The Thin Line between Love and Hate

by LanceALotz

Summary

An attempt to make sense of the plot holes between the episodes and to explain how I think Ava and Sara's relationship came to be what it is now in the show.

Some chapters are supposed to follow the story and some are just random moments I hope happened at some point in the canonic limbo.

Notes

I thought Sara Lance was Ok in "Arrow" but went to beyond awesome in LoT. I am in love with love, especially when it has to come a long way to be, and the minute I saw Sara and Ava hating each other so much in 3x01 I knew Ava had been written for her and there would be the thin line between love and hate. I tried to fill in the gaps between episodes, but I think the next episodes are going to screw up all of my theories.

I chose to rate it mature for future chapters.

This is my first attempt at writing a fanfic, so criticism will be welcomed.
A Change of Heart

Chapter Summary

Ava visits Rip in prison, right before the events in 3x09. Zari is a naughty hacker who wants to be friends with Gideon.

“To what do I owe the pleasure, Agent Sharpe?” Rip sits leaning on his chair, a position that forces him to keep his arms outstretched due to the handcuffs keeping him glued to the table. His blue eyes pierce hers in search for the answers he's not sure he's going to get through words. There's mostly sorrow in them, which leads Rip to believe it's either a friendly visit –Ava must have cared about him at some point along these five years— or she's the bearer of awful news. Or both.

The agent doesn't sit immediately. Instead she stands with her arms crossed holding his gaze. He can tell she's calculating if she should deliver the whole speech she had planned or not. “How are you, Sir?”

“You can skip the formalisms, Miss Sharpe. It's not like I'm your superior any longer. Besides, it was partly your doing that put me in here, so don't pretend that you care” He regrets saying those words instantly as a flash of pain crosses her face.

“You recruited me for the Bureau because you knew I would do what I had to do, Sir.”

“I know.” he mutters with resignation. This is her cue to occupy the chair in front of his. “I'm actually proud of you in a twisted way for what you did. It took courage. It's just—”

“You should have come to me.”

“Would you have followed me blindly chasing a ghost whose existence I hadn't been able to prove?”

“I would have prevented you from screwing up like you did” There's pity in her eyes. Something Rip finds hard to digest.

“It can hardly be said that I screwed up. I proved the danger was real”

“You allowed Darhk to be resurrected. The losses we had that day—”

“We are soldiers. We know the dangers of this profession. And we must be ready to sacrifice ourselves if needed”

“That's the point, Sir. It wasn't needed. There were other more cautious ways of approaching the threat. You were reckless, driven only by your blind desire to prove your theory at any cost. And the costs were people's lives. Good agents and good people who needn't have died.”

“There were no other ways!” Then, Rip lowers his voice to an excited whisper and shifts his position so that his face is only a few inches away from the agent's “For five years I exhausted every other means trying unsuccessfully to learn anything about that monster. It was always five steps ahead of us until that day.” They stare at each other for a few seconds, both certain that they've got through to the other.
“The Bureau is facing a lot of problems now. They are not going to be chasing Mallus any time soon.”

“They?” Rip asks arching an eyebrow

“I mean 'we’”

“I know what you mean. You're not the company man anymore.”

“I know you took me under your protection because you thought I would always be loyal to the Bureau and to you, and I am, but I think you lost your way, and so did the Bureau. It's just—the way in which director Bennet is handling things is—Let's say I don't fully agree with it. He's turned a blind eye to the real problem and the whole situation is bound to explode eventually. I've tried talking some sense into him, but he knows I was too close to you and he uses that to assert my judgement has been clouded. He's made it clear that he won't hesitate to take me out of the way if I interfere with his orders.”

“Two things” Rip begins, looking proudly at the woman “One. Don't get in Bennet's way. He's never liked me and he will try to destroy you. He's the one who calls the shots now, so play along” Then, he places a hand over hers “I made you my protegée, because you are one of the most intelligent, capable people I've ever met. You're passionate and driven and dependable. Besides, you're not loyal to the organization, like you seem to believe, but to its people. That's why you're here today.” Rip leans back on the chair again “If it were for me, you'd have been made director, not Bennet, but the order came straight from the government and there was nothing I could do.”

“Thank you, Sir. That means a lot to me.”

“There's something I never told you before, because I knew you'd probably take it the wrong way, but you've always reminded me highly of Sara.”

“Sara Lance? The time breaker, Sara Lance?” Ava spits the words like a cat would a furball.

“You two are incredibly powerful leaders and have the capability of making people partial to you.”

“Still, their way of acting—”

“You've had training. They've had to go through the motions from the beginning. And I must say they've become pretty good at it. You've been taught to avoid improvisation and you've been able to learn from their mistakes. I went five years into the past to make sure the agency could count with fully prepared agents. The Legends were used as references of what not to do. However, have you ever stopped to think how you would have faced Darhk, Merlin and Thawne? Have you considered the idea that Sara held the spear of destiny and didn't use it to alter time at all? That she didn't bring her sister back? Do you know how much willpower one needs to have, to do what’s right under those circumstances? To come the way she's come?”

For the first time, Ava pictures Sara as something more than a lesser rival. She might have been her equal in combat —ok, maybe slightly superior— but Agent Sharpe had been led to see the Legend as a reckless captain who led her team blindly, who never followed rules or cared to stop to think things twice. Ava had never considered the idea that maybe the captain of the waverider could never afford to waste that time on reflecting on things.

“We couldn't allow ourselves to have our agents running around the world like she does. Only Sara can afford to be like that. She's grown into an amazing leader, and turned a team of meaningless people into legends.”
“But you said—”

“I said what needed to be said. I couldn’t let her be a hero to the agents. As I said, the Bureau can’t have rogue agents running about and making decisions on the spot. Besides, I must admit that I was somehow jealous, for Sara Lance is a much better captain than I ever was. I’m jealous of the way she brings her crew together, of all the admiration and passion and love she arises. Don’t you see it? They would all follow her straight to hell and die for her in a heartbeat, because they know she would die for each and one of them, that she would go to hell and freeze it, undo the whole of time, or suffer for eternity before failing them. Can’t you feel it already?” Ava senses what seems an electric discharge in her spine. “How all your rivalry and spite towards her has turned into admiration and something else? How you’re inevitably drawn to her? How you need to make her see you? She has that effect on people. So, agent Sharpe, Ava, believe me when I tell you that the fact that you remind me of her is nothing but the best compliment I can utter.”

“Why are you telling me this now?” Ava inquires still open mouthed, suddenly seeing things under a different light.

“Because you’re going to need to go rogue. You’re going to need to rely on the Legends—to rely on her—and earn her trust if you want to save the world. You can’t trust anyone at the Bureau. Isn’t that the reason you’re here?” Rip stares at Ava, who looks puzzled. “I see. Why exactly are you here, then, miss Sharpe?”

“About that. The object of my visit is—more difficult to address than I had anticipated, Sir” Ava stops to calculate the best way to tell her former boss the bad news “What brings me here—” agent Sharpe pauses and swallows. “I regret to tell you this, Sir. I have terrible news—about them. I thought it was best to tell you in person, but it has been impossible for me to come here earlier. The Legends were involved in a situation a few days ago. Something went south and it resulted in Martin Stein's being fatally injured. I'm sorry.”

“Bloody hell! Poor Stein. And Jefferson!” Rip's face goes from hard to read to worried “Oh, no. Oh no. Please, tell me it wasn't Darhk”

“No. It was completely unrelated, actually”

“Thank goodness. I wouldn't be able to forgive myself if he hurt any of them. Or you.”

“We learnt about what had happened by chance. They were aiding the Arrow and an alien woman from another dimension after they were attacked by their doppelgangers from I think it was ’Earth X’ I didn’t know there were other dimensions until I heard of this.”

“You'd be surprised, agent Sharpe. How—How's Sara?” The guard that was posted outside the door starts opening it.

“I don't know. I haven't learnt from them since that night in London. I've been meaning to call her, but she'd most likely take it as an intrusion. Do you want me to pass on your condolences?”

“No. Don't mention me if you don't have to. She has every right to hate me right now, but do try to trust her and make her trust you, alright? It's of the utmost importance that you two work together.”

“Time's up” the guard says. Rip stands up “I don't see that happening any time soon, Sir”

“You can do it. You have to.”

“How am I supposed to—”
"You'll figure it out. I count on it. Thank you, Ava. For everything"

"Goodbye, Sir"

"It's Rip, now" The man says sharing one last meaningful look before the guard drags him out of the room.

"Goodbye, Rip"

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"Gideon?"

"What can I help you with, Miss Tomaz?"

"How good are you at keeping secrets?"

"Gossiping is a human interaction I'm not familiar with. However if the information you share with me is deemed as relevant during an exchange of words with a crew member, or if the captain asks a question related to the topic, I am programmed to not keep it from them."

"Good enough, I guess. I don't think anyone is going to ask about this. So...how would you like to help me hack the Bureau servers, girl?"

"Much to your disappointment, I must say I've already tried to do that, as a defensive measure, of course. However, my attempts at it were unsuccessful. Their firewalls seem to be hackerproof."

"Nothing's impossible, Gideon. Not if we work together. What do you say? It'll be fun"

"I say, bring it on, Miss Tomaz. I like a good challenge."

"I knew we were going to be friends."
Chapter Summary

Ava realises after her conversation with Rip, that she knows nothing about Sara Lance, and she does something about it. Why asking her, when prying is so much fun?

Chapter Notes

The title is an obvious reference to the first line of "Love Story" because, why not? I like to think Ava had only been told about the "professional" (or unprofessional) side of Sara Lance. In my mind, she learnt about the missions gone awry on board of the Waverider during her training as a Time Bureau agent, and she learnt about her skills as an assassin from Rip, which sparked the competitiveness in her, probably because she sensed Rip's admiration towards the captain of the Waverider and she thought she, not Sara deserved that admiration for being efficient instead of reckless and messy.

The next chapters are as long as a day without food, but they have things actually happening, so maybe they won't be so bad.

She waits nervously to access the main server room in the Time Bureau until everyone else has left. The files she needs can only be accessed from there, and, although she knows she isn't doing anything wrong or out of the ordinary, it feels like she's a criminal prying where she has no right to go. For a moment, Ava isn't even sure that she will have clearance to open it, so she holds her breath during the time her fingers type her password and after she hits the 'enter' button. It's only after she reads the words 'ACCESS GRANTED' on the screen, that she lets the air leave her lungs trembling. She hastily inserts a USB drive and copies the folder “Sara Lance” into it. She's surprised to see it occupies several Gigabytes. As soon as the file has been copied, the agent disconnects the USB drive, logs out and half-runs out of there.

In the safety of her home, Ava has a look at the folder she's just copied. There's a great deal of video footage. She has a look at some of it while the printer vomits the hundreds of text pages contained in the file. Most of it has low resolution quality as it has been taken from street surveillance cameras. There's Sara as the Black Canary fighting alongside the Green Arrow and the rest of the team in Star City, Sara as the White Canary leaving, together with the rest of the Legends a trail of irresponsible mess through time. But there are also images and video footage of family reunions, of school plays, parties, concerts, sports games, of Sara at different times of her life with different people. Ava wonders why anyone would bother going through so much trouble to document someone's life.

One of the photos calls Ava's attention. It shows Sara pressing her forehead against another woman's, who is wrinkling her nose and smiling broadly. They are in the middle of nowhere wearing what Ava recognizes as assassin's clothes, with nothing but red dry mountains and a blue sky in the background. Ava thinks it likely that both women engaged in passionate making out seconds after the photo was taken. Their looks, oblivious to the rest of the world, charged with need, intimacy, passion, trust and so much more, make something in Ava's insides stir. The other woman
looks very different from Sara but Ava thinks she's just as gorgeous; she's got very dark hair and eyes, and the contrast between the two makes the image even more perfect. Her mind goes back to the day she and Sara had fought in the Waverider, to when she had the other woman pressed against the wall and how she felt a chill going down her spine the minute she looked into her eyes and saw something that caught her unguarded and caused in her a powerful, indescribable attraction. It lasted only a fraction of a second, but it was enough for Sara to gain back the advantage and headbutt Ava.

The Bureau Agent keeps on going over the images, absentminded, until she sees one that makes her blood run cold. One she can't make sense of. It shows Sara in Laurel's arms –Ava recognizes Sara's sister from the framed photo she saw in the ship's library— her body immobile, her chest pierced by three deadly arrows, her arms hanging limp, her eyes wide open with nothing but a hint of shock in her otherwise expressionless face, as if death had come as something unfair and unexpected. The file doesn't say who took the photo, but somehow, Ava knows it was Rip.

After a few seconds trying to process the information, the time agent realizes the printer's finished. She goes over the papers until she finds the events related to Sara's death. She can't believe what she's reading. Ava feels a teardrop going down her cheek. She chooses to ignore that outrageous sign of weakness until it disappears under the neck of her spotless shirt. Sara died. And she was resurrected.

She checks the time on her phone. 10:43. It's going to be a long night.
Pottery making

Chapter Summary

Set between "Beebo the god of War" and "Daddy Darhkest" Sara spends some quality time with Gideon battling nostalgia and grief with some flirting. She also learns Ava has been busy doing her homework.

It's been a couple weeks since Jax left and, aside from the melancholy floating in the air and the sensation that they are enjoying the calm between two tempests, everything's going smoothly. The captain of the Waverider would even say she's content, hadn't she just lost two of her crew, one of them to death. Yes. Aside from the guilt piling up and constraining her chest every time a Legend gets off the ship, everything's rolling. Two weeks, four anachronisms fixed, two of them level 9. Sara knows she should be proud of the way they're handling things, but she says nothing. No one does. She's never been superstitious, so it's not like she believes she's going to jinx it by uttering words of optimism, but it feels as if saying them would be insulting the professor's memory.

It's well past midnight. Sara has been pacing up and down her office for the last few hours trying unsuccessfully to put together everything they have on Mallus, Darhk and his even scarier daughter. Which is close to nothing. The truth is they don't have a clue on where they are or what their plans are, let alone how to fight them. Besides, Sara's last encounters with them have only ended up in close to death experiences lately, always saved in the nick of time by her team. Or by Agent Sharpe, the last time. Apparently, Sara's the only one who has an everlasting “get-out-of-death-free card” in the game of life. This ability to cheat death would seem far more attractive if it could be extended to people she cares about. Ironically, it appears to have the opposite effect. Sara feels a sudden pang of nostalgia in her chest, and she wishes she could be with her parents and sister again, away from responsibilities, away from the pain of loss.

Everything bad that happened to her family in the past few years, the chain of events set in motion the night she ran away with Oliver in the Queen's Gambit which culminated in Laurel's death, was her fault. It was all her responsibility. Like the loss of those in her team. For the first time in ages, the fearless ex-member of the League of Assassins is blocked, unable to make a decision.

“Gideon” Sara mutters acting on an impulse “Set course for Star city 2006. Christmas Eve.” The others are sleeping. Or so she hopes.

“Are you alright Captain?” the soft voice replies.

“Why do you ask?”

“That time and place is anachronism free, so the chances are that you're risking exposure only to see your sister.”

“There will be no exposure, Gideon” Sara says staring at the ceiling with halfway closed eyes.

“I'm a trained assassin. Besides, Laurel hasn't heard from any vigilante yet. She lives a relatively carefree life, worrying only about her younger sister who's a bit of a train wreck. Her guard will be
down.” Sara sighs and hides her face in her hands in a tired gesture “I just need to see her outside a photograph. And hey, by the way, since when have you become so judgemental? I'm the captain.”

“I'm worried about you, captain”

“I didn't know computers could worry”

“I'll let that one slip, because I'm certain that you don't see me as just a computer and I know you're grieving, but that hurt”

“Right. If you were a mere computer you'd simply follow my orders without questioning them. Arguing with you and listening to your judgements is way better” Sara mumbles feigning annoyance.

“I resent that”

“Of course you do. You probably know more about feelings than I do, right? Ok, ok!” The captain yells lifting her hands in an apologetic gesture “I'm sorry, Gideon. You know how fond I am of you, don't you? Needless to say this ship and its crew would be nothing without you. You're smart, caring and sarcastic. And that voice of yours...” Sara adds playfully “it makes me wish you were a woman in the flesh. I must admit I've had more than a nice thought involving you since Jax and I dove into Rip's mind.”

“I'd blush if I could. Although we both know that would be counterproductive as it would result in my circuits being overheated. Anyway, my CPU tells me your features are highly harmonic. That, together with your face symmetry and the fact that you're brave and intelligent make you a very attractive human being. You'd make a suitable partner, so I must say the feeling is mutual.”

“And that's how you speak to a girl”

“I find it hard to distinguish if you're making use of sarcasm. Nonetheless, it's an honor to be at your service. Speaking of which, would you like me to proceed with your previous orders?”

Sara pauses for a few seconds before answering. “It would be unwise, wouldn't it? I would most likely run to Laurel to warn her. But you already knew that, didn't you? Why have you changed your mind?”

“There was a 66.8% probability of that being the result, judging by your erratic actions during the past few weeks, but I still trusted your common sense. The chances of you screwing up time after our brief conversation are a mere 4.9%. So, what are your orders, Captain Lance?”

“I think you put too much trust in me. The temptation would be too great if I saw my sister for that 4.9% to be negligible. You don't know how much I miss her, Gideon. And knowing that I could so easily change her fate, anyone's fate...” she lowers her tone guiltily, gesturing at Stein's empty seat. “Sometimes having a choice sucks.” and then she adds with a sigh “I think a little work will help us take our head off these grim thoughts, what do you say?”

“What do you have in mind, Captain?”

Sara's been fidgeting with the idea of getting in touch with the Time Bureau ever since Ava left. Do you think I should call the Agency and try to get some insight into what's going on?”
“You mean agent Sharpe?”

Agent Sharpe. Ava. Ava Sharpe. Agent uptight. Agent Stick-up-her-ass. Pantsuit. Hotcakes. Hotpants. Sara smiles at the thought of every name and nickname they've given her since they first met the agent back in the bureau. Somehow they all seem to suit her.

“Well, Rip and I didn't end up in the best of terms when we last met, so I doubt he would be willing to cooperate with us even if he were out of prison and Bennet openly hates us. Our friend Agent Sharpe may not like us much and she can be a pain in the ass, but she's our only hope of getting information; Besides, she's been mostly helpful and non insulting lately. Although you need not remind me she almost blew us up”

“Almost, being the key word. And she saved you life last time you met. You wouldn’t be standing here if it hadn’t been for her. For that, all’s forgiven. You’re my favourite captain, Miss Lance”

“And the only one, too” Sara chuckles “Gideon, Gideon. You're gonna end up breaking my heart.”

“Maybe you should start considering the idea of going out some day, captain. Social interaction is key in the appropriate preservation of mental health in humans. So far, it seems you are as desperate as to be flirting with a computer.”

Sara chuckles “Now you're a computer. And my psychologist. How convenient.” And then frowning a little, she adds “I guess you may be right, though. My life has been lacking romance for ages. I haven't had any real conversation with anyone who doesn't sleep on this ship for god knows how long”

“You spoke with Agent Sharpe 15 days 5 hours and 16 minutes ago.”

“Speaking of computers.” Sara rolls her eyes “She doesn't count. She'd be a perfect match for you, Gideon.”

“I disagree, Captain. She appears to be a suitable partner for you. It is my understanding that you find both men and women appealing. Besides, Mr Rory seems to find her quite agreeable and it's clear to me that you two possess the same taste when it comes to females.”

“Me and her? What? No. No. NO!”

“I gather from your words that you don't find her appealing.”

“No. It's not that. I mean. Ava Sharpe? We'd be facing the same problem I have with you. I don't think she's human.”

“She most definitely is. And your brain chemistry improves notably after your encounters with her. Your endorphin levels were through the roof after you two last spoke. Her company appears to be beneficial for your health. Would you like me to call her now?”

“Are you trying to set me on a date?”

“I'm only doing what’s best for your health, captain.”

“Anyway. It's past midnight. I doubt she's...”
“She left her office only an hour ago.”

“Why am I not surprised?” Then, rising an eyebrow “And how exactly do you know that much?”

“Zari and I may have hacked into their system and planted a trojan. We have access to their files and security.”

“Why on Earth would-”

“She wanted to know what they had on us, and to be honest, so did I. I thought they might have had sensitive data that could compromise your safety.”

“I don't believe it.” Sara starts pacing up and down the room with an incredulous look on her face “Gideon, you shouldn't have done that behind my back. What if you had been caught? Maybe you left a trail. Do you know how much trouble that could bring us?”

“Miss Tomaz is incredibly skillful as a hacker. We made sure we took every precaution needed, and now we have all the information we need first hand.”

"You shouldn't have done this behind my back. I would expect this from Zari, I know she doesn't trust me, but you Gideon?"

"I did it as a safety precaution. I guess that means you don't want to know what we found out, then?"

Sara lets out an exasperated roar. “You know how much I hate you right now, don't you?”

“I'll take it as an order to proceed. According to their archives, they have done extensive research on every member of the crew, especially you, captain.” Sara's mouth falls open while the ship's AI reports the information the Agency's dug up on the team. “They have your complete biography up to date, information about your medical records, fighting skills, your assassin training, your friends, acquaintances, lovers, one-night stands, your shoe size, your favourite food, excerpts from old diaries and even some papers you wrote as a student, the oldest one dating from third grade. All of it topped with several hours of video footage from the times you served as vigilante for Star City and some files they took from my database during those awful five years.”

“They know what my favourite food is? I don't even know what to answer to that. And I can't even recall how many one night stands—”

“Apparently your favourite food is frozen pesto-margherita pizza.”

“That's so wrong! That's all I would have for dinner when I was in Star city because it was cheap and easy to make. I was a bartender during the day and a vigilante during the night. It's not like I had the time or money to make fancy dishes.

"I too thought that was preposterous. I know how you love chive and cheese sandwiches and how you devour crackers with peanut butter and chutney."

"Please, don't tell anyone about that last part, Gideon. Is is possible that I access the files from my tablet?"

“Of course, captain. They are in a folder named 'pottery making’ Miss Tomaz thought no one would ever look into it. I'll add a shortcut to it for you”
“Thanks. And, Gideon?”

“Yes, Captain”

“Don't ever do this again without notifying me.”

“As you wish, captain Lance”

“Who would go through so much trouble to get something as useless as this?”

“The person who has accessed that information more recently is precisely Agent Sharpe. Rip created the file when he started the Bureau, and it was regularly updated for years under different signatures, but it seems she's been doing a lot of reading about you lately”

“Oh” Sara purses her lips speechless, a feeling of disappointment growing inside her. “I took it for granted that she despised me because she didn’t know me. I'm lovable, after all, right? but apparently, she hated me because she knew me too well”

“I really don’t think she hates you, captain”

“We're about to find out. Put her on, Gideon. It seems our friend Agent poly-blend-pantsuit has some explaining to do”
The Garden of Forking Paths

Chapter Summary

After learning a lot about Sara's past, Ava has to deal with a few problems that screw up with her normal pathways but end up saving her life and leading her, inevitably, to the place she now dreads more.

Chapter Notes

Still set between 3x09 and 3x10, so no major spoilers. Just watch Ava become a mess and enjoy.

Ava realises she has been staring at her computer screen for too long without even blinking and not really paying attention to anything she's been reading. Her thoughts have been directed towards certain memories involving a pair of celeste blue eyes, which seem to have a light of their own, and a daring smirk.

*It was worth it.*

She practically admitted having a crush on Sara to Sara herself. And it's nothing of the sorts. She only meant that she knew it was the right thing to do, ignoring her orders and helping them save Christmas, but Sara threw her that scrutinizing look implying there was something else in her words and Ava just left, or better said, ran away, so that Sara couldn't see her blush; because Sara didn't know her well enough and she would have taken that as a confirmation of the stupid theory that was most certainly taking shape in her mind. Ava was just trying to earn her trust, like Rip said she should.

Maybe she ought to ping the Waverider; Ask them if there’s been any development and let them know she’s still working on finding what exactly is going on in the bureau. She can act all serious and professional to prove her point.

The Time Bureau agent checks her time courier. It's past eleven. “It seems the call will have to wait until tomorrow” She mutters to herself, between annoyed and relieved. She's been completely alone in the office for more than two hours and it doesn't seem like she's going to get much more work done, so she decides it's time to be heading home.
It was worth it.

The same image keeps coming back to Ava's mind again and again, sending waves of shame from her brain that cling onto her stomach and make her close her eyes in denial every time she thinks about the last time she saw Sara.

She can't believe she was so reckless, letting her emotions surface like that.

It's all Sara's fault for being so damn... Sara.

“Ok” Ava says standing up, massaging her eyes and trying to sound normal “Time to go home.”

Even with her hand limiting her field of vision, she can’t pretend not to see that it's also time to acknowledge she's got the stupidest crush on the captain of the Waverider. The mere thought of it makes her blush and let out a growl of exasperation. Just as Rip said, she's drawn to her. She's been drawn to her since the first day their eyes met, since Sara took her gun from her and disarmed her in twenty different ways.

Denial was working perfectly fine, though, simply holding onto the general idea around the Bureau that the legends were nothing but a bunch of useless idiots, until Rip had to screw it all up. Ava has to admit now she knows what she knows, that she had got the woman completely wrong.

And if there are two things Ava Sharpe is bad at, they are admitting she is wrong and having romantic feelings. Maybe because none of those things have really happened before.

She pushes the uncomfortable thought into a compartment inside her and locks it there, hoping that if she ignores it it'll go away. That's how she's dealt with feelings all her life, and it seems to have worked just fine.

Instead of opening a portal home, the bureau agent goes to the locker room and changes into a pair of dark sweatpants and a fuchsia cotton sweatshirt, paired with black running shoes dashed with neon pink dots. She puts her comm device and her phone into a money belt and ties it around her hips. Next, the agent folds her uniform suit neatly in a mechanical way, and places her shoes into a bag before opening a portal to the hall of her flat. Her plan is to place the clothes carefully onto the console, but before she does it, she’s surprised by the same hunting thought again.
Ava doesn’t give into the first impulse which is to bang her head against the nearest wall. Instead, she turns the pile of neatly folded clothes into a ball and throws it into her home followed by a yell of frustration. The thought of the clothes lying carelessly on the floor makes her uncomfortable, even before closing the portal, but it'll give her something to focus on other than those eyes.

She runs the almost five miles that separate the Bureau offices from her home in a record time.

It's like her lungs and the muscles in her legs feed on frustration and shame. The run has done the trick, though. Seeing the city at night pass by, fast under her feet, has a soothing effect on her. Hopefully she won't dream of her tonight.

Again.

She realises when she's near the building where her apartment is located that she doesn't have the key. It's one of the problems of travelling to and from work through portals; one tends to forget about trifles such as keys.

Although the street is deserted, Ava doesn't want to run the risk to open a portal there in the open. Instead, she curses herself all the way to a back alley that smells like garbage, urine and something worse which could be a rotting corpse—hopefully a rat's. She looks around waiting to see if there's any sign of human presence that could get her into trouble.

The second after she’s decided everything and everyone in the world is oblivious to her presence, she presses the buttons on her courier and soon the console and the mirror in her hall appear in front of her under the blueish light coming from the portal. The second before she leaves the alley, a feeling she can’t shake away nor explain sends a chill down her spine, leaving her under the sensation that something’s wrong.

Once the alley is no longer in sight, Ava goes straight for the shower, ignoring the clothes scattered all over the floor. She hasn’t even bothered to turn any lights on. Just the bathroom’s.

Just after she's finishes rinsing the shampoo Ava realises what it is that has been making her uneasy. She turns down the water and inadvertently slaps her mouth. The van. The same unmarked van she saw this morning by the office during lunch break is parked right next to the cul-de-sac. Unknowingly, her brain must have recognized the license plate numbers of the van, 1225 and realized something was wrong, although not exactly what.
I'm being tailed.

Ava moves mechanically, trying to put her thoughts in order; trying to decide what to do next, trying very hard not to panic.

She needs to make sure it's the same van. Maybe the plates were similar and that's it; They may have had the same numbers, but different letters. She's only certain about the digits, because she noticed they matched Sara's birthday. Even if it is the same vehicle, it may not mean anything. It could have been a coincidence. But, what are the odds? The thought that someone might be watching her right this moment, standing naked in her bathroom hits her all of a sudden, making her reach for a towel and wrap herself in it. For the umpteenth time today, Ava lets out a curse, a muffled one this time, when she thinks she hears the front door creak. She reaches for the light switch and is suddenly surrounded by a darkness matching her thoughts. Then nothing.

The moment she has started thinking it was just her imagination inciting paranoia, the Bureau agent hears the unmistakable sound of someone stumbling in the hall over the clothes she left lying on the floor. Then some quiet whispers and a hush sound. She would never have heard it if she hadn't been expecting it. Or if she had, she wouldn't have thought the noises were coming from her flat.

The agent curses her luck mentally; she's got no clothes, no gun—the official weapon is in her locker at the office and the other weapon is hidden in the main bedroom—and nowhere to go. As she reaches out for the time courier, that she's left on a shelf right under the mirror, she knocks over a bottle of perfume and grabs it right before it hits the porcelain sink. Ava can feel her heart beating so fast and so loudly, the blood pumping through her arteries, that she actually fears someone may hear it. She can’t just think of a safe place to go.

All of a sudden her money belt lights up on the floor while simultaneously, the sound of a silenced gun going off where she can guess is her bedroom reacher her ears. The zipping sound of the bullets rings four times through the air.

Ava has to try very hard to contain the scream that is fighting to find a way out of her lungs. She always—always—leaves her courier and comm device in the first drawer of her bedside table first thing on arriving home. It should be there, next to her reading glasses and the only picture she loves but never dares to watch.

The realisation hits her, of how fortunate it is that she didn't do things as usual and how everything she's done out of the ordinary today has led her to being almost naked in her bathroom and not in bed with four bullets in her body. She never jogs at night, she never gets home any later than eleven p.m. — And she's always in bed by now.
Ava kneels on the floor and takes the comm device out of her money belt. The screen says it's Sara calling.

The call couldn't possibly have been more timely. Once she answers she can get the exact coordinates of the Waverider. Still in shock, Ava presses the answer button letting out a sigh of relief.
A Safe Place to Go

Chapter Summary

Ava is clad in a towel trying to get some clothes and a gun.

The towel stays in place all the time. Sorry guys.

Sara must admit she is a little nervous. The last time she spoke to agent Sharpe was very different from every other interaction the two women have ever shared. Instead of just trying to annoy each other, which it pains Sara to admit that she normally found equally stimulating and frustrating, they actually worked together. And it resulted perfectly; Zero anachronism, Zero casualties.

When they said goodbye she was mostly grateful that Ava had just saved her from being trapped, and most likely killed in another dimension. Only a little part of her, ruled by the assassin, was a little paranoid wondering what could possibly have changed the other woman's mind into being nice and helpful. The fact that she now knows they are being scrutinized so thoroughly doesn't help her feel any better. She's usually good at reading people, but with agent Sharpe… she's puzzled to say the least.

Not wanting to show any sign of weakness, she adopts a casual pose, standing, her arms crossed, her butt resting against the desk. The screen suddenly changes from calling agent Sharpe to a black screen. And then to the message 'Call ended'

Before she even has time to react, a portal opens right in front of her, closing almost instantly. Only now Ava Sharpe, the highly professional time bureau agent ever clad in a spotless pantsuit, is there in front of her, wrapped only in a towel which covers only the basics, with a money belt, a comm device and a flask of perfume clasped in one hand.

“Now that was unexpected.” Sara looks Ava up and down with a grin from ear to ear “Nice legs, by the way”

“I need your help”

“If you want someone to rub your back with a sponge, I’m sure Mick will be delighted to help you” Sara looks like she’s never been more amused in her life.
“Just shut up, Sara. This is serious.” Ava stares at the other woman’s arched eyebrow and playful smirk and feels divided between the urges to punch her and push her down against the table to kiss her.

She does none and just stands there awkwardly in the middle of Sara's office shaking. “Someone has just tried to kill me”


“In my own apartment. I don't have time to explain. I need you to lend me some clothes and a gun so I can go back and—”

“You're not going anywhere like that.”

“I know. That's why you are going to lend me those clothes”

“That's not what I mean. You're too shaken up. Besides, there's no time to waste. My clothes won’t fit you, so you'll have to wait until Gideon can fashion something for you. I'll go. You wait here”

“You're not going without backup”

“Look. I love my team, but this needs some stealth and they are usually as stealthy as a stampede of rhinos. Listen. Here's what we're going to do; if I'm not back in 20 minutes, wake Amaya up and tell her what's going on. She'll know what to do. Her room is the third one on the left. If she's not there, try the room opposite hers.”

Ava arches an eyebrow in reaction to Sara’s last comment

“Don’t ask.” is Sara’s sole response accompanied by some eye-rolling. “Now, give me your courier. The other one's in the command room in case you need it.”

“The one you stole, you mean?”
“Really? Now's the time?”

Sara opens a cabinet and takes two knives and a gun and stuffs them somewhere under her clothes. Then she puts on black gloves and grabs her batons.”

“How many people were there?”

“I don't know. I didn't actually see anyone but i think there were at least two people. I heard someone in my apartment. I was in the bathroom. Then I heard shots coming from my bedroom. Fuck, fuck, fuck! Someone’s tried to kill me.” Ava keeps shaking her head in bewilderment.

“Ava. I need you to focus, ok?” Sara fixes her eyes on the other woman’s looking to reassure her. “Tell me everything you remember”

“I saw you calling and I fled. That’s all. Your call couldn't have been more opportune. I was unable to think of a safe place to run to."

Oh. There’s something else. There was a van parked outside. I didn't notice it when I first saw it, but it hit me when I was in the shower. I realised the plate was familiar, because I’d seen it today outside the office. I didn’t get the first three letters, but the numbers are 1225. The vehicle is right by the alley to the left of the building. There should be at least one more person there”

“That's all I need. One, two, two, five. Ha, I won’t forget that one easily” she says with a soft smile and then, noticing Ava’s sheepish look, she adds “but you already know that, don’t you?”

Ava starts blushing so quickly that it makes Sara feel a little guilty. “It’s OK. I didn’t expect any less from the Bureau. We can talk all about it when I’m back.”

Ava finally seems to realize the perfume and money belt in her hand so she walks to the table to place all the items there. When she turns around and leans back over it, her expression has changed and is now one of desperation.

Ava leans her head down and takes a hand to her forehead. Her eyes are closed tight, drawing worried lines all over her face. Sara notices her other hand has a firm grip on the towel, as if the agent was expecting it to suddenly take off on its own. She also notices the other woman is trembling and her hair is dripping onto the floor.
“Gideon!”

“Yes, Captain”

“Is it possible that you have an outfit that can suit our friend here?”

“I haven’t got anything ready, but if she comes to the bridge, I can scan her body and have something ready in no time. In the meantime, I can offer her a clean bathrobe so that she can be warmer and more comfortable”

“Thanks Gideon. I’m going to leave her in your hands”

Sara’s attention goes back to her unexpected guest who’s now looking absolutely miserable.

“I was supposed to be in bed.”

The observation leaves Ava’s lips in a shaky voice.

“Hey. There's no way they are going to get to you in here. Try to keep calm. I won't be long, I promise. Help me with the portal, would you? I suppose you don’t happen to have the keys?”

Ava frowns and shakes her head apologetically.

“It’s ok. I can’t go straight to the flat or I’ll run the risk of being spotted. Would it be possible to go to that alley you mentioned?”

“Sure. It's the second set of coordinates saved in the memory of departure coordinates. I got into my apartment from there”

Ava starts pressing buttons quickly on the device, placed already around Sara's wrist, which implies she has to let go of the towel so that she can hold the assassin’s hand and operate the device easily.
Both women are staring at the screen. However, Ava can't help but notice how close their faces are. She’s terrified that Sara will know about her secret if their eyes meet. Her hair is still soaking wet and dripping everywhere. When some drops fall onto Sara’s forearm, Ava brushes them away clumsily with a dry apology, at the time that the touch leaves a trail of goosebumps along her body.

“I still think I should go with you. Just give me some clothes and a gun, please. It would be unwise of you to go in there alone”

Sara appears not to have heard the Agent's last comment “Alright. I think I got it. Ava?” Sara’s free hand rests upon the other woman’s bare shoulder while her eyes, scrutinising and wise, seem to be piercing right into Ava’s brain. Ava avoids her gaze and looks at Sara’s hand with incredulity instead, as if she’d never seen a hand before.

“They won’t be expecting me. I’m an assassin and a good one. I’m not going to give you the satisfaction of lecturing me on what I do wrong. Not tonight.” The hand on Ava’s shoulder moves to the time courier again leaving only a sensation of devastation and loneliness on the agent’s body as a gate to the alley materialises next to them.

“Ava”

Both women stare deeply into each other’s eyes.

“I got your back”

Ava nods

“And” Sara adds with a smirk pointing at the desk “There's a bottle of scotch in the bottom drawer.” And before the sound of Ava’s ’Be careful' reaches her ears, she’s gone.
Chapter Summary

Sara goes to Ava's apartment to confront the intruders and Rip gets an unexpected visitor.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The assassin takes out the man in the van first. She moves gracefully, like a cat in the shadows approaching the vehicle unnoticed. There's no one in the front seats, so there's the unlikely possibility that they may see her coming if they are using cameras. Unlikely, because she knows they are not expecting her and chances are they are focusing solely on the front door of the apartment block and they don't have the whole street covered. Whomever they are, they probably thought this was going to be an easy job.

In a quick succession of perfectly calculated moves, Sara opens the back door and while her brain is mapping her surroundings, she simultaneously knocks down the first target before he even sees her. There's only another person; a man who only has time to take his look away from a screen before barely realizing he's facing a gun. The expensive gold chains around his tattooed neck put Sara under the impression that she may be leading with a gang.

“How many more of you idiots are in there?”

The man instinctively rises his hands into the air, but says nothing.

“I'm in a hurry here. If you don’t want to find out how much pain your body can endure, tell me exactly what I want to know” By now, Sara's already climbed into the van and is close enough so that he can see in her eyes the woman's telling the truth.

The thug takes a few moments to evaluate his chances of survival before answering “Two”

“You’d better not be lying.” She adds before knocking him out “Good night”

She disables the cameras and uses some cables to restrain the men, although she's almost sure they are not going to wake up any time soon. The watch around her wrist tells her it been 3 minutes. Ava must already have woken Amaya up. That's how much trust she probably has on her. Sara hopes Gideon has the decency of recording all of their conversations so that she can laugh a little when all is over.
She goes back into the alley and locates the fire stairs. It's only then that she realises she doesn't know to which flat she's supposed to go. *Great*

She reaches the ladder on her first attempt. “Not bad for a mere 5 foot 6, girl” after all. She had to run over two garbage containers and take impulse against the wall. Then she pulls herself up effortlessly up the ladder and reaches the stairs. All of the blinds oriented towards the fire exit are pulled but for two on the fourth floor. Sara stops to think for a few seconds and decides that's most likely Ava's apartment. She peeps through the window which is closest to the main street. It's a living room and Sara knows in a blink this is where she has to be. Everything's neat and in the right place, so impersonal, so Ava. She checks the watch again. *7 minutes.*

The next window is made of translucent glass panels. Probably the bathroom. Ava said she had been there right before leaving, so the time courier should be able to take her inside without making as much noise as breaking a window. She just needs to access the memory “Shit! How was it?”

It takes her almost a minute to do it, but she's in. The bathroom door is ajar. Sara is initially surprised to find out the lock isn’t broken, although when she thinks about it, it’s clear that Ava doesn’t have a roommate or a partner or she would have shown concern for their safety, so locking the door wouldn’t make sense for a normal person. For an assassins though...

Sara can't help but to smile at the sight of the clothes scattered over the bathroom floor. There's a dim light coming from the room next to the living room, and Sara can see a man by the entrance, his back to her, alternatively staring at the front door and sticking his head inside the room he’s guarding trying to speed up whatever is going inside. *Is he really expecting Ava to just walk into her flat through the front door just like that?* Sara can see there's another small mound of clothes in the centre of the hall—she recognises the shirt, the dark jacket and usually neatly ironed pants that have gained Ava one of her many nicknames. She makes a mental note to ask Ava about that weird custom of hers.

The bathroom door doesn't make a sound when Sara opens it, neither does she as she slides over the wooden floor to where the man is standing. When his unconscious body hits the floor it makes a dry sound that Sara knows has given her away, but by the time her last target turns around to face her, she’s already aiming her gun at him, smirking with playful eyes knowing he’s going to get the hell he deserves. The intended murderer seems to be the brain of the operation; The man’s wearing nicer clothes than the others and looks a lot less like a gym gorilla, although Sara can tell he’s got muscles that could cause a lot of pain without much effort. Sara notices they are in Ava’s bedroom. They are most definitely in Ava’s bedroom. The murderer was going through the drawers from Ava’s bedside table. The fact that he’s still holding some of the agent’s lingerie makes Sara furious and when she gets closer and sees the bullet holes near the pillows her rage reaches maddening levels.

“Turn around and and get on your knees” She lets out in a monotonous tone while getting dangerously close to him.

The man seems mostly puzzled and scared. If she didn’t know he had just tried to kill Ava, she’d even feel sorry for him.
And just as if he could hear her thoughts, he makes a clumsy attempt to reach for his gun. Sara hits him on the neck with the side of her left hand. The blow, which has been calculated so that it doesn’t leave the man completely stunned, sends him against the bed accompanied by an intense growl of pain. The second blow is a kick to his crotch, followed by a well-aimed punch to his lower back that makes him exhale the remaining air in his lungs through his teeth and makes it difficult for him to resume his breathing process. When he finally manages to do it, Sara has already thrown the gun he was trying to grab onto the floor.

“You’re lucky I need you alive” The last thing he sees is the blood lust in her eyes.

He’s been knocked out without making as much as a sound before 9 minutes have gone by since she last spoke to Ava.

Sara goes quickly over the agent’s home to make sure the thug in the van was telling the truth. There’s no one else there.

She drags the man in the hall to the fire stairs and down until she reaches the ladder. Although she tries to minimize the fall, she can’t prevent the man from getting a new concussion and maybe a broken ankle. Somehow Sara manages to keep the noise at a considerably low level and aided by the darkness on this side of the building, the whole operation goes unnoticed. Next, she goes back into Ava’s bedroom and makes sure the man doesn’t become a problem in case he wakes up.

There’s a large enough gym bag stored in the back of a closet, where she stuffs a few random casual clothes, some underwear —Sara makes sure it comes from the bottom of the drawer, so his dirty paws haven’t touched it— and a pair of comfortable looking boots. In the top drawer next to Ava’s bed, Sara finds some ID’s and documents which look like they may be important so they are also placed carefully into the bag together with an worn out copy of Jane Eyre.

She picks up Ava's laptop and some USB drives from the desktop in the study next, as well as a journal that looks like it might be important and adds everything to the luggage. When she goes to get a set of keys from the console in the hall, she stumbles over the clothes. Thankful that no one has seen that, she lets out a nervous guffaw. Before leaving she takes all the garments scattered over the floor and places them into the laundry basket. Finally, after a quick look back, bag closed and placed onto her back, Sara opens a portal to the Waverider from the main bedroom and disappears from the apartment.
Amaya is there, arms crossed with a puzzled expression that reaches another level of puzzlement at the words “Good morning” uttered by the captain in a Beebo-like voice.

“Sara, what the hell’s going on?”

“First help me. I’m bringing company”

Sara leaves the bag on the floor and gestures towards the open portal. Amaya opens her eyes dumbfounded.

“Care to tell me now what’s going on?” The woman asks once they’ve moved the thug onto the ship.

“Hasn’t our guest written a full report on the incident yet? Where is she, by the way?”

“She told me she had been attacked and asked if she could borrow some clothes to go help you. Gideon is on that so she’s probably having her body scanned right now”

“You were not supposed to be up. I told our Time Bureau friend to wait for 20 minutes. It's only been— barely seventeen. I should have known that woman wouldn’t take orders from me. I’m sorry she woke you up.”

“It’s a good thing she did. Can you imagine what would have happened if Mick happened to see Agent Sharpe in that tiny towel?”

“You noticed that too, right?” sara whispers in a husky voice

“I'm serious.” Amaya rolls her eyes although she’s unable to hide a smile “Mick would have said something very inappropriate and—”

“C’mon. That would have been fun and you know it.” Sara says with a smirk

“I wasn't going to clean the blood”

“Fair enough. Now, let me wake Mick so that he can help us take sleeping beauty here to his cell and I’ll put you up to date, alright?”
“I’ll call him. You go see if Agent Sharpe is still in that tiny towel”

Ava has her back turned to her. She's only wearing jeans and a plain black bra. Sara can't help but enjoy the sight, so she quickly looks away, clearing her throat and feeling guilty. When Ava realises Sara is behind her, she hurriedly puts on a black tank top with the motto “I choose violence” written in white letters under Cersei Lannister's face. Sara bites her tongue to avoid making a remark on the motto and settles for a playful “Not a suit? I'm surprised”

“Your AI didn't let me choose.”

“Our AI is mad at you for trying to kill us. You're lucky she hasn't fashioned a chastity belt for you.”

Ava rolls her eyes “You're so not funny. And I wasn't trying to kill you. You were being unreasonable and childish and—” Sara arches an eyebrow with a half smirk drawn on her face.

“Ok. Maybe we both were. I'm glad you're back safe, though. How did it go?”

“Smoothly. I told you it would be a stroll in the park.” Sara leaves the gym bag in front of Ava

Gideon’s voice interrupts the conversation. “I’m glad too that you’re back safe, captain”

“Thanks Gideon”

“Let me tell you I’m not angry with you, Agent Sharpe. You seem to have gained my captain’s respect, and so long as she feels that way, so will I. I just considered your usual attire a bit uncomfortable for the occasion and I thought Captain Lance would appreciate the irony”

“Should I worry?”

“You don’t watch Game of Thrones?” Sara asks in disbelief with her eyes wide open

“Game of what?”

“Game of Thrones is like the most popular show on TV. Doesn’t the name John Snow ring a bell?” Ava shakes her head “Arya Stark? Khaleesi?” She shrugs at the mention of the names “You're
grounded until you watch at least an episode.”

“Count me in. I love the boobs” Mick says while he enters the room wearing only a pair of boxers briefs and his reading glasses. “What’s up, Hotpants?”

Ava can’t hide the look of disgust at the sight. “Can’t you put on some clothes?”

“I just did”

Sara smiles “Is our friend comfortable?”

“Yup. I think he’ll be knocked out cold for a few more hours”

“Thanks, Mick.”

“Now, if you don’t need me, boss, I think I’ll go back to bed”

“Aren’t you curious about what that idiot's got to tell us?”

“He’s a fucking thug. I bet he doesn’t know the name of the person who hired him. I doubt you’re going to get anything important out of him. Besides” he adds staring at Ava “I’m sure you don’t need anyone else to keep Hotpants entertained” Then he briefly winks at Sara and turns away from the two women. Sara is astonished, to say the least.

“Put those shoes on. And the jacket. Hurry up. We have to make an unconscious man sing like a bird.”

*********************************************************************
Rip wakes up startled with the echoing of a metallic sound still reverberating in his ears. *Must have been dreaming.* He tries to recall what his dream was about, but nothing comes to mind. His eyes trail the path outlined by the fake moonlight coming from the fake window to the wall opposite the bed. At least the light seems real. Only he knows too well he’s locked hundreds of feet underground, right below the Mohave desert, under a structure of tones of concrete and steel. Rip knows well where he is. What he doesn’t know is when.

For some reason he had thought they’d lock him up in a regular prison. After all, it's not like he’s a mastermind criminal of sorts who can buy his way out or organize a prison break, and if he ever had any friends, they are most certainly not about to go running to his rescue any time soon. Not now that they think he betrayed them. Again. Anyway, if he were in a normal prison, he would be in isolation, just in case he decided to open his mouth, so it wouldn't make much of a difference.

Someone must have thought it would be safer to lock him in the very same place he had designed so that it was almost impossible to get out of. Maybe they had expected, as he had sometimes hoped, in the midst of his delusion during the first days of his imprisonment, that the Legends would rescue him, that they would understand his reasons and come back for him. So, a prison whose existence they ignored had probably been a good choice.

He hears the same metallic sound in his head again. and realises it wasn’t part of the oniric state he had been in. Hoping he hasn't just dreamt it, he sits up hastily on the bed and looks at the cell door, which is clearly and temptingly open. His pupils dilate trying to make sense of what’s in front of him, unable to understand what's going on. Before he has time to react, he hears a familiar voice, a soft voice he's learnt to love through the years and has been missing dearly lately.

“Hello Rip.”

“Gideon! How—?”

“There's no time to explain. The Bureau has been compromised. It is my belief that there’s a mole filtering information to the Darhks and their acolytes. They've already made an attempt on Miss Sharpe's life tonight and I have a reasonable amount of evidence indicating that they will soon be coming for you to take you out of the way.”

“They’ve attacked agent Sharpe? Is she alright?”

“She is, fortunately. However, I’m afraid she doesn’t know the threat came from the inside. I’ve discovered they use hidden orders embedded in memos. The problem is, the original comes from an untraceable email account from outside the Bureau. Luckily for you, I’ve broken the code and we have the upper hand. I’ll be able to know if they are going to strike again or even create a fake memo to lure the culprit out.”

“You bloody witty genius!”

“I couldn’t agree more. Now get the bloody hell out of there. I’ve managed to create a fake alert at a
different time

I've disabled the alarms and the surveillance cameras. The path is clear, but unless you get to the extraction point in about ten minutes, you'll be trapped in this time until someone can come rescue you. Regrettably, you appear to have blown up all your friendships, so apparently I'm the only playmate you have left.”

“I really screwed up, didn’t I?”

“Considerably, Sir”

“Why are you helping me, then?”

“As my former captain, I care about your well-being. And I believe you’ll want to try and win back their trust.”

“Do you reckon that’s still possible?”

“For some reason, the Legends tend to be forgiving to a point of foolishness. Just do your best and make sure nothing happens to my crew.”

“Thank you, Gideon. I’ll make it up to them, I promise”

“Rip?”

“What?”

“I know you won't make me regret this. Now, run. I’ll walk you through to the exit.”

Chapter End Notes

I wanted to post a new chapter before tonight's episode, which I won't be able to see until tomorrow, or I would feel compelled to change things and it would take me forever to write anything new. So it hasn't been polished and I apologize for the inconsistencies
it may contain.

Anyway, thank you for reading and commenting.

I must say that I haven't seen Game of Thrones or read the books. I will probably wait until the saga is over, check the names of all the deceased characters to avoid getting too attatched to them and then read them all in a row.
Chapter Summary

After Ava has been attacked by mysterious assailants in her own apartment, Sara tries to help her deal with the mess and get some answers although they end up getting mostly more questions and into trouble. If you side with the legends, it can’t be easy now, can it?

Chapter Notes

Still set between 3x09 and 3x10 so no spoilers beyond that point. Only maybe Zari and Gideon may have been extra Avalanced because of subsequent episodes, but they are not in this one.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Just as Mick predicted, the gang member hasn’t been able to provide the women with much useful information. Sara has led the interrogation given the fact she’s not the one dealing with anger issues. After all, she hasn’t had an attempt on her life in her own home tonight.

The man can only tell them he belongs to a gang that mostly moves heroin into the country from the Golden Triangle, and he and the others were supposed to go to a rendezvous site outside town to meet their client and get the remaining half of the payment for the job. He doesn’t know who hired them or the reason why Ava’s the target.

After a considerably long and frustrating period of time, they decide to go back to Ava’s apartment, take all the assailants to an abandoned building and tip the police after leaving them tied up next to a stash of freshly baked heroin Gideon has cooked in a heartbeat, breaking like a dozen rules, as Ava so kindly points out.

Both women agree it’s best not to go directly to the flat, as they don’t know if the situation is still under control or maybe reinforcements have arrived. As soon as the portal closes, Ava shivers. Her hair, still wet, has been put up into a messy bun, with locks of hair hanging loosely in a casual way that Sara is not used to seeing about the woman, but which makes her wonder when she first noticed how much her type the agent is.

Ava is walking a few steps ahead, eager to get some answers. When the Bureau agent gets under the light of the main street, she is suddenly pulled back into the dark cul-de-sac by Sara, who pushes her against the wall covered by the shadows. Even in the almost absolute darkness, Sara’s eyes can be
seen glowing. “What the—?” She's never liked having people this close, but the uncomfortable feeling she gets from other people, is ten times worse with Sara who is not only pressing her body against Ava's, but now also covering her mouth with one hand. Her heart rate multiplies tenfold under the scrutinizing gaze of the assassin’s electric, unbelievably blue, icy eyes. Sara ignores her and quickly assesses their surroundings. When she seems to be certain that there's no one near them, she removes her hand and takes her index finger to her lips indicating the other woman to keep quiet.

“Something's odd. There was a man back there.” Sara whispers pointing at the silhouettes of the garbage containers in the darkness. “He’s gone and I’m quite sure he can’t have left on his own.” Then she turns around and peeks out into the street. Ava inadvertently takes her fingers to her lips, to the spot where Sara's hand was only moments ago.

“Cover me”

Ava observes from her vantage point covering Sara’s feline movements while she checks the façade of the building, which is Ava’s only blind spot, on her way to the building. When she reaches her destination, She peeks inside the van, gun first and then she gestures for Ava to join her.

Both men are in the same position Sara left them, only now they each have a bullet in their brains. Clean shot. Instant death. The third man, who has suffered the same fate is also there. Someone clearly wanted to keep them quiet.

“Fuck, Sara. What did you do to them?”

“Hey, I didn’t kill anyone. And I’m not saying they didn’t deserve to die. After all, they were here to murder you. But we needed them alive for questioning.”

“Damn. What do I do now?”

Sara gets into the driver’s seat. The key is in the ignition. The engine emits a dry rumbling sound after she starts it. “We” She puts a lot of emphasis on the word ‘we’ “need to take them out of here. Let’s see if someone shows up at the rendezvous point. In the meantime, can you think of anyone who could be after you? I bet you’ve managed to make some enemies at work over the past few years” she adds teasingly.

They’ve left the vehicle hidden a few hundred yards from the abandoned factory. The place looks deserted save from a truck and a couple of high-end sport cars parked by the entrance.

Sara points to a glass window with some broken panels on the upper floor. It’s likely that they can enter that way if they manage to find a way to climb.
The solution to their problem comes in the shape of a pipe that goes down from the roof just around the corner. The assassin leads the way up, which makes it very hard for the other woman not to admire her ass during the quick and graceful ascent. Then they shimmy along the edge and reach the opening into the warehouse.

The whole structure looks on the verge of collapsing around them. As a result, the women aren’t allowed to move at a comfortable pace, fact that is making Ava visibly nervous, since she keeps on grimacing and cursing under her breath every time she needs to double back in order to go around an obstacle. They advance incredibly slowly around rusty metal sheets and rotten wooden beams towards an illuminated area in the background, what they guess is an open staircase. As they get closer, they start hearing voices although they can’t make sense of them.

When they finally reach the clearing they lean over and peep what’s going on on the lower floor, about 15 feet below them. Sara can see a bunch of henchmen packing submachine guns gathered around a man in his forties, whom Sara identifies as the gang leader. It’s impossible for them to see who he’s talking to. Even though their voices are calm and friendly, their aggressive body language indicates nervousness.

“Of course we trusted you to pay what you owe us. We just wanted to give you a warm welcome just in case you wanted to back away from our deal”

“Our deal was I paid you half before and half after the job was done. Your men should have come back already. Don’t tell me they are having problems handling a simple woman”

The idea of calling Agent Sharpe a simple woman, brings a smile to Sara’s lips. She turns her head towards her only to find out she’s not where she was supposed to be. Ava is trying to circle around the staircase so that she can see the man’s face.

“Ava” Sara hushes. “Stay down, you’re going to get us killed”

Ava chooses to ignore the captain of the Waverider and keeps on crawling over an area lacking all kind of stability and full of holes that would make it impossible for her to get some cover, were she spotted. Sara holds her breath for almost as long as it takes the other woman to reach what’s left of the stairs. One of the metal sheets that sank a little when she passed over it, recovers its original form with a loud noise.

The men become quiet as mice as all of their looks are directed towards the place where the sound originated, only couple feet away from Ava who is face down stuck to the ground. The gang leader orders two of the thugs go have a look with a jerk of his head. Sara assesses the situation as fast as
she can. There are seven gang members including the cocky boss and then there’s the stranger, too. They are outnumbered in manpower and firepower, but they still count with the element of surprise. On the down side, Ava is about to be discovered and most likely killed on the spot.

Sara plays different ways of attack in her head until she comes up with a scenario whose outcome is not a certain death but more of a mystery. One of the two men looking for the source of the sound reaches for his gun while the other one discards the idea of using the stairs after one step breaks under his feet.

“It’s probably just a rat. Or nothing.” He half laughs nonchalantly “The whole place is a fucking mess. I’m surprised the upper floor is still standing”

The other guy, more edgy aims his gun up “We’d better make sure, right, boss?”

The man referred to as the boss stops to consider his options for a few seconds. Finally he nods, pursing his lips. “Just don’t empty the whole magazine. Those bullets are expensive.”

Sara stands up in a silent move and calculates the jump at the same time three shots impact on the area where Ava was lying. The fall knocks down two of the gang members. Sara can hear bones breaking so she hopes none of them will be getting up before the fight is over. Her outstanding landing still can’t prevent all the attention brought upon her from everyone who’s still standing. Three men, one of them the man Sara hadn’t seen before, reach for their guns as she hits the shooter with a shuriken in his weapon hand first and in the throat next in a quick succession of actions. The sight of blood excites her senses in a way she hasn’t felt in a while. She almost pitties her victims, knowing what it’s about to be unleashed.

Next, she grabs the gun from the closest thug to her right and shoots the first armed man she can get a glimpse of, a blond guy with a baby face who looks like he doesn’t belong, only to duck immediately behind the man she’s still sharing a gun with, who takes a burst of friendly fire aimed at her. The splashing sound of the bullets piercing flesh brings Sara’s mind to Ava. Why is she not helping her? Did any of the bullets fired before go through her skin like that, too? Is she hurt?

She gets distracted by the train of thoughts, the one mistake that could bring the death outcome back on the table, but which also washes her blood lust away. She pushes her human shield to the side and finds herself exposed with too many open fronts. Relieved, she sees Ava fall over one of the remaining four and shoot another one down. In the meantime, Sara dodges and uses the impulse to slide over the floor and bring one of her attackers down to the ground with a well-aimed kick.

Both women turn around at the sound of a portal opening. The only non-gang member is also the
only man standing. Ava is the closest to him. When she tries to get a hold of his jacket to prevent him from escaping, he turns around and swings his gun. Ava takes a bad blow to the head and rolls over the floor. Next thing she knows, he’s pointing his gun at her, close range. The second his finger pulls the trigger, a star shaped blade rips his carotid artery.

Although the bullet doesn’t find its intended target the surviving gang members have started regrouping and reaching for their guns. With a swift move, Sara grabs Ava by the jacket, pulls her up and drags both of them across the portal to an unknown time and place. Then she shoots at the time courier around Ava’s assailant’s wrist and as the portal closes, she lets out a sigh of relief.

Chapter End Notes

It's been a while since I last posted anything. I've been quite busy with a few things that needed most of my time and took away whatever little inspiration I had. But I've been working on a few chapters, so it shouldn't be long until I finish this part of the story and start with some romance.

Feel free to tell me if it's getting too boring and you're using it to rock sheep to sleep. Just say it nicely; I have a sensitive heart.
She cares

Chapter Summary

Ava keeps adding stress to an already shitty day and she kind of takes it on Sara, who is not known for her patience.

Chapter Notes

It was supposed to be a really long chapter, but I don't like the outcome so it's going to be just a very short one, because I'm quite satisfied with this part and I'll try to fix the rest and upload it soon.

It's been fun to write but also quite difficult, because the show is determined to contradict me and it's a lot harder to rewrite than to start from scratch. Feel free to leave comments.
There's a little bit of angst and a little bit of fluff. I hope you enjoy it.

The minute Sara shoots at the time courier several things happen. There’s enemy fire, of course. The shots start right when Sara’s projectile makes contact with its intended target, the time courier that’s still exposing her and Ava in the line of fire. And of course the shots are directed at Ava for the umpteenth time tonight as she struggles in a fight against gravity trying very hard, once Sara’s let go of her, not to roll down a very steep slope where they’ve landed. Luckily, the men must have been fascinated by the portal and they haven’t managed to react until it was almost too late to get a shot through the it. The lonely bullet which makes its way to when and where the women have just arrived right before the walls between the two periods are closed for good, misses Ava’s head by an inch and digs its way into a wall topped with barbed wire erected at the top of the slope, with a clatter sound that silences Sara’s sigh of relief. On hearing the noise, Ava gives onto the instinct to brace her head with her arms and half flies onto the floor. She realizes her mistake when it’s too late and, although she manages to slide down the slope more or less gracefully given the circumstances, she is incapable of stopping or even slowing down the slightest before getting to a drop several feet high.

Ava could have sworn Sara gets to the ground before she does, landing perfectly after jumping from an impossible height as if she were weightless, while Ava’s fall is painfully slowed down by a large rock sticking out of the otherwise perfectly vertical surface until she finally drops unceremoniously to the ground letting out a growl of pain and frustration while landing on her back next to the thick trunk of an ancient cedar towering high into the darkness.

Ava sees Sara’s already scanning their surroundings. They are between some sort of fortress and a thick mass of trees and ground vegetation disappearing into the night.
Someone has tried to kill her. But it isn’t just that, she’s had her home invaded, has been shot at, has taken a blow to the head, has fallen down and she’s just had enough. To say that she’s infuriated would be an understatement.

“The fuck were you thinking? Were you trying to get us killed?” Sara’s words feel like a slap on the face, and no matter how much she thinks the other woman has all the right to be pissed, and how much she has lost control of the situation, Ava’s not going to be lectured on how to follow a course of action tonight, after all she’s gone through, least of all by a Legend.

“Don’t be ridiculous” Ava makes an attempt to sit up, but the movement causes a sharp pain in her ribcage that puts a frown in her face and makes her consider the floor as an option for a little longer. Besides, her head is still spinning a little and hurting like hell after her mysterious pursuer, whom Sara killed before he could be questioned, decided to play whack a mole with her and bang her temporal lobe with the butt of his gun. She’s not going to tolerate any other attack tonight, no matter if she’s been reckless and irresponsible, no matter if it comes from Sara, who’s done nothing but help her and has every right to be angry and asking what the fuck is wrong with her.

“I wasn’t going to get us killed. I had it all under control. And if you hadn’t got into a fight, everything would be over by now.”

“Over for you, cause you'd be dead. In case you haven't noticed I saved your life there.”

“My life wouldn't have needed saving if you idiot hadn't stormed into an open fight.”

“Really?” Sara opens her eyes incredulously “From where I was, I could swear they you were being shot at. What did you expect me to do? Watch you get killed? Just— just open a damn portal and get us out of here. Where are we anyway?”

“Fuck fuck fuck” Ava yells through her teeth when she lays her eyes on the time courier. “The stupid thing’s broken.”

Sara sighs out of frustration and leans her head backwards rolling her eyes. “Great” she roars

“What the hell are we supposed to do now?”
“You tell me, miss-perfect-bureau-agent. This would be a great time to illustrate what it is that you bureau stiffs do so well that allows you to call my team and me screwups.”

“Well, you could explain why you had to shoot at the courier for starters”

“You're such a jerk. You know that? THEY WERE SHOOTING AT YOU. You say you had a plan. The hell you did. You were acting foolishly and, guess what, miss Sharpe? You screwed up. You’ve put me and my team at risk.”

“Your team’s probably getting drunk or screwing up history or both”

“Don’t you dare speak like that about them. You’ve been lecturing me for months on what we do wrong. Well, at least we manage to get the job done. Right now they are looking for us and they are going to come and take us out of here in one piece, because they may not have had your stupid training, but we are a family and we look after each other. Who did you turn to when you were in trouble? Just admit it. You can’t even trust you own people. At least I know I can put my life in their hands”

Ava is throwing incendiary glares at her from the floor but she’s otherwise speechless.

“You know what pisses me off? I was beginning to think that you were different from those uniformed dicks at the Time Bureau, but you're just like them, just like Rip, thinking that the end justifies the means. Well, guess what? It's over. Once we get out of here, and you’d better start praying we do, we part ways, and if you get any close to a member of my crew ever again—” Sara's anger is not enough to let her finish her threat. Ava's previous defiant look is nowhere to be seen. Instead, there's only a deep sorrow that takes the assassin by surprise.

Ava’s head keeps spinning faster and faster and it’s accompanied by a buzz in her ears now the adrenaline's wearing off. This can't be good. She tries to convince herself that she’s frustrated because of tonight’s events, because she’s failed Rip, because she was supposed to gain Sara’s trust and she’s just managed to turn all her previous efforts into disdain by being a jerk. However, she knows the agony she’s feeling in the center of her chest has nothing to do with the fall and possibly a couple of broken ribs, but with the fake hopes she’s been secretly embracing since Vineland. Hopes she’s been trying to pretend don’t exist that she might one day be important to Sara, that she can taste her lips one day, that Sara will consider her a good enough candidate to share her bed, even if it is only once, merely another of her many conquests. Hopes that she understands were ridiculous and are now broken.

The bureau agent tries again to stand up. She feels too light headed and sleepy all accompanied by a
rising sensation of nausea. Something's terribly wrong with her. Maybe her head was hit harder than she thought. *I guess this is it.* Last thing she sees is Sara reaching out for her with a worried frown, her lips uttering her name, but no sound gets to Ava's ears. *She cares.* And then nothing.
Verbal Communication

Chapter Summary

Sara's still stuck somewhere in time with an unconscious Ava. Maybe it's because she has nothing else to do in the meantime, maybe it's because she senses she can trust Ava, but Sara feels like opening her heart a bit and so both women end up talking for a while.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Sara barely has any time to react. Ava's voice had been soft compared to her usual bossy tone, but the captain attributed it to her feeling guilty for the mess she had created. When she sees the other woman is going to faint, she jumps the few feet separating them and catches her, right before she hits the ground. *Fuck*. How’s she going to protect her if they are discovered? *Fuck*.

After a few initial seconds of panic, the assassin takes control of the situation again. She places the unconscious woman on the floor dragging her with great care behind the gigantic tree, where the almost absolute darkness offers some cover. She checks her pulse first; weak and slow. Normal, considering the circumstances. The fact that there's a pulse doesn't mean that something isn’t horribly wrong, though, so she starts looking for injuries immediately thereafter. She opens and carefully removes Ava's jacket and then quickly rolls up her tank top watching Cersei Lanister’s determined face contort and disappear. Next, with expert fingers, Sara starts exploring her torso searching for injuries or signs of internal bleeding. She counts three broken ribs on her right side. Holding her breath, the trained assassin proceeds to press her ear to Ava's chest. The lack of any bubbling sound makes her sigh with relief; The lungs haven't been punctured. Sara moves to the head next. She doesn't have to look much to find a bulge an inch or so away from her right temple, covered in clotted blood. Then, she uses the light in Ava's comm device to make sure her pupils are reactive to stimuli. Sara has seen how serious an injury sustained in this part of the head can be without immediate appropriate medical treatment, but she can't just leave Ava there to try and find a way out and chances are her team can't get to them in time – maybe at all. *Fuck*.

The more the Captain of the Waverider thinks about it, the more impotent she feels. “Ava” she whispers “C’mon, Sharpe. Wake up. Don't make me feel guilty for yelling at a comatose you. I need you to be Ok so I can kick your ass for getting us into this mess and not feel remorseful about it.” Soft rambling whispers continue to leave Sara's lips as she strokes the agent's face, pinching her cheeks slightly “I need you to wake up. Hey. C’mon, Ava. I’ll start following rules if you do this for me. I’ll even stop the guys from calling you names, except for ‘Pantsuit’, ok? That one suits you too well. And I’ll let you come along on missions sometimes so you can tell us off in real time, alright?”

She notices, while she’s taking a lock of hair off her face that Ava's getting cold, fact Sara finds strange, since she can't seem to feel the temperature of her own body. Just like when she was trapped in Mallus’s dimension, when Ava pulled her out. Sara suddenly remembers that she has forgotten
about Ava’s jacket. When she's done wrapping her up as well as she can, she takes a moment to look
at her face. She looks almost sweet, without that constant worried expression or the judgemental look
on her face. It seems hard to believe she’s that same stiff bureau agent who wanted to arrest them. Or
the Ava who just acted rashly, impulsively, passionately, in an incredibly stupid way and got them
into a lot of trouble. “What the hell were you trying to do?”

And then it hits her. The reason why she shouldn’t be mad at the woman lying inert before her. The
same reason that led her to risk her job and help them with the Vikings. Ava’s acted just like Sara
would. Like a Legend would.

*************

The idea of attacking her feet comes after a good ten minutes of unsuccessful attempts to revive the
unconscious Ava by more conventional ways. Sara goes for tickling first and then, encouraged by
what looks like a twitch on Ava's nose she pinches the sole of her foot with a pine needle. Ava sighs
and moves a little, which is Sara’s cue to move to the head and start slapping her cheeks gently “Hey.
Ava.”

Ava opens and closes her eyes several times before being able to focus. The nausea is gone, but she's
got a formidable headache and Sara Lance's hands are cupping her cheeks for some reason.

“Morning sunshine!” Sara greets her with her usual grin stupid smile, her transparent blue eyes
scrutinising hers “I thought I'd lost you there.”

“You wish!” is all Ava manages to reply which only makes Sara's smile broader.

Ava starts sitting up “Don’t” Sara orders. Ava ignores the other woman's advice until she feels the
piercing stabbing of broken ribs in her chest and contorts her face in pain.

“Told you so. Wait. I'll help you” and once again Sara is touching her, her arms laced around Ava's
torso helping her to a sitting position. “You've got three broken ribs. Don't worry, your lungs are
fine. But I'd rather you didn't lie down. We don't want to run the risk of you falling asleep and into a
coma. How's your head? Do you think you can stand up?”

“Yes. Just give me a couple minutes.” The pain is worse now she's sitting. She's leaning on her right
hand while she tries to feel the injuries with the other one. Her jacket slips onto her lap and she
notices that the tank top is all rolled up.”
“Did you really have to get me naked?”

“Don't be a prude. I needed to make sure you didn't have internal bleeding. And don't worry; I didn't enjoy it. You're not my type.”

Ava swallows Sara's answer with difficulty at the same time that a now familiar wave of heat travels from her stomach to every cell in her body, coloring her cheeks. Still she manages to control her voice when she replies.

“I'll take that as a compliment”

Of course I'm not her type. And she isn't mine either. I don't know why I am so infatuated with her. I need to get my act together. I don't do feelings. I'm not going to lose my head for someone this infuriating, someone reckless and overwhelmingly intimidating and who will clearly never be interested in me. But I owe her. And according to Rip I need to work with her if I want to defeat Mallus. God, I hope he knows what we’re doing here, because if I get my stupid heart broken for nothing, I'll kill him.

“Thanks for not leaving me here.”

“It's not like I had anywhere else to go, right?” Sara replies with an annoyed expression. Then, remembering how she regretted her harsh words before, she adds in a much friendlier voice “Besides, I don't leave my team behind and you know that.”

her team Ava looks confused. Even after she’s put her life at risk and been a bitch to her, Sara’s treating her like she’s actually part of her team. “Sara” the words seem trapped in her mouth. “I –I'm truly sorry I got you into this mess.”

“That must have been hard for you to say.” Ava can tell Sara's having trouble at keeping the annoying tone she seems to use only for her. “Save the apologies for when we are back at the Waverider. I want Gideon to keep a record of those words.”

“God you're an as– ”
“–tonishing woman, I know.” Sara interjects pursing her lips in an attempt to hide a smile “See? We make a great team. We already finish each other’s sentences” Now it’s Ava the one trying to fight back a smile forming on her lips “And what I said before about parting ways –I was really angry, but I didn’t really mean what I said.”

“Oh my god. You’re only saying that cause I’m dying, aren’t you?” Ava chuckles

“I’m afraid not. Now, can you move? We’re too exposed here. I want to know what’s behind that wall and when we are. Maybe there’s a way to get out of here or at least to let the others know where we are”

“My head is killing me. Maybe you should go. I'll only slow you down.”

“Not a chance. We don’t know what we’re facing, so we need to stick together. I'm going to figure out how to get us out of here and you're going to owe me big time. Where does it hurt? I may be able to help”

“Mostly everywhere, but it's worse around here, Ava says, taking her hand from her ribs to her forehead. Unless you happen to have any painkillers on you, I doubt there's much you can do”

“Let me try something.” Without another word, Sara sits behind Ava resting her back against the giant tree trunk and then she wraps her legs around the other woman.

“What the –?” Ava tries to move but she's stopped by the pain together with the more paralyzing effect of Sara's words whispered close to her ear. “Trust me.”

“You should be laying down for this, but I think you're already too sleepy. Besides, this will keep us from getting too cold.” Sara places her left arm under Ava's and over her chest and pulls towards her. “Ribs ok?”

The Bureau agent is too worried about her heart rate to notice anything else. Please, don't let her notice. She can actually hear her heart pounding in her temples, right next to Sara's cheek. She wants to tell her to stop, but unfortunately she can't move or feel anything but the overtaking pain in her head and on every part of her body which Sara is in contact with. That and the assassin’s breath in her ear.
“Hey, girl? Are you still with me?”

“Head” Ava mumbles afraid she's going to betray herself if she says anything else.

“I'm on it” Now Ava's body's leaning against Sara's, the back of her head against the assassin's left shoulder and Sara's cheek brushing her temple. Sara removes the arm she had around her and places it on the ground for support while she adjusts their position making Ava miss that contact instantly. Then she starts massaging Ava's head, pressing different points with the tip of her fingers; the bridge of her nose, under her cheekbones, at the joint between the zygomatic and the mandible and then all over her scalp and neck, running circles carefully around her temples. Every touch sends a wave of relief that lowers the intensity of the headache. Sara goes on for a few minutes, focusing only on her task. Then, alarmed by the silence, she calls the other woman. “Ava?”

“Hmm?”

“Don't fall asleep.”

“I won’t” But her voice is only an almost inaudible mumble.

“Talk to me. Is this working?”

“A little” The pain is almost completely gone, but Ava wants to enjoy this guilty pleasure for as long as she can. This is most likely all the physical contact she can expect to have with Sara, but that thought can’t prevent her from wondering what it’d be like to have those hands going all over her body.

“Nyssa used to do this for me all the time”

And just like that, the stunning image of the other gorgeous assassin crashes her daydream “Nyssa?”

“I’m pretty sure you know who she is” Ava holds her breath. “Rip has probably filled you in about everything. It's ok. Government bureaucracy, right?” Her voice sounds resigned. Sara chooses not to mention the fact that she knows the Bureau has a file on her and Ava has gone through it “Well, as you may have guessed, painkillers are not to be found anywhere around Nanda Parbat, so every time I got a headache, she'd perform her magic on me.”
“Do you miss her?”

“Sometimes. I think a part of me has sort of been waiting for her. If I think about it, though, us together—it wouldn’t make sense now. We’re so different from who we used to be that I’m afraid it would be impossible for us to fit into each other’s lives anymore. Anyway, she’s the only person I’ve ever truly loved. Romantically, I mean.”

“Only one?”

“Why the surprise?”

“I don’t know. You seem to be the kind of person who falls in and out of love in a heartbeat”

“Hey. Don’t be so quick to judge. I don’t give my heart out that easily. If you want to know, though, there was also Oliver, but that’s a much more complicated story. Nyssa—She’ll always be special. It seems she’s the only person who’d be able to understand what I’ve become, after I—after the Lazarus pit” Sara avoids the word ‘death’ on purpose. She isn’t sure how much of her life is on the file the bureau has on her seeing as she didn’t have time to have a proper look at it and she’d rather Ava didn’t know about the time she didn’t have a soul. “Enough about me. It’s only fair that I have some insight into your life, too. Besides, from here I can’t see if you’re falling asleep or just unusually quiet, so it’s your turn to speak. Apart from your love of rules and your disregard for the Legends I don’t know much about you” Sara can feel Ava's muscles growing tense.

“There isn’t much to know about me. I’m uninteresting”

“C’mon. No friends? no family? No love interest?” Sara finds it hard to read into the silence that follows.

When Ava finally speaks she lets out a passionless speech she seems to have repeated many times over the years “I grew up in Fresno. I still visit my parents there every once in a while. I don’t have any brothers or sisters, pets or childhood friends for the matter. I never really got attached to anyone and I didn’t let anyone get too attached to me—except for once but I don’t want to talk about it”

“You don’t get attached to people”
“Hey, no judging”

“I'm not. It's only that—it doesn't seem right. Not trusting anyone.”

“I don't need to. I trust myself. If you don't expect anything from anyone, you won't get disappointed, right? You could say I trusted Rip and look where it’s got me. Trust brings problems. I guess it would have been nice to have a brother or sister, though”

“It is nice. It was.”

“Sara. I’m sorry.” Ava tries to sit up, but she’s stopped by the other woman

“You should be, but not for me. I had a wonderful family, a sister who cared for me and two wonderful loving parents but I always felt like I didn't belong. I was screwing my sister's boyfriend because it gave me a sense of control. I ran away with him on a boat trip and almost died, twice. Then three, four, five, ten more times as an assassin; then disappeared for six years. After Nyssa found me, I could have tried to go back any number of times, I could have let them know I was alive and well. But I couldn’t face them. I was so ashamed and so afraid that they would never want to see me. Besides, I had ruined their perfect lives. My dad and Laurel had started drinking because of me. My parents had got a divorce because of me, because I was a horrible selfish brat who couldn't take responsibility for her own actions. I caused only pain to them, and when I finally gathered the courage to come back, there was only love and understanding waiting for me. Laurel—” her faltering voice makes Ava feel a pain in her chest that has nothing to do with her injuries “Laurel didn't care about my mistakes. She helped me recover whatever humanity was left in me. She broke every rule to bring me back to life and when I was given the chance I couldn't bring myself to do so for her. And the worst thing is that I broke time anyway. So, if you didn’t dislike me enough already maybe you should consider an opinion upgrade”

Ava feels a teardrop fall from Sara's cheek to hers and slide down her face. When Sara notices she stops massaging her head to wipe it. “Sorry.”

“It's ok” Ava takes Sara's hand and squeezes it. She wishes more than ever that Sara felt the same way about her. Then she’d hold her, and kiss her nose, her forehead and every freckle on her gorgeous face until all the pain had been washed away.

“Maybe I shouldn’t let people get attached to me either. Blow after blow, I survive, because people around me take care of me; and if I don't survive, they continue bringing me back to life, and I don’t get why there's nothing I can do in return to prevent those I care about from suffering and dying. Believe me, Ava, I get why you despise me so much”
Ava has a lump in her throat that prevents her from telling Sara the comforting words the other woman needs. After a few seconds it’s Sara again who breaks the silence

“I don’t know why I’m telling you this” Much to Ava’s displeasure, Sara lets go of her hand “How’s your head?”

“The pain’s almost gone. Thanks. You have to tell me how it’s done.”

“When we get out of here”

“If we get out of here”

“You need to start trusting the Legends, Ava. My crew may be many things, but they are loyal to the core. They will come for us. I just hope they make it on time.”

“It’s you who’s made them so, Sara. They are loyal to you, because of you. You’ve turned them into better versions of themselves. I certainly admire that.”

“A compliment from Agent Sharpe.” Sara lets out a chuckle “You must have hit your head pretty hard if you’re being nice to me.” Next she leaves the comfort of Ava’s warmth and starts to get up. “We should get going”

“I guess what I mean is that I don’t despise you. I really don’t. It’s the opposite, if anything. I must admit I was wrong about you. Until we first met, I only had whatever data we could get from the Waverider concerning your different missions alongside Rip and later on your own after he left. It was mostly strategies, or the lack of them that we had access to. Seen from the outside, to be honest, it didn’t look good. You seem to have great disregard for planning and rules, when planning and rules is what we do. And it’s a method that had worked perfectly for us until Nora Darhk appeared. Now the Bureau has no control over the situation and you, in your chaos, manage to get the job done.”

“After you came help us with the Beebo anachronism I realized we had reached a point of mutual respect, but it’s nice to hear you say that”
After Sara’s managed to put Ava’s shoe back on and has helped her up, they start walking around
the edge of the moonlit forest looking for a place where they can climb back up. Sara can’t help but
notice how breathtaking Ava looks in casual clothes with her hair all messy bathed by the moonlight.
She recalls the vibe she thought she had got from the other woman when they were in Vinland and
wonders if there’s a chance she’s into women. She’s usually good at reading those things, but Ava’s
hard to read. If that were the case, as much as it pains her to admit it, Sara decides that she wouldn’t
put up much resistance if Ava decided to try and get into her pants. She dismisses the idea shaking
her head in disbelief. She’d know if Ava were gay. To avoid treading into dangerous ground, the
captain of the Waverider decides to focus on the pressing hunger she’s been feeling for a while.

“You don’t happen to have a sandwich on you, do you? I’m starving. I could eat you up right now”

Ava reacts with a blush to Sara’s bad choice of words. To her surprise, she sees the other woman’s
also blushing and making a face. Ava is certain both of them are now thinking of the same thing.

“I didn’t mean –”

“Don’t worry.” Ava says with a sheepish smile “I know I’m not your type.”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed it. As always, comments and kudos will be welcomed.
Man of Straw

Chapter Summary

Ava keeps on having her ribs crushed and getting shot during the longest night of her life.

(Yup. I'm great at summarizing)

Chapter Notes

Ok. This got out of hands and what was going to be a short wrap up chapter became a long one (it’s over 3k words) which has taken me a month to finish. I’ve been busy doing other stuff, too, but it was mainly that I had an idea that didn’t comply with what went on in the show and I couldn’t agree with myself on the new plot twist.

WARNING. It gets pretty explicitly violent at some point. Also, it’s unedited because, let’s be honest, It’d take me another 3 months to do it right. I hope you enjoy it anyway!

Ps. I couldn’t help myself and ended up using the idiom “that ship has sailed” after Caity used it wrong at SD Comic Con

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sara’s been gone for only a few minutes, but Ava is already worried sick. She has been worried ever since the second Sara announced she was going to try and enter the place enclosed within the high wall. Anything that happens to the captain of the Waverider or any of the Legends will be her fault. Ava knows this, so, for a second she almost wishes she had a god to pray to.

Fortunately, the time courier manages to keep her busy enough so as not to think about the many possible negative outcomes. No sound comes out of the device when she shakes it with care next to her ear: there’s nothing loose; There are also a couple of scratches on the screen, Ava notices, but otherwise everything seems ok.

The truth is things have spiralled so fast in the past few hours that nothing seems real yet. As if she needed a certain amount of time for the events to sink in. Besides, although her headache is almost gone, her brain appears to be working less efficiently than usual.

Ava knows she’s supposed to be paying attention to her surroundings, but she feels somehow confident that the place is completely deserted, so she keeps on fiddling with the time courier, absorbed by its fascinating guts once she manages to remove the circuit panel using the lid as a lever.
Maybe if she can find out what’s wrong with it, she can fix the damn device and get them out of there before they get into further trouble and she can be in control of the situation again. Ava lets out a sigh of relief when she notices the green gooey substance that powers the courier isn’t leaking anywhere. This means that it is very likely she can fix it if she can lay her hands on a few simple tools.

She’s so focused toying with that she doesn’t hear someone approaching her from behind until it’s too late.

“Who do we have here? I thought there were no more of you left”

“Fuck”

Ava curses herself for the millionth time, staring into the barrel of a gun she doesn’t recognize from any time period she’s familiar with.

The man holding the gun looks nothing like a thug. He seems to be a good fifteen years her senior, is quite tall and a bit fat round the stomach, fact that the lab coat he’s wearing not only can’t hide, but also helps accentuate. It doesn’t seem to Ava like he’d last too much in a hand to hand fight. She just needs to get a little closer and get a hold of that gun.

“I got one. I think it’s her.” He says in what Ava thinks is a Canadian accent. At first Ava looks around him trying to see to whom he’s talking, but she realizes soon that the man must be using some sort of radio communication gadget “The one we were looking for. I don’t know how she’s got here, but I’m almost sure it’s her”

(…)

“because she’s looking at me like she doesn’t know who I am” and saying this, the man’s eyes darken while his lips contort into a smile which makes Ava shiver. “What do we do with the lady?

(…)

“It’s too dangerous. We should get rid of the problem”
“But”

Playing with this is what got you into this mess in the first place. You can question her if you want to, but I’d bet you anything he’s dead.”

“Me? Why me?” “Send Johnson, please. He’s done this before” “Ok, thanks. Tell him to meet me at my lab. We have everything we need there”

“I know it’s a pity, but it’s the wisest choice, believe me. You know what she’s capable of.”

“Don’t you think I know that? I’d call it our greatest achievement if it hadn’t led us here, but we can’t risk it. Let’s stick to the plan. I’ll be there soon” Then addressing Ava again he mutters, slurring his words “C’mon blondie, move.”

In spite of his cockiness, there’s almost a note of sadness in the man’s voice as he gestures towards the muddy track next to them. Ava realizes she’s about to die. She knows she should try to negotiate or to fight back, to scream, but her limbs are numb from the cold and she’s paralyzed with fear. Besides, the pain in her chest is becoming unbearable.

Ava walks slowly, dragging her feet, thinking that maybe it wouldn’t have been such a bad idea to kiss Sara earlier when she had the chance. Now that ship has sailed. Who knows? Maybe Sara liked her well enough for a fling. Probably not after what Ava managed to get her into. Once she’s gone, Sara’s going to be all alone, stranded who knows when and it’s all Ava’s fault. Her failure is going to cost her her life before she can get Sara back to safety. And with this train of thoughts, at this very moment, Ava makes a decision; she’s not going to die without a fight. **Hell, no. I’m not going to die before I fix this mess.**
Ava calculates with precision the distance between her and her attacker. He’s too far away for her to reach for his gun without getting shot first and too close for there to be a different outcome if she decided to run for it and get into the forest. She needs a distraction.

“Why do you want me dead?” she finally manages to ask in a husky voice. Her mouth feels like it has been drained of saliva and the lump in her throat threatens to asphyxiate her at any moment.

“You’re going to be ok. Just do as I tell you”

“I heard you talking, remember? I know where we’re headed”

“You shouldn’t have come”

“Believe me, I didn’t want to come. But what was I supposed to do? Someone was trying to kill me. Just let me go. I promise I’ll never bother to come back. Which year is it anyway?”

“I meant the first time, but I guess you don’t know about that, because you haven’t done it yet. That would technically make it your second time, but I’m going to make sure you don’t come here two years ago and ruin everything. Time travel’s a bitch.”

“You can’t change the past. You have no idea of the damage you’d cause the fabric of the universe”

“Shut up”

“You’re a scientist. You know there are some things that can’t be controlled and are to be left alone.”

“Not in my line of work. We wouldn’t have got so far if we hadn’t pushed the boundaries.”

“Please—” Ava stops and turns around lifting her hands into the air. No matter how eager she is to find out whatever these people have been doing, protecting time is of the utmost importance.

“Just shut up and keep on walking. I have to make sure you don’t come here in the future. Just let me think and I’m sure we’ll find another way.”
Although his words are reassuring, the man’s shaky voice suggests otherwise. Ava can tell he’s afraid of her, that he wants her dead but it is the first time he’s pointed a gun at someone.

Ava reaches the conclusion that she must have dealt with an anachronism here at some point in her future, which apparently is these people’s past, and obviously something was done poorly when they are aware of the Bureau’s existence and know how to find them. Slowly, as they approach the gate of the facility, Ava starts getting closer to the left edge of the track, closer to the dense mass of trees and away from the wall.

Some people believe owls are good luck. Ava Sharpe doesn’t believe in luck, or in fate, or in anything she can’t rationalize, but she believes she’s capable of making the most of her chances. That’s why when an especially large great grey owl decides to overfly their heads, startling her attacker, Ava makes a run for the trees without thinking it twice. She knows she would be faster and better at combat than him under normal circumstances, but given the fact that she’s been hit pretty hard in the head, has a few broken ribs and her blood sugar levels must be ridiculously low by now, she can just hope this time, too, she’s going to make the best of what she knows is the opportunity she’ll have.

The first bullet makes a cracking noise when it dives deep into the trunk of a tree, next to Ava’s ear and its noise lasts for some long seconds echoing in the depths of the forest. The panic and the agony in her chest almost force her to give up but they also serve as a reminder of how alive she is and how she wants to stay that way. She advances a few more yards and takes cover behind another thick tree, realizing there’s no way she can outrun anyone right now.

*Just focus*

It’s taken him too long to react and he’s lost her. While he’s waiting for his eyes to adjust to the darkness, he remembers he has a flashlight in one of his lab coat pockets, so he starts pointing it in turns at every tree which is thick enough to be used as cover.

In his confusion, he never once considers calling for reinforcements although, at this very moment, he would have been spooked even of his own voice. His breath can be heard over the creaking sounds of leaves and branches under his feet. It’s a slow process. Trying to circle around everything Ava could be using as a barricade but avoiding getting too close or leaving his flanks unattended proves to be a difficult task. Finally, when he’s going around a thick coniferous tree, he hears the unmistakable sound of someone stepping onto dry branches.

Seen from the outside, the scene would look ridiculous, like a sketch taken out of a bad comedy; Two people running around a tree, changing directions while playing a game of chase. The second
shot misses her, but dodging the bullet makes her end up with her knees on the floor. And the next second she’s facing the gun again with no time to get up and run, so she does the only thing left to do and she pulls herself up charging forwards against her attacker. Her hand grips her attacker’s forearm just in time to divert the trajectory of the third bullet. She hears the explosion close to her head, but she has no idea where the bullet makes impact, only that she’s still alive, pinned to the floor under the damn assailant and struggling to take the gun away from him.

The last shot brings silence, broken only when Sara arrives running after a few seconds have passed. The first thing she sees is Ava lying on her back immobile, staring into nothingness with wide open eyes, her face covered in blood and grey matter, a sight Sara saw many times during her time as an assassin.

Sara panics for a brief moment and she stops dead a few yards away, until she realizes there are no wounds and for the first time she notices the person in a white lab coat, now stained with dirt and blood, lying right next to her friend, what’s left of his face turned into a mass of blood, brains and bone fragments.

“God, Ava. Are you ok?” Sara hurries next to her

“I screwed up” Ava says taking turns to stare at the blood stains on her left hand and forearm and what’s left of the scientist’s head. Her attempt to sit up fails and causes her to grunt in pain. “Fuck. It hurts like a bitch”

Sara reaches for her and lifts her with great care at the same time she looks for signs of new injuries. She recalls having heard four shots.

“Did you get shot?”

“I don’t think so. No. I screwed up, Sara”

“You’re ok. Look at me. You’re safe now”

“I wasn’t paying attention. I didn’t think there would be anyone. The place seemed deserted”

“You did great. You’re ok”
“He’s dead”

“Oh, you’d never— killed anyone before. Of course. I’m so sorry”

“I screwed up. I screwed up.” On saying this Ava takes her hand to her face and looks terrified when she feels the gore covering it.

Sara leaves her side for a minute, leaving Ava’s still in shock, unable to react.

When she comes back, she’s dragged the man’s corpse away so it’s no longer on sight. Sara has torn a piece of the man’s coat that hadn’t been stained and after kneeling next to Ava, who’s still looking at the bloodstains, she uses it to clean the agent’s face so gently that Ava feels like she’s being caressed, slowly coming back to reality.

“You didn’t screw up.” Sara mutters “It was my fault. I should never have left you alone. Not when you could barely move. You could have died. I’m sorry, Ava”

Tears start streaming down Ava’s face. Sara pulls her into an embrace and holds her, pressing Ava’s forehead against her cheek, feeling the other woman’s uneven breathing until she finally recovers her composure.

“We need to find a way out of here” Ava breathes out

Sara simply nods. And then, offering Ava a hand, she adds “Can you walk?”

*****************

They’ve slipped in through the gate unnoticed, helped by the keycard they found in one of the man’s pockets. They are surprised to find out it’s not a military base, like they thought it would be, but more like an abandoned research facility. Together, they explore the area from the shadows. Their movements are silent, calculated.

They move around quietly looking for anything suspicious until they finally see light coming out of
one of the buildings, a warehouse of sorts judging by the looks of it.

The large metallic sliding gate is closed, but the smaller door next to it is ajar. One shared look is all it takes for them to decide to move in.

The place is almost completely deserted, save for a transport vehicle and some crates here and there.

“I’ve been expecting you” a female voice echoes along the hangar. A woman emerges from behind a crate with her hands up “I’m unarmed. Don’t worry”

Ava gets closer pointing the gun at her. The woman looks older at close range. Although she is elegantly dressed and she’s wearing make up, the deep lines around her eyes and mouth indicate she’s probably well over sixty “Who are you?”

“I’m afraid I’m not at liberty to disclose any information to you. Not even—”

“I’m the one with the gun here.” Ava interjects “And I’m getting tired of people trying to kill me, so you’re going to tell me who you are and what’s going on or you’ll wind up like the last two idiots you sent to murder me”

“I’m going to do something ever better. I’m going to send you both back home. Alive and kicking with the promise that you are never going to hear from us ever again. Well, except for the one time from my past which is still your future. But as you can see, you managed to survive that”

“Do you really expect me to believe you?”

The woman merely shrugs dismissively “Our attempt to change the past has brought unwanted attention and I’m doing this to save my own life. The few supporters I had left have been killed tonight—I suppose you took care of the last one—and I’ve been given an ultimatum. Either I help you or I get a slow and painful death.”

“Who—?”

“I can’t tell you. This is a win-win situation. You walk away with the certainty that no one is ever
going to follow you and I will be granted access to a small part of my considerable fortune so that I can enjoy a very comfortable retirement”

“I can’t leave without knowing—”

“Oh. But you will know one day soon. You know how important it is not to mess with the timeline”

“But you have”

“Well. You can say I’ve tried.”

Sara believes she notices something familiar in the woman’s eyes when she gives them a forced smile, charged with spite. She has been observing from a distance without interfering, but now she can’t help herself and asks “And how are you going to get us out of here?”

“I have very specific orders. I’ll let you know only when you accept my conditions. I’ve been told that I can trust you if you give me your word, Ava. I get you two home safely and you pretend this never happened. Do we have a deal?”

Ava takes a long time to reply. In the meantime, she stares at the other woman in the eye, as she holds her gaze defiantly, both women blinking no more than it is strictly necessary.

“If you play us you’ll regret it”

The woman ignores Ava’s comment “Do we have a deal?”

“Sara?”

Sara gets closer to her and places a hand on her shoulder “I trust your judgement.” The two younger women lock eyes for a few seconds. Sara knows what Ava’s response is going to be even before she speaks

“Deal”
The woman produces a time courier from the pocket of her blazer.

“Where did you get that from?”

“No revealing information, remember? The other catch is that you must destroy it as soon as you get back home. I can’t risk you knowing which year it is”

Ava knows it makes sense, and she can see in the woman’s eyes that she somehow knows too that Ava’s going to do it

“Ok. I’ll destroy it as soon as I get her home, You have my word.”

The woman hands the courier to Ava and gives her a strange smile as she says “I’m strangely proud of how this has turned out in the end. And a few seconds later, as the other women walk through the portal, she adds “You really are a prodigy. The best of them all.”

*****************************************************************

“Johnson!” The woman gives up trying to get a response on the radio. “Where on Earth is this idiotic man?” She mutters to herself.

“He won’t be coming any time soon” The former head of the AVA corporation jumps startled on hearing an unexpected reply. The voice belongs to a slim man sporting a beard and a trenchcoat, with his dark blond hair neatly combed to one side accentuating the impression she first got when the British accent first reached her ears that the man belonged to an aristocratic family taken from the middle of the 19th century.

“And who are you?”

“I was one of your best clients a couple years ago. I purchased twelve of your AVAs and I’ve got word that you’ve just made an attempt on my favourite clone’s life.”
“So, you’re the man that cost me my company.”

“You must admit that you became a little too greedy when you started making clones without free will. It was bound to explode in your face at some point”

“What do you want?”

“I want you to take whatever money you have left and disappear.”

“And you’re going to make me do that how, exactly? That’s ridiculous”

“Unfortunately, my moral compass works only slightly better than yours. The man you sent to the past to kill my agent’s dead. I’ve murdered your bodyguard and the two scientists that were working in your new project. I won’t hesitate to do the same to you if you don’t do as I tell you. But, unlike I did with them, I’ll make sure you suffer a great deal first.”

“’You’re—”

“A monster? I’m sure you can relate. At least I care about other people.” Rip gets only a snort in response. “Here’s the thing: In a few minutes you’re going to get the visit of two very angry women. You’re going to give them this device” Rip say pointing at the courier around his wrist “and you’re going to tell them exactly this...”

Chapter End Notes

Ok. Technically Rip couldn’t have been wearing his trenchcoat because it hadn’t been stolen yet, but I took the liberty to recover it for him a little sooner.

This chapter puts an end to the action part that's been making room for 2-4 episodes of angst and fluff.

Tell me what you thought!
Twice upon a Time (or the one when Sara addresses Ava’s problems of the heart twice the same day but only recalls one)

Chapter Summary

Memories of how Sara got to know and like Ava better, Ava losing it a little and lots and lots of Angst?

Chapter Notes

Ok. I finally managed to get back on track after my own plot got out of hands. This should be only a couple more chapters of angst, smut and fluff (in no particular order) and I can finally put an end to it. I know that because they have already been almost completely written. I hope you like it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sara observes Ava’s hair as it drips water onto the sheets and floor. The stubborn woman refused to let Gideon treat her injuries until she had taken a shower to wash away the reminders of the fact that she’s killed a man tonight. Sara knows that no matter whether it was self defence, taking a life never gets easy, and your first kill follows you through life like a shadow.

Eventually, the captain reluctantly agreed to let Ava go without medical treatment for a little longer, after making Ava swear she would leave the bathroom door unlocked, in case she felt dizzy or even lost consciousness again. In turn, Sara promised to keep watch in the more than likely event that someone decided they needed to use the only bathroom on board while she was showering and walked on her naked.

Sara moves towards the inert woman and puts her hair to one side, brushing her forehead with the tips of her fingers in a sudden wave of tenderness, discarding the sudden impulse to press her lips to the flawless skin she’s just uncovered.

She takes her time to study the woman lying in front of her. Even in a pair of sweatpants and a tank top, Ava’s figure is magnificent, touched with an air of frailty in spite of her obvious physical strength. Her features are more beautiful than ever, now that her usual frown is nowhere to be seen and only a peaceful expression remains. Sara can’t help but recall the apologetic look Ava threw her after she smashed the courier that had brought them both back, the minute they landed safely on the Waverider. The look meant ‘I gave my word. I didn’t have a choice’ And just like that, Sara realizes she trusts Ava more than she would trust some of those she’s dared to call friends along the years and she’s more than glad to know she can turn to the Bureau agent for advice or help.
All of it started with a call. The change in their attitude towards each other. It was a few days after Rip went all berserk in London and screwed the team over for the umpteenth— and hopefully last— time. Ava had called to let Sara know about some irregularities time quakes were causing to the temporal zone which could damage the vessel’s navigation system. Without the proper adjustments to the program, Ava said, they were likely to be left stranded in some random moment of the universe’s history.

When Sara had expressed her surprise and appreciation for Ava’s thoughtfulness, Ava had only snorted and exclaimed she didn’t give a rat’s ass about the Legends, but she wasn’t going to let a perfectly fine ship go to waste. Sara felt a sudden irrepressible urge to smile at her retort and it was then she understood that, against her better judgement, she had loved their twisted game since the day they met and she not only respected, but also admired Ava Sharpe, the infuriating uptight Bureau agent ever clad in a pantsuit who was also hard working, witty, incredibly smart, had her principles well rooted and who, Sara knew, didn’t think remotely as ill of the legends as she pretended to. Ava, who was caught by surprise by the sincerity of Sara’s smile, blushed and cut communications hurriedly, in a much nicer way than she probably meant to.

The next time, it was Sara who called the Bureau, wishing deep down that Ava would be the one to answer the call. She wanted to propose a plan to stay in touch with the Bureau so that both the Legends and the Agency would know what anachronisms they were dealing with at all times. She argued it was of utmost importance after her team had met with a group of agents who were trying to fix the same anachronism without each knowing the others were there. Although the disaster was nearly averted eventually, Sara didn’t see the point in letting something similar happen again when such situations could be so easily prevented. Ava stared expressionless at Sara for a while before agreeing to establish some communication pathways between them, but on the condition that everything would run through her. After all, she wasn’t going to let them spread their bad influence all over the Bureau. Besides, it would be easier to interfere every time the Legends screwed up. Sara caught herself smiling again, spurred by the other woman’s teasing. This time, she closed the call with a great joke about pantsuits and a wink, and the last thing she saw before the screen went blank, was agent Sharpe fighting back a smile and a pair of eyes that weren’t ready to say goodbye just yet.

After that, they started calling each other more and more often, with random excuses at first, until they were placing daily calls looking for advice or just to vent about work and how exhausting leadership could be. That’s until Sara asked for Ava’s help with the Vikings. They ended up in good terms, or so Sara thought, but Ava didn’t call again after she left the Waverider a few days ago, and she’s more distant when Sara calls.

“Captain”

Sara is suddenly pulled out of her abstraction by Gideon’s voice.
“What now, Gideon?”

“I thought you’d want to know that Agent Sharpe’s concussion is fading. It appears it’s not going to leave any long term physical damage, although it’s likely that she will have to deal with troublesome headaches in the next few days. Tell her to refer to me should that happen. I can prescribe something adequate for that type of pain.

Sara lets out a sigh of relief. “Thank you Gideon. You can tell her yourself as soon as she wakes up. I’m sure she’ll take you more seriously than me. What about her other injuries?”

“She should refrain from physical activity during the next couple of days, but other than that she ought to be up and kicking— metaphorically, of course— in a few hours. As for you Captain, can I suggest that you go to your quarters and get some rest as well?”

“I’m fine, Gideon. I want to make sure she’s not alone when she wakes up. She’s been put through a lot tonight”

“I can add something to the concoction I’m already pumping into her veins that will make all of her distress disappear”

Sara rolls her eyes. “I was thinking she could just talk about it, you know? Like normal people do when something worries them?”

“I see. Like when you’re worried overwhelmed sorrowful and you avoid contact with everyone and resort to alcohol to numb your pain?”

“You know how it goes. Do as I say...”

“In your case I would suggest—”

“Please, shut up, Gideon”

“As you wish, Captain, but there’s something concerning agent Sharpe’s brain chemistry that might be of importance for her wellbeing”
The minute Ava opens her eyes, she doesn’t know where she is. A wave of panic spreads through her body until something or someone moves next to her and she sees Sara staring at her, sitting under a dim light with a small notebook in her hands. The recollections from the previous night start coming back and the panic starts turning into a ball of anguish that threatens to take over her whole self.

“Hi. How are you feeling?”

“I’m ok. What time is it?”

“Almost eight. Here. I had Gideon fabricate some nice clothes for you. You can put these on” Sara says handing her some clothes. Ava can see the words ‘When did a Legend ever go quietly?’ printed all over the front of the pyjamas top

“Pyjamas?”

“I have a room ready for you for when Gideon says you’re good to go. You have a bag with some clothes I gathered from your apartment if you prefer” Sara adds pointing at the big gym bag next to Ava’s bed

“I have a home, remember?” Ava knows her voice is coming out wrong, too hostile to meet so much kindness. “I’m sorry. I don’t mean to sound—”

“It’s ok. I would be overwhelmed if I were you. You seem to be dealing with this pretty well. I’m impressed.”

Ava smiles “I’m not used to having people being this nice to me, I guess. Except for Gary, maybe.”

“You can go back to your place once we’ve made sure it’s safe for you to go there. But if you feel like you need to take some time to go back home you can stay here for a few days”
“I— uh. Thanks. I don’t think it will be necessary but— Thanks”

“C’mon. Gideon’s been telling me how irresponsible of me it has been to let you have a shower before checking your brain for injuries first”

“I thought she hated me.”

“I think everyone on the ship may be changing their mind about you, Miss Sharpe”

Ava rejects Sara’s offer to leave the medbay while she changes clothes, so the captain of the Waverider turns her back on her. Sara decides that the fact that she can’t see Ava’s face makes it a great moment to bring up the medical update Gideon gave her while Ava was resting.

“Look, Ava, I know I should probably mind my own business, but Gideon has found something going on in your brain that could pose a problem.”

“What? Like a brain tumor?”

“No. no. Don’t worry. It’s nothing like that. Gideon wouldn’t have given you the all clear if you weren’t physically cured.”

“What do you mean by ‘physically’?”

“She may have hinted that your brain chemistry is affected by what appears to be— well—hum— a heartache”

“That’s absurd” Ava snorts. “That’s completely ridiculous. I mean, it’s absolutely— preposterous. And why would Gideon share that information with you anyway? Isn’t there like a Hippocratic oath that prevents her from breaching patient-doctor confidentiality?”

“Well, the captain is an exception to that, I’m afraid. Gideon also mentioned that you’re showing mild signs of depression that can become a serious problem if you ignore them.” Sara goes on perceptibly uncomfortable.
“Oh” Ava feels trapped, as if the physical exhaustion were keeping her from putting up her nonchalant façade. She feels how her cheeks burn while changing to an accusing color and how her mouth is drained of saliva.

“It’s ok. It’s none of my business and I won’t discuss any of this with anyone, I promise.” Then her voice changes until Ava can swear she can recognize hints of harshness “But maybe you should start considering the fact that you may have fallen for the only person who may never be able to love you back.”

Ava never expected Sara to be so blunt. She wasn’t even supposed to find out about her true feelings for her. Has she been so obvious? While she is trying to convince herself that this is for the best she can feel how her heart starts to crumble, while she stands broken, her soul completely nude before the last person she’d want it to. She feels like she’s been deadly hurt. As if she were bleeding, only it isn’t blood what gushes out of her body, but words “Do you think I don’t know how wrong this is?” The agent's voice trembles a little. “It's not like I wanted it to happen, Sara. I never had this happen to me before and to be honest I don't know how to deal with it. It makes me feel uncomfortable, weak and so that you know, I would never even dream about acting on these feelings”

“Ava, that’s not what I mean. And being in love doesn’t make you weak.”

“It does. I've lost focus.”

“That's because—”

“That's because I knew from the beginning that it would always be an unrequited love” the cold agent persona takes control and interrupts, suddenly looking straight into Sara's eyes telling her that it will take much more than this to defeat her “That's because I'm an idiot and a fool, and I've fallen like a teenager for someone who wouldn't even look at me twice. It's humiliating, Sara. And this is not who I am. I tried to ignore how I felt at first. Then fight it, but it only made things worse.” the gaze Ava grants Sara is as hard as her voice “Do you think it's nice to wander around with a stupid feeling you can't control embedded in your mind, in your chest. I— I didn't ask for any of this. And I don't want it.” The words keep stumbling out of her mouth in a succession as Sara drops her jaw unable to break eye contact, move or speak at all, attracted by an invisible force coming from the pair of dark blue eyes “It's driving me insane. It hurts to be close, it hurts to be away. I've lost perspective, I can't think, I can't sleep and— and, even though I know it will never happen, sometimes, deep down, I find myself— hoping. God, I’m an idiot” her hand covers her face while she lets out a sigh. “I've been a complete idiot.” The tears that have been accumulating in her eyes start streaming down her face and she lets them run silently until they start soaking the neck of her shirt.
“Ava” Sara tries to place a comforting hand on her shoulder, but Ava lifts a hand to stop her

“Don’t, please”

She needed to get it out of her chest. The feeling that had been eating her from inside out for weeks. She needed to get rid of it, to have her heart crushed like she deserves for being a stupid fool, so she can go back to her comfortable loveless life of order and painless emptiness. And she just knows the way to still be able to spare her pride. Her hand finds the cold metal device in the back pocket of her jeans.

Sara stares at Ava in disbelief for a few seconds unable to speak. The time agent has stopped crying and now holds her gaze defiantly, daring.

“It’s not you, Ava. There’s absolutely nothing wrong with you. It’s just I’m not sure Rip’s capable of loving anyone anymore” Sara notices a shadow crawling inside her, whispering messages of hatred towards her former mentor for having managed to capture the attention of the incredible woman in front of her in such a way. A shadow that she tries to ignore as it grasps her heart in a tight fist at the sight of Ava’s love for someone else reflected in her eyes. “Not after what happened to his wife and child”

“Rip?” Ava snorts. “God Lance, you’re an idiot” Her words come out in a desperate note. Of course Sara’s got it all wrong. At least she wasn’t being cruel, just more oblivious to the world than usual “Sara, it’s not Rip with whom I’m in love”

Ava considers for a second the idea of allowing herself to have a taste of Sara’s lips, but she realizes it would be unfair for both of them; She would never hold dear that remembrance knowing that the other woman doesn’t want to be kissed by her. Besides, the recollection of this conversation is about to be snatched away from Sara’s memory.

Still unable to let go without some sort of physical contact, Ava settles for a much chaster pleasure and kisses Sara briefly on the cheek, resting her hand on Sara’s neck while tracing a line with her thumb from the corner of the much desired lips to her cheek, right before registering in her mind the shock in the other woman’s eyes as she pulls back, feeling completely shattered. “I’m truly sorry”

For a brief second Sara is confused and jumps back startled. Then, as the information sinks in and the butterflies find their way into her stomach a flash of light blinds her and blurs her thoughts completely.
When she comes back to her senses she’s alone in the medbay as if the past five minutes have never happened. Still bewildered, Sara tries to recapture the train of thoughts she was at some point submerged into, blaming her confusion on sleep deprivation and maybe the last two helpings of scotch. Sara takes her hand to her face when she realizes it’s strangely cold and is surprised when her index finger touches what feels like a teardrop.

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Ava hides in the cargo bay for a few minutes trying to regain her composure, though the painful pressure in her chest manages to remain, bringing down her expectations of a quick recovery. If someone had told her a few months ago that a heartache was real, she would have laughed in their face. Looking back, she realizes she’s been acting too differently from her controlled self lately, acting uncontrollably, on impulse. She needs to focus on gaining that control back. She needs to see Sara as a work colleague and nothing else. In order to do so, she knows that every time she experiences some sort of romantic feeling towards the captain of the Waverider in the future, she must cling onto the look of surprise Sara gave her after the telltale kiss, which Ava’s shame has distorted into disappointment. This way she will stop feeding the ridiculous fantasies of having something with Sara other than a friendly professional relationship. After all, Sara’s all fire and passion, she possesses an irresistible charm and this overpowering magnetism that makes it impossible for one not to notice her. Ava should always have known Sara was bound to find her, with her love for rules and order, extremely boring and unappealing.

She now knows that she needs to leave the Waverider as soon as possible. Although Sara’s offered her to stay until she feels it’s safe to go back to her apartment or until she finds a new place, somehow she’s certain that her enemies, whomever they are, are not going to come after her again, and her only reason to stay would be so that she could stay closer to Sara for a little longer and keep on torturing herself with sweet daydreams leading nowhere good.

With her new resolution she goes pick up her stuff and goes back to where she left Sara, to thank her again and say goodbye.

Sara’s still a little off after having had her memory wiped. Nonetheless, she’s reluctant to let Ava go at first and tries to convince her to stay for a few days. She finally gives in under the condition that Ava will check up with her in the morning and she will call if she notices anything out of the ordinary, no matter what.

Ava’s professional mask threatens to crumble once again. She realizes she wants to see more behind Sara’s worry and kind offering and the shameful pang comes back to her clenching her stomach. She needs to put distance between her and Sara as soon as possible.

She opens a portal home and says an unceremonious goodbye but, before she can leave, Sara grabs
her by the arm and makes her turn to face her. When their eyes meet, Ava is paralyzed.

“Ava. Gideon said something before, about you, and— well— I know it’s none of my business and I’ll never discuss this again unless you want to but— hum— Rip can be a distrustful selfish son of a bitch sometimes, and maybe you shouldn’t have your hopes high, but I know he cares about you in his own twisted way and you deserve to get what you want and although I really think he doesn’t deserve you, if anyone can get through to him and make him feel anything after what he’s gone through, that person is you.”

Ava is tempted to tell her again that it’s her, Sara, who’s the cause of her heartache, but it would be pointless now she already knows what Sara’s reaction would be, so she just gives the woman a sad smile and mutters “I’m not in love with him, Sara, I never was. He’s a friend and I wish I could have done more to prevent him from screwing up like he did. As for me, I’m ok. I’ve been overwhelmed lately and I’ve been acting weird due to several reasons, but my heart is ok.” she lies. It will be “I will be ok. Thanks for everything. It means a lot to me to know I can trust you.”

“Hey. What are friends for?”

Without another word, Ava turns round and starts walking away

Without realizing what they are doing, both women let out a sigh of melancholy after the portal closes.

Chapter End Notes

Please do comment. And if anyone is interested, you can find me in twitter @Lance_A_Lotz and tumblr as saralancealotz
The heart beats (not only in my chest, but the heart of the streets)

Chapter Summary

Sara falls into the hands of onanism (or rather her hands do) thinking about a certain blonde agent. Also she accepts she has a tiny, little, bleeding heart that wants to be seen and cherished.

Chapter Notes

Here goes a little bit of smut.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It wasn’t even a dream.

It was an idea that had come to her while she was staring into the darkness waiting for slumber to catch up with her.

Something that started out of a memory, out of an inciting scent lost at the back of her mind that kept on haunting Sara now she was alone wrapped in her bed sheets wishing for the first time since she set foot on the Waverider three years ago that she weren’t alone; The idea of touching Ava’s lips with hers, of tracing lines over them with her fingers and caressing those full red lustful temptations with the tip of her tongue.

Sara is curious about what it would feel like. Not that she would have allowed such thoughts to trouble her mind under normal circumstances, but tiredness from recent events and the fifth of scotch she almost completely drowned with dinner— for dinner— have numbed her consciousness, letting a much more primal impulse take control.

So there she is, leaning over agent Sharpe’s office chair, because of course she’s chosen tight-lips-tight-bun Ava, the ever-clad-in-a-spotless-pantsuit agent, the unaccessible woman, to unravel her fantasy.

Sara doubts for a moment after she’s gone down half the distance and stops with parted lips, staring into the cold, scolding eyes opposite her, but the glimpse of a deep uncontrollable need emanating from the dark blue orbs dares her to go on. The moan that escapes her lips when they finally capture Ava’s reverberates sinfully over the walls of her empty room, bringing her momentarily back to reality, where nothing but the wave of heat remains, pumping through her veins and pooling in her lower belly and between her thighs.

Clinging onto her daydream, she closes her eyes and allows her fingers to brush over Ava’s nape, then slide up to remove the hairpins and black rubber band constraining the long golden locks, all without taking her eyes off of Ava’s. The scent of shampoo as she entangles her fingers into the silky waves of hair is intoxicating and, as her brain gives way to the memory of it, Sara clenches her fists around the plain white cover of her bed.
And all of a sudden, they have abandoned Ava’s office for a much more familiar environment, and Sara is pushing Ava onto the desk in the Captain’s office—her office—knocking over several ancient books on even more ancient demons and totem legends in the process, as well as her picture with Laurel and Oliver who offer her their most encouraging smile before disappearing on their way to the floor.

The other woman’s face also looks more familiar; flushed, gorgeous, cunning. The defiant stare is gone, replaced by the nicer, warmer version Sara has seen more of lately, only touched with want.

A part of Sara knows she’ll have to deal with this in the morning, when the effects of alcohol wear off. Because this is not just having the hots for a very attractive woman anymore. This is not just wanting to fuck her and be fucked by her. At least not only that. But right now she craves to have Ava’s mouth everywhere upon her, her long legs tangled around her body and her fingers buried deep within taking momentary control of Sara’s will.

It’s still a long way till dawn arrives, though, with a headache and a dry mouth, shedding light over her shameful lust and her even more shameful feelings, that’s why Sara allows herself the guilty pleasure of resuming the kissing in her dream, letting imaginary Ava respond to her advances equally fiercely this time, with an open mouth and her hands everywhere, whilst, back in the darkness of her room, one of Sara’s hands lets go of the bed cover and finds its way under her own lacy underwear.

The feel of Ava’s skin seems so real under her body once Sara’s unbuttoned the regulation shirt that she can’t help but let out a sigh. She’s got her leg grinding against Ava’s core, the friction causing brief moans to erupt from the other woman’s mouth every time Sara rocks her hips forwards between kisses.

Sara’s lips move to Ava’s collarbone and neck sucking and nibbling, feeling the wetness between her legs increase arisen by the panting next to her ears. Her teeth close over Ava’s earlobe next, before she lets a moaning whisper out “I’m dying to eat you out” Ava’s mouth finds hers once more. “Not tonight” is her reply.

Sara can’t believe that even in her own fantasy Ava’s taking control. She stares at the other woman in awe. Ava maintains the eye contact and cups Sara’s face with both hands while pressing their foreheads together “Tonight your mouth will be on mine while you lay your hands all over me, and I’ll be staring at your gorgeous eyes all the way when you make me come. Am I making myself clear?”

“Yes, Agent Sharpe” Sara replies with a playful grin.

“Then fuck me, Lance” she hisses next to Sara’s ear.

Sara doesn’t waste time on removing any more garments. Instead, she unbuttons and unzips Ava’s pants with shaky fingers and slides her hand under Ava’s underwear until her middle finger meets the wetness that was claiming her and immediately starts drawing circles around her clit. The Sara from outside the fantasy lets out a contained cry as her finger performs matching movements on herself switching paces from a frantic desperate rhythm to a much slower one, trying to postpone the inevitable.

Ava’s reaction doesn’t take long to show. Soon she’s deepening her kisses increasing the amount of tongue as her breathing becomes more irregular. Sara’s finger expands its area of effect as it slides backwards and forwards over the entrance pressing faintly without going in, always coming back to the starting point, circling, teasing, causing both women to swear in turns.

Sara’s mouth finds a soft spot on Ava’s neck, and then on her earlobe making her gasp “Fuck.
“Mmmm?” Sara breathes next to her ear at the same time that the ring finger joins the first right over Ava’s entrance.

Ava’s hand finds Sara’s face and guides it until their eyes meet. “Inside. Plea—ah”

It’s the most vulnerable Sara has ever seen her, responding to her ministrations with involuntary moans and jerking her hips up to meet Sara’s fingers once and again, panting heavily with each thrust while the palm of Sara’s hand rubs her clit in a way that makes Ava dig her nails into Sara’s shoulder and turns her hands into fists around her hair. Not long goes by before her walls start clenching around Sara’s fingers and Sara leans all the way down to kiss Ava’s mouth hard and deep, absorbing the moans the other woman’s unable to suppress when she comes.

In the darkness of her room, Sara reaches her orgasm as she envisions Ava’s, burying her head in her pillow to prevent her groans from going through the walls of her quarters.

Sara knows now, as she whispers Ava’s name into the black air around her, that she wishes she didn’t have to be alone in this bed anymore. She rolls onto her side placing her left hand on the spot next to her; and so, knowing that she’ll blame all of this on alcohol tomorrow and pretend it never happened, Sara pictures Ava there, naked. She imagines Ava holding her hand, taking it to her lips and offering her the shyest of smiles with dancing eyes. It feels like they’ve known each other forever, like Ava knows her darkest secrets but doesn’t care, like the darkness can be, if not completely defeated at least contained, like all’s forgiven. And with that pain off her chest, and her fingers still lurking under the brim of her panties, she changes the world of wakefulness for the first happy dream in years.

Chapter End Notes

It’s the first time I write something like this and I don’t know if I managed to separate the fantasy from reality well, but I hope you enjoy it anyway. Let me know what you thought.

There’s just one more chapter to go and I’ll be able to say I’ve finished something in my life.
5 dates and a date

Chapter Summary

Five interactions between Sara and Ava illustrating the evolution of their relationship until Sara manages to muster the courage to ask Ava out before the other woman melts into a puddle of softness.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

November 27th, 2017

Sara’s going through her third glass of scotch, the only thing that can keep her from going nuts thinking about Darhk and how to kill him once and for all, when Gideon’s voice startles her. “Incoming call from Agent Sharpe.”

“Fuck. I thought I’d never have to hear from her again. Gideon, what are the chances that she’ll leave us alone if we don’t take the call?”

“Knowing her, chances are that she’ll try to take control of the ship.”

Sara shakes her head dismissively. “Fine, fine” she exclaims, exasperated, then hides the proof of guilt behind a large vase at the same time she adopts the pose of someone who doesn’t care about what her interlocutor has to say “Put her on”

Ava’s imposing figure appears in front of her. She looks even more intimidating than usual, almost angry. “A time courier went missing yesterday. Do any of you losers, by any chance, know of its whereabouts?”

“Good morning to you too, agent Sharpe.”

“This is a serious matter. I’m not going to waste my time going over formalities.”

“You sure wasted a lot of breath insulting my crew. You could as well show some manners.”
Ava snorts “Do you or any of the members of the herd you call a team have anything to do with its disappearance.”

“No.” and seeing how Ava is going to resume her accusations, she adds “I can assure you it has nothing to do with us. Now, if you’re done insulting me...”

“You’d better not be lying. If I find out it was any of you I’ll go there myself and this time I’m taking you back with me.”

“I’m telling the truth, but I’ll be glad to finish what we started the day I saved you from the saber-tooth tiger.”

“Which you yourselves turned loose.”

“Fair point, but I would have caught it sooner if I HADN’T BEEN DEALING WITH A CERTAIN PSYCHO WHO NOT ONLY CAN’T THANK ME EVEN AFTER I’VE SAVED HER TWICE BUT ALSO KEEPS ON GETTING IN MY WAY. I-am-telling-you.” Sara adds punctuating each and every word “We had nothing to do with the theft. Sara’s expression, a mixture between anger and determination leaves no room for doubt “Now, if you don’t have any more false accusations, I have work to do”

“Like finishing that bottle of scotch you have there?” Ava hisses “For god’s sake, it’s not even eleven in the morning” Ava snorts while Sara curses herself internally for hiding the glass and not remembering about the bottle “Anyway I should have known you were too useless to pull something like this” Ava grimaces, her look turning desperate, as if she didn’t know where else to turn to.

Sara’s about to end the communication, but her curiosity gets the better of her. “I gather you don’t have any other suspects?”

Ava’s expression softens, but it’s like she’s talking more to herself than Sara. “We’ve accounted for the whereabouts of every employee and I don’t see how the courier can have left the building. Besides, the chain of custody with this stuff is very strict. No one can just grab one and make it disappear without leaving a trace. You need to have access from at least two senior agents. And there’s a lot of paperwork, security codes...”

“Who’s got clearance?”
“Well, I for starters; three other agents and Bennet. And, well, Rip, but none of them can have— no. I trust them.”

“Have you checked the surveillance footage?”

“Yes. Nothing out of the ordinary showed up. Why?”

“I bet it’s been tampered with.” Ava’s eyeing Sara with curiosity “If It had been me— well if I had taken the courier I wouldn’t have bothered to hide my actions in the first place, because it’s not like it’s not happened before and we got to keep it anyway”

“Yeah, you may not wanna pull anything like that again”

“We’ll ask nicely next time, then” Sara exclaims offering her sweetest fake smile observing Ava debating over her desire to hear what Sara has to say and the impulse to say something insulting.

“You were saying?” Ava goes on eventually swallowing her pride.

“What if someone forced two of the agents with clearance to get them the courier and then had their memories wiped? You should be looking for an employee with great computer skills”

“That doesn’t sound half as ridiculous as it should. You know? Coming from you” Sara notices, greatly amused, how Ava’s voice denotes more surprise than spite.

“I’ll take that as a compliment, you know? Coming from you.” Sara retorts making a face “Anyway, I’m sure Zari could help prove my theory.”

“This could actually work. Tell her to come over to Headquarters immediately” and then, realizing she’s in no position to negotiate, she adds “please”

“I very much doubt she’ll be willing to set foot in the Bureau. And to be honest, I can’t blame her. How do we know she’s not going to be shipped back to 2042 in a nice prison uniform?”
Ava pinches the bridge of her nose “I can’t guarantee Bennet won’t take matters into his own hands, but here’s what we’re gonna do: I send you the footage and you tell her to have a look at it.”

“I can ask her. It’s up to her whether she wants to help or not. People sometimes just want to be asked nicely for a change” Sara refrains herself from displaying the cocky smile that starts forming on her lips.

Ava rolls her eyes for all answer “Just let me know what she decides. Bye, Miss Lance. And— er— thanks, I guess”

Sara smirks flirtatiously knowing it will infuriate the other woman “You’re welcome, Agent Sharpe” she replies. Then she cuts the communication.

Sara stares at the empty space, occupied by Ava until a few seconds ago, partly cursing herself for her need to impress the agent and partly filled with satisfaction for her success in doing so.

“Hey. That was agent Sharpe’s voice, wasn’t it?” Amaya’s voice comes from behind her

“I didn’t hear you come in. I must be losing faculties”

“I’m quite stealthy. Besides, you seemed wrapped up by whatever’s been going on” Amaya arches an eyebrow implying the lack of awareness could be due to a certain agent’s presence “Should I be worried?”

“I think I may have just helped the Bureau. Hopefully this will make them start seeing us as allies. Sort of.”

“Since when do you care about what the Bureau thinks of us?” Sara shrugs

Sara ignores the undertone in Amaya’s words. “She’s been nothing but insulting since day one. I want her to eat her words”

“Her words. Yeah, right” Zari’s entrance startles both women. “Sara chooses to ignore her comment, knowing she may find herself out of weapons if she tries to deny feeling sexually attracted to a
certain Bureau agent. “Ok. You people have to stop sneaking around the ship. I’m getting sleigh bells for all of you. Zari, can I talk to you for a moment?”

November 30th, 2017

“Good morning, miss Lance” Ava is acting serious and professional, but Sara can tell there’s a certain kindness in her eyes that didn’t use to be there before “I thought you’d like to know that we’ve apprehended the culprit.”

“Really? I’m glad to hear that”

“Yes. It seems you were right”

“Oh, I like the sound of that. Gideon, do you have a record of it? Of Ava Sharpe saying I was right?”

“I certainly do, captain” On hearing Gideon’s words, Sara lifts her arms into the air triumphantly while mouthing a ‘yes’ with enthusiasm. Surprisingly, Ava doesn’t seem annoyed. On the contrary, her eyes show a level of amusement without precedent in the presence of a legend.

“Apparently, he was planning to take advantage of his position to smuggle goods from different periods and make a fortune selling them and he might have succeeded hadn’t it been for your and Miss Tomaz’ collaboration. The Bureau wants to thank you both. Who knows the amount of damage he could have caused to the timeline”

“I’m glad we could be of help” Sara says, and she makes sure Ava knows she means it by adopting a much more serious expression.

“I was calling for an entirely different reason, though, on behalf of the IT department. Bennet wants to make sure every unit can be accessed remotely from the bureau in order to install any updates automatically. When will be a good time for me to send someone to have a look at Gideon?”

“There’s no way I’m allowing that, Captain.” Gideon’s voice interrupts “That would give any of those brutes freedom to take control of the ship whenever they wanted” Gideon’s decisiveness
startles Sara. She’s not used to the AI refusing to acknowledge authority so vehemently. “Anyway, only Miss Tomaz is allowed to touch my software”

Both women exchange a look of puzzlement “So... Gideon’s monogamous, I guess? And...” Sara adds with a mischievous smile “apparently also a lady-lover. I can’t say I won’t celebrate that” Sara’s offering Ava a shit-eating smile that could be interpreted as flirting if Ava didn’t know better but which still has the power to mess with her in ways only Sara Lance could.

Thus, when Ava’s cheeks start to turn a deep shade of pink, she decides it’s better to find a quick way out. She can call back once she’s thought of an alternative plan that satisfies both parts. Ava stops the conversation abruptly with something remotely resembling a threat and her face disappears from the screen leaving Sara with the sensation that the agent has been thrown aback by Gideon’s negative to collaborate and that the Waverider could be about to be bombed. “Dammit, Gideon. It was going so well. I had almost convinced Ava that I am an efficient leader.”

“Sorry, Captain. But I don’t trust the Bureau without Rip. On a separate issue, since when do you call Agent Sharpe Ava?”

“Shut up and set a course for whenever the Bureau can’t find us. It’s better to stay off the radar for a while until I find a way to reach a compromise. ZARI. WHEREVER YOU ARE, MEET ME IN MY OFFICE!”

December 23rd, 2017

“Good evening, miss Lance.” Sara’s eyes run the risk to jump out of their sockets as she takes in the sight in front of her. Instead of the usual pantsuit, Agent Sharpe is wearing tight jeans and a blue blouse that matches her eyes perfectly and reveals a tiny amount of cleavage that is more than enough to excite Sara’s imagination. As if that weren’t enough, Ava’s hair is loose, cascading in waves, falling over one shoulder and down to her chest and, to top it up, her makeup doesn’t have its usual subtlety and it brings out her big eyes in a breathtaking way while the deep red coloring of her full lips makes it impossible to ignore the temptation her mouth displays. Sara swallows fighting the uncomfortable thoughts forming on her mind “Is this a good time?” Ava asks clumsily, mistaking Sara’s astonishment for annoyance “I can call back some other time if you’re busy.”

“It’s ok. I was just— sparring” Sara looks down at her black leggings and sports bra, feeling she is in a position of inferiority when she’s all flushed and sweaty and Ava’s looking like a goddess, the fact escaping to her that Ava’s occupied with the laborious task to avoid gaping— and maybe drooling
over— Sara’s abs and every other of her well defined musclessculpting her body, in a way that could only be interpreted as lascivious. “I didn’t know you’d changed your uniform policy” Sara adds trying to gain back control of the situation.

“Oh, this.” She mutters with a sheepish smile “I’m supposed to be downstairs at the Bureau Christmas party. I haven’t come since the first year, because people get drunk and you get to see a side of your colleagues you wish you could unsee. God, I look ludicrous, don’t I? Too much make up? Everyone from the office keeps giving me these weird looks and now you too.”

Sara shakes her head. Suddenly, seeing Ava so uncomfortable, feeling out of place, oblivious to how astonishingly beautiful she truly is, makes her experience a wave of tenderness towards the other woman which causes her to let her guard down for a second “That’s because you look absolutely astonishing” she exclaims in awe before she realizes that just sounded hell of a lot like flirting. She can only be glad her face is already colored from the exercise and Ava can’t see how hard she’s blushing.

Ava mutters a sheepish ‘thank you’, her cheeks acquiring a similar tone to Sara’s “I was supposed to give you a message so I thought that would be as good an excuse as any to get the hell out of the party” Ava grunts rolling her eyes “I don’t think I know how to behave around people anymore if it’s not to boss them around. You should have seen how my last date went”

“It can’t have been that bad”

“I literally ran out of it. All I do is work and it’s not like I can talk about it”

“You just need to relax. I’m sure there are a lot of fun but safe topics. You know, practice makes perfect. Still, if that doesn’t work, you could always do as I do and pick up love interestsalong the timeline. They are far more interesting than regular people. And less demanding.” On hearing Sara’s words, Ava adopts her professional pose, allowing her to relax a little as they get to familiar ground.

“I hope you’re joking, Miss Lance. Fraternizing with the locals during missions is strongly discouraged by Bureau policy, let alone getting romantically involved with them. It may bring disastrous consequences to the timeline. Not to mention any number of STDs which used to be of everyday use in the past”

“Maybe I’m joking. Or am I?” Sara purrs with half closed eyes Sending shivers down Ava’s back.
“I don’t want to know. Honestly” Ava stutters the red color in her face turning a few shades brighter.

“Anyway, that wasn’t the point”

“You haven’t called to lecture me? That’s news”

“I was calling to let you know that you it would be wise of you to synchronize the Waverider’s log system with the mother ship. If you do it from there you can break the connection in case you don’t want to be found”

“You’re giving us a way out? Should I be worried?”

“I think it’s important that you do this, and I know you don’t trust us, so I guess this is a way that would work for both you and the Bureau”

“Is that all?”

“Well, if it pleases you, I’m sure I can find over a dozen different subjects on which you surely need lecturing.” Ava blurts out, seemingly annoyed.

“Glad to see my agent Sharpe’s back.” Sara is trying to use her most annoying girly voice, but everything she is saying appears to sound flirty once the words leave her mouth.

Ava looks back at her with an indecipherable expression. Then she just shakes her head surrounded by an air of sadness. “I guess I should let you resume your activities”

“Wait. Are you going back to the party?”

“Hell no! I’m going to try and get some work done, then I’ll go back home so that I can prepare myself mentally to go to my parents’ for Christmas”

“I can’t let you do that. You can’t be working when you’re dressed to the nines. Would you like to maybe go grab a drink and tell me about your last date over a glass of scotch?”

“Oh. You mean, now?”
“Sure. Work can wait, can’t it?”

“Alright. It actually sounds like fun, but I’d rather meet you on the ship, if it’s OK with you. I’ve had enough weird looks from people for today.

“Perfect. That way I don’t have to change. See you in a minute?”

“See you in a minute”

Ava portals into Sara’s office carrying a bottle of scotch in her hands. She hides her disappointment over the fact that Sara’s abs and arms are now covered by an oversized hoodie “I almost forgot. There’s something I’ve been meaning to give you since you helped with the time courier disappearance. I was supposed to destroy it, but I thought it’d be a pity to waste it. Merry Christmas?”

Sara grabs the bottle and opens her eyes in awe the minute she reads the label. “Holy fuck, Ava. A 50-year-old Macallan! This is too much. I can’t— I can’t accept this. It must have cost a fortune.”

“To someone somewhere, maybe. It didn’t cost me a dime, though. The cadet who stole the courier took it from a luxury yacht before it exploded in 2047. The bottle was originally lost in the explosion, but he took it and he meant to sell it for a small fortune. He was caught thanks to you, so it’s only fair that you get it.”

“Will the Bureau be OK with it? Won’t you get into trouble?”

“Not if you keep the secret” Sara simply nods, surprise written all over her face, and keeps on staring at Ava as if she had never seen her before. “The timeline won’t be affected so long as you keep it on the ship.” Sara moves her head understandingly “I was supposed to destroy the bottle, but I remembered Rip told me how he’s never met anyone who could appreciate scotch the way you do and I knew it would be a pity to let it go to waste.”

“Now I feel really bad that I don’t have a Christmas gift to give you”

“Seriously, it’s nothing. Think of it as a birthday present if you prefer. Isn’t it on Christmas day, as well?”
“You know when my birthday is? I don’t think anyone on the ship actually knows that.”

“Well, I get alerts on all of the employees’ birthdays” Ava lies quickly, trying to bury her mistake “and although you’re technically not an employee —”

“Wow! Thanks. Really. I haven’t really done anything for years. I used to be annoyed when I was little, you know? I thought it was unfair that my birthday was on Christmas day. Laurel actually suggested that we started celebrating in November, when she— er, the Lazarus pit, you know?, or the day I survived the Gambit’s sinking, but those were really dark moments in my life so it didn’t feel like they deserved celebration”

Ava gets lost in the feeling of having made Sara’s day a little brighter, but she remembers she wants to hide her crush from her, so she bites back a smile and tries to offer her most professional side “I think it’s important to celebrate one’s birthday. Especially in this line of work. Most days you don’t even know if you’ll be lucky enough to get to next week” Ava realizes her mistake as soon as the words leave her mouth.

“Oh, my god, Sara. I’m so sorry. Stein. I didn’t realize—”

“It’s fine. I’m fine. I just miss him so much. He used to be the voice of reason, you know? When things took a turn to the surrealistic and got out of hands. There’s still Amaya, of course, but she’s bound to leave soon. She knows she needs to go back to her timeline before her stay here affects the future”

“You can talk to me whenever you need to. Look. I get that, as a captain, there are a number of things you don’t want to share with your crew so I just want you to know that you can count on me”

“Thanks. Same goes for you”

Sara turns her back on her and produces two glasses out of a cabinet. Both women seem to set into a comfortable silence for a few minutes until Sara breaks it. “Did you know that he was going to leave the team? He’d just had a grandson and he only wanted to be with his family. If only he’d had a few more days this wouldn’t have happened.”

“For what I heard, his death made it possible that you all came back in one piece. Sara, I don’t think he would have changed anything if he knew him dying would save you all”
The tears Sara had managed to keep under control are now running down her face. She takes a tissue box from over her desk and throws it angrily onto the floor when she notices it’s empty. Before she can do anything else, she feels Ava’s fingers on her skin wiping the teardrops away “I get that you don’t want them to know how you feel, Sara, but your love for each other is not a weakness. On the contrary, it makes you stronger.”

“You don’t understand. I am the captain. It is my duty to make sure they always come back home in one piece. I failed him. I failed them all and all I get in return is their respect, their unconditional support. I don’t deserve any of them. I shouldn’t even be alive. Why do I get all of the second chances?”

“I lost a team, too. I know it’s not the same, but I knew them well. Most of them I even considered friends. Do you really think any of the Legends would regret following Rip all those months ago if they knew what would come of it?”

Sara closes her eyes and smiles broadly “Probably not. I know Stein wouldn’t. It was his interactions with his past self what led him to have a daughter.”

“What? Rip failed to mention that”

“Apparently, he also failed to mention all the good stuff we’ve done”

“You’re not half as bad as I thought you were. He could have warned me sooner that I was being an asshole”

“You’re fine. Breaking into the Bureau probably wasn’t the best way to introduce ourselves”

“Yeah, probably”

“And speaking of assholes. I dragged you here with the promise of a drink. How would you like a glass of a very expensive scotch?”

“I’d love that”
After pouring two generous helpings into the glasses, Sara keeps one and hands the other to Ava who lifts it into the air “To Stein” she whispers.

“To Stein” Sara repeats “And to new friendships”

February 12th, 2018

“Good evening, Sara. How was your visit to the third ice age?”

Sara beams and shrugs. “It was nice, I guess. The era is now anachronism free, but I don’t like the cold very much.”

“I thought you said you have a high tolerance to it”

“I do. Still, the fact that I have a high tolerance to something doesn’t mean I have to like it. It reminds me too much of the League of Assassins. Besides, Ray and Zari got frostbite, Nate hasn’t left the shower since we arrived and Mick’s changed beer for vodka until he— and I quote— ‘sets his insides on fire’”

“Holy shit. I thought you said it the trip had been nice.”

“I said it was ‘n ice . Get it?”

Ava closes her eyes grimacing, but she’s betrayed by the smile she can’t suppress. “Oh my god. That was awful”

“Shut up. You’re smiling. You know you love my great puns”
“You wish, Lance.”

“Stop smiling, then”

“To be clear, I’m laughing at you, not at your joke. Just admit you suck at this.”

“Shut up, Sharpie”

“You wouldn’t even be able to finish any crossword puzzle without my help”

“You helped me ONCE”

“C’mon, c’mon. Don’t give me the cold shoulder. There’s no need to get frustrated”

Both women burst out laughing at once. “See how it’s done?” Ava asks once they’ve recovered their composure.

“Alright, then. How about this; What weapon would you choose if you had to duel someone in the North Pole, a sword or a pen?”

“A sword, of course. Now you’re gonna tell me that the pen is mightier than the sword, right?”

“Wrong! A sword is always mightier, except in the North Pole, because in the North Pole a pen wins, get it?”

“Ok. You’ve gone too far, Sara. I’m gonna have to refer you to HR so they can have you psychologically evaluated. Besides, you know penguins don’t live in the North Pole, don’t you? They only live in the Southern Hemisphere.”

“I knew you were a nerd. Way to ruin a perfect joke. Were you always this fun at school?”
“FYI, I was a popular girl all the way through high school.” Sara simply arches an eyebrow in disbelief “It’s true! I played soccer”

A knock on the door interrupts them. Ava’s voice goes back to freezing ice queen as her features harden. “Come in”

The minute the door opens, she relaxes “What do you want, Gary?”

“The meeting started two minutes ago. I thought you’d want to know”

“What? Oh my god. Thanks. Tell them I’ll be up in a minute.” Once Gary’s left the office, she addresses Sara again. “I have to run. Call you later?”

“You’d better. See you, Aves.”

February 26th, 2018

“Hi, Sara. Is everything alright?”

“Sure. Why do you ask? We speak like three times a day on a regular basis”

“Because it’s barely seven in the morning. I never took you for an early bird”

“Really? Sorry, I didn’t notice. Sometimes it’s hard to tell what the time is here in the temporal zone with no sky and no sun. I’m happy to see I didn’t wake you, though. Are you already in the office?” Sara adds seemingly amused.

“Yes. Maybe. Don’t judge me. There’s a lot to be done. Now Rip’s escaped and no one’s taking Mallus seriously—”

“You still haven’t managed to get through to Bennet, have you?”
“No. I think he’s in over his head and he doesn’t want to admit it or ask for help. He even went as far as to threaten to demote me if I continued to insist on pursuing proof of Mallus’s existence.”

“What a jerk”

Ava shrugs “I have to work under the radar and that complicates things even more. Actually, It’s a good thing you called. I wanted to ask you if you wanted to meet. You know, to see if we can join forces and get something done? They will be updating the alarm system tomorrow evening and I’ll be kicked out of the office at 5, so I won’t be able to overwork even if I want to.”

“So, you’re given free time and you decide to waste it doing some extra work done? You’re impossible, Agent Sharpe.” Ava simply shrugs again. What Sara can’t see is how ‘Agent Sharpe’ melts a little under Sara’s stare of fondness.

“It’s been so long since I had any free time that I’m afraid I’m gonna find out I don’t have a life anymore. So, you’d do me a favor if you kept me busy.” Ava can think of a million things she’d rather Sara kept her busy with other than Mallus’s stuff, but she pushes those thoughts aside. “What do you say? I could bring Thai food and beer.”

Sara sees something in the other woman’s eyes, some sort of longing which helps her gather the courage she’s been missing lately about everything related to Ava. But she needs to make sure she won’t wreck things between them. She can’t put her foot in it.

“I’m not sure I can make it tomorrow night. I may have a date”

“Oh.” The flash of pain in Ava’s face is hidden so quickly behind a façade of composure that Sara can’t be sure if it was really there or if she’s just seen what she wanted to see. “That’s—that’s great. I didn’t know you were dating anyone. Not that you’d tell me if you were, of course. I assumed you wouldn’t have the time. Well, good luck with your date. Rain-check on demon hunting strategy?” Ava feels something burning inside of her but it’s not until she realizes she’s been fooling herself for weeks thinking she had her feelings for Sara under control that she recognizes the signs of jealousy eating her inside. A part of her is mad at Sara for being so utterly blind that she can’t see it would be impossible for anyone to get close to her without loving her foolishly, for not seeing how badly her falling in love for someone else is going to destroy Ava. But she also feels relieved that Sara still ignores her greatest vulnerability. Realization hits her that she really needs to end this conversation as soon as possible, before her emotions give her away. Although she tries her best, Ava can’t help the fact that the words she speaks next sound harsh when they leave her mouth “Let me know when you have the time. Now I should really get going. See you”
“Wait. Will you still be up to meet if my date plan fails?”

Ava doubts for a second. She thought she could deal with Sara’s indifference, but that was before she knew Sara was romantically interested in someone else, a someone Ava doesn’t know anything about but whom she’d gladly throw into the depths of an active volcano if she had the chance. A part of her is telling her to run, to put as much distance as she can between her and the woman she’s fallen in love with in such a short period of time. Still, the fear of losing whatever it is she is building with Sara is stronger than her fear of having her heart crushed again. She’s certain if they keep on building a friendship, she’ll get over her stupid delusion. “Sure” she manages to say trying to offer her most nonchalant smile with the fear she’s utterly failing “Who doesn’t love to be second dish?”

Sara’s tone goes from playful to serious matching her facial expression “I’ll be in desperate need of a friend if she says no. I really, really like her. I like her in a way I haven’t liked anyone in a long time” and looking into Sara’s puppy eyes, Ava realizes she can’t say no to her, that no matter how much it’s going to hurt, how much it already hurts, she needs Sara in her life and she doesn’t want her to hurt like Ava does. If they are only meant to be friends, so be it. Surely romantic love can’t last forever, right?

“Of course I’ll be there for you.” she lets out in a whisper, trying to convince herself that deep down this will be good for her, so that she’ll finally manage to move on and stop deluding herself with the stupid idea that Sara may ever return her feelings “Although I’m sure you won’t need me. Somehow, I’m pretty sure you’ll manage to convince anyone you set your eyes onto to fall head over heels for you. You’re stubborn that way. Just let me know whatever you need, ok?”

“Great.” There’s a pause where both women appear to be lost in their own thoughts. Finally, Sara looks at the agent and spurred by the change of mood the news of her love interest has caused the woman she speaks again “Ava?”

“Hmm?” Ava mutters trying to swallow the lump in her throat

“You said to ask whatever I need from you?” Ava simply nods staring at her own hands turned into fists over her thighs “I need you to look at me.” Ava looks back up, puzzled, just to find fear and insecurity and something she doesn’t want to admit in Sara’s eyes. “I need you to tell me that you will have dinner with me tomorrow night.”

“What?” Ava’s heart stops beating; air stops flowing into her lungs. For a long second the whole of the universe stands still, paused. Surely she has misunderstood. The intensity of Sara’s gaze is telling a different story, though, burning her, stripping her of her walls and everything that’s not a raw primal instinct telling her not to move, not to breathe, not to do anything that could give her away. “What?”
“I need you to tell me that I’m not imagining this thing going on between us.” Sara’s tone is almost begging.

“You’re— You’re not. God, you’re not. But I thought—you said I wasn’t your type. Like a whole bunch of times.”

“I didn’t want you to know how much I liked you. Not unless there was a chance that you felt something too. I didn’t think you would—given our history, you know”

“I know. That’s why I can’t believe it. I thought I was being a fool”

“God, Ava. you’re breathtaking in every sense. You’re incredibly smart, you’re powerful, stubborn, challenging, strong and fucking gorgeous.” Sara lets out the words shyly “I want to be around you all the time. You drive me insane like no one else does, but you also make me vibrate and smile and sigh when I think of you; you make shitty days colorful and you make all the stupid romantic poetry in the world make sense. So yes, I fucking like you. A lot. Now, please, this is killing me. Tell me you’ll go on a date with me”

Ava’s blushing profusely making Sara want to open a portal and throw herself all over her “Maybe I should say no, for all the torture you’ve just put me through, jerk.”

“I’m sorry. I couldn’t risk losing you. I needed to see if you felt something, too, before ruining our friendship”

“Oh my god. I really should say ‘no’. Unfortunately, there’s nothing I’d like more than to have dinner with you, Lance.”

“Hell, yes!” the captain shouts relieved, still laughing with every cell in her body.

“I can’t believe you made me think you were dating someone else just to analyze my reaction” Ava’s giggles make Sara let out a hearty laughter, having the certainty that taking the risk has been the right choice “I thought I was hiding my crush so well.”

“You were, mostly. Luckily for me I have very observant friends. Still, I was afraid you were going
to say no quoting some stupid Bureau rule

“There’s a policy against dating co-workers, but, to be honest, screw the rules.”

“Just when I thought you couldn’t get any sexier.” Sara congratulates herself on making Ava blush again “I’ll text you the details once I’ve booked a restaurant, alright?”

“Good. What should I wear?”

“Nothing?” the Captain replies, making Ava’s blush increase and Sara happy to gain a certain control over the situation after sharing so much about how she feels about the other woman.

“I meant casual or formal?”

“I’m gonna try to impress you with a fancy restaurant, but you can make pantsuits look like they are the sexiest things so” Sara adds winking “surprise me”

“I’ll try. See you tomorrow”

“See you tomorrow, Aves”

Chapter End Notes

I'm going to stop this part of the story here, because it was were I originally wanted to end it. Besides, thirteen is my favourite number because of people's tendency to hate it. Still, I'm planning to write a couple of one shots dedicated to the night after their first date and the first time they meet after Mallus's defeat, in case anyone's interested. I also have an idea for the team meeting Nyssa during a mission, but that's uncharted waters for me.

Thanks for the ride, everyone. It's been awesome. I wouldn't have made it without your support and nice comments.
Avalance is endgame and Beebo be with you all.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!