They were going back but carrying something new with them, something that they both had avoided for too long, and she was so happy at the thought to start that new journey with him, that she needed to kiss him again, and so she did.

They indulged on the bed a little more, stroking each other's hair, kissing each other smiles away, whispering delicate words of affection. Then, when Abby's stomach growled in hunger, Marcus chuckled and rose on his feet. “It's time to get back.” he said, and she nodded, stretching her body on the soft furs, he fell silent at that, gazing at her with dark eyes. “You really need to put on your
“Come on Marcus, I'm starving!” she joked, giving him her back. “Yeah... like that is even worse.” he growled, and she threw him his shirt. “Close your eyes and ignore me!” she chuckled, adjusting the lingerie to her sweaty body. “You really have to put that on again?” he asked her, clearing his throat. “Well, would you prefer if I took it back carrying it in my hands?” she asked him, casting him a quick glance from over her shoulder.

He was buttoning his shirt, shaking his head absentmindedly. “That would be bad...” he whispered, his eyes glued to her lower back. “Exactly...” she whispered mischievously, sneaking inside the black dress. “Ok, I'm ready, shall we?” she said, turning to face him, brushing her hair using her fingers. He was adjusting the pants to his waistband. “Almost ready... You will take that off for breakfast right?” he whispered, looking at her dress. Abby smirked. “Would you prefer me to keep it on?” she whispered, approaching him slowly. He bit at his lower lip. “No... you better not keep it on.” he growled and at that she felt that warm wave growing inside of her once again. “Then you can take it off yourself later.” she whispered in his ear, kissing him on the cheek. “First we eat.” she added, walking outside the tree house, to take a breath of fresh hair.

And she didn't miss the groan he let out when she walked outside, swaying purposely on her hips.

When they reached Polis, after a slow and peaceful walk in the woods, everything was as they had left it, the table, the plates and the glasses scattered all over the ground. Abby blushed when she recalled what she had done to him, but he walked over it with a proud smile on his lips, dragging her with him toward the gates.

Walking back inside the capital felt as walking back at home, it felt good and Abby wasn't able to stop smiling. It wasn't just because she had been blessed by Marcus' lips and fingers first thing in the morning, but because everything in that moment felt perfect, as if everything was in the right place and nothing could go wrong.
They walked inside the palace hand in hand, and met Indra on the entrance, she looked at them with a neutral expression, but smiled fondly when they walked past her. Abby wanted to walk directly to the mess hall and eat, but she knew she couldn't walk there wearing that fancy dress without attracting whispers and glances over them. Of course everybody knew what had happened the night before, she was aware of that, but maybe it was better to not give them further details of it.

He walked her toward her room, and she stole a last kiss before disappearing behind the golden door, promising to meet at breakfast.

When she entered the room, she thought she was gonna find Clarke waiting for her, instead the bed was perfectly made, as if nobody had slept on it, and then was when she noticed that her clothes and personal stuff weren't in her room anymore, she blinked in confusion, and after a few seconds noticed a piece of paper folded on her pillow.

Mom.

She frowned and took it in her hands, opening it carefully, she recognized immediately Clarke's handwriting.

_It's time for me to learn how to brush my hair and how to make my bed without your help. You're things are in Marcus' room mum. Go and be happy._

_I love you._

_Clarke_

Abby stared at the note with glassy eyes, it wasn't such a big deal, she was just going to sleep in another room, at the end of the hallway, she wasn't moving in another city. And still... her heart squeezed in her chest and she closed her eyes, a tear rolled down her cheek. She smiled to herself and sniffed, clearing her throat, she pressed the note to her heart and sighed out.

When someone knocked on her door, and she blinked. “It's open.” she said, and she knew it was him even before seeing him. “I think someone moved you in my room.” he said quietly, and Abby chuckled. “Yeah...” she waved the paper toward him. “Clarke?” he asked, without really asking,
but she nodded and smiled. “You're ok?” he asked her then, approaching her quietly, and Abby nodded, sniffing another time. “Yes, I am fine.” she said and he rested a comforting hand on her shoulder.

“We don't have to do this if-” but she cut him off with a soft kiss on his lips and a stroke on his cheek. “Let's go into our room Marcus.” she whispered, looking up at him, at that he couldn't help the smile the blossomed on his lips, and they walked outside the room in silence, hand in hand, toward their own.

All

When the news of what the Eligius Corporation had done spread throughout Arkadia, and beyond, people had started to riot. Things had escalated quickly, other states started to send help to the city and the entire corporation had being shut down, first of all Becca.

It took just a week for the United Nations to solve the problem permanently, sending humanitarian aid and charging several people in and outside the Government of The United States.

The war ended and Arkadia became again a safe place. Everybody knew that it would take time to build again what had been destroyed, and that it wasn't possible to bring back whom that war had took away. But when the first morning of peace came, and people were allowed to walk outside their shelter without being shot, a new hope started to grow in the survivor's hearts.

The hope that life could grow again, and that from the ashes the war had left, they could all rise.

At first it felt surreal to think about getting back to Arkadia, leaving Polis behind, but when Abby pointed out that they could all just drive there everyday to help the civilians, they all agreed it was something they had to do.
And so they started to travel day after day to the city, the first time they found themselves again in front of the hospital they all had to take a moment before walk in, but then, when it was clear that people needed their help, they avoided their personal demons and did their best to help.

And so Arkadia started to born again. With the help of volunteers coming from all over the world, the rebels, the survivors, the soldiers, there was no distinction anymore, everybody simply worked together to rise again, side by side.

And eventually Abby and the other's help wasn’t needed anymore, and they whole settled back to Polis, permanently.

The village grew bigger with every week that passed, Marcus and Abby found themselves enjoying their new privacy, even Clarke stopped pretending that with Lexa she was just a friend and her room basically grew into theirs.

Octavia and Lincoln had built a little wooden cabin right outside the capital, saying that they preferred to live in the middle of the nature, everybody knew that the truth was that Bellamy had walked on them making out more than how much he could actually handle.

Raven had started to visit the lake every day more often, and when on a particular hot day Abby had found herself approaching it to refill her water bottle, while collecting herbs with Marcus, she spotted her on the shore... but she wasn't alone. Actually, she was really busy in devouring Luna's lips. She widened her eyes and froze, hiding quickly behind a oak, and when Marcus reached her, frowning deeply, asking her what was wrong, she dragged him toward her, ordering him to keep it quiet and to move rapidly away from there.

He didn't move at first, but when a faint moan reached them from the shore, he blushed hard and followed her, trying to walk without looking at his surroundings, afraid to see something he surely didn't want to see.

When Raven sat in front of them at dinner that evening, Marcus had found it hard to look her in the eyes without blushing and clearing awkwardly his throat. And Abby had to fight hard against the need to laugh out loud, especially when Luna joined them and he mumbled a “For the loved of
God.” under his breath.

But luckily for them, the girls had been too busy with looking at each other with heart eyes to notice anything of that.

And so life kept pulsing incessantly into the capital, and beyond. The memory of the war was still trapped into their hearts, but it was buried under so many beautiful other things that they whole find it pretty easy to heal their wounds and to adjust to their scars, building something new with every day that came.

Clarke had asked Raven to melt her parents' wedding rings into an infinite symbol, that she wore right upon her heart, secured to a silver chain, just as her mother was used to. When Abby saw it the first time, a heavy nostalgia started to grow into her heart, but when Marcus squeezed her hand, staring at her with with what looked as love, she smiled and blinked away her tears, life had to move on, and she was just doing that, moving on.

And they all moved on, day after day, week after week, until two months passed and something happened.

Abby was in medical, treating a kid's broken leg, the wave of nausea hit her so quickly that she barely made it to the sink without throwing up all over the floor. Jackson rushed toward her with worried eyes, but she poured cold water on her face and reassured him that she was fine.

When it happened again two hours later though, Jackson forced her to go back to her room and to rest.

She did so and when Marcus got the news that she was sick he rushed toward their room, to check on her, and he found her reading a book on their bed, looking perfectly fine. She told him it had been probably nothing serious, that she wasn't sick and that she was still there just because Jackson had forbid her to go back to work.

The day after she woke up with a smile on her lips, feeling good and ready to go back to work.
“Are you sure you are ok? You can take a couple of days to rest, you never rest Abby.” Marcus said to her, while she was putting on her tight black shirt. “I'm fine Marcus, really.” she sighed, securing her boots at her feet. “It was nothing, it happens, people can throw up Marcus, is not that bad.” she said, smiling, printing a kiss on his lips. “Ok, you're the Doctor here after all.” he said, rubbing his hands on his face, Abby smiled triumphantly. “Exactly, don't worry, I'll be fine. See you at lunch?” she asked him, opening their bedroom's door, he smiled. “Yeah.” and right when she was about to close it at her back, heading toward medical, her stomach betrayed her and she rushed toward their bathroom as quickly as possible, emptying her stomach into the sink.

When she walked outside the bathroom, after she had poured cold water on her face, Marcus was glaring at her, his arms crossed. “I swear, if you try to leave this room again, I will have to tie you to the bed.” he growled, and she had half sighed half laughed at that, but then had followed his order and had staid in their room.

Jackson came to check on her few hours later, Marcus was there too, he had asked for a day off to be sure she wasn't going to sneak outside when he was working. “So? What's the diagnosis?” she had asked, snorting, when Jackson had checked on her completely. “Well you are not feverish, and your stomach isn't hurting so... I don't know.” he said, standing up on his feet. “I need to run some blood tests, meet me in medical in a hour ok?” he said to her, and Marcus answered for her with a firm “Yes.” while Abby rolled her eyes and curled up in a ball on their bed, cursing that impossible man under her breath.

An hour later they were sitting in medical, she was pressing a cotton swab on the inside of her elbows, from where Jackson had took the samples he needed for the exams. “In a couple of hours we will have the results, I'll call you when it's ready.” he said to them, and Abby stood up, followed by Marcus. “You'll see it's nothing.” she whispered under her breath, “I hope so.” Marcus had said to her, and at that she had smiled, stroking his cheek. “I'm fine Marcus.” she had whispered, kissing his lips.

Though, when two hours later Jackson asked them to follow him in medical with a frown, Abby had started to worry. She was a doctor yes, and she felt good, apart from the sudden waves of nausea that had followed her in the last couple of days, but what if she was actually sick? There were so many possibilities ahead of her that she had to shake her head from stop thinking about all the horrible scenarios that came to her mind.

When they found themselves in medical, Jackson asked them to close the curtains behind their backs.

_Oh no, I'm sick._ Was the first thing that popped in her mind, and the look on Marcus' face told her they were both thinking the same thing. They sat down in front of Jackson, and his hand found hers
immediately, she squeezed it and inhaled deeply.

“Ok Jackson what is it? Spit it out. Am I sick?” she said immediately, at that Marcus shifted his weight awkwardly on the chair, clenching his jaw. Jackson looked from the pages in his hands to her. “What? No.” he said, shaking his head. “You’re not sick, you are actually in great health.” he said, at that Abby raised an eyebrow and blinked. “Oh...” she felt how the tension left Marcus' body at that. “Then why are we here?” she asked him, at that he pursed his lips, and looked before at her and then at him.

“Because your blood tests showed something.” he said, at that Abby frowned. “What?” she asked, and Jackson at that cleared his throat and then a tiny smile appeared in the corner of his lips and Abby was really this close to snatch those folders from his hands and read it herself. “So, what is it?” Marcus asked him, and at that Jackson's tiny smile grew into a brighter one. “You're pregnant.” he said eventually.

Abby widened her eyes, her breath caught in her throat. “What?” she snapped, snatching the pages from Jackson's hands, standing up from her chair. “That's not possible...” she mumbled, her eyes traveling rapidly on the results, trying to find something else, whatever but not that, because it wasn't possible, she couldn't be pregnant. Her heart was beating fast in her chest, while Jackson started to mumble about how she was still only in her forties, and that her body could still create life.

She was ignoring him, focused on the pages with intensity, when eventually she looked up briefly and she finally saw Marcus, staring at her with an expression that she could only define as adoration. His lips were forming some kind of shocked smile, his eyes staring at her with awe, as if she was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen in his life.

“...so I would not worry Abby, you are a healthy woman, your body can handle it.” Jackson was saying, but she wasn't listening, the pages in her hands weren't that interesting anymore, she was staring at Marcus, that was now standing up from his chair, saying nothing in words, but everything with his eyes.

We are gonna have a baby. His eyes were saying, We are gonna be parents, together. His smile was whispering. And at that she couldn't restrain herself and smiled at him. “Abby?” Jackson said suddenly, walking at her back, when she kept ignoring him. “Are you ok?” he whispered, she nodded and smashed the pages on his chest, without looking at him. “Jackson, could you give us a moment?” she said, without looking at him in the eyes, the man looked up at Marcus then, and smiled. “Sure.” he said, walking outside the curtains, closing them behind his back.

When they were left alone, Marcus rushed toward her, crashing his lips on hers, enveloping her in his arms, lifting her from the floor, circling on himself. “Marcus, Marcus, I'm gonna throw up
again.” she mumbled when her head started to spin. “Sorry...” he whispered, lowering her down again, but without taking off that silly smile from his lips. “Well.. I guess you like the idea to be a father then.” she said, almost out of breath. Marcus chuckled softly, his eyes were shimmering, was he crying?

“Marcus?” she said his name when he kept staring at her in silence, he blinked then and sniffed, bowing his head, rubbing his hands on his face. “Sorry.” he mumbled, looking up at her, his hands shivered when he cupped her cheeks, and Abby fell silent, staring at the way he was basically *stroking* her features with his dark eyes. “You're pregnant...” he whispered, and she nodded. “Yeah... it seems so.” she whispered back, and then they both chuckled and kissed again.

“You're gonna be a father.” she mumbled between kisses, he nodded, biting at her lower lip, resting his forehead against hers. “I'm gonna be a father.” he said, his voice a low whisper. Abby giggled at that, biting at her lower lip. “Gosh... I'm gonna be a father...” he said again, this time frowning, as if he was realizing it just now. “You will be an amazing father actually.” she said without thinking, nodding. At that he looked at her, intensely. “You think so?” he asked her, his voice deeply concerned now, at that she smiled and stroked his cheek. “Absolutely.” she whispered, kissing him again on the lips. “How can you say that?” he whispered when she hugged him, resting her cheek on his heart. She smiled at that. “Because *I love you.* And I know this baby will love you too.” she whispered.

And just then she realized that that was the very first time she had said those words out loud. She loved him, and she was sure he knew it, and he loved her too, she was more than just sure about it. They never said it out loud though, but it was obvious in every little detail of their life together. From the way they kissed every morning before work, to the way he looked at her when they were alone, from the way she hugged him at night, under the sheets right after sex, to the way he washed her hair when they showered together. It was obvious to everybody in the city, from Raven to Lincoln, it was obvious to Clarke too, she had accepted it a long time ago.

But saying it out loud made it *official* somehow, *permanent*. And so when he hugged her tighter, sniffing at her hair, she knew he was thinking the same thing. “I love you too.” he whispered in her hair and she looked up and kissed him at that, they kept whispering those words over and over again on each other's lips.

*I love you. I love you. I love you.*

And they were going to have a *baby.*
At first they weren't sure if it was a good idea to spread the news of the baby that fast, Abby wanted to be sure she was going to make it without complications. And so they both agreed to wait that the first three months passed.

The only problem was that this was her second pregnancy, and she had always been a skinny woman, so when she entered in the third month, her belly was already *too obvious*. At first it had been pretty easy to hide it, wearing long shirts, heavy clothes. But when spring had started to blossom around them, and the weather didn't allow her to wear heavy shirts anymore, she had found it hard to hide it, especially because she was throwing up day in and day out.

She couldn't wear perfumes anymore, and that was a thing that she could easily get used to, even because Marcus had told her several times that the natural scent of her skin was enough to drive him crazy. But when she found out that she couldn't even walk too close to the kitchens, because even just the faintest touch of grilled meat made her rush toward the nearest corner to throw up, she started to be sure that that baby was going to be a real *pain in the ass*.

But there was a silver lining in all of this. Her *breasts* had never looked better, not even when she had been pregnant of Clarke. And surely Marcus was enjoying it, way too much if you asked her. He had always been a boobs-man, she had get used to that side of him, the way he liked to worship her breasts made her feel loved and beautiful. But now it was almost impossible for her to wear something with a neckline without him basically pinning her toward every possible surface of the palace, his mouth driving her over the edge with hunger.

She liked that *wild* side of him, but since she was just in her third month, sex was suddenly uncomfortable. He didn't mind though, he get used to it pretty easily, saying that he could wait even a hundreds years for it, because he knew that when they were going to make it again it would have been even better, if that was possible, he had added.

*How he loved that man.*

When she entered the fourth month, and both her and the baby were in great health, they decided it was time to spread the news to everybody. The first one in the list was of course, Clarke.
It's not a bad news, it's gonna be fine. Abby kept telling herself, to calm her mind. But she was freaking out, and she could sense that Marcus wasn't handling it any better than her.

They had asked Clarke to have lunch together since it had been a while from the last one. She had been working on a new project with Lexa in the last three months, they wanted to create a school for the kids, an actual school, doing it following the law, asking for the permissions they needed, and they knew they were going to have them since what had happened with Arkadia, they were basically seen as the heroes that had saved the world from the nuclear apocalypse.

And so here they were, sitting at the same table, Clarke talking with enthusiasm about all the things they could teach to those kids, how good that was for the entire community to train teachers by themselves, and how in the end that war had somehow brought something good to the rebels and Polis itself. Then she stopped, apologizing for the overtaking, she leaned over her elbows and smiled. “And what about you two guys? How are you doing?” she asked them, at that Marcus stiffened his back, and looked with something that looked as horror toward her. Abby swallowed and cleared her throat.

“Well... we are doing fine, really fine.” she said, smiling, and Clarke nodded, but when her eyes fell on Marcus she frowned. “You're ok Marcus?” she asked him, tilting her head, Marcus nodded, but his jaw was clenched and his eyes were wide, he looked everything but surely not fine. Abby nudged him on the side and he cleared his throat. “Yes, we are great.” he said, nodding and smiling, taking a sip of his water, bowing his head. Clarke frowned at that grew deeper. “Yeah I can see that...” she mumbled, turning toward her again. “What is it?” she asked her then, raising an eyebrow. Abby at that knew that she wasn't gonna escape her daughter without saying her all.

“Ok, there's something we wanted to tell you.” she said, and Clarke a that hummed. “It's about me and Marcus.” she said, taking his hand under the table, Clarke saw it and a little smile appeared in the corner of her lips. “Ok.” she said, looking at them with curiosity.

Abby opened her lips, but then closed them again, biting at her lower lip, she then shook her head, closing her eyes and sighing out, come on Griffin, say it!

“I'm pregnant.” she said abruptly, squeezing her eyes, peeking at her when she had remained silent for too long. Then she spotted her smiling at her. “Oh it was just that?” she said, raising an eyebrow. Abby blinked, and Marcus frowned at her side. “What do you mean with just that?” she said, and Clarke's smile grew bigger. “You know mum... you are great at many things, but keeping
secrets from me? Not that much.” she said, smirking. Abby looked at Marcus, he was shocked just as her. “You knew?” she said then, turning again toward her daughter. Clarke shrugged. “Well I thought everybody knew.” she said, pursing her lips.

Abby blinked again and rested her cheek on her hand. “Uh. I thought nobody knew.” she whispered, Marcus was nodding at her side. “Mum... have you seen your boobs lately?” she said, her eyes shifting from her cleavage to her face, that made her blink and blush, covering her breasts with her hand, when she turned toward Marcus he was nodding, a grin adorning his lips while staring at her chest. She smacked him on the chest, glaring at him and he cleared his throat, focusing again on Clarke. “So you all know, then there was no need for us to freak out.” he mumbled, at that Clarke smiled.

“It’s a great news, why should you be worried about spreading it around?” she said, as if she really meant it, at that Abby's heart grew a size. “You really think that?” she asked her then and Clarke turned toward her again, smiling. “Yes mum, I really think that.” she said, smiling even brighter. At that Abby sensed the incoming tears that were growing in her eyes, Clarke raised her index finger toward her. “Don’t.” she warned her, but it was too late.

Abby was already sobbing as a baby, attracting a great amount of attention toward her. “Mum.” she reproached her, but Abby shook her head, apologizing. “Sorry, it's not me.” she choked on a sob. Clarke raised an eyebrow and Marcus frowned. “Are you ok Abby?” he asked her, and Abby nodded, without being able to stop from crying though. “You entered the forth month?” Clarke asked her and Abby nodded, at that she grinned and looked to Marcus. “Oh you are gonna have so much fun now.” she said, at that Abby sniffed and chuckled, wiping away the tears from her cheeks with a clean towel. “What do you mean?” asked her Marcus, frowning in confusion.

Abby at that smiled, stroking his cheek. “Nothing Marcus, she meant nothing.” she whispered and Clarke covered her mouth with her palm, giggling. “Yeah Marcus, it's gonna be nothing really.” she said, clearing her throat when Abby glared at her. Marcus kept his frown engraved to his forehead, while both women kept giggling with each other.

And the week after he finally started to understand what Clarke actually meant.

Abby was unbearable, one moment she was laughing in pure joy and the other she was yelling in deep rage, or crying as a baby about how lonely the horses looked at night when they left them in their stables.
Marcus was trying his best to handle her, for example by petting her hair when she had started to cry when a kid had fell on the ground while playing with a ball, saying that she couldn't bare the view of him falling that hard, affirming that it *literally broke her heart*.

He also had tried to calm her down that time that she couldn't find her stethoscope and had started to yell to everybody that she was going to *kill that motherfucking asshole*. That had ended up with her crying and apologizing with every person she had insulted, because in the end the stethoscope had always been in her room, but she had completely forgot about it.

And so the fourth month passed, with her complaining about how her breasts were hurting her, the more they grew the more she complained for the pain, Marcus had tried to empathize with her about it, but *honestly they were glorious*. The fact that she didn't allow him to touch them though, that sucked, and also was driving him crazy. But he was a good man, and could wait, right?

In the middle of all of this her belly was growing every day a little more, she was skinny by nature and ate just the right amount of food, and so she wasn't yet gaining that much fat on her body, Jackson had reassure him that it was perfectly normal, not every woman was the same. Still Marcus felt as if she needed to eat more and to look... fatter, somehow.

Abby had glared at him many times, saying that she was a doctor, a woman and had been pregnant before, and she knew that everything was perfectly fine without him needing to worry that much. But he couldn't help it, he was worried. Raven had to separate the both of them many times, when they had fell into lit arguments about that, in the middle of the village, without caring for the rest of the people staring at them.

And then, right at the end of the fourth month, something happened.

They were laying on bed, it was one of her good days, Abby was relaxing on her side, her back was starting to hurt, she was starting to need the bathroom every ten minutes, her breasts were painful and her hormones were crazy, but she was healthy, the baby was fine, and she was now wearing a tiny smile on her lips, falling asleep.

Marcus was right behind her, their hands entangled on her swollen belly, he was eyes closed, nuzzling in her neck, almost falling asleep himself, when suddenly her belly kicked him.
He was eyes wide open in a second, his muscles tensed, his hand jerked instinctively away from her stomach. He wasn't sure what actually had just happened, and so he got up on one of his elbows and looked at Abby in search of an answer, she was looking in front of her, her hand was moving on her belly, she seemed focused on searching for something. “Abby?” he whispered, but she shushed him. He tried again, but then she was taking his hand, adjusting it on her belly. “Marcus shut up and feel.” she whispered, looking at him, he blinked and then he felt it, another kick. 

He looked down at their joined hands. “Is that?” he asked her and Abby smiled and nodded. “Yes.” she said, at that Marcus felt tears prickling at his eyes. “Oh my god.” he whispered, looking at her belly, everything was still again. “That was strong.” he said, frowning, suddenly worried, Abby at that giggled. “She will be a tough girl.” she whispered, and her words took a moment to sink into his mind.

She.

He widened his eyes and looked up again at her, she was smiling. “It's a girl?” he asked her in a whisper, she rolled on her back nodding. “Yes. I saw it this morning, when you couldn't come to the ultrasound.” he nodded, he had been stuck into a meeting and didn't want her to skip that exam, he knew it was really important. She frowned suddenly. “Are you mad?” she asked, and he blinked. “What? Why should I be mad?” he asked her, his hand stroking her cheek. She sighed. “Because I got to know the sex before you.” she said, at that Marcus shook his head. “I'm not mad, actually...” he said, adjusting himself at her side, his hand never leaving her belly. “I am just happy to know she is a girl.” he whispered, at that Abby smiled.

“Yeah?” she said, and he hummed. “She will be a great woman, just as her mother and her sister.” he said, at that Abby looked at him in silence for a long moment, and then her eyes filled with tears, Marcus thought she was gonna have another one of her emotional breaks, but she seemed in control of it this time. “I love you Marcus.” she whispered and reached for his lips, kissing him slowly.

They both fell asleep then, their joined hands on the swollen belly, on their baby girl.

The fifth month started without Marcus noticing it that much, her emotional breaks were almost gone, she wasn't complaining too much about her breasts anymore, her belly was gloriously growing, and she was also starting to eat more. What actually made him get that something else had changed happened during a meeting.
They were sitting around the circular table, it was pretty hot outside and they were all wearing light clothes, he had a white shirt that was unbuttoned on his chest, exposing a strap of skin. He was focused on what Lexa was saying about the project of the incoming school, when his eyes fell on Abby, she was staring at his chest, her eyes dark, her lips parted. She was sweating, her amber skin was prickle with drops of sweat that fell down her neck to her cleavage and disappeared in her, still glorious breasts, that seemed so constricted under that clingy and tight black shirt.

Marcus smiled, trying to catch her attention, but she seemed too focused on his chest, he tried again to get her attention, moving his hand in front of his chest, right where she was looking, and she blinked at that, looking up at him. He smiled at her again then and at that she smiled back. But it wasn't a simple smile, she was smirking, with that teasing smirk he had learned to read very well during the last year.

*Oh.*

He cleared his throat and adverted his gaze, focusing on Lexa, but he could feel the pressure of Abby's gaze on him, he told himself to simply ignore her, because his pants were already too tight, *it had been a while.* But when Clarke answered one of Lexa's answers, and she was sitting in the other side of the table, he had turned toward her, and in doing so his eyes fell on Abby, she was staring at his bare skin with intensity, and had decided to use that exact moment to lick a drop of sweat from her lips.

Damn it.

He cleared his throat, Clarke at that stopped and looked at him. “Is everything ok Marcus?” she asked him, now everybody's eyes were on him, Marcus blinked and parted his lips to say something, but suddenly Abby preceded him. “Actually honey, I don't feel that well, I would like Marcus to walk me back in our room.” she said, looking at her daughter, Marcus frowned, suddenly worried. “Oh, sure.” she smiled, focusing again on the papers in her hands. Abby smiled back and started to sit up, Marcus at that walked toward her, helping her. She stood up easily, her belly wasn't that big yet to cause her too many problems, but she groaned, resting a hand on her back.

Marcus walked her outside, she kept snorting here and there, until the door of the room closed at their backs and she huffed. “Oh finally.” she said, at that he frowned and she grabbed the collar of his shirt and pushed him against the nearest wall, her lips were on his neck in a second.

“How?” he gasped in shock, she was sucking with strength on his pulse point. Her belly pressing on his stomach. “What are you doing?” he hissed, at that she chuckled, biting at his sensitive skin. “What do you think?” she said. And with that her hands found their way in his hair, her lips traveling on his mouth. “I want you to take me to bed Marcus.” she panted in his lips, while biting
at his lower lip, that draw a groan from him, he couldn't help it.

“But weren't you feeling sick?” he asked her, while his hands rested on their usual spot on her hips by instinct, she giggled. “No, actually I am feeling just horny.” she whispered, and took his hand, dragging him away toward their room.

From that day on Marcus learned something more about pregnancy, and also how he was starting to like this new side of it.

Month after month Marcus and Abby adjusted to the pregnancy more comfortably. Her belly was growing and their little girl was starting to make her presence noticed more often, kicking her daddy and mommy’s, as Raven liked to call them, hands. They had regained a regular and passionate love life, it had been weird at first, especially for him, to adjust to the belly. Abby wasn't that affected by it, especially because her hormones were always taking control over her, making her hot and cold all over, forcing her to restrain herself from jumping on him at every occasion.

When the baby started to move more freely, and her belly was so big that Marcus had to support himself with his hands on the mattress, if he wanted to kiss her while buried in her, he also learned that the baby could actually feel him when they were having sex, this made him feel not embarrassed but more.

Abby had laughed that time when he had withdrew from her and her belly was awkward because the baby had curled up higher toward her chest, he had widened his eyes, suddenly worried and Abby had took her time before stop laughing and explain to him that it was perfectly normal and that there was no need to worry.

They were still allowed to have sex, and the baby had the right to simply change room.

After a while he simply got used to it.
And then the ninth month came.

It was a quiet autumn morning, Abby was looking outside the window of their room, stroking her belly absentmindedly, she was humming a song, one of those that Marcus liked to sing to her with the guitar she had gave to him months before, and how glorious the sex that night had been. They both thought that they had conceived her that night.

Marcus was sitting at their table, she thought he was reading his papers, but he was actually staring at her, the sunlight bathed her, and she was beautiful, carrying their baby in her body, while humming quiet love words to her. Marcus was feeling as the luckiest man on earth.

And right when that thought passed his mind, Abby frowned, and then groaned. Marcus was at her side in a second, she started to pant heavily, to him it looked like one of her usual contractions, so he kept as usual one hand on her lower back, the other one on her shoulder, while she grabbed her belly. Then suddenly she widened her eyes and looked at him. “Call Jackson!” she said, and with that he knew what was happening.

*She was coming.*

Everything happened pretty fast after that.

Jackson came in a rush, followed by Clarke, they helped her on a wheel chair and rushed toward the medical tent, Abby was breathing in and out as she knew she had to, stroking her belly, restraining herself from screaming out loud in the hallways of the palace.

“You're doing great Abby.” Jackson whispered in her ear, and she clenched her jaw. “I know.” she hissed, at that Clarke pursed her lips, suppressing a chuckle. Marcus was following them. Feeling powerless.

Abby was in pain, he could see that, and he couldn't do nothing. When they reached the medical tent, and she had been adjusted on one of the beds, he approached her, stroking her forehead. “Are you ok?” he asked her, she glared at him at that. “What do you think?” she said, but than took the hand he was offering her and squeezed it. “Sorry, I'm fine Marcus, I swear.” she whispered.

In the meantime outside the curtains the kids had started to walk in, he could hear them whispering. He heard things like, “Is she pushing already?” or “Can we go an take a look?” and even “How you wanna bet that Kane is gonna faint?”
He groaned at that and Abby chuckled, she had heard that too. “You can wait outside if you want.” she whispered toward him, sweating. Marcus shook his head. “No, I'm not gonna leave your side.” he said, stroking her hair. “Maybe you don't wanna see this Kane.” Jackson said, reappearing again, his hands covered in a pair of gloves now. “I said that I stay.” he said at that and Abby squeezed his hand. “Ok then.” she whispered.

“Ok Abby, when you are ready you can push.” said Jackson, spreading her legs wide open. Abby hummed and then everything happened fast and slow at the same time.

She started to push hardly, clenching her jaw and panting, here and there Jackson gave her hints on what to do, while she kept squeezing Marcus’ hand. He tried to make eye contact with her, to whisper comforting words, but she wasn't listening, she was focused on her pain and on giving birth to their baby.

Clarke was in the room as well, right at Jackson's side, ready to help if needed. Her eyes were focused, her hands ready to grab anything they could need. Time passed, with every push of Abby his anxiety grew. He wanted to take a look, but he had heard it wasn't something you actually want to see. But it wasn't as if he could not look at it.

And so he peeked, right when the head started to appear and he had to clench his jaw and took a long breath, because that thing was huge, and he was suddenly feeling sick to his stomach. But then Jackson said, “Ok one last push Abby, you are almost there.” At that Abby collected all of her strengths, reaching for his hand, he squeezed it, his eyes glued to the miracle that was actually happening in front of him. She screamed then, her body tensing to the limit, and with one last push the baby was in Jackson's hands.

The first scream that her lungs left out filled the room, and Marcus was sure she could been heard till Arkadia. Abby was panting slower now, sweating, her hair plastered on her forehead. Marcus was speechless, from outside no sound came either, it was as if the entire world had fell quiet, waiting.

What happened next Marcus wasn't able to register it completely, his mind was lost. Jackson cut the umbilical cord, and then, without wasting another moment, because they had learned how important was for the mother and the baby to get the first skin to skin contact immediately, he leaned the baby to Abby's chest, Clarke lifted her shirt, exposing her sweaty skin, Jackson lowered the crying bluish baby on her amber skin.

Abby was smiling so brightly that she could lit up an entire city. Clarke was sniffing quietly, and Marcus was finally approaching her, regaining control over his body. When he was close enough to
touch them both Abby looked at him. When their eyes met they both smiled, and he pressed a long warm kiss on her forehead. “I love you.” he whispered against her skin and she smiled, the baby girl in the meantime had stopped crying and was now gurgling on her mother's beating heart. “She is perfect.” Abby whispered, stroking her yet bluish skin.

She was covered in blood and other things that Marcus couldn't name, but he didn't care, neither did Abby, because she was indeed perfect. When he looked at her for the first time in the eyes, and her hand reached for him, he felt as if his heart was about to explode.

She was warm, her eyes close again, she still needed to adjust to the world, but she was alive, and she was powerful, and beautiful, she was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen in his life. When he looked up to Abby though, he felt the need to rectify that statement, she was one of the two most beautiful things he had ever seen in his life.

“How are you gonna call her?” asked suddenly Clarke, both of them blinked, as if they had forgot about every other human in the world. Abby smiled at that and Marcus looked at her with a question in his eyes. At that Abby looked at him and when their eyes met they both new the answer. He nodded and she smiled, looking at Clarke, that was quietly waiting at their side, looking with heart eyes at her little sister. “Hope.” Abby whispered, “She is Hope.” and at that Clarke smiled.

“I like it.” she said and looked at both of them. She leaned over her mother and pecked her on the head. “You did great mum, I'm really proud of you.” she whispered, at that Abby smiled and one of her hands grabbed her daughter's arm. “I love you Clarke.” she whispered and Clarke smiled. “I love you too.” Marcus was silent, stroking his daughter head, his heart was so loud in his chest, his joy was making him feel so alive, that when Clarke approached him at his side, and rested a hand on his shoulder, he wasn't expecting it and flinched. She smiled then and he looked at her. “You did great too.” she whispered, and he knew she wasn't talking just about today. He nodded and smiled and then she surprised him, leaning forward and hugging him.

He hugged her back, because how could he resist? And when she started to cry quietly against his chest, he kept her there, in his arms, where his heart was beating. When his eyes peeked at Abby he saw that she was suppressing tears herself, while playing with one of Hope's hands, he smiled at her and she smiled back. “I love you.” her lips mouthed at him, he smiled at that and tightened his grip around Clarke, the girl didn't withdrew, on the contrary, she tightened the grip too.

And they both didn't saw Abby falling asleep with Hope on her chest, luckily for them Jackson was there, he took the baby in his arms and then approached them, Marcus blinked at that. “Sorry to interrupt.” he whispered, Clarke withdrew completely, blinking and sniffing. “Would you like to bath her?” he said, talking to the both of them. They looked at each other for a moment and then smiled, nodding. “Yes.” they answered.
And so they bathed her, under the protective watch of Jackson. They dressed her with tiny white clothes that Luna had made especially for her, and then Clarke left her in Marcus' arms, smiling. He sat down at Abby's side, she had been so tired that had fallen into a deep sleep, he remained there with Hope in his arms, the love he was feeling toward her was so glorious that he felt overwhelmed by it for a moment.

“I love you already so much.” he whispered on her thin black hair, Hope stretched and mumbled in his arms, her yet blue eyes closed. He was so busy at staring at her, that didn't see the smile that grew on Abby's lips.

In that warm day of October, Hope Vera Kane had come to life, the war had ended and they were gonna be fine.

Chapter End Notes

And so here we are. This story reached it's end at last. 18 Chapters, an entire year with them. It had been an amazing journey guys, when i started it i wasn't sure if I was going to end this, because I thought I wasn't able to do that. And I am happy I actually made it! Even if saying goodbye now makes me feel sad, I loved to write for you all, I loved to read your comments, to know I made you feel something. This story had to end at some point, but the beautiful thing is that for them it just started.

I know you probably want to know still a lot of things, how is Hope gonna live in Polis? Will they ever go back to Arkadia? Will she be loved by everybody in the city? And also, will Bellamy got a love for himself? (Echo maybe?) Will Octavia bring a baby to life too? Well, these are questions I have for myself too, a thing that I know is that they are all gonna be fine.

I will maybe write a one-shot as an epilogue, if you guys will really want it. What I know is that Abby and Marcus never looked happier in my mind, trust me guys on that!

May we meet again, and thank you for the journey you took with me in this world.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!